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These were the main Republic cities in Italy, but the less important Republic of Ragusa, competitor of Venice in the late Middle Ages, also had contacts with other Mediterranean powers and it is not surprising to find within the holdings of the State Archives of this city (now Dubrovnik) three Mamluk documents, all of which have been published.<sup>69</sup>

Closing this panorama of the main archives collections in Europe, a word must be said about the Archives of Castilla and Aragon (Barcelona). Mamluk documents preserved in this collection reveal the extent of the relations established between the Mamluk state and the West. These consist of nine treaties concluded with the King of Castilla and Aragon. Some of them were examined by Atiya for his study on the relations between Aragon and Egypt during the second and third

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<sup>65</sup> Amari, *I diplomi arabi del R. Archivio fiorentino*; idem, "Nuovi ricordi arabici su la storia di Genova"; Joseph Karabacek, "Arabische Beiträge zur genuesischen Geschichte," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 1 (1887): 33–56. See also Charles Clermont-Ganneau, "Explication d'un passage du traité conclu entre le sultan Qelaoun et les Génois," in idem, *Recueil d'archéologie orientale*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1888), 219–23.

<sup>66</sup> John Wansbrough, "The Safe-Conduct in Muslim Chancery Practice," *BSOAS* 34 (1971): 20–35.

<sup>67</sup> John Wansbrough, "A Mamlūk Commercial Treaty Concluded with the Republic of Florence 894/1489," in *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, ed. S. M. Stern (Oxford, 1965), 39–79, pl. XX–XXIX.

<sup>68</sup> John Wansbrough, "Venice and Florence in the Mamluk Commercial Privileges," *BSOAS* 28 (1965): 483–523.

<sup>69</sup> Gliša Elezović, *Turski spomenici* (Belgrade, 1952), 1:2:168, 175–76; Besim Korkut, *Arapski dokumenti u državnom arhivu u Dubrovniku* (Al-Wathā'iq al-'arabīyah fī Dār al-Maḥfūzāt bi-madīnat Dūbrūwnīk), vol. 1, pt. 3, *Osnivanje Dubrovačkog Konsulata u Aleksandriji*, Posebna Izdanja (Orientalni Institut u Sarajevu) no. 3 (Sarajevo, 1969).

reigns of Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn,<sup>70</sup> but not without mistakes in the dating and reading, as has been demonstrated.<sup>71</sup> Later, these documents were published extensively in a general catalogue of the archives collection.<sup>72</sup>

## II. Library Collections

Besides these archival collections where the documents have been kept since their issue, there exist other small collections in Europe, particularly in libraries, where important collections of papyri are preserved.<sup>73</sup> The most important collection of Arabic papyri outside Egypt is the Erzherzog Rainer Sammlung at the National Library in Vienna. Here, 235 documents on paper have been discovered and studied by Werner Diem in three different catalogues according to their subject (business letters, private letters, and state letters).<sup>74</sup> A few of them are dated, but most are not and pose a problem since their identification as belonging to the Mamluk period must rely mainly on paleographical elements and philological

<sup>70</sup>Aziz Suryal Atiya, *Egypt and Aragon: Embassies and Diplomatic Correspondence between A.D. 1300 and 1330*, *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 23:7 (Leipzig, 1938). See also Amari, "Il trattato stipulato da Giacomo II d'Aragona;" Peter M. Holt, "The Mamluk Sultanate and Aragon: The Treaties of 689/1290 and 692/1293," *Tārīḥ* 2 (1992): 105–18 (reprinted in his *Early Mamluk Diplomacy*).

<sup>71</sup>Peter M. Holt, "Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's Letter to a Spanish Ruler in 699/1300," *Al-Masāq* 3 (1990): 23–29.

<sup>72</sup>*Los documentos árabes diplomáticos del Archivo de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. and trans. Maximiliano A. Alarcón y Santón and Ramón García de Linares, Publicaciones de las escuelas de estudios árabes de Madrid y Granada, series C., no. 1 (Madrid, 1940). The following publication is now useless: Antonio de Capmany y de Montpalau, *Antiguos tratados de paces y alianzas entre algunos reyes de Aragón y diferentes príncipes infieles de Asia y África, desde el siglo XIII hasta el XV* (Madrid, 1786).

<sup>73</sup>For an overview of the collections and their contents, with specific references to the published material, see Adolf Grohmann, *Einführung und Chrestomathie zur arabischen Papyruskunde*, vol. 1, *Einführung*, Monografie Archiv Orientalní, vol. 13 (Prague, 1954); *Chrestomathie de papyrologie arabe*, ed. Adolf Grohmann and Raif Georges Khoury, *Handbuch der Orientalistik* (Leiden, 1993).

<sup>74</sup>Werner Diem, *Arabische Geschäftsbriefe des 10. bis 14. Jahrhunderts aus der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien*, *Documenta Arabica antiqua*, no. 1 (Wiesbaden, 1995); idem, *Arabische Privatbriefe des 9. bis 15. Jahrhunderts aus der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien*, *Documenta Arabica antiqua*, no. 2 (Wiesbaden, 1996); idem, *Arabische amtliche Briefe des 10. bis 16. Jahrhunderts aus der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien*, *Documenta Arabica antiqua*, no. 3 (Wiesbaden, 1996); idem, "Dringende Bitte aus dem bedrängten Aleppo um Truppen: Anmerkungen zur Form des mamlûkischen Dienstschreibens," in *Urkunden und Urkundenformulare im klassischen Altertum und in den orientalischen Kulturen*, ed. Raif Georges Khoury (Heidelberg, 1999), 143–45 (study of doc. 37 already published in his *Arabische amtliche Briefe*); idem, "Vier arabische Rechtsurkunden aus dem Ägypten des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts," *Der Islam* 72 (1995): 193–257.

analysis. Diem has been criticized for his working method by Yūsuf Rāḡib, as too hasty. Rāḡib's critiques<sup>75</sup> may be accepted to a certain extent, but there is no doubt that what is involved here is a settling of scores which goes beyond scientific work. Diem may be criticized for his classification (some documents that appear in a given volume are not really of this nature), his readings, and/or his translations,<sup>76</sup> but he must be commended for having published each time a volume of plates which illustrates all the documents, giving the reader the opportunity to verify his results. Hasty as he may have been, his work has the merit of putting at the disposal of scholars the majority of the Mamluk documents held in Vienna in a relatively short time.

The Cambridge University Library is known for its large collection of Geniza documents. Besides this, it also holds the Michaelides collection of papyri and papers. It was among these that Richards discovered a scroll acquired from Christie's in 1971, the origin of which is unknown. The document is the product of a series of court procedures in Damascus with various acts stretching over a period of one hundred eighty years from 1366 to 1546. As Richards has shown in his study,<sup>77</sup> it deals essentially with a *waqf* in favor of the Yūnusīyah Sufi order in Damascus, the terms of which were confirmed during this long period. Later on, he published an article about a rare type of document issued by the army bureau<sup>78</sup> (called *murabba'*: square decree) of which only nine examples were attested in the Ḥaram collection.

Undoubtedly, some documents, small in number, must have found their way into other library collections. Even the Cyril and Methodus Library in Sofia, which preserves several hundred Arabic and Turkish documents dating to the Ottoman period, owns a copy of a *daftar* regarding *waqf* properties in Beirut, stretching over a period of 250 years (1274–1544).<sup>79</sup> Ottoman copies of documents pertaining to the Mamluk period are as such significant and cannot be disregarded on the basis of chronology.

<sup>75</sup>*Bulletin critique des Annales islamologiques* 14 (1997): 171–79; *ibid.*, 15 (1998): 194–97; *ibid.*, 16 (2000): 185–86.

<sup>76</sup>To state that a reading and the translation offered, whoever did them, are never definitive is probably depressing for young students, yet unavoidable.

<sup>77</sup>Donald S. Richards, "A Damascus Scroll Relating to a Waqf for the Yūnusiyya," *JRAS* (1990): 267–81.

<sup>78</sup>Donald S. Richards, "A Mamlūk Emir's 'Square' Decree," *BSOAS* 54 (1991): 63–67.

<sup>79</sup>Doc. F.278, a.u. 1. See Stoyanka Kenderova, *Opis na dokumentite na arabski ezik, zapazeni u orientalskiya otdel na narodnata biblioteka 'Kiril i Metodii' u Sofiya XIII–XX v.* (Fihris al-wathā'iq bi-al-lughah al-'arabīyah al-mahfūzah fī al-qism al-sharqī ladā al-maktabah al-waṭanīyah "Kīrīl wa-Mītūdī"—Šūfyā: al-qarn al-thālith 'ashar–al-qarn al-'ishrīn) (Sofia, 1984). It was studied by Vera Mutafchieva, "On the problem of landowning in Syria in the XIV–XVI c.," *Vizantijski vremennik* 26 (1965): 58–66.

### III. Museum Collections

Museum collections undoubtedly hold Mamluk documents. However, they are seldom catalogued and known (Louvre, British Museum, etc.).<sup>80</sup> Recently, D. S. Richards learned of the existence of a scroll preserved at the Oriental Institute Museum of Chicago, which obtained it in 1929 from Bernhard Moritz.<sup>81</sup> His study has shown that it deals with Frankish commercial practice at Tripoli in 1513. It is quite a rare chancery document as it was addressed to a Muslim official. Another document, still unpublished (OIM 13789), was issued in the reign of Ṭūmān Bāy (dated to 12 Muḥarram 922/17 February 1516) and regards the trade of the Venetians in Alexandria and other ports.<sup>82</sup>

The University of Pennsylvania Museum is also worthy of mention as it holds four letters written by Mamluk officers. These are scattered in the middle of a collection of Arabic papyri catalogued by Levi della Vida.<sup>83</sup> The author provided in an appendix a reproduction of one of these letters, which served as the basis for an edition by Diem.<sup>84</sup> However, the remaining three still await study.

### IV. Private Collections

Some documents find their way into private hands. To get a clear idea of these is almost impossible. If one surfaces, it is always by chance and depends on the collector's good will. Most of the time, the collection has to be sold and bought by an official institution to get an exact accounting of its contents. One example of the first reality is illustrated by Denise Rémondon, who owned a Mamluk document. This was fortunately published by Cahen, who got a photograph from the owner before her death.<sup>85</sup> The document is interesting as it deals with a short news item of a type rarely reported by the chronicles regarding the murder of three persons

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<sup>80</sup>In addition to the census of libraries and museum collections of papyri surveyed by Grohmann and Khoury (*Chrestomathie de papyrologie arabe*), consult now for the U.S.A. Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "North American Papyrus Collections Revisited," *Al-Bardiyyat, Newsletter of the International Society of Arabic Papyrology* 1 (2002–3): 11–19, where references to documents on paper, some of them from the Mamluk period, are found.

