Book Reviews

Linda S. Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan: The Career of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and the Consolidation of Mamluk Rule in Egypt and Syria (678-689 A.H./1279-1290 A.D.)* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1998). Pp. 350.

Reviewed by Robert Irwin, London, England

This has, I believe, been a long time coming. However, it has been worth waiting for. It is lucid, assiduously annotated, and in quite a few areas it breaks new ground. The opening chapter on sources is exceptionally clear. I note that she is more positive than Donald Little (in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*) in her assessment of Ibn al-Furāt. It is also curious to note that the Copt Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī Faḍā'il appears to have identified so strongly with the anti-Crusader enterprise that he even refers to Qalāwūn as *al-Shahīd*. Her portrait of Qalāwūn, the man, brings few surprises. He was, as earlier historians have judged him to be, capable, cautious, and unusually clement to defeated rivals. What is unusual in Northrup's monograph is her close focus on such matters as the sultan's real and theoretical relationship with the caliph, the phrasing of the *'ahd* or investiture diploma, and the underlying significance of the sultan's entitulature. She points again and again to the ways in which Qalāwūn took care to associate himself with the traditions of al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb. Also welcome is her use of the *tadhkirah*s, which were drawn up to guide Qalāwūn's deputies during his absences from Egypt, in order to shed light on details of administration and especially the supervision of irrigation and agriculture.

Even more striking is Northrup's repeated emphasis on the strength of civilian hostility to Qalāwūn. It is one of her leading themes. Some of the sources for this are rather late, but she is inclined to believe them (and so am I). According to al-Maqrīzī, Qalāwūn was at first at least so unpopular that he did not dare ride out in a traditional accession procession. The reasons for the antipathy of many of the ulama towards Qalāwūn seem to have been various, but the main issue seems to have been the high-handed fund-raising procedures of Qalāwūn and Sanjar al-Shujā'ī and their ready resort to confiscations and misappropriations of *waqf*s. It is also clear that Syrians resented Egypt's dominance and, for example, the Syrian chronicler Ibn Kathīr stated that Egypt "was a place where wrongdoing was perpetrated with impunity."

Doubtless there were others who suspected that Qalāwūn had not dealt honestly with the sons of Baybars. The death of al-Malik al-Sa'īd, possibly of a fall from his horse, must have looked suspicious. Ibn Taghrībirdī claimed that, because

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Qalāwūn poisoned the prince, he was loathed until he started making conquests. Qalāwūn's grand charitable gesture, the building of the Manṣūrī Bīmāristān and Madrasah, was also very unpopular, because of the extravagance and the corvées. It is also interesting to note that, at first at least, amirs must have had reservations about their new sultan, as they threatened to depose him if he did not advance against the Mongols in northern Syria.

Finally with regard to Qalāwūn's unpopularity, on page 155 Northrup notes that Qalāwūn "was met with demands for an end to his rule on what should have been his triumphal return to the city following the conquest of Tripoli in 688/1289," but tantalizingly she does not dwell any further on this final disappointment (unless I have missed it).

Northrup believes that there were commercial reasons for Qalāwūn's final offensives against Tripoli and Acre: "Repossession of the ports of the Syrian Littoral, therefore, gave the sultanate access to a port in which the slave trade had figured and greater control over the trade routes to the interior as well as the revenues from the commerce that passed through the ports and along those routes." Yet the history of the Syrian Littoral and its once great ports for at least the next half century or so was one of desolation. The trade routes to the interior were in abeyance and almost the only revenues to be earned were earned by a small band of troopers stationed at Acre who sold caged birds to the occasional pilgrim. (But Northrup has a much better case when she argues against Meron Benvenisti's contention that the Mamluks systematically destroyed Palestinian agriculture.)

I do have one other substantial reservation. On page 47, in a discussion of the value as a source of the chronicle of Qirṭay al-ʻIzzī al-Khazindārī she notes that I have raised doubts about its veracity, but does not refer to the article in which I did so. (I did so in "The Image of the Greek and the Frank in Medieval Arab Popular Literature" in Benjamin Arbel et al., eds., *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204* [London, 1989], 226-42; also published in *Mediterranean History Review* 4 [1989]: 226-42.) Northrup goes on state that while she believes that "it is too early to dismiss the entire chronicle as fiction, it is perhaps necessary to use it with caution." While I did not dismiss all of Qirṭay's chronicle as fictional, I did note that some of his most improbable and exciting information is not corroborated by other chroniclers and I concluded that the "fact that the pages he devoted to the embassy to England are demonstrably nonsensical should encourage us to look with a colder eye on the other original snippets of information he offers elsewhere." When Qirṭay is the only source, as he is, for example, on Qalāwūn's recruitment of the sons of Baḥrīyah from the riffraff of the Bāb al-Lūq quarter (Northrup, 83), or on Qalāwūn's riding out on an accession procession (Northrup, 84), I think that we have to look on these reported incidents with great suspicion. The question mark over Qirṭay's reliability is not without

importance, as Northrup quotes *in extenso* an account relayed by Qirṭay of how Qalāwūn on separate days successively delegated military power, financial power, and spiritual power to three of his trusted officers. It is a fascinating narrative and one is grateful to see it translated, but I fear that its only value may lie in the light it sheds on the way that Qirṭay, or his alleged source Ibn al-Wāḥid, thought about things. As Northrup herself notes, we know practically nothing about the third officer, Ṭughrīl al-Shiblī, and there is no other evidence at all to suggest he was the supremo over spiritual affairs in Egypt. While on the subject of unreliable sources, I used to believe that the *waṣīyah* of the dying Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb was an authentic document. (It is cited by Northrup in a note on p. 163 on the need for military discipline.) But I now believe it should be read more carefully in order to determine, if possible, who forged it.

LI GUO, *Early Mamluk Syrian Historiography: Al-Yūnīnī's Dhayl Mir'āt al-zamān* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998). Two volumes.

REVIEWED BY DONALD P. LITTLE, McGill University

Readers of this journal will be familiar with the name Li Guo as a member of its editorial board and as author of the important review article, "Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art," which appeared in the first issue.[1] The present work is a revised version of his Ph.D. dissertation on al-Yūnīnī's continuation of Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī's famous history *Mir'āt al-Zamān*.[2] Since the *Dhayl* has long been recognized as one of the key contemporary sources for Baḥrī history during al-Yūnīnī's lifetime (640-726/1242-1326) spent mainly in Syria, both Guo's edition and translation and his clarification of its relationship to other Mamluk histories should be of considerable interest to scholars.

Unfortunately, publication of the *Dhayl* has been sporadic, piecemeal, and, until Guo's work, sometimes incompetent. The most substantial portion of the text appeared in four volumes some forty years ago, covering the years 654-86.[3] Ironically, this section is of secondary significance, being based for the most part

[1]*Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997):15-43.

[2]"The Middle Baḥrī Mamluks in Medieval Syrian Historiography: The Years 1297-1302 in the *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān* Attributed to Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsá al-Yūnīnī; A Critical Edition with Introduction, Annotated Translation, and Source Criticism," Ph.D. diss, Yale University, 1994.

[3](Hyderabad,1954-61).

on secondary sources, which Guo identifies as Ibn Khallikān, Abū Shāmah, Ibn Ḥamawayh al-Juwaynī, Ibn Shaddād, Ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir, and Ibn Wāṣil (1:60-63). In recognition of this fact a dissertation by Antranig Melkonian, published in 1975, produced the text and German translation of the years 687-90,[4] a period when al-Yūnīnī's "originality" became more strikingly evident, that is, when he seems to have relied on his own observation and that of his informants and colleagues, although, in fact, he was heavily indebted to the work of his Syrian contemporary, al-Jazarī. Now with Guo's book we have the text for another segment, 697-701, which means, however, that the years 691-96 and 702-11 are still available only in manuscript.

Why, we might ask, did Guo choose to edit these particular years rather than pick up where Melkonian left off? Unless I have missed something he does not explicitly say, though in his historiographic article he does declare his intention to complete "the remaining ten-year portion (702-711)," [5] leaving 691-96 unclaimed. Presumably a combination of factors historiographical and historical guided his choice. In any case, of the twenty-three known manuscripts, he has based his edition on two: one at Yale, the other in Istanbul. Another complicating factor is that Guo's edition of the *Dhayl* has been collated with the text of al-Jazarī's *Ḥawādith al-Zamān* for the years 697-99 in a separate footnote apparatus. Since, however, al-Jazarī's text in the Paris MS used by Guo covers the years 689-99 he could presumably have chosen the years 691-95, say, and still collated them with a1-Jazarī and followed Melkonian's sequence. I am sure that there must be a good reason for Guo's decision not to do so. I'm just not sure what it is.

Since I have not been able to compare his edition with the two manuscripts, I cannot judge his editorial skills with any authority But signs of his competence and care are plentiful inasmuch as Guo follows in many respects Claude Cahen's suggestions for editing Arabic texts by collating the best manuscripts and "providing the textual, linguistic and historical explanations which help him [the reader] in understanding the narrative, but also give him the references to all other sources.' "[6] Thus Guo introduces his edition with a summary of what is known of al-Yūnīnī's life, a descriptive survey of the twenty-three extant manuscripts of parts of the *Dhayl,* an analysis of the formation of the text, and a description and analysis of the two manuscripts he used for his edition, including paleographic, orthographic, and grammatical discussions. To find the reasons why Guo opted to adapt and "correct" orthographic peculiarities and grammatical irregularities (due to the

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[4]*Die Jahre 1287-1291 in der Chronik al-Yūnīnīs* (Freiburg, 1975).

[5]"Historiographic Studies," 16.

