

Book Reviews

ANDRÉ CLOT, *L'Égypte des mamelouks: L'empire des esclaves (1250-1517)* (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1996). Pp. 354.

REVIEWED BY PAUL M. COBB, Wake Forest University

Can Mamluk history be popular history? For some historians, no more damning praise could be bestowed than to have one's work labeled "popular." Yet, to judge from his other works (*Haroun al-Rachid et le temps des mille et une nuits* [1986], *Mehmed II, le conquérant de Byzance* [1990], etc.), popular history seems to be André Clot's baguette and butter, and he has carried it off with verve in his latest book, a whirlwind tour of the Mamluk Sultanate from its origins to its demise.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part is a narrative survey of the political history of the period, with a brief prologue about precedents for Turkish slave troops in the Islamic world ("Mamluks before Mamluks"). The title of part one, "Two Hundred Fifty Years of Power and Splendor," sums up why the author thinks the Mamluks are worthy of study, as well as his romantic vision of the Islamic past. In summing up this period, Clot concludes (p. 207): "The *mamlūk*-system possessed enormous defects. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. . . . [The Mamluks were] [b]rutal and without scruple, to be sure, but what grand chivalry was that of the Mamluks, courageous, ready for any sacrifice for Islam and for the empire!"

Clot's anecdotal narrative, then, is one that chronicles the "power and splendor" of the Mamluks, focusing on the colorful, the violent, and the weird. This first part deals with the politics of the Sultanate, and above all with the territorial expansion of the state. For Clot, the Mamluk Sultanate especially saw its greatness in its victories over the Crusader states and the Mongols. Their "golden age" was the "long and glorious reign" of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (i.e., his third reign), ending only with the Black Death in 1348, followed immediately by a "time of crises" and "years of blood." Despite the Sultanate's "Indian summer" under Barsbāy, the Mamluk achievement was slowly dismantled as Barsbāy's successors led the Sultanate to its demise. This is hardly a radical vision of Mamluk history. As this periodization suggests, Clot attaches special importance to the personality of individuals as agents of change, and much of this first part is given over to biographical and psychological sketches of the various personalities of the period.

The second part of the book is a topically-arranged survey of various aspects of Mamluk history: social organization (heavily indebted to Lapidus), cities, trade, daily life, art (without any illustrations), and literature. The book concludes with



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an epilogue, a sketch of the continuity of the *mamlūk*-system in Ottoman Egypt. Six appendices contain digressions on the Nile flood, Felice Brancacci's audience with Barsbāy in 1422, a European account of a wedding, the status of Christians, a list of sultans, and a handy time-line.

Specialists may feel themselves above this sort of book, and the author may well be happy to leave them there. On the other hand, some (like this reviewer) might feel a certain guilty pleasure at the author's fondness for the lurid. Be that as it may, Clot does not treat his subject haphazardly, and the book has much to recommend it, especially to non-specialists. The historical narrative appears to be accurate, although a detailed analysis of the book might turn up errors of fact. Although Clot does not appear to have consulted any indigenous sources in the original, he did make use of the standard Orientalist translations, as well as some of the more important (and older) secondary studies. The second part of the book is especially noteworthy, fleshing out in telling detail an otherwise traditional "trumpets and drums" narrative with the sights and smells of daily life. If Clot's book will not satisfy all readers, it at least paints a rich (if idiosyncratic) picture of an Islamic past.

TH. EMIL HOMERIN, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and His Shrine* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1994). Pp. 162.

REVIEWED BY WARREN C. SCHULTZ, DePaul University

This monograph is a study of the Cairene poet Ibn al-Fāriḍ (576-632/1181-1235). Given when he lived, readers of this journal might well ask why this book is being reviewed here. The answer lies in the fact that this volume is more than a biography of Ibn al-Fāriḍ. It is a study of the posthumous transformation of Ibn al-Fāriḍ from highly regarded poet into first, an influential Sufi, then a Muslim saint (*walī*) whose tomb was a locus of pilgrimage, and finally into his modern image as a "God-intoxicated" poet. The first two stages of this transformation happened during the Mamluk period. Thus while the focus of this book is not limited to things Mamluk, Mamlukists will find much that is worthy of their attention.

Ibn al-Fāriḍ's posthumous roles in the Mamluk era are apparent from the first page. The book begins with an account of the appearance of the ghost of Ibn al-Fāriḍ before the father-in-law of Sultan al-Ashraf Qāyṭbāy. As Homerin demonstrates, the Mamluk sources are replete with mentions of Ibn al-Fāriḍ.



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While he is often cited as a poet of supreme quality, those sources often mention that the man and his poetry were open to frequent charges of advocating various “heretical” beliefs, chief among them monism (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), divine incarnation (*ḥulūl*), or the possibility of mystical union with the divine (*ittiḥād*). What is also clear, however, is that Ibn al-Fāriḍ also had his share of supporters. Thus Homerin devotes much of chapters 1 and 3 to detailed discussion of three occasions during the Mamluk era in which the poet’s name and verse figured in major controversies. The first occurred in the waning years of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn’s sultanate (pp. 40-44), the second in 831/1428 (pp. 59-60), and the third and most important in 874-875/1469-1470 (pp. 60-75). The figures involved in these disputes ranged from high-ranking members of the ‘*ulamā*’ and leading Sufis to civilian political officials and representatives of the Mamluk elite. It is a major strength of this book, however, that these controversies are not dismissed as merely dichotomous conflicts between learned ‘*ulamā*’ and mystical Sufis. Ibn al-Fāriḍ’s supporters and detractors defy such simplistic classification, and Homerin’s awareness of this—coupled with his thorough reading of the available sources—enables him to draw out the various political, economic, and even personal contexts (in addition to the theological) of these episodes. He has unpacked levels of information that are all too often lost as one plows through the chronicle accounts.

By concentrating on these episodes, of course, I have ignored several important aspects of the book that are not limited to a Mamluk-only perspective. (In this sense, I am reminded of Robert Irwin’s *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* [1995], a book which, while not about the Mamluk era *per se*, contains important and cogent analyses of several aspects of Mamluk society.) Homerin provides a sophisticated introduction to Ibn al-Fāriḍ’s poetry, accompanied by lucid translations of many verses. And, as Frederick M. Denny points out in his preface, since there is not an official procedure in Islam for the canonization of saints, this book provides a valuable case study of one long process of sanctification. Homerin also illustrates how Ibn al-Fāriḍ has become part of the fabric of Egyptian culture, whether in the Mamluk era rivalries mentioned above or in the fiction of Naguib Mahfouz. In short, Homerin has distilled a 750-year tradition into a well-written monograph deserving of wide readership.



FĀYID ḤAMMĀD MUḤAMMAD ‘ĀSHŪR, *al-Jihād al-Islāmī dīdda al-Ṣalībīyīn wa-al-Mughūl fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Tripoli, Lebanon: Jarrūs Press, 1995). Pp. 368.

REVIEWED BY ANNE F. BROADBRIDGE, The University of Chicago

‘Āshūr’s work provides what its title promises, and presents the field with a history of Mamluk *jihād* against the Crusaders, the Mongols, the Ethiopians, and Tīmūr, informed by a late twentieth-century consciously Islamist world view. It is not a narrative of general Mamluk military encounters throughout the 267-year span of their rule, but rather focuses only on those battles or campaigns that fit the author’s definition of *jihād*. This results in a somewhat disjointed work, in which chapters can either bear too little relation to each other, or too much.

‘Āshūr sets up the book by laying out a detailed description of *jihād*. This accomplished, he then employs this definition to call for revolution against, and the removal of, un-Islamic government, as well as for *jihād* and terrorism (*irhāb*) against non-Muslims. Having established his ideological framework, ‘Āshūr proceeds to the body of the work, in which he uses the example of the Mamluks both to illustrate the abstract idea of *jihād* with concrete examples, and to support his call for *jihād* against contemporary corrupt governments, Egypt’s in particular.¹

‘Āshūr’s arrangement of this subsequent material is quite interesting, although it differs decidedly from standard historiographical practices of chronological or topic-related organization. Most of the chapters focus on the forty-two-year period between 1249 and 1291 in general, and the reigns of Baybars, Qalāwūn, and al-Ashraf Khalīl ibn Qalāwūn in particular. However, ‘Āshūr also includes chapters on al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (only up to 702/1303), Ethiopia, Cyprus, and Tīmūr’s campaign of 1400-1401.

To state that ‘Āshūr focuses mainly on the years 1249-1291, however, does not mean that he approaches these years in chronological fashion. Rather ‘Āshūr chooses to tell the story of the Mamluks and their enemies several times over, focusing in each chapter on different facets of the historical picture. This style of writing is reminiscent of—and might be modeled after—the fascination of early Islamic authors like Ibn Sa’d (d. 844) with the *khābar* or report. Such early authors recorded similar accounts of the same event one after another in order to emphasize different aspects of the event itself, as well as the varying degrees of their confidence in different sources. This technique gradually gave way to the annalistic style favored by al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) and subsequent authors, although the importance of the *khābar* never disappeared entirely. Unlike early Islamic scholars, however, ‘Āshūr is not presenting and critiquing the voices of others in this book,

¹N.B.: The book was published in Lebanon although ‘Āshūr teaches at ‘Ayn Shams University in Cairo.



but merely providing his own voice. As a result the book as a whole lacks any overarching evaluation or source criticism. Additionally, since ‘Āshūr explores different facets of the same or similar sets of historical data in each chapter, the work as a whole suffers greatly from repetition of material, and generally reads like a poorly-edited collection of overlapping lectures.

Following his introduction on *jihād*, ‘Āshūr provides two chapters of historical background, after which he arranges the remaining chapters according to the different enemies the Mamluks faced, first Christian or Crusader enemies (chapters 4-8), then Mongol foes (chapters 9-12). His second chapter, “The Appearance of the Mamluk State,” presents the formation of the Mamluk Sultanate in 1249 in opposition to the invasion of the French king Saint Louis IX, and its perpetuation up through both the battle of ‘Ayn Jālūt (1260) and the re-establishment of the Abbasid caliphate (1261). Rather than progressing chronologically from 1261, however, the next chapter, “The Victory of Islam at ‘Ayn Jālūt, 1260 AD,” begins with a brief history of the Mongols before once again treating the French invasion of Egypt, this time in the context of a Frankish-Mongol exchange of envoys. Following this, ‘Āshūr investigates the battle of ‘Ayn Jālūt again, this time in much more detail and with a great deal more analysis. These two chapters provide a general historical background.

Next begins the section addressing Christian or Crusader foes of the Mamluks. In chapter 4, “*Jihād* against the Crusaders in the Age of Sulṭān al-Zāhir Baybars,” ‘Āshūr returns for the third time to the French invasion of Egypt, this time drawing attention to the Crusader presence vis-à-vis not only the Mamluks but also the Ayyubids of Syria. He also discusses Mamluk-Ayyubid rivalry, and touches briefly upon some of the tensions among various Crusader groups, although not with enough detail or specificity, closing the chapter with the introduction of Baraka Khān of the Golden Horde, hitherto unknown to the reader.

These first chapters are the strongest in the book, due to the amount of detailed information they contain and ‘Āshūr’s extensive supportive quotation from sources. The book begins to weaken significantly in its fifth chapter, “*Jihād* in the Days of Sulṭān Qalāwūn al-Alfī,” in which ‘Āshūr moves on to discuss Baybars’s successor Qalāwūn and his struggles against the Crusaders. Although equally detailed, this chapter is weakened by a number of moralistic asides and exhortations, which begin by taking up historical issues like Qalāwūn’s internal punitive measures against Christians and Jews, and end with such anachronistic topics as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The remaining chapters become increasingly marred by carelessness and similar ahistorical and rampant moralizing.

Chapter 6 is entitled “Crusader Alliances with Ethiopia against Islam.” ‘Āshūr’s inclusion of Ethiopia is interesting, as many other scholars of the Crusades ignore the Ethiopian presence; unfortunately, however, Ethiopia occupies only the final



six pages of this twenty-page chapter. ‘Āshūr builds up to the Ethiopian connection with a vitriolic fourteen-page discussion of Christianity’s desire to destroy Islam, either through the military action of the Crusades, or through economic warfare against the Mamluks. Although clearly aware of the arguments for economic, strategic, social, or political motives behind the Crusades, ‘Āshūr chooses to hold religion responsible as the single cause for enmity between medieval Europe and the Mamluk Sultanate, and thus takes care to discard all other possible causes as false (p. 211).

Moving away from this promising and yet ultimately unsatisfactory treatment of Ethiopia, ‘Āshūr turns next to “The Mamluks’ *Jihād* against the Crusader [State of] Little Armenia,” in light of the aforementioned theory of Christian economic warfare against Islam. ‘Āshūr attempts to situate his comments by providing a brief history of Armenia-Cilicia. This is a decidedly superficial presentation of the material; for example, ‘Āshūr describes settlement of the area in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in terms of Armenians “who fled to that region” (p. 229), but neglects to mention the Seljuks, from whom they were fleeing. Nor does he make any reference to the ninth-century Byzantine practice of using Armenian administrators in Cilicia. Following this faulty introduction, ‘Āshūr goes on to rework much of the material from chapter 4 about Baybars’s attacks on Cilicia, then brings the narrative up to the final Armenian defeat of 1374.

‘Āshūr’s eighth chapter, “Relations of the Mamluk State in Egypt and al-Shām with Cyprus,” seems to have been merely tacked on to round out this section on the Mamluks’ Christian foes. After an encapsulated history of Cyprus since the rise of Islam, he focuses on those campaigns that took place in 1365 or later. This sits oddly with the preceding sections of the text, which, except for the Armenian chapter, only reach the year 1291. Although in this chapter events are presented as a unified sequence, the gap of years or decades between them, and the omission of other important internal political and strategic events makes this casual stringing together of battles unconvincing. One example should suffice: ‘Āshūr jumps from 1368 to 1424 without transition, and compounds the problem by discussing one of Sultan Barsbāy’s policy decisions without supplying any kind of introduction, background, or greater historical framework.

Having finished his treatment of Christian enemies, ‘Āshūr proceeds to a discussion of the Mamluks’ Mongol foes. This means that the ninth chapter, “*Jihād* against the Mongols in the Age of Sulṭān al-Zāhir Baybars,” is a continuation of the story of ‘Ayn Jālūt begun 135 pages earlier. Like chapter 4, this chapter focuses on the period directly following ‘Ayn Jālūt, but this time ‘Āshūr concentrates on tension between the Mamluks and the Ilkhanids, rather than military encounters between the Mamluks and the Crusaders. To his credit, he does include a new angle here, namely detailed information about the role of the city of Mosul in



Mamluk-Mongol skirmishing, which has been omitted by such authors as Runciman and Setton, as well as more recently by scholars like Amitai-Preiss.

Similarly the tenth chapter, "*Jihād* of Sulṭān Qalāwūn al-Alfī against the Tatars," once again presents the story of Qalāwūn and the Crusaders (chapter 5), this time with an emphasis on the Ilkhanids' activities. It is followed by "*Jihād* against the Tatars in the Age of Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn." This is an entirely new piece filled with fresh information, but is nevertheless disappointing. 'Āshūr seems to be unaware of the work of Emmanuel Sivan and his discussion of the role of the *faqīh* Ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328) in overcoming Mamluk/Muslim reluctance to fight their co-religionist foes, the Mongols.² Rather 'Āshūr's treatment of Ibn Taymīyah and his importance in the formation of ideology during the Ilkhanid campaigns of 1299 and 1303 is largely restricted to unadulterated praise, which is then used as a vehicle for 'Āshūr's condemnation of modern governments for not fighting infidels with enough conviction.

Already limping severely, the book stumbles and falls short in the final full chapter, "The Attack of Tīmūr Lang on al-Shām." 'Āshūr seems compelled to write on Tīmūr's campaign against the Mamluks as the last gasp of the "Mongols," but does not do the topic justice. It is clear that he has not yet read the works of Beatrice Manz and John Woods,³ when he states, for example, that Tīmūr was a Mongol and that his mother was descended from Chingiz Khān, ignoring that it was Tīmūr's very inability to lay claim to the Chingiz Khanid heritage that led to his elaborate construction of identity and ideology (p. 339). 'Āshūr also ignores important historical details like the treachery of the Mamluk amir Damardāsh at Aleppo and the presence of Ibn Khaldūn in Damascus at the time of Tīmūr's campaign, to say nothing of Ibn Khaldūn's actual meeting with Tīmūr.

'Āshūr ends his work with a five-page conclusion in which he waxes fulsome in his praise for the *jihād*-inspired military skills and zeal of the Mamluks. That accomplished, he proceeds to his main purpose, which is to condemn so-called "Islamic" countries today, and to call first for a unified Islamic community, and second to action against Christians and Jews. 'Āshūr closes with a final general call to terrorism (*irhāb*) to achieve the goals set out throughout the book.

In conclusion, 'Āshūr's work is interesting mostly as an example of late twentieth-century Islamist history. He is clearly familiar with the Arabic source material, especially for the earlier years of the Mamluk Sultanate, and often provides detailed

²Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven, 1985).

