The Rank and Status of Military Refugees in the Mamluk Army: A Reconsideration of the Wāfīdiyyah

The existence of military refugees from Mongol territory during the Bahri Mamluk period was of great importance for the history of the Mamluk Sultanate politically, diplomatically, and culturally. David Ayalon studied this group over fifty years ago in his article "The Wafidiyya in the Mamluk Kingdom" and his theory has been widely accepted, together with his term wāfīdiyyah, an Arabic "collective formation from wāfid ‘one who comes, makes his way, in a delegation or group.’” In his study, he criticizes A. N. Poliak, who stated that the wāfīdiyyah enjoyed high positions in the Mamluk army because of the vassal character of the Mamluks’ relationship to the Golden Horde. Rather, Ayalon claims, the wāfīdiyyah were constantly discriminated against in the Mamluk military system throughout the Mamluk period because they were not mamluks, i.e., of slave origin.

In the view of the present author, however, his study is too narrow. First, he connects the arrival of the wāfīdiyyah only to the political situation inside the Mamluk Sultanate, and neglects the situation outside it. For example, he characterizes al-Zāhir Baybars and al-ʿĀḍil Kitbugha the two sultans who received the largest and second largest number of Mongol immigrants, according to his counting, as "an admirer of the Mongol regime" and "a member of that ethnic group" respectively, as if these factors caused these immigrations. The wāfīdiyyah’s influx, however, must not have had much to do with the reigning sultans; rather, it was caused by internal factors within the Ilkhanid state. Second, Ayalon states that the wāfīdiyyah’s inferior status is proved by the fact that most of them joined the hahlqah unit. Yet, in another place, he points out the prominent position of the hahlqah in the early Mamluk period. These two claims seem contradictory. Third, his survey tends to look at the wāfīdiyyah as a unit, so he fails to grasp their diversity. We must differentiate their commanders from their soldiers, the Mongol

---

4Ayalon, "Wafidiyya,” 90–91.
tribesmen from indigenous groups within Mongol-ruled territory, and groups who came in the early Mamluk period from groups who came in relatively later periods.

All of these problems resulted from the lack of adequate published sources in Ayalon’s time. In the present day, because research in Mamluk historiography has progressed and more Arabic sources have been published, we have access to more thirteenth- and fourteenth-century contemporary sources. The present state of research “simply demands that this part of his work be redone.”

ARRIVAL OF THE MILITARY REFUGEES

WHO WERE THE Wafdîyâh?: IBN SHADDA’s CATEGORIZATION

Actually, the term wafdîyâh is not found frequently in the contemporary sources, and though there are references to a wafdîyâh in the Mamluk army, the designation must have been temporary and indefinite. Ayalon uses this word in the extremely wide meaning of “immigrants, those coming from outside” and includes not only al-Khvârizmiyâh and the Kurdish Shahrazûrîyâh, who came before the Mongols, but also Frankish and Maghribi refugees, and even those who came from the Ottoman state. On the other hand, later scholars use this term in a narrower sense, as “individuals and groups of tribesmen who fled to the Sultanate from Mongol controlled territory.” We shall also follow the latter definition in this study. Accordingly, this study generally limits itself to the period from the formation of the Mongol state in Iran until its end, i.e., from 1258 to 1335.

But before we proceed to the main subject, we must make clearer who the wafdîyâh were by referring to a contemporary account. ‘Izz al-Dîn Ibn Shaddâd, the author of Sultan Baybars’ biography, Târîkh al-Malik al-Zâhir, lists the names of 201 refugees who entered the sultanate during his reign in a section titled “Those who came to him” (man wafada ‘alayhi). He classifies them into the following groups: (a) those from Medina and Yanbu’ (19 persons); (b) those from al-‘Irâq (21 persons); (c) those from al-Mawsîl (17 persons); (d) amirs of al-‘Arab and al-Turkumân (46 persons); (e) Muslims who were displaced by the Mongols (al-Tatâr) (21 persons); (f) those from Bilâd al-Rûm (35 persons); (g)

---


Mongols (40 persons); (h) those from Māridīn (1 person); and (i) notables of the Franks (2 persons).⁹

Among these, groups (a) and (d) should be excluded from this study, because they came to the sultanate and then returned to their country; they never became regular members of the Mamluk army.¹⁰ All the refugees of groups (e) and (h) and a part of those of (c) were Ayyubid princes in Syria and Saljuqids atābaks.¹¹ Therefore they did not come from "Mongol-controlled territory" any more than group (i), the Frankish refugees. The other three groups, which can be regarded as wāfidiyyah for this study, represent three types of wāfidiyyah during Baybars’ reign: indigenous soldiers who came from areas newly occupied by the Mongols (b), subordinates of the Rūm Saljuqs (f), and Mongol tribal units (g).

CHRONOLOGY OF THE WĀFIDĪYAH’S DEFECTIONS

Other contemporary sources do not indicate when or under what circumstances all those listed by Ibn Shaddād arrived in the Mamluk Sultanate. This shows that the sources do not transmit all the information about the wāfidiyyah. Still, we have twenty-four examples during the period covered in the present article of groups of refugees whose arrival times are known. The following list shows the arrival year of these groups, their leaders’ names, and the size of the group.

(1) 660/1262 Shams al-Dīn Salār al-Mustansīrī, a ruler of al-‘Irāq
300 horsemen¹²

(2) 660/1262 Şaragħān Āğā, a commander of the Golden Horde
200 horsemen¹³

¹¹Sato Tsugitaka, State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam: Sultans, Muqta’s and Fallahun (Leiden, 1997), 78.
¹³Abū Shāmah, Tarājīm Rijāl al-Qarnayn al-Sādis wa-al-Sābi (Cairo, 1947), 220; Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir, Rawd, 137–38; al-Yūnīnī, Dhayl Mir ṣāt al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-A’yan (Hyderabad,
58 NAKAMACHI NOBUTAKA, A RECONSIDERATION OF THE WĀFID|YAH

(3) 661/1263 Karmūn Āghā, a commander of the Golden Horde over 1300 horsemen
(4) 662/1264 Sayf al-Dīn Baklak, a ruler of Shīrāz a large number (jamā‘ah kabīrah)
(5) 662/1264 Jalāl al-Dīn Bashkar ibn Dawādār, a vassal of the Abbasids a large number
(6) 672/1273–74 Shams al-Dīn Bahādur, a ruler of Sumaysīt, not specified
(7) 675/1277 Ḫusām al-Dīn Bījār, a vassal of the Rūm Saljuqs, and several others
(8) 681/1282 Mu‘min Āghā, a ruler of Mawsil not specified, but a small number
(9) 681/1282–83 Sinān al-Dīn al-Rūmī, a son of a ruler of Amasia
(10) 681/1283 Shaykh ‘Alī, a Sufi shaykh several Mongols
(11) 683/1284 no specific names 4000 horsemen

13Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 196, 199.
14Ibid., 216.
22Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir, Tashrif al-Ayyām wa-al-‘Uṣūr fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr (Cairo, 1961), 68;
(12) 695/1296  Tairogahā, the commander of the Oirat tribe
10,000–18,000 households

(13) 698/1299  Sulāmish, a lieutenant from al-Rūm
500 horsemen

(14) 703/1304  Badr al-Dīn Jankalī ibn al-Bābā, a ruler of Ra’s al-‘Ayn
11 persons

(15) 704/1304  Four silāhdāriyahs of Ghāzān
200 horsemen with their families

(16) 705/1305–6  Sayf al-Dīn Hānnā and Fakhr al-Dīn Dāwūd, brothers of
Amir Salār
not specified

(17) 717/1317  Tahī, a commander of one thousand of the Mongols
100 horsemen with their families

(18) 722/1322  Ahmād, a son of an aunt of the sultan
not specified

(19) 724/1323–24  Ḥasan, a relative of the sultan
not specified

(20) 726/1326  Tāyibughā, a relative of the sultan
not specified
During Baybars’ reign, four groups were indigenous groups from Mongol-occupied areas (nos. 1, 4–6), one group came from the Rûm Saljuqs (no. 7), and two groups were Mongol tribesmen (nos. 2–3). Ibn Shaddâd calculates the wâfîdîyâh from the Mongol tribesmen to have numbered about three thousand horsemen, while the chronicles state that there were two groups, of 200 and 1,300 men, respectively. These two groups, which some historians count more accurately as three groups, are often combined as a single group under sixteen commanders in the sources. It is noteworthy that in all cases these defections of the Mongol wâfîdîyâh were unexpected events for the Mamluk Sultanate; we can find no evidence that the Mamluks enticed them to immigrate. On the other hand, some of the indigenous wâfîdîyâh from areas newly occupied by the Mongols had had connections with the Mamluk Sultanate, and Baybars seems to have pursued a “head-hunting” policy toward them. The defections of the Rûm Saljuq wâfîdîyâh, whose arrivals spanned a long term, were caused by Baybars’ military campaign against al-Rûm.

Although a large number of refugees arrived during the reign of Baybars, the

32Al-Nuwayrî, Nihâyâh, 33:231–232; al-‘Aynî, ‘Iqd, MS Süleymaniye 835, fol. 72r.
35Al-Shuja‘î, Târikh, 27; al-Maqrîzî, Sulûk, 2:446; al-‘Aynî, ‘Iqd, MS Ahmet III 2911/a17, fol. 113r.
36For example, al-Yûnînî describes the wâfîdîyâh in 661/1263 as al-tâ‘ifah al-thânîyah and al-tâ‘ifah al-thâlîthah; see al-Yûnînî, Dhayl, 1:534, 2:195.
38For no. 1 see al-Nuwayrî, Nihâyâh, 30:54–55. For no. 4 see Ibn ‘Abd al-Zâhîr, Rawd, 182; al-Nuwayrî, Nihâyâh, 30:90. For no. 5 see ibid., 207–8.
role of his policy of encouraging the wāfidiyyah to immigrate should not be overestimated. Most of their defections reflected the situation of Mamluk-Mongol relations in those days rather than Baybars’ admiration of the Mongol regime and military organization.39

Further, even in the post-Baybars period refugees in some number came to the sultanate continually. In the reign of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn we find four groups of refugees (nos. 8–11), one of which consisted of four thousand horsemen, and the total number of these refugees is larger than the total number in Baybars’ reign. Afterwards, Sultan Kitbughā received the famous Oirat wāfidiyyah (no. 12), and al-Manṣūr Lājin accepted a group of refugees led by Sulāmish, a Mongol lieutenant of al-Rūm (no. 13). During al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s second reign, three groups arrived (nos. 14–16). Among these, it is true that the Oirat wāfidiyyah was "the greatest wave of Tatār horsemen immigrating to the Mamluk kingdom."40 Their defection itself, however, probably had nothing to do with the fact that Kitbughā was also a Mongol mamluk, contrary to Ayalon’s suggestion, since no evidence of ‘head-hunting’ on Kitbughā’s part is found.41

Most of their defections were motivated by disorder upon the deaths of Ilkhan rulers and purges carried out by the Ilkhans. Mu’mīn Āghā (no. 8) was suspected of the murder of the Ilkhan Ābāghā’s brother.42 The wāfidiyyah in 683/1284 (no. 11) came because of the internal disorder in the Ilkhanid state after Arghūn’s enthronement.43 Ṭaraghāy, Sulāmish, and Jankālī ibn al-Bābā (nos. 12–14) were escaping the purge instituted by the Ilkhan Ghāzān. Some groups of the wāfidiyyah consisted of family members of the Mamluk elite (nos. 16, 18–21), especially the relatives of the sultans, who arrived around the year 722/1323, in which the Mamluks and the Mongols came to an agreement on a peace treaty. Tamurtāsh (no. 22), who rebelled against the Ilkhan Ābū Sa’īd and defected, had been on friendly terms with a Mamluk amir, Sayf al-Dīn Āytamīṣ.44 But, in spite of their friendship, Tamurtāsh was executed by the sultan in conformity with the treaty. The defections of the last two groups of wāfidiyyah (nos. 23–24) were caused by the political disorder after Ābū Sa’īd’s death. Khalīfah ibn ‘Alī Shāh (no. 24) was

40Ibid., 99.
41Of course, it is true that Kitbughā favored them after they came to the sultanate, but we must distinguish the reason for their defection from how the sultan treated them after they arrived.
43Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir, Tashrīf, 68.
also an associate of a Mamluk amir, Sayf al-Dīn Tankiz, and when the Ilkhan Abū Saʿīd died, Khalīfah first sought refuge with Tankiz.

The waḍīyāh defections reviewed here can be characterized as follows: first, most of them were caused by the internal political situation of the Ilkhanids, rather than that of the Mamluk Sultanate. Second, especially in the later period, the waḍīyāh often had some connections with the Mamluk elite before their defections.

**Starting Assignments**

The hierarchy of assignments: accounts from the reign of Baybars

Ayalon states in his article that ‘most of them joined the ḥalqah, whose status . . . was greatly inferior to that of the Mamluk units.” This statement has formed the basis for the idea that the military refugees were a group discriminated against in the Mamluk Sultanate. In this section we shall see if most of them actually joined the ḥalqah unit or not.

Here let us refer to Ibn Shaddād again. He states that those who sought refuge from al-Tatār during the reign of Baybars were assigned positions as follows:

Among them some were assigned exceptionally to the khāṣṣakīyāh; others were assigned to the unit of silāḥdār (armor bearers), the unit of jamdār (wardrobe keepers), and the unit of sāqī (cupbearers). Others were made amirs of ṭablkhānah, others were made amirs given from ten to twenty cavalrymen, and others were incorporated into amirs’ units.

In this account, we find a somewhat hierarchical order of treatment of these newcomers. This can be categorized as follows:

(a) Recruited into the sultan’s units: khāṣṣakīyāh, silāḥdār, jamdār, and sāqī: All of these units are regarded as consisting of Mamluks.

(b) Appointed to the rank of amir, i.e., amir of ṭablkhānah or an amir having

---

46For translation of the words silāḥdār, jamdār, and sāqī, see William Popper, Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans 1382–1468 A.D.: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghri Birdi’s Chronicles of Egypt (Berkeley, 1955), 95.
47Ibn Shaddād, Tārīkh, 337–38. A similar passage can be found in al-Yūnī, Dhayl, 3:256–57, and Ayalon cites the latter (“Wafidiyāh,” 98-99). However, the former is more first-hand information.
from ten to twenty cavalrymen: "Amir of *tablkhānah*," generally translated as "amir of forty," derives from the word “band” (*tablkhānah*). It is the second highest rank of amir after "amir of one hundred and commander of one thousand" (*amīr mi‘ah wa-muqaddam alf*).\(^49\)

(c) Integrated into the units of various amirs.

(d) Retained in the unit of their original leader: though this group is not mentioned specifically by Ibn Shaddād, its existence is reasonable, given (b).

As far as we can see from this passage, there is no requirement that they join the *halqah* units, which Ayalon regards as the main destination of the *wāfidīyah*. But in another place, Ibn Shaddād cites the regulation that non-Mongol *wāfidīyah* who came from al-‘Irāq and other regions join the *halqah* unit.\(^50\) We can thus add provisionally to the four above-mentioned categories a fifth category:

(e) Assigned to the *halqah* unit.

In order to consider whether assignments to all five of these categories were actually made in practice, let us take two examples from events that occurred in the reign of Baybars.

The first example is Shams al-Dīn Sālār al-Mustansīrī’s group, who arrived in Egypt in 660/1262 and were the first military refugees in the reign of Baybars (see no. 1 in list above). According to Ibn Shaddād, when Baybars received them, "he made him [Sālār] amir of fifty cavalrymen, took into service one hundred persons from those who arrived with him, and divided the rest among amirs."\(^51\) In this passage, we find mention of those who were appointed to the rank of amir, i.e., Sālār himself, those who were assigned to the sultan’s own unit, and those who were divided among amirs’ units. Sālār’s "fifty cavalrmyen" meant that he could retain his own followers within the limit of fifty. Those who were taken “into service” would have joined either the mamluk unit or the *halqah* unit, but it is unclear which they joined in this case. Thus, of Sālār’s three hundred followers, one-sixth stayed under their original leader (case d above), one-third joined the mamluk unit or *halqah* unit (case a or e), and half were assigned to various amirs’ units (case c).

The next example is the first group of Mongol refugees which came in 660/1262, one of the leaders of which was Sayf al-Dīn Ṣaraghān Āghā (see no. 2 in above list). When they arrived at Cairo, Sultan Baybars "made their leaders amirs with one hundred cavalrymen or less and assigned the rest to his Bahrīyah unit and to his mamluks."\(^52\) It is clear that Ṣaraghān and other anonymous leaders were permitted


\(^{50}\)Ibn Shaddād, *Tārīkh*, 331.

\(^{51}\)Ibid., 330.

to keep more than one hundred of their followers in total. Since this group consisted of two hundred cavalrymen,\textsuperscript{53} we can conclude that more than half of them stayed in the service of their original leader (case d) and that less than half joined the mamluk unit (case a).\textsuperscript{54}

These two examples show that the five categories of Ibn Shaddād can be substantiated by fact, even though the difference between (a) and (e) is unclear. As this categorization applies to the reign of Baybars only, let us examine the cases of all other wāfidiyyah we know about in the period under discussion.

**The Starting Rank of the Wāfidi Amirs**

First, let us investigate the military refugees who were appointed to the rank of amir in the above category (b). Ibn Shaddād ranks this category as second to those who were recruited into the sultan’s unit. But we treat them first here because they were commanders of the various wāfidiyyah groups originally. Although some of the soldiers under them reached the rank of amir during their later careers in the Mamluk army, we shall treat them in a later section and here look at the starting rank to which the commanders were appointed on their arrival.

Although Ibn Shaddād states that the commanders were made amirs of tablkhānah and "from ten to twenty cavalrymen," Shams al-Dīn Salār al-Mustansirī was made amir of "fifty cavalrymen," as seen above. The fact that not forty but fifty cavalrymen were allowed to Salār means in those times there was a lack of the strict uniformity of rank of later times, i.e., amir of one hundred, amir of forty, amir of ten. In 672/1273–74, Shams al-Dīn Bahādur from Sumaysāt (see no. 6 above) was made amir of twenty cavalrymen, which is also not in accordance with the normative size of Mamluk amirs’ units, as R. Stephen Humphreys has shown, at least during the reign of Baybars.\textsuperscript{55}

On the other hand, Sayf al-Dīn Šaraghān Āghā and other leaders of the first Mongol refugees in 660/1262 were made “amirs with one hundred cavalrymen or less,” as seen above. If we take this as appointment to the rank of “amir of one hundred,” they can be regarded as having gotten a higher rank than Ibn Shaddād’s generalization. On this point, while Ayalon states that “Baybars’ reign is also marked by the absence of a single appointment to the rank of Amir of a Hundred,”\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{53}Ibid., 137.

\textsuperscript{54}The Bahriyyah unit here means the Mamluk unit that Baybars founded, namely al-Bahriyyah al-Zahiriyah. See David Ayalon, "Le régiment Bahriya dans l’armée mamelouke," *Revue des études islamiques* 19 (1951): 137.


\textsuperscript{56}Ayalon, "Wafidiyyah," 99.
as Sato Tsugitaka points out, Ayalon’s statement is a mistake, “although the example of such an appointment was indeed rare.”

Reuven Amitai-Preiss regards the report of this appointment as “mere hyperbole” because the appointment of one of the ṭablkḥānah to this rank “is not substantiated by one concrete example from the sources.” In my view, there is no logical reason for denying this appointment itself, although we should not regard it as to the highest rank of amir because of the lack of a strict uniformity of rank in the early Mamluk period. At least one of these Mongol ṭāfidi amirs must have been appointed to a relatively high rank in Baybars’ reign.

However, it is true that most of the ṭāfidi amirs were appointed to the rank of amir of ṭablkḥānah. The following list shows the starting rank of twenty-two ṭāfidi commanders. The number in parentheses is the number of the group they were associated with in the list above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shams al-Dīn Salār</td>
<td>Amir of fifty cavalrymen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Šarīm al-Dīn Šaraghān</td>
<td>Amir of one hundred cavalrymen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sayf al-Dīn Karmūn and others</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sayf al-Dīn Baklak</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Muẓaffar al-Dīn Washshāh ibn Shahrī</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Jalāl al-Dīn Bashkar ibn al-Dawādār</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Shams al-Dīn Bahādur</td>
<td>Amir of twenty cavalrymen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Aqūsh</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ţaraghāy</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ulūs</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Badr al-Dīn Jankalī ibn al-Bābā</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>‘Alī</td>
<td>Amir of ten cavalrymen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nīrūz</td>
<td>Commander (taqdimah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ţāyirughā</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Yahyā ibn Ţāyirughā</td>
<td>Amir of ten cavalrymen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Muḥammad Bih ibn Jamaq</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tamurtāsh ibn Jūbān</td>
<td>Amir of one hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Sharwīn</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Fakhir al-Dīn Maḥmūd</td>
<td>Amir of ṭablkḥānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ḫusayn</td>
<td>Amir of ten cavalrymen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

59 For the personal data of each amir, see the Appendix.
21. Kābik (23) Amir of ten cavalrymen
22. Nāṣir al-Dīn Khalīfah ibn ‘Alī Shāh (24) Amir of one hundred in Syria

We find that most of them initially held the rank of amir of tablkhānah. Only three commanders (nos. 2, 17, and 22) were made “amir of one hundred” when they arrived. Six commanders (nos. 7, 10, 12, 15, 20, 21) were appointed to a lower rank like ten or twenty cavalrymen, but in the case of five of them (nos. 10, 12, 15, 20, 21) their colleague commanders from their same group were given tablkhānah rank.

This tendency seems to reflect the idea in those days that the rank of tablkhānah was the one suitable for refugee commanders. For example, Sultan Kitbughā welcomed the Oirat refugees, who arrived in 695/1296, and intended to appoint their commander Tāraghāy amir of one hundred and commander of one thousand. But when he consulted with the amirs, they suggested to him that he should give Tāraghāy the rank of tablkhānah at first and promote him later.

What the rank of tablkhānah actually means, however, must be considered. Some sources other than Ibn Shaddād state that Sālār al-Mustanṣirī was made an amir of tablkhānah. Therefore he became an amir of fifty cavalrymen and amir of tablkhānah concurrently. Moreover, when Jānkālī ibn al-Bābā (11) arrived in Cairo in 703/1304, Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad “made him an amir of tablkhānah and granted him one hundred cavalrymen.” In these two examples, the rank of “amir of tablkhānah” is obviously not equal to having forty cavalrymen. Humphreys points out the honorary meaning of the rank of tablkhānah bestowed on foreign vassals in the earlier years of Baybars’ reign and states, “this title signified less a specific rank than one’s entry into the political-military elite of the Kingdom.”

We must distinguish between the honorary meaning of the rank of tablkhānah and the number of cavalrymen that they could accommodate, at least in the second reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.

Furthermore, we must pay attention to the fact that appointment to the rank of

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item[60]But three more amirs (nos. 11, 14, and 18 in the above list) were raised to amir of one hundred soon after their arrival. See below.
\item[61]Al-‘Aynī, ‘Iṣq, 3:306.
\item[63]Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Tuhfah, 175. In fact, Jānkālī was appointed amir of tablkhānah upon arrival, and then was raised to amir of one hundred. See below.
\item[64]Humphreys, ‘Emergence of the Mamluk Army,’ pt. 2, 169.
\end{itemize}}
amir in the Mamluk Sultanate always involved distribution of an *iqta‘*. Consider the following passages:

[Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad] appointed him [Jankal] amir of *tablkhānah* upon the *iqta‘* of the amir Bahā’ al-Dīn Qarāqūsh, who was transferred to Damascus.

The amir Bahā’ al-Dīn Qarāqūsh was transferred to amir of Ṣafad, and Jankal was granted his rank of amir, which is *tablkhānah*.

[Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad] ordered him [Jankal] to live in the citadel, and on his settling down, ordered the amir Bahā’ al-Dīn Qarāqūsh to leave for Ṣafad and granted his *iqta‘* to this Jankal.

All these three passages describe the same event. Although they have diverse information about the new post of the amir Qarāqūsh, in this case it is obvious that the rank of amir which he had held was connected with a certain *iqta‘* and that Jankal was granted both at the same time. As for the correspondence between the rank of amir and an *iqta‘*, another example can be found in the case of Mahmūd ibn Sharwān (no. 15). Upon his arrival, this Mahmūd was made only an amir of *tablkhānah*, but when the amir Ṭāyirbughā, who was one of the commanders of one thousand and was himself a wāfīdī amir, died, Mahmūd was raised to commander of one thousand in his place, and at the same time he received Ṭāyirbughā’s *iqta‘*.

These examples show that there was a one-to-one correspondence between each rank of amir and a certain *iqta‘* in this period. In order to recruit a commander of the military refugees, it was necessary for the sultan to transfer another amir or to wait for some amir’s death. This rule can also be substantiated by the following two examples: Tamurtāsh (14) gained the rank of amir of one hundred in the place of Amir Sanjar al-Jamaqdar, and Khalīfah ibn ‘Alī Shāh (19) was appointed commander of one thousand in Damascus in the place of Amir Barsbughā al-‘Ādillī.

---

65For the *iqta‘* distribution to the wāfīdīyah during the reign of Baybars, see Sato, *State and Rural Society*, 99–103.
68Al-‘Aynī, *‘Iqd*, 4:303.
71Ibid., 446.
We can observe a result of the redistribution of *iqṭāʾ*’s carried out by al-Manṣūr Lājin and al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the examples after Jankalī’s defection in 703/1304. Because of the reform of the *iqṭāʾ* system, it became impossible to bestow high rank and large *iqṭāʾ*’s upon *wāfīdī* amirs when they arrived. Instead, the sultan consistently gave them the rank of amir of *tablkhānah* as an honorary rank. Accordingly, it is meaningless to compare their starting ranks, most of which were amir of *tablkhānah*. Rather we must investigate their ranks later in their careers.

**Wāfīdī Soldiers Assigned to Units**

*Those Recruited into the Sultan’s Mamluk Unit*

During the reign of Baybars, there are statements that a part of the *wāfīdī* soldiers were incorporated into the sultan’s mamluk unit (category [a] above). Baybars assigned fewer than half of the first Mongol *wāfīdīyah* “to his Bahrīyah unit and to his mamluks,” as seen above, and when the number of military refugees increased after that, Baybars “divided all groups among twice their number of royal mamluks” (*wa-yufarriquhum kull jamāʾah bayna adʾāfha min al-mamālik al-sultānīyah*). Further, Qalāwūn assigned some of the followers of Shaykh ‘Alī (no. 10) to his own mamluk unit or to the *khāṣṣakīyah*.

Sato states, “It is not clear whether the Mongols who were incorporated into the Mamluk corps became slaves or not.” In my opinion, they did not become slaves, but remained free men, for one would expect some evidence of the conflicts that would have occurred if they had been enslaved. Rather, the sources emphasize their honorable positions within the Mamluk army: Ibn Shaddād ranks this group as first on the above-mentioned list, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir states, “Each one of them became like an independent amir attended by soldiers and slaves (*ghilmaʾ*)”.

We also noted above the *wāfīdīyah* of Salaḥ, one hundred of whom were taken into service, but we could not determine whether they joined the mamluk unit or the *ḥalqah*. Thus, the historians of the early Mamluk period seem to have regarded the fact that they were assigned to the immediate control of the sultan as important, while they disregarded whether or not they became slaves.

Among those in this category in the later period, Aydamur al-Khaṭīrī and Bahādur al-Damurdāšī (nos. 15 and 25 in the Appendix) were the most successful. These two came to Egypt under the command of *wāfīdī* amirs, were assigned to

---

72 For the result of the redistribution of *iqṭāʾ*’s (*rawk*), see Sato, *State and Rural Society*, 152–61.
75 Sato, *State and Rural Society*, 102.
the sultans’ mamluk units, and reached the rank of amir of one hundred and commander of one thousand in their later careers. Amitai-Preiss regards Aydamur al-Khaṭīrī as a “non-affiliated” amir, i.e., neither al-Manṣūrīyah nor al-Nāṣirīyah. However, Aydamur’s biography states that he was “the greatest of al-Burjī amirs” and many sources call him “al-Manṣūrī.” Bahādūr al-Damurdāshī was one of the twenty-four commanders of one thousand at the time of the death of al-Nāṣir Muhammad, and he was classified among “his (i.e., al-Nāṣir’s) mamluks and khawāṣṣ” and was called “al-Nāṣirī.” We can consider that these two were not only wāfadīyah but also mamluk amirs. Thus, even in this later period, the difference between free men and slaves in the Mamluk army was not always clear.

**Those Divided into the Amirs’ Units**

This category (category [c] above) can be found in the case of Salar’s group, half of whom were divided among amirs’ units. When Muʿmin Āghā (no. 8 in list beginning on p. 57) and his followers sought refuge with Qalāwūn in 681/1283, his two sons were assigned to serve under the amir Sayf al-Dīn Ṭūrūntāy, nāʿīb al-saltānah of Qalāwūn.

Ibn Shaddād ranks this category as the last on the list shown above, and its minor position within the Mamluk army is substantiated by the following two examples. First, when al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā was deposed, the new sultan al-Manṣūr Lājīn arrested three commanders of the Oirat refugees, Taraghāy, Kaktāy, and Uluṣ. As for the rest of them, “some of them came to serve under amirs [in Egypt] and others went to Syria and sought to enter the service of amirs.” Second, when six hundred followers of Tamurtāsh arrived at Egypt in 728/1328, al-Nāṣir “was antipathetic towards those who were in Tamurtāsh’s service and divided a part of them among amirs, so that they served under them without iqtā’s.” Both examples show that this category did not provide favorable conditions for the military refugees, and the latter shows that they were assigned without being given iqtā’s.

**Those Retained in the Unit of Their Original Leader**

Before seeking refuge, the wāfadīyah had been part of a military organization, very different from that of the army of the Mamluk Sultanate, stationed in Mongol-controlled areas. After they sought refuge, most had to accept being dispersed into...
various units of the Mamluk army, but a part of them (case [d] above) were able to remain in the service of their original commanders, who had gained the rank of amir.

As seen above, Salār al-Mustansīrī was allowed to keep his followers up to the limit of fifty persons out of three hundred, and Ṣaragḥān Āghā kept at least one hundred out of two hundred. For the later wāfidiyyah, we have little information on how many followers remained under their commanders. But I suppose that a certain number of them remained in their original leaders’ units and that these units constituted the various wāfidiyyah groups in the Mamluk army, as will be seen later.

**Those Assigned to the Ḥalqah Unit**

Let us return to the previous question: did most of the wāfidiyyah join the ḥalqah unit (case [e] above)? Here also let us start with the reign of Baybars. During his reign, Ibn Shaddād states, none of the Mongol wāfidiyyah were assigned to the ḥalqah unit, as seen above, and no other contemporary sources report their assignment to the ḥalqah either. It is uncertain whether those of the wāfidiyyah from al-‘Irāq commanded by Salār al-Mustansīrī who were “taken into service” were assigned to the ḥalqah unit or the mamluk unit. As a whole, no wāfidiyyah groups are described as assigned to the ḥalqah during the reign of Baybars, except for a few ‘Irāqī wāfidiyyah. Ayalon points out that the amir Sayf al-Dīn Qunqur al-Tatarī, who came to Egypt in the reign of Baybars but whose arrival year is unknown, “was assigned a good iqtā’ in the ḥalqah.” If we consult with more contemporary sources, however, we find no account like this.

After the reign of Baybars, also, we find only a few cases of wāfidiyyah who were assigned to the ḥalqah. Al-Maqriẓī states that about 300 commanders of the Oirat refugees, except for Ṭaraghāy and al-Luṣūs (Ulūs), were made commanders in the ḥalqah (taqādum fi al-ḥalqah), but this information is not found in any contemporary source. According to al-‘Aynī, who cites al-Yūṣufī, Nīrūz, a brother of the amir Jankalī, was appointed taqdimah, which was possibly taqdimat al-ḥalqah (commander of the ḥalqah). Through all the period covered in the present article, we find no indication that the wāfidiyyah in general joined the ḥalqah unit, contrary

---

83 See the cases of Ṣaragḥān Āghā and Karmūn Āghā (nos. 2 and 3 in the list).
to Ayalon’s statement.

Besides, it is necessary to clarify what the term ḥalqah meant in this period. Here, Ayalon and Humphreys’ argument about the ḥalqah is helpful. They both accept the fact that the ḥalqah in the army of Saladin was an elite force under the personal command of the sultan. Ayalon considers that the ḥalqah kept its high position at least until the reign of al-Naṣir Muḥammad and that it gradually declined because of the redistribution of iqṭā’.⁸⁷ On the other hand, Humphreys argues that the ḥalqah was already weak at the beginning of Baybars’ reign, because “it comprised the bulk of the provincial Syrian troops.”⁸⁸ The basic disagreement between these two is whether there was much continuity between the Ayyubids and the Mamluks, or not.⁸⁹

Ayalon and Humphreys, however, agree that the ḥalqah in the Bahri period was still attached to the sultan as royal troops.⁹⁰ This seems to be a key to the solution of the obscure treatment of the wāfidiyyah. As seen above, the Mongol wāfidiyyah in the reign of Baybars were assigned to the sultan’s mamlik unit without being enslaved, supposedly. We can just say that they joined the royal troops. The expression khāṣṣakīyah used by Ibn Shaddād can be used whether they were mamluks or free men. As for the troops of Salār al-Mustanṣirī, there is no designation whether they joined the mamluks or the ḥalqah; they are simply described as being taken “into service.”