[6]"Editing Arabic Chronicles: A Few Suggestions," *Islamic Studies* (Sept., 1962): 1-25, quoted by Guo in "Historiographic Studies," 26.

influence of colloquial usages) in the text and to relegate the originals to the footnotes, one must refer to his already-cited article, where he contrasts "free editing" with "the traditional Orientalist method."[7] By the former he apparently means arbitrary, if not whimsical, tampering with a text, whereas the latter results in a faithful transcription of a text with its errors and peculiarities with "corrections" relegated to the footnotes. Arguing that a free edition is capricious and that a traditional transcript could be reproduced by a photocopy, Guo takes the conservative option of standardizing the unpunctuated text and footnoting irregularities. This, of course, is a matter of editorial choice of no great importance as long as the reader interested in linguistic issues related to Middle Arabic can cut through the editorial apparatus to find the original text. The addition of variations from al-Jazarī's *Ḥawādith al-Zamān* in the footnotes is not as confusing as it might sound, given the fact that the *Dhayl* and the *Ḥawādith* are virtually the same for the years Guo has edited.

The relationship between these two authors, plus another contemporary, al-Birzālī, is the main issue addressed by Guo in the prefatory analysis. As other scholars have already shown, "until A. H. 690, the two texts are clearly independent of each other and contain their exclusive stories supported by their own sources" (1:42), even though these same sources "demonstrate that the mutual borrowing between the two, often without acknowledgment, did take place in certain portions (covering the years prior to A. H 690) of their works" (1:41). In addition, I myself have claimed that for the annals 694, 699, and 705, al-Yūnīnī copied al-Jazarī without explicit acknowledgment, and this portion should be regarded as al-Yūnīnī's copy of al-Jazarī's lost work, the extant copies of which end at the beginning of 699.[8] Guo confirms this impression on the basis of his painstaking comparative analysis for 691-99, concluding that this part of the *Dhayl* should be regarded as a synthesis of *Ḥawādith* edited by al-Yūnīnī. But then Guo goes a step further to argue that the remaining portion of the *Dhayl,* for 699-711, represents a nearly verbatim edition of al-Jazarī's work but "was wrongly attributed to al-Yūnīnī by a later editor" (1:59). Although he stops short of identifying that editor as al-Birzālī (he is often quoted as a source by both authors), Guo does state that al-Birzālī's "stamp was so deeply marked on these two works that one wonders whether the insertion of al-Jazarī's collection into al-Yūnīnī's 'third volume' of the *Dhayl* and the probable misattribution of the 'fourth volume' of the text may somehow be due to al-Birzālī's involvement" (1:80). This explanation is certainly plausible, but it seems to me that the evidence for misattribution is slim, consisting as it does of instances in which Yūnīnī is mentioned by name not only as a narrator

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[7]"Historiographic Studies," 21-23.

[8]*An Introduction* to *Mamlūk Historiography* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 57-61.

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but as a subject of narration (possibly a scribal interpolation?). In any case, as Guo concedes, the question of authorship is not so important from a historical, as opposed to a historiographical, point of view, since the Yūnīnī/Jazarī version is one of our most important sources for mid-Baḥrī history, no matter who the original author may have been. For this reason alone we are indebted to Li Guo for making a key segment of this central source available to scholars, quite apart from the light he sheds on how history was composed by a group of early fourteenth-century Syrian scholars.

As far as the translation is concerned, spot checks show it to be accurate and idiomatic and accompanied by informative footnotes. Needless to say, I do have a few complaints. First of all, I wonder why only the *ḥawādith* have been translated, when the obituaries constitute so sizable a chunk of the text. In his dissertation Guo says only that the *wafāyāt* have not been translated, being ″reserved for the use of specialists.″[9] Surely the purpose of translating the *Dhayl* is to make it available to non-specialists, meaning non-Arabists; I′m not sure that the latter will gain an adequate view of al-Yūnīnī and al-Jazarī or ″the Syrian school″ of historians from this partial translation. Probably Guo′s consideration was practical: enough is enough. Also missing are translations of some of the verses that appear in the annals. Although the dissertation contains a helpful glossary of Arabic terms, the published version does not. This is especially unfortunate since the English index includes only names of persons and places. True, volume 2 contains an index of technical terms in Arabic, but these don′t help the non-Arabist. Also frustrating is the lack of headers on the pages of the translation; worse, there are no cross page—much less line—references between text and translation, so that it is not easy to check one against the other. But given the fact that this is basically a revised and improved dissertation, one can only express admiration and appreciation for the extraordinary effort and skill required to produce such an impressive and useful work. It is also gratifying to observe that with Li Guo Mamluk historiographic studies have passed into capable hands.

[9]″Middle Baḥrī Mamluks,″ 1:136.

MUḤAMMAD MAḤMŪD AL-NASHSHĀR, *ʿAlāqat Mamlakatay Qashtālah wa-Arājūn bi-Salṭanat al-Mamālīk, 1260-1341 M/658-741 H* (Cairo: ʿAyn lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Buḥūth al-Insānīyah wa-al-Ijtimāʿīyah, 1997). Pp. 319.

REVIEWED BY KENNETH J. GARDEN, The University of Chicago

In this work, Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Nashshār provides a detailed examination of diplomacy between the Mamluk sultanate and the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile respectively from 608/1260 to 741/1341. He gives a comprehensive portrayal of the circumstances of both Aragon and Castile that shaped their diplomatic agendas and charts the unfolding of their relations with the Mamluks in a way that is clear to readers not familiar with the history of these kingdoms. The book is written for those with a familiarity with the Mamluk sultanate and its diplomatic agenda. Its treatment of the relations between Castile and Aragon and the Mamluk Sultanate focuses almost exclusively on the Iberian states and has little to say about the concerns and reactions of the Mamluks.

The book begins with a review of the sources used by the author. These include published collections of diplomatic documents from Aragonese archives, Mamluk chronicles, Aragonese chronicles, and Castillian chronicles, as well as other documents found in the Aragonese archives. From here he begins his study, which he divides into five chapters dealing with three topics. These are the historical backgrounds of Castile, Aragon, and the Mamluk Sultanate before and during the period covered in the book, the political relations of Castile and Aragon with the Mamluks, and trade relations between them.

Chapter one outlines the broader historical background of the period covered. After their establishment, Castile and Aragon were initially concerned with their survival and then were too engrossed in the *reconquista* to have any foreign diplomatic concerns until the period covered by the book. Beginning in this period, both nations sought to foster trade with the east. Aragon was concerned with finding allies in its struggle against the papacy and France to maintain control over the island of Sicily. This situation changed when the dispute was resolved under Jaime II. A brief section is also devoted to the concerns of the Mamluks who sought to obtain war materiel from abroad as well as to prevent an alliance between the Crusaders and the Mongols and reinforcements to the remaining crusader outposts in the eastern Mediterranean.

Chapters two and three are devoted to the political relations between Aragon and the Mamluk sultanate. As the ruling military power in the western Mediterranean and one of the leading trading powers in the whole of the Mediterranean at the time, it is natural that Aragon would have more diplomatic concerns with the Mamluks than Castile would. One of Aragon´s major concerns early in this period

was its search for allies in the Mediterranean during its conflict with France and the papacy over its control of the island of Sicily. To this end, Aragon signed a treaty of alliance with the Mamluks in 1287. This suited the Mamluks as well, as it allowed them to circumvent a ban issued by the pope on trade in strategic materials with them. It also allowed them to count on Aragon's not sending reinforcements to the remnants of the Crusaders in the eastern Mediterranean. The treaty only lasted as long as the conflict over Sicily. This was briefly resolved in 1291, when Alfonso III signed the treaty of Tarascon, at which point Aragonese-Mamluk relations entered a period of "confusion." The treaty was, however, rejected by Alfonso III's successor Jaime II when the former died shortly after its signing. Jaime II quickly renewed his alliance with the Mamluks. The alliance ended when Aragonese relations with the pope and France were restored in 1295 with the signing of the treaty of Anagni. Aragon's return to the good graces of the pope affected its relations with the Mamluks. After briefly flirting with the idea of an alliance with the Mongols and a new crusade, Jaime II began to press the Mamluks for recognition as patron of the Christians of Egypt and the Levant and for the release of Christian prisoners held in Egypt.

Chapter four, devoted to political relations between Castile and the Mamluks, is much briefer than the section devoted to Aragonese-Mamluk political relations because Castile had few political issues to resolve with the Mamluk sultanate. However, owing to the personality of Alfonso X (the Wise) and his interest in Arabic culture, Castillian diplomatic relations with the Mamluks actually preceded Aragonese-Mamluk relations. These were shortlived, however. They consisted mainly of exchanges of gifts and requests for trading privileges and came to an end after the death of Alfonso X, at which point Castile entered into a period of protracted civil war.

Chapter five deals with trade relations of both Aragon and Castile with the Mamluks. Again, Aragon is the principal player in this story due to its possession of Barcelona, one of the busiest Mediterranean ports of the era. Aragon wanted to insure that Barcelona remained a major player in trade in eastern goods throughout this period. The main obstacle to this was the papal ban on trade in commodities of strategic importance with the Mamluks. Prior to the treaty of Anagni, this was not a difficult obstacle to overcome as Aragon was anyway at odds with the papacy and flagrantly violated the ban. After Jaime II returned to the papal flock, he had to be more circumspect in carrying on this lucrative trade with the Mamluks. One way around the ban was to send merchants along with diplomatic missions. As for Castile, Alfonso X encouraged trade in hopes that revenues generated thereby could solve Castile's chronic economic difficulties. To this end he sent ambassadors to Cairo to discuss matters of trade. Castile, though, was not as well positioned geographically for trade as was Aragon. Such diplomatic missions

were never as important to the Mamluks as were those of Aragon and they anyway ceased nearly entirely after the death of Alfonso X and the ensuing civil war.

Following chapter five is an afterword that provides a synopsis of the book and appendices of diplomatic documents with partial translations into Arabic, as well as charts of the kings of the Spanish kingdoms in the Middle Ages and maps of the Iberian peninsula in that period. That there are no maps provided of Egypt or lists of the Mamluk sultans confirms the point made above that this is a book for readers already familiar with Mamluk history.