³Beatrice Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge, 1989); idem, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988): 105-22; John Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46 (1987): 81-108; idem, "Timur's Genealogy," in *Intellectual Studies on Islam: Essays Written in Honor of Martin B. Dickson*, ed. Michel M. Mazzaoui and Vera B. Moreen (Salt Lake City, 1990), 85-125.



information, particularly in the first chapters. Certainly ‘Āshūr’s presentation of his material, although repetitive, unwieldy and obfuscating, is interesting when viewed as an attempt to assert an alternate framework for the writing of history. Nevertheless, even as a modern recasting of the *khavar*-centered histories, the book is unsuccessful. It neither provides a coherent chronological progression, nor, as in the case of the three successive accounts of ‘Ayn Jālūt, a broad view of all the intricacies of one event or period. Nor is ‘Āshūr positioning the reports of others within a coherent framework, but rather is merely refracting his own opinions through his organizational scheme. ‘Āshūr’s factual carelessness in his later chapters, as well as his inability to resist opportunities to moralize, seriously weaken the later sections of the book and detract from its overall quality as a work of history. As a final note, it should be pointed out that the book is plagued by numerous typographical errors, poor footnotes, anachronistic, ahistorical and careless use of terminology, and a noticeable lack of uniformity in dates, which sometimes appear using the *hijrī* calendar, sometimes the common era calendar, and only occasionally both. Thus the book should be used with extreme caution, if at all, by anyone other than the student of late twentieth-century Islamist historiographical trends.

MUḤAMMAD IBN ‘ABD AL-RAḤMĀN AL-SAKHĀWĪ, *Wajīz al-Kalām fī al-Dhayl ‘alā Duwal al-Islām*, edited by Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma‘rūf, ‘Iṣām Fāris al-Ḥarastānī, and Aḥmad al-Khuṭaymī (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1416/1995). Four volumes.

REVIEWED BY FRANZ ROSENTHAL, Yale University

Al-Sakhāwī (831-902/1427-1497) is one of the most informative and prolific authors of his century, above all as an historian but also as a writer on numerous religious subjects, whose work lives on to this day as an inexhaustible source of information and instruction. The appearance in print of an unpublished work of his may deservedly be termed an event. The *Wajīz*, edited here in a well turned-out edition, is no exception.

(After completion of this review in manuscript, I happened upon an earlier edition of the work entitled *al-Dhayl al-Tāmm ‘alā Duwal al-Islām lil-Dhahabī* and edited by Ḥasan Ismā‘īl Marwah and Maḥmūd al-Arnā‘ūt [Kuwait, 1413/1992]. The edition ends with the year 850; I do not know whether the announced second part has been published. As stated in the preface, it is based upon a photocopy of a manuscript in Tunis dated 979 and thus deserves checking. It is, however, sad that



editions continue to be based upon limited manuscript material [see below], and earlier printings are not even mentioned. The all too frequent phenomenon of the appearance of the same text at about the same time in different places, although it is understandable, constitutes a waste and loss for all concerned, manufacturers, private and public libraries, and, above all, scholarship.)

By Mamluk times, the forms of historical writing were fully developed in all their many varieties. As a faithful disciple of his revered teacher Ibn Ḥajar, al-Sakhāwī followed him in writing a great centennial history, and it is not surprising that he also wrote a history such as the *Wajīz*, arranged annalistically with each year divided into events and obituary notices just as Ibn Ḥajar had done in his *Inbā' al-Ghumr bi-Abnā' al-'Umr*. He, however, did not follow the *Inbā'* with its strict systematic arrangement, but continued the rather skimpy and disorganized *Duwal al-Islām* of al-Dhahabī from 745 to 898. Why he did so is one of the problems we face in this work. It would have been helpful if he had indicated the name of the individual who supposedly suggested to him the composition of the *Wajīz* and who may or may not have been a real person and not merely a convenient fiction. He speaks of him in the beginning as an extremely accomplished and exemplary individual who had inherited his many good traits from his father and grandfather and added to them by his own exertion, "so much so that when his excellent qualities are counted, it may well be said: 'How much did the first leave to the later'" (a well-known remark which seems strangely misapplied here). A simple explanation would be at hand if it could be shown that a descendant of al-Dhahabī is meant, but this does not seem to be possible. Thus, it seems, we must fall back upon the feeble assumption that it was merely the fame of al-Dhahabī as the author of a large world history of events and obituaries as well as its very concise abridgment that convinced al-Sakhāwī, who admired him greatly, to compile an abridged history here of the events and obituaries for the century and a half that had passed since al-Dhahabī's time. It may be noted that following al-Maqrīzī, al-Sakhāwī himself had also compiled a very extended work in the same form, entitled *al-Tibr al-Masbūk* (again see further on).

Since the abridgment covers such a long period of time, the selection process had to be severe, and since the ethos of Muslim historiography required that only information from one or the other presumably authoritative sources be considered for inclusion, another intriguing problem is the motives that governed the choice of material and its relationship to the sources. But first a few remarks on some of the formal characteristics of the work (which, of course, it shares with many others).

There can be little doubt that formal matters in reference works such as the *Wajīz* were as passionately discussed in earlier times as they are nowadays, and they are indeed of almost crucial importance if a given reference work is to be of



use to researchers (as well as a commercial success to the degree possible in the manuscript age). Occasional reflections of such deliberations are preserved in the literature. Alphabetization procedures were occasionally explained, as was done already by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in his *History of Baghdad* at a time when those procedures were still in their infancy. In *al-Durar*, for instance, Ibn Ḥajar explained why he put the Abū Bakrs where he did, namely, after the names beginning with *alif* and before those beginning with *bā'*: "I put the Abū Bakrs here on the assumption that Abū is part of the name and the name thus begins with *alif* and assuming at the same time that the name is a composite and would thus begin with *bā'*. Therefore, I [hit upon a compromise solution and] put the Abū Bakrs in between the letters *alif* and *bā'*." However, where Abū Bakr is the name of the father of the biographee, it appears at the end of the names beginning with *bā'*. In the *Wajīz*, al-Sakhāwī followed no alphabetical (or precise chronological) arrangement, a step backward but one easily explained as conditioned by the example of al-Dhahabī and the need for brevity. The lack of any order in the obituary notices of the *Wajīz* made it unnecessary for al-Sakhāwī here to ponder where to alphabetize the 'Abd Allāhs, whether before all other names composed with 'Abd (as in *al-Durar*) or where the second element belongs in the alphabetical order (as in *al-Daw'*).

A significant difference is the placement of women biographees. In *al-Durar*, Ibn Ḥajar had inserted their obituaries in the alphabetical order. Al-Sakhāwī, in his *al-Daw'*, followed precedents that had been established earlier, as in al-Khaṭīb's *History of Baghdad*, and put them all together at the end after all the male biographees. This may suggest that he had reasoned that women scholars should be considered as a separate, and presumably less important, category of scholars; to us, it would seem to be another step backward. In an annalistic arrangement as in Ibn Ḥajar's *Inbā'* and al-Sakhāwī's *Wajīz*, this, of course, was no issue.

A minor but intelligent choice was made in the *Wajīz* by indicating the age, or the approximate age, of a biographee at the time of death instead of using references to the year of birth. This has been done fairly consistently beginning with the ninth century when al-Sakhāwī usually had the necessary information. It saved some space and allowed elegant variations in expression. For earlier times, this was not really possible. When in his *Raf' al-Iṣr 'an Quḍāh Miṣr*, for instance, Ibn Ḥajar covered the entire Muslim period down to his own time, he often had to take recourse to dating his biographees merely to the century in which they lived.

The abridgment procedures are much more difficult to reduce to a common denominator. Each biographical entry needs to be considered separately. More often than not, interesting differences to ponder and, if possible, to explain, present themselves. Why, for instance, should al-Sakhāwī have added the *laqab* al-Badr (Badr al-Dīn) in an obituary notice (p. 227, no. 476) that seems to be a straightforward rearrangement of *Inbā'*; we cannot tell whether it derives from some other source.



It is easier to explain why, in the extremely brief and uninformative fifty-word entry on Ibn Khaldūn (p. 385), the statement that “he never changed his (Western) dress in Egypt” is retained. In al-Sakhāwī’s mind, it had no doubt entertainment value, which was an important factor in all Muslim historiography. It also explains the frequent retention of verses here, although their inclusion obviously conflicted with the aim to be brief. One wonders, however, why, from the often numerous verses in the biographical sources, just some particular verses made it into a given obituary notice in the *Wajīz*. Special artistic merit and conceptual originality may have prompted their retention, but it more probably was meant to prevent boredom and provide an incentive for the reader to go on browsing through the work.

As stated, the historiographical ethos normally forbade the abridger from making extraneous comments of any length prior to his own period; where we cannot pinpoint a source, it is just because we have not yet located it. Very rarely in the earlier years do we find remarks going back to al-Sakhāwī and introduced by *qultu* such as appear on pp. 111 and 163. In the latter passage (as he does again on p. 425), he calls attention to the omission of a reference to the endemic plague in *Badhl al-Mā‘ūn*, Ibn Ḥajar’s monograph on the subject. It is not clear where the verses on the plague quoted on p. 205 came from; possibly, they were inserted by al-Sakhāwī himself from some less used source, but his introductory words are ambiguous. The sparsity of al-Sakhāwī’s own comments disappears when he chronicles the last fifty years where he himself was a witness. It turns into an avalanche of information for the last few years. He indicated the reason for this at the beginning of the year 895: “I have enlarged the coverage for this year in comparison to the previous year[s]. The enlarged coverage also extends to the book’s subject matter (*mawḍū‘*), because now a clean copying of *Tibr al-Masbūk* would be difficult.”¹ The obituaries here remain brief and are all traceable to *al-Daw’*, but the events are in part either directly reported by al-Sakhāwī or first attested for us here. One cannot fail to notice how much he saw himself as part of the happenings during that period. He considers it news where he spent a year, as in traveling for purposes of enlarging his knowledge (pp. 649 and 690) or continuing his residence in the holy cities. His activities as a scholar, lecturer, and author, and whom he saw or who came to visit him take up more and more space. For instance, the year 897, he states (p. 1218), “began when I was, thank God, in

¹He adds the general observation: “Often someone gets angry at what is mentioned about him and therefore (is ready in the future) to avoid the implications of what is written about him. Or he may enjoy agreeable statements about him and, therefore, exert his efforts to do what he likes to be mentioned about him. This belongs to the useful aspects of history that are not kept out from an abridgment’s limited coverage.” Al-Sakhāwī, as we know from his *I‘lān al-Tawbīkh*, was fond of general reflections on the value of history, as in the introduction of his *Tibr*, cf. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2d ed., 329 f. (Leiden, 1968). The “clean-copying” here seems to involve the preparation of a new edition and continuation of the work.



Mecca, hoping for acceptance and blessing by God, He be praised. My writings that year included a new essay on the completion of [the reading of] the *Sīrah* of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, a clean copying of my work *al-Tawbīkh li-Man Ḍamma al-Tawrīkh* in several quires, and a second draft of my work on *al-Fīraq*, a volume I have not yet completed the way I would like.”² For the Muslim historian (as well as the modern historian), it was not unusual to see his own times in a more personal light, but the extent to which this was done by al-Sakhāwī possibly reflects an increasingly pronounced inward turn away from public life to the individual. This, of course, is not to deny the innate human weakness for self-advertisement.

The editors of the *Wajīz* have done a very satisfactory job overall. Their introduction covers the essential items. One misses a list of the sources cited in the footnotes with bibliographical indications as to the editions used (which would be especially useful for readers in later generations) and a listing of the secondary literature including information on previous relevant publications by the editors. The index covers the entire fourth volume or almost half the number of pages of the text. For the voluminous Mamluk histories, indices are indispensable and most important. It is a sign of true progress that in recent years they have become a prominent feature in text editions. The one here contains a survey of the contents according to years (233 pp.) and an alphabetical listing, with cross-references, of the individuals whose obituary notices are in the text (269 pp.), followed by indices of places and localities (36 pp.), groups (2 pp.), selective cultural topics (13 pp.), and books mentioned in the body of the text (32 pp.). Some might have been expanded, others shortened, and more might have been provided; there is no end to what can usefully be done and the editors' choice is acceptable. For reasons of space, their decision to restrict footnotes to the most basic minimum must also be endorsed. References to *al-Durar* and *al-Ḍaw'* are given with complete regularity, so much so that sporadic omissions as on p. 887, note 1, and p. 943, note 2, or a wrong reference as on p. 964, note 1, deserve notice (one wonders why references to Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt*, are often included, seeing that they contain nothing additional).

The text itself is based on two manuscripts, preserved, respectively, in the Köprülü and Bodleian libraries. The latter dates to the lifetime of al-Sakhāwī. The former ends on p. 1125 and thus lacks about 270 pages. Considering the fact that the available sources have also served in lieu of manuscripts, the two manuscripts appear to be sufficient to establish a basically reliable text, but for a scholarly edition, it would have been advisable at least to try to give some information on

²The essay on the biography of the Prophet by Ibn Sayyid al-Nās was entitled *Raf' al-Ilbās*, and the accepted title for *Fīraq* was *Raf' al-Qalaq wa-al-'Araq bi-Jam' al-Mubtadi'īn min al-Fīraq*, see *al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'*, 8:18, lines 11f., and 19, lines 8-10 (Cairo, 1353-55).



other manuscripts such as those listed with some confusion in *GAL* (as far as I can see, the Vienna manuscript does not contain the text of the *Wajīz*, the Berlin manuscript has part of it, containing the years 828-894). This might have contributed to a better understanding of the interrelationship of the manuscript material and clarified the gradual growth of the text at the end, customary in all annalistic historiography. Some more detail on later continuations as preserved in the manuscripts might also have been useful. This reviewer realizes how difficult it would have been for the editors to become acquainted with manuscripts outside the Near East. It shows how much remains to be done for international cooperation between Near Eastern and Western scholars and scholarly institutions, on all levels and in all directions.

The editing appears to have been done with care. The specimen pages reproduced on pp. 28 to 35 of the introduction tend to confirm this impression. Comparison with the photo (intro., p. 30) shows the omission of *f*-*'*-*l*-*y* before *bi-ḥusn al-taṣawwur* on p. 3, line 9. Furthermore, note 2 on p. 3 states that for *al-mu'addilīn*, Ms. Köprülü has an apparently meaningless *al-'āl-m-y-n* in the text; however, the Bodleian Ms. has the same word in the text and offers the correction *al-mu'addilīn* in the margin. This situation requires rechecking with the manuscripts. As the photo (intro., p. 31) shows, on p. 873, line 16, *lī* is omitted after *qarraḍa* (*al-Ḍaw'* confirms its existence). In the following line the printed text adds *sanatan* after *sittīn*; "year," however, does not appear on the photo, and the word is not ordinarily, if ever, used here in connection with indicating the age of a biographee. Finally, the photo (intro., p. 32) shows that on p. 885, line 15, *al-Ḥanaḫī* followed *qāḍihā*. This is very little. If a check of the manuscripts in their entirety should produce nothing more substantial, it testifies to careful work done by the editors. Editing all these pages is a tremendous task. A couple of minor mistakes is fully allowable for each page. It should, however, be kept in mind that even such trivial mistakes may have unforeseen consequences.

The problem of where and how to indicate vocalization cannot be solved systematically and to everybody's satisfaction. In the present edition, vowels have been supplied judiciously. Minor errors and misplacements go doubtlessly back not to the editors but to the printer, certainly in *ṣallū*, for *ṣallaw* (p. 81, line 20), but there also occur some debatable vocalizations such as (p. 59, line 16) *lam tughayyar lahū ḥay'atun wa-lā wassa'a lahū dā'iratan*, where *yughayyir . . . ḥay'atan* would seem preferable. The editors show the same concern with the often doubtful vocalization of proper names as did their Mamluk predecessors, and they try to give guidance to the reader. Nevertheless, much vacillation and uncertainty remain. This sometimes occurs in the case of Arabic names and is hardly avoidable. For instance, *al-Zura'ī*, accurately vocalized in most occurrences, suddenly becomes *al-Zar'ī* on p. 742, line 2. Foreign, especially Turkish, proper



names, cause special headaches. There are two ways of looking at them, either from the point of view of Arabic speakers and how they pronounced them or from the point of view of etymology. Thus, names beginning with *K-m-sh* may sometimes have been pronounced *Kamash-* as indicated in the edition, but since *k-m-sh* represents *gümüş*, "silver," *Kumush-* would seem preferable. While final *-miş* and *-muş* may both be acceptable, *-maş* hardly is, and so on. A most obvious desideratum (at least, according to the knowledge of this reviewer) is a comprehensive dictionary, complete with etymological discussion, of the foreign, mainly Turkish, elements occurring in Mamluk literature. It is difficult but can be done.

When dealing with the edition of a text, small, indeed piddling, details are what really count. When they are taken care of, the content will take care of itself, and the reader can enjoy what is offered to him, in this case insight into the method and the psychological and material background of the abridger, on the one hand, and valuable new information coming from the historian's own period, on the other. Of course, no text edition is ever perfect. The present one appears to have done what, considering its time and circumstances, can fairly be expected. The work itself, as al-Sakhāwī says in his autobiography,³ referring to it simply as *al-Dhayl 'alá Duwal al-Islām lil-Dhahabī*, is indeed "very useful" if only in some ways.