In my view, during the reign of Baybars, the ḥalqah, the khāṣṣakīyah, and even the sultan’s mamluks constituted one royal troop, and there was no distinction among the terms. The distinction between mamluks and free men inside this troop would not have mattered in this period. So I disagree with Humphreys on the point that he regards the ḥalqah of Baybars as second-class royal troops. Rather, I agree with Ayalon’s view of the early Mamluk ḥalqah, but disagree with him on the point that regards the ḥalqah as a separate troop from the mamluks.

It is true that the ḥalqah became second-class royal troops but only in a later period. Furthermore, we have found little connection between the wāfidiyyah and the ḥalqah. Accordingly, we cannot support Ayalon’s statement that we know the wāfidiyyah were discriminated against because they joined the ḥalqah.

**ADVANCEMENT IN THE MAMLUK ARMY**

So far we have only dealt with the rank assigned to military refugees when they

---

⁸⁹ For their arguments about the ḥalqah, see also David Ayalon, “From Ayyubids to Mamluks,” Revue des études islamiques 94 (1991): 50–53.
⁹⁰ Ibid., 163.
had just arrived. But we can also identify those who were later promoted to higher rank. Especially, we can identify nine amirs of one hundred from the wāfidiyyah (nos. 1, 4, 12, 15, 20, 23, 24, 25, and 27 in the Appendix), while Ayalon counts only four amirs of one hundred. Besides, other wāfidi amirs seem to have reached politically important positions at the Mamluk court, although they are not described as amirs of one hundred in any source (nos. 2, 5, 6, 11, 13, and 22 in the Appendix). Wāfidi amirs in high positions can be seen throughout the period in question. If we divide this period into two phases, with the third enthronement of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 1310 as a dividing point, we can see that the reasons for their advancement were different in the two phases.

THE FIRST PHASE (1262–1310)

In the first phase, from the outset of the Mamluk Sultanate until 1310, i.e., before the third enthronement of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, most of these refugees remained with their own military units which maintained their solidarity. Let us look at some groups which arrived at various times.

The Mongol wāfidiyyah who come in the reign of Baybars (nos. 2–3 in the list) often appear in the sources as a group under Mongol commanders afterwards. For example, in 680/1281, when Sultan al-ʿĀdil Sulāmīsh, a son of Baybars, was dethroned and Qalāwūn became sultan, a group called al-tatār al-wāfidiyyah fled from Cairo, under command of their leader Sayf al-Dīn Karāy (no. 6 in the Appendix) and his sons. This episode shows that they had still kept their Mongol tribal bond for about twenty years. Since this Karāy and his unit returned to Cairo later and submitted to the authority of Qalāwūn, it seems they maintained their unit during the reign of Qalāwūn. There are also some accounts in the chronicles stating that one of their leaders, Sayf al-Dīn Nūkāy (no. 4 in the Appendix) participated in several expeditions against the Crusaders and the Mongols until 699/1299, so we can suppose that their unit continued to exist as a viable military unit no less than thirty-six years after their arrival.

The Rūm wāfidiyyah (no. 7 in the list) left little trace in the sources after their defection. But two of their leaders (nos. 11 and 12 in the Appendix) achieved high positions in the reign of al-Manṣūr Lājin and the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Therefore it can be supposed that this group also maintained its political power for a long time.

As for the famous Oirat refugees (no. 12 in the list), they retained not only their tribal solidarity, but also their religious creed and lifestyle during the reign of

---

91See Ayalon, "Wafidiya," 93.
92Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 193.
93Ibid., 200; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 31:36; Ibn al-Furat, Tārikh, 7:221.
Sultan Kitbugha. For example, it is reported that they did not observe the fast in the month of Ramaḍān, and that they ate the meat of horses that they had not slaughtered according to Islamic conventions, but had been beaten to death, as was their custom. Yet this situation did not continue for long, as seen above. After their leaders were arrested, they could no longer remain a strong military faction and we find only a few accounts about them, such as the short-lived riot in 1299.

We can generalize the first phase using the five categories mentioned above as follows: a large number of category (d) soldiers continued to serve under category (b), i.e., wāfidi amirs. These amirs were advanced for reasons of their military ability and the large number of category (d) soldiers under their command, for the sultans in this phase needed these military refugees in order to solidify the newborn Mamluk state as well as to bolster their own authority. Wāfidiyyah of categories (a) and (c), i.e., those taken into the units of the sultan or other amirs, are also found in this period, but these categories produced no high-rank amirs.

On the other hand, the wāfidiyyah in this phase are also characterized by their marital ties to the sultans. For example, two of the four wives of Baybars at the time of his death were daughters of Mongol wāfidi amirs who came to Egypt in 661/1263, and a daughter of Karmūn, the leader of these wāfidiyyah, had been another of his wives. Qalāwūn married another daughter of Karmūn, who gave birth to his son al-Šāliḥ ʿAlī, and also the daughter of one of the Rūm wāfidiyyah. She is known as the mother of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Besides, Qalāwūn married his two sons, al-Šāliḥ ʿAlī and al-Ashraf Khalīl, to the daughters of Mongol wāfidiyyah.

What was the reason for these close marital ties between the wāfidi amirs and the Mamluk elite? As for the Oirat, Ayalon points out their physical beauty and states, ‘Many Mamluks married Oirat wives.’ In my opinion, however, the Mamluk elites’ preference for the daughters of wāfidi amirs had rather to do with their fathers’ military ability. The sultans wanted marriage with their daughters for political reasons: they regarded the wāfidiyyah as reliable supporters.

The Second Phase (After 1310)
In this phase, i.e., the third reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and afterwards, unlike the first phase, we can find no unit that consisted of military refugees

---

94 Al-Nuwayrī, Niḥāyah, 30:298.
95 See no. 17 in the Appendix.
96 See Humphreys, “Emergence of the Mamluk Army,” pt. 2, 159.
97 See nos. 2, 4, 6, and 10 in the Appendix.
alone, and only those amirs who had personal connections with the sultan could reach high rank.

The amir Badr al-Dīn Jankalī ibn al-Bābā (no. 20 in the Appendix) advanced to the highest rank in the Mamluk Sultanate, but when he arrived in Egypt in 703/1304, he had brought only several horsemen with him. So when he was made an amir of one hundred, his unit could not have consisted of Mongols only. The reason for his advancement is unknown, but it is clear that it depended on his personal connection to Sultan al-Nāṣīr rather than his troop’s strength. This connection is reflected in the fact that his daughter married a son of al-Nāṣīr.

If we again take an example from the Oirat wāfidiyyah, the amir Qararnah (no. 18 in the Appendix) is noteworthy. After the dissolution of this group, most of the Oirat were divided among the amirs’ units, and it is not clear how this amir Qararnah was treated. But during the third reign of al-Nāṣīr Muḥammad, Qararnah was sent to the Ilkhanids as an envoy, and during the reigns of the sons of al-Nāṣīr, he was sent to post-Ilkhanid Baghdad twice. These appointments were presumably due to his geographical knowledge of Iran or his skill as an interpreter of the Mongol language. He eventually reached the rank of amir of ṭablkhānah, thus becoming the most successful Oirat in the Mamluk Sultanate.

The group commanded by Tamurtāsh (no. 24 in the Appendix) was welcomed by al-Nāṣīr Muḥammad at first, but when al-Nāṣīr arrested Tamurtāsh and executed him, the men were divided among Mamluk amirs.99 Bahādūr al-Damurdāshi (no. 25 in the Appendix) had been under this Tamurtāsh’s command, as his niṣbah shows, and then was assigned to al-Nāṣīr’s mamluk unit. Afterwards, though his former colleagues vainly rose in revolt in 732/1331–32,100 he reached the highest rank of amir, and his prosperity continued until his death in 743/1343, in the reign of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā‘īl. He married a daughter of al-Nāṣīr, and it is clear that his advancement was closely related to his personal connection to the sultan. Similarly, the brothers Badr al-Dīn and Sharaf al-Dīn ibn Khāṭīr (nos. 13–14 in the Appendix) were promoted to high ranks, despite their original affiliation, the Rūm wāfidiyyah.

One of the last refugees, Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Sharwīn (no. 26 in the Appendix) was supposedly advanced because of his skill as an administrator. Before coming to Egypt, he had been a vizier of Baghdad,101 and that is why he was treated favorably by Sultan al-Nāṣīr. And then, in the reign of al-Manṣūr Abū Bakr, a son of al-Nāṣīr, he was appointed vizier.

Thus, throughout the second phase, we can find several wāfidi amirs (category [b]), who kept only a few of their original soldiers (category [d]) under their

99 Al-‘Aynī, “‘Iqd,” MS Süleymaniye 835, fol. 97v.
100 Ibid., fols. 171v–172r.
101 However, I could not find any evidence that he was a vizier in Baghdad in Persian sources.
command. These amirs were able to reach high rank, not by their military importance, but by their strong connections to the sultan or by their skill as administrators. In this phase, we also find high amirs recruited into the sultans’ units (category [a]) whose advancement owed to personal factors.

In this second phase, we still find several examples of marital ties between wāfidi families and the Mamluk elite. These ties, however, were based on the sultans’ favoritism toward them, while those in the first phase were based on the wāfidiyāh’s military importance.

**Conclusion**

The present study has clarified that the wāfidiyāh’s status was higher than scholars have realized. A certain number of them were recruited into the royal troops, not into the ḥalqah, a minor unit in the Mamluk army. Some of the wāfidi amirs reached the highest rank in the Mamluk army.

Of course, their status was not unchanging from the beginning to the end, and the change in their status closely reflected the change of structure of the Mamluk Sultanate. At the outset of the Mamluk Sultanate, the wāfidiyāh could retain their tribal units because the sultans needed to make use of their capable forces to strengthen the newborn state and to solidify their own authority. Owing to this tribal solidarity, their leaders could reach high positions in the Mamluk military system. In the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, however, the centralization of power was achieved, and the sultan no longer needed to depend on strong units of military refugees. He could advance his favorite retainers whether they were sultan’s mamluks or not. Therefore, in this phase, several highly advanced wāfidi amirs emerged from wāfidiyāh groups which had only a small number of personnel or which had collapsed and completely dissolved.

It is true that the wāfidiyāh were not mamluks, i.e., those who were brought to the Mamluk Sultanate as slaves or captives. But differences between free men and slaves in the Mamluk army seems to have been less significant than has been realized, at least in the early Mamluk period. The wāfidiyāh were outsiders to the sultanate, just as the mamluks were. The wāfidiyāh often shared with the royal mamluks the sense of belonging to a certain sultan, because their only base of

---

102 See nos. 20 and 25 in the Appendix.
103 During the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, there were many examples of amirs who attained the highest ranks without sufficient military training. See Amalia Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Qalāwūn 1310–1341* (Leiden, 1995), 34–40.
power was the relationship with the sultan who recruited them. The present article shows that the situation of the wa‘fidiyyah cannot be explained by the dichotomy of slave and free man. It also casts a new light on the Mamluk political order and the relationship between the Mamluk army and the sultans’ household.

Historiography, 72). See also the Oirat wa‘fidiyyah and Kitbughā’s mamluks in the revolt of 699/1300: al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 1:883.
APPENDIX: THE LIST OF THE WĀFIDĪ AMIRS
(The number after the name is the number of the group in the previous list with which the individual was associated.)

1. Sayf al-Dīn Şaraghān Āghā (no. 2): His name is found only in the account of 661/1263 (Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir, Rawd, 180; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 30:89–90) and in the allocation list (maktuḥ jāmiʿ bi-al-tamlīk) of 663/1265 (Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 98–99; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 30:276–81; Mufaḍḍal, Nahj, 1:479–86; al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 1:532–34). Amitai-Preiss identifies him as a leader of the Mongol wāfidiyāh of 660/1262. See Amitai-Preiss, "Mamluk Officer Class," 295.

2. Sayf al-Dīn Karnūn al-Tatarī (d. 664/1266, no. 3): His biography is found in Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir, Rawd, 264; Shafiʿ ibn ʿAli, Ḥusn, 111; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 30:130. He sought refuge in Cairo in 661/1263 accompanied by another thirteen Mongol commanders and their men, and his name is also found in the allocation list of 663/1265. One of his daughters married al-Zāhir Baybars and then the amir Sayf al-Dīn Kunduk al-Zāhirī, while another married al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and gave birth to his son al-Šāliḥ ʿAli. Shafiʿ ibn ʿAli, Faḍl al-Maʿthūr min Sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr (Sidon, 1998), 111; Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 164, 228; idem, Tuhfah, 56, 87. See also Amitai-Preiss, "Mamluk Officer Class," 296.

3. Badr al-Dīn Baktāsh ibn Karnūn (no. 3): Ibn Shaddād, Tārīkh, 338. His name is found only in the account of the battle of Ḥimṣ in 679/1280 (Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 197; idem, Tuhfah, 100; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 31:33–34; Ibn al-Furāt, Tārīkh, 7:216).


7. Sayf al-Dīn Jabrāk al-Tatārī (no. 3): He was one of the fourteen Mongol commanders of 661/1263. His name is found only in the account of the battle of Hīmṣ in 692/1293 (Baybars al-Mansūrī, Zubdah, 181; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 31:33; Ibn al-Furat, Tārīkh, 7:215; al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 1:692).


10. Saktāy (no. 7): He was the first refugee from al-Rūm, who came in 675/1276 with his brother Jāwrajī. His daughter Āshlūn married Qalāwūn in 681/1282–83 and gave birth to his son al-Nāṣīr Muḥammad (Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir, Tashrif, 110; Baybars al-Mansūrī, Zubdah, 229; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyah, 31:90, 267; al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 1:709; Ibn Ḥajar, Durar, 1:459).

11. Mubāriz al-Dīn Sawārī ibn Tarkārī, Amīr Shīkār (d. 704/1304–5, no. 7): He was one of the Rūm wāfīdī amirs (Ibn Shaddād, Tārīkh, 154–55; al-Yūnīnī,
Dhayl, 3:166; Mufaddal, Nahj, 2:407–8). He is also known as one of the sixteen amirs who supported al-Manṣūr Lājin in 696/1296 (Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 313). Biography: Baybars al-Manṣūrī, Zubdah, 382; al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 2:14; Ibn Hajjar, Durar, 2:275; Ibn Taghrībirdī, Nujūm, 8:217.


15. ʿIzz al-Dīn Aydamur al-Khāṭīr al-Manṣūrī (d. 738/1337–38, no. 7): Originally he was one of the mamluks of Niẓām al-Dīn Awḥad ibn Ḥaṭṭīr (father of the amirs numbered 13 and 14 above) and was later assigned to the Burjīyah unit by Qalāwūn. He reached the rank of amir of one hundred in the third reign of al-Nāṣir. Biography: al-Yūsufī, Nuzhah, 384; al-Ṣafadī, A’yān, 1:660; idem, Wāfī, 10:17; Ibn Ḥaṭṭar, Durar, 1:511–12; Ibn Taghrībirdī, Manhal, 3:180–82; idem, Nujūm, 9:312. See also Amitai, “Remaking of the Military Elite,” 161; Sato, “Proposers and Supervisors,” 82.

16. ʿAraghāy (no. 12): He was a leader of the Oirat refugees in 695/1296. For his career under the Mongols, see Rashīd al-Dīn, Jāmiʿ al-Tawārīkh (Tehran, 1995), 1262, and also Shimo Hirotoshi, The Political Structure of the Mongol Empire: The Core Tribes of the Ilkhanid (in Japanese) (Tokyo, 1995), 275–76. He was favored by al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā, but in the reign of al-Manṣūr Lājin he and the Oirats were purged (al-ʿAynī, Iqd, 3:356). His brief biography is found only in Ibn Taghrībirdī, Manhal, 6:381–82.

17. Ulūṣ (d. 699/1300?, no. 12): After the purge of the Oirat, among their leaders,
he was the only one released, for unknown reasons. In 699/1300, he conspired with Sayf al-Dîn Burîltây, one of the sultan’s mamluks, and ‘Alâ’ al-Dîn Qutulûbars al-‘Ädîlî, a mamluk of Kitbughâ, and revolted, but they were soon put down and executed (Baybars al-Manšûrî, Zubdah, 330; idem, Tuhfah, 156; al-Nuwayrî, Nihâyah, 31:381; Ibn al-Dawâdârî, Kanz, 9:15; Mufaḍḍal, Nahj, 2:632; al-Maqrîzî, Sulûk, 1:883).

18. Qararnâh (d. 749/1348–49, no. 12): One of the Oirat refugees, he was appointed amir of ṭablkhânah by al-Nâṣîr. He was sent as envoy to the Ilkhanids several times. Biography: Ibn Ḥajar, Durar, 4:290.

19. Sulâmîsh (d. 698/1299, no. 13): He was the governor of al-Rûm under the Ilkhanids and sought refuge in Egypt in 698/1299. Leaving his brother Qutqûtû, who was given an iqṭâ‘ in Egypt, he went to al-Rûm, where he was caught and executed by the Ilkhanid army. See Rashîd al-Dîn, Jāmi‘, 1287, 1289; Shimo, Political Structure, 129.


23. Sayf al-Dîn Tâyîrbughâ (Zahirbughâ) (d. 738/1337, no. 20): He was one of the relatives of Sultan al-Manšûr Qalâwûn. When he arrived with Ilkhanid envoys in 726/1326, he was made amir of ṭablkhânah, and was raised to the rank of amir of one hundred before long. He read and wrote the Mongol language in the sultan’s court. Biography: al-Ṣafadî, A‘yân, 2:635–36; Ibn Ḥajar, Durar, 2:234.

24. Tamurtâsh (Damurdâsh) ibn Jûbân (d. 728/1328, no. 22): He was the governor of al-Rûm in Ilkhanid territory, and he sought refuge in Egypt in 728/1328. He was made amir of one hundred, but al-Nâṣîr executed him seven months after he arrived, on account of the peace treaty with the Ilkhanids. Biography:

25. Bahādur al-Damurdaš al-Nāṣir (d. 743/1343, no. 22): He was originally a mamlik of Tamurtāsh and was later assigned to al-Nāṣir’s mamlik unit. He became amir of one hundred in the latter half of the third reign of al-Nāṣir. Biography: al-Shujāʿ, Tārīkh, 252–53; al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 10:299; idem, A’yān, 2:62–63; Ibn Ḥajar, Durar, 2:36.

26. Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ʿAlī ibn Sharwīn (d. 748/1347, no. 23): Known as “the vizier of Baghdad.” He sought refuge from Baghdad accompanied by some officials and their families in 738/1337. He was made amir of one hundred and after al-Nāṣir’s death he held the post of vizier three times. Biography: al-Ṣafadī, A’yān, 5:399; Ibn Ḥajar, Durar, 6:90; al-Maqrīzī, Sulūk, 2:755; Ibn Taghrībirdī, Nujūm, 10:183; Ayalon, “Wafidiya,” 93.

27. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ghawrī (no. 23): He came to Egypt with the above Maḥmūd ibn Sharwīn and was appointed Hanafi qadi (al-Shujāʿ, Tārīkh, 19). Biography: al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 3:22; Ibn Ḥajar, Durar, 3:430.

Cairene Cemeteries as Public Loci in Mamluk Egypt

INTRODUCTION

After the conquest of Egypt, the Arab Muslims located their graveyards in the area beneath the Muqtaṭṭam Mountain, stretching outward from the southeast side of their new capital, al-Fustāt. This older and larger cemetery area became known as al-Qarāfah al-Kubrá (the Greater Qarāfah). Subsequently, the cemetery area developed around several famous mausolea, including the mausoleum of Imām al-Shāfi‘i, extended to the Muqtaṭṭam as well, and came to be called al-Qarāfah al-Ṣughrā (the Lesser Qarāfah). Also, outside the Naṣr Gate, there stretched another cemetery area, eventually swallowed by the so-called al-Ṣaḥrā’ that prospered most during the Mamluk period, and had stronger ties with the Mamluk ruling elites. There were several other smaller graveyards, and in this article, I include all cemetery areas in the region surrounding Cairo/Fustāt in the term “Cairene cemeteries,” although al-Qarāfah al-Kubrá preceded the construction of Cairo.

These cemetery areas were primarily sanctuaries where people came to console the souls of the dead, or to seek help for worldly difficulties and pray for entrance into heaven through the fulfillment (ijābah) of the du‘a’ (supplicatory prayer). Likewise, crowds including women and children went there on excursions, leading to the depiction of these areas by the historian al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) as “the greatest meeting place of the Egyptian people, and their most popular pleasure resort.”

Literature detailing these cemetery areas and the practice of visitation (ziyārah/ziyārat) among Egyptian Muslim society were prominent in the Mamluk era and continued even through the nineteenth century. Yet, in vicissitude of time, these works tended to focus on the ahl al-bayt (the Prophet Muḥammad’s holy family), arranging information about them into chapters. Al-Qal‘āwī (d. 1815), al-Shablanjī (d. 1883), and al-Mushkī (published in 1919), for instance, composed treatises of this sort, and al-Nabhānī’s (d. 1931–32) compilation of karāmāt (miracles and virtues) achieved by “saints” should be recalled in this regard.


in addition, listed famous mausolea in 1936. Meanwhile, scholarly investigations in the Western academy were initiated by A. F. Mehren in the latter half of the nineteenth century, followed by R. Guest and L. Massignon, primarily focusing on topography. Great breakthroughs were made by Yusuf Rāghib, who, after completing an inventory of ziyārah guidebooks of the cemeteries, published many substantial studies on this subject. Since the 1980s, Christopher Taylor and the present author have engaged this subject from social-historical or historical-anthropological perspectives, detailing customs and the social background and trying to reconstruct the social milieu. More recently, new studies seem to be flourishing in this field.

This article is an attempt to reconsider the historical characteristics and illuminate actual conditions of these cemetery areas, where any Muslim could participate in various activities, each in his or her own way, irrespective of their position in the social strata, place of origin, gender, or age. Particularly, primary consideration is focused on the various ways in which people participated, based on their social positions or strata, and the supervision of that area by the Mamluk government.


3Hasan Qāsim, Al-Maza'arat al-Misrīyah (Cairo, 1936). Also Ahmad Taymūr, Qabr al-Imām al-Su'ūtī: wa-Tahqiq Mawdū'īh (Cairo, 1927) should be added here.

4A. F. Mehren, Cāhirah og Kerāfat, historiske Studier under et Ophold i Ægypten 1867–68 (Copenhagen, 1869).


8The main historical sources of this article have already been referred to orally at the Annual Meeting of the Historical Society of Japan in 1991, also partly published in Japanese as "The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century."
As a result, I hope to elucidate the various roles that these cemeteries played in the Cairo/Fustat region, and how the public loci in Islamic Egypt functioned for members of Egyptian society, by reconsidering the relationships between cemetery areas and the people of various strata of society in Cairo, as well as the interactions among those people.⁹

**CEMETERIES AS RESIDENTIAL AND LEISURE PLACES**

Cairene cemeteries, including the two Qaraafahs and al-Šahrā’, were primarily huge areas where the dead of Cairo and al-Fustat, from sultans to paupers, were entombed. These were graveyards for all Muslims, who probably requisitioned them as their burial land from Coptic Egyptians after the conquest. Copts were allocated a spot near the Ḥabash Lake as their cemetery, although the higher stratum of Copts, such as the pope or some bishops, were buried in churches like al-Mu‘allaqah of Old Cairo, or, in some cases, the pope’s body was relocated to the monastery of Abū Maqār in Wādī Naṭrūn.¹⁰ The main cemeteries for Jews and Samaritans may have stood next to the Coptic ones beside the Ḥabash Lake, which the 56th Coptic Pope Khā’il III (880–907) sold to them. Perhaps this measure was taken due to the construction of the maydān (square) in a new capital, al-Qaṭā‘ī’, by Ibn Ṭūlūn. Other dhimmīs interred their dead within churches, such as the Melikites, who also buried their dead in the Qusayr Monastery on the Muqattam, the Armenians, and the Nestorians.¹¹ Thus, Muslim cemeteries were adjacent to dhimmī graveyards, although from a shari‘ah point of view, they should have been kept separate by great distances.¹²

---

⁹The aim of this article does not lie in social class or stratum analysis; the sectioning of each chapter by headings such as the common people, ulama, or ruling elites, is employed only for arrangement and facilitation of the arguments herein, not for rigid classification of social strata. Through such indices, this article intends to illuminate various aspects of Cairene cemeteries.


¹²Although not written in the Mamluk period, see al-Damanhūrī (d. 1192/1778), Iqāmat al-Ḥujjah al-Bāḥirah ‘alā Ḥadīm Kanā’ is Miṣr wa-al-Qāhīrah (Berkeley, 1975), 63 (text).
At the same time, since the Cairene cemetery areas were located on the periphery of the Cairo/Fustát region, they were vulnerable to easy plunder by raiding outsiders. The invasion of the areas of al-Qarāfah or by the Qarmatians and Fatimid Maghribians, and later by the Ottomans, may be recalled in this regard.\textsuperscript{13}

People from all across the social stratum, regardless of gender or age, visited the tombs of their acquaintances or “saints”; these activities were termed ziyārah.\textsuperscript{14} Also, travelers from outside of Egypt came to visit the cemeteries, drawn by such sites as the mausoleum of Imām al-Shāfi‘ī.\textsuperscript{15} Many of them stopped on their Meccan pilgrimages. While visiting famous mausolea, visitors would often form groups, each led by a shaykh of al-ziyārah, an authority and guide, making a circuit of the holy mausolea following their own routes. In 845/1442, for instance, eleven groups went on tours of the two-Qarařahs simultaneously. The shaykhs of al-ziyārah, who might be considered tour leaders, wrote guidebooks for tomb visitation, termed “kutub al-ziyārah” (books of visit) as well. These treatises, which are utilized in this article, detailed the customs of visitation, and cited abundant anecdotes about the late saints.\textsuperscript{16} The ziyārah was made not only by visiting groups (sing. ta‘īfah), but also by individuals or groups with specific motives. For instance, at the tomb of al-Shātibī in al-Qarařah al-Šughrá, verses of the deceased and the Quran were recited by shaykhs and their pupils on the first Tuesday of each month.\textsuperscript{17}

The sanctity of the Qarařah cemeteries was assumed to be strengthened by their location beneath the holy Muqatšam Mountain. The word al-Qarāfah is employed interchangeably with safh al-Muqaṭṭam (the foot of al-Muqaṭṭam Mountain) in historical sources. The Muqaṭṭam itself attracted the reverence of

\textsuperscript{13} Ibn Iyās, Bada‘i’ al-Zuhūr (Cairo, 1982–84), 5:154; Ohtoshi, “The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century,” 171.

\textsuperscript{14} The term “saint” in this article is employed to denote an analytical concept, which is applied to any person who won veneration from others, including those who were called walā‘awliyā‘, sāliḥ/sāliḥūn, etc. Concerning various terminological problems on “saints,” see Tetsuya Ohtoshi, “‘Saints’ and ‘the Cult of the Saints’” (in Japanese), in The Handbook of Islamic Studies (Tokyo, 1995), 240–48.

\textsuperscript{15} Before the Mamluk period, in the middle of the twelfth century, al-Shaykh Ibn al-Šabūnī, who was living in Damascus, asked Nūr al-Dīn Māhmūd, the Zangid ruler, for permission to visit Imām al-Shāfi‘ī in al-Qarāfah, and his hope was realized. See Abū Shāmāh, Kītāb al-Rawḍatayn (Cairo, 1956–62), 2:68.

\textsuperscript{16} For more detail on the manners and customs which prevailed in Egyptian cemeteries and their visits, and also on the shaykh al-ziyārah and kutub al-ziyārah, see Ohtoshi, “The Manners, Customs, and Mentality”; idem, “The Egyptian City of the Dead and Visits to Holy Graves”; and Taylor, In the Vicinity of the Righteous.

Egyptians of various religions—Copts cherished their own legendary memory of moving the Muqattām Mountain. A person entombed in this area may have been believed to have escaped Judgment. Muslim literature often depicted al-Muqattām through personification, and every important historical figure was said to have had a relationship with it. Later, the ziyyarah tract of al-Shu'aybī (seventeenth century) even illustrated its cosmological position by ranking it with Mount Arafat, the Ka'bah, and Jerusalem. Al-Muqattam was therefore described as "al-muqaddas" (holy) by both Muslim and Coptic literature.

As a result, a du'a' (supplicatory prayer) performed there was thought more likely to be fulfilled. The fulfillment (ija'bah) of individual du'a' constituted a crucial concern of visitors to graveyards, and its content tended to concentrate on worldly affairs or entering heaven. Moreover, mass prayers conducted by rulers were often held there, mainly in the back enclosure of Sūltān Barquq's religious complex in al-Šahra', seeking the abatement of the plague or the rising of the Nile. People, including Copts and Jews, were urged to go there to pray, and huge amounts of bread, meat, and other items were distributed on those occasions.

After the death of a relative, the bereaved family would stay for long periods at the graveyard to comfort the soul of the deceased. Additionally, visitors from in and out of Cairo/Fustat came to visit these cemetery areas. As time went on the infrastructure in al-Qarāfah was improved, with numerous walled tomb structures enabling people to live there, and it consequently became inhabited by the common people.

As early as the Tulunid period, histories already suggest the presence of inhabitants, particularly those who enjoyed the benefits of an aqueduct from the Ḥabash Lake to al-Maʿārif (al-Qarāfah al-Kubrā), constructed by Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 270/884). In the Ikhshidid period (935–69), the situation seems to have remained

---

20 For a detailed analysis of the content of the du'a' and the logic of its rewards, see Ohtoshi, "The Manners, Customs, and Mentality," 30–39.
the same. From the Arab conquest to the Fatimid period, the development of the al-Qarāfah al-Kubrá area, first as a suburb of al-Fustāt and then as a graveyard area, is evidenced by archeological research as well. When they entered Egypt, the Fatimids were reported to have made al-Qarāfah al-Kubrá a residential area, and they built mosques, large pavilions, monuments, and cisterns, and so many moved there that it eventually became congested. There were, however, also struggles between the Qarāfah resident Egyptians and al-Maghāribah, who came with the Fatimids. Notably, in 363/973, the Maghāribah invaded the Qarāfah district, evicting Egyptians, and plundered or occupied it. In those days, the natives of al-Qarāfah may have been known as al-Qarāf|yah, who went so far as to send robes of honor to a swindler named Shurūṭ, possibly a converted Copt, when the Banū Qurrah of the Arab Bedouins supported him as their caliph. Nevertheless, the Fatimids later distributed to the Qarāfah residents a great deal of meat and sweets through the mosque, and built a free mill complete with working beasts and fodder. Sufis were reported to seclude themselves in the Muqatlam, though the reliability of this passage in the text is uncertain. Although it suffered disasters in al-Mustansir’s reign (427–87/1036–94), and in 564/1168, the area revived in the Ayyubid period, with many new buildings, such as Ribāt Fakhr al-Dīn and the muṣallā (oratory) of Ibn al-Arsūfī. Most famous of all was the rebuilding of the mausoleum of Imam al-Shāfī’ī in al-Qarāfah al-Šughrá with an aqueduct built by Sultan al-Kāmil. The custom of ziyārah seems to have been established in this period, as indicated by the appearance of ziyārah tracts.
Geographical works of this period also confirm the existence of inhabitants in the Qarāfahs.\footnote{Al-Idrīsī, Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī Ikhtilāq al-Āfīq (Cairo, n.d.), 324; Yāqūt, Kitāb al-Mushtarak (Göttingen, 1846), 341.}

The Bahri Mamluk period is considered one of the high points of the Qarāfahs; they are thought to have been fully developed to accommodate both sojourners and inhabitants. The residents of Cairene cemeteries were too numerous to be mentioned. According to the sources, accommodations for residents and sojourners included mosques, khānqāhs, zāwiyahs, ribāts, madrasahs (colleges), mashhadās (mausolea), turbahs (mausolea), maqbaraḥs (graveyards), and qubbahs (cupolae mausolea). This situation was made possible through equipment and development of religious institutions in this period based mainly on the waqf (religious endowment) system. Other facilities recorded were a muṣallā (oratory), sūqs, furns (baking ovens), public bathhouses, an aqueduct, and wells. Residents and sojourners consisted of people concerned with religious institutions, Sufis, superintendents and employees of the above-mentioned public facilities, persons related to the cemetery industry such as grave diggers, and so-called ‘fuqarā’, assumed to be living with their families.\footnote{Ibn ‘Uthmān, “Murshid,” fols. 90a, 91a, 116b, 131b, 229b–230a; Ibn al-Nāṣir, “Misbāḥ,” fols. 66, 98; Ibn al-Zayyāt, Al-Kawākib, 108–9, 154, 175, 227, 244, 254, 257, 280; al-Sakhawī, Tuhfah, 180, 190; al-Ḥalabi, Al-Qabas al-Ḥāwī li-Ghurar 獬w’ al-Sakhawī (Beirut, 1998), 2:131; Ibn Taghribirdī, Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī (Cairo, 1984– ), 7:77, 133, 190; idem, Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qaḥṣā (Cairo, 1963–72), 7:356; al-Kutubi, ‘Uyūn al-Tawārīkh (Baghdad, 1984), 21:46, 166, 314; al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi’īyyah al-Kubrā (Cairo, 1964), 6:90, 8:321; Ibn al-Furat, Tārikh, 7:112; Ibn ‘Imād al-Hanbali, Shadharāt al-Dhuḥab fī Akhkhār Man Dhuḥab (Beirut, n.d.), 5:373; al-Yūnīnī, Dhayl Mīr’āt al-Zamān (Hyderabad, 1954–61), 3:70, 291; al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulūk, 1:3:148, etc.}

Al-Maqrīzī’s description of this situation is widely known: “Then amirs of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s dynasty rebuilt this cemetery area. . . . The soldiers and the rest of the people followed them, and built mausolea, khānqāhs, sūqs, mills, and public bathhouses as far as the area from al-Ḫabash Lake to al-Qarāfah Gate, and the residential area of Fustāt to Muqatṭam Mountain became built up.\footnote{Al-Maqrīzī, Khītaṭ, 2:444; cf. Ohtoshi, “The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century,” 167; Taylor, In the Vicinity of the Righteous, 20.}

Subsequently, as al-Qarāfah also attracted the governing elite of the dynasty, it became inhabited by them, for instance, Vizier Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Salūs (d. 693/1294), Tāj al-Dīn Ibn Ḥīnā (d. 707/1308), and qāḍī al-quḍāḥ (chief justice) Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz (d. 695/1295–96). Also, the area began to produce notable scholars of the age, such as Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfī (d. 682/1283–84), Ahmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qarāfī (d. 802/1402), and Ibn al-Hāʾim (d. 815/1412).\footnote{Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Muqaffā, 6:207; idem, Al-Sulūk, 1:3:760–61, 2:1:41–42; al-Himyarī, Al-Rawḍ}
the nisbah "al-Qarāfī," or "native of al-Qarāfah," were recorded in rather large numbers. It is interesting to note that, before around 844/1440–41, visits to the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Ruqayyah were hindered because people—including Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Taqā—had taken up residence there. In this manner, the commoners were a driving force for the custom of living in the Qarāfahs, and thereafter the elites of the dynasty followed suit.