Readers of the *Mamlūk Studies Review* can rest assured that they fit the profile of the book′s intended audience, though even Mamlukists (or perhaps especially Mamlukists) will find themselves wishing at times for a greater emphasis on Mamluk responses and motivations. The book′s organization is, in some ways, well suited to readers who are not familiar with the history of the western Mediterranean. The three-topic approach—general background, political relations, trade relations—means that the history of Castile and Aragon and their relations with the Mamluk sultanate is told three times with a different emphasis in each telling. While some repetition may be welcome for those unfamiliar with Iberian history, another repetition of much of the information is unnecessary by the third telling. Combining the section on trade relations with the section on political relations would not only have avoided a retelling of events but perhaps would have better illustrated the ways in which trade and political concerns interacted in determining policy. The book is poorly edited. In addition to typographical errors in the Arabic text, the text in Latin characters is especially full of errors. Consistent use of both *hijrī* and common era dating would have been welcome. Sometimes one, sometimes the other and sometimes both are used. Aside from these minor problems, the book provides a clear description of relations between the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon and the Mamluk sultanate. It is a useful resource for those interested in a detailed history of the Mamluks′ diplomatic relations with a particular region.

HENRI AND ANNE STIERLIN, *Splendours of an Islamic World: Mamluk Art in Cairo 1250-1517* (London and New York: Tauris Parke Books, 1997). Pp. 219.

REVIEWED BY BERNARD O´KANE, American University in Cairo

A pithy but cogent judgement of this work has already appeared within the pages of volume three of this journal:

> With the publication of a splendid full color luxury book by the noted team of Henri Stierlin and Anne Stierlin, the study of Mamluk Art and Architecture has finally made it into the Big Time. The Stierlins, who have previously brought us books on Islamic Architecture, Mughal architecture, Ottoman architecture and the Alhambra, have now brought us the first affordable ($59.50) coffee-table book on Mamluk art and architecture. Dramatic long shots compete with exquisite details for the viewer´s attention which, in the tradition of architectural photography, is rarely, if ever, distracted by the attention of people, apart from the picturesque natives populating reproductions of David Robert´s nineteenth-century lithographs. Their stunning photographs of Mamluk buildings and objects will explain to even the most sceptical audiences why Mamluk art has had its devotees for over a century; the text, infelicitously translated from the French, is mercifully brief and appears oblivious of the content (although not the titles) of recent scholarship on the subject.[1]

One might wonder why a coffee table book merits a review in this journal, but the quality of the photographs is truly such as to provide an inspiration for potential students of the subject. If they can indeed attract attention to our field then we should be grateful. It is all the more important, therefore, that the photographs be identified accurately, but as there are numerous errors in this respect I concentrate in the following on setting the record straight.

The text is not so brief that it does not also have its share of mistakes and misleading information. Its organization is somewhat haphazard, although most chapters are straightforward accounts of the monuments that they illustrate. While the text may be generally accurate, a few examples of its more serious errors may be sufficient to show that not too much reliability should be placed on it:

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[1] Jonathan M. Bloom, ˝Mamluk Art and Architecture: A Review Article,˝ *Mamluk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 31.

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> 14: ″the Ilkhans of Amou-Daria″
> 12: ″Greeks (Syrian or Byzantine) . . . often played a role in [Mamluk] art and architecture.″ I know of no evidence for this, and none is proffered.
> 24: The dome of the mosque of Baybars is no longer standing.
> 26: ″the *khanka*, or monastery for soldier monks . . .″
> 29: ″Mangu controlled the Mongols of the Golden Horde″—a reference to the Ilkhanid Möngke-Temür.
> 49: ″the eleventh-century Tulunid period″
> 178: It is curious, to say the least, when several Mamluk examples have survived, to pick the Ottoman house at Darb al-Labbān as representative of Mamluk style.

The writing can be eccentric, leading to such statements as (p. 98) ″the centripetal space lends itself to the teaching of the four theological schools of Islam″ (the central courtyard of the complex of Sultan Ḥasan and its *īwān*s [whether or not one thinks of them as centripetal] were a congregational mosque); or, referring to the complex of Faraj ibn Barqūq, ″Everything is ruled by a seemingly natural order, based on the right angle, as part of an all-pervasive orthogonal system″ (p. 140), despite the unusual total lack of flat roofs in the hypostyle areas of the complex.

Moving to the photographs, the eye for detail is remarkable. A judicious number of these, combined with medium and long distance shots and redrawn plans, gives a viewer the best possible impression both of the spatial qualities and the textural variety of the decoration of the major monuments. The numerous ways in which the Mamluks exploited sunlight dappling on diverse surfaces are captured imaginatively. Would that the captions were of the same standard:

> 18: ″The crenellated walls of the Madrasa of Sultan Hasan . . .″ The crenellated walls visible in this photograph belong instead to the nineteenth century mosque of al-Rifāʿī.
> 44: ″the quarter of the Mosque of Ibn Tulun at Fustat″—it is in the quarter of al-Qaṭāʾiʿ, far to the north of Fusṭāṭ.
> 53: ″Constructed immediately after Sultan Baibars took power, the Mausoleum ′of the Abbasids′ (1242) . . .″ Baybars took power in 1260; the date of 1242 comes from earliest cenotaph preserved within it.

72-73: The details of the doors of the complex of Qalāwūn are surprisingly repeated on an even larger double spread on pages 76-77.
79: This is not the front façade of the mausoleum of Qalāwūn, but rather the façade leading from the vestibule to the interior of the mausoleum.
89: The detail of the mihrab of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, also used as the illustration on the jacket, is of one which was almost totally reconstructed in 1948 (only partially on the lines of the original).[2]
90: This is not from the madrasah of Sultan Ḥasan.
107: This is the mausoleum of Qāytbāy, not of Sultan Ḥasan.
154: The background is of glass paste rather than ceramic.
167: The mihrab is from the mosque of al-Mu'ayyad, not the Qāytbāy complex.
169: This is not the madrasah of al-Ghawrī.
170: The tomb is on the right and the madrasah on the left, not the other way around.
176: The captions to this page are to be found on p. 181.
178: not the window of the Bashtak palace, but the façade of the *wakālah* of Qāytbāy at Bāb al-Naṣr. The caption, misplaced on p. 182, wrongly identifies it as the *wakālah* of Qawṣūn.
180: The caption to this, the Ottoman house at Darb al-Labbān, is found on p. 185.
181: The basin used in the restoration of the Bashtak palace is of an unknown provenance; it was lying for some years behind the shops fronting the façade of the madrasah of al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb until reused in the restoration of the palace by the German Archaeological Institute of Cairo.
184: This is the interior of the northern mausoleum in the complex of Faraj ibn Barqūq (the correct caption is on p. 189).
185: This is again the *wakālah* of Qāytbāy at Bāb al-Naṣr, not the *wakālah* of Qawṣūn.
186: The private collection in which this Quran stand is held is not identified. However, judging from the photograph, it appears be a nineteenth century copy of a virtually identical stand in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (a detail of the stand, with a misplaced caption, is shown on p. 183).

[2]Mona Zakariya, "Technique de Construction du miḥrāb mamlūk," *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron* (Cairo, 1979), 2:377-82.

> 188: The caption to this, the mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn, has been misplaced on p. 193.

In short, the relative inexpensiveness of the volume makes it a suitable tool to fire the visual imagination, provided the text is used with caution.

N. MAḤMŪD MUṢṬAFÁ, *Al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī—Min Taṣfiyat al-Wujūd al-Ṣalībī ilá Bidāyat al-Hajmah al-Ūrūbbīyah al-Thāniyah, 642-923/1258-1517* (Cairo: al-Maʻhad al-ʻĀlamī lil-Fikr al-Islāmī, 1996). Pp. 177.

REVIEWED BY STEPHAN CONERMANN, University of Kiel

Every Western scholar who does research in the field of Islamic studies would in principle agree with the statement Carl F. Petry issued in the first volume of *Mamlūk Studies Review*: ″And since so much contemporary scholarship in Arabic is neglected by Western readers for obvious linguistic reasons, the inclusion of recent works in this language by the editorial staff of *Mamlūk Studies Review* for assessment is to be commended.″[1] Unfortunately, Petry himself was anything but impressed by the book of an Arab colleague that the journal had offered him for review. In his opinion, the work suffered from at least five considerable deficiencies: (1) the monograph′s value derives exclusively from its factual information; (2) it contributes no fresh methodological insights; (3) it does not significantly alter existing perceptions of the commercial economy of prominent Red Sea ports throughout the Middle Ages; (4) while numerous monographs published in Arabic are listed in the bibliography, these fall into the same particularistic category as the book under review; and (5) few works of broader scope, either in Arabic or other languages, are noted.[2]

One might say: ″Well, perhaps the author did his work after a fashion, but the reviewer had no real interest in it,″ but after a careful reading of Maḥmūd Muṣṭafá′s *Al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī—Min Taṣfiyat al-Wujūd al-Ṣalībī ilá Bidāyat al-Hajmah al-Ūrūbbīyah al-Thāniyah, 642-923/1258-1517,* I came to the same conclusions as Petry. All the shortcomings he criticized in his review accorded with my own

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[1]See his review of ʻAlī al-Sayyid ʻAlī Maḥmūd′s *Al-Ḥayāh al-Iqtiṣādīyah fī Jiddah fī ʻAṣr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk, 648-925 H./1250-1517 M.* (Cairo, 1991) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 128-29.

[2]Ibid., 128.

Book Reviews (combined): http://mamluk.uchicago.edu/MSR_IV_2000-BookReviews.pdf
Full volume: http://mamluk.uchicago.edu/MamlukStudiesReview_IV_2000.pdf

findings: this book has, as it were, some value as a first survey of intra-Arab relations during the age of the Mamluks, but in general it consists of mere facts, offers no methodological approach, gives no new insights, is based on old and outdated secondary literature, and completely ignores recent research on this topic.