<sup>81</sup>Donald S. Richards, "A Late Mamluk Document Concerning Frankish Commercial Practice at Tripoli," *BSOAS* 62 (1999): 21–35.

<sup>82</sup>Gladys Frantz-Murphy, who shared this information with me, intends to publish the document in question.

<sup>83</sup>Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *Arabic Papyri in the University Museum in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)*, Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, no. 378 (Rome, 1981).

<sup>84</sup>Werner Diem, "Ein mamlükischer Brief aus der Sammlung des University Museum in Philadelphia," *Le Muséon* 99 (1986): 131–43.

<sup>85</sup>Claude Cahen et al., "Un fait divers au temps des Mamluks," *Arabica* 25 (1978): 198–202.

in the countryside of Egypt. An order is given to arrest the perpetrators and bring them to Cairo, but the accused prefer to pay blood money instead. Since the death of its owner it has been impossible to discover what has become of this document.

### *MUSLIM COUNTRIES*

#### I. Non-Muslim Collections and Archives

##### A. Egypt

##### 1. Geniza (Ben Ezra Synagogue, Cairo)

The word *geniza* designates in Hebrew a repository of discarded writings. It was a common feature among certain Jewish communities not to discard papers where the name of God was written. This explains why, for centuries, the Jewish community of Old Cairo gathered all the documents considered obsolete in a particular repository. These consist of religious manuscripts as well as private documents regarding merchants, although some official documents from the chancery were also recovered among them.<sup>86</sup> This huge trove was packed into a room (Geniza) during a period that stretches from the tenth to the fifteenth century (mainly to the thirteenth century). After this time, its existence was forgotten until 1890, when it was rediscovered. It gave an extraordinary impetus to Jewish studies in general, not only for Egypt, but also for all the Mediterranean area and even Asia (India). Almost half a million scraps of papers and manuscripts, sometimes almost complete, were retrieved from this room.<sup>87</sup> The majority are written in Hebrew or in Judaeo-Arabic. However, some 10,000 scraps of paper are in Arabic characters. Unfortunately for researchers (or fortunately, because who knows what would have happened to these documents otherwise?), most of them were bought by private collectors who gave them, or bequeathed them, to libraries in Europe and North America. Among these, two took the lion's share: the Firkovitch collection (St. Petersburg), which is not relevant for our topic, and the Taylor-Schechter collection in Cambridge (Cambridge University Library).<sup>88</sup> This dispersal does not facilitate their consultation as well as the fact that, being mostly scraps of paper, the cataloguing work is still in progress. Be that as it may, study has begun and to date has thrown new light on the religious, economic, and social life of the

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<sup>86</sup>For this last category, it remains questionable how they found their way into private hands, in this case Jewish. A convincing answer would be the reason invoked in the Introduction, pp. 17–18.

<sup>87</sup>Shlomo Dov Goitein, "The Documents of the Cairo Geniza as a Source for Mediterranean Social History," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 80 (1960): 91–100.

<sup>88</sup>For a good introduction to the Cambridge collection of Genizah papers, see now Stefan C. Reif, *A Jewish Archive from Old Cairo: The History of Cambridge University's Genizah Collection* (Richmond, 2000), and idem, "A Centennial Assessment of Genizah Studies," in *The Cambridge Genizah Collections: Their Contents and Significance*, ed. idem and Shulamit Reif, Cambridge University Library Genizah Series, no. 1 (Cambridge, 2002), 1–35.

medieval Jews in the Orient, and more particularly on the middle class which is rarely mentioned in the contemporary chronicles.<sup>89</sup> Some dated, or datable, documents go back to the Mamluk period, as has been demonstrated by S. D. Goitein in an article published in 1972, which has remained little known because it is in Hebrew.<sup>90</sup> Undoubtedly, Goitein is the scholar most familiar with these Geniza documents of a private nature, and his masterly study in several volumes is a prerequisite for anyone working on the Mediterranean societies in the Middle Ages (mainly eleventh–thirteenth centuries).<sup>91</sup> This work is essential reading, even for Mamlukists, as the author makes reference here and there to documents from this period.<sup>92</sup> A similar assessment can be made of Ashtor's book on the evolution of prices.<sup>93</sup> Unfortunately, most of the documents relevant for us are still awaiting publication and are not easily available for consultation. A list of these documents would be most welcome. Meanwhile, the researcher has at his disposal bibliographies

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<sup>89</sup>Besides the essential study of S. D. Goitein (see below), the most recent results are to be found in David Marmer, "Patrilocal Residence and Jewish Court Documents in Medieval Cairo," in *Judaism and Islam: Boundaries, Communication and Interaction: Essays in Honor of William M. Brinner*, ed. Benjamin H. Hary et al., Brill's Series in Jewish Studies, no. 27 (Leiden, 2000), 67–82; Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza: Legal Tradition and Community Life in Mediaeval Egypt and Palestine*, Etudes sur le judaïsme médiéval, no. 20 (Leiden, 1998).

<sup>90</sup>Shlomo Dov Goitein, "Geniza Documents from the Mamluk Period" (in Hebrew; English summary), *Tarbiz* 41 (1972): 59–81. For a more recent, but general, assessment of the Arabic documents for all periods in the Geniza collection, see Geoffrey Khan, "Arabic Documents in the Cairo Genizah," *Bulletin of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo* 21 (1997): 23–25.

<sup>91</sup>Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: the Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkeley, 1967–93); Werner Diem and Hans-Peter Radenberg, *A Dictionary of the Arabic Material of S. D. Goitein's "A Mediterranean Society"* (Wiesbaden, 1994).

<sup>92</sup>See also Shlomo Dov Goitein, "The Exchange Rate of Gold and Silver Money in Fatimid and Ayyubid Times: A Preliminary Study of the Relevant Geniza Material," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 8 (1965): 1–46, where, despite the chronological span indicated in the title, nine documents from the Mamluk period are studied.

<sup>93</sup>Eliyahu Ashtor, *Histoire des prix et des salaires dans l'Orient médiéval*, Monnaie, prix, conjoncture, no. 8 (Paris, 1969). See also idem, *History of the Jews in Egypt and Syria under the Rule of the Mamluks*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem, 1970), which studies 74 documents that are undated, but that Ashtor was able to date to the Mamluk period due to exchange rates between dinars and dirhams; and more recently, Avraham L. Udovitch, "L'énigme d'Alexandrie: sa position au moyen âge d'après les documents de la Geniza du Caire," *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 46 (1987): 71–79; idem, "Medieval Alexandria: Some Evidence from the Cairo Genizah Documents," in *Alexandria and Alexandrianism: Papers Delivered at a Symposium Organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities and held at the Museum, April 22–25, 1993* (Malibu, 1996), 273–84.

published regularly for the Cambridge collections (the most recent was published by Reif in 1988 and covers the period stretching from 1896 to 1980),<sup>94</sup> albeit the main criticism I would make is that the material is arranged according to the shelfmark of the documents studied. This means that it allows one to know whether a document has been published or not, but it presupposes that one knows what one is searching for. It is thus like squaring the circle. Fortunately, in 1993, Geoffrey Khan published a book devoted to the study of 159 administrative and legal documents in Arabic in the Cambridge collection.<sup>95</sup> Among them, some are dated or datable to the Mamluk period (business and personal correspondence, wills, contracts of all kinds, bills of account, etc.), the most recent one being dated to 697/1298. The only criticism to be made, for which the author must surely not be blamed, rather the commercial editor, regards the small number (22) of documents reproduced, which does not facilitate further study by other scholars. Other documents from the Mamluk period are still awaiting publication.

## 2. Monastery of Saint Catherine (Mount Sinai)

This is an old story, too, in the sense that the discovery of the treasures it holds goes back to the nineteenth century. In fact, the first who paid attention to it was a traveller, Konstantin Tischendorf. During his travels in the East in 1844 and 1859, he visited the monastery, where he was shown a manuscript which was to revolutionize the field of Biblical studies, and was to be known later on as the *codex sinaiticus* (Greek translation of the Bible dated to the fourth century A.D.). Afterwards, a Prussian mission was sent in 1914 under the direction of Carl Schmidt and Bernhard Moritz. Photographs were taken not only of manuscripts, but also of documents in Arabic and Turkish. Unfortunately, despite the publication of the results of this mission,<sup>96</sup> all the photographs were destroyed in St. Petersburg during the First World War. The treasures of the monastery had to await an American mission in 1950 which resulted in the microfilming and measuring of all the manuscripts and documents which were presented to the staff by the librarian, some of them being discovered by A. S. Atiya. Atiya published a handlist

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<sup>94</sup>*Published Material from the Cambridge Genizah Collections: A Bibliography, 1896–1980*, ed. Stefan C. Reif et al. (Cambridge-New York, 1988).

<sup>95</sup>Geoffrey Khan, *Arabic Legal and Administrative Documents in the Cambridge Genizah Collections* (Cambridge, 1993).

<sup>96</sup>See particularly B. Moritz, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Sinaiklosters im Mittelalter nach arabischen Quellen*, Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, no. 4 (Berlin, 1918).

(this is not the only one<sup>97</sup>) in 1955 where 1,072 Arabic documents (from the Fatimid down to the Ottoman period) are mentioned, which makes it the most important collection of chancery documents for Islam.

However, there is a caveat, since these documents deal exclusively with the affairs of the monastery, meaning that they were issued for the benefit of non-Muslims by the successive chanceries. Nevertheless, this is a remarkable group of different kinds of official and private documents for the dynasties which succeeded each other in Egypt. Fortunately, in this case, the whole collection has been made widely available to researchers as various sets of the microfilms were distributed (Egypt, North America, and Europe). On the other hand, scholars drew attention to the importance of this collection very early, like Hans R. Roemer, who wrote at least four articles on this topic from 1957 to 1981.<sup>98</sup> He also succeeded in convincing some of his students to prepare Ph.D. theses on various aspects (Ayyubid and Ottoman documents in Arabic and Turkish<sup>99</sup>). What immediately attracted scholars were the decrees issued by the chancery bureau in answer to petitions sent by the monks to the sultan regarding problems they faced with the local authorities or populations. Their interest lies in the fact that some of the petitions have been preserved as the decree was sometimes written on the back of it. Decrees of the Mamluk period are particularly significant in this collection since they were issued

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<sup>97</sup> Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai: A Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts and Scrolls Microfilmed in the Library of the Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai* (Baltimore, 1955); Kenneth W. Clark, *Checklist of Manuscripts in St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Microfilmed for the Library of Congress, 1950* (Washington, D.C., 1952); Kamil Murad, *Catalogue of All Manuscripts in the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai* (Wiesbaden, 1970). See further Aḥmad Muḥammad 'Īsá, "Makḥṭūṭāt wa-Wathā'iq Dayr Sānt Kātarīn," *Majallat al-Jam'īyah al-Miṣrīyah lil-Dirāsāt al-Tārikhīyah* 5 (1956): 105–24, where reproductions of several of the sultans' mottos ('*alāmah*') are provided, completing those published by Atiya, *Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*.