As places of residence, the two Qarāfahs, al-Kubrá and al-Ṣuğrá, suffered severe devastation due to recurring pestilence, but ironically, at the same time, they expanded as graveyards. In 806/1403–4, the inhabitants were reduced in numbers by a disaster, then in 833/1430 and 864/1460, a huge number of deaths resulted from pestilence reported in the areas included in the two Qarāfahs. Among the dwellers of al-Qarāfah, al-Sūdān al-Takārīrah, who originated in an area which may have stretched from western Sudan to Mali, were well known to have become the greatest victims. According to the sources, only a handful of the three thousand al-Takārīrah survived the pestilence, notwithstanding the fact that they sought refuge in the Muqatṭam Mountain. These al-Takārīrah seem mostly to have settled there on their Meccan pilgrimages, as exemplified in the case of the well-known King Mansā Wali, al-Malik Mūsá ibn Abī Bakr, who stopped in Egypt (724/1324) accompanied by a retinue of ten thousand. He enjoyed the hospitality shown there, famously dispersing a large quantity of gold, and stayed in al-Qarāfah al-Ṣuğhrā.

On the other hand, the Ṣahrā’ area developed toward the northeast of the

---


38The famous account by Leo Africanus, who visited al-Qarāfah in 1526, estimated its population as two thousand families, after the great disaster. Liwūn al-Ifrīqi, Wasf Irfīqiyah (Rabat, 1980), 2:20; M. Dols, The Black Death in the Middle East (Princeton, 1977), 196.


citadel in the Mamluk period, and the graveyard, which appeared in the Fatimid period outside the Naṣr Gate, combined with this area. Although this area was famed for its closeness to the ruling elite, who filled the place with religious complexes, people of all classes began to live there over the course of time. We find, since the Bahri Mamluk period, many ulama bearing the nisbah of al-Ṣahrawi, such as ‘Abd al-Ṣamad al-Ṣahrawi (d. 879/1475) and Muḥammad al-Abūdarri (d. 844/1440–41). They were born and raised or lived in structures there that included zāwiyahs, turbahs, and houses.

Qubbat al-Naṣr and al-Raydānīyah must have marked the northeast limits, as indicated by the situation of 749/1349: "Graveyards were filled up lengthwise from the Naṣr Gate to Qubbat al-Naṣr, and to the Muqatam Mountain breadth-wise. Also the area from the Ḥusaynīyah cemetery to al-Raydānīyah was filled up..." 43 Qubbat al-Naṣr, established in the Fatimid era, originated in a zāwiyah where fuqara’ (poor, Sufis) abided. Following the reconstruction by Sultan al-Nāṣir, ruling elites of the dynasty, notably the Mamluks, made much use of this Qubbah. The place became an overnight stop for sultans and amirs, and communal supplicatory prayers (du‘ā’) were conducted here for rainfall or the abatement of pestilence. Al-Raydānīyah was also associated strongly with the ruling elite, and was frequently utilized by them, mainly after Sultan Barqūq’s reign. Near the mastaḥbah there, military exercises, such as polo and horse races, were held. The function and characteristics of these two spots bear much similarity; birds for communication or hunting were bred there, and they also marked places for receiving visitors from the north or seeing them off. Since both places offered a suitable gathering place for members of the army and amirs, they became strategic points for rebels as well as rulers. 44 Possibly due to their strong relationship with the ruling elite of the dynasty, and the alienation felt by the common people, these two places seldom appear in ziyārah books, but appear very frequently in the chronicles.

---

43 Al-Maqrizī, Al-Sulūk, 2:3:783.
As has been seen, the custom of living in cemeteries has a long history in Egypt, contrary to what is usually believed. Therefore we need to investigate this custom by extending the span of our study, taking the Egyptian view of the hereafter into consideration. In addition, it can be noted that there was a certain interrelationship between the funeral prayers held at Muṣallā Bāb al-Naṣr (Bāb al-Naṣr Oratory) and burials conducted in the Ṣāḥrah area.\textsuperscript{45}

Another important aspect relating to cemeteries, shared by the whole population, was pleasure seeking. Since ziyyārah books made an effort to situate the visiting of cemeteries within the framework of Islamic pious activities, they never mentioned that visits were often made for pleasure. Yet, if we look at visitors' behavior, we can easily discern the tendency to pursue pleasure. The common populace (‘āmmah) went on moonlit nights, bringing sweets and drinks, while influential people were fond of enjoying the moonlight of summer nights in the courtyards of mosques in the Qarāfah. In winter, they preferred to stay overnight under the minbar (pulpit). Even women and children could stay out openly until late at night, which was ordinarily quite exceptional.\textsuperscript{46} For travelers from outside Cairo the Qarāfahs, which included the mausolea of Imām al-Shāfi’ī and al-Sayyidah Naﬁsah, were the first place to be visited. Egyptians, too, may have ushered travelers there, as in the case of an Ilkhanid mission.\textsuperscript{47} Meccan pilgrims who stopped in Egypt made visits there and left accounts of the Cairene cemetery regions. They include Ibn Jubayr, Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, al-Tujibī, al-Balawī, al-‘Abdarī, and al-Qalṣādī.\textsuperscript{48}

The wā‘iz (religious preacher) preached from pulpits in the City of the Dead, and the qāṣṣ (storyteller) narrated Arab heroic epics, such as Sīrat ‘Antar and Sīrat Dhūt al-Himmah, among the graves or near the Qarāfah Gate. Quran reciters recited in singsong tones, creating additions and subtractions, or stresses, arbitrarily.\textsuperscript{49} From the following account quoted in ziyyārah treatises regarding Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn (d. 622/1225), we can well perceive the situation:

One of the ṣāliḥūn (pious men) who resided in al-Qarāfah had died, so his comrades had prepared the funeral ceremony (waqt,
'urs) in the Zawiyyah al-Gharabili. There a qawwal (religious singer) named al-Faṣīḥ, handsome and preeminent in singing in that era, was engaged. In their hearts, the people assembled there had come to hear him sing. Then the shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn, who was held in awe, was informed of this event, and arrived on the scene with his attendants, urging al-Faṣīḥ to desist. Al-Faṣīḥ fled, fearing the shaykh, and the audiences were practically dying with deep disappointment at the passing of the reason they had gathered [abridged].

Moreover, the ruling elite occasionally enjoyed singing and drinking at the southern border of al-Qarafah al-Kubra. Thus the activity of singing and dancing performed in the cemeteries varied from mere entertainment to more religious appearances. In either event, ulama condemned them for the mingling of the sexes and immorality as a sort of bid’ah (deviation from correct religious practice).

Celebration feasts for saints’ birthdays (sing. mawlid, mawsim, waqt, etc.) were held in the cemeteries as well, although this is not reflected in ziyarah tracts. In the case of the well-known shaykh Muḥammad Wafā’ (d. 765/1364), his tomb was “famed for hosting a waqt (celebratory occasion), yearly on the twenty-second night of Rabī’ II [for commemorating the deceased]. Plenty of money was spent, and crowds flocked there.” On the other hand, the mawlid of al-Sayyidah Nafṣah at her mausoleum began in 889/1484, and became known as “mawlid al-khalifah” (the caliph’s mawlid), since the caliph, who resided close to this mausoleum, took care of it.

The Attachment of the Common People to the Cairene Cemeteries

One way in which the common people involved themselves in the Cairene cemeteries was through the creation/fabrication of tombs of famous persons, or forging/rewriting their names on tombstones. Among the many objects of cemetery visitors, prominent targets were mausolea of the ahl al-bayt (the Prophet


51 Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulāḥ, 2:2:491–92.

52 Tetsuya Ohtoshi, Taṣawwuf as Reflected in Ziyāra Books and the Cairo Cemeteries,” in A. Sabra and R. McGregor, The Development of Sufism in Mamluk Egypt (forthcoming).


Muḥammad’s family) and ṣāliḥ/ṣāliḥūn (pious figure[s]) who acquired veneration from the masses. Yet, in reality, many popular mausolea which attracted visitors were fake, and the names on tombstones were frequently misattributions. Ziyārah treatises repeatedly made accusations of such inventions.

Concerning the invention of holy tombs or mausolea, one premise is that the practice of disinterment may have prevailed in Egyptian society in that period, which is supported by this statement from a ziyārah book: “many ṣāliḥūn who were entombed in an Egyptian cemetery were disinterred after several years.” People would excavate deserted graves and build new mausolea with purportedly-discovered skulls or relics, such as the robe of the Prophet Muḥammad, with invented anecdotes. Similarly, several mausolea were built based on people’s dreams. Mausolea built on the basis of skulls were called mashāhid al-ruʾs, while those based on dreams were known as mashāhid al-ruʿyā.

The following is the gist of an anecdote concerning the invention of mausolea, which occurred in the first half of the fifteenth century. An old man named Mubārak al-Takrūrī (d. 871/1467) retired from his work as a dough kneader at a baking oven located in Bāb al-Lūq, and began living in al-Qarāfah. Then, removing the soil of a mound little by little, he began to construct holy tombs. Whenever he saw grave posts while walking around through the cemeteries, he brought them back to one of his tombs in progress. His first creation was a tomb named Shukran, and he brought its sitr (cover cloth) from the gate of al-Manṣūrī hospital to al-Qarāfah al-Kubrā, in Barsbāy’s reign. When the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Ṣughrā was destroyed by malefactors, he took its tombstone and put it on one of his invented graves, calling it “the tomb of Fāṭimah al-Ṣughrā.” Also, he carved stones, naming his tombs whatever he liked. Then he turned to the construction of that area, and as the place of Mubārak’s holy tombs gained fame, even Sultan Jaqmaq and his wife were said to have supported Mubārak.

Let us now look at examples of Cairene mausolea, which were built upon skulls, dreams, bodies of the deceased, or even complete fiction. If we focus on the periods of creations/fabrications, it is notable that the Fatimids stand out. Specifically, viziers of the later Fatimids or the caliphs themselves were the main inventors. Yet we need to add that this practice continued to occur beyond the Fatimid era. Second, objects of creation tended to center around the ahl al-bayt, chiefly ‘Alī’s descendants, and also great prophets, such as Moses. Among them,
we have many traces of Moses in al-Muqattam and the Qarâfahs, such as the Aqdam mosque, which contained a footprint attributed to Moses.

The reascription of tombstones was another prevailing practice. For instance, someone rewrote the name on a tombstone as al-Mustansir, the caliph, but in fact it was the tomb of al-Mustatir, the onion merchant. Examples of contrived names on tombstones are: the Umayyad Caliph Yazid, Mu‘awiyah, Bilal, the muezzin of the Prophet Muhammad, one of the famous sahâbah, Abü Hurayrah, the Prophet Daniel, the son of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, etc. The pattern of these reascriptions can be summarized as being based on famous historical figures or even fictitious characters. The former includes the Prophet Muhammad’s holy family, persons linked to the Prophet Muhammad like the sahâbah, other prophets, “saints,” and historically well-known individuals. The latter category comprises fictitious offspring of famous people, such as Muhammad ibn Zayn al-‘Abidin. Concerning the way names were invented, it often depended on name similarity, but sometimes this was totally irrelevant. Numerous acts of fabrication and mis-transmission resulted in the production of a huge amount of misnaming, where both the tombstones and their supporting legends were false, and the views of ziyârah books varied as a result.

Thus seen, the list of invented names of “false” mausolea rather represents the wishes and expectations of commoners, and it is in these falsely attached names that we may perceive their mentality and intentions. Through this method of positive participation in the dynamic life of cemeteries, we see an outburst of energy in the common people engaged in visiting cemeteries or inventing tombs.

Next, as stated above, cemeteries provided inhabitable places for the people, where they could enjoy benefits, or could hope for relief from economic hardships in their daily lives. Large scale banquets, for instance, were held on occasions of celebration for the completion of distinguished buildings or to commemorate recovery from illness. Banquets were also held at communal prayers for the rise of the Nile or the abatement of the plague, at funerals, and feasts, where great quantities of food and money would be dispensed. Moreover, through various religious institutions, both waqf income and direct contributions from the state reached Sufis, the needy, and orphans. Numerous visitors to graveyards, needless to say, gave alms and made offerings. Under such circumstances, the masses apparently understood the cemeteries to be a place for sustenance. They could visit cemeteries in times of privation, and were advised to do so. Some of them went even further in order to obtain money or goods from visitors to al-Qarâfah.

59 The following argument was detailed in Ohtoshi, “The Manners, Customs, and Mentality,” 34–39.
60 Ibn al-Nâsikh, “Miṣbâḥ,” fol. 68.
Thus, “many people desired to live there, because of . . . the frequency of alms and acts of charity toward the people of al-Qarāfah.” It was also recorded that on Fridays, “all the poor of Cairo go there to eat and to receive money which is given to them.”

I have previously analyzed this situation, and have explained it as a symbiotic relationship, wherein the wealth and good deeds of visitors were exchanged for rewards from Allāh, through the intercession of those who received them. Indeed, this exchange was nicely depicted by Shu‘ayb ibn al-Ḥurayfīsh:

“The poor man is the rich man’s messenger, since when the rich man exercises almsgiving to the poor man with alms on behalf of his [deceased] parents or relatives, it will reach to the deceased; thus the poor man is the rich man’s messenger.”

Tomb robbery would have been committed primarily by the common people. According to ziya‘rah treatises, kafān (the winding sheet for the deceased), tāḥūt (coffin), and tomb poles were stolen, and other sources list silver candlesticks, carpets, sitr (cover cloths of a grave or coffin), copies of the Quran, lumber from a mausoleum’s ceiling, and windows. It was in 827/1427 and 918/1512 that the scandal of selling disinterred corpses to Europeans was publicized. As for the plundering of graveyards, there was great unrest in 864/1459, and again in 901/1495, when natives of al-Ṣahrā’ fled en masse to Cairo, due to plundering by bands of robbers. Some destruction of tombs was carried out as a result of political embroilments or private grudges. In one example, which occurred in 748/1347, a mob opened the grave of Amir Shuja‘ al-Dīn, stripping off his kafān, and burnt his remains. When criminals were apprehended, rulers punished them severely, through methods such as beheading, cutting off their hands, whipping, crucifixion, or flaying of the face.

Since al-Qarāfah comprised large open spaces, it offered refuge in times of emergency. For instance, “in 702/1303, there was a great earthquake in Egypt.

---

Syria with collapsing houses, and a lot of people died under the debris. A tsunami ensued due to the earthquake, and wrecked many ships. The earthquake lasted for forty days; people fled to al-Qarāfah and pitched tents for themselves. It so affected Alexandria that the sea rose to the middle of the city.67 Also, in 699/1300, a large number of troops conscripted by the Mamluk government stayed in the Qarāfah and other places due to a shortage of housing.68 The stopping place for the aforementioned king of al-Takrūr was al-Qarāfah al-Ṣughrah, and the wālī (governor) of al-Qarāfah and Fustat, Amir Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Amīr Ḥājib took care of him. Similarly, in 783/1338, the daughter of the Marinid ruler Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, known as al-Hurrāh, stayed in al-Qarāfah with a group of four hundred Meccan pilgrims. These facts reveal that the cemeteries not only contained open spaces, but also were supplied with sources of water and food.69

THE ULAMA’S ATTACHMENT TO CEMETERIES

For the ulama, Mamluk society offered more positions in religious institutions than in previous times, and some of them were established in Cairene cemeteries.70 That is to say, cemetery areas provided places for their employment and education. To take some examples, al-Madrasah al-Nāṣirīyah (or al-Ṣalāḥīyah), near Qubbat al-Imām al-Shāfi‘i, was of crucial importance, as is shown by the fact that al-Qalqashandi regarded it as one of the positions suitable for high-ranking mudarrisūn (professors).71 Mudarrisūn and shaykhs were employed there, as we can see in the historical literature.72 Names of khānqāhs in the Qarāfahs, whose positions for ulama were known, included those of Tuquztamur, Baktamur, al-Karīmīyah, al-Taydamurīyah, (Arghūn al-‘Alā‘ī and Najm al-Dīn Mahmūd), and notably Khānqāh Qawsūn (near the Qarāfah Gate) which comprised a shaykh and fifty Sufis with abundant waqfs at its opening in 736/1335.73 Also, khānqāhs and turbahs in al-Ṣahrā’

68 Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulūk, 1:3:898.
70 According to the assertion of I. Lapidus, ulama of relevant age included fuqaha‘ (jurists), judges, scholars, teachers, Quran reciters, hadith reciters, Sufis, functionaries of religious institutions, professional witnesses, and so on. Moreover, many ulama were appointed by the state as bureaucrats, or could be part-time merchants. Even workers, craftsmen, or people of lower strata could become ulama. Ira Lapidus, Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1967), 107–15.
71 Al-Qalqashandi, Ṣubḥ, 9:256.
included Khānqāh Ṭaybughā al-Ṭawīl, Turbat Khushqadam, and Turbat Barqūq.\(^{74}\)

The shift from a shaykh post in one khānqāh to another was a frequent occurrence.\(^{75}\)

Other institutions in these cemeteries, to which appointments are recorded, included Mashhad al-Sayyidah Nafīsah, zāwiyahs, turbahs, ribāṭs, jāmis, etc.\(^{76}\) In those foundations, ulama found employment in positions such as shaykh (leader), mudarris (teacher), nāzīr (administrator), khatāb (preacher), hired Sufis, ḥādim (servant), and so forth. Further, other institutions in these cemetery areas might have employed ulama in operating positions, such as Jāmi’ Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir, Ribāṭ Fakhr al-Dīn ibn Quzul, Jāmi’ al-Afram, and Jāmi’ Ibn al-Labbān.\(^{77}\)

For ulama as well, Cairene cemeteries were places for visiting tombs, being entombed, and occasionally living, as noted earlier. Even a well-known biographer of the age such as Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) visited the cemetery frequently, and left eyewitness observations in his Wafayāt. In addition, in his chronicle, Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1405) repeatedly cites the words of his comrades who visited al-Qarāfah.\(^{78}\)

Cemetery areas also provided employment for Sufis, as mentioned above, and there were several magnet spots for Sufi practices, centering around certain zāwiyahs, such as Zāwiyāt Abū al-Su’ūd and Zāwiyat (or Ribāṭ) Saḥī al-Dīn Ibn Abī al-Manṣūr, in addition to khānqāhs, turbahs, and zāwiyahs founded by the ruling elite. These examples were strongly related to the ʿarāq/ʿarīqah (way) of al-Shādhiliyah. Zāwiyahs in the Qarāfahs are thought to have provided places of contact between ulama and visitors to cemeteries, whereby the visitors could participate in the religious gatherings and rituals conducted there. Moreover, ascetic practices in the Muqattāṭam region and the cemeteries beneath it were conducted by Sufis.\(^{79}\)

Furthermore, it was significant that ulama intervened in cemetery areas through

\(^{74}\)Al-Halabī, Al-Qabas al-Ḥawī, 1:283; al-Maqrīzī, Duar ar-ʿUqūd al-Farīdah, 1:377.

\(^{75}\)Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulāk, 3:3:998.

\(^{76}\)Concerning Mashhad al-Sayyidah Nafīsah, see, for instance, Ibn Taghrībīrī, Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī, 7:135, 189, 403.

\(^{77}\)Al-Maqrīzī, Khiṭṭāt, 2:298, 303, 324, 367. As for the construction activities of the ruling elite, see Chapter 4.


\(^{79}\)For more detail, see Ohtoshi, “Taṣawwuf as Reflected in Ziyāra Books and the Cairo Cemeteries.” The meaning of the term “Sufi” widened during this period, and many ulama were encompassed by this term, hence I included Sufis in this section.
their juridical and religious functions; for example, they criticized the manners of visiting tombs and the tombs’ appearance, judged how to inter the dead, and so forth. Ulama could express their judgments based upon shari’ah (Islamic law), which often took the form of condemning bid‘ah regularly performed by the people, such as visits by women or their mingling with strangers, nadhr (an offering often accompanied with a vow), praying to entombed “saints,” leading to their veneration, ostentatious graves, singing and dancing with musical instruments at the cemetery, walking on graves with shoes, etc.80 Through these accusations, the ulama established their “authority,” and retained their sphere of activity. To cite a well-known incident in this regard, al-‘Izz Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, the sultan al-‘ulamā’ (d. 660/1262), criticized the existence of ostentatious tombs in Cairene cemeteries and activities that took place there, and reportedly succeeded in persuading Sultan Baybars to have all such tombs razed, although it was never enforced.81

**Cemeteries and the Dynastic Elite**

In this section, I will attempt to show how the ruling elite interrelated with Cairene cemeteries in ways not connected to their supervision, which will be discussed next. First are the ziyārahs of sultans or their entourages, which had a long history among the Muslim rulers of Egypt. From the time of the legendary Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 270/884) and his son Khumarawayh (d. 282/896), and Kāfūr al-Ikhshīdī (d. 357/968), through the Fatimids (al-Ḥākim, al-Āmir, Amīr al-Juyūsh al-Afḍal, Vizier al-Ma’mūn, al-Zāfir, and al-ʿAḍīd), to the Ayyubid sultan Kāmil, rulers and their retainers are said to have engaged in the ziyārah.82 The tradition is assumed to have persisted during the Mamluk period, for Sultan Baybars is portrayed as having followed their example.83 Even if we confine ourselves to the Burjī Mamluk period, we can see the ziyārah of sultans occurred frequently, i.e., Barquq (786/1384, 796/1394, 797/1395), Faraj (812/1409), Mu’ayyad (al-du’a’ at al-Ṣahra’ in 822/1419), Barsbay (841/1438), Jaqmaq (845/1442), Ina’l (865/1461), Ahmad ibn Ina’l (865/1461), Khushqadam (866/1462, 870/1465, 871/1466, 871/1467),

---

80See Ohtoshi, “The Manners, Customs, and Mentality,” 19–44; idem, “The Egyptian City of the Dead and Visits to Holy Graves,” Chapter 1.


82Herein, “ruling elites” or “dynastic elites” include sultans, military elites, high-ranking officials, and ‘Abbasid caliphs who immigrated to Cairo, etc.


Qāytbāy (872/1468, 874/1469, 874/1470, 876/1471, 876/1472, 882/1478, 885/1480, 885/1481, 886/1482), Muhammad ibn Qāytbāy (901/1496), Ghawrī (913/1508, 914/1508, 915/1510, 918/1512, 920/1514, 922/1516), and Tūmān Bāy.85 Some retainers followed suit on ziyārah activities, or even took the initiative, such as Yūnus ibn ‘Umar, who is reported to have visited al-Qarāfah every Friday.86 Along with these visits, the ruling class performed charitable activities such as distributing sadaqah (alms) and food. Even when they could not visit the cemeteries personally, they arranged for these distributions. Since these cemetery areas contained the sepulchers of the elites’ relatives, frequent reports of visits to them can also be found.

Further, as mentioned above, members of the ruling elite also competed in the building of architectural works in cemeteries.87 They constructed madrasahs, mosques, and khānqāhs in their names, and turbahs for their own entombment. Those buildings and institutions obviously reflect the religious policy or the personal attitude of each member of the ruling elite, and they also can be considered to be closely related to their ziyārah activities and the development of the northeast al-Ṣaḥrā’ area.

It is widely known that these religious institutions were administered by the waqf system. A large number of tombs in the cemeteries were devastated in the vicissitudes of time, and crumbled into the soil. In order to avoid this, considerable efforts were exerted. The first method taken, under Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ayyūbī, was the government’s direct commitment to the administration of holy sepulchers by nominating managers to live there, paying them stipends (jirāyaṭ), and also making monthly payments to faqırs (poor, Sufis) and awliya‘ (“saints”), and enabling

travelers to stay there. Second, the operations of tomb structures were carried out with waqf income. The elite and others endowed their property as waqf for the maintenance of tombs, mausolea, or khângâhs, and appointed overseers (nâzîr, mutawallî) of these institutions. Waqf endowments were no longer designated exclusively to the public infrastructure, nor to the mausolea of those who had won the veneration of the populace. On the contrary, influential families increasingly administered their own turbahs through the waqf system, diminishing the social redistribution aspect which this system originally boasted.

Specifically, the list of persons who were recorded as having established waqfs included sultans, high-ranking amirs, qadis, ulama, and so-called saints (awliyâ’). We are able to confirm the sources of waqf income as iqtâ’s of certain lands, or rent from buildings. Structures founded by waqfs included the famous mausolea of Imâm al-Shâfi‘î, Ikhwat Yusuf, and Ibn al-Fârid, turbahs of sultans or member of the ruling elite, and the facilities of religious institutions. Sultan Baybars was famed for establishing a waqf for the ritual washing, kafan, and burial of the dead who had no relatives.

An illustration of tomb management according to the waqf system can be found in the mausoleum of Ibn al-Fârid (d. 632/1235). In the days of Sultan Înâl (r. 857–65/1453–61), Amir Tamur and his descendants managed the operation, building a mausoleum with waqf donations, holding a banquet, performing charity works, and paying stipends (jâmakyah) to the khâdim.

As for the administration of the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Nafisah, the Abbasid caliphs, who had immigrated to Cairo due to the Mongol invasion of Baghdad, took charge of it. The first caliph to be buried in al-Qarâfah near al-Sayyidah Nafisah was al-Hâkim (d. 701/1302), and afterwards this became the practice. They began to live near the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Nafisah, a holy area suitable for caliphs. This is understandable since she might have been one of the

89 Ohtoshi, “The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century,” 174. In the case of Turbat al-Sûfîyah, the shaykh of al-khângâh took money from those who wished to be entombed there, in exchange for burial. See al-Sakhawi, Tuhfah, 31–32.
91 Ohtoshi, “The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century,” 175; al-Maqrîzî, Al-Sulûk, 1:2:638.
92 Ohtoshi, “The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century,” 175; al-Sakhawi, Tuhfah, 382–83.
most admired people in pre-modern Egypt, and also, in a broad sense, they could be regarded as of the same lineage.\textsuperscript{94} Then, after the caliph al-Mu’tadid (r. 753–63/1352–62), sultans began to entrust its nazar (superintendency, controllership) to successive caliphs instead of appointing administrative officials.\textsuperscript{95} Since caliphs stood to benefit a great deal from nudhūr (offerings) to this mausoleum, when they were deprived of this post during the years 766–88/1365–87, and after the Ottoman conquest, it caused them a great loss.\textsuperscript{96} They benefited from donated objects such as candles and oil, and also from offerings of money placed in the box beneath the head end of al-Sayyidah Nafisah’s tomb.\textsuperscript{97} Additionally, the mawlid of al-Sayyidah Nafisah began to be known as “the caliph’s mawlid,” as he was a main part of this celebration. It should also be noted that, notwithstanding the fact that caliphs were in charge of the mausoleum, the management of its waqf was assigned to the mustawfī (accountant), and one of them might have been a Muslim convert from among the Copts. The names of a khādim and a shāhid al-khizānah employed there are also mentioned in the sources.\textsuperscript{98}

Let us now move on to more details of waqf operations in Cairene cemeteries. As shown above, expenses for managing mausolea through the waqf system included specified items, such as sādaqah, banquets for the “poor,” and stipends for supervisors and Quran reciters. It should be added that payments were made from waqf income to visitors to the Qaraḍah, as I have detailed elsewhere.\textsuperscript{99} For example, the waqf document of Amir Mithqal mentions stipends of twenty dirhams per month to two reciters at the mausoleum of Ibn Labbān in al-Qarāţah al- Şuğrah. In the waqf document of Sultan Barsbāy, the waqf was reserved for a zāwiyyah, a sabl (public fountain), Quran reciters, etc.\textsuperscript{100}

The following case is from the waqf document of a leading historian, Ibn Taghrībirdi (d. 874/1470), through which we attempt to trace the details of administration of a mausoleum according to the waqf system.\textsuperscript{101} This was not a

\begin{footnotes}
\item[99] Ohtoshi, “The Manners, Customs, and Mentality,” 21; wathiqah waqfiyyah, Südūn min Zāda al-Zāhirī, Dār al-Watha’iq no. 58, 804 A.H.
\item[100] M. Meinecke, \textit{Die Restaurierung der Madrasa des Amīrs Sābiq al-Dīn Mīghāl al-Ānūkī} (Mainz, 1980), 164; \textit{Ḥujjat Waqf al-Asrāf Barsbāy} (Cairo, 1963), 45–48, 50–52, 58; etc.
\end{footnotes}
mausoleum of saints, but rather a mausoleum run by an influential family for themselves.

The waqf endowments for this mausoleum in al-Šahrā’ consisted of several properties, including buildings in the Barjawān quarter of Cairo and on the Nile shore at Būlāq, and shares from two parcels of land in the Gharbīyah district of the Delta. The structures of this mausoleum described in the waqf document were ĕwān al-qiblah, used as a mosque, four fasāqī (family vaults) for the endower’s four families, a wide ḥawsh (courtyard, walled enclosure) for burial, a qā’ah (hall) and riwāq (portico, apartment), toilets, an istābl (stable), a matbakh (kitchen), tībāq (living units) and khalāwī (Sufi cells) for employees of the mausoleum, a sabīl (fountain) and a šihrīj (cistern) under it, and a maktab upstairs in the sabīl as a place for children to study. All of these were to meet the demands of residents of the mausoleum and visitors, particularly the families of the waqf endowers.

Regarding duties and allowances for operating the mausoleum, the following conditions were set in the waqf document: 400 (dirhams per month; the same monetary unit is employed hereafter) for the bawwāb (gate-keeper); the muzammalātī, who was in charge of the sabīl, was given 300, also 300 for the water suppliers, 500 for the farrāš (janitor), who would clean up or sweep the mausoleum and prepare the lamps and frankincense, 150 each as scholarships for ten young orphans and sons of needy people, 300 for their teacher, 150 each for two Quran reciters for the tomb of the waqf endower; 200 each for the shādd (superintendent) of the waqf and its buildings, and khāzīn al-kutub (librarian). The repair and maintenance of the mausoleum cost 200, 500 for the supervisor (nāzir) of the mausoleum and its waqf, 300 for shaykhs who recited the Quran every morning in shifts at the ĕwān of the mausoleum; also 150 each for nine other Sufis, and so forth. Moreover, stipulations set by the waqf endower reveal that, for instance, Sufis and their shaykh in the mausoleum should not leave their posts or neglect their duties, except in cases of illness or the pilgrimage to Mecca. Likewise, the bawwāb and other employees should live in the mausoleum.

As seen from this document, the mausoleum of Ibn Taghribirdī combined various functions including a mosque for prayer, locations for Sufi practices and education, and tombs. Thus, it should be pointed out that the number of religious complexes, which were variously known as khānqāhs, ribāṭs, zāwiyahs, turbahs, qubbahs, madrasahs, and mosques, expanded in this age. In Cairene cemetery areas the growth of these institutions was widespread, to the point where shaykhs with their disciples, employees, and their families dwelled together, as exemplified in the aforementioned case of the Khānqāh Qawṣūn near the Qarāfah Gate, which comprised a shaykh and fifty Sufis, supported by abundant waqfs.