ḤAMMŪD IBN MUḤAMMAD IBN 'ALĪ AL-NAJĪDĪ, *al-Nizām al-Naqdī al-Mamlūkī*, 648-922 H./1250-1517 M.: *Dirāsah Tārīkhīyah Ḥaḍārīyah* (Alexandria: Mu'assasat al-Thaqāfah al-Jāmi'iyah, 1993). Pp. 664.

REVIEWED BY WARREN C. SCHULTZ, DePaul University

This voluminous work is best approached as a useful compilation of much, but not all, earlier work on the Mamluk monetary system. Its strengths lie in the massive amount of data crammed between its covers; its weaknesses lie in what is surprisingly absent from these six hundred-plus pages. While it thus has the potential to become a well-thumbed resource, it should be used with caution.

The book is organized into an introduction, six major sections, a brief conclusion, nine appendices of limited usefulness, and a seven-part bibliography. The first section (pp. 47-159) provides an overview of mints and coin minting in the Mamluk Sultanate. The second section (pp. 161-261) introduces the reader to Mamluk money itself, with major subsections addressing types of money (including

³ *al-Daw'*, 8:17, lines 6f.



a discussion of monies of account—*al-nuqūd al-ḥisābīyah*), weights, purity, and how coins were issued. The last passage contains a useful, though incomplete, historical survey of coin issues. The next section (pp. 263-372) addresses the topic of monetary values (*al-qiyam al-naqdīyah*) across the spectrum of gold, silver, and copper coins. Section four (pp. 373-461) discusses the purchasing power (*al-qīmah al-shirā'īyah*) of Mamluk money. The fifth section (pp. 463-536) covers the circulatory relationships between Mamluk money and the money of the Sultanate's neighbors. Finally, the sixth section (pp. 537-597) addresses what al-Najīdī calls the monetary weakness and collapse (*al-fasād al-naqdī*) observed in the Mamluk Sultanate.

The analyses found in the above sections are based upon evidence found in the usual sources. By this I mean the standard Mamluk-era chronicles. As is well known, these chronicles are chock-full of monetary information, and much of that information shows up in this book. These sources are much richer for the Circassian period, however, and that bias is reflected here. There are, however, frustrating and unexplained lacunae in how al-Najīdī handles this data. An example of this is found in table I (pp. 521-530). This table lists those rates of exchange between Mamluk and Italian gold found in the chronicles for the period 790-849/1388-1445. It is an impressive list. But given that exchange rates are known for dates outside of this period, and from other sources than those consulted in this study, their unexplained omission is curious. (On this matter there is another point—or rather an admission—that I must make. In a review published in this journal last year, I asserted that this particular table of exchange rates superseded the discussion of the same topic found in Ra'fat al-Nabārāwī's *al-Sikkah al-Islāmīyah fī Miṣr: 'Aṣr Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Jarākisah* [Cairo, 1993]. Upon closer examination and comparison, however, it is clear that my earlier assertion was wrong. There is more exchange rate information available in the second section of al-Nabārāwī's book, albeit not in convenient tabular format.) There is one welcome development, however, for which al-Najīdī should be commended. He has begun to incorporate monetary data derived from *waqf* documents into his analysis, sources that have yet to be thoroughly exploited for Mamluk monetary history.

More important to note, however, are those sources which are not fully exploited in this discussion of Mamluk money: the coins themselves. While the views of such figures as Ibn Taymīyah or Ibn al-Hāyim (discussed by al-Najīdī) on how money should work are valuable, it must be emphasized that such normative descriptions give only part of the picture of Mamluk monetary history. The analysis of Mamluk coins, which survive in great number, does much to complete that picture, and it is in the exploitation of these actual artifacts of the Mamluk monetary system that al-Najīdī's work falls short. No catalogues of major collections are consulted. While there is an obligatory acknowledgment of Balog's corpus of



Mamluk coins, there is only limited application of numismatic data, such as the examination of actual coin weights, hoard evidence, or issues of metallic purity. In this last area, the evidence presented is drawn from the works of others, such as Bacharach and al-Nabārāwī. The failure to use the coins as either a check against the veracity of the chronicle citations or to supplement our knowledge where the Mamluk authors are silent is this book's most serious weakness.

Finally, in a similar vein, the bibliography is strong in some areas, and weak in others. The bibliography is strongest for Arabic language resources, including several unpublished theses that we can hope will one day surface as published studies. Works in European languages are few (nine, with ten others in translation), and unevenly represented. Thus two of Bacharach's valuable articles are utilized extensively, but others are completely ignored. The important works of Shoshan and Hennequin are missing. Al-Najīdī also makes some striking omissions in his use of modern analyses of Mamluk economic history. Important overviews and specific studies by authors such as Rabie or Labib (regardless of language) are absent, and only one work of Ashtor's is utilized. While it may be the case that these works were inaccessible to the author, their absence diminishes the overall value of the conclusions made by al-Najīdī.

ÉRIC GEOFFROY, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans: Orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1995). Pp. 510.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL WINTER, Tel Aviv University

By the end of Mamluk rule in Egypt and Syria, Sufism had grown into an extremely rich, complex, sophisticated, and multifaceted religious, cultural, and social phenomenon. Far from being a marginal or a sectarian movement, Sufism became a central, mature and, one could add, highly successful trend of Islamic culture, which was followed and practiced by illiterate commoners, but also by many members of the political, social, and intellectual elites. Fully realizing these basic characteristics of the movement, Éric Geoffroy presents in this comprehensive study a panoramic view of Egyptian and Syrian Sufism in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. He is aware that in order to do justice to his subject, it cannot be studied in isolation from other aspects of Islamic religion and culture in that period. The result is a thorough, extensive, useful, and readable volume that contains much more than its title implies.



The study is based on impressive source-materials, including many Arabic manuscripts located in Damascus libraries. The list of the primary and secondary sources used for this study is exhaustive. The bibliography is well organized and convenient to use. So are the five indices.

The first part consists of the usual survey of sources and the existing studies on the subject, and the political and social background. Some central themes are already examined here, such as the *'ulamā'* and the Mamluk government, the religious minorities and Sufi attitudes regarding them, and the Ottoman conquest.

The second part of the book, entitled "Sufism and Muslim Society," addresses such topics as Sufism and the Sunnah, Sufism and *ḥadīth*, the model of the Prophet as a way to enhance Sufism's legitimacy, aspects of sanctity (*walāyah*), miracles, and relationships between rulers and Sufis. Sufi institutions are discussed, and the writer makes a strong case for the centrality of the *zāwiyah* in Sufi life. On the other hand, the *khānqāh* was an official institution established by the authorities in earlier times, which did not have a good reputation with many Sufis. The *zāwiyah* was more independent and was associated with Sufi teachers and masters. The Ottomans constructed *zāwiyahs* and *takīyahs*, but not *khānqāhs*.

The third part deals with different modes of affiliation with the Sufi *ṭarīqahs*, which the writer prefers to translate as a spiritual method or a way of initiation rather than a Sufi order.

On the question of multiple membership in the *ṭarīqahs*, Geoffroy writes that in the period studied it became a general phenomenon and under the Ottomans it became the norm (pp. 199-201). This is certainly true about prominent Sufis. A famous example is al-Sha'rānī's initiation into twenty-six *ṭarīqahs*. The question which is still to be answered satisfactorily is whether this principle applied also to simple adherents of the Sufi way. There are indications that in those cases this was discouraged by the Sufi shaykhs.

Chapter 11 surveys the various orders in Syria and Egypt. Chapter 12, called "Contrasts and Similarities," compares Egyptian and Syrian Sufism with its Maghribi and Turco-Persian counterparts. This is an interesting and important analysis, since these alternative versions of Islamic mysticism left their mark on the Sufism of the central Arab world (which in turn influenced them).

The book's fourth part is called "An Outline of Spiritual Typology." It describes and analyzes extensively (pp. 283-360) the main types associated with Sufism: *al-zāhid*, the ascetic; *al-'ālim al-'āmil*, the scholar who lives up to his scholarship; the *ummī* (illiterate) shaykh; the *majdhūb*, the enraptured one; *arbāb al-aḥwāl*, those of the spiritual states; the *malāmatīs*, those who invoked blame upon themselves by their ostensibly outrageous behavior. Of course, sometimes the lines separating one character from another are blurred.



The fifth part deals with confrontations, debates, and mutual perceptions of Sufis and jurisconsults (*fuqahā'*). The writer presents the standard accusations, arguments, and debates across the Sufi-*faqīh* divide. In these confrontations, there was room for accommodation, dissimulation, exegesis, apologetics, and other means to defend one's position and to denounce the other side. Some well-known themes and practices associated with the Sufis, which were denounced or looked upon with suspicion by their opponents, are discussed, such as *dhikr*, the central Sufi ceremony; *samā'*, listening to music and dancing; as well as the mystical doctrines of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, "the unity of being," or *waḥdat al-shuhūd*, "the unity of contemplation." These notions were regarded by a few, strict theologians as blasphemous, verging on infidelity. Public debates and quarrels erupted occasionally around the figures of the mystical poet Ibn al-Fāriḍ and the mystical writer Ibn 'Arabī, both controversial thirteenth-century figures, whose ideas were still attacked and defended three hundred years after their deaths. Ibn Taymīyah, the great fundamentalist theologian and polemicist, who was the archenemy of Ibn 'Arabī's ideas, was still quoted and considered as an authority, centuries after his death in 1328. As Geoffroy shows, although Ibn 'Arabī's ideas were often proscribed and condemned (in Damascus more than in Cairo), the leading scholars and writers of Islam, notably the great al-Suyūṭī and al-Sha'rānī among others, wrote long treatises in defense of Ibn 'Arabī, who was also called al-Shaykh al-Akbar. It can be stated that by the sixteenth century Ibn 'Arabī had become a shibboleth for Sufism. Finally, the triumph of Ibn 'Arabī over Ibn Taymīyah was best expressed by the official support given to his ideas by the Ottomans. Sultan Selim erected a domed mausoleum over Ibn 'Arabī's grave in Damascus, but the work had to be done at night to avoid antagonizing the residents of the Ṣāliḥīyah quarter of Damascus, who were hostile to the deceased mystic. Finally, Ibn Kamal Pasha, the Ottoman Grand Mufti, issued a strongly-worded *fatwā* supporting Ibn 'Arabī (the Arabic text is reproduced on p. 511). According to Geoffroy, it was the writings of Ibn Taymīyah that were forbidden for a long time (p. 83, but references are needed for such a statement).

The writer is undoubtedly right in emphasizing the success of Sufism as a spiritual trend, Islamic discipline, and cultural force in the late Mamluk and early Ottoman period. Among his interesting observations is the notion that the "candidates" to the distinction of *mujaddid al-dīn*, "the renewer of religion" which, according to a well-known *ḥadīth*, should appear at the turn of every century, were now Shādhilī Sufis (pp. 489-491).

As the book's title indicates, the study is stronger as an intellectual and religious history than a social history. It is successful in demonstrating the richness of Egyptian and Syrian Sufism and masterfully examines it against the heritage of Islamic culture. Yet some questions concerning the decline of Sufism *after* the



period covered by the study should be raised and addressed. Why did the great figures studied here, such as Zakarīyah al-Anṣārī, al-Suyūṭī, al-Shaʿrānī, ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and his disciples Muḥammad ibn ʿArrāq and ʿAlwān al-Ḥamawī, not have worthy successors and followers? And, on the other hand, what were the circumstances that encouraged the unprecedented proliferation of popular *mawliids* in sixteenth-century Egypt, as attested by Evliyā Çelebi, al-Jabartī, and ʿAlī Bāshā Mubārak?

The writer's mastery of Arabic is impeccable and his numerous quotations well chosen. (Yet, *al-ḥūr al-ʿayn* should be corrected to the Quranic *al-ḥūr al-ʿīn*, p. 325.)

A few critical comments:

The writer says (p. 75) that the Syrian and Egyptian population regarded the Ottoman occupation as a liberation. This statement has some truth with regard to Syria, but not as far as Egypt is concerned, as is abundantly clear from every page of the fifth volume of Ibn Iyās's chronicle. It is shown even from scattered remarks in al-Shaʿrānī's writings.

Tarīq al-qawm (the Way of the People) is a term sometimes used for Sufis. The author mentions *ṭāʾifat al-qawm* instead (p. 270), a term which at least this reviewer finds unusual; references would have been welcome here.

Geoffroy writes (p. 77) that for the leading Sufis and men of religion generally, Mamluks and Ottomans were equally strangers, "Turks." Yet in the Arabic sources, the term "Turks" (*atrāk*) was reserved for the Mamluks (despite the fact that at this time they were predominantly Circassians), while the Ottomans were called Turkomans (*tarākimah*), Rumis (*arwām*), or Ottomans (*ʿathāminah*). The Mamluks were thoroughly familiar and seemed "strangers" much less than the Ottomans.

On the same page, the writer cites without any reservations a notice by Ibn Ayyūb, a Damascene historian, that after his conquest of Damascus, Sultan Selim visited the Shādhilī Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿArrāq, the disciple of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn al-Fāsī, and asked his authorization to conquer Egypt as well. Even if this had really taken place (which is unlikely, owing to the Sufis' tendency to brag about their influence with members of the ruling class), it seems hardly more than a gesture of respect on the part of the sultan. One can be too carried away in admiring one's research subjects.

The Bakrī family head did not assume the *mashyakh al-mashāyikh* (*al-ṣūfiyah*) before Mehmet Ali's reign (p. 79); the source Geoffroy is using, Muḥammad al-Bakrī's family history, is inaccurate.

Discussing the relevance of the *madhāhib* (legal schools) to Sufism, Geoffroy concludes that in the debates regarding Sufism, the *madhhab* was not pertinent (p. 500). True, but still the impression, from al-Shaʿrānī's works at least, is that it was the Mālikī *faqīh* who personalized for the Sufis the critical and hostile opponent.



Finally, while the present reviewer is described (correctly) by the writer as “le chercheur israélien” (p. 49), Bilād al-Shām is defined in the following manner: “Cette region comprend *grosso modo* Syrie, Liban, Jordanie et Palestine actuel” (p. 52, note 3). A writer whose favorite expressions throughout the text are *nuance* and *subtil* should be more careful in his geography of the Middle East: In 1995, the year of the book’s publication, the historical Bilād al-Shām comprised a state called Israel, while no state named Palestine was on the map.

These few comments notwithstanding, Éric Geoffroy’s study will be a basic, required reading for anybody interested in the history of Sufism or in the history of the central Arab lands in the transition period from Mamluk to Ottoman rule.

Le Waqf dans l’espace islamique: Outil de pouvoir socio-politique. Edited by Randi Deguilhem (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1995). Pp. 337.

REVIEWED BY LEONOR FERNANDES, New York University

One can only applaud an ambitious work that brings together a large and diverse number of articles under the title *Le Waqf dans l’espace islamique: Outil de pouvoir socio-politique*. Before reviewing the book one has to pause and wonder about the choice of the title for such a work: Does “espace islamique” have any particular meaning for the editor herself? What are the criteria used to define an “Islamic space”? And what is the place of the *waqf* in this so-called space?

Setting aside the odd title of the book, we can appreciate the efforts of this group of distinguished authors whose research has contributed to our understanding of this otherwise poorly studied institution. They have indeed proved, as the author has mentioned (p. 15), that if one knows how to question the texts of the *waqfs*, they can yield interesting information which can improve our understanding of the histories of Arab and Islamic societies.

In her introduction, Randi Deguilhem indicates (p. 21) that the subject of the book itself, the study of the *waqf* from the beginning of Islam to the present time, has dictated a thematic approach to its organization. Hence, she divides the book into three sections: methodology, case studies, and the *waqf* and the world of politics. An Arabic section is added to the preceding three and bears the title “Partie arabe” without any reference to its relation to the other sections. One wonders if the fact that the contributions to this section were written in a non-Western language made them difficult to integrate within the themes of the book.

The methodology adopted by the book follows two different lines of research, one defined as “ponctuel”, the other as “quantitatif.” Both lines of research yield



information which are said to be complementary. The "approche ponctuelle" deals with features concerned with the infrastructure of the society and throws light on such features as the *wāqifs* themselves, the type of properties they endowed, and their beneficiaries (p. 19). The "approche quantitative" uses an empirical method to sort out the data provided by a collection of documents, thus allowing for a statistical analysis of the information. This latter approach favors a computerized analysis of the data collected.