Was this coincidental, or could it be that these books represent typical scholarly output in Arab countries? Instead of jumping to final conclusions I decided to reread all reviews of historical works written in Arabic that had been published in the first two volumes of *Mamlūk Studies Review*. With the exception of two titles,[3] all books under review were sharply critcized. Thus, Richard T. Mortel writes on ʻAlī al-Sayyid ʻAlī Maḥmūd′s *Al-Ḥayāh al-Thaqāfīyah fī al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: ʻAṣr al-Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk, 642-923 H.*: ″After a careful reading of the work I must, however, confess to a serious disappointment. ʻAlī al-Sayyid′s book . . . appears to this reviewer as a verbose and quite undisguised apology for the Mamluks lacking in sophistication or the application of any identifiable modern historical methodology.″[4] Similarly, Linda S. Northrup criticizes Muḥammad Ḥamzah Ismāʻīl al-Ḥaddād′s *Al-Sulṭān al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn: Tārīkh Aḥwāl Miṣr fī ʻAhdihi, Munshaʼatuhu al-Miʻmārīyah*: ″There are, in my opinion, two problems with this study, the first of which is methodological. There is no apparent thesis. Further, the author fails to define the relation between the historical and descriptive sections of the work. . . . Al-Ḥaddād brings neither new information nor a new perspective to his narrative. Nor does he use his synthesis as a framework within which to interpret the findings of his survey of the monuments. . . . A second criticism concerns the historiographical basis of al-Ḥaddād′s monograph. . . . Although al-Ḥaddād has used current secondary literature in Arabic, his failure to supplement older, and still valuable, foreign scholarship with more recent research . . . is unfortunate. Important recent foreign studies treating aspects of Qalāwūn′s reign are not cited in the narrative.″[5] Virtually identical argumentation can be found in the remarks of Warren C. Schultz on Ḍayf Allāh Ibn Yaḥyá al-Zahrānī′s *Zayf al-Nuqūd al-Islāmīyah: Min Ṣadr al-Islām ḥattá Nihāyat al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī,* in Anne F. Broadbridge′s comments on Fāyid Ḥammād Muḥammad ʻĀshūr′s

[3]See the ambivalent reviews by Warren C. Schultz of Raf'at Muḥammad al-Nabarāwī′s *Al-Sikkah al-Islāmīyah fī Miṣr: ʻAṣr al-Mamālīk al-Jarākisah* (Cairo, 1993) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 142-43 and of Ḥammūd Ibn Muḥammad Ibn ʻAlī al-Najdī′s *Al-Niẓām al-Naqdī al-Mamlūkī, 648-922 H./1250-1517 M.: Dirāsah Tārīkhīyah Ḥaḍārīyah* (Alexandria, 1993) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 208-10.

[4]*Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 135-37.

[5]*Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 145-48.

Al-Jihād al-Islāmī ḍidda al-Ṣalībīyīn wa-al-Mughūl fī al-ʻAṣr al-Mamlūkī, and in the reviews of Ḥayāt Nāṣir al-Hajjī's books.[6]

What kind of conclusions can be drawn from these findings? It seems to me that we find ourselves in an orientalist predicament. On the one hand, considering the postmodern reappraisal of the colonial past, generally it is politically incorrect to make derogatory remarks about the scholarly works of Arab historians. As a product of Western socialization, one is not only suspected of judging the "natives" as foolish and incompetent but also of reducing them again to the rank of mere objects to be studied. On the other hand, in the age of ongoing globalization the Western scientific approach carries the day. If science stands for a special kind of communication that has been (at least temporarily) established by scholars who dominate *this* discourse, it can be taken for granted that everyone who wants to be part of the game has to follow its rules. This is of course—in spite of the overall calling for authenticity—the endeavour of the majority of Arab scholars.

It is therefore legitimate to ask for the reasons for the insufficiencies in their books. Without getting into the details of the much-discussed internal discourse of the colonized, according to my own judgement, first and foremost three simple factors are responsible for the above-mentioned assertion: (1) the old-fashioned structure of higher education in most Arab countries leads to the adoption of strictly hierarchical patterns in which the students have to follow the beaten tracks of their teachers; (2) the overwhelming majority of Arab researchers have access neither to new publications in foreign languages nor to sources that have been edited and published in the West; (3) for that reason, many Arab colleagues have not had the opportunity to follow the early debates of the '60s and '70s over methodological and theoretical questions, nor is it possible today for them to keep abreast of the still ongoing discussion. In their works they take no account of the recent interchange of views in journals like *History and Theory, American Historical Review, Past & Present, Central European History, Annales; economies, societes, civilisations, Storia della storiografia, Journal for Interdisciplinary History* or *Journal of the History of Ideas*—just to mention a few.

What can be done in view of these circumstances? The East European historians who faced a similarly difficult situation before 1989—and some Russian scholars still do—delved into the accessible local archives and confined their efforts to writing articles and books with a microhistorical approach or to editing the material and adding a commentary and some introductory remarks. In limiting their ambitions

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[6]See John L. Meloy's review of her *Ṣuwar min al-Ḥaḍārah al-ʻArabīyah al-Islāmīyah fī Salṭanat al-Mamālīk* (Kuwayt, 1412/1992) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 149-50 and Li Guo's remarks on her *Anmāṭ min al-Ḥayāh al-Siyāsīyah wa-al-Iqtiṣādīyah wa-al-Ijtimāʻīyah fī Salṭanat al-Mamālīk fī al-Qarnayn al-Thāmin wa-al-Tāsiʻ al-Hijrīyayn/al-Rābiʻ ʻAshar wa-al-Khāmis ʻAshar al-Mīlādīyayn* (Kuwayt, 1995) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 222-25.

to this kind of research some of these East European scholars were able to build up an excellent international reputation. Perhaps Arab historical scholarship should also limit itself in this way, since all reviewers in *Mamlūk Studies Review* of text editions produced by Arab scholars not only warmly welcome these works but highly praise them. It seems that this indeed could be a way out of their predicament.[7]

IBN ZUNBUL, *Wāqi'at al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī ma'a Salīm al-'Uthmānī,* edited by 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Āmir (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1997). Pp. 209.

REVIEWED BY NABIL AL-TIKRITI, The University of Chicago

This edition—a slightly revised reprint of an earlier 1962 edition[1]—renders accessible to a wide audience one of only a few eyewitness accounts from the Mamluk side of the 1516-17 Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria, extending up to the Mamluk-turned-Ottoman governor Jānbirdī al-Ghazālī's abortive attempt to restore Mamluk independence in Syria following the accession of Sultan Süleyman (1520-66).[2] The author, Aḥmad Ibn Zunbul al-Rammāl al-Maḥallī (d. ca. 1552-53), by virtue of his position as a geomancer at the Mamluk court, appears to have been privy to many of the sensitive and tortured debates among the leading Mamluk amirs concerning how to deal with tens of thousands of Ottoman troops bearing down on Cairo armed with blisteringly effective small firearms and a train of cannon.

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[7]See Franz Rosenthal's praise of Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī's *Wajīz al-Kalām fī al-Dhayl 'alá Duwal al-Islām*, edited by Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf, 'Iṣām Fāris al-Ḥarastānī, and Aḥmad al-Khuṭaymī (Beirut, 1416/1995) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 202-8; Doris Behrens-Abouseif's remarks on the publication of a *waqfīyah* included in Rashīd Sa'd Rashīd al-Qaḥṭānī's *Awqāf al-Sulṭān al-Ashraf Sha'bān 'alá al-Ḥaramayn* (Riyadh, 1994) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 221-22; Li Guo's comments on *Le Manuscrit autograph d'*al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār *de Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn 'Alī 'Abd al-Qadir al-Maqrīzī (766-845 AH/1325* [sic]*-1441 AD),* edited by Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (London, 1416/1995) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 229-37; and Paul E. Walker's review of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir's *Al-Rawḍah al-Bahīyah al-Zāhirah fī Khiṭaṭ al-Mu'izzīyah al-Qāhirah,* edited by Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (Cairo, 1996) in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 2 (1998): 237-38.

[1]In this 1997 reissue of 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Āmir's 1962 edition, a confusing editor's postscript describing medieval Cairo was deleted. No more publishing details were available in the photocopy of the older edition examined by this reviewer.

[2]Names of Ottoman characters or authors are transliterated here according to the norms of modern Turkish.

The editor, ʿAbd al-Munʿim ʿĀmir, starts his introduction with a brief historical survey celebrating the Cairo-ruled Egyptian and Syrian unity of the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods and blaming corruption and divisiveness for bringing an end to that unity. Following this opening survey, ʿĀmir states that he has published the complete version of this text for the first time, basing his edition on a comparison of Dār al-Kutub MS 376 Taymūr (copied in 1654-55) with MS 714 Taymūr (copied in 1794-95) and an Alexandria University manuscript previously owned by a German library. The editor has discounted a significantly variant text, identified as Dār al-Kutub MS 44 Tārīkh.[3] The first part of this mysterious text was copied in 1921 from a text held by the Orthodox Coptic Patriarchate in Cairo, and is ″defective″ in many parts. The second part, however, was copied in 1657. Taken together, this text is far longer than the version common to the other three copies due to extensive poetic interludes as well as numerous digressions on ancient mythology and other such matters which ″have no connection to the events between Selim and al-Ghawrī″ (p. 11). In this reviewer′s experience, such digressions and poetic asides fit the style of a sixteenth-century geomancer′s account more closely than the rather straightforward version presented here. These digressions, combined with other incongruities based on a summary comparison of the first and last pages of MS 44 Tārīkh with the three editions, suggest that the text has not remained stable through its various recensions and editions.

In a possible sign of textual evolution, the narrative occasionally quotes Ibn Zunbul, stating ″al-Shaykh Aḥmad Ibn Zunbul al-Maḥallī has related″ (pp. 33, 100). In addition, at one point the narrative voice mentions in an offhand fashion that ″al-Qāḍī Aṣīl al-Ṭawīl always spoke of the strange and wonderful stories he had witnessed . . . and he died in 970 [1562-63]″ (p. 178). Finally, while discussing Süleyman′s accession to power the narrative states that ″he came to rule 48 years″ (p. 189). The combination of widely variant texts and references to people and events dating nearly fifteen years *after* Ibn Zunbul supposedly died leads this reviewer to speculate whether the text presented here might be an abridged version of Ibn Zunbul′s account produced at some point between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, with the variant MS 44 Tārīkh text perhaps closer to an ″original″ account.

While the narrative presents an omniscient point of view by including deliberations within the Ottoman camp, the story is told mostly from the Mamluk side. As such, this text can be compared with other contemporary sources covering the same set of events, such as Ibn Iyās′s (d. ca. 1524) celebrated chronicle[4] and

[3]For a listing of other extant manuscripts, see Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden, 1938), S2:409-10; and ibid., 2:384-85.