The ruling elite of the Mamluk dynasty would conduct collective prayers in
cemeteries, for the rising of the Nile River, or the abatement of plague. Given that pestilence raged, people in Egypt tended to flee from the land in defiance of fatwās telling them to remain, or rely on talismans, yet there was no better plan than to implore Allāh who presides over all things. Some of them, however, not only considered this prevalence of pestilence as the fury of Allāh, but went so far as to destroy places of amusement, alcohol, and hashish, prohibiting women from going out, and attacking Christian quarters, in the name of eradicating corruption.

An account of a communal prayer in the Ṣaḥrā’ area is described as follows:

[In 822/1419] the pestilence prevailed and sudden death increased so that people began to tremble. Hence, the sultan Mu’ayyad Shaykh proclaimed three days of fasting through the muḥtāsib. After three days’ fasting, people went out to the Ṣaḥrā’. The caliph, fuqārā’, ulama, major Sufis, judges, and common people with the vizier and an ustādār (steward) marched to the mausoleum of al-Malik al-Ẓāhir (Barqūq). They lifted a caliph’s banner and the Qur’an, raising invocations to Allāh. Groups of Jews and Christians also attended raising the Torah and the Gospels, respectively. The sultan wore wool like a Sufi; on his horse was a plain cloth. As the sultan arrived at the back enclosure of Barqūq’s mausoleum, he prayed tearfully, rubbing his face on the ground. Enormous amounts of food and slaughtered beasts were distributed to the poor. More than thirty thousand pieces of bread were also dispensed, and the people kept on praying [abridged].

Similar events were repeated in 749/1349, 775/1373, 806/1403, 818/1416, 822/1419, 823/1420, 833/1430, and 854/1450, whenever the plague was rampant, or the Nile failed to rise. Al-Ṣaḥrā’ and the fringe of al-Qarāfah, al-Raṣad and al-Āthār al-Nabī were spots used for such events. Collective marching and prayer beneath al-


Muqaṭṭam carried out by a combination of Muslims, Copts, and Jews can be traced back to the Tulunid period, in 270/884. The above quotation brings up at least five points at issue, when collated with other historical sources. The first is that the official character of the Şaḥrāʾ area, and in particular, the back enclosure of the Barqūq mausoleum should be underscored. Collective prayers led by the ruling elite would have been held in this northeast area, whereas most of the common people would pray in the more southern al-Quṣrah area, except perhaps when they were recruited to the northeast. Second, Jews and Copts were mobilized in these official prayers, without fail. This may have been rational, as many Copts were employed in the financial offices of the government, and this mass ritual itself was held by the ruler and his government. Yet, without the entire set of these dhimmīs, I have suggested, the total image of “Egypt” would not have been complete, which might have made the ritual less effective.

Third, related to the second point, the attendance and support of the masses was vital. Their participation was indispensable for the pious deeds of almsgiving and food distribution to gain merits, whether in the mundane world or the hereafter. Viewed from the point of view of the commoners who were associated with this ritual, what they obtained there could be regarded as wages or remuneration for their attendance. Fourth, rituals performed in times of the Nile’s failure to rise and the prevalence of pestilence bore a close resemblance; countermeasures for the plague were considered to be of the same dimension as natural disasters, and all these were believed to be ultimately under the control of Allāh. Fifth, the sultan dressed like a Sufi, expressing himself as sincere and humble; his manner can be interpreted as behaving as an intercessor to Allāh for all the people in the land.

Meanwhile, banquets (wālīmah, simāt) on a large scale were often given by the ruling class in the cemetery areas. As stated earlier, rulers and the military elite were ardent in their support of construction activities in cemeteries, and every celebration for the completion of a building such as a khanqāh, for the recovery of health, or collective prayers, was marked by this sort of banquet. It was considered more a religious ritual than an amusement, and included recitation of the Quran, almsgiving on a large scale, and the distribution of food and slaughtered

---


106 Ohtoshi, “Muslims and Copts as Reflected in the Ziyāra Books and Qarafas,” 42–43.

107 Additionally, Copts performed communal prayers for the swelling of the Nile yearly in churches, holding festivals along the Nile. All this may have created the impression of Copts as having a special relationship with this river. See Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Armanī (attributed), Tārīkh, 75–76, 96; Ibn al-Muqaffā (attributed), Kitāb Siyar al-Abāʾ al-Batārikah, 2:3:213.
beasts. Many people of influence, those connected to religious institutions, and faqīrs assembled there. All these factors, including the above-mentioned ziyārāt and the construction projects of rulers, lead to the conclusion that Cairene cemeteries formed a legitimate stage for rulers to act justly and generously. Moreover, on this stage one could be sanctified through the solemn atmosphere of the Cairene cemetery areas. At the same time, these places offered points of close contact between the ruling class and the common people, on occasions such as ziyārah, ṣadaqah, and walīmah. Through the information networks among people of religious affairs, and hearsay among the commoners, news of the good deeds of the ruling elite may have spread from the cemeteries throughout the domain. If we look at it from the governmental point of view, notwithstanding that they might have sincerely aspired to the fulfillment of their prayers, such banquets could also be taken as a measure to win popularity among the masses.

The Șahrā’ area was included in the itineraries of sultans’ parades, for the area seems to have played a significant symbolic role in solemnifying the parades. Sultans, in their customary parade of enthronement, would first head for the Qubbat al-Naṣr in al-Șahrā’, then enter Cairo from the northern Naṣr Gate, and after marching through the decorated city, they would go out from the southern Zuwaylah Gate to return to the citadel, traversing a counterclockwise arc. Some of these parades are reported to have included Copts and Jews in their company. The shorter version of this parade, which made a circuit only around the citadel, also attached importance to the parade from the Qarāfah Gate. These courses were proper in a practical sense, but also served to demonstrate dignity, authority, and sanctity. Moreover, in 659/1261, Sultan Baybars held a ceremony of enthronement in the vicinity of al-Qarāfah, which is understandable given the Qarāfah’s function as a solemn stage, and its open spaces. Furthermore, in 677/1278, the ceremony of mourning one year after the death of Sultan Baybars was held in al-Qarāfah, and meals were served in tents, and “people of different classes assembled therein.” Likewise in 814/1411, Sultan Faraj held an appointment ceremony for a caliph, a qadi, and others at the mausoleum of Barquq, indicating the official ceremonial characteristics of this area, as well as recognizing the majesty of his late father (Barquq), and demonstrating legitimacy to his subjects.

---

111 Ibid., 452, 459, 461, 4:1:174–75; Ibn Abī al-Faḍā’il, Al-Nahj al-Sadīd, 424; Ibn al-Dawādāri,
Another important aspect of cemetery areas was military training and the games of horsemen. In the Mamluk period, games combined with military exercises, such as the lancers’ exercises (sing. la’b rammāḥ), polo, and qabaq (a game in which a rider shoots arrows at a standing guitar-shaped target), were put in force as the practice of furūṣiyah (chivalry), and some of their playing fields (mayādīn) were located in the cemetery districts. They included Maydān al-Qabaq in al-Ṣahrā’, Maydān al-Nāṣirī on the periphery of al-Quṣayr al-Kubrā, and the space in front of the mausoleum of al-Ḥarrār in al-Quṣayr al-Kubrā alongside the Ḥabash Lake.\footnote{Kanz, 8:73.} Maydān al-Nāṣirī was recognized as the playing field for polo, and Maydān al-Qabaq was known, as the name indicates, for the playing of the qabaq game. Notably, at circumcision ceremonies for sons of the ruling class, as well as games of qabaq, robes of honor were bestowed on principal figures of the dynasty, and a plenitude of goods was dispensed.\footnote{Ohtoshi, “The City of the Dead and Egyptian Society from the 12th to the 15th Century,” 188–90; J. Jomier, Le mahmal et la caravane égyptienne des pèlerins de la Mecque (Cairo, 1953), 35–42; D. Ayalon, “Notes on the Furūṣiyah Exercises and Games in the Mamluk Sultanate,” Scripta Hierosolymitana 9 (1961): 31–62; A. ‘Abd al-Rāziq, “Deux jeux sportifs en Égypte,” Annales islamologiques 7 (1974): 95–130.}

Furthermore, lancers’ exercises were repeated before the mausoleum of al-Ḥarrār. This custom began being conducted at the time of dawrān al-mahmil (the ceremonial city circuit of the pilgrimage palanquin sent to Mecca), and on the first occasion, which was in the month of Rajab (there were two annually), was carried out in al-Quṣayr. Lancers in red garments and their horses, both armored, took part in mock battles. Young troopers standing on clogs fixed on their horses swung lances in both hands in staged combat. Upper class and common people alike would take pleasure in watching the games.\footnote{Ibn Taghribirdi, Al-Nujūm, 8:16; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz, 8:243–44; al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulāk, 1:2:517–18.} This exercise of lancers during the dawrān al-mahmil became established as an annual observance, and as early as in 822/1419, it served to amuse Cairo/Fustāt inhabitants. Consequently, when it was cancelled, such as in 836/1433, 839/1436, and 848/1444, due to demoralization or military expeditions, the people were greatly disappointed and grew indignant. Conversely, their delight in the revival of this event was all the greater, yet when it resumed in 857/1453 after a ten-year interval, the details had already been forgotten, and, in 910/1505 and 920/1514, it was viewed as an old custom.\footnote{Ibn Zāhirah, Al-Fadā’il al-Bāhirah fī Maḥāsin Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah (Cairo, 1969), 200; al-Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ, 4:57–58; al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulāk, 1:2:517–18. Cf. Al-Aḥdab, Al-Furūṣiyah wa-al-Maṇaṣīḥ al-Ḥarbīyah (Baghdad, 1984), 138–39; Ibn al-Ḥājī, Madkhul, 1:272 ff.}
During lancers’ practices, the *mu’allim* (commander) of the band of lancers, accompanied by four pashas (*bāšhāt al-arba’ah*), led the army corps. Qāyṭbāy, the amir of one thousand, was noted as a master at this practice; he would always perform this exercise at al-Qarāfah al-Kubrá, aside from the *mahmil*’s circuits. In addition, he innovated a new ceremony in which the Mamluks, four pashas, and a *mu’allim* would dismount in the order named and kiss the ground in front of the sultan.  

These exercises of military training and games denote not only that Cairene cemetery zones contained wide open spaces and were located beneath the citadel, which was the base for the troops, but also that they provided a place for contact with the common populace, as in cases of royal parades and rituals, which served as another measure for cultivating personal popularity and for impressing upon the people the rulers’ dignity and legitimacy.

Despite the fact that Cairene graveyards were primarily sanctuaries comprised of sepulchers and religious institutions (as they occupied the area around the citadel, and also contained many open spaces), they became arenas for political actions of the ruling elite, particularly amirs and Mamluks. Accordingly, one of the several gates of the citadel, Bāb al-Qarāfah, became a strategic point of the dynasty, manned by Mamluks and even blockaded if necessary. These political actions can be summarized as follows: First, *turbahs*, madrasahs, and a *burj* (tower) in the Qarāfahs were utilized for informal confinement. In 678/1280, for instance, after his dismissal, Vizier Burhān al-Dīn was ordered to confine himself in a madrasah in the Qarāfah. Then, in 723/1323, the qadi Karīm al-Dīn was subjected to arrest and confiscation, and was placed under confinement in a mausoleum. Second, during struggles for supremacy or for other reasons, several members of the elite concealed themselves within mausolea, their *fisqiyahs*, or *zāwiyyahs*, in ways that can be interpreted as a demonstration of the asylum aspect of Cairene cemeteries. Amir Lājīn (693/1294), Yashbak (803/1401), and Jarbāsh

---

Third, examples of assassinations and murders there are too numerous to count. The two Qarafahs and al-Šahrā’ were advantageous in that corpses could be buried there immediately after a homicide. In 648/1251, 746/1346, and 748/1348, amirs assassinated sultans and entombed them there. Fourth, battles in cemetery sections were best exemplified in the case of 804/1402, whereby a force of Amir Nawrūz took up a position near the Habash Lake, were defeated by Sultan Faraj at the periphery of al-Qarafah, and some major personnel were captured.

As seen here, Cairene cemetery areas, which had been essentially the sanctuary of Egyptians, took on some aspects of what could be called, in my expression, “the courtyard of the Mamluks,” which the military elite frequented as a result of their location (surrounding the citadel and being situated between the two cities of Cairo and Fustat). Nevertheless, the government made vigorous efforts to supervise graveyard areas, which I will discuss next.

Further, regarding the interrelationships between big merchants and the cemetery districts, they were interred there, visited tombs of acquaintances or mausolea, and might themselves become objects of ziyārah if they became venerated by the people. What is more, they dispensed alms, or at least the people hoped that they would, as with the aforementioned merchant who was surrounded by the needy in the cemetery. Some of them might have built religious institutions or shops, yet these sites would not primarily be for profit, but for the spending of profit.

**Government Supervision of Cemeteries**

Crime, political activities, the reputation of cemeteries as pleasure resorts where people of both genders and all ages and social strata mixed, and vulnerability to outside invasion: all these characteristics may have led rulers to regard Cairene cemeteries as disquieting and dangerous spaces. In addition, their location just beneath the citadel, the focal point of Mamluk rule, containing tombs of the ruling

---


123 See note 60. One of the Kārimī merchants, Šalāḥ al-Dīn Aḥmad (d. 769/1368), built a large *turbah* in al-Qarafah (al-Maqrīzī, *Khitāf*, 2:369).

elite themselves and their relatives, made them important. Through the supervision of solemn spaces where people came into contact with holiness, rulers may have endeavored to show their dignity. The Mamluk government, therefore, made strenuous efforts to supervise the cemeteries, and repeatedly took measures such as prohibiting women’s visits.

The memorandum (tadhkirah) of the amir Kitbughā should be reexamined in this context. Issued in 679/1281 by Sultan Qalāwūn to Vice Sultan Zayn al-Dīn Kitbughā, the memorandum was also directed at all subjects by its being read at each minbar (pulpit). It contained directives regarding the two Qaraفاhs, such as ‘mujarradūn (night watches) are to be customarily arranged around both Cairo and Fustάṭ, as well as in the district of al-Qaraفا. . . . It should not be neglected even for one night, and mujarradūn are not to leave their posts except at dawn or in complete daylight.” or “on Friday nights, men and women should not assemble at the two Qaraفاhs; particularly, women are prohibited from this.”

The muḥtasib (inspector of markets and public morals) should also inspect graveyards and their moral order, as is reflected in the hisbah treatises. Namely, he should oversee the selection of burial sites, methods concerning ablution of the dead, burial, visiting of tombs, as well as the shape of tombs, and he should also prevent women from ostentatious lamentation, visiting graves, and following the bier. The ulama of all the schools of law supported enforcing discipline in cemetery areas, or even took the initiative in enforcement. Some of them cooperated with the governing authorities, and undertook to investigate alleged holy tombs outside the mortuary zones, moving them into a cemetery if they were legitimate.

Furthermore, although executions were ordinarily carried out in the citadel and other places, graveyards, too, could function as execution grounds. This should be reinvestigated in relation to the supervision of cemetery regions. Mainly grave robbers were executed therein; however, in 793/1391, some influential amirs, who had been imprisoned, were beheaded in al-Šahrāʾ. Yet, a more consistent and systematic measure for supervising cemeteries was created: the establishment of the office of wālī al-Qaraفا (governor of al-Qaraفا).

According to al-Qalqashandi (d. 821/1418), the police districts (wilāyāt al-

---

125Ibn al-Furat, Tarikh, 7:197; al-Qalqashandi, Subh, 8:94; Sato Tsugitaka, State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam (Leiden, 1997), 105–23.
shurṭah) of Mamluk Cairo and its surroundings were divided into three quarters: wilāyat al-Qāhirah (Cairo), wilāyat Miṣr (Fustāt), and wilāyat al-Qaraṭah. An amīr ‘asharāh was appointed as the wāli of al-Qaraṭah under the supervision of the wāli Miṣr; nonetheless, at the time Ṣubḥ was written, the Qaraṭah district was incorporated into the Fustāt district. After the annexation, the Fustāt wāli was upgraded and the office assumed by an amīr ṭablkhānah, still less than the Cairo wāli.\(^\text{130}\) We will attempt to collate this account with those in other chronicles of that period that show some discrepancies.

In 786/1385, “the first” (according to al-Maqrīzī) wāli al-Qaraṭah (a separate position from wāli Miṣr) the amir of ten Sulaymān al-Kurdī, was nominated by Sultan Barquq.\(^\text{131}\) Perhaps before this, the governors (wāli, mutawallī) of al-Qaraṭah were appointed occasionally, as noted in historical sources, such as in the Fatimid period (Ibn Shu’lah al-Kutāmi), 672/1274, 724/1324 (Amir Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Amīr Hājib, who was said to have been wāli of al-Qaraṭah and Fustāt), and 737/1336–37 (Ibn ‘Usaylah); yet they might have been in lesser positions, or under the superintendence of other wālis, like the wāli Miṣr.\(^\text{132}\) Then, in 792/1390, Sulaymān was assigned as wāli Miṣr, so there is a possibility that he might have held both positions concurrently.\(^\text{133}\) In 801/1399, the two-Qaraṭah district was added to the jurisdiction of the wāli Miṣr, Amir Śaṭīm al-Dīn Ibrāhīm, who took the position of Sulaymān, and also in the month of Rajab in 803/1401, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muhammad, the amīr ṭabar (hatchet), assumed the position of wāli al-Qaraṭah.\(^\text{134}\) Eventually, in the month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah in 803/1401, the Qaraṭah district was transferred to the wāli of Cairo, Amir Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Ṭablāwī.\(^\text{135}\) It is in this way that the Qaraṭah wāli’s position was separated from or united with that of Fustāt or Cairo, possibly influenced by the individual situation of persons appointed as wāli, or the intention of the ruler.

After 803/1401, accounts regarding wāli al-Qaraṭah disappear from the chronicles. Instead, the function of nazār al-Qaraṭah (supervisorship or controllership of al-Qaraṭah), or its supervisor, nāzīr al-Qaraṭah, began to be recorded.\(^\text{136}\) In 856/1452, for instance, Abū Bakr al-Muṣārī died; he was “nāzīr of

\(^{130}\) Al-Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ, 4:23.

\(^{131}\) Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulūk, 3:2:525; Ibn al-Ṣayrafi, Nuzhat al-Nuṣūf, 1:106; Ibn Taghrībirḍī, Al-Nuṣūf, 11:241. Although Ibn Iyās noted that the Qaraṭah district was separate from the Cairo district, this account is not trustworthy. Badā‘i’, 2:355–56.


\(^{136}\) Al-Biqa‘ī, Izhār al-‘Aṣr, 1:199, 341; Ibn Taghrībirḍī, Hawādith, 124, 161; al-Sakhāwī, Ważīz...
the Imām al-Shāfi‘ī mausoleum, the Layth mausoleum, and all of al-Qarāfah. And the sultan had bestowed on him the controllership for mausoleum of al-Qarāfah.” Abū Bakr al-Muṣāri‘, mentioned here, was originally one of the awbaṭash ( riffraff), but Sultan Jaqmaq promoted him to this position, whereby he was said to have enriched himself. Yusuf Shāh (d. 876/1471), who was in fact mu’allim al-bannā‘īn (the master of royal builders), took over Abū Bakr al-Muṣāri‘s post of nāzār al-Qarāfah in 856/1452 and remained until 857/1453 when the sultan’s son-in-law Amir Burdbak seized it. In 892/1487, a qadi was dismissed from the nāzār al-Qarāfatayn; meanwhile in 897/1492, anzār (pl. of nāzār) and similar offices, such as al-Baybarsiyah, al-Sa‘īdiyah, waqf al-Šālih, and al-Qarāfatayn, were under the jurisdiction of the ustādār Taghrībirdī, and then were transferred to the dawādār Taghī Barmish. In 901/1495, (qadi) Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 912/1506) was appointed to the position of nāzār al-Qarāfatayn (the two-Qarāfahs), as well as nāzar of waqfs. If we compare this account side by side with others, we can make the conjecture that the function of this nāzār al-Qarāfah (or al-Qarāfatayn) would be to inspect or administer mausolea and zāwiyyahs in the two Qarāfahs, including those of Imām al-Shāfi‘ī and Imām Layth. Thus, this position likely concentrated on the administration of mausolea, but its relationship with fiscal duties and control of waqfs in each mausoleum remains rather obscure. Yet, seen from other nāzīrs’ duties, nāzār al-Qarāfah can be assumed to have dealt in some way with waqf administration and the financial affairs of mausolea in the Qarāfah.

On the other hand, regarding the Șahrā’ area, we find only the function of nāzar, such as nāzār turbat al-Zāhir Barquq (superintendency of Barquq’s mausoleum), but not the wālī. In 856/1452, Sultan Jaqmaq nominated al-Shaykh ‘Alī al-Muḥtasib for nāzār turbat al-Zāhir Barquq, following the dismissal of al-Muhīb ibn al-Ashqar, who was its nāzīr according to the stipulations set by the waqf founder. Al-Shaykh ‘Alī (d. 862/1458) had experience as the muḥtasib of Fustāṭ and of Cairo successively, and al-Muhīb ibn al-Ashqar, who was kātib al-sīr (confidential secretary), held the nāzār of khānqāh Siryāqūs after his dismissal from Turbat al-Zāhir Barquq. The nāzār of the Șahrā’ area seems likely to have been concerned with supervising mausolea financially and administratively through the management of waqfs, as seen through waqf documents as well as chronicles or biographies.137

To conclude, nāzīrs of al-Qarāfah and Turbat Barquq, especially the latter, seem more to be involved in the financial and administrative management of mausolea, in contrast to the wālī al-Qarāfah, whose function rather laid stress on the policing and supervision of the districts. The aforementioned nazar of al-Sayyidah Naﬁsah’s mausoleum, which was undertaken by caliphs, should be viewed in this respect.

Women’s Association with Cemeteries

During the Mamluk period, women’s visits to cemeteries can be clearly observed. These visits became a focus of harsh diatribes by ulama and of supervision by muḥtasibs. Their criticism pertained mainly to the mingling of women and men, and moral laxity.138 According to Ibn al-Hājj (d. 737/1336), “on Thursdays they go out to the tombs, and stay there on Fridays, then return home on Saturdays; likewise on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ (10th of the month of Muḥarram), two Feasts (‘īdān) and the night of mid-Raḍān.” Moreover, they went out visiting the mausoleum of al-Ḥusayn on Mondays, al-Sayyidah Naﬁsah on Wednesdays or Saturdays, and on Thursdays and Fridays to Imām al-Shāfi‘i in al-Qarāfah, and also the tombs of their relatives.139 It should be recalled that al-Tifāshī (d. 651/1253) had already portrayed al-Qarāfah in his compilation of anecdotes as a place where women assembled.140 The Mamluk government repeatedly proclaimed the prohibition of women’s visits to cemeteries, such as in 679/1280, 708/1309, 793/1391, 824/1421, 825/1422, 835/1432, 841/1438, and 864/1460, usually prior to the feast celebrating the end of Raḍān. Yet, several records, including frequent criticism and bans on women’s ziyaḥrah, clearly show that women were integral to visiting customs in Cairene cemeteries.141

Furthermore, it is worth noting that women of all classes visited cemeteries, and they could be interred therein, as well. Among them, there must have been women who helped with the fabrication of holy tombs, by carrying soil in their veils for instance, and even women of the ruling elite, who would visit, pray, and pledge ample donations to cemeteries, as in the case of the mothers of Sultan Ismā‘īl and Amir Anūk. In fact they acted as the very mediators between the royal elite and the common people by describing the conditions and merits of ziyaḥrah to


their husbands or families.\footnote{Ohtoshi, “Visits, Holy Tombs and Relics in the Medieval Egyptian Muslim Society,” 241–51; al-Maqrizi, Al-Suluq, 2:3:649–50; idem, Al-Muqaffa, 2:312; al-Sakhaw, Tuhfat, 181.}

**CONCLUSION**

Cairene cemeteries were open to people of all social strata, regardless of ethnic origin, social status, language, gender, age, occupation, disparity in wealth, physical handicap, religion, place of origin, illness, or skin color.\footnote{This characteristic also held true within the cities of Cairo and Fustat. According to ziyārah treatises, sick persons rushed into cemetery areas to pray for their healing, albeit the ḥisbah tract warns against the mingling of hermaphrodites with women in funerals. See Ibn al-Ukhūwah, Ma‘ālim, 51.} Commoners could participate there through frequent visits and the creation or reidentification of tombs, as is well reflected in the guidebooks of al-ziyārah. Through ziyārah texts, writings on the tombs, and hearsay, people were able to form their own discourses. The ulama also maintained an association with Cairene graveyards through their writings and preachings, while the ruling elite held banquets, communal prayers, or engaged in political struggles there. Everyone could find his own medium through which to relate to the cemeteries, and had the right to visit or be buried there. In this sense, Cairene cemetery areas formed a public locus in which people of any social status participated in their creation or improvement.\footnote{In general, the definition of “public” can delineate anything official relating to a nation, such as public education or public enterprise; anything common to all people, such as public welfare or public order; or anything open to everyone, such as information or a space from which no one will be rejected. Additionally, “publicness” is usually placed opposite “community,” and the latter is defined as the relationship unconsciously established between persons, before the emergence of individual consciousness, such as family. If “public” is understood as a notion adoptable only for modern bourgeois society derived from the modern West, any efforts to utilize this conception within the context of Cairene cemeteries are rendered inaccurate from the beginning. Likewise, a simple application of Western concepts to Middle Eastern studies should be avoided in general. This article does not employ directly the recent definitions and arguments on the public sphere, but still reflects them to some extent. The employment of the word and conception of “public” as a framework for reference and comparison can be thought of as stimulating to argument, which helps us to discover new aspects of Cairene cemeteries. In this sense, this article is evocative rather than deductive. See J. Saito, Publicness (in Japanese) (Tokyo, 2000).} The public character of al-Qarāfah is well reflected in what al-Shaykh ‘Alī al-Turkī (d. 804/1401–2) was told by Shaykh ‘Umar, while they were walking through al-Qarāfah. “‘Alī, al-Qarāfah is the cemetery for Muslims, and no one individual can possess it, nor is one allowed to take [even] a portion of it for oneself.”\footnote{Al-Maqrizi, Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīdah, 2:510.} 

Relationships in the cemeteries did not always depend on hierarchy; rather, equality was emphasized. Personal relationships among visitors to Cairene cemetery
districts were generally not communal, but rather temporal. Institutions such as waqf or shari’ah, then, pervaded the whole of this composition. That is why the government ordered muḥtasibs to supervise these cemetery areas, and wālīs to control them. In addition, they sent their superintendents (nāẓir) to oversee mausolea’s finances through the waqf system, and the government even supported the burial expenditures of commoners through waqf income.

The way people related to Cairene cemeteries, however, would have varied according to their religious beliefs, social status or personal situations, gender, and so forth. Particularly, internalized religious attitudes and values might have affected these relationships greatly; hence Sufis, who were devoted to ascetic practices there, differed from rigid scholars, who tried to prohibit people from visiting holy tombs. Thus the involvement of all classes does not mean that their interests and activities there were always in harmony. On the contrary, they were often in conflict with one another; for instance, the ruling elite undertook to supervise the activities of commoners and women. Ulama, too, harshly condemned them. Hence, Cairene cemetery areas were loci where power relationships were acted out.

Was there, then, any category of society who were excluded from visiting Cairene cemetery areas? As I mentioned above, they were open and accessible to all people, from sultans to commoners. It is worth underlining here that women went there to visit famous mausolea and fulfill their prayers through the mediation of the entombed Muslim saints. This habit was often criticized by scholars and sometimes prohibited by the government, yet women were never actually expelled from the cemeteries, and the Qarāfahs retained their fame as a spot for women to assemble. Nor were people from outside Egypt or Cairo excluded, so that it was a tourist spot not only for Muslims, from Andalusian Spain to Central Asia, but seemingly also for European travelers.

As for religious differences, the issue is rather subtle. Generally speaking, visits by non-Muslims to the Qarāfahs and al-Ṣahra’ may possibly be presumed to have been avoided by non-Muslims themselves, and not welcomed readily by Muslims. Nonetheless, we should never forget the fact that the communal prayers in Cairene cemetery areas in the Mamluk period always mobilized a band of Copts and Jews. Additionally, as the cemetery of Coptic Christians was situated on the southern border of al-Qarāfah al-Kubrá, and the Jews’ cemetery was also located close to the Ḥabash Lake, strictly speaking, their cemeteries were on the edge of the Cairene cemetery zones. And it is possible that they made visits to their own cemeteries by passing through Muslim cemetery areas. Moreover, European non-Muslim travelers possibly traversed them and left accounts of their own visits. Since the Cairene cemeteries were popular pleasure spots for Egyptians, there is a possibility that non-Muslims mingled with Muslims, as is frequently
observed during feasts in Mamluk Egypt. Thus we see a contrast between ziyārah to Cairene cemeteries and the Meccan pilgrimage, which prohibits non-Muslims in the holy zone.

Yet people who violated public morals, as expressed in the hisbah tracts, were the first to be excluded from the cemetery areas, at least in theory. Also, thieves, people of shameless behavior, those who insulted Islamic values, and destroyers of tombs were to be excluded. In reality, however, as mentioned earlier, the Cairene graveyards were famed for their thieves and moral laxity.

Finally, it can be seen that there was a difference in function and character between the two Qarafahs and al-Šahrā’. If I may generalize by contrasting them, the Qarafahs were a burial district for venerated people and commoners, and a visitation site for people of all classes. Meanwhile al-Šahrā’ projected a more official character, where members of the ruling elite preferred to be interred, and for the common people it was usually not a place to visit for fulfillment of their prayers, except in instances when they were mobilized. Ziyārah treatises, therefore, seldom depicted tombs of sultans and khāngāhs there.
The amount of tax revenues from farm villages was estimated throughout Egypt and Syria on the basis of the cadastral survey referred to as al-rawk al-Nāṣirī, conducted during the third reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (709–41/1310–41). Based on the results of the survey, iqṭā’ı’s were reallocated to soldiers, giving priority to the Mamluks. Simultaneously, a new ratio for the division of agricultural land into iqṭā’ı’s and khaṣṣıṣ land (land in the government’s domain) was fixed. The government’s control over the allotment of iqṭā’ı was greatly strengthened through this rawk, and the political, military, and financial systems of the Mamluk state were finally established on the basis of the highly centralized iqṭā’ı system. It is commonly understood that this resulted in the formation of the basic structure of the Mamluk state.¹

However, the state structure thus established began to crumble after the middle of the eighth/fourteenth century, when the Mamluk state was thrown into political and social confusion. It was thus obliged to transform itself in various respects. Although this is considered as superficial evidence of the decline of the Mamluk dynasty thereafter, in recent years, several important articles have been published, attempting to document the transformations in state and society, especially the changing domestic and international situations during the rule of the Circassian Mamluks (784–922/1382–1517). These articles throw new light on Mamluk history.²

Presently, Mamluk studies has reached a stage where the historical development

---

¹ On al-rawk al-Nāṣirī and its significance, see: Sato Tsugitaka, State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam: Sultans, Muqta’s and Fallahun (Leiden, 1997), Chap. 6.

of the Mamluk regime throughout the whole of the Mamluk era is being reassessed through further research on the structure of the state and society during the period of "decline."

From this perspective, this article is concerned with a special financial bureau called al-Dīwān al-Mufrad, which was founded by al-Zāhir Barquq, the first sultan of the Circassian Mamluks (r. 784–91, 792–801/1382–89,1390–99). The existence of this dīwān, which was charged with providing monthly wages and other essentials to the sultan’s mamluks, was the most obvious difference between the state machinery of the Bahri Mamluks (648–784/1250–1382) and the Circassian Mamluks. However, thus far, the study of this dīwān has been superficial and little is known about it despite its having played a crucial role as the most important bureau during this period. I believe that elucidating the implications of its establishment and evolution will also contribute to understanding the problems that confronted the Circassian Mamluk state, compelling it to undertake such an institutional change.

In this article, we trace the historical development of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad from its establishment until its fiscal bankruptcy on the eve of the enthronement of Sultan al-Ashraf Qāṭbāy in 872/1468, who had initiated financial and administrative reforms in order to revitalize the weakened Mamluk state. We also investigate the political and social factors underlying this transformation in order to show that it was not a superficial alteration of the financial machinery; rather, it was closely linked to the process of the collapse of the iqṭā’ system, established through al-rawk al-Nāṣirī, and the resulting transformation of the state structure.