The book consists of sixteen articles that cover a wide range of topics spread mostly between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries. Among the articles one notes Abdelhamid Henia's "Pratique habous, mobilité sociale et conjuncture à Tunis à l'époque moderne (XVIIIe-XIXe siècle)." The author uses the data provided by *waqfs* to draw interesting conclusions about the nature of a group of *wāqifs*, the 'Ā'ilāt (elite) of Tunisia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He analyzes the data to show the mobility of the properties endowed. Furthermore, he links the internal dynamics regulating this mobility to the economic changes affecting the group of notables in question, as well as to the historical events influencing a change in conjuncture. Marco Salati follows the evolution of a Shi'ite family living in Aleppo in the seventeenth century, the Zuhrawī, tracing the role of *waqfs* in the consolidation of the socio-economic activities of the family. Randi Deguilhem studies the development of a *waqf* founded in Damascus by a woman, Ḥafīzah Khānum al-Mūrahli, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The control and administration of the *waqfs* and/or the socio-political factors affecting their development is the object of a number of articles. Richard van Leeuwen looks at the economic and political pressures exerted by two prominent families, the Khāzin and the Ish'ayā, on the administration of *waqfs* created by the Maronite Church in the Lebanon. He examines the *waqfs* founded in the eighteenth century for a monastery in Kisrawān, that of Sayyidat Bkirkī, and traces the role played by the Vatican and the Maronite Church at the local level in Lebanon. Gregory Kozłowski's study examines the degree of control exerted by the state on the administration of *waqfs*. He chooses to focus his research on particular cases from India, post-revolutionary Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, post-colonial regions of the Maghrib and Mashriq, and other regions of the former Soviet Union. Aḥmad Qāsīm deals with Tunisia during the second half of the nineteenth century, and tries to determine the role played by the state in the administration of *waqfs* and more specifically on the Jam'īyat al-Awqāf established under the French Protectorate and designed to provide the state with a tighter control over the resources of the *waqfs*. Byron Cannon examines the administration of *waqfs* in Algeria under colonial rule in the middle of the nineteenth century. He studies the degree of control the state had over the region of Biskra, on the edge of the Sahara, and the relationships that existed between the local chiefs and elites on the



one hand and the state on the other. Ḥamzah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Badr and Daniel Crecelius choose to look at a social institution, the *ḥammām*. Relying on the information provided by a *waqf* (Waqf al-Maṭrabāz), they study the place it occupied in the urban fabric of Mamluk Cairo. The authors provide us with a valuable translation of a document found in the archives of the Ministry of Waqfs listed under the name of a certain ‘Uthmān al-Maṭrabāz Jāwīshān (no. 337, dated 1181 *hijrī*, Maḥkamat al-Bāb al-‘Ālī). It is unfortunate that they do not provide us with any biographical information about al-Maṭrabāz himself. Moreover, they do not indicate how these two *ḥammāms*, which were originally part of the *waqf* of Sultan Qalāwūn, ended up in the hands of this new *wāqif*. Also, a better and fuller analysis of this important document would have certainly enhanced our understanding of the functioning of this poorly studied institution. An interesting article in Arabic, that of Muḥammad ‘Afīfī, sheds light on the role played by *waqfs* in the Red Sea trade and the religious and politico-economic changes affecting it. The author examines a number of Ottoman *waqfs*, focusing on the one founded by the wife of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1553, and the one created by Sultan Murad in 1588, known as Waqf al-Dashīshah. He concludes that by that period ships were bought to benefit a *waqf* and, in some cases, were specifically built with *waqf* revenues. Such ships were involved in the transportation of grain and staples from Cairo to the Hijaz. By 1723 the number of ships belonging to *waqfs* had reached six. In time, the ships were used for the transportation of diverse goods between Egypt and the Hijaz and came to play an important role in the Red Sea trade as a whole.

Two of the contributions in the book deal specifically with Mamluk Egypt: Denoix offers an interesting approach for the study of *waqfs* focusing on a corpus of Mamluk *waqfs*, while Jean-Claude Garcin and Mustafa Anouar Taher concentrate on a case study. A third contribution by Doris Behrens-Abouseif concentrates on the analysis of some *waqfs* from the early Ottoman period.

Sylvie Denoix’s ambitious and challenging contribution which forms part of a larger project of the Institut de recherches et d’études sur le monde arabe et musulman, entitled “Histoire de la vie matérielle et des sociétés urbaines,” draws our attention to the fact that there is still a lot to be done by scholars specializing in the study of *waqfs*. Her idea is to look at the large corpus of Mamluk *waqfiyahs*, since they represent a homogeneous collection of documents which, as she points out, have the same structure and provide the same type of information. Accordingly, she sees that the analysis of these documents yields data that sheds light on the *wāqifs*, their socio-political status, the type of properties they endow, the group of beneficiaries, and so on. She urges scholars to examine whole collections rather



than concentrate on individual documents, implying that the study of a collection as a whole can be more fruitful than the traditional approach that limits itself to the detailed analysis of individual cases.

Her main goal is to classify the data provided by Mamluk *waqfiyahs* in order to draw some general conclusions about the nature of the *wāqifs*, their socio-economic background, their professions, gender, and the type of investments. One has to recognize that her approach has a certain appeal and what she proposes to do with the data collected could be justified. However, a number of questions have to be answered and some comments have to be made here.

The title of her article, "Pour une exploitation d'ensemble d'un corpus: Les waqfs mamelouks du Caire," builds up our expectations as to the benefits of what is termed an "approche globale et serielle" (p. 30) to be used in the study of these documents. Yet, rather than study the *waqfiyahs* themselves, or even the catalogues in the archives of Cairo, the Dār al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmīyah, Denoix deems it sufficient to base her research on a published catalogue and focuses exclusively on Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn's *Catalogue des documents d'archives du Caire de 239/853 à 922/1516*. She hastily explains that it is fortunate that Amīn has researched the topic (p. 32) and that he already provides the necessary data on the *wāqifs'* names, their titles, professions, gender, the type of transactions, and other information. In order to show how her "étude serielle" would work, Denoix proposes to look at some entries in the catalogue. She selects a sample (pp. 32-33) consisting of fifteen entries (nos. 13 to 27) from the catalogue which spans over 327 pages and covers 888 entries (in addition to the publication of a number of documents covering pp. 334-508) and provides us with the results of her analysis of the data. Since the choice of the entries is nowhere explained, the reader has to assume that they were selected at random. Furthermore, since the sample covers only fifteen out of the 888 entries in the catalogue, the reader has to be prepared to accept her choice without questioning it and assume that her reading and analysis of the data collected from the rest of the catalogue will lead to a meaningful "study of Mamluk *waqfs*." However, before we accept her conclusions and the general statements she makes on *waqfs*, two crucial questions have to be answered first: How reliable is the data provided by the catalogue? How accurate is her reading of the data? A brief look at the entries she examined helps the reader make up his own mind on the matter. Indeed, even though she has chosen to limit her analysis to a very short list of *waqfs* (fifteen entries only), the author has managed to provide a sloppy and inaccurate reading of the entries. For instance in the very first entry of her sample, corresponding to no. 13 in the catalogue, she gives the date of 13 Shawwāl 687 for the *waqf* of Ṣandal ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Ṭawāshī, while Amīn writes 1 Rabi' al-Ākhir 669. Any such mistake could be regarded as trivial or attributed to a typographical error. But, trivial as it may appear, when examined in



the context of the other information collected from entries in the same collection, it may prove to be serious and misleading. Also, entry no. 17 is listed as the *waqf* of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Majd al-Dīn al-Tājir al-ma‘rūf bi-al-Sharābīshī and dated 687, while Amīn specifically mentions two *waqfs* under this number, one being the *waqf* mentioned by Denoix, the other being that of Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Khazrajī dated 802 and 803. Since the purpose of the study is to produce a systematic analysis of the collection as a whole and since conclusions will be based on statistical data put at the disposal of a great number of researchers who do not have access to the documents themselves, one should hope that greater caution will be applied in the retrieval and analysis of the data from the remaining entries which represent the bulk of the collection.

Equally, some reservations have to be voiced as to the validity of relying on a catalogue and not on the *waqfiyahs* themselves. Without undervaluing the study undertaken by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, relying on his catalogue represents a danger. Indeed, the goal of its author is to provide the researcher with easy yet not fully comprehensive access to the information contained in the documents he lists. Since a detailed analysis of the documents lies outside the scope of his catalogue he often does not bother to specify the nature of the listed *waqf*, i.e., whether the *waqf* is *khayrī* (for charitable purposes), *ahlī* (a family *waqf*) or a mixture of the two. Often, he does not mention that the document he lists includes more than one type of transaction. Hence, the rubric of an entry in his catalogue may indicate that the document is a *bay‘* or an *istibdāl*, while the reading of the corresponding document may reveal that it was followed by a *waqf*. Occasionally, discrepancies can be detected between what Amīn lists in his entries and what appears in the register of the Dār al-Wathā’iq al-Qawmīyah and/or the text of the *waqfiyahs* themselves. Finally, the accidental omission of some *waqfiyahs* from the list in the catalogue could weaken conclusions based on statistics. These are some of the problems faced when dealing with a catalogue. If one adds to these the fact that we cannot assume that we have in our possession all of the *waqfs* dating from the Mamluk period and that the great bulk of *waqfs* created by civilians have disappeared (we know of their existence from the sources), statistics regarding the involvement of that particular group of individuals in the creation of *waqfs* would be irrelevant unless complemented by data provided by chronicles and biographical dictionaries.

Some mistakes in the translation of professional occupations and of certain Mamluk titles could have been avoided by consulting al-Qalqashandī’s *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā*. For instance in no. 95, Khushqadam, “al-Adur al-Sharīfah” does not refer to the “biens chérifiens” but to the Royal Harem (or residences of the wives of the sultan). Likewise, no. 110, which mentions al-Jamālī Yūsuf as a Nāzir al-Khawāṣṣ al-Sharīfah, does not refer to a “nāzir des biens chérifiens” (p. 35) but a Nāzir of



the Privy Fund of the Sultan. Sitt Ḥadaq/Miskah was not the wife of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (p. 36); all contemporaneous chroniclers refer to her as being his Dada or Qahramānah put in control of his harem. Disregarding these petty mistakes, one can hail the initiative taken by Denoix and hope that her approach and methodology, when applied properly, will benefit and enrich our understanding of Mamluk society as a whole and that of the *waqf* institution in particular.

An interesting contribution focusing on a case study is presented by Jean-Claude Garcin and Mustafa Anouar Taher. Following the traditional approach, this study deals with the *waqfs* of a fifteenth century amir, Jawhar al-Lālā, a eunuch and tutor of Sultan Barsbāy's children. The authors undertake the painstaking effort of retracing, if I may say, the road to the creation of a large *waqf*. Focusing on the *waqfiyah* of Jawhar al-Lālā and the data retrieved from chronicles and biographical dictionaries, they succeed in showing how the eunuch had planned the foundation of his *madrasah*, built between 1429 and 1430, and how he worked over the years to accumulate properties which would form part of the large *waqf* created to maintain it. Through their analysis of the amir's urban acquisitions and the historical developments affecting Jawhar's career in general, they allow us to determine how a member of the military elite occupying a privileged position in the court would use his power and influence to acquire the commercial and residential properties necessary to sustain his charitable foundation and at the same time accommodate his own life-style. Explaining the logic behind the choice of the properties acquired between 1429 and 1437, they track all of his *waqfs* and analyze the data they provide to come up with the conclusion that the acquisition of properties by Jawhar focused primarily on two urban localities, Khuṭṭ al-Maṣna' and Khuṭṭ al-Khiyamīyīn, where the *wāqif* bought a large number of residential and commercial properties. The former locality seems to have been the most important of the two since it was part of a residential quarter located near the Citadel and inhabited by Mamluks, and because it was in this particular Khuṭṭ that Jawhar chose to live. The commercial nature of the second Khuṭṭ, that of the Khiyamīyīn, located near al-Azhar, attracted the founder's interest because of its lucrative advantages. Relying on the information in the *waqfiyah* in a *tour de force*, the authors managed to trace the plan of the *madrasah* and situate it in its immediate urban context. They also managed to show how Jawhar's acquisitions in the vicinity of his own residence had slowly come to surround his religious foundation, which became the center of his *waqfs*. Once the *madrasah* complex had formed the nucleus of his properties, he took up residence in quarters located within the foundation. In an interesting comment, the authors suggest that perhaps Jawhar had deliberately intended to build for himself a little estate in a quarter in which he himself had personal ties: the Khuṭṭ al-Maṣna', and that the revenues



from the properties he had acquired in the Khuṭṭ al-Khiyamīyīn were to be used for the maintenance and functioning of his *madrasah*.

The study is followed by the edition of the Arabic text of two documents representing, respectively, the *waqf* of a *qā'ah*, dated 1435, and that of a complex comprising rental properties, shops, and warehouses, dated 1436. Such well-researched and thorough analysis of a *waqf* in its urban and historical context is most welcome and one hopes it will open the door for more researchers to follow in their footsteps.

The last contribution, by Doris Behrens-Abouseif, deals with Egypt in the early Ottoman period and is entitled "The Waqfs of a Cairene Notable in Early Ottoman Cairo, Muḥibb al-Dīn Abū al-Ṭayyib, Son of a Physician." The study of his *waqfiyah*, dated 1528, eleven years after the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans, is of great importance since, as the author notes, very few *waqfs* were created by local notables at the time. While Garcin and Taher have focused on the *waqfs* of a member of the military elite, Behrens-Abouseif chose to study the *waqfs* of a Cairene notable in order to show the extent of his investments in the city. She focuses on one *waqfiyah*, that of Abū al-Ṭayyib Muḥammad (Wizārat al-Awqāf, Daftarkhānah no. 1142, dated 1528). (There exists another *waqfiyah* in the Dār al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmīyah, no. 45, dated also 934/1528, in the name of Abū al-Ṭayyib Muḥammad; one wonders if it is a copy of the same *waqfiyah* or whether it contains some additional information about the *waqfs*.) Looking at the *waqfs* forming part of the *waqfiyah* as well as at a number of historical sources, Behrens-Abouseif manages to trace the biography of this notable who was the son of a physician. She clearly shows how the information contained in Abū al-Ṭayyib's *waqfs* can shed light on the life-style of this sixteenth century notable living in Cairo. Worthy of mention is her painstaking effort to enumerate the 169 books endowed by the *wāqif* to be part of the library in his religious foundation. As she mentions, the study of the subjects of the books selected to form part of this library helps to sharpen the picture we have of the educational background of the fifteenth to sixteenth century '*ulama*', and falls in line with the information provided by al-Sakhāwī in his biographical dictionary.

Studies on the *waqf* institution as a whole are wanting; therefore, the publication of a book like the one edited by Randi Deguilhem is most welcome and deserves great credit. The collaboration of so many distinguished scholars writing in three different languages is most enriching. Thanks to the new approaches they have adopted in their study of *waqfs*, they have succeeded in opening new avenues for the investigation of this institution and have challenged us to do more research in the field. Reading this book increases our awareness of the importance of this new genre, which is crucial not only for the study of architecture, the development of cities, and their urban fabric, but also for understanding the interdependence of



waqfs and political control and the relationships that existed between political power and the religious establishment on one hand and the religious establishment and the civilian notables on the other. Regardless of the approach adopted for their studies, contributors have proved that, when examined within the proper socio-economic context affecting the fortunes of the *wāqifs* (military or civilian), *waqfs* contribute greatly to our understanding of Arab and Muslim societies as a whole.

AL-QAḤṬĀNĪ, RĀSHID SA‘D RĀSHID, *Awqāf al-Sultān al-Ashraf Sha‘bān ‘alā al-Ḥaramayn* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Malik Fahd al-Waṭanīyah, 1994). Pp. 259.

REVIEWED BY DORIS BEHRENS-ABOUSEIF, University of Munich

Al-Ashraf Sha‘bān, together with al-Zāhir Baybars, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, and al-Ashraf Qāytbāy, was among the few Mamluk sultans who performed the pilgrimage. Sultan Sha‘bān’s deed of endowment for Mecca and Medina is the subject of this study.

After a short introduction about the origins of *waqf* in Islam and the history of *waqf* in Egypt, relying mainly on Muḥammad Amīn’s work, the author documents briefly Bahrī Mamluk policy concerning the Ḥaramayn, using published chronicles as well as some *waqf* documents. This first chapter includes, in addition, a biographical résumé of Sultan Sha‘bān with reference to his buildings and pious works in the Holy Cities as described in the chronicles (pp. 51-62). In the second chapter the alienated estates of the *waqf* are enumerated, which consisted of agricultural plots in Syria. Their locations are indicated on several maps (pp. 65-85).

The third chapter (pp. 89-137) describes the endowment itself with a list of the expenditures both in Mecca and in Medina. These do not include the construction of new buildings or institutions but rather the enhancement of existing institutions by means of the restoration of buildings, the supplementing of salaries, and the creation of additional staff positions, such as teachers of Quran, *ḥadīth*, the four rites of Islamic law as well as teachers for a primary school for orphans. The *waqf* provides additional stipends for the Shāfi‘ī, Ḥanafī, and Mālikī shaykhs, thus neglecting the Ḥanbalī shaykh. In Medina, the endowment emphasizes philanthropic services, such as the distribution of food and the upkeep of a hospital with one physician, although no hospital building is mentioned. Besides the religious and



scholarly institutions, the endowment provides for a wide range of social services such as burial of the dead, maintenance of the water supply, cleaning and infrastructural works, building restoration, and distribution of alms and food. A significant charity for the population of the Holy Cities was tax exemption.

The full text of the *waqfiyah* is published at the end, following the short conclusion (pp. 167-259). There are a number of noteworthy points in this document, such as the equal salaries for male and female cleaning staff and the salaries of the teachers and students of the four rites of Islamic law. Teachers were given equal salaries for teaching a class of ten students each; the instructor of a class of five, however, received a smaller salary. The discrimination against the Ḥanbalī shaykh has been mentioned. Similarly, the Ḥanbalī students had smaller stipends than the students of the other rites. Moreover, it is interesting that Shi‘i Muslims (Zaydīs and Rāfiḍīs) were excluded from all charitable services provided in the endowment. The author does not try to investigate these points.