[4]Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden-Cairo,

the numerous Ottoman narrative histories from this period.[5] As the Ottoman sources offer far less detail concerning events and debates within the Mamluk camp, Ibn Zunbul's narrative is a valuable source to use as a check against the only other extant Mamluk source as well as a supplement to the more numerous Ottoman sources.

Much of the text reads like a morality play, intent on demonstrating the correct behavior of an amir. Both Khā'ir Beg and Jānbirdī al-Ghazālī are repeatedly condemned as traitors to their [Mamluk] "Circassian brotherhood." Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (1501-16) is blamed for neglecting his supporters, failing to control his forces, and playing the diplomatic game poorly. In one example, al-Ghawrī is said to have made a mistake of epic proportions: when his geomancer—probably Ibn Zunbul—informed al-Ghawrī that the next ruler's name would begin with the letter *sīn,* the wily sultan concluded that the Mamluk amir Sībāy[6] was out to get his crown rather than that the Ottoman Padishah Yavuz Selim (1512-20) was out to get his empire (p. 17). Meanwhile, the Mamluk amirs Kartbāy, Sībāy, Shārdbeg, and Tūmānbāy are portrayed through their respective noble actions and passionate monologues as courageous leaders who fought for their families, beliefs, and properties against impossible odds.

The "Rūmīs" [Ottomans] are portrayed as weak fighters who could not possibly have defeated the Mamluks without firearms or Mamluk treachery. Selim, despite the congratulatory opening *du'ā'* deleted in this edition, is castigated repeatedly—through dialogue rather than the narrator's own voice—for attacking fellow Muslim rulers without sufficient cause and for having the audacity to use firearms against chivalrous Muslim fighters. Without doubting the authenticity of such viewpoints in the original text, the concept of heroic forces defeated due to internal disunity while facing an unscrupulous and technologically superior invader from the north must have had a certain resonance with Egyptian readers when this edition first appeared in 1962.

1961-75).

[5]Some of the more valuable Ottoman narrative sources for these events include the Turkish *Selim-nâme*s by Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi (d. 1567), Hoca Sadettin Efendi (d. 1599), Kemal Paşazade (d. 1534), Sücûdi (fl. 1520), and Şükrü-i Bitlisi (fl. 1521); the Persian *Salīm-nāmah*s by Idrīs-i Bitlīsī (d. 1520), Kabīr ibn 'Uvays Qāḍīzādah (fl. 1518), and Ādā'ī-yi Shīrāzī (d. 1521); and Arabic equivalents by Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Lakhmī (fl. 1516) and Jār Allāh ibn Fahd al-Makkī (d. 1547). For descriptions of these and other works, see: Ahmed Uğur, *The Reign of Sultan Selîm I in the Light of the Selîm-name Literature*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen 109 (Berlin, 1985); and M. C. Şehabettin Tekindağ, "Selim-nâmeler," *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 (1970): 197-231.

[6]Sībāy was the Mamluk governor of Damascus who had rebelled against al-Ghawrī while governor of Aleppo in 1504-5. See P. M. Holt, "Ḳānṣawh al-Ghawrī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 4:552-53.

This text contains a number of memorable episodes, some of which suggest that Ibn Zunbul drew freely from older themes to embellish his morality tale. When the Mamluks send a militant and haughty delegation, Selim orders his men to shave their leader Mughulbāy's chin and parade him around on a donkey (p. 27). When a number of Sufi shaykhs who had supported al-Ghawrī were caught trying to flee after Marj Dābiq, Selim had all one thousand of their necks wrung, one by one and without distinction according to status (p. 50). At one point, a number of Mamluks who had accepted Selim's offer of safe passage were beheaded or strangled and thrown in the Nile (p. 68). After a couple of small victories over the Ottomans, Shārdbeg inscribes on the Pyramids ninety-two verses of Arabic poetry celebrating their heroism (pp. 93-98). In an episode reminiscent of Muḥammad ʻAlī Paşa's (r. 1805-48) famous 1811 Citadel massacre of Mamluks,[7] Jānbirdī al-Ghazālī launched his bid for independent rule in Damascus by inviting the local Ottoman commanders to a feast and having all of them murdered (p. 193).

Other passages offer valuable anecdotes concerning religious and ideological components of the conflict. Shārdbeg and a number of Ottoman troops trade curses labelling each other as "infidel louts" *[kuffār,ʻulūj]* and "profligates" *[fujjār]* (p. 124). The Ottoman battle formation is described as including seven banners carrying Quranic battle slogans and the names of Selim's forefathers, with a large white flag said to represent the "banner of Islam" (p. 135). Tūmānbāy accuses Selim of attacking Muslims without cause and contrasts the Ottomans' "worship of idols and crosses" with the Mamluks' "unitary Islam" (pp. 142-43). Confronted with these and similar accusations, Selim responds that he would not have attacked without a *fatwá* from the ulama authorizing an attack against those "sons of Christians with no lineage" who had helped the *rawāfiḍ* (pp. 166, 187). After Tūmānbāy was executed, his widow marries the Halveti Shaykh İbrahim Gülşeni's son (p. 178).

ʻĀmir's edition appears to follow closely an earlier edition published in Cairo in 1861-62. This edition, used extensively by David Ayalon for his study on Mamluk firearms,[8] was entitled *Tārīkh al-Sulṭān Salīm Khān ibn al-Sulṭān Bāyazīd Khān maʻa Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī Sulṭān Miṣr*. Note that in the century between these two editions, following the intervening Cairene political perceptions, al-Ghawrī's relative titular pre-eminence grew and Selim's fell. The only significant differences between these editions—other than the choice of title and the lack of footnotes in the earlier edition—come at the beginning and the end of the text.

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[7]E. R. Toledano, "Muḥammad ʻAlī Pasha," *EI*[2] 7:423-31.

[8]David Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society* (London, 195_), especially 86-97.

'Āmir deleted the following congratulatory *du'ā'* offered to Selim in the beginning of the text, present in the 1861-62 edition:[9]

> Praise be to God, Lord of the two worlds. May God bless our master Muḥammad, his family, and his companions. May God preserve this treatise treating the invasion of the paramount sultan, exalted khāqān, master of the slaves of all nations, master of sword and pen, deputy to God in this world, protector of the kings of the Arabs and 'Ajam, knight on the field of courage, guardian of the foundation of gallantry, killer of pharaohs and tyrants, Khusraw of the Khusraws and the Caesars, completer of Ottoman fortune, guide for sultanic codes, the sultan son of the sultan, Sultan Salīm Khān, son of Sultan Bāyazīd Khān with Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, sultan of Egypt, and the deeds contained in it . . .

While it may be true, as David Ayalon pointed out,[10] that this *du'ā'* does not fit the tenor of the rest of the treatise, it is striking that 'Āmir chose to delete it altogether. In addition, the 1997 edition reviewed here extends beyond the 1861-62 edition, which ends with Süleyman's 1521 conquest of Rhodes. This brief extension includes a summary of events and governors of Egypt until the death of 'Alī Bāshā al-Tawāshī.

There are some intriguing historical inaccuracies in the text which suggest that either the author, some of the copyists, or the editor(s) were not at all intimate with Ottoman developments of the time. On p. 22 the narrator states that Selim's brother Korkud (d. 1513) had fled and taken refuge with al-Ghawrī upon Selim's coming to power and ordering the execution of his brothers. According to the text, Selim requested his return, al-Ghawrī refused, and this was the earliest cause for enmity between the two rulers. In fact, Korkud had visited Cairo as al-Ghawrī's guest while ostensibly on the *ḥājj* and returned in 1511—a full year before Selim came to power.[11] Other persistent inaccuracies include the mistaken statements that Selim fled to "Kūfah" rather than "Kafah" after losing a skirmish with Bayezid's forces in 1512 and that Süleyman conquered "Russia" [Rūs] rather than "Rhodes" [Rūdus] when he came to power. There are also consistently peculiar spellings for

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[9]This *du'ā'* is also present in Yale MS Landberg 461.

[10]The "submissive eulogy to Sultan Selim I . . . is only to camouflage his real attitude. In reality the book reflects the agonized protest against a hated and despised conqueror of a humiliated military caste. . . ." Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 86.

[11]For a detailed account of the events leading up to Selim's coming to power, see Çağatay Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Padişah Oldu?" *Tarih Dergisi* 6/9 (1954): 53-90, 7/10 (1954): 117-42, 8/11-12 (1955): 185-200.

″Janissary″ *[al-Yakinjarīyah]* and ″Shahsuwār″ *[Shahwār]*. The fact that these peculiarities were present in both this edition and the 1861-62 edition suggest that ʻĀmir may have concentrated less on textual comparison than on reissuing a forgotten nineteenth-century edition.

In conclusion, ʻĀmir has provided neither a critical nor a mistake-free edition. The edition lacks critical apparatus. The footnotes, while useful for an understanding of Egyptian geography and certain military or administrative terms, are neither very extensive nor entirely accurate. Two footnotes in particular, one explaining that ″Edirne is a city in Shām″ (p. 24) and the other describing ″Jīlān″ [Gīlān] as ″a Persian clan which moved from around Persepolis *[Istakhr]* to one side of Baḥrayn on the Arab Gulf″ (p. 40)[12] struck this reviewer as indicative of careless editing. While any edition of such a rare and valuable text is to be welcomed in the fields of both Ottoman and Mamluk studies, the text itself does not appear to have remained consistent through the years and this edition has not been carefully prepared. In order for this source to be used with greater confidence, more careful philological and editing work remains to be done.

NAJM AL-DĪN AL-ṬARSŪSĪ, *Kitāb Tuḥfat al-Turk. Oeuvre de combat hanafite à Damas au XIVè siècle,* edited and translated by Mohamed Menasri (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1997). Pp. 47 + 209.