**The Political and Financial Situation in the Second Half of the Eighth/Fourteenth Century Prior to the Establishment of Al-Dīwān al-Mufrad**

It is necessary to examine the political and financial situation after the death of Sultan al-Nāṣir in 741/1341 and to understand the problems that confronted Barquq when he seized power. Regarding the political situation, the Mamluk state was undergoing “political chaos,” primarily caused by a fundamental problem concerning the character of the sultan’s power and the path of succession. Power struggles in those days were basically caused by three factors: first, contesting for power between the Qalāwūnid sultans, who ascended on a lineage basis, and the Supreme Council (majlis al-mashūrah), comprising several senior Mamluk amirs; second, factional rivalries among the amirs; third, the direct intervention of the Royal Mamluks (al-mamālik al-sulṭāniyyah) in the political process. The Royal Mamluks were a powerful political group because they possessed the armed strength required to win such struggles. After a series of struggles, Sultan al-Ashraf Sha'bān was killed during the coup d’état in 778/1377. In the following year (779/1378), Amir

---

3Cf. Petry, Protectors or Praetorians?, 190–219.
Barquq finally seized power and began to rule through the agency of the position of atābak al-'asākir (commander-in-chief) with the title of al-amīr al-kabīr (the Grand Amir). Subsequently, the principle that the paramount individual among the Mamluk amirs would assume the supreme seat with the support of a Mamluk factional power base and through an agreement among the Mamluks, which was the political system prior to the establishment of the Qalāwūnid “royal authority,” was re-established. This principle was maintained for the remainder of the Circassian Mamluk period, determining the fundamental character of the sultan’s power.4

It now became essential for Barquq, who had emerged as the final winner in the series of power struggles, to rebuild the state structure that had been weakened during the previous volatile situation. The matter that required immediate attention was that of finance, which was responsible for affecting the stability of successive governments. The period of political and social upheaval following the death of al-Nāṣir was marked by a financial crisis. It had become difficult for the state treasury to meet expenses; therefore, dismissals and resignations of successive viziers were frequent. Although an increase in allowances and provisions for the army, the eunuchs, the harem, etc., was observed to be the principal cause of the financial difficulties,5 it was not their only cause. The generous special bonus (nafaqah) paid to the Royal Mamluks for the purpose of gaining their support during political struggles had strained the treasury.6 In addition to this, the great plague, which first broke out in 749/1348–49, played an additional, crucial role in the economic deterioration, resulting in rural depopulation and a subsequent decline in agricultural production in the Middle East.7 Moreover, the “political confusion” in those days also impoverished rural areas in Egypt and Syria because it resulted in the government and the iqtā’ holders neglecting ‘imārah (cultivation of land) and exacting oppressive taxes from peasants, in addition to the subsequent plundering

of these areas resulting from the incursion of bedouin tribes with their herds and flocks. There is no doubt that these varied factors contributed to economic decline and ensuing financial difficulties. However, the immediate cause of the decrease in state revenues was a problem arising from the system of landholding, which was characterized by the alienation and privatization of state lands that produced kharāj (land tax) revenues for the state treasury.

With regard to agricultural land in Egypt, which was the principal financial resource of the Mamluk state, 14 qirāts (14/24) were allotted to amirs and the ḥalqah troopers as iqtā' and the remaining 10 qirāts (10/24) became khāṣṣ land. Iqtā's for the Royal Mamluks were allocated from the khāṣṣ land, with the remainder allocated for other governmental needs. According to the traditional financial system of the Mamluk state, the vizier was in charge of the financial affairs of the government as the chief financial officer, and the bureau headed by him was called the Dīwān al-Wizārah/al-Dawlah (the vizier’s bureau/the state bureau).

Although the state’s economic and financial difficulties were predominantly due to the above-mentioned reasons, I believe that another direct cause was the decrease in taxable lands held by the government. Al-Maqrīzī’s account reads as follows:

On 11 Ṣafar 783 (7 May 1381), Shams al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj al-Maqsī resigned from the office of vizier owing to the impotence of the office, because a huge amount of land had been lost from [the resources for] its work. . . . The following day, the Grand Amir (Barqūq) sent a khil’ah (robe of honor) to al-Maqsī in order to persuade him to continue [in office] as before. However, he declined the offer because the lands that had been lost from the state [bureau’s resources] could not be recovered.
At this point, it should be noted that at the beginning of Barquq’s rule, the decrease in government land was regarded as a crucial problem in the state’s finances and it was described as the reason for the vizier’s resignation and his adamant refusal of Barquq’s offer. We will now investigate the two causal factors that Barquq attempted to address during his reign. The first was that amirs had rented large quantities of agricultural land from the state treasury. On 19 Ramadān 784 (26 November 1382), Barquq deposed the Qalāwūnid nominal sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Ḥājjī and pronounced himself sultan. He then immediately appointed Shams al-Dīn Ibn Kātīb Arlān, who was the chief manager (nāẓir) of Barquq’s office (dīwān) when he was an amir, as the vizier and ordered him to restore the fiscal integrity of the state:

Since al-Malik al-Zāhir (Barquq) ascended to the sultanate, some time had passed. [But] the [financial] affairs were not in order. Therefore, he appointed him [Ibn Kātīb Arlān] to the post of vizier in Muḥarram 785 (March 1383). . . . At the time of his appointment, there was neither one dirham [in cash] nor one qadāḥ of grain in the [state] coffers, [because] state lands had been rented by amirs at a lower rate than their value by means of making advance payments.12

This indicates that a large amount of government land that should have been producing tax revenues for the state treasury had been “rented” by the powerful amirs for negligible amounts; in other words, the lands had passed into their de facto possession.

The second problem was an increase in the sales of state land and subsequent “waqfization” of the lands thus sold. During this period, a substantial amount of agricultural land had been sold by the state treasury as milk (private real estate), and then turned into waqf (religious trust) for the support of religious institutions or the descendants of sultans and amirs. Accordingly, in 780/1379, which was the year following his ascension to power as atābak, Barquq called a meeting to discuss this problem in order to make such acts illegal and to implement the return of the alienated lands to the state treasury:

On 16 [Dhū al-Hijjah 780] (5 April 1379), the Grand Amir Barquq summoned qadis and learned shaykhs and consulted with them regarding the cancellation (halt) of waqf lands allotted for mosques (jawāmi wa-masājid), schools (madāris), and Sufi convents (khawāniq wa-zawāyā wa-raḥt), for descendants of sultans (mulūk), amirs, and others, and for pious rizqahs, and whether the sale of Egyptian and Syrian kharāj lands from the state treasury was [legally] permissible or not. Documents concerning Egyptian and Syrian lands that had been turned into waqf or privatized—the amount [of loss] was an enormous sum of money every year—were presented. When these were read to the amirs and learned men present [at that consultation], Amir Barquq stated, “This is the matter that has weakened the army of the Muslims.”

Barquq’s questioning of this circumstance, the legality of which had remained largely unchallenged until this time, indicates that he considered the management of the government to be seriously impeded by the sale and “waqfization” of state lands, which had intensified following al-Nāṣir’s reign. That is to say, the increase in waqfs caused a decrease in government tax revenues because the waqf properties were tax-free owing to their religious nature. Moreover, state lands had often been sold for a pittance by means of an immediate refund of the price paid to the

---

13Rizqah (pl. rizaq) is land allotted by the sultan from the state treasury. It is classified under two categories: the first one is the “military rizqah” (al-rizaq al-jayshiyyah), which was allotted to retired amirs or widows and orphans of dead amirs. The second one is the “pious rizqah” (al-rizaq al-ahbāsiyyah), which was allotted to religious institutions or religious men. See: A. N. Poliak, Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and the Lebanon, 1250–1900 (London, 1939; repr. Philadelphia, 1977), 32–34; Takao Ito, “Aufsicht und Verwaltung der Stiftungen im mamlukischen Ägypten,” Der Islam 80 (2003): 55–61.

14Sulūk, 3:345.


16Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Ijtima‘iyah fi Miṣr 648–923 A.H./1250–1517 A.D. (Cairo, 1980), 279. Taysīr also says that the state land sale and the subsequent “waqfization” was one of the reasons for the decrease in revenues in Egypt that occurred during the period from al-rāwak al-Nāṣirī till the enthronement of Barquq. Moreover, it was also regarded as a reason for the agricultural decline because the ‘imārah of waqf lands was often neglected (Taysīr, 79–83). While Abū Ghāzi, basing his findings on archival sources, describes the phenomenon as widespread under the Circassian Mamluks (Abū Ghāzi, Tājawwur, 10, 16–17), we also find this situation described for earlier times in the literary sources.
state treasury for the land.17

Thus, these two factors that had led to the alienation of state lands were the fundamental causes of the financial difficulties at the time of Barquq’s ascent to power. Moreover, their effects on the iqṭā’ system, which was based on the principle of state landholding and its full control over land allocation, cannot be ignored; this topic will be addressed later. Although the reasons for the problems that arose after the death of Sultan al-Nāṣir require careful examination, it is plausible that the damage to rural districts that resulted from the great plague had inflicted losses on the amirs who depended on the iqṭā’ income; therefore, they tried to obtain lands through suspect methods during the political instability wherein the sultan’s control over the government had weakened, by taking advantage of the frequent transfer of iqṭā’ whose holders were lost to the plague.18

Nevertheless, when Barquq took power, he made efforts to resolve these two problems during his reign. However, although all his attempts succeeded initially, they proved to be inconclusive. With regard to the former problem, Vizier Ibn Kātib Arlān succeeded in recovering lost lands from the possession of the amirs and rebuilding state finances during his tenure.19 However, his death in 789/1387 and Barquq’s temporary dethronement due to Amir Minṭāš’s rebellion in 791/1389 nullified the efforts put into the reconstruction of the landholding system. When Barquq recovered his position in the following year, 792/1389, he appointed several civilians, who had worked as viziers, to various financial posts at the Diwān al-Wizārah for the purpose of “restor[ing] the condition of the state land to that in Ibn Kātib Arlān’s years.”20 Nonetheless, the fact that a majority of them were relieved of their positions as early as the following year is an indication of the failure of this attempt. With regard to the latter, it is important to understand the manner in which the majlis ended; however, two different endings are reported in the sources. While some sources such as Sulūk claim that Barquq succeeded in confiscating waqf lands and allotting them to the army as iqṭā’ regardless of strong opposition from the ulama,21 others, such as Inbā’ al-Ghumr, report that his

17Sulūk, 3:346. The same method is often observed in the archival sources, and Abū Ghāzī estimates that 10 percent of the state land sales he counted on the basis of the archives had applied this method. See: Abū Ghāzī, Tatāwwur, 80–83.
18Cf. Sulūk, 2:785.
21Sulūk, 3:347; Nujūm, 11:166; Badr, fol. 104v.
attempt resulted in failure owing to the opposition.\(^\text{22}\) It is difficult to judge the veracity of these reports. Although similar majālis were called in 783/1381 and 789/1387 during Barquq’s reign\(^\text{23}\) and also under later sultans, not all of them succeeded in abrogating waqf’s. Moreover, owing to the opposition of the ulama, they went no further than imposing temporary levies on the waqf’s under emergency situations such as military expeditions.\(^\text{24}\) Therefore, this is an exceptional case even if the abrogation of waqf’s was carried out at the time. In reality, throughout the Mamluk era, state land sales had never been forbidden, nor had the confiscation of lands converted into waqf been legalized.\(^\text{25}\)

When Barquq seized power under these difficult circumstances, he not only made efforts to bring state finances under control, but also founded a new bureau, al-Dīwān al-Mufrad, for the purpose of anchoring the financial administration and achieving the political stability of his regime.

**The Establishment of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad and the Transformation of the State Machinery**

Chancery manual sources such as Șubḥ explain al-Dīwān al-Mufrad as follows: it was an independent financial bureau in charge of providing the monthly wages (jāmakiyah), clothing allowances (kiswa), fodder (‘aļq), and other provisions to the Royal Mamluks, having specific lands separate from those of the state treasury as its own resources. Ustādār al-sultān al-‘āliyah (the sultan’s/supreme majordomo), one of the military officers, managed this dīwān as chief, assuming the responsibilities of other officials such as nāẓir al-dīwān al-mufrad (the deputy chief of the dīwān), scribes (kuttāb), notaries (shuhūd), and so on.\(^\text{26}\)

While it is clear that this dīwān had been established by Barquq, there are two


\(^{25}\)On the Islamic legal disputes regarding the legality of the sale and “waqfization” of state lands in the Mamluk era, see: Kenneth M. Cuno, “Ideology and Juridical Discourse in Ottoman Egypt: the Uses of the Concept of İrsād,” Islamic Law and Society 6, no. 2 (1999): 145–49.

opinions regarding the actual year of its establishment; that is, 784/1382 or 797/1395.\(^\text{27}\) The former is based on an account in the Khitaṭ stating that it was established by the conversion of an iqṭā’, held by Barqūq when he was an amir, into a revenue source “when he ascended to the sultanate.”\(^\text{28}\) Accordingly, it regards 784/1382, the year of Barqūq’s enthronement, as the year of establishment. On the other hand, the latter opinion depends on an account in Nujuṭm stating that it was established by the conversion of the iqṭā’ belonging to Barqūq’s son Muḥammad, who died in 797/1395.\(^\text{29}\) In other words, the difference of opinion with respect to the year of establishment of the diwan arises from a question regarding its source of revenue, i.e., whether it was originally Barqūq’s iqṭā’ or his son’s. We shall now examine the actual establishment process of this diwan on the basis of the chronicle sources.

In the early years of Barqūq’s reign as atābak al-‘āsākir from 779/1387, the government had been jointly headed by Barqūq and his colleague, Amir Barakah. Subsequently, owing to the political differences between them, Barqūq succeeded in incarcerating Barakah and then killing him in Rabi’ I 782 (June 1380);\(^\text{30}\) consequently, Barqūq’s regime attained stability. At this time, he gave Barakah’s iqṭā’, which was allotted to an amir of one hundred, and the amirate to his own son Muḥammad, who was born on the first day of that month. He then appointed Amir Sharaf al-Dīn Mūsā ibn Dandār ibn Qaramān as Muḥammad’s ustāḍār to be the manager of his iqṭā’, contrary to the prevailing custom that when the position of an amir became vacant, it was given to another along with his iqṭā’.\(^\text{31}\) It appears reasonable to suppose that Barqūq intended to profit from the iqṭā’ held in the name of his infant son as well as to prevent the emergence of a political rival by not giving the vacant iqṭā’ of the number two position to another amir. In the meantime, Barqūq retained his own iqṭā’ as an amir of one hundred in addition to


\(^{28}\) Khitaṭ, 3:723.

\(^{29}\) Nujuṭm, 12:145–46.


being in charge of the financial affairs of the state as the atābak. During this time, Amir Bahādur al-Manjākī (d. 790/1388) had served as Barquq’s ustādār and managed his iqtā’. Thereafter, Barquq formally ascended to the sultanate in Ramadān 784 (November 1382) and immediately appointed his personal ustādār, Bahādur, to the post of ustādār al-sultān with a rank of amir of forty, as well as to the post of Muḥammad’s ustādār. Although the duties of the ustādār al-sultān had hitherto included taking charge of all the affairs relating to the sultan’s court and servitors as “majordomo,” Bahādur’s duties mainly comprised financial management, much as the ustādārs of the amirs. Nevertheless, this does not immediately imply that al-Dīwān al-Mufrad was established during this time. The first reference to this dīwān was made in Dhū al-Qa’dah 788 (November 1386), in which Sa’d al-Dīn Naṣr Allāh ibn al-Baqarī, who had managed Barquq’s private financial affairs prior to his enthronement, was appointed as the nāẓir of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad “newly established (istajadda) by the sultan.” Therefore, it appears reasonable to suppose that this dīwān was officially established at this time. However, I believe that Muḥammad’s iqtā’, which had been under the control of the ustādār al-sultān, was probably added to the dīwān’s resources after his death in 797/1395 because his iqtā’ remained separate from the land of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad after its establishment as it was previously; however, it might have been a de facto source of revenue for this dīwān.

Thus, we can summarize the establishment process of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad as follows: Barquq had kept for himself two iqtā’s allotted to amirs of one hundred, which once belonged to Barquq and Barakah, as his own revenue source, and independent of the government purse, without allotting them to others even after his enthronement. Subsequently, he appointed the nāẓir and formally established this dīwān through the conversion of his former iqtā’ into its revenue source in 788/1386, then added the other iqtā’ to it later, possibly in 797/1395. If this is true, a question arises regarding the inducement for him to establish the dīwān. One reason could be that it was due to one of the policies aiming to augment the revenue of the sultan himself, called mushtarawāt, and

---

32 Sulūk, 3:393.
33 Ibid., 478; Nujūm, 11:228; Nuzhah, 1:49; Badr, fol. 116v.
34 Al-‘Umarī, Masālik al-Aḥsār fi Mamālik al-Aṃṣār (Cairo, 1985), 57–58; Subh, 4:20.
35 Sulūk, 3:553; Nuzhah, 1:143. For the management of Barquq’s financial affairs, see: Sulūk, 3:336.
36 Badr, fols. 139r, 145r.
37 The Royal Mamluks comprised the mushtarawāt, the Mamluks who were trained by the present reigning sultan, and the mustakhdamūn, those who were transferred from the service of the preceding sultans or amirs to the service of the reigning sultan. See: David Ayalon, ‘Studies on the Structure of...
also to ensure the regular distribution of monthly wages to them. During the chaotic period preceding Barquq’s ascent to the sultanate, the control of the Royal Mamluks was beyond the sultan’s power and even the mushtarawār had often participated in revolts by the amirs against the sultan demanding money. Because of this, following his enthronement, Barquq exiled the previous sultans’ mamluks and replaced them with his own in order to secure control over the Royal Mamluks. Therefore, the establishment of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad could be regarded as a corollary policy; that is, while the Royal Mamluks were sustained by iqtāʾs allotted from the khāṣṣ land or the monthly wages paid from the state treasury, this system had been directly affected by the decrease in state lands. To counter this problem, Barquq ensured there would be an exclusive revenue source for the Royal Mamluks through the establishment of this dīwān. Accordingly, he succeeded in maintaining the mushtarawāt, comprising a large number of mamluks, estimated at 5,000 men. The establishment of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad undoubtedly enabled Barquq to retain his power, unlike his predecessors during the late Bahri Mamluk period. However, it should be noted that this dīwān was organizationally and financially independent of the traditional financial system of the Mamluk state as it was originally established, because the dīwān itself was funded by iqtāʾ lands. This made it possible for the dīwān to avoid the direct effects of the government’s financial difficulties which would affect the sultan’s power base directly; however, it also indicated that Barquq could not solve the fundamental problem causing these financial difficulties, and that it was difficult for the sultan to depend on the traditional financial system.

Consequently, the newly-established al-Dīwān al-Mufrad rapidly expanded its role, and the Mamluk state structure also came to be reorganized owing to its development. Initially, the financial affairs of the state were managed by three independent bureaus, namely, Dīwān al-Wizārah, Dīwān al-Khāṣṣ, and al-Dīwān al-Mufrad. Although each of these had its own revenue sources and was responsible for providing certain allowances, all of them were sometimes placed under the sole supervision of the mushīr al-dawlah (counselor of the government). Although the role and revenue sources of each of these bureaus changed with time, they may be summarized as follows: Dīwān al-Wizārah obtained its income through

38Sultan Shaʿbān distributed money to his mamluks for the purpose of “securing himself by giving his money” [Sulūk, 3:139, 154], but he lost his position due to their participation in the amirs’ revolt (see note 6). For a case pertaining to Barquq’s mamluks in 784/1382, see: Sulūk, 3:473; Ibn Qādī Shahbah, 1:84–85.

the collection of kharāj tax from particular districts such as Giza and Manfalūt and miscellaneous taxes (mukūs), and undertook the responsibility of supplying meat and other food for the Royal Mamluks and others. Dīwān al-Khāṣṣ obtained its resources from taxes levied at Alexandria and other coastal ports on the Mediterranean, which covered expenses for the two feasts (‘Idayn), khil'ahs, etc. Finally, as mentioned before, al-Dīwān al-Mufrad was responsible for the monthly stipends and other essentials for the Royal Mamluks.\(^42\)

It is difficult to specify the exact year in which the division of state finances into these three bureaus was completed. However, it is fairly certain that the two prominent uṣṭādārs, Yalbughā al-Sālimī (d. 811/1409) and Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf (d. 812/1409), who seized political and financial power during the civil war during the reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraj (801–8, 808–15/1399–1405, 1405–12), were associated with the transformation of the financial organization. Each of them was also an amir of one hundred exercising the general management and supervision of state finances as mushīr al-dawlah, and occasionally held concurrently the post of vizier.\(^43\) During their tenure, the office of the uṣṭādar underwent a remarkable growth in importance, accompanied by a dramatic increase in the numerical strength of the staff of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad.\(^44\) In contrast, the office of vizier, which had hitherto played a crucial role in state finances, lost its importance.\(^45\) Based on this knowledge, we can judge that the transformation of the financial bureaucracy was achieved at approximately this time; however, this leaves still unanswered the question of whether this was an intentional policy clearly designed to transform the organization of state finances.

Parallel to the division of the state finances, the khāṣṣ land in Egypt was also allocated to the resources of each bureau.\(^46\) However, lands allotted to the Dīwān al-Wizārah and Dīwān al-Khāṣṣ accounted for only a small portion of the entire amount of land, and al-Dīwān al-Mufrad acquired the greater portion of it for itself along with some farm land in Syria.\(^48\) Consequently, al-Dīwān al-Mufrad

\(^{43}\) Dīwān al-Inshā’, fol. 125r; Ḥadā‘i q, 119; Zubdah, 106; Popper, Systematic Notes, 1:96.
\(^{44}\) On the roles, resources, and officials of each financial dīwān, see: Zubdah, 97–98, 106–9; Martel-Thoumian, Les civils et l’administration, 35–40, 49–53; Poliak, Feudalism, 4–5.
\(^{46}\) Sulik, 4:289; Inbā‘ al-Ghumr, 3:38.
\(^{47}\) Khiṭāt, 3:723–24; Taysīr, 71.
\(^{48}\) Khiṭāt, 1:261.
became the most important office for Egyptian local administration, and the appointee to the post of ustādār al-sultān began to assume the additional post of Viceroy of Lower Egypt (nāʿib al-wajh al-bahrrī) from the reign of Sultan Faraj, and also of Upper Egypt (nāʿib al-wajh al-qibli) from the reign of Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy (825–41/1422–38). The appointee was also invested with the authority to appoint and dismiss local governors (wālī, kāshif). Furthermore, the ustādār would often travel throughout the rural districts of Egypt in order to collect taxes himself.

With regard to the proportion of land assigned to al-Dīwān al-Mufrad, valuable information can be obtained from Intisār and Tuhfah, which recorded the name, size of the cultivated land, and the tax revenues of each tax district (nahiyah) in Egypt (see Table). This indicates that during the reign of Sultan Barquq, the agricultural land of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad in Egypt comprised only 14 districts with annual revenues (‘ibrah) estimated at approximately 200,000 dīnārs jayshī (dj). However, by the reign of Sultan Qāytbāy, approximately eighty years later, these numbers had increased tremendously; the number of districts had increased by approximately ten times (159 districts), and the amount of revenue collected had increased approximately seven times (1,413,858.3 dj). These districts were spread across most of the provinces of Egypt (17 of 21) and the average revenue from them was 8,892.2 dj, which was more than twice that of the revenues obtained

---

49Dīwān al-Inshā’, fol. 126r–v; Ḥaddāʾiq, 121; Khīṭat, 3:724. However, according to the chronicles, the first case of an ustādār holding the post of Viceroy of Lower Egypt came about in 800/1397 (i.e., toward the end of Barquq’s reign), and the first case of an ustādār holding the post of Viceroy of Upper and Lower Egypt came about in 824/1421 (i.e., the year in which Sultan al-Muzaffar Ahmad was enthroned). See: Suluq, 3:891, 4:568; Nuzhah, 2:498.
51Ibn Duqmāq, Kitāb al-Intisār li-Wāṣiṭat ʿIqd al-Ansār (Cairo, 1893); Ibn al-Jīʾān, Kitāb al-Tuhfah al-Sanīyah bi-Asmāʾ al-Bilād al-Miṣrīyah (Cairo, 1898). Notes on the Table: (1) All figures were rounded off to one decimal place. (2) If al-Dīwān al-Mufrad shared a tax district with other uses (such as private land, waqf, etc.), the ‘ibrah of the dīwān was calculated by dividing the ‘ibrah of the district under consideration equally, except in a case wherein the ‘ibrah of each was specified. (3) The ‘ibrah, the average ‘ibrah, and the percentage were calculated excluding those districts whose ‘ibrahs were not known. Therefore, the total amount of ‘ibrah for the whole of Egypt given in this Table differs from that written in the opening paragraph of Tuhfah. However, when calculating the percentage of ‘ibrah of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad, this showing of a general tendency is not a problem because there is a small difference of only one decimal place.
from all the Egyptian districts, which was 4,107.8 dj. Moreover, 187 districts in Egypt provided revenues exceeding 10,000 dj, of which 47 belonged to al-Dīwān al-Mufrad, accounting for almost one-fourth of the total number. However, this dīwān also accounted for 20 of the 50 districts (40 percent) that provided revenues of 20,000 dj and more, and 10 of the 17 districts (almost 60 percent) that provided revenues of 30,000 dj and more, with the ratio rising in proportion to the revenue. These details immediately clarify that this dīwān, as a matter of priority, acquired a greater number of productive districts among the resources under its control. As a result, al-Dīwān al-Mufrad held the largest number of tax districts among the financial bureaus of the government, the income from which comprised 17.3 percent (i.e., more than 4 ₕārāṣ) of the revenues from all the rural districts of Egypt.

This increase in al-Dīwān al-Mufrad’s landholdings had been achieved by means of acquisition of not only khāṣṣ lands previously under the control of the Dīwān al-Wizārah but also iqṭā’s. The chronicles report several cases in which iqṭā’s of deceased or dismissed amirs were added to the resource pool of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad by sultans: those of three amirs of one hundred, one amir of forty, one amir of ten, and one amir of unknown rank. However, not all the iqṭā’s added to this dīwān were such high-yielding ones belonging to high-ranking amirs. According to Nujuʿm, regarding Zayn al-Dīn Yahyā al-Ashqar (d. 874/1469), the ustādār during the reign of Sultan al-Zahir Jaqmaq (842–57/1439–53), “he seized numerous iqṭā’s of the Royal Mamluks and amirs, acquiring them by force, and added them to al-Dīwān al-Mufrad.” Ustādārs tried to seize iqṭā’s of lower-ranking amirs, mamluks, and probably also the ḥalqah troopers for the purpose of discharging their duties and advancing their own interests at every opportunity. In addition, this dīwān benefited from other sources of revenue, notably, the government-managed waterwheels (dawāliḥ) in 803/1401 and the income from the sultan’s monopoly on sugar in 832/1429. Moreover, a deficit in this dīwān was covered by

---

55“Nuẓūm, 16:28. Haarmann also connects the decline in iqṭā’ holdings of the sons of the sultans (ṣūdī; pl. asyād) during the Circassian Mamluk period to the establishment of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad
sales of positions in local government in 824/1421.55

These details show that the establishment of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad brought about and played a pivotal role in the reorganization of the administrative and financial bureaucracy. It clearly indicates that providing monthly stipends to the Royal Mamluks became the most important task of the government. As mentioned earlier, the Mamluk state had undergone a radical change in its political and power structure, resulting in the Royal Mamluks expanding their role in politics.56 Furthermore, they rioted when there were delays in the distribution of wages, which often escalated into open revolt against the sultan vociferously demanding his dethronement;57 therefore, the reliable distribution of wages became the primary concern of successive sultans. Viewed in this light, the establishment of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad can be regarded as an organizational adjustment to the new political structure.

On the other hand, it is important to note that al-Dīwān al-Mufrad developed through the acquisition of not only khāṣṣ lands but several iqtā’s as well. While the number of amirs of one hundred in Egypt had been fixed at 24 men owing to al-rawk al-Nāṣirī, all of these posts were rarely filled during the Circassian Mamluk period. According to Șubḥ, the decrease in the number of amirs of one hundred resulted from the establishment of this dīwān, and their number was reduced to 20 or less, and even 18 during the reign of Barqūq due to this reason. Thereafter, this decrease in the number persisted till the reign of Sultan Barsbāy in 840/1436, when it dipped to 13, and then 11 in 857/1453 during the reign of Sultan Jaqmaq.58 This indicates that on one hand al-Dīwān al-Mufrad accumulated a vast amount of agricultural land but on the other that iqtā’ lands for amirs decreased inversely, so that the ratio between the khāṣṣ land and the iqtā’s based on al-rawk al-Nāṣirī was being diminished.

Nevertheless, such a large-scale expansion of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad’s landholdings should not simply be regarded as part of an “innovation” to strengthen

---

58Barqūq’s reign: Șubḥ, 4:14; Badr, fol. 162v. Barsbāy’s reign: Sulûk, 4:989. Jaqmaq’s reign:
the sultan’s autocratic power by an increase in the number of Royal Mamluks through the building up of this _diwan_. On the contrary, it resulted from the necessary addition of resources to this _diwan_, moving parallel to the gradually deteriorating financial situation, as we shall see in what follows.

**The Bankruptcy of Al-Diwān Al-Mufrad and Its Implications**

The economic decline caused by various factors such as plague was further aggravated during the Circassian Mamluk period. Accordingly, al-Diwān al-Mufrad also experienced financial difficulties as early as the reign of Sultan Barsbāy, usually regarded as a relatively stable period. In Rajab 828 (May 1425), a large deficit was detected through an audit of the _diwan_; it amounted to 120,000 dinars per year. Similarly, another deficit, detected in Rabī‘ II 832 (January 1429), had reached 60,000 dinars per year. The financial condition markedly deteriorated subsequent to the reign of Sultan Jaqmaq, during which many _ustādār_ s resigned, fled, or were dismissed and suffered confiscation, and the Royal Mamluks frequently demonstrated against the arrears of their monthly wages. While the difficulty in managing this _diwan_ was undoubtedly further aggravated by the economic decline, I would like to emphasize that its expenditures showed a consistent increase throughout the period under consideration. During the reign of Sultan Shaykh, the total amount spent on monthly wages accounted for 11,000 dinars per month; it subsequently increased to 18,000 dinars during Barsbāy’s reign, 28,000 dinars

---


60 According to my analysis of the chronicles, there are 21 accounts on the financial failures of al-Diwān al-Mufrad during 16 years and 8 months of his reign. It is remarkably larger than 5, the number of accounts of financial failures during the 14 years and 3 months of the reign of Sultan Faraj, and 2, during the 8 years and 5 months of the reign of Sultan al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh (815–24/1412–21).


62 During the reign of Barsbāy, 9 men assumed the post of _ustādār_ a total of 13 times, and the average term of office at one time was 15.4 months. However, during the reign of Sultan al-Ashraf İnāl (857–65/1543–60), 7 men assumed the post a total of 12 times and the average term was 8.2 months, while during the reign of Sultan al-Zāhr Khushqadam (865–72/1461–17), 5 men assumed it a total of 12 times, and the average term was 6.5 months. These figures indicate that the frequency of the substitution was increasing steadily. According to Miura, the average term of office of an _ustādār_ during the period from the beginning of Barsbāy’s reign to Qāytbāy’s...
during Jaqmaq’s reign, and it finally reached 46,000 dinars in 873/1468, immediately after Qāytbāy’s enthronement. Since these amounts excluded the expenditures on other necessities such as clothing allowances and fodder, the total expenditure of the diwān undoubtedly exceeded the given amount.

This increase in expenditures was not caused by an increase in the number of the sultan’s mamluks or radical pay raises; rather, it was caused by the inclusion of recipient groups other than mamluks. Several accounts are found in the sources wherein we can find that various groups such as the sons of the mamluks, referred to as awlād al-nās, Islamic jurisprudents (fuqahā’), women, children, orphans, merchants, and other common people were also enrolled as recipients, receiving money and supplies from al-Dīwān al-Mufrad similar to the mamluks after the reign of Jaqmaq, particularly after 860/1455:

If only a sultan’s mamluk was [a recipient], what do you think about the present [circumstances]? Countless people comprising “men of the turban” (muta‘ammīmūn: religious men), the awlād al-nās, merchants (tujjār), common people (‘āmmah), and even Christians had been enrolled with the sultan’s treasury (bayt al-sulṭān) [as recipients]. The situation departed from the rule and transcended its boundaries. Viziers were unable to provide meat supplies, and ustādārs also were unable to [provide] the monthly wages and fodder. . . . These incidents were unheard of before, except following the reign of Sultan Jaqmaq (may God have mercy upon him).

It may be reasonable to believe that in its development, al-Dīwān al-Mufrad assumed the additional responsibility of providing for some of the needs of “men of the turban” and the poor, which prior to its establishment would have been

---

64 The monthly wage of a mamluk rose from 100 dirhams to 400–500 dirhams in 809/1406 [Sulūk, 4:28], thereafter undergoing several raises till it reached 2,000 dirhams per month during Barsbāy’s reign [Sulūk, 4:804, 817–18; Nuẓḥah, 3:160, 178; Nujūm, 14:330]. However, this increase was superficial and primarily resulted from the state of disorder of the monetary system; that is, the widespread circulation of copper coins and the consequent decline in the value of the dirham. On the conversion rates and the prices in this period, see: E. Ashtor, Histoire des prix et des salaires dans l’orient medieval (Paris, 1969), Chaps. 6, 7; Popper, Systematic Notes, 2:41–106.
65 Inbā’ al-Haṣr, 16, 20–21, 43; Ḥawādith, 465, 491–92, 678, 682, 689–95; Nujūm, 16:82–83.
66 Ḥawādith, 691.
carried out by the government as charity. However, more noteworthy reasons for the increase in the numbers and types of recipients were: first, the new, formal recognition of the awlād al-nās as recipients and second: the increase in the informal recipients registered fraudulently.