The interest of this book, which is a junior scholar’s work, lies in the topic of the *waqfiyah* itself, rather than in the analysis of the subject, which could have been more developed. More information on the Mamluks’ policy towards the Ḥaramayn could have been extracted from the chronicles. Al-Qaḥṭānī could have consulted Quṭb al-Dīn’s (d. 988) or al-Fāsī’s (d. 832) histories of the Holy Cities. He does not refer to the *imārat al-ḥājj*, nor to the competition between Mamluks and other Muslim rulers for the privilege of protecting the Holy Cities, which would have been part of this subject. Every publication of a *waqfiyah*, however, is beneficial to scholarship, and this is a very interesting document.

ḤAYĀT NĀṢIR AL-ḤAJĪ, *Anmāt min al-Ḥayāh al-Siyāsīyah wa-al-Iqtisādīyah wa-al-Ijtimā‘īyah fī Salṭanat al-Mamālīk fī al-Qarnayn al-Thāmin wa-al-Tāsi’ al-Hijrīyayn/al-Rābi’ ‘Ashar wa-al-Khāmis ‘Ashar al-Milādīyayn* (Kuwait: Jāmi‘at al-Kuwayt, 1995). Pp. 260.

REVIEWED BY LI GUO, The University of Chicago.

The book under review, as the title suggests, deals with some “aspects” of the political, economic, and social history of the Mamluk Sultanate during the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries. Instead of a monograph with a coherent theme, this volume is a collection of three previously published articles, each of which takes on a particular issue not necessarily related, either chronologically or thematically, to the others. It thus defies explanation why they



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should be brought together and reprinted here without any revision. It should also be pointed out that the author never mentions this fact in her preface to the book, leaving the impression that these are new studies. Oddly enough, not only are the topics of these essays largely independent of each other, but so are the bibliographies. Thus we have in this small volume three separate bibliographies, many of the titles having been repeated three times. Sometimes non-Arabic works are cited (essays 1 and 2), sometimes not (essay 3); sometimes the titles are underlined, sometimes not. There is no index.

The first study, entitled "The Political and Economic Situation during the Reign of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (815-824/1412-1421)" (previously published in *al-Majallah al-'Arabīyah lil-'Ulūm al-Insānīyah* 9, no. 36 [1989]: 8-55), begins with a discussion of three major issues of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's political legacy: his seizing power (pp. 19-22), his rivalry with the Abbasid caliph al-Musta'in billāh (pp. 22-28), and his Syria policy (pp. 28-56). The author then moves on to al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's economic reform (pp. 56-96). The reason why al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh is singled out, the author claims, is because his reign "saw a series of political changes and economic initiatives that were unprecedented and unique" (p. 10). We never learn, however, what exactly these "changes" and "initiatives" were, much less their impact on Mamluk society at large. The author, for instance, disputes al-'Aynī's statement that the transfer of power from al-Musta'in billāh, the first Abbasid caliph to be appointed sultan, to al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh was peaceful and smooth by arguing that "most of such transfers in the Mamluk period were known for violence, bloodshed, and brutality" (pp. 20-21). Nevertheless, she fails to provide any sources or facts to support this generalization. One is left wondering whether the transfer of power, in this particular case, was bloody or not. The author's discussion of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's economic reform also suffers from this kind of superficial generalization. Except for a brief discussion, based merely on speculation, of the factors that are thought to have caused high prices during al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's reign and a laundry list of the functions and duties of the market inspector (*muhtasib*), it is unclear what exactly al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's "economic initiatives" were, or indeed, whether there were such things to begin with. The most interesting part of this chapter may be the discussion of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's monetary reform as well as the problem of counterfeit *dirhams* (*al-darāhim al-maghshūshah*) that had a long lasting effect on the decline of the late Mamluk economy (pp. 76-96). But, unfortunately, the author has limited the scope of her inquiry to a single literary source, i.e., al-Maqrīzī's *al-Sulūk*, while totally ignoring the rich body of contemporary sources on the subject, especially those treatises on monetary issues, e.g., al-Maqrīzī's *al-Ighāthah* (she clearly is not aware of Allouche's 1994 study of the work), as well as many new studies on Islamic



numismatics. As a result, the author's discussion contributes very little to our understanding of Mamluk economic life.

The second study, entitled "Amīr Qawṣūn: A Living Example of the System of Governing in the Mamluk Sultanate" (appeared earlier in *al-Majallah al-'Arabīyah lil-'Ulūm al-Insānīyah* 8, no. 32 [1988]: 6-55), is a case study of the dynamics of Mamluk internal politics (pp. 109-187). The author has utilized a great number of primary sources, many of which are unpublished manuscripts, in an attempt to reconstruct Amir Qawṣūn's (d. 743/1341) life. One is not sure why this particular amir is selected here, for as far as can be gathered from his biographical sketch, his "unique" career path, which the author tries to prove, appears to be anything but. Is this amir's career typical? If this is the case, how is it so? Or does this amir's life story offer a rare and special case in which some intriguing irregularities and nuanced peculiarities in Mamluk internal politics can be traced? If this is the case, how? There are no answers to these questions.

The third study is a social history of the markets in Mamluk Cairo and was previously published in *Buḥūth wa-Dirāsāt fī al-Tārīkh al-'Arabī* (Damascus, 1992). It begins with a general historical survey of the growth and development of markets in Cairo (pp. 200-205). This is followed by a description of the system of specific market places, such as the horse market, the fruit market, and others (pp. 205-214). The following two sections deal, respectively, with different types of markets and the professional guilds associated with them (pp. 214-217), and various alternate types of markets, such as the *wikālah*, the *khānah*, and the *qaysārīyah* (pp. 217-226). The function and duties of the market inspector (*muḥtasib*) are discussed, again, at length (pp. 226-238). The study concludes with a discussion of the decline of market places in Cairo which the author attributes to "some"—again, without any details—practices of price fixing established by the sultan for the purpose of control and stability (pp. 246-256). Two photographs of the *wikālah* of Qāyṭbāy at the Azhar Mosque in Cairo are presented (pp. 223-224) and their quality is rather poor. Like the previous two essays, this ambitious one is no more than a summary of the author's reading of some well-known Mamluk sources, such as al-Maqrīzī's *al-Khiṭaṭ* and *al-Sulūk*, Ibn Baṭṭūṭah's *al-Riḥlah*, Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Nujūm*, Ibn Iyās's *al-Badā'i'*, etc., and a few modern studies (e.g., those of Ziyādah, 'Āshūr, Ayalon) published in the '60s and '70s. The division of some of the sections is rather arbitrary and confusing; the section on the *wikālah* and other markets, for instance, ought to be a subsection under the rubric "the different types of market"; and the section on "the social and cultural significance of the office of the *muḥtasib*" ought to be a subsection under the section on the *muḥtasib*.

Throughout the book, the author has demonstrated a very rigid style of writing. The essays usually open with a "big" statement, quotes from various sources, often



selected at random, then the posing of some questions, usually three in number, with some answers. This mechanical way of presenting material and discussion reaches its peak in the second essay which is entirely based on this "question, answer, 1, 2, 3 . . ." mode. In addition to typos in both Arabic and English, the book is laced with incomprehensible jargon (e.g., [*al-*]nufūd*h al-adabī*, [*al-*]markaz *al-adabī*, [pp. 114, 115]), combined with an assertive and self-serving tone in argument ("This volume contains a detailed and meticulous survey of the subject and offers fruitful results . . ." [p. 14]; "We who study the primary sources are absolutely sure that . . ." [p. 20]) and irritating punctuation marks ("!?!", "??!", "!!!"). It is not an easy read.

Overall, the book is a disappointment for those looking for new information and insightful analysis of the political, social, and economic history of the Mamluk era. One is bound to come away empty-handed. The book not only suffers from serious flaws in methodology, but it is also marred by its rigid style, confusing writing, and numerous typos. I would not recommend it to anyone. For the graduate student who ventures into the secondary literature written in Arabic, this book is not worth the time and effort. And for the researcher, he or she may well be better off simply checking the primary sources and secondary literature instead of the unreliable, incomplete, and confusing synthesis this book offers.

SHERMAN A. JACKSON, *Islamic Law and the State: The Constitutional Jurisprudence of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996). Pp. 249.

REVIEWED BY JONATHAN P. BERKEY, Davidson College

In his now-classic study *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (1967), Ira Lapidus observed that we know remarkably little about the inner functioning of the schools of law (*madhāhib*, sing. *madhhab*) in Cairo and other medieval Islamic cities. Three decades later, we at last have a book-length monograph in which the *madhhab* and its legal and political role provide the center of attention. Sherman Jackson's study of the seventh/thirteenth-century Mālikī jurist Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī represents a fascinating and useful contribution to several fields of investigation concerning the legal and political configuration of medieval Islamic societies. Mamluk-period specialists may be surprised by Jackson's choice of a Mālikī jurist as the focus of his attention, accustomed as we are to thinking of the Shāfi'ī and Ḥanafī schools as the principal jurisprudential parties of post-Fatimid Egypt; but Jackson reminds us that, at least until Saladin's favoring of the Shāfi'ī



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school, Mālikism was dominant among Egyptian Sunni Muslims, and so al-Qarāfī's viewpoint proves exceptionally valuable to a study of the *madhāhib* during the period of Sunni consolidation under the Ayyubids and early Mamluks.

The book addresses several important but conceptually difficult themes. The first concerns what Jackson labels "constitutionalism," which he identifies in his introduction as "the value of and mechanisms for promoting and sustaining the rule of law" in the face of the raw power of the state (p. xxi). (Incidentally, readers should not be tempted by its separate pagination to skip the author's introduction, for it represents one of the most intellectually satisfying portions of the book.) The starting point of al-Qarāfī's (and Jackson's) discussion of this issue was the exclusivist policy of the Shāfi'ī chief *qāḍī* Ibn Bint al-A'azz, who refused to implement judgements made by his deputies which contradicted his own interpretation of Shāfi'ī law. To understand al-Qarāfī's frustration, one must recall that Ibn Bint al-A'azz served as *qāḍī al-quḍāh* before Sultan Baybars's appointment of four chief justices, one for each of the four Sunni *madhāhib*: the rulings he ignored, in other words, may have been perfectly acceptable according to the Mālikī or Ḥanafī schools of his deputies. Hence the "constitutional" issue: al-Qarāfī groped for arguments to compel the chief *qāḍī* to implement rulings made according to non-Shāfi'ī law, in effect, to level the playing field and remove the arbitrary advantage held by the Shāfi'ī school as a result of its status as the *madhhab* favored by the state. In making this argument, Jackson draws on the insights of the Critical Legal Studies (CLS) school of late twentieth-century American jurisprudence, in one of several instances in which he tries to connect his own very specialized research with discussions in other, quite disparate fields. The connection is obvious: CLS has stressed the incoherence of legal patterns outside the context of the power wielded by the state and by dominant social elements, precisely the situation confronted by a Mālikī jurist such as al-Qarāfī. In al-Qarāfī's opinion, the principle of the mutual acceptance of the four *madhāhib* required that, once a legal viewpoint had been adopted as a legal ruling (*ḥukm*) by a jurist acting as a *qāḍī* and not simply as a *muftī*, accepting it was binding upon all (including the *qāḍī al-quḍāh*), provided that the ruling fell within the consensus of the *madhhab* of the judge who issued it.

A second issue takes the discussion considerably beyond the constitution of the early Mamluk state. Jackson throws himself fearlessly and confidently into the on-going debate about the persistence or demise of *ijtihād* (independent legal reasoning) in the Islamic Middle Period. He provides a useful survey of the debate, from Joseph Schacht's formulation of the standard position (that, at some point in the early Middle Period, the "doors of *ijtihād*" effectively closed) to Wael Hallaq's vigorous contention that *ijtihād* remained central to Islamic jurisprudence throughout the medieval period. On the surface, Jackson adopts a position closer



to that of Schacht than Hallaq: despite the arguments of some jurists who always insisted the "doors of *ijtihād*" remained open, the historical record clearly indicates the existence and dominance of a "regime of *taqlīd*" in the later Middle Period. He would prefer that we not view *ijtihād* and *taqlīd* as "mutually exclusive linear moments in Muslim history but rather [as] competing hegemonies that stood (and continue to stand) in perpetual competition with each other" (p. 77). But he notes a profound shift in the practical experience of Islamic law, one reflected most clearly in a transformation of the character of treatises describing the role of a *qāḍī* (*adab al-qāḍī*): whereas earlier works in this genre were essentially on the "foundations of jurisprudence" (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), "designed to teach judges how to interpret scripture, deduce rules, and apply them to cases" (p. 78), those dating from the sixth/thirteenth century and later "assume the form of statute manuals designed to provide judges with the rule already deduced on the basis of one of the recognized schools" (p. 79).

In fact, however, Jackson's argument is more nuanced, and he would recast the terms of the debate itself. What Jackson refers to as the "post-formative" period of Islamic jurisprudence was a self-conscious one: it was aware that times had changed, that the character of its jurisprudential thought and practice was different than that of an earlier era. The most fundamental change was that of the nature of authority: no longer did it reside in an individual jurist, whether the founder of one of the four schools or any later *mujtahid* (one who exercises *ijtihād*); now it lay squarely with the *madhāhib* themselves. In al-Qarāfī's jurisprudence, the *madhāhib* really do move to center stage, for in a sense it is the received body of opinion within a *madhhab*, rather than the Quran or *sunnah* of the Prophet, which defines the parameters of the law. With al-Qarāfī, the

madhhab has come to constitute not merely a broad method of legal reasoning but a specific body of concrete legal rules. At the same time, *taqlīd*, as the institution relied upon by the *madhhab* to sustain and perpetuate itself, emerges as the dominant hegemony. This marks the second phase in the development of the *madhhab*, one that witnesses the ultimate ascendancy of the regime of *taqlīd* (p. xxx).

It is a mistake, however, to view the institution of *taqlīd* as a reflection of "decline" from some earlier, golden period of free and independent thinking; rather, it represents a *development* of Islamic jurisprudential thought, one which provided Islamic law with a critical element of all successful legal traditions: reasonable consistency, internal coherence, and freedom from arbitrary judgment. But neither did *taqlīd* preclude change and innovation in the application of the law. *Taqlīd* did



not necessarily constitute “blind imitation,” as Western scholars have sometimes translated the term. Rather, it was performed at a variety of different levels, the most advanced of which al-Qarāfī identified as *takhrīj*, which Jackson translates as “extrapolation” (i.e., of methods of legal reasoning from the rulings of the founder of the *madhhab*). And *takhrīj* provided scope for flexibility in the application of established legal principles, a flexibility which could even take into account changes in the customs and popular expectations which lay behind those actions and controversies which jurists were expected to judge. In effect, then, *takhrīj* is “the *ijtihād* of the *muqallid*-jurisconsult” (i.e., the jurist operating under the regime of *taqlīd*) (p. 94).

Clearly this is a rich vein of argument, one which speaks to a variety of both historical and contemporary debates, and Jackson is fully aware of the political and religious implications of his analysis. Those who have seen Islamic law under the regime of *taqlīd* as characterized by “crippling and ubiquitous stagnation” (p. xxxi) have missed the true nature of that regime. *Ijtihād* goes on all the time, in the modern world in the work of Mohammed Arkoun, Fazlur Rahman, Fatima Mernissi, and others. Its success, however, is limited by the failure to recognize the proper method of debate under the regime of *taqlīd*, a method outlined by Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī. Where the locus of authority is the *madhhab*, a successful argument will claim that authority for itself, rather than quixotically attempt to return to Islam’s “roots” and dispense with the accumulated discourse of the post-Prophetic centuries. A successful argument, in other words, will avail itself of what Jackson calls “legal scaffolding,” the process of modifying and mitigating existing rules by arguing *within* a legal tradition, which is the product of Islamic jurists in the post-formative period.

Like all good monographs, Jackson’s leaves a number of questions unanswered. Islamic modernists may not fully accept his advice on how to conduct a debate and make authoritative arguments from within the Islamic tradition. They may observe, for example, that Jackson himself seems to acknowledge that the regime of *taqlīd* and the “legal scaffolding” it implies, for all their hidden flexibility, tend inevitably to ossification and “increased rigidity and farther removal from the practical needs of society” (p. 99). As a historical matter, too, the impact of al-Qarāfī on medieval jurisprudence remains an open question. Is it not a matter of some consequence that Jackson found few references to al-Qarāfī in the biographical literature through which the medieval ‘*ulamā*’ perpetuated memory of themselves? How widely accepted were al-Qarāfī’s views? Jackson himself admits that some of them were “unique” to him (p. 186). In particular, how did the creation of four separate chief *qāḍī*-ships affect Mamluk-period jurists’ understanding of the *madhāhib* and their function? In the final analysis, this book’s most valuable contribution may be its implicit reminder that we err if we



conceive of Islamic jurisprudence simply as an impersonal abstraction. It was/is in fact the product of particular jurists with strong personalities and articulate and discernible viewpoints, more of which deserve to be studied with the care that Sherman Jackson has devoted to Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī.