REVIEWED BY BERNADETTE MARTEL-THOUMIAN, Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier III

The starting point of this work is the textual edition of a tract, *Kitāb Tuḥfat al-Turk,* whose author, Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭarsūsī (d. 758/1357), completed his redaction in 1353. This edition is followed by an annotated translation, then an introduction situating the work in its religious as well as cultural and political context. The editor, Menasri, outlines the condition of the different juristic schools in Damascus under Mamluk control (Baḥrī period) and provides us with information concerning the author′s personal life—at any rate what he could gather about someone already dead at 37, in his prime. If one considers that the purpose of this work is to make known a text which is presently unedited, one cannot fathom why the presentation of the manuscript is so brief. Indeed, in the section dedicated

[12]It is clear from the context that the *region* Gīlān is meant—the coastal area south of the Caspian Sea in northern Iran.

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to this, Menasri even fails to indicate the number of pages (one realizes this from reading the Arabic text, in which 91 folios are marked). Similarly, he seems to be unaware of the existence of copies other than those he has used, which are held in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (they number two, pp. 54-56). The text does not seem to be furnished with a colophon, but the copyist's name is specified (p. 54). The date of the copy, quite frankly, has not been established, the author merely referring to Baron de Slane. These various points, which bear significantly on the framework of a document which Menasri styles a juridico-political manual, have not received any comment by him. How, further, does one evaluate the importance of this work if one cannot gauge its dissemination? It is difficult to imagine that this tract could have had a ″favorable reverberation in the service of the Mamluks″ if it remained secret. If that were not the case, one would like to know if the Shafi'i *madhhab,* sued by al-Ṭarsūsī repeatedly, reacted and counterattacked, and if comparable writings as a consequence have come to light (knowing, of course, that the author was to die just a few years later). Does the work of al-Ṭarsūsī reflect the positions of the Hanafi school of Damascus, for which he would have played in some fashion the role of spokesman? This issue seems the most interesting, for in reality, considering all those who were bound up with the government, be they military, civil, or religious, could al-Ṭarsūsī have been sufficiently naive to believe that his masters would be grateful for his precious advice and modify their criteria for recruitment when they were themselves the primary beneficiaries of certain practices (e.g., venality of office)? The study of biographies and chronicles shows that moralization had not become manifest but rather that prohibited practices had, for all intents and purposes, become a way of governance. If, as Menasri suggests, power appears to have affected the author′s position regarding the Hanafi *madhhab,* which seems to have acquired more importance, one can always ponder if the question was really one of honest compliance with the practices remonstrated against by Abū Ḥanīfah, or if personal self-interest carried all before it; but this, only a detailed study would allow us to know.

As a final comment, we must note that this tract is not "a hitherto unpublished text" as the abstract claims. It has been published by Riḍwān al-Sayyid (Beirut, 1992), based upon manuscripts from Berlin, the Umayyad Mosque, and Medina.

IBN ḤAJAR AL-ʻASQALĀNĪ, *Dīwān,* edited by Firdaws Nūr ʻAlī Ḥusayn (Madīnat Naṣr: Dār al-Fikr al-ʻArabī, 1416/1996). Pp. 358.

REVIEWED BY THOMAS BAUER, Universität Erlangen

In the ninth/fifteenth century seven "shooting stars" (*shuhub*) were sparkling in the heaven of poetry in Egypt, as we learn from al-Suyūṭī.[1] These *shuhub* were seven poets, all of them bearing the name Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad, who were counted among the best poets of their time. Due to the almost complete neglect of the Arabic literature of the Mamluk period, the names of these once much admired artists fell into oblivion and their works, despite their undisputable quality, are still in manuscript.[2] There is, however, one exception. One of these Shihāb al-Dīns was none other than Ibn Ḥajar al-ʻAsqalānī, whose fame as one of the most ingenious hadith-scholars of Islam has endured. Few people may, however, be acquainted with the fact that this same Ibn Ḥajar started his career as an *adīb* and poet, eulogizing the rulers of the Rasulid dynasty of the Yemen. Even later in his life, Ibn Ḥajar never ceased to appreciate and to compose poetry. The importance Ibn Ḥajar assigned to his own poetic production is shown by the fact that al-Suyūṭī mentions three different recensions of Ibn Ḥajar's *Dīwān,* obviously compiled by the author himself.[3] Of these three recensions at least two seem to have survived. A larger one, represented by a manuscript now in the Escorial, gives the poems in alphabetical order. It still awaits edition. The smaller recension is a selection of those poems that Ibn Ḥajar considered to be his best. The arrangement of the poems is rather sophisticated and shows again Ibn Ḥajar's care for his poetry. The poems are organized in seven chapters, each chapter comprising seven poems. The only exception is the last chapter, which consists of seventy epigrams (each comprising two lines), since it was Ibn Ḥajar's idea that ten epigrams would equal one long poem. As might have been expected, the book starts with poems in praise of the prophet *(nabawīyāt),* followed by a chapter comprising poems in praise of princes (mainly from the Rasulid dynasty) and the caliph *(mulūkīyāt),* and a chapter with poems in praise of other members of the military and civilian

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[1] *Naẓm al-ʻIqyān fī Aʻyān al-Aʻyān*, ed. Philip K. Hitti (New York, 1927), entries 20, 34, 37, 39, 42, 43.

[2] A major exception is the recent edition of two collections of *ghazal*-epigrams (a smaller one dedicated to girls, a larger one dedicated to young men) by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ḥijāzī, *Al-Kunnas al-Jawārī fī al-Ḥisān min al-Jawārī* and *Jannat al-Wildān fī al-Ḥisān min al-Ghilmān,* ed. Raḥāb ʻAkkāwī (Beirut, 1418/1998).

[3] See *Naẓm al-ʻIqyān,* 50. The editions mentioned in this review in all probability contain the recension mentioned by al-Suyūṭī under the title *Al-Sabʻah al-Sayyārah,* though this title does not appear in the title pages of the manuscripts.

élite *(fī al-amīrīyāt wa-al-ṣāḥibīyāt)*. The fourth chapter is dedicated to love poems *(al-ghazalīyāt)*. Chapter five is made up of poems of different genres, among them an interesting elegy on the death of Ibn Ḥajar's teacher al-Bulqīnī. The following chapter is dedicated to the *muwashshaḥāt*. Most of the epigrams that form the last chapter deal with love, just as do all of the *ghazalīyāt* and the *muwashshaḥāt*. It goes without saying that Ibn Ḥajar's book is of primary importance not only for literary history, but also for the history of culture and mentalities. Apart from this, the main themes of his poetry being praise and love, Ibn Ḥajar's *Dīwān* offers ample material for the study of Mamluk representations of social relations.

It was certainly mainly Ibn Ḥajar's fame as a scholar that first aroused the interest of modern scholars in his poetry. The outcome was that today Ibn Ḥajar is the only Mamluk poet whose poetry is accessible in more than one edition. To my knowledge, his *Dīwān* (in the shorter recension) has been edited at least four times. A Ph.D. thesis from 1962 by Syed Abul Fazi was not accessible to me. The edition by Ṣubḥī Rashād ʿAbd al-Karīm (Ṭanṭā: Dār al-Ṣaḥābah 1410/1990), certainly no philological masterpiece, is criticized in detail in the introduction of Nūr ʿAlī Ḥusayn's edition (pp. 4-7). So there remain two editions that deserve attention: (A) Nūr ʿAlī Ḥusayn's (the book under review), and (B) an edition by Shihāb al-Dīn Abū ʿAmr, published 1409/1988 in Beirut (Dār al-Dayyān) under the title *Uns al-Ḥujar fī Abyāt Ibn Ḥajar*. Both editions present a reliable text. (A) is based on six, (B) on three manuscripts. The greater textual basis of (A) is, however, not very significant, since the range of variants in the different manuscripts is fairly small. Most variants noted in the apparatus of (A) are either obvious misspellings or mere orthographic variants that hardly deserve to be mentioned. Unfortunately, (B) does not record variant readings. But whereas (A) gives scarcely any commentary on the poems, (B) is in fact, as its subtitle notes, a *sharḥ balāghī,* a commentary explaining the tropes used by the poet, whereby it becomes an absolutely indispensable tool for every serious reader of Ibn Ḥajar's poetry. Typical for most poets of this period, Ibn Ḥajar makes more than ample use of rhetorical devices, especially of the *tawriyah,* a form of *double entendre* that has been considered to be the most characteristic trait of Mamluk literature. Consequently, for the modern reader many lines of Mamluk poetry remain obscure without further explanation. Since even specialists of Arabic poetry are often confronted with insuperable difficulties, the number of good commentaries is fairly rare. Shihāb al-Dīn ʿAmr's commentary, however, is a masterpiece. The author (another "shooting star"!) not only explains the meaning of every difficult line, but gives an inventory of all rhetorical devices used by Ibn Ḥajar. His edition can thus be considered a valuable contribution to the growing interest in rhetoric in general and Arabic rhetoric in particular. Beyond helping to understand Ibn Ḥajar's verses,

'Amr's commentary may also be used as a textbook for the study of *balāghah* and *badī'*. Though Nūr 'Alī Ḥusayn's (poorly printed) edition is not completely superfluous (due to its critical apparatus), Shihāb al-Dīn 'Amr's beautiful and erudite edition and commentary remains first choice.

CHRISTOPHER S. TAYLOR, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous:* Ziyāra *and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1999). Pp. 264.

REVIEWED BY PAUL E. WALKER, Chicago, IL

Every visitor to Cairo is soon aware of the presence of the massive cemetery complexes that lie adjacent to the city on its eastern side just beneath the Muqaṭṭam plateau, particularly of the one known as al-Qarāfah, which stretches for a considerable distance southward from the Citadel. The placement there of thousands upon thousands of Muslim burials, and with them often impressive aboveground mausoleums, has always seemed as if it constituted a city in its own right. Inhabited from the beginning by a full complement of the living alongside the dead, it is a special feature of the Islamic urban pattern. But the meaning and role of the city of the dead, as the residence not merely of ordinary deceased individuals, is even more complex. Home to numerous saints who radiate blessings to those who live in close proximity and to those who come to visit them, the cemetery is a celebrated abode of righteousness and piety. Despite fairly consistent rejection from the earliest days by strictly traditional Islamic authorities and constantly renewed attacks against the practice, saint veneration—a universal phenomenon in any case—is an integral feature of local religious devotion. Having the saints nearby or available for ready visitation increases the sanctity of the neighborhood. It serves as well to draw pilgrims from farther away. And, although the importance of these sacred spaces on the border of the modern city remains active, for the medieval inhabitants both living near and being buried in the vicinity of the holy dead provided enormous religious benefits that are not quite so obvious now.