(1) THE AYLAD AL-NAS
The sons of the mamluks, referred to as awlād al-nās, began to be enrolled in al-Dīwān al-Mufrad and like the mamluks, received monthly wages and provisions. The awlād al-nās were originally military men belonging to the ḥalqah troops, receiving iqtā’s from the sultan. A question arises as to the circumstances that required their enrollment, which started on a regular basis during the reign of Sultan Jaqmaq. I believe it was the ultimate consequence of the long-term decline of the ḥalqah that began during the late Bahri Mamluk period. It is widely known that the ḥalqah troops became impoverished and began to sell their iqtā’s for money in the last decades of the Bahri Mamluk period; however, their condition continued to deteriorate under the Circassian Mamluks. In Ramaḍān 821 (October 1418), Sultan Shaykh initiated the reconstitution of the ḥalqah and improved the chances of a ḥalqah trooper holding an iqtā’ based on his status. That is to say, amirs often purchased the ḥalqah troopers’ iqtā’s or acquired them in the names of their own mamluks and eunuchs. The sultan’s mamluks also acquired ḥalqah troopers’ iqtā’s in addition to their own monthly wages. Accordingly, several ḥalqah troopers who lost their revenue source entered into the service of the amirs as “mamluks of the amirs.” This indicates that the iqtā’s of the ḥalqah gradually came into the possession of the mamluks and amirs, the higher-ranking military class, contrasting with the decline of the ḥalqah. In addition, the situation wherein iqtā’s were lost by being turned into rizqahs, milks, etc., was also regarded as a

67 Taysir, 73; Dīwān al-Insāh’, fol. 133v.
69 On the decline of the ḥalqah troops and the sale of iqtā’s of the ḥalqah troopers, see: ibid., 451–56; Khīṭat, 3:710–11. While the origin of this phenomenon lay in al-rawk al-Nāṣirī, which sharply reduced the revenues from iqtā’s for the ḥalqah troopers, the plagues that had been frequent since 749/1348–49 also aggravated this problem. In addition to causing extensive damage to the rural areas and decreasing income from the iqtā’s, several iqtā’s that lost their holders to the plagues fell into the hands of non-military men. See: Dols, Black Death, 273–75; Sato, State and Rural Society, 159–60.
70 Nujuum, 14:69–71; Sulūk, 4:461–64; Inba’ al-Ghumr, 3:169. There are several examples wherein a sultan’s mamluk held an iqtā’ of a ḥalqah trooper. For example, when the monthly wages were distributed to the Royal Mamluks in Rabī’ II 827 (March 1424), wages of mamluks who also held iqtā’s of the ḥalqah troopers were deducted. See: Sulūk, 4:661.
reason for the decline of the ḥalqah, and the alienation of the state lands mentioned above continued uninterrupted, directly influencing the decrease in the land for iqṭāʾs. In any case, this effort of Sultan Shaykh’s was largely futile and the decline of the ḥalqah proceeded.

The continued decline of the ḥalqah troops and their disappearance as a military unit naturally and directly affected the sons of the mamluks, who joined the military unit as ʾawlād al-nās troopers. One possibility is to assume that the enrollment of ʾawlād al-nās in al-Dīwān al-Mufrad was in keeping with a policy to maintain them as a military unit by directly providing wages in cash from the state treasury instead of iqṭāʾs, which had been gradually reduced during the period under consideration. The fact that Sultan Qāytbāy tested the ʾawlād al-nās on their military ability by making them draw their bows and deducted the monthly wages of those who were unsuccessful in the examination proves that the wage for the ʾawlād al-nās paid from al-Dīwān al-Mufrad was officially regarded as compensation for military service. But in fact a majority of them had never possessed any abilities suited to military service, nor had they received an amount necessary to support them. This is proved by the following account (885/1481) regarding the inspection of ḥalqah members in which they are ordered to maintain their military equipment and acquire military training:

However, as for the ʾawlād al-nās, no previous sultan had ever reviewed them, or ignored them even if they had reviewed them [with the army]... One [of them] receiving a monthly wage of as much as 500 or 300 dirhams [as opposed to the regular sum for a mamluk of 2,000 dirhams] and having dependents is poor. Where can he raise additional [money] in order [to pay] for a sword, a lance, or a quiver? These are the people who preceding sultans allowed to have presents of alms (ṣadaqah) from the sultan’s treasury.

As this account indicates, the monthly wages paid to the ʾawlād al-nās were not well-earned rewards for military service; rather, they were a kind of “public-assistance payment” for the sons of the mamluks. We can say that the novel enrollment of the ʾawlād al-nās in al-Dīwān al-Mufrad as formal recipients of stipends indicated that the traditional military iqṭāʾ system had reached a dead end as a consequence of the continuous decrease in state lands.

(2) INFORMAL RECIPIENTS

71Nujūm, 14:71.
72Inbāʾ al-Ḥaṣr, 501–2.
There were several categories of informal recipients who were enrolled in al-Dīwān al-Mufrad. If we examine the people who acquired the right to receive wages from this dīwān and the channels through which they achieved it, they may be divided into two groups. The first group includes "the people connected with influential men in the state (muḍāfī kibār al-dawlah)." It can be stated with a fair amount of certainty that they had connections and became recipients with the aid of their patrons. The majority of these are assumed to be mamluks and private staff of the amirs although there were various kinds of people among them. In the aforementioned account pertaining to Sultan Shaykh’s policy that aimed for the reconstruction of the ḥalqah, it is stated that the amirs enrolled their mamluks and eunuchs in this dīwān so that they could acquire monthly wages in addition to acquiring ḥalqah troopers’ iqṭā’ s for their own uses (see note 70). For example, there was a case wherein an ustādār enrolled his own mamluks in this dīwān as "sultan’s mamluks" and paid them wages from it. Another example is that of Amir Burdbak al-Bajmaqdar (d. 875/1470), an eminent amir who successively held various high offices such as Viceroy of Aleppo, Viceroy of Damascus, etc., and who compelled viziers and ustādārs to provide him and the men in his service with monthly wages and various supplies. It is obvious that these types of people included themselves among the regular recipients in view of the fact that amirs often balked at the attempts of sultans to reduce their stipends.

The second group includes the people who purchased their status as recipients. Al-Ashqar, who had occupied the position of ustādār for more than ten years during the reign of Sultan Jaqmaq, was given free rein in the management of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad, which was mired in financial difficulties. Due to a lack of operating funds, he began to sell the rights of receiving wages from this dīwān in order to obtain funds to disburse the monthly wages. Consequently, various people fraudulently acquired wages as "sultan’s mamluks." Furthermore, it was inevitable that these wages fell into the hands of wealthy people; there were amirs who also received monthly wages, or mamluks who gained more than one stipend at a time. In 873/1468, Qāytbay attempted to reestablish the principle that each mamluk would receive only 2,000 dirhams (i.e., the regular stipend) and compelled mamluks who purchased stipend-receiving status or received more than this amount to

73 Hawādith, 678; Inbā’ al-Haṣr, 16.
74 Inbā’ al-Haṣr, 173.
75 Ibid., 300.
76 Sulāk, 3:1103; Nuzhah, 2:165; Hawādith, 1:426; Bada’i’, 2:320. Sultan Qāytbay did not approve the intervention of the amirs in his attempts at reforming al-Dīwān al-Mufrad in 873/1468 [Hawādith, 693].
77 On the sale of the monthly wages and its repercussions, see: Inbā’ al-Haṣr, 34.
return them to the sellers (probably including rank and file mamluks and awlād al-nās). This explains the manner in which the sale of wages became widespread.

Under these circumstances, al-Ashqar managed al-Dīwān al-Mufrad as well as possible using all the means within his power, such as seizing iqtā’s and rizqahs for the dīwān’s resources. Nevertheless, this was nothing more than ad hoc management depending on his own discretion; thus, it ceased to function following the death of his supporter, Jaqmaq. Furthermore, a part of the agricultural land from the dīwān’s resources frequently fell into the hands of amirs and mamluks aiming to acquire the lands as iqtā’ during times of political unrest, such as the interval between a sultan’s death and a new sultan’s enthronement. In addition, powerful amirs’ ḥimāyah (private protection) over farm villages, which became widespread during this period and prevented local officials from collecting taxes from them undoubtedly exerted a negative influence on this dīwān, which depended heavily on tax returns from rural districts. Therefore, sultans regularly had to meet this dīwān’s deficit from their own purses because it could not otherwise be operated. During the reign of Khushqadam, the fact that the istādār was awarded a khil’ah and was lauded each time he was able to provide stipends to the mamluks proves the difficulty of performing this job at this time. These circumstances compelled Qaṭṭāb, who ascended to the sultanate in 872/1468, to immediately embark on a thorough financial reform. However, this will not be discussed in this article for lack of space.

**CONCLUSION**

On the basis of our analysis of the historical development of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad from its establishment till the time of its fiscal bankruptcy, two important facts relating not only to this dīwān but also to the structure of the Mamluk regime itself were clarified. Firstly, the growing weakness of the system of land management under the sole authority of the state had a persistent influence on the establishment, development, and, finally, bankruptcy of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad. This dīwān was established against the background of a problem, namely, the alienation of

78 Hawādith, 690; Inbā’ al-Hasr, 36. Similarly, the rights to receive meat supplies from Dīwān al-Wizārah were also dealt with [Badā’i’, 3:23, 331] and pensions (ma’āsh) for the poor/Sufis (fuqara’) and others were sold at a high price [Nujum, 16:28].
81 Taysīr, 95–96, 135–36.
82 Hawādith, 413, 449, 491, 757; Hawādith, 1:453.
83 Hawādith, 486, 491–92, 493, 495.
agricultural lands from the state treasury. However, this continued to be perceived as a problem without an effective solution throughout the Circassian Mamluk period. As Abū Ghāzī describes it, the state land sales rapidly increased in the 850s/1446–56 and a majority of those lands sold fell into the hands of the upper class of Mamluks, such as the sultans and amirs.\[84\] This problem was directly related to the malfunctioning of the *iqṭāʾ* system; the privatization and inheritance of *iqṭāʾ* lands were widespread during the period under consideration, and the *iqṭāʾ* system was shaken to its foundations.\[85\] It can be said that the large increase in al-Dīwān al-Mufrad’s landholdings resulted from the ceaseless efforts to raise money for the monthly stipends of the relatively lower-class Mamluks (and their sons) who had been directly affected to a greater extent by these problems of the *iqṭāʾ* system, by means of concentrating the gradually decreasing state lands, either *khāṣṣ* lands or *iqṭāʾ*’s, into this dīwān. Simultaneously, it meant that redistributing agricultural lands based on government initiatives such as *al-rawq al-Nāṣirī* were impossible, because titles to lands such as private holdings, *waqf*, lease, *ḥimmāyah*, etc., were complicated.

Secondly, in relation to the above, the government’s ability to control the distribution or withholding of remuneration, not only *iqṭāʾ*’s but also the monthly stipends or other provisions, through the machinery of the state had weakened. In contrast, powerful amirs were striving to acquire interests from the state for themselves, and even their followers acquired interests with their support. It appears reasonable to suppose that this situation suggesting “the privatization of the state” that Sabra refers to\[86\] was closely linked to the emergence of the personal factions/households referred to as *jamāʿah* or *bāb*, which formed around powerful figures (including amirs, civilians, and qadis), and expanded their roles in politics and society during the late Mamluk period.\[87\] However, this is irrelevant to the main subject. In a political structure where one of the powerful amirs would ascend to the sultanate with the support of a Mamluk factional power base and through an agreement among the Mamluks, it essentially enabled other powerful

\[84\] Abū Ghāzī, *Tatāwurūr*, 26–28, 110–11. However, I agree with Adam Sabra that the alienation of state lands was a part of the privatization of state resources by the Mamluk elite (and their descendants) linked to a change in the character of the Mamluk elite opposing Abū Ghāzī’s view that it induced the rise of a new class of private landowners with the opening of a land market. Adam Sabra, “The Rise of a New Class? Land Tenure in Fifteenth-Century Egypt: A Review Article,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 8, no. 2 (2004): 207–10.


amirs to interfere in the workings of the administration. Thus, the sultan’s control through the state machinery naturally had its limits although it was in varying degrees according to the sultan’s ability and his power base. Inferentially, the sultan, as the “principal Mamluk,” had first of all to protect the interests of all the Mamluks, ensuring an equitable distribution of wealth and its allotment among them. On the basis of an understanding of the nature of the sultan’s power and the political structure, we can explain the role of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad from a different perspective; that is, securing resources through the establishment of the dīwān and its continuous development achieved institutional stability in training and maintaining a certain number of Mamluks despite the adverse financial situation. In other words, it functioned as an effective mechanism in sustaining the Mamluk military system that produced the ruling military elites through the purchase, training, and emancipation of slaves, which was a fundamental basis of the Mamluk regime. It also enabled the continuance of their rule during the period of economic decline and the collapse of the state structure. Furthermore, the observation that the Royal Mamluks comprised the mushtarawāt of the ruling sultan and the mustakhdamūn trained by preceding sultans (see note 37) as well as the fact that powerful amirs had let their followers receive wages from al-Dīwān al-Mufrad indicates that not only the sultan but also several Mamluk factions and their leaders, namely, powerful amirs, had their own vested interests in this dīwān. In other words, the development of al-Dīwān al-Mufrad and various other efforts to ensure the regular payment of monthly stipends were linked to the common interest of the Mamluk community, beyond the original plan supporting the preferential treatment of only the sultan’s mamluks.

88 Under the Circassian Mamluks in particular, the members of those Mamluk factions who were trained and emancipated by the same sultan functioned as political interest groups. It was essential for sultans to manage the government through balancing the interests of such factions. On the Mamluk factionalism in politics and the power structure of the sultan, see: Robert Irwin, “Factions in Medieval Egypt,” Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (1986): 228–46; Levanoni, “The Mamluk Conception.”
### Table. Egyptian Nahiyyahs Assigned to Al-Diwān Al-Mufrad in the Reigns of Qāytbāy and Barqūq

#### The Reign of Qāytbāy (around 885/1480)

(According to Tuhfah)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Egypt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Suburbs of Cairo</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>114,100</td>
<td>5,705</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Qalyūbiyyah</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>365,500</td>
<td>6,768.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31,800</td>
<td>15,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Sha‘īyrah</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>1,085,185</td>
<td>3,284.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>77,700</td>
<td>5,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Daqqahīyyah</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>435,938.5</td>
<td>2,476.9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>90,860</td>
<td>11,357.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dāwūdi Thaghr Dimyāt</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24,200</td>
<td>2,016.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Gharbiyyah</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>1,730,723.2</td>
<td>3,951.4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>267,950</td>
<td>14,886.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Manūfīyyah</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>491,768.5</td>
<td>3,753.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44,700</td>
<td>6,385.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abyūr wa-Jazirat Banī Nasr</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100,888</td>
<td>2,193.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Buhiyyah</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>561,908.3</td>
<td>2,565.8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>175,890.3</td>
<td>5,173.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuwwah</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>54,400</td>
<td>3,885.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nastarāwah</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29,900</td>
<td>9,980</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dāwūdi al-Iskandarīyah</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34,112</td>
<td>4,264</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>1,666.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Lower Egypt</td>
<td><strong>1,615</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,028,623.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,460.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>94</strong></td>
<td><strong>731,900.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,786.2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Egypt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Jizyāyah</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>206,142</td>
<td>5,027.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33,025</td>
<td>6,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Ifbiyyah</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>96,794.5</td>
<td>1,935.9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10,916</td>
<td>3,638.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Fayyūmīyāh</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>433,543</td>
<td>4,563.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27,632</td>
<td>3,070.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Bahnaṣāwīyāh</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>968,971</td>
<td>6,417</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>278,764</td>
<td>13,274.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Ushmūnayn</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>526,339.7</td>
<td>5,110.1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>167,455</td>
<td>9,850.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Manfalūṭīyāh</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Asūṭīyāh</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>329,220</td>
<td>10,620</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83,250</td>
<td>27,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Ikhmīmīyāh</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>180,864</td>
<td>7,536</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Qūṣīyāh</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>366,999</td>
<td>9,657.9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60,916</td>
<td>10,152.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Upper Egypt</td>
<td><strong>678</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,146,873.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,801.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>681,958</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,491.7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Egypt</td>
<td><strong>2,293</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,175,496.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,107.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>159</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,413,858.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,892.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slave Traders and Kārimī Merchants during the Mamluk Period: A Comparative Study

Both slave traders (nakkhās, jallāb) and Kārimī merchants played important economic and social roles in Mamluk Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz. As Ira M. Lapidus has stated, slave traders were regarded on religious grounds as disreputable, like brokers, town cryers, and money changers, but nevertheless were employed in the slave trade for the army of the Mamluk sultanate and became important figures in Mamluk circles. David Ayalon was the first historian to provide a brief overview of the characteristics of slave traders. In an investigation of mamluk names, titles and nisbahs, he also discovered the personal ties that existed between slave traders and ex-mamluks, that is, the sultans and amirs sold by them. On the other hand, Subhi Y. Labib’s voluminous book on commercial activities in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt presents only a brief description of the slave trade during the Mamluk period. Eliyahu Ashtor and Andrew Ehrenkreutz have also touched upon military slaves supplied by the Genoese from the end of the thirteenth century on; however, both failed to refer to Muslim slave traders during that period. Al-Sayyid al-Bāz al-‘Arīnī, in his book entitled Al-Mamālīk, explained the title khwājā, which was held mostly by slave traders, and their transactions in military slaves, through case studies of several merchants during the Mamluk period.

As for the Kārimī merchants, more research has been accomplished than in the case of slave traders. S. D. Goitein, in a study on the origins of the Kārimī merchants based on the Geniza documents, refers to their close relationship with

© Middle East Documentation Center. The University of Chicago.
2David Ayalon, L’esclavage du Mamelouk (Jerusalem, 1951), 1–4.
6Al-Sayyid al-Bāz al-‘Arīnī, Al-Mamālīk (Beirut, 1979), 73–77.
the merchants active on the west coast of India.\(^\text{7}\) Walter J. Fischel, following up on the pioneering study by Gaston Wiet,\(^\text{8}\) states that the Kārimī merchants formed a strong association and played an important role in Mamluk fiscal administration through their participation in the profitable spice trade between Egypt and Yemen.\(^\text{9}\) By adding new Arabic sources, Ashtor criticized Fischel’s views, stating that (1) the Kārimīs were a loosely-organized group of merchants dealing not only in spices but also slaves and agricultural products between Egypt and Yemen, including Syria, and (2) contrary to Fischel’s belief that the Kārimīs were an exclusively Muslim group of merchants, there is no reason why the Kārimīs should not have admitted Christians and Jews into their ranks.\(^\text{10}\) Based on plentiful Arabic and non-Arabic sources, Labib systematically describes their activities from the Fatimid to the Mamluk period.\(^\text{11}\) Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Ashqar has furthered the historical study of the spice trade during the Mamluk period with a book entitled \textit{Tujjār al-Tawābil fi Miṣr fī al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī},\(^\text{12}\) which provides a very useful list of 201 Kārimī merchants containing their full names, personal information, and related historical sources.

As mentioned above, slave traders and Kārimī merchants have been studied mainly in the context of the social and economic history of Mamluk Egypt and Syria. Given that my interest lies in the similarities and differences between these two groups of merchants, this article will attempt to compare them during the Mamluk period, in terms of their fields of commercial activity, commodities, relationships with Mamluk sultans, and religious and cultural activities, based on the cases of two famous slave traders and one leading family from among the Kārimī merchants as depicted in the contemporary Arabic sources.


TWO SLAVE TRADERS

The activities of Khawājā Majd al-Dīn Ismā‘īl ibn Muḥammad ibn Yāqūt al-Sallāmī (671–743/1272–1342) and Khawājā Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Uthmān ibnMuḥammad ibn Ayyūb ibn Musāfir al-As’ardī (d. 783/1381) are described in the Arabic chronicles and biographical dictionaries, allowing one to obtain a general grasp of their origins, spheres of activity, commodities, types of activity, relationships with the Mamluk sultans, and religious and cultural activities.

ORIGINS

Majd al-Dīn al-Sallāmī was born in the village of al-Sallāmīyah near Mosul in al-Jazīrah in the year 671/1272. According to Yāqūt (574 or 575–626/1179–1229), al-Sallāmīyah was a large village located on the east bank of the upper Tigris. Al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) says that he came to Egypt as a merchant and was granted the much-coveted title of khawājā during the reigns of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 693–94/1293–94, 698–708/1299–1309, 709–741/1310–41). Khawājā (Arabic corruption of hoja) was a title (laqab) bestowed upon wealthy merchants operating in official service from outside the Mamluk domain in places like al-Jazīrah, Fars, etc. Al-Ṣafadī (696–764/1297–1363) states that he was a significant figure, intelligent, friendly, and an excellent mediator between local rulers.

Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Uthmān al-As’ardī was from As’ard, a town to the south of Āmid in al-Jazīrah. He was granted the title of khawājā for his distinguished service in transporting Barquq (future sultan 784–91/1382–89, 792–801/1390–99), then his father and his brothers to Cairo in 782/1381. According to Al-Nuji‘m al-Zāhirah, Fakhr al-Dīn was thought of as brave, intelligent, and dignified.

As to language ability, both Majd al-Dīn and Fakhr al-Dīn should have spoken

16 Al-Qalqashandi, Subḥ al-A‘shā fi Ṣinā‘at al-Insāh (Cairo, 1963), 6:13; Ayalon, L’esclavage, 3:4; Lapidus, Muslim Cities, 122–23, 127–29; Muhammad Qandīl al-Baqīl, Al-Ta‘rīf bi-Muṣṭalabat Subḥ al-A‘shā (Cairo, 1984), 124. Ashtor states mistakenly that the honorific title khawājā or khawādji was bestowed upon them is not mentioned in the great manual of state administration compiled by al-Qalqashandi (A Social and Economic History, 321).
19 Ibn Qadī Shuhbah, Tārikh Ibn Qadī Shuhbah (Damascus, 1977), 1:3:38, 70.
20 Ibn Taghrībirdī, Al-Nuji‘m al-Zāhirah fi Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah (Cairo, 1963), 11:220.
Arabic fluently since they were from al-Jazīrah. However, Ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 874/1470) states that Fakhr al-Dīn could speak Turkish, but not Arabic. Ibn Qādī Shuhbah (779–851/1377–1448) gives his name as Fakhr al-Dīn al-ʿAjami (al-āsīl) al-Miṣrī, which indicates that he was originally not an Arab, but later lived in Cairo. As al-ʿArīnī concludes, judging from their names, most of the slave traders during the Mamluk period were non-Arabs.

**SPHERES OF ACTIVITY**

Al-Maqrīzī (766–845/1364–1442) states in Kitāb al-Sulūk that Majd al-Dīn traveled often between Cairo and Tabriz using post (barīd) horses, which were formally for official business. Tabriz at the beginning of the fourteenth century was not only the capital city of the Ilkhans but also an emporium of international trade. Al-Maqrīzī states in Al-Khitāṭ, “Majd al-Dīn used to go in the countries of Tatār, trade there and return with slaves (sing. raqīq) and other goods.” It is related that when he visited the court (urudū) of the Ilkhanids, he would stay there for two or three years.

As in the case of Barquq, who was from Charkas, Fakhr al-Dīn was involved in the trade between Cairo and the province of Charkas to the north of Tabriz. Fakhr al-Dīn also constructed a splendid trading center (qaysārīyah) in Damascus, which indicates that his activities encompassed both Egypt and Syria. According to al-Maqrīzī,

Sultan al-Nāṣir increased the number of male slaves (sing. mamlūk) and female slaves (sing. jāriyah) to be purchased. He summoned the slave traders and gave them money to purchase male and female slaves. When the traders returned from Uzbek, Tabriz, Rūm and

---

22 Ibn Qādī Shuhbah, *Ṭarīkh*, 1:3:73.
23 Al-ʿArīnī, *Al-Mamālīk*, 76.

© 2006, 2012 Middle East Documentation Center, The University of Chicago. 
Baghdad [to Cairo] with mamluks, the sultan would bestow precious goods upon them.\textsuperscript{30}

The spheres of activity of Majd al-Dīn and Fakhr al-Dīn—Tabriz and the province of Charkas—were included in the districts for purchasing slaves as mentioned by al-Maqrīzī.

**COMMODITIES**

Majd al-Dīn was known as a mamluk trader for the sultan (tājir al-khāṣṣ) during the reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir. He often traveled to the Tatar provinces and returned with mamluk and jāriyah slaves (sing. raqīq) and other goods.\textsuperscript{31} The Arabic sources do not describe the "other goods"; however, Majd al-Dīn might have purchased such products in the Tatar provinces as furs, silk goods, and silver.

Fakhr al-Dīn was a "mamluk merchant" (tājir fī al-mamālīk),\textsuperscript{32} widely known as the trader (jālib) who brought al-Atābak Barquq from the Charkas provinces to Cairo around 764/1363.\textsuperscript{33} According to Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbāh, Fakhr al-Dīn was a "merchant of the sultan" (tājir al-sulṭān) bringing mamluks and jāriyahs from the Turkish provinces (Bilād al-Turk).\textsuperscript{34} However, it is not related whether or not he traded other goods besides slaves.

**TYPES OF ACTIVITY**

According to the Arabic sources, the slave traders of the Mamluk period were engaged in commerce on an individual basis, not forming any trade organizations. According to al-Maqrīzī, Majd al-Dīn al-Sallāmī was a person of high intelligence, a skillful manager, who had gathered information on the character and manners of local rulers, and a man of gentle character, moderate speech, and handsome appearance.\textsuperscript{35} These talents and knowledge enabled him to form a personal bond of trust with Sultan al-Nāṣir. Al-Šafadī relates that Majd al-Dīn earned the trust (wajākah zā’idah) of both Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir and the Mughuls (the Ilkhanid court) due to his outstanding conduct.\textsuperscript{36}


\textsuperscript{32}Ibn Hājar, *Inbā’,* 1:247.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibn Taqrībīrdī, *Al-Nujūm*, 11:223.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbāh, *Ṭārīkh*, 1:3:73.


On the other hand, Ibn Taghrībīrī remarks in the obituary notice for Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Uthmān that he achieved salvation (sa‘ā dah) for his personal contribution in bringing Barquq to Egypt.37 Because Barquq was also grateful to Fakhr al-Dīn for services that had opened his opportunity for advancement in Egypt, the sultan would stand up from afar whenever he saw Fakhr al-Dīn and pay his respects.38 Thus Fakhr al-Dīn, like Majd al-Dīn, developed his trading business based on a personal relationship with the sultan. However, we do not find any account that their descendants inherited their slave-trading businesses following their deaths.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE MAMLUK SULTANS

From the time of the establishment of the Ilkhanid dynasty in 654/1256, hostile relations continued between the Mamluks and the Ilkhanids until the end of Ghazan Khan’s reign (694–713/1295–1304). Since Majd al-Dīn had the confidence of both Sultan al-Nāṣır and Ghazan’s nephew, Abū Sa‘īd (716–36/1316–35), he attempted to mediate between them. Majd al-Dīn traveled to Tabriz several times for the sultan carrying letters and gifts (sing. hadīyah) he himself chose for the notables at the Ilkhanid court.39 In 722/1322 Amir Aytamīsh al-Muhammad was eventually sent to Abū Sa‘īd to conclude a peace treaty (sūlḥ). The treaty, which was effective for ten years and ten days,40 guaranteed that roads between the two countries would be open, enabling all merchants to travel freely and a caravan to travel from Iraq to al-Ḥijāz every year with a decorated palanquin (mahmil) and the flags (sanjaq) of both countries.41

Due to his contribution to the peace treaty, Majd al-Dīn confirmed his position with Sultan al-Nāṣır and gained even greater esteem and favor than before.42 Consequently, Majd al-Dīn obtained various privileges from the Mamluk government: the sultan assigned iqṭā’s of the ḥalqah to his mamluks, and granted him meat, bread, white unleavened bread (kumāį), barley, sugar, sugar candy, etc., worth one hundred and fifty dirhams a day. Furthermore, the sultan allotted him the village of Arrāq in Ba‘labakk, which yielded ten thousand dirhams annually.43

37Ibn Taghrībīrī, Al-Nuğām, 11:220.
42Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Muqaffā, 2:181; idem, Al-Khiṭṭat, 2:43.
In addition, according to al-Maqrīzī, Majd al-Dīn was granted another fifty thousand dirhams and received a 50% tax exemption on his goods.\textsuperscript{44}

It is widely known that Barquq named himself Barquq al-‘Uthmānī because he greatly respected Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Uthmān. When Fakhr al-Dīn died in 783/1381, just before Barquq ascended the throne, he prayed to God and wailed much for him.\textsuperscript{45} Furthermore, Ibn Ḥajār al-‘Asqalānī (773–852/1372–1449) relates that Fakhr al-Dīn personally requested the abolition of the pomegranate tax (\textit{maks al-rummān}) in Damascus and his request was eventually granted by the sultan.\textsuperscript{46} It is interesting to find that both Majd al-Dīn and Fakhr al-Dīn were exempted from taxation due to their personal relationships with the sultans.

**Religious and Cultural Activities**

As to the public works sponsored by slave traders, we do not find any information on such activities except Fakhr al-Dīn’s trading center (\textit{qaysāriyah}) in Damascus. Research to date documents only a few religious and cultural activities conducted by slave traders during the Mamluk period.\textsuperscript{47}

**The Kārimī Merchants**

From the end of the Fatimid period on, the Kārimī merchants cultivated commercial relations with Yemen, India, Southeast Asia, and China. During the Mamluk period there were such influential families among the Kārimīs as al-Maḥallī, al-Kharrūbī, Ibn Kuwayk, and Ibn Musallam. Here I will take up al-Kharrūbī as an example of an upstart wealthy Kārimī merchant to be compared with the slave traders discussed above.

Since "kharrūb" in Arabic means carob, the family ancestor, Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Miṣrī al-Kharrūbī, might have been a carob retailer. According to Ibn Ḥajār, the Kharrūbīs originated from Kharrūb square in Fustāt\textsuperscript{48} where carob was usually sold.\textsuperscript{49} In any case, the family’s activities as Kārimī merchants lasted for seven generations from Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Kharrūbī (mid-thirteenth century) to Fakhr al-Dīn

\textsuperscript{44}Al-Maqrīzī, \textit{Al-Sulāk}, 2:246.

\textsuperscript{45}Ibn Ḥajār, \textit{Inbā’}, 1:247.

\textsuperscript{46}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{47}Ibn Ḥajār, \textit{Al-Durar}, 2:141. Al-Ḥusayn ibn Dāwūd al-Khawājā ‘Izz al-Dīn al-Sallāmī was a merchant who constructed a madrasah known as ‘al-Sallāmīyah.”

\textsuperscript{48}Ibid., 1:481.

\textsuperscript{49}Ibn Duqmāq, \textit{Kitāb al-Inṭiṣār li-Wāṣīṭat ‘Iqd al-Amṣār} (Cairo, 1893), 1:35. According to this account, the square was originally called “Rahḥbat Dār al-Malik,” then it came to be named “Rahḥbat Kharrūb” because carob was usually sold there.
Sulaymān (d. 864/1460), who was imprisoned due to his large debt.\textsuperscript{50}

**Origins**

It was after the time of the two brothers, Šalāḥ al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (d. 769/1368) and Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (d. 762/1361), that concrete descriptions of the Kharrūbīs appear in the Arabic chronicles and biographical dictionaries. Their activities were centered around Fustāṭ, where they were probably born as Arab Muslims. Among the Kharrūbī merchants, only Sirāj al-Dīn or Badr al-Dīn ibn Abī ‘Umar ibn Šalāḥ al-Dīn\textsuperscript{51} and Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Aḥmad (d. 802/1400)\textsuperscript{52} were granted the title of khawājā.

**Sphere of Activity**

Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad constructed al-Madrasah al-Kharrūbīyah on the outskirts of Fustāṭ and his brother Šalāḥ al-Dīn Aḥmad built a large tomb (turbah) in al-Qarāfah.\textsuperscript{53} Khawājā Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī, who was a manly (murūwah) and benevolent (khayr) person, came to be one of the most notable merchants in Egypt and went to Mecca several times, probably both for pilgrimages and trade.\textsuperscript{54} He was also the owner of a school (šāhīb al-madrasah) near the bank of the Nile in Fustāṭ.\textsuperscript{55}

Zakī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn ‘Alī al-Kharrūbī (d. 787/1385) was brought up as a Sufi (faqīr), because his father, who yearned for the ascetic life, built a monastery (zāwiyyah) for his son at al-Jīzah. After he returned from Yemen via ‘Aydhāb with a small amount of goods, Zakī al-Dīn inherited a large fortune from his brother Badr al-Dīn, which provided him with the opportunity for success.\textsuperscript{56} Ibn Hājār relates in *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*,

[In Mecca] I was under the patronage of Zakī al-Dīn like his slave (raqīq) because my father had requested him to take care of me due to my young age. In 786/1384 I returned [to Cairo] with him and Zakī al-Dīn still retained the title of leadership (ri’āsah).\textsuperscript{57}


\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., 3:267, 8:246.