<sup>98</sup> Roemer, "The Sinai Documents," 381–91; idem, "Sinai-Urkunden zur Geschichte der islamischen Welt: Aufgaben und Stand der Forschung," in *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients: Festschrift für Bertold Spuler zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. idem and Albrecht Noth (Leiden, 1981), 321–36; idem, "Über Urkunden zur Geschichte Ägyptens und Persiens in islamischen Zeit," *ZDMG* 107 (1957): 519–38; idem, "Documents et archives de l'Égypte islamique"; idem, "Christliche Klosterarchive in der islamischen Welt," in *Der Orient in der Forschung: Festschrift für Otto Spies zum 5. April 1966*, ed. Wilhelm Hoenerbach (Wiesbaden, 1967), 543–56.

<sup>99</sup> Horst-Adolf Hein, *Beiträge zur ayyubidischen Diplomatie*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, no. 8 (Freiburg, 1971); Klaus Schwarz, *Osmanische Sultansurkunden des Sinai-Klosters in türkischer Sprache*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, no. 7 (Freiburg, 1970); Robert Humbsch, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des osmanischen Ägyptens nach arabischen Sultans- und Statthalterurkunden des Sinai-Klosters*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, no. 39 (Freiburg, 1976); and also Elias Khedoori, "Charters and Privileges granted by the Fāṭimids and Mamlūks to St. Catherine's Monastery of Tūr Sinai (ca. 500 to 900 A.H.)," M.A. thesis, University of Manchester, 1958.



under the rule of no less than 20 sultans and cover quite comprehensively the whole period, with only a few small gaps. This gives us the opportunity to follow how a particular kind of document evolved over time through the different Egyptian dynasties. Thanks to this, the system of *mazālim* in Egypt during the three periods (Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk) is better understood.<sup>100</sup> S. M. Stern's pioneering work on the study of this kind of document, within a broad context which took into account other periods and countries, especially for the diplomatic commentaries, has led the way.<sup>101</sup> The decrees from the Mamluk period were studied by Hans Ernst in his Ph.D. thesis, published in 1960. He edited and translated all the decrees of the given period he had knowledge about, basing himself on Atiya's catalogue (although, as already mentioned, others exist).<sup>102</sup> However, in some cases, Atiya misread the dates of documents, which means that some of them were not considered by Ernst. Qāsim al-Sāmarrā'ī published in 1990 an article on one of these neglected decrees which was in fact issued by the first Mamluk sultan, Aybak!<sup>103</sup> Besides this, Ernst's book has been the object of criticism mainly for his meagre diplomatic commentary, due to the fact that he was unable to read most of the confirmation formulas of the various bureaux, and for the lack of reproductions (this last is less fair as Ernst had to publish his thesis at his own expense before presenting it). His work must be read in the light of Stern's review article,<sup>104</sup> where he carefully studied three of the petitions and gave a full diplomatic commentary. Since Stern's premature death, other scholars, like D.

<sup>100</sup>Jørgen S. Nielsen, *Secular Justice in an Islamic State: Mazālim under the Bahrī Mamlūks, 662/1264–789/1387*, Uitgaven van het Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te İstanbul, no. 55 (Leiden, 1985).

<sup>101</sup>Samuel Miklos Stern, "Two Ayyūbid Decrees from Sinai," in *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, ed. idem, Oriental Studies, no. 3 (Oxford, 1965), 9–38 + pl. I–XIX; idem, *Fāṭimid Decrees: Original Documents from the Fāṭimid Chancery* (London, 1964).

<sup>102</sup>Hans Ernst, *Die mamlukischen Sultansurkunden des Sinai-Klosters* (Wiesbaden, 1960). Doc. XXI was also published later by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, "Marsūm al-Sulṭān Barqūq ilā Ruḥbān Dayr Sānt Kātarīn bi-Sīnā': Dirāsah wa-Nashr wa-Taḥqīq," *Majallat Jāmi'at al-Qāhīrah bi-al-Kharṭūm* 5 (1974): 83–113. A comparison with Ernst's reading of the decree shows that Amīn's work is not trustworthy, although it was published fourteen years later.

<sup>103</sup>Qāsim al-Sāmarrā'ī, "A Unique Mamluk Document of al-Malik al-Mu'izz Aybak al-Turkumānī al-Šālihī, the first Mamluk Sultan of Egypt, from the Monastery of Sinai," *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 21 (1990): 195–211 + pl. IV–VII. The document was dated by Atiya (*The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*, no. 29) to 701 instead of [6]51. According to al-Sāmarrā'ī, no. 964 in Atiya's handlist (dated to 861 instead of 860) is also missing in Ernst's book.

<sup>104</sup>Samuel Miklos Stern, "Petitions from the Mamlūk Period (Notes on the Mamlūk Documents from Sinai)," *BSOAS* 29 (1966): 233–76; reprinted in idem, *Coins and Documents from the Medieval Middle East*, Collected Studies, no. 238 (London, 1986).

S. Richards and Geoffrey Khan, have followed in his footsteps and have shed new light on the system of petitions.<sup>105</sup>

This aspect of the royal chancery (*dīwān al-inshā'*) has thus been revealed, even if our knowledge of it is based only on *dhimmī* petitions. The functioning of other bureaux, less prestigious than the chancery, remains less known as documents issued by them have rarely survived. This is the case, for instance, for the *dīwān al-jaysh*, the army bureau, which was responsible for the granting of fiefs (*iqṭā'āt*) and their control. But here, documents of the monastery can provide some relevant information. Richards studied a petition regarding a problem encountered by the monks with the beneficiary of a fief.<sup>106</sup> On the back of it, he found a report from the army bureau connected to the fief in question where previous attributions of it are mentioned. This significant document shows that the clerks updated their records regularly and that accurate records were available when required.

The Saint Catherine Monastery documents are probably the best studied so far. The significance of these studies for the history of the Mamluk sultanate is limited, as they essentially give us important historical and economic information on the monks (relations with the surrounding populations, the bedouins, and also their properties elsewhere, like Cairo). However, unlike the Geniza documents, they are an invaluable source of chancery practice and provide us with a unique opportunity to study the diplomatics of the Egyptian *dīwān al-inshā'*. Nonetheless, much remains to be done. Private documents have so far received little attention. Only recently, Richards has studied three of them (Muslim and Christian documents), two dating from the Mamluk period.<sup>107</sup> They are related to a *waqf* made in favor of

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<sup>105</sup> Donald S. Richards, "A Fāṭimid Petition and 'Small Decree' from Sinai," *Israel Oriental Studies* 3 (1973): 140–58; Geoffrey Khan, "The Historical Development of the Structure of Medieval Arabic Petitions," *BSOAS* 53 (1990): 8–30, where a comparison with papyri held at Cambridge is provided.

<sup>106</sup> Donald S. Richards, "A Mamlūk Petition and a Report from the *Dīwān al-Jaysh*," *BSOAS* 40 (1977): 1–14.

<sup>107</sup> Donald S. Richards, "Some Muslim and Christian Documents from Sinai Concerning Christian Property," in *Law, Christianity and Modernism in Islamic Society: Proceedings of the Eighteenth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants Held at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (September 3–September 9, 1996)*, ed. U. Vermeulen and J. M. F. Van Reeth, *Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta*, no. 86 (Leuven, 1998), 161–70. Similar documents regarding properties of the monastery located mainly in Cairo, but also in Alexandria, Gaza, and Siryāqūs, have been studied by the same scholar: "Documents from Sinai Concerning Mainly Cairene Property," *JESHO* 28 (1985): 225–93.

the monastery and they enabled him to demonstrate that the Christians followed the Muslim legal system for the redaction of documents of this nature.<sup>108</sup>

Beside the private documents, official ones, the decrees, as I said, were not all studied by Ernst and still await publication. More worrisome is the fact that probably not all the documents were microfilmed. This is evidenced by the fact that Atiya catalogued 17 decrees from the time of Qāyṭbāy although Schmidt and Moritz described more than 20 during the 1914 mission.<sup>109</sup> On the other hand, new discoveries have been made since the American mission of 1950. In 1976, cases were discovered by the librarian and their contents were placed in 47 boxes. The material consisted of papyri, parchment, and scraps of paper and was described as being mainly of a liturgical nature, but it remains unknown whether Arabic documents are among them.<sup>110</sup>

### 3. Karaite Community (Cairo)

The Karaite community in Cairo holds a small collection of Arabic documents preserved in their old synagogue, situated in the old Fatimid city (Shāri‘ Khurunfish). As early as 1904, these drew the attention of Gottheil, who published (1908) a Fatimid decree issued under the Caliph al-Zāhir (415/1024) and a Mamluk document (*ḥukm tanfīdhī* = order confirming previous documents) dated 860/1456, which deals with the permission to lawfully repair the synagogue which had been damaged in the course of recent riots.<sup>111</sup> In 1969, D. S. Richards had the opportunity to study the entire collection and he presented the results of his researches carried

<sup>108</sup>Furthermore, see for a study of two juridical documents (purchase deeds) from this collection ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Ibrāhīm, “Min Wathā’iq Dayr Sānt Kātrīn: Thalāth Wathā’iq Fiqhīyah,” *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts (Cairo University)* 25 (1963): 95–133 + 4 pl.

<sup>109</sup>It is essential to mention here that Moritz sold a private collection of manuscripts and documents to various institutions around the world, and particularly to the University of Chicago. Surprisingly, some of these documents may originate from the Monastery of Saint Catherine and the question must be raised how he got them (see above, p. 34) Other documents were found in Istanbul, Cairo, and even in the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin. See Stefan Heidemann, Christian Müller, and Yūsuf Rāḡib, “Un décret d’al-Malik al-‘Ādil en 571/1176 relatif aux moines du Mont Sināi,” *Annales islamologiques* 31 (1997): 81–107, particularly 81.

<sup>110</sup>Roemer, “The Sinai Documents,” 381.