*Le Manuscrit autographe d'al-Mawā'iz wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār de Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Maqrīzī (766-845 AH/1325 [sic]-1441 AD), edited by Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1416/1995). Pp. *106, 534.*

REVIEWED BY LI GUO, The University of Chicago

Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-Mawā'iz wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār*, widely known as al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*, is one of the most significant sources on the history, architecture, and topography of Islamic Cairo. The 1853 Būlāq edition, the first and the only complete edition of the text, is notorious for its serious defects and countless errors (several later printings published in Baghdad, Beirut, and Cairo are all based on the Būlāq edition without significant corrections). The French scholar Gaston Wiet's ambitious editing project, which began in 1911, ended abruptly in 1927 when the editor, having discovered more manuscripts along the way, came to the conclusion that the enormous number of extant codices, more than 170, were too many for a single person to handle. Since then, editions of parts of the work, as well as translations and studies, have continued. In addition, an ongoing project of compiling indexes of the monumental work under the auspices of the French Institute in Cairo was started in 1975 and has so far produced three volumes, and the need to complete Wiet's aborted project has been repeatedly reiterated.

With all this in mind, the current edition of al-Maqrīzī's masterpiece is timely and most welcome. This lavishly printed, handsomely produced, and superbly edited volume, the first in the series of Arabic manuscripts published under the sponsorship of the London-based al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, is an autograph and draft version (*musawwadah*) of the work. Its significance is manifold. First, being an autograph with the author's own marks and vowel signs, a solid and surer textual basis is thus established to correct errors of the Būlāq edition. Second, it offers a draft version that differs from the complete version (*mubayyadah*), thus paving the way for further investigation into the history of the development of the text. Third, the publication of this abridged version of the lengthy text



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provides the reader with a handy one-volume synopsis. And furthermore, no one is more qualified to undertake a project like this than Dr. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid, who wrote his Sorbonne dissertation on the history and topography of Fatimid Cairo and has published extensively in the field of studying and editing Arabic manuscripts.

The volume is divided into four parts: the introduction (pp. *1-*106; a French abstract is on pp. iii-v), the Arabic edition (pp. 1-435), a bibliography (pp. 436-453), and indexes (pp. 457-534).

The introduction comprises an excellent monograph in its own right on the history of the *khiṭaṭ* genre and al-Maqrīzī's work. After a preface that highlights the importance of the work (pp. *1-*6), it begins with a discussion of the purpose and scope of the work in question and a historical survey of *khiṭaṭ* writings in Islamic historiography (pp. *6-*35). This section is, in my opinion, the most illuminating segment of the introduction. It explores the historical evolution of the *khiṭaṭ* genre, with special reference to those produced in, and about, Cairo, and al-Maqrīzī's own contribution to its development, from the so-called "Pre-Maqrīzī *Khiṭaṭ* Writings" (pp.*7-*21), to "al-Maqrīzī's Cairo" (pp. *22-*24), to the "Post-Maqrīzī *Khiṭaṭ* Writings" (pp. *24-*35). The pre-Maqrīzī period included pioneers of the genre like al-Kindī (d. 961). The Fatimid historians Ibn Zūlāq (d. 996), al-Musabbihī (d. 1029), al-Qudā'ī (d. 1062), and al-Sharīf al-Jawwānī (d. 1092) played a central role in giving the genre its reputation and serving the needs of the Fatimid dynasty after the city of al-Fuṣṭāṭ became the center of the state and a "Métropole" in the real sense.

The Ayyubid era witnessed a decline of interest in urban development and thus *khiṭaṭ* writing suffered from a lack of attention. However, some descriptions of the church and monastery buildings and Coptic quarters by Christian authors (e.g., Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Armanī) and Muslim travelers from the Maghrib and Baghdad, such as Ibn Jubayr (d. 1217), 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (d. 1231), and Ibn Sa'īd al-Maghribī (d. 1287), who visited Cairo and al-Fuṣṭāṭ and left us their recollections, kept interest in the genre alive.

An ambitious expansion and re-planning of Cairo took place in the Mamluk period, especially during the reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn. And it is not surprising that his contemporary Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī's (d. 1349) *Masālik al-Absār*, a historical topography of Egypt, Syria, Hijaz, and Yemen, was a milestone in the evolution of the *khiṭaṭ* genre. It is noteworthy that while all the previous authors focused their attention on al-Fuṣṭāṭ, i.e., the old city of Cairo, the first *khiṭaṭ* work on al-Qāhirah, the new Cairo, was actually produced during the Mamluk period by Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir (d. 1293). The latter's *al-Rawḍah al-Zāhirah fī Khīṭaṭ al-Mu'izzīyah al-Qāhirah* is important in that it not only served as a model for al-Maqrīzī's future writings but was also the primary source utilized by



al-Maqrīzī in his *Khiṭaṭ*. Other Mamluk authors who were significant sources for al-Maqrīzī's writing are al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418), and two of al-Maqrīzī's contemporaries, Ibn Duqmāq and al-Awḥadī, who are discussed at length in the introduction. In the segment on "al-Maqrīzī's Cairo," the editor draws attention to the fact that despite being a native of Cairo, al-Maqrīzī himself did not see the glorious "good old days" of Cairo which he recorded in his *Khiṭaṭ* in utmost detail, but rather, he witnessed the decline of the city in the chaotic years after Timur's invasion of Syria and the deteriorating economic situation caused by internal and external turmoil. Therefore, he relied heavily on what he had heard or read about the city when he wrote most of the *Khiṭaṭ*, in the years between 818/1410 and 827/1422. The segment on "Post-Maqrīzī *Khiṭaṭ* Writing" begins with stellar names such as Ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 1470), al-Maqrīzī's own student, and al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505), who incorporated material from the *Khiṭaṭ* in their writings. However, only three works of the genre in its strict sense are known, and all of them are *mukhtaṣars*, or abridgements, of al-Maqrīzī's *al-Khiṭaṭ*, by Āqbughā al-Khāshikī, al-Bakrī (d. 1650), and an unknown author named Aḥmad al-Ḥanafī, a fact that further attests to the fame of al-Maqrīzī's work. The rest of the story is well known to those familiar with the scholarship on pre-modern Egypt. The editor offers a brief but balanced survey (pp. *27-*31) of works on the topography of Egypt since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, works by Western, especially French, scholars, such as the monumental *La description de l'Égypte*, and works by Egyptian scholars, such as al-Jabartī (d. 1822), 'Alī Mubārak, and Wafā'ī al-Ḥakīm, among others. The introduction also contains a discussion of the so-called *kutub al-ziyārāt* (descriptions of visitations to saints' tombs) as a body of literature that is closely linked to the *khiṭaṭ* topoi (pp. *31-*35).

Section 2 of the introduction deals with the life and works of al-Maqrīzī. The editor offers a "new biography" of al-Maqrīzī (pp. *35-*45) which supplies the reader with more details of al-Maqrīzī's life and career than can be found in previous studies. Among the interesting issues raised is al-Maqrīzī's alleged filiation to the Fatimids (pp. *44-*45), which has a certain bearing on his being keen on the description of Fatimid Cairo. The list of al-Maqrīzī's works (pp. *45-*64) is most useful insofar as the editor has provided the reader, drawing from his vast knowledge of and immense practical expertise in Arabic manuscripts, much new information on manuscripts, publication records, and the current state of research on al-Maqrīzī's works. One example will suffice here: the editor mentions a manuscript of al-Maqrīzī's *al-Muqaffā al-Kabīr* discovered by Jan Just Witkam in 1990 and the discussion he had with the latter, in 1993, about its verification and other issues (pp. *50-*51). This stock-taking is presented under two rubrics: (1) al-Maqrīzī's major historical writings; (2) al-Maqrīzī's minor works. Here the editor echoes al-Shayyāl's assessment that al-Maqrīzī's minor works have not



received the scholarly attention they deserve. Many of these works deal with particular issues, or topics, or theoretical details that are not usually dealt with in mainstream historical writings, and thus shed light on various rarely explored issues and interesting materials (pp. *57-*60). A short discussion is devoted to the so-called "pseudo-Maqrīzī" works (pp. *62-*64) as well.

The third section of the introduction deals with the work in question. The editor begins with a discussion of the format and structure of the *Khīṭaṭ*. His observations are that, just as in Ibn Khaldūn's case, there is a gap between al-Maqrīzī's *ideal* of historical writing, and his *actual* writing, inasmuch as the *Khīṭaṭ* is not balanced in its overall structure. Al-Maqrīzī, for instance, mentions that he intended to arrange his materials in seven chapters (*ajzā'*): (1) a general survey of the topography of Egypt; (2) cities and towns; (3) al-Fuṣṭāṭ; (4) al-Qāhirah; (5) newly constructed buildings in Cairo and suburbs; (6) the Cairo Citadel; (7) the causes of the destruction and deterioration (*khirāb*) of the historic sites in Egypt. However, as modern scholars, such as the Russian orientalist I. Kratchkovsky and others, have already noted, chapter 6, which is on the Cairo Citadel, is in fact incorporated into chapter 5 in the final version (*mubayyadah*) of the work as a natural continuation of the latter, which is devoted to the newly constructed buildings of Cairo. More tellingly, the work actually concludes with a chapter on the Jewish and Coptic architectural sites in Cairo. The promised final chapter, that is, "The Causes of the Destruction of Egypt," was in fact never delivered. In his discussion of the contents of *al-Khīṭaṭ*, the editor stresses that the most original and significant parts of the entire work are those in which al-Maqrīzī describes the taxation system (*al-kharāj*, *al-ḍarā'ib*) and the *iqṭā'* fiefs, as well as the parts on Fatimid Cairo and the foundation of al-Qāhirah (pp. *66-*67). It is rather a surprise, as the editor observes, that al-Maqrīzī's coverage of his own time, i.e., the Mamluk period, is not as original and sound as that on earlier periods. This is particularly true with regard to the present autograph manuscript, a draft version of the work, which is very short on the Mamluk era (p. *67). This problem is then discussed in a segment entitled "The Problems of Editing the *Kitāb al-Mawā'iz wa-al-I'tibār*" (pp. *67-*79). The main argument is that this has to do with the on-going nature of al-Maqrīzī's writing which perhaps never resulted in a final version of the work. More importantly, it has to do with the way al-Maqrīzī handled his sources, in that he usually quoted from other independent sources, many of them "pre-Maqrīzī" as well as contemporary *khīṭaṭ* works, verbatim and without acknowledging them, a practice for which al-Sakhāwī accused him of "literary theft" (*al-sariqah*). Among al-Maqrīzī's sources, the most frequently quoted ones are Ibn Duqmāq's (d. 1407) *al-Intiṣār li-Wāsiṭat 'Iqd al-Amṣār* and al-Awḥādī's (d. 1408) draft of an unfinished manuscript on the description of Cairo. Previous scholarship on the controversy (Quatremère, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh 'Adnān, Kratchkovsky,



Brocklemann, Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāh 'Āshūr, and Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid) over the relationship of al-Maqrīzī's *al-Khiṭaṭ* to these two sources is presented with insightful analysis (pp. *68-*74). The editor seems to be of the opinion that al-Maqrīzī is not to blame given the nature of the manuscript as an autograph "work-in-progress" draft and the fact that half of the material in the *Khiṭaṭ* in fact deals with the sites built after al-Awḥadī's death. A lengthy, perhaps slightly repetitive, source criticism follows. It is basically a summary of the previous scholarship on the subject (Langlès, Sylvestre de Sacy, Quatremère, Wüstenfeld, Ravaisse, Casanova, van Berchem, Salmon, Guest, Creswell, Garcin, Raymond, Aḥmad Fakrī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Zakī, Yūsuf Rāḡib, among others), with a list of the titles that were evidently utilized by al-Maqrīzī in the preparation of his *Khiṭaṭ*, especially the sources used in the current edited *musawwadah* version (pp. *79-*89). Other issues presented in this section include the publication history of al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*, including partial translations and index volumes, as well as studies of the work (pp. *89-*99).

The introduction concludes with a description of the manuscript (pp. *99-*101) and the editing method. Thirty-two plates of sample folios of the manuscript are presented. It is a little disappointing that the plates are not of high quality since they are produced from microfilms rather than directly from the original manuscript now housed in the Topkapı Palace Library, Istanbul.

The edition is admirable. It is based on the sole Istanbul manuscript, collated with the Būlāq edition and other parallel sources, such as Ibn Taghrībirdī's *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah* and Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's *al-Rawḍah*. The integrity of the text is taken into consideration so that we find that the entire text of the author's introduction (pp. 1-11), which is *not* in the draft manuscript, is supplied from the Būlāq and Wiet editions. The first chapter, which is misplaced at the end of the Istanbul manuscript (fol. 179), is returned to its appropriate place (pp. 15-18). There are two kinds of apparatus underneath the main text: the upper level apparatus deals with textual matters (verification of text, variant readings, etc.), and the lower level is devoted to historical, biographical, and bibliographical annotations. The indexes are organized under fifteen categories: proper names, historic sites, architectural terms, titles and ranks of the *dīwān* system, places, rare words and technical terms, tools and equipment, textiles, food and drink, Quranic verses, *ḥadīths*, poetic verses, tribes and peoples, writers and poets, and written sources mentioned in the work.

Since the project is such a gigantic enterprise, some shortcomings may be unavoidable. As far as the physical aspects of the edition are concerned, there certainly is some room for improvement. In the following I have proffered some remarks on editorial and typographical details.



1) A major reservation may be raised concerning the way the footnotes are arranged. By and large, these notes are meticulously executed; however, frequent inconsistencies have made them less useful and occasionally confusing. For instance, the original manuscript, as we are told, is referred to as *khazīnah* (which stands for the Hazine collection at the Topkapı Library), but very often it is mentioned as *al-aṣl*, and occasionally as *al-musawwadah* instead. The Būlāq edition is abbreviated as "Būlāq," but not infrequently we have "al-Khiṭaṭ" instead (the different references to the same source even occur on the same page, e.g., pp. 201, 212). More serious problems emerge when the variant readings from the Būlāq edition and other independent sources are repeatedly provided for cross-checking, which tends to work better on single words rather than on phrases and clauses. In the latter cases, the device of marking the beginning and end of a phrase or clause with superscript letters is *sometimes* applied but unfortunately not always. As a result in most cases, we are not told where the variant reading begins and where it ends (e.g., p. 4, notes (b), (c), (e), (f), illustrate this problem). Other inconsistencies are seen in the emendations made in the text. Textual additions, quoted between brackets, are sometimes given their sources, e.g., "added after such-and-such" (*ziyādah min . . .*); but quite often, they are simply indicated as "missing from (*sāqīṭah min*) the original"; so we do not know whether the addition is the editor's conjecture, or from another source. On many occasions, the information of the parallel sources is not adequately given; e.g., p. 295, the sources for the volume and page numbers in notes (a), (d), (g) are not identified. Textual emendations are usually given explanations and sources, but occasionally we are left wondering why they should read so; e.g., p. 56, the change of the original *al-gharbī* to *al-sharqī*; p. 119, *al-safīnah* to *al-saqīfah*; p. 158, an entire clause in the manuscript is omitted after the (a) sign; pp. 221, 222, we are given neither reasons nor sources for the emendations between the signs (a - a). Likewise, some lacunas in the text need more explanation; e.g., p. 31, line 4. While the editor provides the reader with an enormous amount of information in the footnotes, certain difficult words are not treated satisfactorily; e.g., p. 240, the words *al-aqwāt* and *al-muḥāqā'ah* are merely commented on by "[sic]"; one might wonder if there are parallel readings from the Būlāq edition or other sources. Sometimes upper apparatus textual notes should be lower apparatus explanatory notes, and vice versa; e.g., p. 194, (b); p. 227, (d); p. 301, (2); p. 326, (4); p. 336, (a); p. 344, (1); p. 351, (1); p. 360, (2); p. 379, (3); p. 396, (a). Occasionally a question mark replaces the regular apparatus signs (e.g., p. 323, line 3).

2) Another reservation I have is about the typesetting. Various fonts and inconsistent indentation appear throughout the text. The inconsistency of typesetting frustrates the reader's effort to figure out the complex structure of the work and the exact division of chapters and sections of the text. In this regard, I find the



table of contents does a better job than the main text whose rubrics and headlines are always confusing due to inconsistent sizes and styles (plain, bold, calligraphic, etc.) of the Arabic fonts. For instance, on p. 64, the section heading (“*Khiṭāṭ al-Qāhirah . . .*”) and the sub-section heading (“*Dhikr Quṣūr . . .*”), according to the division given in the table of contents, ought to be set in each other’s fonts. The indentation of these headings is just as chaotic. Oddly enough, the wording of many items in the table of contents is not the same as they appear in the main text. A more serious problem is that many of the headings are marked with brackets, indicating conjectural additions, but without any explanation. Should we assume that they are taken from the Būlāq edition? Or perhaps from other sources? Or supplied by the editor?

Other general observations concerning the typesetting: (a) Footnotes are, in most cases, arranged in a double-column format, but quite often this format is not observed. (b) Inconsistent spacing is frequent. (c) The Arabic fonts used in the edition are nice, with one exception: in the plain text, the coarse, aloof *hamzah* is really ugly. (d) The *alif maqṣūrah* is often misspelled as *yā’* (with two dots underneath); examples are too numerous to be listed here. (e) The punctuation is generally good, but occasionally inconsistent: for instance, parentheses and brackets are used inconsistently (p. 127, line 4); blank spaces (e.g., pp. 308, 412) and ellipsis points (e.g., pp. 410, 433), both used to indicate the lacunas in the manuscript, are also used inconsistently. Sometimes the punctuation is odd; e.g., p. 112, line 12, the quotation mark splits the definite article *al* into two parts.