\textsuperscript{54}Ibn Hājār, *Inbā‘*, 1:123.

\textsuperscript{55}Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i‘i‘*, 1:2:636.

\textsuperscript{56}Ibn Hājār, *Al-Durar*, 1:481–82.

\textsuperscript{57}Ibid., 482. See also al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulāk*, 3:539; Ibn Qādī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 1:3:167–68. Since Ibn Hājār was born in 773/1372, he was thirteen years old when he returned to Cairo with Zakī
When Zakī al-Dīn died in 787/1385, Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Maḥallī took the title of leadership (riʿāsat al-tujjār) exclusively until he died in 806/1403. Al-Maqrīzī relates that Burhān al-Dīn al-Maḥallī was a large-scale Kārimī merchant who traveled to Syria and Yemen many times.

According to the above accounts, the sphere of activity of the Kārimī merchants, particularly those of the Kharrūbī family, were Fustāt, Cairo, Mecca, Yemen, and Syria. We know that there was a not-insignificant number of Kārimīs who unlike the Kharrūbīs traveled to India and as far as China.

Commodities
The research to date informs us that the Kārimīs traded spices (bahār), lumber, textiles, precious stones (jawāhir), wheat (qamh), sugar (sukkar), pottery (fakhkhar), slaves (sing. raqāq), etc. Al-Qalqashandī (756–821/1355–1418) states that the office of spice and al-Kārimī (nazār al-bahār wa-al-Kārimī) supervised the various spices (bahār) and other goods the Kārimī merchants brought from Yemen, so there is no doubt that the Kārimīs specifically brought spices from Aden to Cairo, Alexandria, and Damascus.

However, as I have already mentioned in another article, we find an interesting account in Ibn Dūqmāq’s (d. 809/1406) Kitāb al-Intisār, which relates that among the 65 sugar refineries (matbakh al-sukkar) located at Fustāt, 7 were owned by the sultan, 21 by amirs, and 13 by merchants (sing. taṭir). Among the 13 refineries owned by merchants, 4 were managed by sukkarīs (probably Muslim and Jewish sugar merchants) and another 4 by the Kārimī merchants. Among the 4 refineries owned by the Kārimīs, 2 were managed by Kharrūbī family members: Matbakh Sīrāj al-Dīn ibn [Abī ‘Umar] al-Kharrūbī and Matbakh Nūr al-Dīn [‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz] al-Kharrūbī. Sirāj al-Dīn ibn Abī ‘Umar was the family’s fourth-
generation merchant prior to Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī, who died in 802/1400. This indicates
that the Kharrūbīs had already begun managing sugar refineries during the latter
half of the thirteenth century. Accordingly, we need to correct Ashtor’s view that
the first generation was represented by Śalāḥ al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (d.
769/1368).

Among the Kharrūbīs, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (d. 762/1361)
was particularly well known as a “sugar refinery merchant” (tājir fi maṭābih
al-sukkar) at Fustāṭ. In 751/1350 Sultan Ḥasan (748–52/1347–51) ordered the
Kharrūbīs to provide sugar for his grant of the commodity during the month of
Muharram. The above accounts show that the Kharrūbīs profited not only from
the spice trade but also from sugar refining and sale. Al-Maqrīzī says, “When the
water of the Nile flows into the Alexandria Canal during Misrā (25 July–23
August), ships (sing. markab) loaded with various kinds of goods, like crops
g(hallah), spices (bahār), and sugar (sukkar), would set sail.” Sugar during the
Mamluk period was thought to have been one of the most important exports to
Europe as well as a luxury good consumed by sultans and amirs at their private
residences or during public festivals.

TYPES OF ACTIVITY
It is widely known that the Kārimīs formed a loose confederation of merchants
bound together by professional interest and that they constructed hostelries (sing.
funduq) on various occasions for common purposes. According to Lapidus, Kārimī
merchants themselves were headed by ra’īses, who acted as liaisons between
them and the state for the purpose of discipline, diplomacy, banking, and other
services. However, Ashtor emphasizes the fact that such titles as “chief of the
Kārimīs” found in Arabic chronicles and biographical dictionaries should not be
taken too literally.

In the case of Zakī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Kharrūbī, who held the title of ra’īs
al-tujjār, Ibn Ḥajar relates that after he obtained the title, the influential merchants

---

65Ibn Iyās, Badā‘i‘, 1:2:636.
68Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulūk, 2:829.
70Sato, State and Rural Society, 215.
71Ashtor, A Social and Economic History, 300–1; idem, “The Kārimī Merchants,” 51, 55–56;
72Lapidus, Muslim Cities, 125.
came to be subject to him. Arabic sources do not state distinctly what sort of authority he held over the Kārimī merchants, but it is clear that the title was closely related to the Mamluk government. This will be discussed in the following section.

Though the Kārimīs formed a loose confederation, there was, at the same time, a strong business rivalry among several of them. For example, when a dispute arose between Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Kharrūbī and Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Musallam (d. 776/1374), Ibn Musallam said to Badr al-Dīn, "Buy sacks for all your money and bring them to me. Then I will fill them for you with my coins." However, interestingly enough, Ibn Musallam gave his daughter in marriage to Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 825/1422), a Kharrūbī merchant, in order to strengthen ties between the two families.

Another example of the rivalry that existed among the Kārimī merchants can be found in Ibn Ḥaʾjr’s Inbāʿ al-Ghumr, already noted by Labib. In 786/1384, when trouble arose between Zakī al-Dīn al-Kharrūbī and Shihāb al-Dīn al-Šārīqī, an influential merchant from Yemen, they were both tried before Sultan Barquq. In answer to al-Šārīqī’s accusations, Zakī al-Dīn quoted a letter written by al-Šārīqī and addressed to the lord of Yemen, which read, “At present Egypt is in a state of corruption (fasād). Since there is no credible lord (ṣāḥib), you need not send any gifts from here on. The present lord [sultan] is the lowest and the most despicable among the mamluks.” After reading this, Barquq ordered al-Šārīqī seized and his tongue cut out. Then the sultan bestowed on Zakī al-Dīn a fine robe (khilʾah) and granted him the title of “great merchant” (kabīr al-tujjār).

**Relationships to the Mamluk Sultans**

The account of the Zakī al-Dīn/Shihāb al-Dīn dispute tells us that Zakī al-Dīn was granted the title of great merchant or chief merchant (raʾis al-tujjār) in 786/1384. In Al-Durar al-Kāminah, Ibn Ḥaʾjr states, ”Zakī al-Dīn approached the state (dawlah) and gained the title of leadership (riʾāsah), thus surpassing his equals,” showing distinctly that Zakī al-Dīn petitioned Sultan Barquq to bestow

---

74 Ibn Ḥaʾjr, Al-Durar, 1:482; idem, Inbāʿ, 1:306. Zakī al-Dīn was also called “kabīr al-tujjār” (a leading figure of merchants) (al-Maqrīzī, Al-Sulūk, 3:539).
77 Labib, Handelsgeschichte, 228. See also S. Labib, “Kārimī,” The Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., 4:640–43.
78 Ibn Ḥaʾjr, Inbāʿ, 1:288.
79 Ibn Ḥaʾjr, Al-Durar, 1:482.
upon him the title of ri‘āsah. Since he died in 787/1385 at Fustat, Zakī al-Dīn held that title for about two years. Ibn Ḥajar relates that after he gained the title, Zakī al-Dīn’s status (qadr) in the government improved, and he became preeminent among the Kārimī merchants.

Before that, in 781/1379, Kamāl al-Dīn, a grandson of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ahmad al-Kharrūbī, was arrested and whipped by amir Barquq because he attempted to obtain the rank of vizier with a bribe of 100,000 dinars. Following that incident, Kamāl al-Dīn was exiled to Qūṣ in Upper Egypt, where he was ordered to reside until his death. Consequently, Kamāl al-Dīn al-Kharrūbī was not summoned with three other influential Kārimī merchants—Burhān al-Dīn al-Mahallī, Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Musallam, and Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn al-Kharrūbī—to supply Sultan Barquq with 1,000,000 dirhams for the war against Timur when the latter attempted to invade Syria in 796/1394. The above three Kārimī merchants’ share thus amounted to ten percent of the 10,000,000 dirhams expended for Barquq’s royal mamluks just prior to the war.

According to al-Ashqar, the Kārimīs during the Mamluk period were supported and administered by “the office of spices and the Kārimī,” which issued passports (sing. jawāz) to them and imposed taxes (2.5 percent) on their trade goods. Furthermore, Lapidus argues that the Kārimī merchants became officials because of their close association with the government. However, Zakī al-Dīn al-Kharrūbī, for example, though he gained the title of ra’īs al-tujjār and had authority over his Kārimī colleagues, was never regarded as a state official.

**Religious and Cultural Activities**

Compared to the slave traders, we find many more instances of religious and cultural activities conducted by the Kārimīs. As mentioned above, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Kharrūbī (d. 762/1361), who was known as a “sugar refinery merchant,” constructed a school (madrasah, later called “al-Madrasah al-Kharrūbīyah) to which he appointed Shaykh Bahā’ al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Uqayl

---


86 Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 128.
“professor of law” (mutadarris fiqh) and Shaykh Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar al-Bulqīnī assistant (mu‘īd).\textsuperscript{87} It is said that Badr al-Dīn set down the condition that non-Arabs not be appointed to its faculty.\textsuperscript{88} His brother, Šalāḥ al-Dīn Ahmad (d. 769/1368), built a large tomb (turba) at Qarāfah, which his grandson, Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī (d. 802/1400), repaired and to which he later added a fine washroom (mathārah).\textsuperscript{89}

According to Ibn Ḥaṣan, ‘Īzz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 776/1374) was the owner of a fine madrasah adjacent to his house.\textsuperscript{90} Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ahmad al-Kharrūbī (d. 785/1383) built a large house on the bank of the Nile and converted it into a madrasah, to which he donated a waqf and appointed a professor of tradition (mutadarris hadīth).\textsuperscript{91} Șalāḥ al-Dīn’s son, ‘Īzz al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 776/1374), also built a madrasah in the suburbs of Fustāt, which was larger than that of his uncle Badr al-Dīn, but he died before its completion.\textsuperscript{92} According to Ibn Iyās (852–ca. 930/1448–ca. 1524), Khawāja Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Kharrūbī (d. 802/1400) was also the owner of a madrasah in Fustāt near the Nile.\textsuperscript{93}

After he returned from Mecca in 786/1384, Zakī al-Dīn (ra’is al-tujjār) invited Najm al-Dīn Ibn Razīn to learn Ṣahkhārī al-Bukhārī from him. It is said that he was a person of decency (hishmah), esprit de corps (‘asabīyah), and manliness (murūwah), donating generously to scholars and poets.\textsuperscript{94} Al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497) relates that Badr al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Kharrūbī (d. 822/1419), who had yearned to hear the Quran, listened to his reading many times and died heavily in debt.\textsuperscript{95} Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī, who was a pious Sufī (mutaṣawwīf), donated 100,000 dirhams for the reconstruction of al-Hārām al-Sharīf in Mecca.\textsuperscript{96} Although Nūr al-Dīn was called “the last of the Kharrūbī merchants (ākhir tujjār Miṣr min al-Kharāribah),”\textsuperscript{97} actually he was not the last merchant to come out of the Kharrūbī family, for his nephews, ‘Īzz al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar (d. 842/1438), Badr

\textsuperscript{87}Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Khiṭat, 2:369. Badr al-Dīn also built rab’s (living quarters) near the school (ibid.).
\textsuperscript{88}Ibid., 369–70.
\textsuperscript{89}Ibid., 369.
\textsuperscript{90}Ibn Ḥaṣan, Inbā’, 1:86–87.
\textsuperscript{91}Al-Maqrīzī, Al-Khiṭat, 2:368.
\textsuperscript{92}Ibid., 370.
\textsuperscript{93}Ibn Iyās, Badā’i’, 1:2:636.
\textsuperscript{94}Ibn Ḥaṣan, Al-Durar, 1:482. We also find al-Khānqāh al-Kharrūbīyah in al-Maqrīzī’s Khiṭat (2:426–27). However, Zakī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Kharrūbī originally constructed this as a private house for his family. In 822/1419 the house was converted into a khānqāh in accordance with the wishes of Sultan al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh.
\textsuperscript{95}Al-Sakhāwī, Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’, 6:92.
\textsuperscript{96}Ibid., 5:240.
\textsuperscript{97}Ibid.
al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar (d. 833/1430), and Fakhr al-Dīn Sulaymān ibn ‘Umar (d. 864/1460), etc., still continued to be active in trade. Fakhr al-Dīn, who had spent a luxurious life reading the Quran, suffered misfortune, fell deeply into debt, and was consequently imprisoned,98 no doubt as the result of the spice and sugar monopoly policies attempted by Sultan Barsbāy (825–41/1422–38).99

In conclusion, the above comparison between several slave traders and the Kharrūbī family of Kārimī merchants during the Mamluk period can be summarized in the following six points.

(1) Most of the leading slave traders who were from outside the Mamluk domain were given the title of "khawājā," while only two merchants were granted the title of "khawājā" among the Kharrūbīs, who were based in Fustāt.

(2) Slave traders traveled from Cairo or Damascus to Tabriz and the province of Charkas along the northern routes, while the Kharrūbīs traded between Fustāt, Cairo, Mecca, and Yemen along the southern routes, but not as far as India, Southeast Asia, or China.

(3) Slave traders returned from Tabriz and the Tatar provinces with male and female slaves and other goods, while the Kārimīs traded goods such as spices, sugar, lumber, textiles, precious stones, wheat, pottery, and slaves. The Kharrūbīs, in particular, earned large profits not only from the spice trade but also from sugar refining and sale.

(4) While slave traders engaged in business on an individual basis, the Kārimīs formed a loose confederation headed by chief merchants (raʾīs al-tujjar), which title sultans bestowed upon several wealthy merchants.

(5) Since slave traders were favored and relied upon by both the Mamluk sultans and the Mongol khans, they played an active part as diplomats using their knowledge of the characters and manners of the local eastern rulers. They were often exempted from taxation due to their personal relationships with sultans. The Kārimī merchants also enjoyed the protection of sultans in return for their contribution to the spice trade and contribution to military expenditures. However, the Kharrūbīs were never regarded as state officials, despite their close association with the Mamluk sultans and influential amirs.

(6) As to the public works of slave traders, we find little positive information

98Ibid., 3:267.
on their activities. In contrast to this, there are many accounts of the religious and cultural activities conducted by the Kharrūbīs, like the construction of schools in Fustāt, appointment of professors to those schools, and donations for the reconstruction of al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf in Mecca. Accordingly, it seems that the Kārimī merchants, most of whom were Arab Muslims from Egypt, Yemen, and Syria, made attempts to return part of their wealth to society through such public welfare (maṣlahaḥah)-oriented religious and cultural works.
Genealogical Table of the Kharrūbīs

1\(^{300}\) Revised and enlarged genealogy based on the table by E. Ashtor (1956).
Urban Society in Damascus as the Mamluk Era Was Ending

INTRODUCTION

How were the Mamluks, formerly military slaves and of a different race and religion, able to govern cities occupied principally by Arab Muslims for more than 250 years? Nearly forty years have passed since Ira M. Lapidus presented a stimulating thesis, and abundant documentation, in an attempt to answer this question. His thesis is still influential: The Mamluks did not simply have military and political superiority; they also linked peasants and nomads to the cities by means of active social and economic actions, forming a variety of networks between these rural outsiders and the two main classes in urban society, the notables and the common people. Thus, the ruling Mamluks’ linkage of the ulama and the common people into one political and social unity was characteristic of the structure of urban society during the Mamluk dynasty. Lapidus called such a system of political and social relations the "Mamluk regime" and argued that it had its origin in the Seljukid era of the eleventh to twelfth centuries and worked well even after the rise of the Ottoman dynasty.  

In this article the author examines urban society at the end of the Mamluk period. According to Lapidus, the Mamluk regime suffered a serious crisis in this period, but later recovered under Ottoman rule. Earlier studies have thus far described this period as one of decline or disorder, but have given no analyses of the socio-political structure except those of Carl F. Petry, who regards it as a period of innovation because of the leadership of the sultans.  

© Middle East Documentation Center. The University of Chicago. This article is a revised and enlarged English version of my Japanese paper published in Shigaku-Zassi 98, no. 1 (1989).

1Ira M. Lapidus, Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, MA, 1967). On the Mamluk regime, see 43, 191.


3Carl F. Petry has published two illuminating works on the socio-political structure of Egypt at the end of the Mamluk period. See Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamlûk Sultans al-Ashraf Qâytbây and Qânsûh al-Ghawrî in Egypt (Seattle, 1993); Protectors or Praetorians?: The Last Mamlûk Sultans and Egypt’s Waning as a Great Power (New York, 1994).
a period of about fifty years, from the reign of Sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (872–901/1468–96) to the occupation of Cairo by the Ottomans, paying primary attention to the political changes outlined below.

First came the financial problem. At the end of the Mamluk period the state constantly faced serious financial crises, due to the decrease of income from iqṭā’ land as agricultural production fell and the salaries paid to mamluks and officials increased. Meanwhile, however, the Mamluk state needed to dispatch the army against repeated Ottoman incursions from the northern frontier into Syria, which required an extraordinary budget. The financial problem was therefore closely linked to state security. Sultan Qāytbāy inaugurated a new financial policy of imposing taxes on properties owned by civilians and donated as waqf, as well as reducing the salaries of military and state officials, thus changing the balance of state income and expenditures. The sultans who succeeded him followed this policy. Although such a policy was criticized by the ulama and the citizens as oppressive conduct (ẕulm) against the shari’ah and ‘ādah (customary law), its purpose was to replace income lost from the iqṭā’ system, by increasing taxes on the cities and their inhabitants.4

Second came the decline of the mamluk army, a phenomenon so precipitous that the sultans and provincial governors began to use non-mamluk military forces. The sultans’ mamluks, called jūlbān, often revolted against the sultans, demanding the customary extra payments (nafaqah) during mobilization and at the succession of a new sultan, or complaining about delays in payment of their monthly stipend. These revolts were caused not only by a lack of military discipline but also by the weakening of the state economically. Having lost their iqṭā’ income, the mamluks had become salaried workers who depended on the stipend paid to them by the sultans. They could not sustain themselves without an extra payment, in the face of the financial crisis and sudden rise in commodity prices, which reduced the real value of their incomes. The sultans, recognizing the weakness of the military, organized a new army (called the Fifth Army) consisting of non-mamluks, conscripted black slaves (‘abīd), and the urban outlaws called zu’r, in order to reform a military system that at that time depended solely on the mamluks. This new army consisted of infantry equipped with firearms and hired at lower salaries

than the mamluks, thus challenging the privileged status of the mamluks.³

The financial and military crisis became crucial at the end of the Mamluk period, after Qaṭṭāb, and this necessitated reform of the state itself, which up until that time was based on the iqṭāʾ and the mamluk system. The above-mentioned new financial and military policies were introduced to achieve such reform. The new targets were cities and citizens, and this inevitably caused changes in urban administration. In this article we will examine the changes in urban society, focusing on Damascus. The main sources are journals by Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524), Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546), and Ibn Ṭawq (d. 908/1502).⁴ These are detailed diary-like chronicles and give us clues as to how the inhabitants behaved toward external political and economic pressures and developed new networks as the era ended, even though this behavior was often implicit and concealed behind the apparent disturbances.

CHANGE OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATION

BRIBERY AND CONFISCATION (Muḥādarah)

We find a remarkable number of descriptions of bribery in relation to appointment to office, as well as of confiscation of property by forcible means (muḥādarah): for bribery, 49 cases are found in Badāʾiʾ, 34 in Muḥākahat, and 22 in Inbāʾ; for confiscation, 78 cases are found in Badāʾiʾ, 21 in Muḥākahat, and 12 in Inbāʾ. Instances of both bribery and confiscation are found throughout the Mamluk period, but in the following discussion we will focus on particular features at the end of the period.⁷ Bribes were customarily offered at the time of appointment to office, as well as of confiscation of property by forcible means (muḥādarah):

³ The sultans’ mamluks revolted about thirty times during the fifty years at the end of the Mamluk period, and most of the revolts were caused by their economic difficulties such as the termination of salary payments and food distribution. They had to maintain their households, pay wages to their subordinates, pay house rents, buy clothes, etc. (Ibn Iyās, Badāʾiʾ, 4:369, 483–86).


⁷ I have discussed bribery and property confiscation in Miura Toru, “Administrative Networks in the Mamlūk Period: Taxation, Legal Execution, and Bribery,” in Islamic Urbanism in Human History, ed. Sato Tsugitaka (London, 1997). Bernadette Martel-Thoumian’s recent article, “The
office, and there seems to have been standard amounts (such as 3,000 dinars for the chief judgeship of Cairo). The sultans could amass a huge amount of income from bribes by making frequent appointments of high officials. As for confiscation, the amounts extracted were often more than 10,000 dinars, higher than the amount of bribes, and these were exacted to cover the extra payments (nafaqa) mentioned above. Both bribery and confiscation were used as financial measures to cover the state income deficit. The main targets were civil officials living in the cities, thus transferring the wealth of the citizens to the state.

The constant bribery and confiscation caused changes in the administrative process and the quality of the officials. First, high officials needed to have considerable wealth to pay bribes and endure confiscations. Second, the bribery was pervasive, from high officials to minor ones and common people, as shown in the following report. In Rajab 922/August 1516 when the Ottoman sultan Selim entered Aleppo in peace, he reproached three chief judges of Cairo (who were arrested there) for their unjust conduct, saying that “you have received bribes (rishwah) at the trial under the shari’ah and assumed the office of chief judge, seeking for it by money, and did not prevent the oppressive conduct (zulm) of the Mamluk sultans towards the citizens.” The new Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Ṭūnān bāy (r. 922/1516–17) stated at the appointment of four new chief judges of Cairo in Dhū al-Hijjah 922 that “I have not received any bribe from them, and therefore you must not take bribes from any citizen.” This report tells us that bribery had pervaded the whole administration, so widespread as to reach the judges and nullify any chance for justice at trials over which they presided. Furthermore, the bribery relating to judges was more frequent than other types. We cannot simply

Sale of Office and Its Economic Consequences during the Rule of the Last Circassians (872–922/1468–1516),” Mamlūk Studies Review 9, no. 2 (2005), is a detailed research contribution but does not make use of my earlier work.

8Ibid., 46–49.
9Of the forty-seven cases reported in Badāʾiʿ, confiscation of more than 10,000 dinars occurs in about two-thirds (thirty-four cases). Intentional confiscations for the extra payments are found: Badāʾiʿ, 3:394, 407, 409, 442–43. For the average amount of confiscation, see ibid., 52.
10The average bribe for the chief judge (3,000 dinars) was equivalent to five years’ salary, assuming his salary was fifty dinars (Miura, “Administrative Networks,” 48–49). Since such a huge bribe was required, even wealthy men lacking the knowledge and skill needed for state civil officials were appointed simply by offering it (Ibn Taghrībīdī, Ḥawādith, 771, 780–81; Ibn Iyās, Badāʾiʿ, 4:257, 264).
11Ibn Iyās, Badāʾiʿ, 5:117.
12Bribery to get the position of chief judge appears in 56% (18 cases) of the total in Badāʾiʿ and 30% (6 cases) of the total in Mufākahat, while it rises to 65% (13 cases) in Mufākahat in the case of the appointment of deputy judges. A judge who did not receive a bribe at his trial was praised, which ironically shows the generality of taking bribes at trials (Ibn al-Ṣarraj, Inbāʾ, 346–47, 451;
ascribe the prevalence of bribery to the depraved morals of the ulama. We must analyze the changes in the administrative system itself, which we will do in the next section, using as an example the Furfür family, who monopolized the office of Shafi‘i chief judge in Damascus for 35 years.

**The Furfür Family of Damascus**

Two Shafi‘i chief judges, Shiha‘b al-Dīn Āḥmad ibn Ṭahmūd (d. 911/1505) and his son Walī al-Dīn Muḥammad (937/1531), were both known as Ibn al-Furfür, a name which was ascribed to their ancestor. As for the origin of this Furfür family, all that is known is that Shiha‘b al-Dīn’s father Ṭahmūd served Ibn Muzhir (d. 893/1488), confidential secretary (kātib al-sirr) of the Sultanate, and Shiha‘b al-Dīn himself was a head of Ibn Muzhir’s bureau at Damascus.

Shiha‘b al-Dīn was appointed the Shafi‘i chief judge of Damascus, in addition to his existing posts as nāẓir al-jaysh (superintendent of the army), wakīl al-sultān (go-between for the sultan), and nāẓir al-qal‘ah (superintendent of the Citadel), when he was thirty-three years old, in Ṣafar 886/April 1481. This was only five days after the former chief judge Ṣala‘h al-Dīn’s appointment. The chronicle (Inbā’) explains this sudden change as owing to three reasons: Shiha‘b al-Dīn, who with a fine countenance and voice and chivalrous mind (futūwah) was a right hand (akhsa‘) to Ibn Muzhir, offered a bribe of 30,000 dinars and got a recommendation from the Shaykh al-Islām. Ibn Muzhir, as a confidant of the sultan, had influence when it came to office appointments, and the judges were usually appointed from among the staff who served his bureau. His close relationship to Ibn Muzhir dating from his father’s time, and a large bribe, secured the appointment of Shiha‘b al-Dīn.

Shiha‘b al-Dīn continued to be the Shafi‘i chief judge for twenty-five years until his death in Jumādā II 911/November 1505. Furthermore, in Rabī‘ I 910/August
1504 he was appointed the Shafi‘i chief judge of Cairo, in addition to Damascus, and was allowed to pass the office to his deputy in his will.\(^{18}\) At the same time his son Wali al-Dīn became deputy judge at the tender age of fifteen years; at his father’s death the following year, he succeeded to the post of chief judge and held this office for about ten years, until Rabī‘ I 921/May–June 1515.\(^{19}\) The office of the Shafi‘i chief judge was the highest among the four chief judges, as he supervised waqf foundations and could appoint his own deputies (nā‘ib).\(^{20}\)

Shihāb al-Dīn appointed twenty-four deputy judges during his tenure, with up to fourteen at one time. He controlled the ulama of the Shafi‘i law school by the appointment of deputies, so that he appointed a man of knowledge like al-Nu‘aymī (d. 927/1521) and dismissed a deputy who opposed him.\(^{21}\) He also took a bribe when assigning a deputy office.\(^{22}\) His influence extended to the other law schools so much as to make his nephew Badr al-Dīn Muhammad Ibn al-Furfūr (d. 936/1529) a superintendent and professor of the Qāṣṣā’iyah Madrasah, and to discharge Ibn al-Qaṣīf, the Hanafi chief judge. Badr al-Dīn finally assumed this office succeeding Ibn al-Qaṣīf in Muharram 902/October 1496.\(^{23}\) As he held this office until Dhū al-Ḥijjah 913/March 1508, the Furfūr family monopolized the highest offices of two influential law schools for ten years after 902.

Shihāb al-Dīn seems to have been a powerful mediator among the ulama in matters of appointments to office, liberation from imprisonment, and the like.\(^{24}\) He cultivated close connections with military officers such as the provincial governor (nā‘ib) by means of gifts and banquets.\(^{25}\) Such connections increased his influence, so that he was able to play an influential role in the conflict between the provincial governor and the common people, who resisted his attempt to tax them, preventing

---


the governor from attacking them in 905/1500. He had gained considerable influence in Damascene politics and society and was known to be a man of wealth, having iqtā’ land in the provinces and a residence in Damascus, owning shops and public baths, and holding waqf properties.

Strong opposition developed against the rising influence of the Furfūr family. In Rajab 893/June–July 1488 a lampoon on the deputies of Shiḥāb al-Dīn was thrown into the Umayyad Mosque. It ridiculed his deputy judges one by one in the form of a poem. Once again, in Rabī‘ II/March–April 1489, another lampoon was thrown into the court of the governor’s palace (dār al-sa‘ādah), in which a deputy was accused of oppressive behavior (zulm) at a trial and the forcible imposition of taxes (bals). These lampoons asserted that the deputies acted tyrannically at their most important job, conducting trials. An order was sent to summon to Cairo two deputies, two notaries (shāhid), a dawādār (executive secretary), and a bailiff (naqīb) working under Shiḥāb al-Dīn in Shawwāl 895/September 1490. Here we note that those to be summoned were called “jama‘ah (faction, household) of the Shafi‘i chief judge, Shiḥāb al-Dīn,” which shows that the subordinate staff (deputies, notaries, etc.) was regarded as within the faction of Shiḥāb al-Dīn, and the organization itself was criticized.

Based on two incidents that occurred after the death of Shiḥāb al-Dīn, it seems that the Furfūr family organized a faction/household composed of both familial and non-familial members. First, when Shiḥāb al-Dīn died on 2 Jumādā II 911, his son Walī al-Dīn sent an urgent message from Cairo to announce that he had been appointed chief judge to succeed his father on 9 Jumādā II and all deputy judges should remain in office. One of the deputies, al-Nu‘aym, hesitated to conduct a trial, however, because the sultan had not authorized the assignment of

26Shiḥāb al-Dīn was described as being strong in his struggles with the governors (al-Buṣrawī, Tārīkh al-Buṣrawī, 229). Conflict in 905/1500: Ibn Ṭūlūn, Muʿākhatat, 1:227. He also prevented the clash in 891/1486 thus leading to the peace announcement (Ibn Ṭawq, Ta’liq, 2:627–28).


28Ibn Ṭūlūn, Muʿākhatat, 1:96.

29Ibn Ṭūlūn, Muʿākhatat, 1:133, 143. Al-Buṣrawī reported about this lampoon that Shiḥāb al-Dīn rejected it as a slander before the governor, and there is no criticism of him in Ibn Ṭawq’s report, unlike Ibn Ṭūlūn’s. See Ibn Ṭawq, Ta’liq, 2:839.

30Ibn Ṭūlūn, Muʿākhatat, 1:133, 143. Al-Buṣrawī reported that his deputy judge al-Sibt was also summoned (al-Buṣrawī, Tārīkh al-Buṣrawī, 143–44). Ibn Ṭawq, Ta’liq, 2:981.
deputies. Nevertheless, the other deputies continued their work. We know from this report that appointment to the office of deputy judge lapsed when the official who had made the appointment left office, and permission of the sultan was needed to re-assign the deputy. To keep his own faction together, Walî al-Dîn declared the deputies would continue in office before getting the sultan’s permission. Walî al-Dîn benefited the deputies by assuming his late father’s office and assigning the office of deputy to each of them, so they did not follow al-Nu‘aymî. The second incident was that members of the faction (jamâ‘ah) of Walî al-Dîn were arrested and subjected to confiscation in Dhū al-Hijjah 911/April–May 1506, only a half-year after the first incident. Six persons, including Muḥammad, the dawâdâr of Walî al-Dîn and his late father, and the ustâdâr (majordomo) of his father, were arrested and sent to prison to be mulcted. The reason for this arrest and confiscation was not made public, but its purpose must have been to reprimand the Furfûr family as a group because the target of the punishment was obviously the subordinate staff responsible for its management, such as the dawâdâr and the ustâdâr. These reports show that the Furfûr family had organized a faction/household including non-familial members, who were united by their common interests.

**JAMĀ‘AHs IN LEGAL ADMINISTRATION**

The term jamâ‘ah means a group in general, and was often used at the end of the Mamluk period to designate a specific faction led by a boss, attaching to it his own name or his post. The most frequent ones were those of provincial governors and chief judges. The word bâb—originally meaning gate—was also used to designate a household or faction performing administrative tasks under the boss.

The organization of jamâ‘ahs under judges was demonstrated during the two incidents in which Ibn Furfûr’s group was summoned and later mulcted. The members can be classified into two groups: legal administrative staff such as the nā‘ib, shâhid, and naqib on one hand, and the management staff such as the dawâdâr and ustâdâr on the other hand.