<sup>111</sup>Richard J. H. Gottheil, “Dhimmi and Moslems in Egypt,” in *Old Testament and Semitic Studies in Memory of William Rainey Harper*, ed. Robert Francis Harper, Francis Brown, and George Foot Moore (Chicago, 1908), 2:353–414. He also published another document from the fifteenth century which was at that time in the possession of the Cattaoui Brothers: see idem, “A Document of the Fifteenth Century Concerning Two Synagogues of the Jews in Old Cairo,” in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 18 (1927–28): 131–52.

out on the spot in an article published in 1972.<sup>112</sup> This detailed catalogue describes the contents of 27 documents running from the early eleventh century to the mid-nineteenth century, all of which focus on the Karaite community. With the exception of the Fatimid decree just mentioned, they are all of a private nature (deeds of conveyance, grants of ownership, deeds of *waqf*, sworn declarations, etc.). Among them, 18 pertain to the Mamluk period. Working on such collections often requires that the researcher, after having received permission to study the documents, must still bring with him all the necessary tools (camera, rule) so as to be in a position to study them properly. One should not be surprised that Richards could not measure all the documents nor photograph them completely. While he intended to return to several issues in connection with these documents, and to fully publish the texts with facsimiles, to my knowledge such a study has never appeared, so that they still await complete publication.<sup>113</sup>

#### 4. Orthodox Coptic Patriarchate (Cairo)

This institution in Cairo holds several *waqf* documents concerned with Copts. They were catalogued by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn and will be dealt with together with the archives collections in Cairo.<sup>114</sup>

#### 5. Centre of Oriental Studies/Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land (Cairo)

Our knowledge of the documents preserved in this center relies completely on articles published in 1956, where 69 items are described.<sup>115</sup> According to the first of these, only one document pertains to the Mamluk period (dated 914 A.H.).

### B. Palestine

#### 1. Franciscan Monastery of the Custody of the Holy Land (Jerusalem)

The Franciscan Monastery of the Custodia di Terra Santa (Mount Zion) in Jerusalem, like the Saint Catherine Monastery, is another important repository of documents,

<sup>112</sup>Donald S. Richards, "Arabic Documents from the Karaite Community in Cairo," *JESHO* 15 (1972): 105–62.

<sup>113</sup>With the following exception: Donald S. Richards, "Dhimmi Problems in Fifteenth Century Cairo: Reconsideration of a Court Document," *Studies in Muslim-Jewish Relations* 1 (1993): 127–63.

<sup>114</sup>See below, pp. 44–45.

<sup>115</sup>E. Boers, "Arabische Documenten in het Archief van het Studiecentrum in Muski," *Studia Orientalia* (Cairo) 1 (1956): 177–79. Martiniano Roncaglia, "Catalogus documentorum Muski," *Studia Orientalia* (Cairo) 1 (1956): 165–75, presents the contents of a manuscript which consists of a catalog of Arabic and Turkish documents held by the Center ("Manoscritto degli Archivi del Centro di Studi Orientali del Muski"). They are all dated after the Mamluk period (the oldest is from 942 A.H.) and are thus irrelevant for our purposes.

although in this case too we are speaking of documents issued for Christians. The whole collection amounts to 2,644 documents dated from 1219 to 1902. Among them, 83 pertain to the Mamluk period, consisting mainly of decrees and legal documents (court records). As one would expect, the majority belong to the last period of the Mamluk sultanate (43 from 1427 to 1513). A study of 12 of them (dated 1309 to 1472) was published by Pourrière as early as 1898,<sup>116</sup> but it was not until 1922 that a general catalogue, by Eutimio Castellani, appeared.<sup>117</sup> This catalogue, published by the Franciscan monastery and printed in Jerusalem, was not put on the market and is as inaccessible as the documents themselves. In 1936, another Franciscan, Norberto Risciani, published a book<sup>118</sup> where he studied 28 Mamluk documents (21 decrees and 7 court records), all belonging to the Circassian period. This is a landmark study, due to the nature of the documents, the quality of the analysis, and the facsimiles provided, but is unfortunately as unobtainable as the preceding one. Produced under the same conditions, it even seems that the copies preserved in very fortunate libraries lack the title page, which does not facilitate research. Allusions to these studies are seldom found in the scientific literature, except from those who are fortunate enough to own a copy (Stern and Little, who made reference to some of the documents published by Risciani) or to have access to it in a library (Richards).<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup>Leone Pourrière, "Appendice I: Firmani e documenti arabi inediti estratti dall'Archivio della procura di T. S. in Gerusalemme colla traduzione italiana," in Girolamo Golubovich, *Serie cronologica dei reverendissimi superiori di Terra Santa: ossia dei provinciali custodi e presidenti della medesima già Commissari Apostolici dell'Oriente e sino al 1847 in officio di Gran Maestri del S. Militare Ordine del SS. Sepolcro attuali prelati mitrati, provinciali e custodi di T.S. guardiani del S. Monte Sion e del SS. Sepolcro del N.S.G.C. ecc.* (Jerusalem, 1898), 123–87 (12 documents dated from 1309 to 1472 published).

<sup>117</sup>Eutimio Castellani, *Catalogo dei Firmani ed altri documenti legali emanati in lingua araba e turca concernenti i Santuari, le proprietà, i diritti della Custodia di Terra Santa conservati nell'Archivio della stessa Custodia di Gerusalemme* (Jerusalem, 1922) (docs. 1–83 dated from 1247 to 1523).

<sup>118</sup>Norberto Risciani, *Documenti e firmani* (Jerusalem, 1936). See also *Custodia di Terra Santa, 1342–1942*, ed. Virgilio Corbo (Jerusalem, 1951), 82 (regarding doc. VI in Risciani = decree issued by Barqūq in 1396).

<sup>119</sup>The Library of the University of Leiden (the Netherlands) is particularly fortunate to possess two original copies of this work. Aḥmad Darrāj, *Wathā'iq Dayr Ṣahyūn bi-al-Quds al-Sharīf* (Cairo, 1968), is the only work so far in which the documents held by the Franciscan monastery are extensively studied on the basis of the above-mentioned catalogs. Its main focus is on Mamluk-Christian relations in Jerusalem during the period covered by these documents, with the help of other kinds of documents preserved in other places (historical sources, epigraphy).

## 2. Greek Orthodox Patriarchate (Jerusalem)

Jerusalem seems to be a good place for Mamlukists interested in documents. This is due to the numerous Christian institutions which were developed over time and which were eager to maintain good relations with the Muslim authorities by negotiating treaties. Until a few years ago, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate was not particularly known for the collection it inherited from the Monastery of the Holy Cross at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Recently, Johannes Pahlitzsch was fortunate enough to gain access to it and discovered several documents, some of which date to the Mamluk period.<sup>120</sup> Among these is a missive addressed by Baybars to one of his amirs (665/1266), which sheds light on his relations with the Georgians.<sup>121</sup> The remaining items will be published progressively in chronological order. The arduous circumstances in which he had to study the documents is also symptomatic of the difficulties met with by researchers: lengthy negotiations with the Franciscan authorities, lack of adequate tools on the spot (camera, ruler), etc.

## II. Muslim Collections

### A. Egypt

#### 1. Archives Collections (Cairo)

What is meant by the Cairo archives are the National Archives of the Citadel<sup>122</sup> which, if my information is accurate, are now held by the Dār al-Wathā'iq, close to the Dār al-Kutub, the Ministry of *Waqf* (*Daftarkhānah*), the Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmīyah, and finally the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate. Consisting of private legal documents (court records, deeds of *waqf*, contracts on subjects of all kinds [marriage, sale, partnership, lease, etc.]), they were estimated at 2,000 by a pioneering scholar in this field, 'Abd al-Laṭīf Ibrāhīm 'Alī. Dating mainly from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth century, their importance has

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<sup>120</sup>For a provisory evaluation of these, see Johannes Pahlitzsch, "Georgians and Greeks in Jerusalem from the End of the 11th to the Early 14th Century," in *East and West in the Crusader States: Context, Contacts, Confrontations: Acta of the Congress Held at Hernen Castle in September 2000*, ed. Krijnie N. Ciggaar and Herman Teule, *Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta*, no. 125 (Leuven, 2003), 35–51.

<sup>121</sup>Delivered at the conference *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society* organized by Tel Aviv and Haifa Universities in May 2000. The article will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Arabica*.

<sup>122</sup>Maḥkamah Shar'īyah, which became Maḥkamat al-Aḥwāl al-Shakhṣīyah wa-al-Wilāyah 'alā al-Nafs.

been quickly recognized,<sup>123</sup> and Daniel Crecelius and Carl Petry<sup>124</sup> have drawn the attention of Mamlukists to these documents *in tempore non suspecto*, before the publication of Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn's catalogue.<sup>125</sup> This catalogue, published in 1981, gave for the first time a clear overview of all these documents held by the various institutions mentioned above. It inventories 888 numbers, but documents are more numerous as one number may contain more than one document. Among these, I would like to call attention to one in particular that is identified as a chancery document. This is in fact a *manshūr iqtā'ī* (grant of a fief) dated to the reign of Qānṣūh.<sup>126</sup> Many studies have dealt with the feudal system of Egypt,<sup>127</sup> but they lacked original documents of this kind. The survival of this almost unique (see Unsuspected Places, below) witness provides the opportunity to compare its structure to the models in chancery manuals like al-Qalqashandī's, written a century before, and to study the evolution which it underwent.

Yet the most impressive, no doubt, of these documents are clearly the several endowment deeds that have survived. In a rather provocatively entitled article,<sup>128</sup> Carl Petry has emphasized the various issues that can be addressed thanks to the Cairene *waqf* documents. *Waqf* documents offer the greatest challenge for future study, and the recently announced foundation of a journal devoted entirely to this topic reinforces this impression.<sup>129</sup> The recently published article "Waqf" in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>130</sup> and the bibliography to be found in it relieve me from

<sup>123</sup>Leo A. Mayer, *The Buildings of Qaitbay as Described in His Endowment Deed* (London, 1938). Endowment deeds may also be found in historical sources. For a good example taken from ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's work, see Axel Moberg, "Zwei ägyptische Waqf-Urkunden aus dem Jahre 691/1292 (nebst Bemerkungen zur mittelalterlichen Topographie Kairos)," *Le Monde Oriental* 12 (1918): 1–61 + 3 pl.

<sup>124</sup>Daniel Crecelius, "The Organization of *Waqf* Documents in Cairo," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2 (1971): 266–77; Carl F. Petry, "Medieval *Waqf* Documents in Cairo: Their Role as Historical Sources," *American Research Center in Egypt Newsletter* 118 (1982): 28–33; idem, "Research on Medieval *Waqf* Documents: Preliminary Report from the Field," *ARCE Newsletter* 133 (1986): 11–14.