The intrinsic value of a cemetery like the Qarāfah is frequently made clear even in passing references in the standard chronicle histories of Egypt. But as the accumulation of saints and the number of their tombs in it grew over time, it increased to the point that a special literature was created to record the many loci of such special sanctity and to guide the increasing numbers of pilgrims by giving them rules of proper behavior in the presence of a saint (do not, for example, sit on the saint's tomb!) and a topographical inventory of the places to visit along

with a catalog of the miracles and other achievements of the person buried there. Of many such guides to the Qarāfah that are known to have been written, four in fact survive from the medieval period. They, together with other writings about saints and other examples of their veneration, offer an almost irresistible source for a sociology of Islamic practice, especial for the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries from which these particular guidebooks come.

However, although these subjects—cemeteries, tomb visitation, and saint veneration—possess their own natural fascination, and there exists a literature dedicated to them in this instance, shaping the information to serve a scholarly purpose cannot be an easy task. It is not simply that much about the subject involves what is often called ″folk″ or ″popular″ Islam but that the sources—the pilgrims′ guides—tell stories about a timeless ahistorical world that, although supposedly rooted in the real presence of individual persons, proves surprisingly imprecise and unspecific. It is not confined by time and space. The guides, for example, serve poorly as a tool to reconstruct the actual landscape of the Qarāfah in the period they cover, partly because the details in them seldom match the surviving physical evidence, but partly also because they, like other literature about saints, are not as much concerned with this world as with the next. The lives of saints tend to take on generic qualities; a saint here is much like a saint there, places blur and times merge.

Nevertheless, succumbing to the more obvious attractions of this material, Christopher Taylor in this fine study of the Qarāfah, of the literature about it, and the whole subject of saint veneration in late medieval Egypt, approaches the task with admirable resolution and skill. He has had *per force* to assume a mastery over the material and thereafter to extract from it a suitably scholarly analysis from which to fashion his sociology of this aspect of Islamic observance. Nicely written for the most part this book presents an often vivid picture of life in and around the tombs, of the city of the dead′s liminal role in the sacred universe of Muslims, and of the ambiguity of official and unofficial attitudes toward it. Basing himself primarily on the following four guidebooks: *Murshid al-Zuwwār ilá Qubūr al-Abrār* by Ibn ʻUthmān (d. 1218), *Miṣbāḥ al-Dayājī wa-Ghawth al-Rājī wa-Kahf al-Lājī* by Ibn al-Nāsikh (d. about 1297), *Al-Kawākib al-Sayyārah fī Tartīb al-Ziyārah fī al-Qarāfatayn al-Kubrá wa-al-Ṣughrá* by Ibn al-Zayyār (d. 1412), and *Tuḥfat al-Aḥbāb wa-Bughyat al-Ṭullāb fī al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Mazārāt wa-al-Tarājim wa-al-Biqāʻ al-Mubārakāt* by ʻAlī al-Sakhāwī (d. about 1483), he necessarily limits his perspective to the Qarāfah and to the time frame defined by these sources. The many additional cemeteries both in Egypt and in other Muslim countries, as well as funerary practice before and after this period, are not covered. Also, since his focal point is the Qarāfah and its saints, he largely avoids or stays away from the issue of saint veneration and visitation elsewhere. He did not

consider Christian and Jewish (nor ancient) practice, as another example, although in Egypt it parallels that of the Muslims.

In covering his several basic themes, he offers individual chapters on 1) the history, topography, and role of the Qarāfah itself; 2) the *ziyārah* as an institution; 3) notions of righteousness and piety; 4) *barakah,* miracles, and mediation as related to the saints and their tombs; 5) an analysis of the legal attack against visitation and veneration (Ibn Taymīyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah); and 6) the defense of them (al-Subkī). There are of course many limitations in his coverage of any one of these topics and it shows in his discussion of them. Such restrictions were in part dictated by the narrow scope that is inherent in the original sources from which he began. Some historians will, accordingly, find too little that is truly historical; those wanting a topography will be frustrated by the vagueness of the physical mapping; and even for the sociologists of religion the citation and consideration of parallel materials or theory could have been richer. Still, Taylor was able to extract from his material a highly interesting, often intriguing portrait of his subject and that represents an impressive success which will certainly please most readers, both the specialist and the non-specialist.

The Cambridge History of Egypt. Vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt, 640-1517*, edited by Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Pp. 645.

REVIEWED BY ROBERT IRWIN, London, England

When *The Cambridge History of Islam* came out in 1970 it attracted much criticism (and some praise). Edward Said, in *Orientalism,* was particularly cruel: "For hundreds of pages in volume 1, Islam is understood to mean an unrelieved chronology of battles, reigns, and deaths, rises and heydays, comings and passings, written for the most part in a ghastly monotone." One knows what he means. Happily standards in the writing of medieval Islamic history have improved quite a bit in the last few decades, and *The Cambridge History of Egypt* cannot fairly be accused of offering a monotonous chronology of the doings of exotic bigwigs. All the contributions to the new volume seek to address broad institutional, social, and ideological issues and, sometimes, methodological issues too. The contributions are argumentative, so that at times, as we shall see, *The Cambridge History of Egypt* appears to argue with itself, and that is no bad thing.

As Carl Petry notes, this is the first such survey in a European language to have been attempted since Gaston Wiet's *L'Égypte Arabe* (1937). Yet is Egypt a

self-standing, coherent unit with a continuous history? Some contributors, those dealing with the Fatimids and the Mamluks, are writing about the heart of a great empire. Other contributors, for example those dealing with Byzantines and the Ottomans, are discussing a province which was being milked of its resources. Thierry Bianquis, writing about the Tulunids and Ikhshidids, shows Egyptian history being shaped by developments in Iraq. At times, Egypt′s affairs are impossible to disentangle from those of Syria and under the Ayyubids Egyptian interests were often subordinated to those of Syria. It is not surprising then that Michael Chamberlain′s chapter on the Ayyubid period devotes a great deal of attention to Syria. Also Donald Little′s chapter pays almost as much attention to Syrian historians as it does to Egyptians.

Contributions dealing with the pre-Mamluk period may be dealt with selectively and briskly. Hugh Kennedy′s chapter on Egypt in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods stresses the degree to which we are dependent on the restricted coverage of the sources, both Muslim and Christian. It is also strong on institutional history and is heavily weighted towards the way in which the army in Egypt was paid for. Kennedy concludes by remarking that Egypt′s failure to develop a strong local elite prepared the way for the coming of the Turkish soldiery. The next chapter, ″Autonomous Egypt from Ibn Ṭūlūn to Kāfūr, 868-969″ by Bianquis is commendably wide-ranging and packed with vivid detail. I learned a lot about the Tulunids and Ikhshidids that I did not know before. Paul Walker′s ′The Ismāʻīlī Daʻwa and the Fāṭimid Caliphate′ has a tighter focus than its precursors. One gets the impression that the Fatimids liked Cairo well enough but it was not Baghdad. Yet their stooge Basāsīrī′s brief occupation of Baghdad proved to be the kiss of death for Fatimid ambitions. Paula A. Sanders writes about the Fatimid state. The main activity of the Fatimid army seems to have been to fight itself. Its endemic military factionalism seems to foreshadow that of the Mamluks. I note that in a later chapter on art and architecture, Irene A. Bierman refers to a major institutional change regarding the way *waqf* was centrally administered, which led to the rapid increase in the building of major monuments and pious endowments supported by rural revenues. According to Bierman, this took place around the time Badr al-Jamālī became vizier, i.e., ca. 1075. However, neither Walker nor Sanders discusses this phenomenon. (They do not discuss *waqf* at all.)

Although the next chapter by Michael Chamberlain, on Ayyubid Egypt, rightly pays a great deal of attention to Egypt′s relations with the Crusader regime, this has not been prepared for in the Fatimid chapters, so that we hear nothing in them about Amalric and Manuel II′s Egyptian project or, more generally, about the havoc wreaked by various Crusader expeditions in the Delta area prior to the coming of Saladin. Chamberlain′s chapter on the Ayyubids stresses the informality of office-holding and of social and administrative procedures in general. Men

made their own authority and offices were molded to fit the office-holder rather than the reverse. His argument is persuasive, yet his contribution is in marked contrast to later chapters on Mamluk history and society which, as might have been expected, emphasize the importance of hierarchy, discipline, and set career patterns.

The coverage of this first volume of *The Cambridge History of Egypt* is heavily weighted towards the Mamluk period. Linda Northrup's "The Baḥrī Mamlūk Sultanate, 1250-1390," while covering much ground that is uncontroversial, judiciously deals with two issues which are debatable and debated. In the first of these, regarding the degree of continuity between the Ayyubid military system and that of the Mamluks, she favors Ayalon's view of the essential continuity between the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk regimes. The institutional changes, whenever they did come, seem to have been carried out while the chroniclers' backs were turned, so that we are not sure whether they happened in the reign of Baybars, Qalāwūn, or later yet. The second issue is whether changes initiated by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn had a deleterious effect on the sultanate or not. According to Northrup, "the political, military and economic reforms instituted by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, although intended to strengthen his political and economic position, led in the long term to the end of Qalāwuñid and Kipchakī-Turkish rule." However, as Maynard Keynes once observed, "In the long run we are all dead," or, as Ibn Zunbul put it, "It is God who decrees an end to all dynasties." Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is indicted for presiding over "demamlukization" of the regime by appointing non-mamluks to senior military posts, but this was not necessarily a bad thing. He is also condemned for running down the Egyptian *ḥalqah,* but it seems likely that by the 1320s this was already a diminished and ineffective force (unlike the Syrian *ḥalqah*). The thesis that the *khānqāh* was used by the Mamluk regime to promote "moderate Sufism," as Northrup contends, remains unproven. However, these positions can be defended and doubtless will be defended in seminars and essays for years to come.