3) The vocalizations on the text are very helpful, but sometimes they tend to be excessive (e.g., the *alif maqṣūrah* and the *fathah* sign are constantly, and unnecessarily, used together), or inadequate (e.g., full vocalizations are given to some common words and obvious case endings, while some rare words and difficult passages that call for attention are not vocalized). On several occasions, the vocalizations are inconsistent (e.g., the same word is vocalized as *ṣinf* on p. *57, but *sanf* on the next page) or inaccurate (examples will be listed below). Following are some of the obvious errors that I caught:

- p. *20, line 10, تَعَدَّ , read تُعَدُّ
- p. *47, note 1, *Tā’ rīkh*, read *Ta’ rīkh*
- p. *54, line 12, بمناسبة, read بمناسبة
- p. *69, line 6, امْتَحَنَ, read امْتَحَنَ
- p. *79, line 17, دارسة, read دراسة
- p. *81, line 11, سَمَّيْتُ , read سَمَّيْتُ
- p. *82, line 11, وَجَدْتُ , read وَجَدْتُ
- p. 21, note (a - a), omit في
- p. 26, note (a), بالسوداء , is identical with the Būlāq edition, so what’s the



point?

- p. 33, line 1, حَدُّهَا , read حَدُّهَا
- p. 33, note (5), الْآن , read الْآن
- p. 35, line 3, يَطْلُق , read يَطْلُق
- p. 41, note (f) is incomprehensible
- p. 47, line 14, الأربعة , read الأربع
- p. 58, line 2, add (a) to the end of the headline
- p. 65, line 3, قصر الشوق , read قصر الشوق
- p. 91, line 12, كُنُوب , read, كُنُوب
- p. 94, line 12, مبنا , read مبني (?)
- p. 95, line 8, هذ , read هذه
- p. 98, line 14, يسئل , read يسأل
- p. 107, line 3, يدعوا , read يدعو
- p. 110, line 3, قل , read قل
- p. 111, line 8, امرأة , read امرأة
- p. 125, line 4, بحريه (?)
- p. 128, the footnote sign of (a) is missing in the main text
- p. 136, a line between line 3 and line 6 is missing
- p. 141, line 13; p. 349, line 4, the sign of (كذا) usually occurs in the apparatus, not the main text, in this edition
- p. 143, line 12, مئین , read مائتين or مائة
- p. 147, line 12, يبيعوا , read يبيعون
- p. 157, line 8, عمل , read عمل
- p. 161, line 14, ليومأو (?)
- p. 162, line 6, دار , omit the *kasrah* sign
- p. 233, line 4; p. 289, line 6, المظله , read المظلة
- p. 247, line 11, الرسل , read الرسل
- p. 272, line 10, الغره , read الغرة
- p. 275, the content of note (a) is missing
- p. 282, line 17, (c), ought to be (a)
- p. 298, line 14, انتشا (?)
- p. 305, line 1, هذ , read هذا (?)
- p. 317, line 7, ركب , read ركب
- p. 327, line 9, تسموا , read تسمو
- p. 336, line 13, يسوف , read يسوق



- p. 337, line 10, يسلك , read يسلك
- p. 338, note (b), إضافة , read إضافة
- p. 406, line 1, قرقه , read قرقة
- p. 425, the second (b) in the upper apparatus ought to be (c)
- p. 431, note (b) in the upper apparatus, كلمة , ought to be كلمات (the addition cited here is more than one word)

These, however, are minor defects. Dr. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid is to be commended for an excellent job in bringing to light al-Maqrīzī's rare autograph of a draft version (*musawwadah*) of his all-important *al-Khiṭaṭ* and for keeping alive the vision of eventually publishing the complete work. One can only hope that the dream will one day come true.

MUḤYĪ AL-DĪN IBN 'ABD AL-ZĀHIR, *al-Rawḍah al-Bahīyah al-Zāhirah fī Khīṭaṭ al-Mu'izzīyah al-Qāhirah*, edited by Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (Cairo: Maktabat al-Dār al-'Arabīyah lil-Kitāb, 1996). Pp. 185.

REVIEWED BY PAUL E. WALKER, Chicago, IL

Having completed and published an edition of the *musawwadah* of al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ* (reviewed above), Dr. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid, who has given us so many important editions of major texts or what remains of them, next turned to a work that was thought lost, but which resurfaced recently in a collection of manuscripts in the British Museum. It is another *Khiṭaṭ* from an earlier period and is, in fact, the earliest *Khiṭaṭ* of Cairo, since its predecessors—those by al-Kindī, al-Quḍā'ī, and al-Sharīf al-Jawwānī—concentrated almost exclusively on Fustāṭ and the Qarāfah. The new text was compiled by the Baḥrī official and historian Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir al-Miṣrī (d. 692/1293), who is well known both for his various roles in the government, particularly in the Dīwān al-Inshā', and for his authorship of biographies of the sultans he served: Baybars,¹ Qalāwūn,² and al-Ashraf Khalīl.³

Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir was fully cognizant of the ascendancy of Cairo in his age, due, in part, to the near total eclipse of Baghdad after 656, and he knew also that his subject had not yet been covered satisfactorily. Al-Maqrīzī, who used this

¹*Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*.

²*Tashrīf al-Ayyām wa-al-'Uṣūr fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*.

³*Al-Altāf al-Khaṭīyah min al-Sīrah al-Sharīfah al-Sulṭānīyah al-Ashrafīyah*.



Khiṭaṭ extensively in his own, also gave credit to its author for being the first to assemble the data on Cairo. Beginning about 647, Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir drew for his work on a number of sources that he cites by title in his introduction. Out of his initial efforts came a first draft—a *musawwadah*—and later he either rewrote it at least once or continued to add notes on the margins of the earlier version, possibly both. Ibn al-Dawādārī examined the former and noted that it was a *musawwadah* specifically from 647, and al-Maqrīzī and al-Qalqashandī used the latter. Al-Maqrīzī, in fact, consulted two different versions of it. Unfortunately, it is the first—the earlier draft—that appears to be what we now have, although it contains information that can only have been added after 647. To compound the difficulties of understanding the history of this work, and unlike the situation with al-Maqrīzī, the surviving manuscript is itself a late (and evidently quite poor) copy of Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir’s original first draft (with some additions). The copyist says explicitly that he copied all that he found in the hand of the author, including an appendix containing a copy of the *waqfiyah* of al-Ḥākim in favor of al-Azhar, the mosques of al-Ḥākim and of al-Maqs, and the Dār al-‘Ilm.

In order to achieve a usable edition, Sayyid had, therefore, not only to emend the text on the basis of common sense and his own extensive knowledge of the subject, but add words, phrases, and whole passages that appear in the works of later writers who quoted from one or the other versions of it but which, for various reasons, are missing from the one manuscript now available. He has marked these additions carefully as to provenance and has provided, as well, a valuable series of citations for sources that run parallel to or complement Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir. There are also eleven separate indexes and a clear, informative introduction. Despite a few inconsistencies of form and some typographical errors, it is on the whole a welcome contribution and a commendable piece of scholarship.

It is, however, of some interest to assess the value of this undertaking given how much of the text was known previously either in the form of direct quotations or in other transmissions of the information it contains. Quite apart from its critical role in the history and development of the *Khiṭaṭ* genre prior to the work of al-Maqrīzī—a matter of special concern to Sayyid—this version of Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir adds, it seems on first inspection, little. One curiosity, for example, is that it accords but a single line to al-Azhar and thus confirms by its silence the neglect of this mosque in the century preceding the time of the author. There may be other examples of a similar kind and importance but, as few are obvious, spotting and evaluating them must be done on a case by case basis.



JÖRG-DIETER BRANDES, *Die Mameluken: Aufstieg und Fall einer Sklavendespotie* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke-Verlag, 1996). Pp. 340.

REVIEWED BY STEPHAN CONERMANN, University of Kiel

What *can* "popular historiography" achieve?

Until now only very few scholars have succeeded in presenting their studies to a wide and varied audience in popular language. This is the reason why a "popular historian" can be a mediator between the scholarly researcher in the field of history at a university and the uninformed but interested outsider. For twenty-five years there has been an ongoing debate among theoreticians over the question of whether language is at all capable of "translating" historical events. Language as such does not necessarily lead to understanding, but refers only to the cognitive impotence of the person who uses it, or in the words of Hayden White: "All systems of knowledge begin in a metaphorical characterization of something presumed to be unknown in terms of something presumed to be known, or at least familiar."¹ However, the human consciousness turns "incidents in time" into "historical events." In the first place, the "popular historian"—like any other historian—observes the deeds, thoughts, and feelings of the actors concerned and formulates his own impressions in accordance with the reports on and the evidence of the acting persons. The common medium for fixing this mental process is the narrative text, although one should keep in mind that in principle the deeds committed, the narration of these deeds, and their interpretation differ only insignificantly from each other. In this way, the difference between fiction and historiography becomes questionable, and the role of "popular historiography" naturally becomes more important, as one of its presumptions is normally the use of fictional characters and a plot.

If this kind of historiography aims at "reviving the past" for an uninformed reader, the "popular historian" should neither disregard the complexity of different epochs nor should he fall back upon positivist modes. Positivist historiography was based on the concept of a passive historical thought from which the compliant historian is able to extract only the most obvious information: legal data from a legal text, information on production and distribution from an economic source, a narration of events from a chronicle. The hallmark of this kind of historical writing was the mere accumulation of such facts within a narrative of wars, kings and empires. To avoid this antiquated positivist method it might be useful to the "popular historian" to write his work against the backdrop of a theoretical approach (structuralism, micro-history, history of mentalities, psychohistory, etc.). In any

¹Hayden White, "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory," *History and Theory* 24 (1984): 12.



case, one of his main tasks should be to reconstruct images of the world which are representative of different epochs and cultural traditions. This requires the reconstruction of the subjective reality which formed the content of the consciousness of the people of a given epoch and culture. It is, however, wrong to try to understand a foreign epoch by forgetting one's own cultural background. A pre-condition of this understanding is that the "popular historian" should recognize that he belongs to a time and culture different from the people he seeks to describe. He should be guided by an understanding of the "otherness" of what he presents to the reader. This implies that he has in mind that there is a difference between the people, the culture and the mentality being studied, and the spiritual make-up of his own society.

Last but not least, the "popular historian" has the privilege of dropping footnotes and bibliographies. This, however, should not mean that he is allowed to refrain from making a diligent and systematic inquiry into his subject. On the contrary, it is necessary for him to consult the relevant literature and to go through the most important sources, at least in translation. In any case, he should seek the help of a scholarly advisor if he wants his book to be taken seriously.

The problem with Jörg-Dieter Brandes's book *Die Mamluken: Aufstieg und Fall einer Sklavendespotie* is that it does not fulfill any of the above-mentioned criteria. The very title is badly chosen and tells us a lot about the author's conception of the world. Who does not associate *Sklavendespotie* with Karl A. Wittfogel's controversial *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven, 1957) and thus with Karl Marx's idea of an *Asiatische Produktionsweise* within Oriental societies? But, without referring to these known theories, Brandes draws the outline of a more and more degenerating Mamluk caste (pp. 202-205) within a society, which for him represents dictatorship (p. 133).

His presentation does not and cannot assert a claim to originality and literary quality. He therefore abandoned the idea of introducing fictitious characters within a Mamluk setting. So, what we have is neither a historical novel like Umberto Eco's *Il nome della rosa* (Milan, 1980) or Frans Gunnar Bengtsson's *Röde Orm* (Stockholm, 1941-45), nor a literarily high-ranking historiography like Roy Mottahedeh's *The Mantle of the Prophet* (New York, 1985) or Theodor Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*, vols. 1-3, 5 (Leipzig, 1854-85), for which the Nobel prize for literature (!) was granted in 1902. Brandes pretends to have written a scholarly study, but this is not a maintainable claim if we take a closer look at the work.

The author has done nothing more than produce a narrative account of the political history of the Mamluks. Unfortunately, he did this with the help of only a very few books that partly consist of obsolete secondary titles and partly of unrepresentative translations from the original sources. It is unpardonable that he



made no effort to consult recent literature, although any scholar could have named him dozens of well-written articles and monographs.

If Brandes's book is not literature in the common sense of the word but a pseudoscholarly work, it is no wonder that a theoretical approach is missing as well. On the contrary, we have to deal with a quite antiquated kind of historiography that even stands behind the somewhat outdated works by Stanley Lane-Poole (*History of Egypt in the Middle Ages* [London, 1913]) and Gustav Weil (*Geschichte der Chalifen*, vols. 4 and 5 [Stuttgart, 1860-62]). Mere descriptive accounts of rulers, kings, and empires go hand in hand with lengthy reports of battles. Besides some historical distortions, many things are told erroneously and without questioning the trustworthiness of the translated sources. The author's positivist *Weltanschauung* becomes clear when he speaks of an alleged "higher cultural level of the Burdjī-Mamluks" (pp. 180ff.) or when he characterizes the life of the Mongols "throughout the centuries" as "primitive and without history" (p. 60). The scant comments on social phenomena during the Mamluk period give only a static impression of Egypt without leaving any room for inner developments. They do not at all tackle the complex socio-economic changes within Mamluk society but rather serve to create an Oriental coloring of Brandes's battle-stories.

The author does not make an effort to undertake an objective analysis or to describe the past as a "sympathetic observer." Thus, his book is full of subjective judgements and inappropriate evaluations. Above all, he gives the reader vivid but inopportune characterizations of all Mamluk rulers. The whole narration is more or less essentialist. The Druzes are "proud" (p. 154) and the Copts and Jews constantly suffer from suppression and mistreatment (pp. 34, 97-98, 110). The narrow streets in the cities are always "full of vibrating life and noise" (p. 46). They breathe the "atmosphere of a Thousand and One Nights" (pp. 7, 8, 45) and you can hear "old Arabian music" with its "inciting rhythm" (p. 196). All Brandes tells us about Sufism during the reign of the Mamluks in Egypt is a supposed "ecstatic howling of the Dervishes" (p. 43) on the battlefield. As an explanation of bedouin rebellions we read: "The will for freedom stirred up the sons of the desert to impetuous rebellion" (p. 50). Similarly superficial is his analysis of the "fall" of the Mamluk empire: "The empire had become large and tired and fell to pieces" (p. 15). For him, one of the reasons for this decline seems to be the "fact" that "at the beginning of the fourteenth century within the Islamic countries the imaginative power and the scholarly quest for knowledge had come to an end" (p. 177). Perhaps by following Stefan Zweig's well-written *Sternstunden der Menschheit* (Leipzig, 1927), Brandes formulates: "Historic *Sternstunden* to save the unity of the Islamic World passed by unused. Islam remained without a spiritual leader and, in this way, the way had been smoothed for foreign rulership and later on, for the rather confused ideas of an 'Arabian World' without corporate identity" (pp.



76, 238). This is also a good example for the constant attempts on the part of the author to refer to the present political situation in the Near East (pp. 8, 12, 69, 90). Unfortunately, his interpretations do not contribute to a better understanding of today's problems in this region. The only thing one can conclude from these passages is that Brandes considers the policy there to be determined by irrational forces.

As to the transcription of Arabic names and technical terms, no logic or system is visible. If one does not have a very good knowledge of Arabic—no one would really care when dealing with a "popular historian"—one should not pretend to be an expert in it. Transcriptions like *la ilaha, illaha wi mohammedun rasulullah* (p. 260) are as incomprehensible as "Nizam al-milk" (p. 98) or "Hasan ben Saba" (p. 89). A very interesting translation of Miṣr al-Qāhirah can be found in the glossary: "Capital of the triumphant" (p. 334). By the way, the reader should avoid a glossary altogether in which *qibṭ* is deduced from *kutub*.

Last but not least, one has to speak of some of the historical inaccuracies and errors. Who, one might ask, is this frequently mentioned "Allah" (pp. 55, 162, 163, 187-188, 202) and who are the "Shi'ite Abbasids" (p. 14)? The reader is also caught by surprise when Brandes alludes to a "wave of Shi'ism" that came like a flood over *Vorderasien* in the beginning of the tenth century (pp. 16, 263). The brief sketch of the rise of the Safavids (pp. 251ff.), Brandes's understanding of *siyāsah* (p. 131), the characterization of Tīmūr (pp. 193f.), or the account of the Assassins (pp. 89f.), all give evidence for the misinterpretation of basic facts within the history of Islam. In the fourteenth century "Moghuls" did not exist in India (p. 177), "within the Sunnite community" there were more than "originally four different *madhāhib*" (p. 100), and "former Islamic rulers" were not "possessed of a religious zeal to convert all unbelievers" (p. 163). The culmination of these distortions seems to be the following general description of the religious scholars during the Mamluk period which should better be left in the German original: "Die finstere Ulema kannte [*sic!*] in ihrem religiösen Starrsinn selten Erbarmen. Der Tod eines politischen Widersachers war für sie kein Mord, sondern lediglich ein notwendiges religiöses Opfer, ist doch Politik im fundamentalen Islam [*sic!*] seit jeher Mittel und Werkzeug der Religion und der Geistliche der von Allah Auserlesene, der über Leben und Tod zu entscheiden hat." (p. 217)

To make a long story short, there might be someone who buys this book, but anyone who would like to read something serious about the era of the Mamluks in Egypt should leave it on the shelf.