<sup>125</sup>Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *Catalogue des documents d'archives du Caire de 239/853 à 922/1516*, Textes arabes et études islamiques, no. 16 (Cairo, 1981).

<sup>126</sup>Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, "Manshūr bi-Manḥ Iqtā' min 'Aṣr al-Sulṭān al-Ghūrī," *AI* 19 (1983): 2–23.

<sup>127</sup>Hassanein Rabie, *The Financial System of Egypt A.H. 564–741/A.D. 1169–1341*, London Oriental Series, vol. 25 (London, 1972); Tsugitaka Sato, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam: Sultans, Muqta's and Fallahun*, Islamic History and Civilizations, Studies and Texts, no. 17 (Leiden, 1997).

<sup>128</sup>Carl F. Petry, "A Geniza for Mamluk Studies? Charitable Trust (*Waqf*) Documents as a Source for Economic and Social History," *MSR* 2 (1998): 51–60.

<sup>129</sup>*Waqf: An Annual Journal for the Study of Islamic Endowments and Charitable Foundations*.

<sup>130</sup>Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "Waqf," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 11:63–69.

giving a complete list of all the publications regarding Egyptian *waqf* documents, save for the latest of them. Undoubtedly, endowment deeds provide answers to a lot of questions and this has been understood by scholars. So far, the main studies carried out on this material have dealt with architectural,<sup>131</sup> social,<sup>132</sup> and economic issues.<sup>133</sup> I am quite confident that things will proceed smoothly and that the state of research in this matter is far from giving cause for concern. My main concern is that we need more text editions.<sup>134</sup> It is in this sense that I would like to mention an important project of the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale (IFAO) in Cairo. This project, under the direction of Mustafa Taher, Sylvie Denoix, and Michel Tuchscherer, aims at cataloguing all the microfilmed archival documents of Cairo (thus not only the endowment deeds, but also the sale contracts, court records, etc.), as well as those of the Saint Catherine Monastery, so as to provide researchers with a catalogue, to be published on the Internet or on CD-ROM, which would foster further research on this material, particularly editions and studies of technical terms (legal, and not just architectural). So far, since the work began in 1995, 88 reels out of 129 have been analyzed.<sup>135</sup>

## 2. Museum Collections

We have seen that European and American museums hold in their collections some Mamluk documents and we would expect the same for Muslim countries.

<sup>131</sup>Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn and Laylā Ibrāhīm, *Al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Mi'mārīyah fī al-Wathā'iq al-Mamlūkīyah* (Cairo, 1990).

<sup>132</sup>Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtimā'īyah fī Miṣr, 648–923/1250–1517: Dirāsah Tārīkhīyah Wathā'iqīyah* (Cairo, 1980); Ulrich Haarmann, "Mamluk Endowment Deeds as a Source for the History of Education in Late Medieval Egypt," *Al-Abḥāth* 28 (1980): 31–47; Adam Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250–1517* (Cambridge, 2000); Jonathan P. Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992).

<sup>133</sup>Jean-Claude Garcin and Muṣṭafā A. Taher, "Enquête sur le financement d'un *waqf* égyptien du XVe siècle: les comptes de Jawhar al-Lala," *JESHO* 38 (1995): 262–304.

<sup>134</sup>This seems to have been understood only recently. See particularly *The Waqf Document of Sultan Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn for his Complex in Al-Rumaila*, ed. Howayda N. al-Harithy, *Bibliotheca Islamica*, vol. 45 (Beirut and Berlin, 2001) (with Julien Loiseau's critique, however, in *Bulletin critique des Annales islamologiques* 19 (2003): 129–31); and Stephan Conermann and Suad Saghbini, "Awlād al-Nās as Founders of Pious Endowments: The *Waqfīyah* of Yahyá ibn Ṭūghān al-Ḥasanī of the Year 870/1465," *MSR* 6 (2002): 21–50.

<sup>135</sup>See Bernard Matheu, "Rapport d'activités," *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire* 102 (2002): 536. The database created is already searchable and accessible to students and scholars visiting this institution.



## a) Maṭḥaf al-Fann al-Islāmī (Cairo)

The museum seems to hold several documents from the Mamluk period, although it is not possible to obtain a complete census of the holdings at this time. I have had to rely on the published material to determine approximately what one can find in this museum. I found an article published in 1964 by Āmāl al-‘Umarī where she wrote about a collection of 27 documents dealing with the purchase and sale of horses and fabrics. She only published those contracts related to the horses,<sup>136</sup> announcing her intention to study the remaining items (I may have missed some Arabic publications, but I have not found anything for the latter documents). There are 15 published contracts which date back to the very end of the Circassian period.

Besides these, the museum also has preserved an important group of marriage contracts written on cotton. Most of them are available to researchers through the study carried out by Su‘ād Māhir,<sup>137</sup> a book hitherto rather neglected. It was generally thought that all the contracts had been published by her, but this was a false impression. Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Rāziq studied one of these regarding the marriage of two slaves in 1343.<sup>138</sup> These documents are important as far as social and economic history is concerned because they shed light on the nature of the dowry, and in this particular case on the conditions applied to slaves. Other contracts are still unpublished.

The above documents reached the museum under obscure circumstances, as is often the case. But material pertaining to the Islamic period unearthed during excavations is presented to the museum. This is the case with the material found on the site of Quṣayr al-Qadīm. Located on the Red Sea coast, approximately 100 km. from Qūṣ, this ancient seaport, in which activity is attested since the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, was still active in the Ayyubid period and began to lose its importance under the Mamluk sultans with the emerging port of ‘Aydḥāb as the main departure point for travel to Jedda. Digs were carried out by a team from the University of Chicago under the direction of Donald Whitcomb and Janet Johnson in 1978, 1980, and 1982. Besides the archeological discoveries, some 500 scraps

<sup>136</sup> Āmāl al-‘Umarī, “Dirāsah li-Ba‘ḍ Wathā’iq Tata‘allaq bi-Bay‘ wa-Shirā’ Khuyūl min al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī,” *Majallat Ma‘had al-Makhṭūṭāt al-‘Arabīyah/Revue de l’Institut des manuscrits arabes* 10 (1964): 223–72.

<sup>137</sup> *Uqūd al-Zawāj ‘alā al-Mansūjāt al-Atharīyah* (Cairo, n.d.).

<sup>138</sup> Ahmad ‘Abd ar-Raziq, “Un document concernant le mariage des esclaves au temps des Mamlūks,” *JESHO* 13 (1970): 309–14. It is unknown whether the two marriage contracts concluded in Aswan and studied in the following article are part of this collection or of another, as no information is given by the author: ‘Abd Allāh Mukhlīṣ, “‘Aqdā Nikāḥ Kutibā fī Awāsiṭ al-Qarn al-Thāmin,” *Majallat al-Majma‘ al-‘Ilmī al-‘Arabī* 21 (1946): 419–26. Both were written on silk and are dated to 734/1334 and 740/1339 respectively.

of paper were found, most of them undated. Those which were dated go back to the beginning of the thirteenth century, thus clearly Ayyubid, while numismatic evidence has shown that the remaining fragments must be from the same period. These documents consist of business and private letters, all coming from a merchant's house, and are important in this respect and will no doubt throw light on trade in this remote region. Studied by Thayer in the context of her thesis,<sup>139</sup> they were not classified or catalogued prior to the works of Li Guo, who has devoted his attention to them.<sup>140</sup> Since these documents have now been clearly identified as Ayyubid they are not relevant to our subject. But since 1999, new expeditions by the University of Southampton under the direction of David Peacock and Lucy Blue have taken place. The site excavated is somewhat different. Among medieval rubbish and in the Muslim necropolis, they brought to light 300 paper fragments stretching from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. They also consist of business and private letters, but the period is clearly Mamluk. On the other hand, the funerary context has revealed a hitherto unknown practice: Arabic inscriptions on ostrich eggs. The whole material discovered during these campaigns will now be studied in the framework of a project called "Reconstructing the Quseiri Arabic Documents."<sup>141</sup> Edition, translation, analysis, and interpretation of all the documents within their context will be done by a recently constituted team made up of Arabists and computer specialists. There is no doubt that this project will elicit important new data on the commercial and religious activities of this peripheral community of merchants.

#### b) Egyptian Museum (Cairo)

This renowned institution for Egyptology has received excavated material, mainly going back to antiquity. Nonetheless, useful discoveries for our field can be made

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<sup>139</sup>Jennifer Thayer, "Land Politics and Power Networks in Mamluk Egypt," Ph. D. diss., New York University, 1993; idem, "In Testimony to a Market Economy in Mamlūk Egypt: The Qusayr Documents," *Al-Masāq* 8 (1995): 45–55.

<sup>140</sup>Li Guo, "Arabic Documents from the Red Sea Port of Quseir in the Seventh/Thirteenth Century: Part 1: Business Letters," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 58 (1999): 161–90; idem, "Arabic Documents from the Red Sea Port of Quseir in the Seventh/Thirteenth Century: Part 2: Shipping Notes and Account Records," *JNES* 60 (2001): 81–116. Li Guo has just published a detailed study of all the fragments unearthed by the Chicago team: *Commerce, Culture, and Community in a Red Sea Port in the Thirteenth Century: The Arabic Documents from Quseir*, Islamic History and Civilization, 52 (Leiden, 2004).

<sup>141</sup>See <http://www.rqad.leeds.ac.uk>. For a preliminary presentation of these documents, announcing a thorough study to come, see Anne Regourd, "Trade on the Red Sea during the Ayyubid and Mamluk Periods: The Quseir Paper Manuscript Collection 1999–2003, First Data," *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 34 (2004): 277–92.

among its holdings. Two private letters on paper, discovered by specialists in Greek papyri, were brought to the attention of Diem, who studied them in an article published in 1993.<sup>142</sup> One of these letters, consisting of an invitation to a meal, has been dated by this scholar as being from the fourteenth century, and improves the knowledge we have of private letters in the period under consideration.