Incidentally, Northrup's chapter on the Baḥrī Mamluks starts by citing Ibn Khaldūn. (When shall we ever be free of this man and his brilliant insights?) Elsewhere, in the chapter on "Culture and Society in the Late Middle Ages," Jonathan Berkey refers to Ibn Khaldūn's views on the splendor and wealth of Cairo. Ibn Khaldūn thought that the Mamluks were marvellous and the saviors of Islam and he perceived the capital city over which they presided to be thriving. Ibn Khaldūn's enthusiasms are in cheerful contrast to al-Maqrīzī's later grumps and glooms. However, Ibn Khaldūn was in Egypt most of the time from 1382 until his death in 1406 and I note that, if we turn to Jean-Claude Garcin's chapter, "The regime of the Circassian Mamluks," we find that Ibn Khaldūn's Egyptian sojourn overlapped with a famine as well as not one but three plague epidemics.

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Both Barqūq and Faraj had to fight for their thrones and at times Cairo was the battlefield, as in 1497, ″when the battle line stretched from Fusṭāṭ in the south to Maṭarīyah in the north.″ It was a battle for control of not much more than the Delta region, for in the opening decades of the fifteenth century control of Upper Egypt had passed into the hands of the Bedouin. When Tīmūr invaded Syria in 1399, the Mamluk army was too disorganized to face him in open battle. In the light of all this, Ibn Khaldūn′s Pollyannaish approach towards the Mamluks seems misplaced.

Warren Schultz′s ″The monetary history of Egypt, 642-1517″ has an attractive rigor and iconoclastic bite. Because of its engagement with methodological issues, it can be recommended not just to Mamluk historians, but to anyone with an interest in pre-modern history. It can particularly be recommended to anyone who has cracked his or her skull trying to master Hennnequin′s long, dense, and fiercely argued papers on Islamic coins and currency problems. Irene A. Bierman′s ″Art and Architecture in the medieval period″ makes interesting points about urban topography and architecture. She is good on the history of the study of Egyptian architecture and, for example, she points out the damage done by the Comité de conservation des monuments de l′art arabe. However, the chapter is almost wholly devoted to architecture. The treatment of metalwork is perfunctory, glass is hardly mentioned, and miniatures and Mamluk carpets are not discussed at all. Berkey′s ″Culture and Society during the late Middle Ages″ pays more attention to these sorts of artifacts. Berkey, among other points of interest, stresses the piety and learning of a significant number of sultans and amirs and, more generally, the degree to which the military intermingled with civilians in the Mamluk period.

Berkey′s stress on the *gravitas* of at least some of the Mamluk elite is echoed in a different key by Garcin′s chapter on the history of the Circassian Mamluks. This is one of the best chapters in the book and makes many cogent points, but if there is one big argument he is advancing, it is, I think, that Mamluk politics at the top was much less violent and chaotic than it appeared to earlier historians such as Muir, Lane-Poole, and Wiet. He suggests that the ″sultanate was acquiring the appearance of a military magistrature, no longer threatened by the ambition of the amirs.″ Moreover, ″a new political mechanism had gradually been imposed: any amir who rose to be sultan had first to remove his predecessor′s recruits relying on the previous age group that had been kept waiting in the wings until that point, which marked their genuine entry into the political arena. The initial rhythm of Mamluk political life was thus much slowed down.″ Indeed, it is hardly an exaggeration to describe late medieval Egypt as a gerontocracy. Incidentally Garcin′s researches on Upper Egypt, published as *Un centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūṣ* (1976) can now be seen to have been one of the

most influential books on Mamluk Studies. Almost every contributor to *The Cambridge History of Egypt* makes some reference to Garcin's work on such matters as shifting trade routes in Upper Egypt, the contribution to intellectual life made by men from Qūṣ, the role of the Bedouin, and the eventual dominance of the Hawwārah over that region.

I think that Garcin exaggerates the incapacity of the last Mamluk sultans to innovate and I think Carl Petry thinks so too. In "The military institution and innovation in the late Mamluk period," he presents a convincing portrait of Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī as a thorough-going innovator. "Under trying circumstances, the military institution was capable of exploring creative ways of reconstituting its hegemony." Michael Winter, in his chapter on the Ottoman occupation, is more inclined to labor the alleged conservatism of the last generation of Mamluks. Winter remarks quite rightly that Ibn Zunbul "was not a reliable chronicler and his work is a kind of historical romance," but he spoils this by going on to observe that nevertheless "it is important as a genuine expression of the mamluks' view of themselves and their ethos." But why should a geomancer from Bahnasā who worked in the household of a sixteenth-century Ottoman pasha be taken as a *porte-parole valable* for the Mamluks? Winter claims that Ibn Zunbul, as the best exponent of the Mamluk military ethos, "regarded firearms as un-Islamic and unchivalrous." Yet all the evidence suggests that Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī and Tūmānbāy had no prejudice against guns. Indeed what doomed Tūmānbāy at the Battle of Raydanīyah was his over-reliance on artillery. It is tempting to rely on Ibn Zunbul, as otherwise the modern historian is almost entirely at the mercy of Ibn Iyās. The trouble with Ibn Iyās is that one cannot, as it were, walk round him, in order to discover what realities he may have been concealing. Ibn Iyās was certainly anti-Mamluk. (He did not realize that the Ottomans were going to be worse.) Although one cannot avoid using Ibn Iyās, nevertheless one can supplement his evidence with that of the Turkish chroniclers and this is what Winter has done in his valuable chapter.

In "Historiography of the Ayyubid and Mamluk epochs," Donald Little notes how Ibn Iyās shared the tendency of al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrībirdī to idealize the Baḥrī period. This is certainly true. Our view of Mamluk history would be transformed if Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī had maintained a servile court historian like Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, while Baybars I had been systematically denigrated by the carping of an *ʿālim* like Ibn Iyās. Although Little is chiefly concerned with chroniclers and biographers from the point of view of their value to the modern historian, he does also sometimes linger on their literary qualities as well (an approach pioneered by Ulrich Haarmann). On a minor point, Little states that Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir's topography of Cairo is lost. In fact it survives in the British Library, but unfortunately it turns out to be a rather brief and dull treatise. The original source or sources for so much of al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ* remain to be discovered.

Little notes that, though Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī Faḍā'il was a Copt, his chronicle cannot be seen as having been produced outside the Islamic tradition. Indeed "he occasionally copied Muslim religious formulae into his work!" The Islamization of the Coptic community is a leading theme of Terry G. Wilfong's "The non-Muslim communities; Christian communities." For example, Coptic men sought to impose controls on their women which mimicked those of the Muslim community. One consequence of the Islamization of Coptic culture is that it seems unsafe to deduce conversion to Islam on the basis of the adoption of Arab names. Although the chronology of Coptic conversion remains unclear, there is a perfect consensus among the contributors to this volume that the Copts suffered a catastrophic decline in their numbers and fortunes in the course of the fourteenth century.

In "Egypt in the world system of the later Middle Ages," R. Stephen Humphreys has drawn together common themes and places Egypt in a wider political and commercial context. There is very little agreement in this volume even about the broadest outlines of Egypt's commercial history. Humphreys argues that the destruction of the Crusader ports, while it crippled Syrian trade, had the advantage of channelling all the Mediterranean trade through Alexandria. On the other hand, Sanders believes that in the Fatimid period it was precisely the establishment of the Crusader states which led to a diversion of one of the main routes for international commerce from the Red Sea to the Nile Valley and that this was a leading source of Fatimid prosperity. Both Humphreys and Northrup seem to be implying that the spice trade only became an important part of the Mamluk economy in the Baḥrī Mamluk period. This is very likely true, though one does not get the impression that the spice trade ranked high in the thinking of Baybars or Qalāwūn or even al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. It is possible that Northrup takes an excessively bleak view of the Mamluk economy in the late fourteenth century. She states that there was "a shortage of specie" in this period, but it is hard to see why this should have been so, as most (or even all?) Europeans in this period were under the impression that the balance of trade in this period was very much in Egypt's favor. (Northrup here cites Abraham Udovitch, who in a brief survey article published in 1970 placed too much trust in al-Maqrīzī's *Ighāthah*). Schultz, on the other hand, states that by the end of the fourteenth century "both the numismatic and literary evidence indicates that there were many different types of precious metal coins in circulation." Northrup suggests that there was a lack of exports in the late fourteenth century. This seems intrinsically unlikely, given the granting to Venice of Papal licenses to trade with Egypt from the 1340s onwards. Venice's regular convoys to Egypt only began in 1346. Eliyahu Ashtor in *The Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (1983) identified the period from 1291 to 1344 as the years of commercial crisis. By contrast, he presented the period from 1345 to 1421 as a boom period. It does seem likely that the volume and importance of the

spice trade increased yet further under the Circassians. Garcin suggests that threats posed to the overland routes by the wars of Tīmūr and the Turkomans benefited Red Sea commerce and consequently the coffers of the sultans. Therefore a model of Mamluk economic (or military, or social) history in which everything just gets worse and worse is implausible.

As can be seen from the above, there is plenty in *The Cambridge History of Egypt* to engage the mind and interest of anyone with a background in Mamluk studies. For students coming new to the subject, it will also of course serve as a work of reference and a history which, besides engaging with complex social and institutional issues, tells the essential chronological story. It is an immensely valuable work, a compendium of state-of-the-art syntheses of research in the field. Still it is a pity that there is no chapter on Egyptian literature. It is sad not to see any sustained discussion of the works of Bahā' al-Dīn Zuhayr, Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Ibn Dāniyāl, Ibn Sūdūn, and others. Finally, there is the odd charming misprint. On page 313, we learn of the ″building by al-Ghawrī alongside the Nilometer (*Miqyās*) of a royal palace where a veil fluttering at a widow announced that the flood had reached its maximum . . .″ This reminds me of a friend who, while he was working on a *Time-Life History* part-work, typed in the sentence ″All of Egypt′s prosperity depends upon the headwaters of the Nile,″ only to have it corrected by his spell-checker to ″All of Egypt′s prosperity depends upon the headwaiters of the Nile.″