SHAUN MARMON, *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Pp. 162.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL CHAMBERLAIN, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

In spite of their ubiquity in the sources, eunuchs have received surprisingly little attention from Islamicists. Apart from Pellat's "Khāṣī," in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Ayalon's seminal articles on the subject, and a few recent studies of the endowments of particular eunuchs, the field has produced little to stack up against the historiography of eunuchism elsewhere. One has only to consult Orlando Patterson's *Slavery and Social Death* to note how Islamic as opposed to Chinese or Byzantine eunuchism has been neglected, all the more so since significant new research on Chinese and Byzantine eunuchs has appeared since Patterson's book was published. Islamicists, and Mamlukists especially, will welcome this intriguing and original study of the eunuch-guardians of the Prophet's tomb.

Since eunuchs were often to be found at liminal zones, between men and women in domestic life, between rulers and their subjects in citadels, and between the living and the dead in tombs, Marmon begins with an examination of the boundaries that eunuchs "both defined and crossed." The first chapter deals with eunuchs and boundary-mediation in medieval Cairo, a little disorienting perhaps in a book intended to deal with the Hijaz, but understandable given that the sources from Cairo are so rich in comparison. Using al-Ghuzūlī's imaginary topography of domestic space as a starting point, Marmon examines vestibules (*dihlīz* and *darkāh*) as transitional zones between the protected—and partly sacred—interior of the household and the outside world. Moving from domestic space to the citadel of Cairo, Marmon argues that eunuchs controlled access to the sultan in much the same manner as they marked the boundaries of domestic life. In both cases eunuchs protected the sacred inviolability (*ḥurmah*) of the interior (*ḥarīm*) from disruption (*fitnah*, sexual and political) and in both cases the line was not drawn between the political and the sexual or the domestic, but between the sanctuary and the exterior. After the deaths of powerful individuals, eunuchs could guard their tombs in much the same way as they guarded households. Underlying the domestic, the political, and the world of the dead, therefore, was a single way of conceiving of space. The most highly-charged boundaries were mediated by the presence of eunuchs, people who were ideally suited to both mark and cross them.

Chapter 2 attempts to find the origins of the society, to describe the endowments that supported it, to chart changes in its patronage, and to understand its organization, social networks, and leadership. Succeeding chapters deal in part with the activities of the society in the politics of the Hijaz. Marmon argues that Saladin supported



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the eunuch society less to suppress Shi'ism in the Hijaz than to demonstrate his reverence for the Prophet and the *sunnah*, a point that seems well-taken and confirmed by research into the "Sunni Revival" elsewhere. She also shows how eunuchs marked boundaries to separate Sunnis and Shi'is in *fitnahs*, the *ṣaff al-khuddām* (the "row of the eunuchs," between worshippers and the pulpit in the Prophet's mosque) making its first appearance to quiet one such *fitnah*. The physical boundary, here as in domestic and sultanal eunuchism in Cairo, was also a moral line, one that reduced the possibility of *fitnah*. Marmon also asks how eunuchs were viewed by others, and argues that they inspired reverence and dread even as jurists viewed the phenomenon of eunuchism with skepticism, and others saw eunuchs as somehow incomplete or childlike. Particularly striking (and worthy of comparison with Cairo) are the patronage activities of wealthy eunuchs: as patronage was a necessary attribute of any great man or woman, some eunuchs seem to have been esteemed in much the same light as a high-ranking amir or a sultan—as great men themselves. The final chapter, "The Longue Durée of the Eunuchs of the Prophet," seems tacked on and a bit out of place (it is based almost entirely on Western travelers' accounts, with a few minor exceptions); in any case the chapter will be of less interest to scholars of the Mamluk period.

The book is thus as much about social, cultural, and religious boundaries as it is about eunuchs. Many readers will hear an echo of Bernard Lewis's suggestion that the pre-modern Islamic world was a place of ins and outs rather than ups and downs: it is the interiority and exteriority of relatively equivalent entities, rather than hierarchies of specialized elements, that gave form to fields as distinct as domestic life, politics, and architecture. Less directly, one senses an unacknowledged debt to symbolic anthropology's insights into how people build boundaries in space in the same way as they make them in their heads, and into how anomalous beings and substances mediate such boundaries. But in a book such as this, intended to be neither theoretical nor programmatic, the absence of any explicit discussion of the approaches that helped Marmon disentangle this most complex subject is no defect.

A work of such originality will inevitably inspire more reservations and criticisms than one that follows better traveled paths. One possible reservation is that the work is too short to cover such a broad expanse of time and space. Although it has the length of an essay and the scope of what could have been a large book, this is more than made up for by its originality. The same reply could be made to the usual niggling concerns over terminology (the *muṣādarah* as "enforced extralegal taxation" seems especially anachronistic) and small errors (al-Maqrīzī's *Khīṭāṭ* should be *Khīṭaṭ*). A larger reservation is that many Mamlukists will want to know why so many of the sources that carry significant accounts of important eunuchs were not cited. Moreover, in a work that devotes so much



attention to eunuchs, power, and domestic life, it would have been useful to hear something about those eunuchs who maintained their own powerful households. Though Marmon mentions that the eunuch-guardians of the Prophet's tomb had their own household retinues (p. 55), it seems to this reviewer that more could have been made of this issue, especially since she was willing to bring Cairo into the discussion. Similarly, Marmon's discussion of the boundary-mediating roles of eunuchs in tombs is exciting and convincing, but the absence of any discussion of those eunuchs who built their own magnificent tombs leaves the reader with the feeling that more could have been said. The sources—both the usual chronicles and biographical dictionaries, together with the *waqfiyahs* that Petry and Garcin have studied—contain masses of information on these topics. But these are minor reservations, reflecting this reviewer's hunger for additional information more than anything else, and should not deflect attention from this fascinating and path-breaking work.

Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras. Edited by U. Vermeulen and D. De Smet (Leuven: Peeters, 1995). Pp. 371.

REVIEWED BY R. STEPHEN HUMPHREYS, University of California, Santa Barbara

This useful but loose-knit volume is made up of papers in English, French, and German presented at three international colloquia held at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Louvain) between 1992 and 1994. The contents are quite evenly divided between the three dynasties, with nine on the Fatimids, six on the Ayyubids, and eight on the Mamluks. In spite of the title, there is very little here on Syria; Cairo continues to dominate scholarly discourse—perhaps to a degree which distorts the realities of medieval life.

Those who edit volumes of this kind have three principal tasks: to obtain contributions from outstanding scholars, to see that these papers are carefully prepared and well-presented, and to bring the papers together within some sort of unifying framework. In the present case, De Smet and Vermeulen have seen to the first two tasks quite successfully; the third they have not attempted. The papers are of variable weight and substance, but all have a contribution to make. Some are still very much oral presentations, others have been considerably revised for publication. The standard of production is high—a compliment to the publisher as well as the editors—with good paper, an attractive format (including real footnotes rather than endnotes!), and careful proofreading. The volume is a pleasure to read,



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something which is too often not the case in contemporary scholarly publishing. Beyond grouping the papers according to dynasty, however, the editors make no effort to link them together. There is no introduction (the usual device), and under each dynastic heading, they simply arrange the papers by the authors' names in alphabetical order. Nor is there an index or a consolidated bibliography. To this miscellany every reader will have to bring his own sense of coherence and unity.

Four scholars have contributed papers to the Fatimid section: two from Michael Brett, three each from D. De Smet and Heinz Halm, and one from Pieter Smoor. They cover a wide range of topics: military institutions, political biography, caliphal ceremonial, theology, legal prescriptions, poetry. Under such circumstances detailed commentary is out of the question, but a few points can be noted. In his two articles Brett throws much light on the military resources available to the twelfth century Fatimids, and thereby on their inability to take effective action against the Franks and then Nūr al-Dīn. His first paper does this by a deconstruction of the Arabic sources for the several battles of Ramlah between Crusaders and Fatimids in the crucial period of 1099-1105. His second looks at late Fatimid fiscal practices and shows how these were carried over into the distinctive *iqṭā'* regime of Mamluk Egypt.

In his three articles, De Smet examines aspects of Fatimid doctrine. The first interprets (quite persuasively) al-Ḥākim's apparently arbitrary decrees on food and drink by showing that they represent an extremely rigorous application of Ismā'īlī *fiqh* or *ḥikmah*; as such they are the product not of madness but of hyperzealousness. The second examines the conflict between Sunni and Ismā'īlī doctrine on determining the dates of the Ramaḍān fast. The third is an analysis of al-Shīrāzī's brilliant defense of revealed religion against the attacks of that mysterious arch-heretic Ibn al-Rāwandī. In all three papers De Smet demonstrates both a detailed knowledge of Fatimid theological and legal texts and a gift for subtle analysis.

Heinz Halm devotes one paper to examining the locales where Ismā'īlī *ḥikmah* and *fiqh* were studied; al-Azhar, he points out, was a mosque, never a center for training *dā'īs*. His second and third papers examine Fatimid ceremonial and royal symbolism. Especially interesting is his argument that the *shamsah* was not a parasol (as it is usually taken to be) but a crown suspended on a chain from a baldachin or arch. This symbol had its origins in Sasanian Iran, but it spread all over the medieval Mediterranean world and even into Germany. Finally, Pieter Smoor analyzes the imagery of Fatimid court poetry; in view of the opacity of much of this verse, his extensive citations and analyses are very welcome. As poetry, I am sorry to say, it is mostly very poor stuff.

The Ayyubids receive rather less attention than the two dynasties flanking them. They still tend to be the step-children of Syro-Egyptian history. Of the six



articles in this section, in fact, the most substantial is Angelika Hartmann's study on the Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh ("Wollte der Kalif sufi werden?"). The two appreciations of Saladin and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil by D. E. P. Jackson are thoughtful and pleasant to read, but rather light-weight. On the other hand, the pieces by A. Louca on the fiscal clerk Ibn Mammātī and by J. N. Mattock on a panegyric ode to al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb by the poet Baḥā' al-Dīn Zuhayr are more closely focused. Anne-Marie Edde examines three much-discussed Ayyubid military terms—*ḥalqah*, *jamdār*, and *ustādh al-dār*. The meanings of the latter two words are convincingly worked out. To the problem of the Ayyubid *ḥalqah*, she brings both new texts and a clear head; her discussion is a real step forward in decoding this vexing term, though important questions remain.

The eight papers on the Mamluks come from five authors. The longest are a pair by Doris Behrens-Abouseif, who focuses on the architecture of Cairo—obviously one of the most important and permanent achievements of Mamluk rule. Her first paper compares the patronage of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and al-Ashraf Qāyṭbāy; the goal of these two sultans was not merely to leave a large body of monuments to perpetuate their names, but also, and more importantly, to build up or conserve the urban fabric of the capital. Though she does not make the comparison, the ambitious designs of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad recall those of his distant successor, the Khedive Ismā'īl. Her second paper looks at Norman Sicily as a possible source for some of the distinctive features of Cairene Mamluk architecture; she argues her case cautiously, but it is interesting and suggestive.

P. M. Holt continues his valuable studies on early Mamluk diplomacy with a meticulous analysis of Qalāwūn's abrogation of his treaty with the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem just before his death in 1290. His other paper examines the complex web of family relationships in which al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was embedded. Al-Nāṣir's many marriage alliances with the military aristocracies of the Golden Horde and the Il-Khans—and his own mother was in fact the daughter of a Mongol commander—demonstrate that the ties between Mongols and Mamluks were far more intimate than we have recently been led to believe. Likewise intriguing is the failure of al-Nāṣir's complex marriage diplomacy to establish a secure succession to the throne for any of his numerous sons.

The other papers can be treated more concisely. Frederic Bauden reconstructs the very complex family tree of a learned family of Mecca—an enormous amount of labor, which yields results interesting in their own right, but also needing to be placed within a broader study of Mamluk-era '*ulamā*' "dynasties." Jean Michot takes a new look at Ibn Taymīyah, to see what light he can throw on some of the key political controversies of his time. Particularly revealing is Ibn Taymīyah's scathing (and probably ill-informed) denunciation of the Il-Khanid vizier Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh, whom he encountered during Ghāzān's occupation of Damascus



in 1299-1300. The volume closes with two brief papers by Urbain Vermeulen, one on Mamluk royal insignia, the other on a letter by the shadow-caliph al-Mustakfi to the Yemen in 1307.

In spite of the disparate contents of this collection, many of the papers should be read together. For example, it is very useful to compare Brett's source analysis of the battles of Ramlah with Holt's dissection of the texts describing the reasons for Qalāwūn's treaty abrogation two centuries later. Likewise, Smoor's survey of the Fatimid court poets fits neatly with Jackson's discussion of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil and Mattock's of Bahā' al-Dīn Zuhayr. The family networks explored by Bauden and Holt throw a bright light on the radically contrasting social and political worlds inhabited by the learned and military aristocracies of the Mamluk era. Other readers will find equally useful groupings of their own. In brief, De Smet and Vermeulen have given us a useful volume which accurately reflects the current state of research on Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk Egypt. With some additional effort, they could have provided a much better integrated view of the field.



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Short Notices

ŞUBĤĪ ‘ABD AL-MUN‘IM, *al-Sharq al-Islāmī Zaman al-Mamālīk wa-al-‘Uthmānīyīn* (Cairo: al-‘Arabī lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī‘, 1995). Pp. 258.

This book is a superficial survey of events in the Middle East from the mid-thirteenth century to the early years of the twentieth. Focusing primarily on the history of Mamluk and Ottoman Syro-Egypt, the author also reviews such collateral issues as the rise of Safavid Iran and the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into the Hijaz, Yemen, and Iraq in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as the late eighteenth century French invasion of the Levant. The early sections on Mamluk history, which make up nearly half the book, are organized briefly around events occurring in the reigns of some of its most famous rulers from Shajar al-Durr through Qānşūḥ al-Ghawrī. Copious but short notes at chapter endings. (W. W. C.)

NAJM AL-DĪN IBRĀHĪM IBN ‘ALĪ AL-ṬARSŪSĪ, *Tuḥfat al-Turk fīmā Yajibū an Yu‘mālā fī al-Mulk*, edited by Riḍwān al-Sayyid (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah lil-Ṭibā‘ah wa-al-Nashr, 1992). Pp. 110.

This example of *Fürstenspiegel* was composed for the benefit of the Mamluk Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir Ḥasan (fl. 748-762) by the author, Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭarsūsī (d. 758). Al-Ṭarsūsī was the outspoken Ḥanafī *qāḍī al-quḍāh* of Damascus, who succeeded his father to that position in 746. Preceded by a long and useful historical introduction, the text is divided into twelve short chapters commemorating his *tarājim* as a Ḥanafī *qāḍī al-quḍāh* concerning the proper operation of the then century-old Mamluk state. Al-Ṭarsūsī’s *fuṣūl* contain a variety of stock admonitions calling for the investigation of such things as the functioning of government *dawāwīn*, conditions among local peasants, maintenance of local infrastructure (dikes, fortifications, ports), as well as related fiscal issues (*awqāf*, confiscations, disbursements from the *bayt al-māl*). While the author’s ambition to review the condition of “everything pertaining to the interests of Muslims” falls short, reading between the lines of al-Ṭarsūsī’s text may be helpful in developing a fuller appreciation of the problems facing Mamluk society in the critical decades following al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s passing. The notes and bibliography are useful. (W. W. C.)



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ANWAR ZAQLAMAḤ, *al-Mamālīk fī Miṣr*, Ṣafaḥāt min Tārīkh Miṣr, no. 24 (Cairo: Maktabat Madbūlī, 1995). Pp. 192.

This reprinted volume undertakes in twenty-one short chapters to characterize briefly the external relations of Mamluk Egypt with various states, both Muslim and Christian, some well-known (Mongol, Armenian, Ottoman, Venetian, French), some not (Nubian, Cypriot, Portuguese). The book's chronological scope ranges from the end of the Ayyubid period in the mid-thirteenth century to the end of the French occupation in the early nineteenth century. The notes are short, and the book is without a bibliography. (W. W. C.)

AL-SAYYID 'ABD AL-'AZĪZ SĀLIM and SAḤAR AL-SAYYID 'ABD AL-'AZĪZ SĀLIM, *Dirāsah fī Tārīkh al-Ayyūbīyīn wa-al-Mamālīk* (Alexandria: Mu'assasat Shabāb al-Jāmi'ah, 1997). Pp. 321.

This is primarily a history of the Levantine maritime frontier from the thirteenth through fourteenth centuries and, in particular, the events leading to the infamous Cypriot sack of Alexandria in 1369. Beginning with Saladin's seizing power in Egypt (1169), much of the book in fact covers the Ayyubid period. Those limited number of pages concerning Mamluk history are devoted largely to a review of earlier Cypriot maritime raids in the Baḥrī period as well as the state of Mamluk Alexandria before 1369. Appended also are brief histories of several prominent constructions of the Mamluk period located principally in the maritime cities of Tripoli and Alexandria. (W. W. C.)