In an old study, Charles Bachatly brought to the attention of scholars the existence of a particular document held by the then Société Royale de Géographie (Cairo). This specimen concerns an Egyptian pilgrim who made an agreement with a camel dealer.<sup>143</sup>

## B. Palestine

### 1. Islamic Museum (al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf, Jerusalem)

This is the latest significant and sizeable discovery that has been made in the last decades, and shows that we must be optimistic regarding future finds. The story is well known. Discovered, as often happens, more or less by accident, by the curator Amal Abul-Hajj, in 1974 and 1976, these 883 documents from the Mamluk period could have returned to their dusty cupboards if she had not enlisted the help of one of Donald Little's students, Linda Northrup. This demonstrates once more the need for international cooperation in regard to archival research. Announced in 1979 in an international journal,<sup>144</sup> the discovery received a cool, or at least indifferent, reception in the scientific world, as Donald Little noticed in 1980.<sup>145</sup> But things were to change with the publication of his catalogue in 1984.<sup>146</sup> The documents had been measured and photographed during a mission and it is on this basis that he could prepare his work. The classification revealed that the majority of the documents were of a private nature and consisted of the papers of a judge, Ibn Ghānim, who died at the end of the fourteenth century, which makes

<sup>142</sup>Werner Diem, "Zwei arabische Privatbriefe aus dem Ägyptischen Museum in Kairo," *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 25 (1993): 148–53.

<sup>143</sup>Charles Bachatly, "Document sur un pèlerinage à la Mecque au début du Xe siècle de l'hégire (907/1501)," *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte* 21 (1943): 23–27.

<sup>144</sup>Linda S. Northrup and Amal A. Abul-Hajj, "A Collection of Medieval Arabic Documents in the Islamic Museum at the Ḥaram al-Šarīf," *Arabica* 25 (1978): 282–91.

<sup>145</sup>Donald P. Little, "The Significance of the Ḥaram Documents for the Study of Medieval Islamic History," *Der Islam* 57 (1980): 189–219; and also idem, "The Judicial Documents from al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf as Sources for the History of Palestine under the Mamluks," in *The Third International Conference on Bilad al-Sham: Palestine, 19–24 April 1980*, vol. 1, Jerusalem (Amman, 1983), 117–25.

<sup>146</sup>Donald P. Little, *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-Ḥaram aš-Šarīf in Jerusalem*, Beirut Texts and Studies, no. 29 (Beirut, 1984). See more recently Robert Schick, "Arabic Studies of Mamluk Jerusalem: A Review Article," *MSR* 5 (2001): 159–68.

the discovery even more crucial. It had previously been maintained by Ottomanists that the Ottoman judges were the first to institute the principle of the *dīwān al-qāḍī* (*sijill* as they call it), on the basis that Ottoman *sijills* alone had been preserved. Wael Hallaq has recently tackled this question<sup>147</sup> and demonstrated that the *dīwān al-qāḍī* truly existed in earlier Islamic times and that the qadi had to keep his records up to date. The Ḥaram documents provide another proof for this, showing that it is nonsensical to believe that an administration was not full of red tape only because the documents have not survived.<sup>148</sup>

This material has given scholars the opportunity to study various issues. This has been the case for some official documents, as some of them are clearly unique items: the square decrees (*murabba'āt*, documents issued by the army bureau), have been dealt with by Richards<sup>149</sup> and the petitions and their associated decrees have been addressed by Little.<sup>150</sup>

Yet the private documents obviously present the greatest challenges. They are of an incomparable richness for the history of Jerusalem and its environs during the given period, although it must be kept in mind that it is a short period of time. This richness is particularly noted for social and economic life. This is due to the fact that they include a great variety of deeds, the main category being represented by estate inventories (almost half of the collection) and court records. Thus, unsurprisingly, this kind of document has received first attention. An initial attempt to publish several of them in their context and to draw more general lines was provided by Kāmil Jamīl al-'Asalī in a three-volume work.<sup>151</sup> Later on, Huda Lutfi based her study<sup>152</sup> on them, trying to draw conclusions on a statistical basis for the social history of the city. Later, Little published a study devoted to three of these

<sup>147</sup>Wael B. Hallaq, "The *qāḍī*'s *dīwān* (*sijill*) before the Ottomans," *BSOAS* 60 (1997): 415–36.

<sup>148</sup>The Ḥaram documents have recently been appraised at their true value for the understanding of the *qāḍī*'s role in Jerusalem during the Mamluk period. See Muḥammad Ḥusayn 'Alī Abū Ḥāmid, "Quḍāt al-Quds fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī," M.A. thesis, Jāmi'at al-Qiddīs Yūsuf, 1998.

<sup>149</sup>Richards, "A Mamlūk Emir's 'Square' Decree."

<sup>150</sup>Donald P. Little, "Five Petitions and Consequential Decrees from Late Fourteenth Century Jerusalem," *Arab Journal for the Humanities* 54 (1996): 34–94.

<sup>151</sup>Kāmil Jamīl al-'Asalī, *Wathā'iq Maqdisīyah Tārīkhīyah: Ma'a Muqaddimah ḥawla Ba'd al-Maṣādir al-Awwaliyah li-Tārīkh al-Quds* (Jerusalem historical documents), vol. 1 (Amman, 1983) (edition of 44 documents pertaining to the Mamluk period among 60); vol. 2 (s. l., 1985) (edition of 61 documents from the Mamluk period among 104); vol. 3 (Amman, 1989) (of the 156 documents edited, 1 is from the Mamluk period).

<sup>152</sup>Huda Lutfi, *Al-Quds al-Mamlūkiyya: A History of Mamlūk Jerusalem Based on the Ḥaram Documents*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, no. 113 (Berlin, 1985). See also idem, "A Documentary Source for the Study of Material Life: A Specimen of the Ḥaram Estate Inventories from al-Quds in 1393 A.D.," *ZDMG* 135 (1985): 213–26.

inventories,<sup>153</sup> and more recently, Müller has published one of these to illustrate how the record of an estate was drawn up by the qadi's court.<sup>154</sup> His study fits into the framework of a larger project dealing with the functioning of the judicial system in Jerusalem in the fourteenth century<sup>155</sup>

As far as the court records are concerned, Little gave an overview of their contents<sup>156</sup> and has lately published two of them.<sup>157</sup> In this study as well as in previous ones, he has followed the way paved by Stern for official documents, which consists of comparing the private documents to models as they are preserved in *shurūt* manuals, showing that there is a correspondence between the principles prescribed there and the documents.<sup>158</sup>

Attention has been paid to other categories of documents, although in a less systematic manner. Contracts were the subject of one of Little's articles in 1981 devoted to the question of slaves.<sup>159</sup> Richards, in 1990,<sup>160</sup> has been able to define more precisely a particular kind of document called *qasāmah* (sworn declaration) and to study the evolution of the term from Fatimid times until the early Ottoman period, proving its persistence through the successive chanceries. More recently, he studied two pieces (a statement of account and an order) related to a *maktab* in charge of the education of children.<sup>161</sup> This unique document offers the possibility

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<sup>153</sup> Donald P. Little, "Ḥaram Documents Related to the Jews of Late Fourteenth Century Jerusalem," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 30 (1985): 227–64, 368–70. See also idem, "Documents related to the Estates of a Merchant and His Wife in Late Fourteenth Century Jerusalem," *MSR* 2 (1998): 93–193.

<sup>154</sup> Christian Müller, "Contrats d'héritages dans la Jérusalem mamelouke: les témoins du cadi dans un document inédit du Ḥaram al-Šarīf," *AI* 35 (2001): 291–319. Recently Donald S. Richards published a study on fourteen of them, with special emphasis on two of this group with edition and translation. See Donald S. Richards, "Glimpses of Provincial Mamluk Society from the Documents of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf in Jerusalem," in *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society*, ed. Michael Winter and Amalia Levanoni, The Medieval Mediterranean, no. 51 (Leiden, 2004), 45–57.

<sup>155</sup> See also Rūksī ibn Zā'id al-'Azīzī, "Min Tawṣiyāt wa-Mawāthīq al-Mamālīk lil-Ruhbān fī al-Quds wa-Ḍawāhīhā," *Al-Dārah* 7 (1981): 208–32.

<sup>156</sup> Donald P. Little, "Two Fourteenth Century Court Records from Jerusalem Concerning the Disposition of Slaves by Minors," *Arabica* 29 (1982): 16–49.

<sup>157</sup> Donald P. Little, "Two Petitions and Consequential Court Records from the Ḥaram Collection," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 171–94.

<sup>158</sup> See now Hallaq, "Model *shurūt* Works."

<sup>159</sup> Donald P. Little, "Six Fourteenth Century Purchase Deeds for Slaves from Al-Ḥaram Aš-Šarīf," *ZDMG* 131 (1981): 297–337.

<sup>160</sup> Donald S. Richards, "The *qasāma* in Mamlūk Society: Some Documents from the Ḥaram Collection in Jerusalem," *AI* 25 (1990): 245–84.

<sup>161</sup> Donald S. Richards, "Primary Education under the Mamlūks: Two Documents from the Ḥaram in Jerusalem," in *Proceedings of the 20th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et*

of examining how a modest provincial foundation such as this one could exist. Legal depositions (*iqrār*) have also been the subject of detailed study.<sup>162</sup>

Account records may also reveal unexpected results as in the study of Richards<sup>163</sup> which shed new light on the Mamluk postal service, particularly in Jerusalem, some years before the collapse of the whole system after Tamerlane's invasion.

A less-expected aspect of these documents is the philological one. As is generally done for papyrological studies, Diem has recently done a thorough study of philological notes based on the various editions provided by Little, Richards, and others.<sup>164</sup>

Significant as they are in themselves, all these documents provide further revealing data on Mamluk society, specifically lower levels neglected by historical sources, in Jerusalem and its surroundings. These aspects have been emphasized in the various studies on individual documents as well as in broader perspectives.<sup>165</sup>

To conclude with this part, the Ḥaram documents have clearly received greater attention since the publication of the catalogue. Various issues have been approached and answered. Various types of legal documents have been systematically examined together with the functioning of the judicial system connected to them. Nevertheless, many documents still await editing, translation, and analysis.<sup>166</sup>

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*Islamisants*, part 1, *Linguistics, Literature, History*, ed. Kinga Dévényi, *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic*, nos. 24–25 (Budapest, 2002), 223–32.

<sup>162</sup>Huda Lutfi, "A Study of Six Fourteenth Century *iqrār*s from al-Quds Relating to Muslim Women," *JESHO* 26 (1983): 246–94; idem and Donald P. Little, "Iqrār from al-Quds: Emendations," *JESHO* 28 (1985): 326–30.

<sup>163</sup>Donald S. Richards, "The Mamluk *Barīd*: Some Evidence from the Haram Documents," in *Studies in the History and Archeology of Jordan*, vol. 3, ed. Adnan Hadidi (Amman, 1987), 205–9.

<sup>164</sup>Werner Diem, "Philologisches zu den mamlūkischen Erlassen, Eingaben und Dienstschriften des Jerusalemer al-Ḥaram aš-šarīf," *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 33 (1997): 7–67. In this article, Diem also edited, translated, and analyzed documents on the basis of the reproductions provided by D. Little in his catalogue.

<sup>165</sup>Donald P. Little, "Relations between Jerusalem and Egypt during the Mamluk Period According to Literary and Documentary Sources," in *Egypt and Palestine: a Millennium of Association (868–1948)*, ed. Amnon Cohen and Gabriel Baer (Jerusalem-New York, 1984), 73–93; idem, "The Ḥaram Documents as Sources for the Arts and Architecture of the Mamlūk Period," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 61–72; Donald S. Richards, "Saladin's Hospital in Jerusalem: Its Foundation and Some Later Archival Material," in *The Frankish Wars and Their Influence on Palestine: Selected Papers Presented at Birzeit University's International Academic Conference Held in Jerusalem, March 13–15, 1992*, ed. Khalil Athaminah and Roger Heacock (Birzeit, 1994), 70–83.

<sup>166</sup>In an oral communication, Donald Little informed me that other Mamluk documents, probably originating from the same collection, are being offered for sale by a private owner. This evidence proves, if necessary, that other such documents have survived.

## C. Syria

### 1. Umayyad Mosque of Damascus (Istanbul)

Mosques commonly owned libraries containing manuscripts, and not exclusively of the Quran. Some of them are even renowned for the antiquity of their collections (Qarawīyīn/Fez, Qayrawān/Tunisia). It would have been surprising if the Great Mosque of Damascus, one of the oldest in the Muslim world, had not been in the same position. In fact, this was the case, but unfortunately it suffered from several fires which destroyed most of its original structure. The last one happened in 1893 and at that time the Ottoman authorities decided to transfer to Istanbul all the manuscripts that had survived, even incompletely. They were installed in the collections of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts where a rough handlist was drawn up (Şamdan gelen evrak: Damascene papers). Nobody studied them until 1963 when the Sourdels heard of their existence. They were presented with thousands of fragments of manuscripts and documents written on parchment or paper, most of which had been damaged by the fire or water. Going through them, they soon realized that they mainly consisted of religious works, but surprisingly some archival material of a private nature was noticed. They soon published the results of their discovery in two articles describing the contents of the collection.<sup>167</sup> If the Quranic fragments, some of which go back to the first centuries of Islam, were examined quite quickly, the other documents have not so far been fully considered. The Sourdels published some of them, mainly dealing with the Fatimid and Ayyubid periods.<sup>168</sup> Two of their articles dealt with three documents going back to the beginning of the thirteenth century.<sup>169</sup> One example concerns a particular kind attested from the Fatimid period: the certificates of pilgrimage by proxy. These have been the subject of several articles by the Sourdels covering different periods,<sup>170</sup> and recently the documents pertaining to the Mamluk period were

<sup>167</sup>Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Nouveaux documents sur l'histoire religieuse et sociale de Damas au Moyen Âge," *Revue des études islamiques* 32 (1964): 1–25; idem, "A propos des documents de la Grande Mosquée de Damas conservés à Istanbul: Résultats de la seconde enquête," *REI* 33 (1965): 73–85.

<sup>168</sup>Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Biens fonciers constitués waqf en Syrie fatimide pour une famille de šarīfs damascains," *JESHO* 15 (1972): 269–96; idem, "Trois actes de vente damascains du début du IVe/Xe siècle," *JESHO* 8 (1965): 164–85.

<sup>169</sup>Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Un acte de vente arabe portant sur la région d'Ahlat au VIIe/XIIIe siècle," *Tarih araştırmaları dergisi* 6 (1968): 51–60; Dominique Sourdel, "Deux documents relatifs à la communauté hanbalite de Damas," *BEO* 25 (1972): 141–49.

<sup>170</sup>Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Une collection médiévale de certificats de pèlerinage à la Mekke, conservés à Istanbul: Les actes de la période seljoukide et bouride (jusqu'à 549/1154)," in *Etudes médiévales et patrimoine turc* (Paris, 1983), 167–93; idem, "Une collection médiévale de certificats de pèlerinage à la Mekke: II: Les actes de la période zengide et ayyoubide" (forthcoming).

studied.<sup>171</sup> This article focuses on 21 of the certificates that have survived. Some of them are dated, others are not but can be dated quite precisely thanks to the study of the stylistic evolution noticed by the Sourdels. They all go back to the Qipchak period (the oldest dated 1282, the most recent 1304–5). Written on the same kind of scroll used by the chancery (the longer measures 1.60 m., but was originally bigger [2 m.]), these certificates were displayed by their owners. These documents might seem anecdotal as they give little historical information (rather religious formulas, few names, except that of the beneficiary). However, once more, it is the study of the evolution of this kind of document over the centuries that is more meaningful for history. Indeed, the Sourdels demonstrated that a comparison with other periods clearly indicates that in the Mamluk period this kind of document was no longer produced for prominent figures of Damascene society (princes, etc.), but rather only for other classes. This could indicate that during the Mamluk period, the military aristocracy of governors and officers who succeeded one another at a frenetic pace had little concern for their local reputations, since the role of capital city had been transferred from Damascus to Cairo. The ruling amirs in Damascus had no incentive to make a show for the local population of the importance that the pilgrimage to Mecca held for them.

## 2. Maktabat al-Asad (Damascus)

The recent publication of a book gives me the opportunity to speak about a kind of document rarely mentioned by the sources: reading certificates. This is perhaps due to the fact that this kind of document is only found in manuscripts, yet these certificates are authentic documents, important in many respects. It was Georges Vajda who first studied the collection of manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the result of which was published in book form.<sup>172</sup> Others of his articles were devoted to manuscripts held in Damascus (the then *Zāhirīyah*) and Tunis.<sup>173</sup> The *Zāhirīyah* library (now at the al-Asad Library) was known to have rich holdings of this sort of document, given that an important part of its manuscripts came from the library of an influential Hanbali family, the Maqdisīs, who were originally

<sup>171</sup>Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel, "Certificats de pèlerinage par procuration à l'époque mamlouke," *JSAI* 25 (2001): 212–33.

<sup>172</sup>Georges Vajda, *Les certificats de lecture et de transmission dans les manuscrits arabes de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*, Publications de l'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, no. 6 (Paris, 1956).

<sup>173</sup>Georges Vajda, *Le Dictionnaire des Autorités (Mu'ğam aš-Šuyūh) de 'Abd al-Mu'min ad-Dimyātī*, Publications de l'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes: documents, études et répertoires, no. 7 (Paris, 1962); idem, "La mašyaḥa d'Ibn al-Ḥaṭṭāb al-Rāzī: Contribution à l'histoire du sunnisme en Egypte fāṭimide," *BEO* 23 (1970): 21–99.



from Jerusalem and settled in Damascus in the twelfth century.<sup>174</sup> Most of these manuscripts were read during recitation sessions and the names of all the participants were written at the end of the work read on that occasion. The structure of the reading certificate is invariably the same: it provides the names of the participants, the shaykh who listens (*musmi'*), the reader (*qāri'*), the writer of the certificate (*kātib*), the date, and finally the place. These certificates are thus significant documents for social history: they provide us with precious information on the way texts were transmitted, the education system, the biographies of scholars, the culture of Damascene inhabitants, the families, their occupations, the toponyms, and last but not least the role played by women in this particular case. This important collection has finally been studied at length by Stefan Leder with the help of other researchers.<sup>175</sup> They went through 86 manuscripts collecting 1,350 certificates that appear on 524 folios and date from 1155 to 1349. The results are impressive: more than 10,000 names and 250 toponyms listed. The work is to be commended given the difficulties presented by the discouraging scripts, but also because a volume of facsimiles for all the certificates was published subsequently.<sup>176</sup> There is no doubt that such a book will foster further research on the ulama in Damascus, and in this sense it is to be hoped that other studies will be published for the remaining certificates held in the Maktabat al-Asad, as well as elsewhere in Cairo, Istanbul, India, and in European and North American libraries.

### 3. Private collections

Private collections which hold family archives must exist in the Middle East. Most of them date from the Ottoman period, though even in this case they can still be useful for Mamlukists as some of them consist of copies made during the Ottoman period of earlier specimens. An interesting example of this was recently studied by Marco Salati,<sup>177</sup> who edited and studied a document dated 1066/1656, but dealing with matters of the Mamluk period, preserved in the private archives

<sup>174</sup>Stefan Leder, "Charismatic Scripturalism: the Ḥanbalī Maqdisīs of Damascus," *Der Islam* 74 (1997): 279–304.

<sup>175</sup>Stefan Leder, Yāsīn Muḥammad al-Sawwās, and Ma'mūn al-Ṣāgharjī, *Mu'jam al-Samā'āt al-Dimashqīyah: al-Muntakhabah min Sanat 550 ilá 750 H./1155 ilá 1349 M.* (Damascus, 1996). See also Stefan Leder, "Hörerzertifikate als Dokumente für die islamische Lehrkultur des Mittelalters," in *Urkunden und Urkundenformulare*, 147–66.

<sup>176</sup>Stefan Leder, Yāsīn Muḥammad al-Sawwās, and Ma'mūn al-Ṣāgharjī, *Mu'jam al-Samā'āt al-Dimashqīyah: Ṣuwar al-Makhṭū'āt: al-Muntakhabah min Sanat 550 ilá 750 H./1155 ilá 1349 M.* (Damascus, 2000).

<sup>177</sup>Marco Salati, "Un documento di epoca mamelucca sul *waqf* di 'Izz al-Dīn Abū l-Makārim, Ḥamza b. Zuhra al-Ḥusaynī al-Ishāqī al-Ḥalabī (ca. 707/1307)," *Annali della Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere di Ca' Foscari* 33 (Serie Orientale 25) (1994), 97–137.

of the Kawākibī family in Aleppo. Such discoveries will probably be made in the future, depending on the good relations established by a scholar with a local family.

#### *UNSUSPECTED PLACES*

I will finish this census with an account of the most recent and challenging discovery in terms of Mamluk documents. These have been found in what might be called an unsuspected place. As early as the nineteenth century, it was known that Islamic documents could have been recycled as new writing material in Europe, at a time when paper was still rare in this part of the world. A unique example of this reuse was published at that time by Michele Amari.<sup>178</sup> In this case, the fragments were found in the notarial records of Giovanni Scriba of Genoa, where contracts dating from 1154 to 1166 constitute a *terminus ante quem* for the reuse of these fragments of an Arabic document. In Amari's eyes, it could be nothing other than an official document from the Fatimid period, though the surviving parts of it did not allow a reconstruction of a coherent text or precise date.

This example makes us wonder if such reuse of old documents was not also prevalent in Islam for the same reason (scarcity of paper).<sup>179</sup> I have answered this question with the discovery of an unpublished autograph manuscript of al-Maqrīzī.<sup>180</sup> One of the main features of this notebook is that it was partly written on Mamluk chancery documents (scrolls) that were cut into pieces at a given period due to the high cost of paper. Put together to form quires, they were used by this historian as scratch paper for his drafts and notebooks. The greatest challenge was to develop a technique that would allow a coherent reconstruction of the original documents, hoping that they could be dated quite accurately. Fortunately, this was the case, and among the five documents reconstructed, I was able to precisely date three of them from 1344, demonstrating, thanks to the sources, that these were grants of fiefs (sing. *manshūr iqtā'ī*).<sup>181</sup> This sort of document was previously attested only by a unique example from the reign of Qānṣūh.<sup>182</sup>

While the document discovered by Amari was of no great interest, the fragments preserved in al-Maqrīzī's autograph manuscripts are undoubtedly valuable and

<sup>178</sup> Amari, "Nuovi ricordi arabici," 633–34 and plates II–IV.

<sup>179</sup> See above, pp. 17–18.

<sup>180</sup> Frédéric Bauden, "Maqriziana I: Discovery of an Autograph MS of al-Maqrīzī: Towards a Better Understanding of His Working Method: Description: Section 1," *MSR* 7, no. 2 (2003): 21–68.

<sup>181</sup> Bauden, "The Recovery of Mamlūk Chancery Documents," 59–76.

<sup>182</sup> Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, "Manshūr bi-Manḥ Iqtā'ī," 2–23.

current research should be directed to the other autograph manuscripts of al-Maqrīzī, where more than 400 leaves have been identified as recycled documents.

### CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

We may conclude that the situation of documents for the Mamluk period is not as disastrous as it has generally been presented. An approximate figure would be meaningless given that, as we have seen, several collections still remain to be studied. Compared to other periods and areas in Islam, Mamluk documents offer the researcher more than expected at first sight. Rather than lamenting our situation, research should proceed in various ways: edition with translation and diplomatic commentary, thematic studies, and searching for new documents.

The first of these issues should receive more attention: the temptation to study large sets of documents rather than editing, translating, and commenting on individual documents prevails in some cases. One should keep in mind that published documents, besides the fact that they enlarge the corpus and offer new elements for the comparison of formularies, provide not only data for further research on a subject, but also for related topics like diplomatics, paleography, the history of paper, and other matters unsuspected by the editor.

In this sense, the following *vade mecum* should be observed step by step by any person wishing to publish a document:

(1) physical description: description of the support material and of the physical appearance. Paper is preeminent for documents from the Mamluk period. Our knowledge of the paper of this period, and of Arabic paper in general, limits itself to a few certitudes. For sure, codicology and all related topics are still in their infancy and will not grow without detailed analysis of individual items. Careful description of the paper found in Mamluk documents will make it possible to distinguish it from paper used in manuscripts of this period.<sup>183</sup> If possible,<sup>184</sup> paper should be described in detail, indicating its color, the presence of chain lines (number, assembled or not, distance between groups) and laid lines (thickness, space occupied by 20 of them). Furthermore, the physical appearance provides a mass of information on the nature of the document itself, especially in the case of chancery documents where strict rules prevailed. The document should be accurately

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<sup>183</sup>For a first attempt to study this kind of paper, see Geneviève Humbert, "Le manuscrit arabe et ses papiers," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 99–100 (2002): 55–77, particularly 68–74 for papers used by the chancery.

<sup>184</sup>It is true that most scholars studying Arabic documents usually work with a reproduction (photograph, microfilm) which does not allow this kind of analysis.

measured<sup>185</sup> and different measurements taken into consideration (width of the space between two lines of text and between introducing and concluding formulas, width of the right and upper margins).

(2) paleographical description: Arabic paleography has also been quite neglected although Greek, Latin, and Western scripts have been categorized for a long time. The editor should not forget to mention all the peculiarities of the script as well as orthographical features.

(3) grammatical commentary: all the inconsistencies noted in comparison with the standard rules of Arabic grammar. Philological notes will help future editors to understand some seemingly incoherent readings, as well as linguists working on the various levels of Arabic in the Middle Ages.

(4) diplomatic commentary: due to the lack of a manual of diplomatics for the Mamluk period, this kind of commentary is a must and should not be neglected. Comparison with the sources (manuals and chancery anthologies) and evidence preserved from all periods, due to the relative continuity of formularies through the various dynasties, allow an improved knowledge of the features of diplomatics in Islam.

(5) historical commentary: the editor must consider all the data provided or not by the document itself (identification of persons, places, explanation of technical terms, study of the context, of what is implied by the document, etc.).

(6) reproduction: Reproduction is essential for many reasons. A reproduced document will be available to all and for centuries. Furthermore, all the descriptions made and the readings proposed by the editor can be checked by anyone else wishing to study the document for another purpose. Several systems have been developed, some being preferable to others. The best solution, I believe, is to be found in Risciani's book,<sup>186</sup> where the document is reproduced in the left margin with the proposed reading in the other part of the page, respecting the spacing between lines, the disposition of words (horizontally and vertically), and even the size of characters noticeable in some parts of the document.

Besides this, there are urgent requirements which must be met. It remains true that few students are interested in the study of Arabic documents. Perhaps the difficult handwriting commonly used by careless clerks<sup>187</sup> discourages them. Courses devoted to paleography are not to be found in the curricula of most universities. In

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<sup>185</sup>In the case of scrolls, the approximate measurements of a single sheet should be indicated as well as the width of the glued part.

<sup>186</sup>Risciani, *Documenti e firmani*.

<sup>187</sup>As quoted by Richards, "The qasāma in Mamlūk Society," 251, "al-Asyūfī strongly recommended that clerks, especially the clerk of the court, should write well and not curtail letter shapes nor run

this respect, the project of the Arabic Papyrological School<sup>188</sup> could help as a first step to attract students, but a more profound reflection on the necessity of reintroducing this discipline in the programs of universities is required.<sup>189</sup>

There is a pressing need for a microfilming project for various reasons. Firstly, it allays the danger of destruction of documents. Secondly, we can see that once a collection is put at the disposal of the scientific community (via printed catalogues, microfilms, or photographs), the documents are studied by a wide range of scholars and research moves forward quickly. The foundation of an institute for Arabic archives, similar to the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts in Cairo, would be most welcome. Before this ever happens, an easy way to foster research would be the use of the Internet. Collections that have already been microfilmed could easily be made available to the scientific community through this medium (at least those already published).

An intermediate measure would be the publication of an analytic bibliography classified according to the different kinds of documents published with mention of the place of conservation, date of the document, content, and type. What we need is something similar to what Roemer did in 1966 for the Mamluk official documents,<sup>190</sup> a work which has to be reexamined in view of the new discoveries made since that date.

Finally, there is an urgent need for a manual of diplomatics for the Mamluk period. In 1966, Hans Roemer already stressed this lacuna in these words: “. . . die Diplomatie der Kanzleien des islamischen Orients den Kinderschuhen noch nicht entwachsen ist.”<sup>191</sup> It is not at all scientifically acceptable that this matter has been dealt with for other periods and areas for which fewer or an equal number of documents have been preserved.<sup>192</sup> Since that statement, substantial contributions to the field of diplomatics have been made, but always on specific types of

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them one into another, all of which produces error. He recalls that a certain Qadi in Egypt chastised careless clerks, with the result that legal documents of all sorts in his time were written accurately and clearly.”

<sup>188</sup><http://www.ori.unizh.ch/aps/>

<sup>189</sup> Good introductions to the study of documents were proposed by Muḥammad Aḥmad Ḥusayn, *Al-Wathā'iq al-Tārīkhīyah* (Cairo, 1954); ‘Abbās Maḥmūd Ḥammūdah, *Al-Madkhal ilá Dirásat al-Wathā'iq al-‘Arabīyah* (Cairo, 1984).

<sup>190</sup> Hans Robert Roemer, “Arabische Herrscherurkunden aus Ägypten,” *Orientalische Literatur Zeitung* 61 (1966), columns 325–43.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, column 343.

<sup>192</sup> Heribert Busse, *Untersuchungen zum islamischen Kanzleiwesen: an Hand türkménischer und safawidischer Urkunden* (Cairo, 1959); M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, *Osmanlı paleografya ve diplomatik ilmi* (Istanbul, 1979); Valeri Stojanow, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der osmanisch-türkischen Paläographie und Diplomatie*, *Islamkundliche Untersuchungen*, vol. 76 (Berlin, 1983).

documents and in scattered publications.<sup>193</sup> Thus, a major contribution which would embrace the various issues implied by this field would be most welcome by both scholars and students. Let us hope that this call will be heard.

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<sup>193</sup>First attempts to foster research in this direction will be found in Claude Cahen, "Notes de diplomatie arabo-musulmane," *Journal asiatique* 251 (1963): 311–25; to which must be added the following bibliography: Martiniano Pellegrino Roncaglia, *Essai bibliographique de diplomatie islamique (arabe-persane-ottomane)*, Subsidia Bibliographica Historica, no. 1 (Beirut, 1979). In addition to Stern's and Khan's publications on the petition already quoted, see also Walther Björkman, "Die Bittschriften im *dīwān al-inšā*," *Der Islam* 18 (1929): 207–12; Jørgen S. Nielsen, "A Note on the Origin of the *Ṭurra* in Early Mamlūk Chancery Practice," *Der Islam* 57 (1980): 288–92. For the nomination deeds of amirs, see Annemarie Schimmel, "Einsetzungsurkunden mamlukischer Emire," *Die Welt des Orients* 1, no. 4 (1949): 302–6 (based on al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā*). The following reference on the *dīwān al-inshā'* is too general to be taken into consideration: S. Imamuddin, "*Diwān al-inshā'* (Chancery in Later Medieval Egypt), (with Special Reference to Later Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Decrees Dated 528–894 H/1134–1489 A.C.)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 28 (1980): 63–77. On private documents, see more specifically Rudolf Veselý, "Die Hauptprobleme der Diplomatie arabischer Privaturkunden aus dem spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten," *Archiv Orientalni* 40 (1972): 312–43; idem, "Die richterlichen Beglaubigungsmittel: ein Beitrag zur Diplomatie arabischer Gerichtsurkunden," *Orientalia Pragensia* 8 (1971): 7–23, 10 (1977): 99–122; Claude Cahen, "A propos des *shuhūd*," *SI* 31 (1970): 71–79.