---

33 Dawâdâr Muḥammad served two heads of the Furfûr family and took an important role as envoy on behalf of one (Ibn Ťûlûn, *Mufâkahat*, 1:215, 297). He was blamed at the time of confiscation in 894/1489 as well as of the summons in 895 (Ibn Ťûlûn, *Mufâkahat*, 1:108, 133), which suggests to us his responsibility for household management.
34 We find twenty-one examples of governor’s jamâ‘ahs and thirteen of chief judge’s in *Mufâkahat*.
First I will examine the legal administrative staff. A na‘ib was a deputy judge appointed by the chief judge of each of the four Sunni law schools to conduct trials under his auspices. The number of deputy judges exceeded one hundred in Cairo and might have been about twenty in Damascus. They conducted trials at the notary’s office and even in the street, and they seem to have been taking bribes, as is shown in an order stating that a na‘ib should be dismissed when he received anything at trial. Wali al-Din Ibn Furfur issued an order to his na‘ibs that they must not hear a complaint, authorize a document, or hold a trial other than at the house of the chief judge, in order for him to oversee the legal process, but nevertheless the na‘ibs were soon permitted to conduct trials freely. The na‘ibs resisted this new order and conducted trials and certified documents at their own houses in order to profit personally. Sha‘hids acted as witnesses at trials, as well as for marriage contracts and commercial transactions. They were also called ‘adl. They received a fee for notarizing contracts or for being a trial witness, had shops (ḥanūt, dukkan) and


37 Sultan al-Ghawrī, in Dhū al-Hijjah 919/January 1514, restricted the number of deputy judges for each Sunni law school in Cairo to 40 for the Shafi‘is, 30 for the Hanafis, 20 for the Malikis, and 10 for the Hanbalis, a total of 100 (Ibn Iyās, Badā’i’, 4:352). In Damascus in 902/1496 there were as many deputy judges as 10 for the Shafi‘is, 5 for the Hanafis, and one for each of the other two schools, making a total of 17 (al-Busrawī, Tārīkh al-Busrawī, 190). The number of Wali al-Din’s deputy judges reached 16 at one time (Ibn Tūlūn, Muḥākahat, 1:309).


40 Ibn Tūlūn, Muḥākahat, 1:311. At the time of Shihāb al-Dīn in Muḥarram 897/November 1491, a royal order came out to prohibit the na‘ibs of the Furfūr family from judging at their houses and keeping a shāhid, wakīl, and rasūl, but it was the order written by Shihāb al-Dīn (Ibn Ṭawq, Ta’liq, 3:1082).


43 It was reported that the fee was three dirhams for a certificate written at the office of the muḥāṣab (market inspector) in Damascus, and the total number of certificates came to 3,000 in a day and the rasūls executing this work gained one dinar each per day (Ibn al-Šayrafī, Inbā’, 389). The Ottoman sultan Selim I, before his entry into Damascus, sent a new judge there to proclaim
bureaus (markaz, maktab) in the city, and performed their work at mosques and madrasahs and city gates in Damascus and Aleppo.\(^4^4\) Descriptions of shāhīds are often found in the biographies of the ulama: for example, that they acquired their incomes by working as a shāhid\(^4^5\) or began their career as a shāhid.\(^4^6\) The position of shāhid was usually the first job for legal administrators. As an example, a nāʿīb of Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Furfūr, ‘Uthmān, was originally a weaver, then became a madrasah gatekeeper, and worked as a notary under the Hanafi chief judge. He was promoted to nāʿīb by paying a bribe and remained at this post for more than twenty years.\(^4^7\) We find many cases of promotion from shāhid to nāʿīb, or of holding both positions at the same time.\(^4^8\) The offices of nāʿībs and shāhīds might be centers of legal administration where people were trained not so much in legal theory as in legal practice, and where a personal network (jamāʿah/faction) would be created.\(^4^9\)

Naqībs were bailiffs, also called rasūl, who executed legal judgements. They received a fee from a plaintiff and made a profit by exacting more from a defendant. In Cairo in Jumādā I 919/July 1513, the sultan ordered naqībs and rasūls under the amirs (military chiefs) not to extort payments from the parties to a trial.\(^5^0\) At that time the amirs used to profit by holding a trial at the bench (dikkah) in front of their house gates.\(^5^1\) This order aimed to prevent the subordinates from oppressing the parties. The Damascus governor also prohibited naqībs from exacting a penalty without a plaintiff in Dhu al-Hijjah 918/February–March 1513.\(^5^2\)

Wākīls (go-between) arbitrated a matter between the party and the judge. We found a notable example of a wākil in Sharaf al-Dīn, who served the chief judge that the fee for a marriage contract was to be 25 dirhams, of which 20 dirhams were for the judge and 4 for the shāhid (Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 2:29–30, 41).


\(^4^6\) Al-Ghazzī, Kawkīb, 1:270, 320.

\(^4^7\) Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:50; al-Buṣrāwī, Tārikh al-Buṣrāwī, 107, 190, 221; al-Ghazzī, Kawkīb, 1:260.


\(^4^9\) Ibn Iyās, Badā’i’, 4:131.

\(^5^0\) Ibid., 320.

\(^5^1\) Ibid., 302, 312. This is a kind of mazālim court (administrative court) supervised by administrative executives, such as the sultan and provincial governors.

\(^5^2\) Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:374. Ibn Furfūr’s naqībs also exacted money (Ibn Ṭawq, Taʿliq, 2:1199).
in spite of his ignorance and illiteracy. He bribed his boss to hear the cases and then extorted bribes from the parties. After a while he found favor with the judge and was consulted about important matters, lived in a mansion, and bought slaves, until he became so powerful that chief judges went to call on him instead of the reverse. Finally, however, in 876/1472 he was prohibited from performing the duties of a wakīl.\(^{53}\)

The increase of lawsuits in larger cities accelerated this tendency of seeking more profit in legal administration. A curious order was issued in Rabī‘ II 914/July–August 1508, forbidding the bringing of a suit against anybody without just cause (ḥaqq), and demanding that the accused not be deprived of anything by such an unjust lawsuit. A similar order in Dhū al-Hijjah 914/March 1509 provided that a lawsuit would not be accepted unless the defendant agreed to the claim.\(^{54}\) These orders show that lawsuits and trials had turned into a means for the strong to exploit the weak. Trials were no longer to maintain justice and fairness (‘adl) in society or to prevent oppressive conduct (ẓulm), but were instead a means to pursue the private interests of both citizens and legal administrators.

We can surmise the features of legal factions and their staffs at the end of the Mamluk period. First, they gained their income by receiving fees, bribes, and exactions pursuant to the performance of legal functions. It is noteworthy that such income was not necessarily regarded as irregular or illegal, but instead as proper in lieu of salary, as the following episode demonstrates. ‘Īzz al-Dīn, the Hanbali chief judge, did not solicit bribes at trials, because he received sufficient income from his madrasah salary and income from rented properties.\(^{55}\) Legal staff could become wealthy by increasing their income from bribes and fees like the above-mentioned wakīl. Second, it was not necessary to have had a madrasah education in order to carry out the work of a notary and go-between. To give an example, a shāhid from a peasant background (fallāḥ) came to Damascus to be a rasūl, then became a ballāṣī (tax collector) and later worked as a shāhid. He was eventually banished because of his crime of forging a royal order.\(^{56}\) His example shows that the easiest way for newcomers to the city to earn a living was to be employed as subordinate staff such as a rasūl or ballāṣī under the patronage of an influential man. After gaining experience in legal practice, they could advance to


\(^{54}\)Ibn Iyaś, Bada‘i‘, 4:134; Ibn Ṭūlūn, I‘lām, 214. At the mazālim court of the sultan, bribes were offered (Ibn al-Ṣayrafi, Inbā‘, 367). Therefore the sultan was forced to control the increase of lawsuits brought to him in Shāb‘ 876/January 1472 (ibid., 400–1).

\(^{55}\)Ibn al-Ṣayrafi, Inbā‘, 345–47, 450–51. He was famous for his austerity and did not employ nā‘ibs, naqībs, and rasūls as the other chief judges did.

\(^{56}\)Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākhatat, 1:334.
become a shāhid or nāʾib and make more money.

Legal factions absorbed a large number of subordinate staff in the cities, based on the common interests for each member in making money from legal execution, plus their own training and promotion system inside the jamāʿah, until they strengthened and extended their organizations. To control such an extended faction (jamāʿah) required a managing staff of dawādārs and ustādārs such as that of the jamāʿah of Ibn Furfūr. We know about the prevalence of such jamāʿah organizations at the end of the Mamluk period because of the legal reform ordered by the Ottoman sultan Selim I and carried out from Shaʿbān 922/August 1516 to Rabīʿ I 924/February–March 1518. In both Cairo and Damascus, the judges’ courts were concentrated in one place, the number of nāʿibs and shāhids was reduced, and the judges’ rasūls and wakīls were dismissed. Strong resistance to this reform existed, however. No one in Cairo or Damascus obeyed the order. After Selim’s departure to Istanbul, the provincial governor of Damascus, Jānbirdī al-Ghazzālī (r. 924–27/1518–21), allowed shāhids to go back to their offices and restored the jamāʿah of the judges, that is, shāhids and rasūls. Legal factions (jamāʿah) could survive despite the Ottoman attempt at reform because they had already taken root in urban society.

The chief judges organized their factions, composed of subordinate staff, and executed legal affairs to gain huge profits by means of these jamāʿahs. This was why they sought the post of chief judge in spite of paying a large bribe and enduring property confiscation. We find similar organizations led by kātibs al-sīr and muḫtasibs as well.

CHANGE OF CITY ADMINISTRATION

TAXATION AND MILITARY CONSCRIPTION

Mamluk sultans, facing the two serious problems of the need to mount military expeditions abroad and financial crisis, introduced a new tax policy, to be imposed on citizens and waqf properties. Such policies were imposed in Syrian cities as well, and provincial governors of Damascus instituted the new taxation. Syrian cities were threatened by the invasion of the Ottoman army. How to pay the costs of war and raise the necessary military personnel and supplies were crucial problems of urban politics. In this section we will examine how these problems were solved, as well as investigate the changes in city administration, focusing on Damascus.

The provincial governor, called the nāʿib al-saltānah, oversaw the administration of Damascus, with its population estimated at 50,000 to 60,000 persons. The chronicles report a new type of taxation imposed on the citizens and city quarters (ḥārah, maḥallah), the first example was in Muharram 890/January 1485 and there eventually were sixty-eight examples prior to the end of the Mamluk period. Most of these were by order of provincial governors. After 904/1499, the tax was imposed every year. In contrast, Cairo had only eight examples of such taxation according to Ibn Iyās’ Bada’i’. What was the reason for its frequency in Damascus?

**Purpose and Object**

The imposition of occasional taxes in Damascus had two purposes: one, to fund the conscription of infantry soldiers for foreign expeditions (twenty-one cases) and the other, to impose an extra tax, allegedly as punishment, on a quarter where a murder was committed (fourteen cases). In contrast, in Cairo, seven of eight cases of taxation are for expeditionary costs, primarily to pay extra allowances to the mamluks rather than for infantry. As for the object of taxation, in Damascus taxes were imposed on all the city quarters or collected from an individual quarter, whereas in Cairo they were levied on immovable properties of waqf and milk (private ownership), and a portion of rental income was collected. The amounts imposed in Damascus were 23 cases, and on individual quarters, 25 cases. Taxation in Cairo: in Rabī’ I 894 (Ibn Iyās, Bada’i’, 3:260–61), in Rabī’ II 896 (ibid., 278–280), in Muharram 907 (ibid., 4:14–17, 20) and in Rajab 917 (ibid., 242). Here the owners of milk properties such as houses (bayt, rab’), shops (ḥānūt), public baths (ḥammān), vegetable gardens (ghayt), mills (ṭaḥūn), and vessels (markab) collected the rent in advance from their lessees to pay the provisional tax to the sultans (ibid., 4:16). Such taxation can be found previously for dispatching the troops against the Mongols (700/1300) and Timur (803/1401); see Ibn Kathīr, Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah (Beirut, 1966), 14:14; al-Maqrīzī, Kitāb al-Sulāk li-Ma’rifat Duwal

---

60 My estimate of the population of Damascus and its quarters at the end of the Mamluk period is based on a household survey at the beginning of Ottoman rule in Damascus. Cf. Jean-Paul Pascual, Damas à la fin du 16e siècle d'après trois actes de waqf ottomans (Damascus, 1983), 1:23–27. The approximate number of quarters was estimated as 70 inside the city wall (madinah) and 30 in the Sālihyah Quarter, on the basis of the descriptions of Ibn Tulūn (Ibn Tulūn, “Ḥarāt Dimashq al-Qadīmah,” Al-Mashriq 35(1937) and Ibn Kinnān, Al-Muruq al-Sundūsīyah al-Fasḥah fī Talkhīs Tārīkh al-Ṣālihyah, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Dahman (Damascus, 1947).

61 There is no comprehensive study of the city taxation system during the Mamluk period, except that we know zakāt and maks were imposed on goods and trade, and mushāharah was imposed on daily commodities, at the end of the Mamluk era. Cf. Hassanein Rabie, The Financial System of Egypt A.H. 564–741/A.D. 1169–1341 (London, 1972), 80–107.

62 The descriptions were collected from the sources of Mufakahat, I’lām, and Tārīkh al-Busrawī. Those who imposed the tax were provincial governors, 21 cases; governor’s jamā’ah, 6 cases; khāṣṣakī (sultan’s guardsmen), 4 cases; and Mamluk sultans, 2 cases. In addition, 12 cases seemed to be by governors, judging from their taxation procedures.

63 Taxation on all the quarters of Damascus was 23 cases, and on individual quarters, 25 cases.

64 Taxation in Cairo: in Rabī’ I 894 (Ibn Iyās, Bada’i’, 3:260–61), in Rabī’ II 896 (ibid., 278–280), in Muharram 907 (ibid., 4:14–17, 20) and in Rajab 917 (ibid., 242). Here the owners of milk properties such as houses (bayt, rab’), shops (ḥānūt), public baths (ḥammān), vegetable gardens (ghayt), mills (ṭaḥūn), and vessels (markab) collected the rent in advance from their lessees to pay the provisional tax to the sultans (ibid., 4:16). Such taxation can be found previously for dispatching the troops against the Mongols (700/1300) and Timur (803/1401); see Ibn Kathīr, Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah (Beirut, 1966), 14:14; al-Maqrīzī, Kitāb al-Sulāk li-Ma’rifat Duwal
of taxation are known in the case of Damascus; the least one being 50 dinars from each quarter and larger amounts, including 1000 dinars imposed on the Shāghūr Quarter and 20,000 dinars on the whole city of Damascus.\textsuperscript{65}

**Expedition and Infantry**

A new tax to fund an expedition was inaugurated in Jumādā II 891/June 1486. At that time the provincial governor of Damascus, Qijmās al-Isḥāqī (r. 892–902/1487–97), was asked to dispatch an expeditionary force by the commander of the Egyptian army in Aleppo. The governor read the letter from the commander in the presence of ulama and other officials, and apologized for the need to collect money from them to dispatch infantry troops against the Ottoman army.\textsuperscript{66} In this case the purpose of taxation is clearly to send infantry troops; eight other cases were described as simply for an expedition. Can we assume these orders were also specifically for infantry?

The primary reason to use infantry is obvious. Due to the weakening of the Mamluk army, the need for infantry increased, for these troops could be hired by wage (jāmakiyah, ma’ilūm). Provincial governors ordered the conscription of men to serve as infantry in support of the mamluks, and the number of troops reached 4,000.\textsuperscript{67} Another reason is technical: the use of gun power was becoming more necessary at the end of the Mamluk period. The Ottomans were able to use gun power, and therefore the Mamluk sultans were forced to organize infantry troops other than their mamluks. They organized the Fifth Army from non-mamluks and trained non-mamluk slaves (‘abīd) to use guns.\textsuperscript{68} In Damascus, we find many examples of infantry troops (forty-five cases).\textsuperscript{69} It is natural to assume that infantry

---


\textsuperscript{66}Ibn Tulu\'n, \textit{I\'lam}, 72; al-Busrawi, \textit{Tārikh al-Busrawi}, 112. Ibn Tawq reported that the heads (kubrā) of quarters were asked to collect the money for infantry at an amount of 15 dinars for each infantryman (Ibn Tawq, \textit{Ta\'liq}, 2:625–29).

\textsuperscript{67}In 903/1498 the provincial governor ordered the military dispatch. Most of the mamluks, however, were unwilling to go on the expedition, and eventually only 70 mamluks as well as many infantrymen went (Ibn Tulu\’n, \textit{Mufakhat}, 1:196-97). The number of infantry troops: ibid., 342 and idem, \textit{I\'lam}, 232.


\textsuperscript{69}The descriptions are collected from \textit{Mufakhat} and \textit{I\'lam}.
troops must have been equipped with firearms, although their specific use is mentioned in only two cases. While the sultans in Cairo, using non-mamluks, organized a new army to employ firearms, infantry was conscripted from the city quarters in Damascus.

The next problem was how to conscript infantry and cover their wages. We can find answers from the descriptions that follow. In Muḥāram 907/August 1501 the deputy governor ordered conscription of troops from each quarter and announced that the conscripts’ allowances should be collected from their respective quarters. In Jumādā I 912/October 1506 the provincial governor asked each quarter for twenty infantrymen to accompany him on an expedition, and the ‘arīfs (administrative heads) of the quarters began to collect money to support these soldiers. As these two descriptions show, the quarters were levied heavily, contributing both infantrymen and their wages. However, a clever means of dealing with this problem was devised: The outlaws (zu‘r) of the quarter were conscripted and the inhabitants paid their wages. This mechanism is mentioned in the report of Jumādā I 908/November–December 1502, which says that the provincial governor collected the money to be paid to infantrymen, but could not collect it from the zu‘r whom he would conscript. As the following section explains, the zu‘r were outlaw groups who usually brought arms with them. This solution worked well for all parties concerned. For the governor, the zu‘r provided a strong military force. For the zu‘r, conscription was a way to acquire weapons as well as wages. For the inhabitants of the quarter, it enabled them to avoid conscription. The provincial governors could acquire the infantry troops at the expense of the inhabitants. This is why they repeated this policy, and by pursuing this policy they could solve their financial and military problems simultaneously.

**Penalty Tax for Murder**

The provincial governor imposed a penalty tax on the inhabitants of any quarter where a murder had occurred. For example, at the Mazzāz quarter in Ramadān 906/1501 a man was killed and robbed of his horse. Several days later the ustādār

---

70 Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, 1:211, 289.
73 Ibid., 309.
of the governor imposed a penalty tax on the inhabitants there.\(^75\) Judging from this report, the provincial governor imposed a penalty on the quarter whether the killer lived there or not. The governor had good reason for this penalty taxation, as he stated when he imposed a penalty of 1000 dinars on the Šāliḥiyah Quarter in Dhū al-Qa‘dah 901/August 1496: “I did not impose [a penalty] without a basis in shari‘ah. One of the Hanafi ulama told me that the diyāh (blood money) should be collected from the inhabitants of the quarter when a murdered person was found there and the killer was unknown.”\(^76\) This legal ground originated from the theory of the Hanafi law school, called qāsāmah (compurgation). Joseph Schacht explains it thus: “If the body of a person is found who has obviously been killed, the inhabitants of the quarter, the owner of the house and his ‘aqīla (relatives) must swear fifty oaths that they have not killed him and do not know who has killed him. They thereby become free from liability to qiṣāṣ but must as ‘aqīla pay the blood money.”\(^77\) The legal texts of the twelfth century developed this theory to specify that all inhabitants of the quarter were responsible as a group for the murder or compurgation,\(^78\) responding to the development of city quarters.

The provincial governors used this legalism to repeatedly impose penalty taxation. The chronicle states, “at the end of this month incidents of murder occurred many times because of the absence of the governor, and his deputy again imposed the penalty for the reason of murder, which was oppressive to the people.”\(^79\) This shows that the governors willingly imposed the penalty on the quarter, rather than pursuing the killer. It is obvious they took the penalty to cover their lack of income, in place of normal taxation.

The amount of the penalty imposed was much larger than that collected to support the conscripted infantry, reaching 1000 dinars in the great quarters like the Šāliḥiyah. This could be a financial boon for the governor, but on the other hand was oppressive to the inhabitants, causing dissension between the rulers and citizens. The inhabitants of the Masjid al-Qasāb Quarter gathered to ask for God’s relief (takbīr) from a huge imposition due to a murder in Jumādā I 905/January 1501.\(^80\) On the side of the rulers, al-‘Ādil Tūmānāy, after assuming the position of sultan in Damascus in Jumādā I 906/November 1500, issued a decree that the inhabitants of the quarter where a murder occurred should not be liable for the

\(^75\) Ibn Ṭulūn, Mufākahat, 1:234.
\(^76\) Al-Buṣrāwī, Tārīkh al-Buṣrāwī, 179.
\(^77\) Schacht, Introduction, 184.
\(^78\) Al-Kāsānī, Kitāb Badā‘i‘ al-Ṣanā‘i‘ī fī Tartīb Sharā‘i‘ (Cairo, 1327–28), 7:286–96.
\(^79\) Ibn Ṭulūn, Mufākahat, 1:317; idem, I‘lām, 209.
\(^80\) Ibn Ṭulūn, Mufākahat, 1:227; idem, I‘lām, 103. The inhabitants of the Šāliḥiyah Quarter protested the penalty tax in 901/1496 (Ibn Ṭawq, Ta‘liq, 3:1430–31).
penalty; rather they should strive to pursue the killer. The decree of Sultan al-ʿĀdil was engraved on the stone wall of each quarter.\textsuperscript{81} But this decree was issued so the sultan could win the favor of the citizens, and it was rescinded after four months.\textsuperscript{82} The opposition led to bloodshed in Rabīʿ I 910/August 1504, when Muḥammad Bardādār, the bailiff of the governor, went to the Maydān al-Ḥaṣā Quarter to exact the penalty because its inhabitants killed his colleague, and his fellows were attacked and killed on their way. The next day, the inhabitants stoned those who tried to bury those killed, and antagonism deepened between the two groups. The governor launched an effort to arrest the killers, but the \textit{zuʿr} began to support the inhabitants. The governor was then forced to issue a decree of \textit{amān} (peace), attributing the murder of Muḥammad Bardādār to a dog.\textsuperscript{83} In this incident, the governor was on the side of the victim and could demand blood money from the inhabitants. Nevertheless they showed strong resistance to the imposition of this financial penalty. Why did the governors cling to the blood penalty, which caused heavy oppression? The governors of Damascus had no other means but the blood penalty to increase their incomes, whereas the sultans in Cairo could gain an immense amount by bribes and property confiscation to overcome a financial crisis.\textsuperscript{84}

\textbf{TAX COLLECTION AND THE JAMĀʾAHS OF THE GOVERNORS}

The governors used differing tax collection procedures to fund expeditions and for the murder penalty. We know that when Governor Qijmās attempted to raise money to dispatch an expedition of infantry in 891/1486 the response from the citizens was to protest and assert that his actions were motivated by self-interest and were illegal. As the people prepared to stone him, Qijmās went to the house of Shaykh al-İslām Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr Ibn Qāḍī ʿAjlūn (d. 928/1522),\textsuperscript{85} to talk him into asking the influential people of each quarter to cooperate in tax collection. As the Shaykh al-İslām consented to this request and justified the taxation, ʿarīfs

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{81}Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Muʃāḥahat}, 1:234; idem, \textit{Iʿlām}, 129. It remained until the twentieth century and was recorded in Jean Sauvaget, "Decrets mamelouks de Syrie," \textit{Bulletin d'études orientales} 2 (1932): 44. Sultan Qāṭbāy issued a similar decree (\textit{Iʿlām}, 129).
\textsuperscript{82}Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Muʃāḥahat}, 1:234.
\textsuperscript{83}Ibid., 279–80.
\textsuperscript{84}Property confiscation in Damascus was conducted on a smaller scale than that of Cairo in terms of the number and amount. The number of confiscations in Damascus noted in \textit{Muʃāḥahat} and \textit{Iʿlām} for the period 885–922 was 17 (in contrast to 73 cases in Cairo in the same period), and in only 4 cases were more than 10,000 dinars confiscated.
\textsuperscript{85}He was a Shafiʿi jurist and played a role in negotiations on matters of civil life such as the rise of commodity prices and the alcohol trade (Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Muʃāḥahat}, 1:29–30, 32, 41). Cf. al-Ghazzi, \textit{Kaʃākib}, 1:114–18; Ibn al-Ḥanbali, \textit{Shadḥarār}, 8:157.
\end{footnotesize}
(administrative heads of the quarters) and other influential persons began to collect the money.\textsuperscript{86} At first, the governors strove to get the consent and cooperation of the ulama to defend this taxation. Later, however, only two examples of their seeking such support can be found,\textsuperscript{87} indicating it probably was unnecessary.

In practical terms, \textit{‘arīf}s of each quarter were charged with the task of collection, as in the example of Qijmās. The following report is suggestive: In Jumādā 912/September 1506 when the governor ordered the conscription of twenty infantrymen from each quarter, \textit{‘arīf} of each quarter began to collect money following the example of Qijmās.\textsuperscript{88} A noteworthy incident occurred during the twenty years between these two reports. When the order of infantry conscription was given in Muḥarram 907/July 1501, outlaws (\textit{ghawghā‘}) began to plunder the quarter. They justified their actions by insisting that the order stipulated that their wages should come at the expense of each quarter. This caused severe harm to the inhabitants, who appealed to the deputy governor. He suddenly decided to collect 50 dinars from each quarter, 40 dinars of which was allotted to the infantry.\textsuperscript{89} The example of Qijmās in 891/1486 was mentioned as precedent for the collection in 912/1506 to avoid such confusion.

Who were the \textit{‘arīf}s of the quarter? In spite of only meager information about the duties of the \textit{‘arīf}s, we can say that they were the administrators responsible for security as well as tax collection in each quarter, and were appointed by the governor.\textsuperscript{90} \textit{‘Arīf}s pocketed the money collected from the quarter and seemed to have taken tips in exchange for allowing some to avoid paying, for the governor ordered \textit{‘arīf}s to collect taxes in Jumādā I 893/April 1488, warning that no one should seek the protection of \textit{‘arīf}s.\textsuperscript{91} When zu’r of the quarters were ordered to take part in an expedition in Şafar 914/June 1508, \textit{‘arīf}s were asked to cover their expense, so as not to burden the citizens.\textsuperscript{92} The governor must have recognized the abuse committed by \textit{‘arīf}s while collecting taxes. The people’s strong opposition to the exploitation of the \textit{‘arīf}s often led to their murder.\textsuperscript{93}

\begin{itemize}
\item In other sources, three chief judges as well as Taqī al-Dīn were reported as cooperating in the taxation: Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{I’lām}, 73–74; al-Br العراقی, \textit{Tārīkh al-Buṣra al}–\textit{بغداد}, 112. See also note 66.
\item Refusal of taxation by the judge: Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Mufakahat}, 1:119. Refusal by shaykh of the quarter in Aleppo: ibid., 282.
\item Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Mufakahat}, 1:309; idem, \textit{I’lām}, 203.
\item Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Mufakahat}, 1:245; idem, \textit{I’lām}, 148. Ibn Tawq reported in 893/1488 that it was usual to collect 60 dinars for infantry in the city (\textit{Ta’līq}, 2:781).
\item Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Mufakahat}, 1:89; idem, \textit{I’lām}, 76.
\item Ibn Ṭūlūn, \textit{Mufakahat}, 1:330.
\item Ibid., 2:21, 22.
\end{itemize}
Subordinate officials of the provincial governor such as the ustadār, the dawādār, and the bardadār collected the murder penalty, and they were often collectively called the jamā’ah of the governor. The governor’s jamā’ah was composed of two different groups, one being subordinate officials such as ustadār, dawādār, khāzīndār (grand treasurer), bardadār, and mihmandār (host manager), the same posts that can be found in the central government of Egypt. These were administrators whose function was to perform political and administrative tasks for the provincial governor. The dawādār was mainly responsible for tax collection, for the arrest and execution of criminals, and for supervising the jamā’ah itself. They were primarily from the mamluks of the governor, and later the governors would value them above higher officials of the provincial government like hājīb al-ḥujjāb (grand chamberlain).

The second group executed public policy: for example, the ballās and naqib carried out commands of the governor and the dawādār. The ballās was a tax collector, but only part time because the first group of bardadār and ra’s al-nawbah (guard) held these positions concurrently. They might also be recruited from the common people, as announced in the decree of Rabī’ I 912/August 1506 that recently appointed ballāṣis were dismissed and should return to their own professions. The third group was mercenaries, such as the ‘abīd (black slaves) and the zu’r. ‘Abīd were hired by wage and worked as private soldiers of the governors, equipped with firearms, especially in the civil war against the sultan. They were also employed to make collections from citizens and for security. Lastly, the governors hired drifters (gharīb) entering the city and robber chieftains.

---

97 Dawādār and khāzīndār assumed the office of deputy-governor, in place of the great chamberlain (hājīb al-ḥujjāb) who by the regulations had this office (Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufakhat, 1:104, 309, 317, 330, 2:11).
99 Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufakhat, 1:221, 252, 254.
100 Ibid., 306.
in their attempt to maintain control by incorporating marginal men in urban society into their *jamāʾah*.

The new taxation to support conscripted infantry and the imposition of the murder penalty benefited the governors financially and militarily. To perform these new procedures efficiently, they organized the *ʿarīfs* in each quarter while also maintaining their *jamāʾahs* as a distinct group separate from the formal administrative organization. Thus, they could control the inhabitants of the quarters directly. Next we will examine the actual conditions of people under this system of rule.

**THE CITY QUARTERS AND THE COMMON PEOPLE**

**POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUARTERS**

There were two conflicts in Damascus that reflect political developments of the quarters at the end of the Mamluk period. One was the civil war from Ǧaḥrān to Rabiʿ II 903/October to December 1497, and the other was the popular revolt in Jumāda I 907/October 1501.

In 903/1497 Āqbirdī (d. 904/1499), after being defeated by the sultan in Cairo, marched to Damascus. Ǧaḥrān al-Faqīh, the recently-appointed governor of Damascus, joined him. When their alliance against the sultan became known on 26 Ǧaḥrān, citizens hastened to bring their property inside the city walls for fear of an attack by the rebellious troops. The next day the mamluks who supported the sultan gathered at the citadel. However, a split occurred among them and they were left leaderless. Ultimately they all fled from the citadel in fear of an attack by the rebels. On 29 Ǧaḥrān the rebels first clashed with the inhabitants of the Ǧaḥrān al-Muṭṭalib Quarter in the northern suburbs, which had remained on the sultan’s side, and established their base at the Maydān al-Ḥāṣa Quarter in the southern suburbs of Damascus, from which they planned to attack the inner city. On the sultan’s side, the *naʿib al-qalʿah* (governor of the citadel) was made commander and continued to wage battle for a month and a half. On 16 Rabiʿ II, the rebels launched a final attack with all their force, but could not enter the city. Hearing that the army, led by the new governor Kurtbāy al-ʿĀḥmar (r. 903–4/1497–98), was approaching Damascus to subdue them, the rebels then abandoned Damascus for Aleppo.103

It is noteworthy that the common people and *zuʿr* fought on both sides. One report was that nobody supported the sultan other than the common people (*al-ʿawānm*), especially those of the Ǧaḥrān Quarter, and that Āqbirdī was amazed at the strength of the common people who fought equally with his army.104 Several

---

103 Ibid., 185–96.
104 Ibid., 200.
reports also document the participation of the zu‘r in the battle. Responding to the sultan’s dismissal of Governor İnâl and his demand for their submission, the rebels claimed it was a false report in order to keep the zu‘r on their side.105 This report suggests the zu‘r were an indispensable force for the rebels. We know that they were employed as infantry because the people complained that the zu‘r behaved as they pleased in each quarter because the Turks (mamluks) valued them as infantry.106 Both groups often used firearms that were normally employed only by infantrymen. Therefore the zu‘r might participate in the battles as infantry with guns. As the Şâghûr Quarter was a base of the zu‘r, it is possible that they comprised the militia of the Şâghûr who fought against the rebels so bravely.

Also notable are the political activities of the people organized in each quarter, especially at major quarters located in the suburbs. At the time of Aqbirdî’s rebellion, the Şâghûr and Şâlihiyya Quarters were allied with the sultan and defended the inner city, while the Maydân al-Hasâ and the Qubaybât Quarters sided with the rebels. They were not forced to take sides, but allied themselves with one side or the other depending on their personal politics. The Şâlihiyya Quarter fought against the rebels on the side of the sultan and refused the rebels’ proposal of alliance, which demanded that they supply one hundred soldiers and safeguard the women and belongings of the rebels.107 The inhabitants of the Maydân al-Hasâ and Qubaybât Quarters demanded their protection when moving to the Qabr ‘Ātkakah Quarter to take refuge from the combat.108 In contrast, the quarters located between the Maydân al-Hasâ and the inner city, such as al-Suwayqah, Qaṣr al-Ḥajjâj, and Masjid al-Dhabân, were often battlefields and suffered devastation.109 Suburban quarters were exposed to the dangers of attack and plunder by invaders, and the inhabitants there moved to shelter in the inner city, with its protection of a strong city wall, as shown in the war of 903/1497. The four suburban quarters participating in the civil war with their own armies and of their own volition seem to have learned from bitter experience, however, that this was the best and indeed the only way to defend their quarters.

The popular revolt in 907/1501 illustrates political developments in the major suburban quarters of Damascus. First, the inhabitants of the Şâghûr and the

---

105 Ibid., 194.
106 Ibid., 195.
Maydān al-Ḥaṣā Quarters gathered at the congregational mosque of Muṣallā al-Īdayn on 14 Jumādá I and allied to fight against the injustice (ẓulm) of the governor and his faction.110 Governor Qānṣūḥ al-Burj (r. 906–10/1501–4) had levied taxes on quarters like the Maydān al-Ḥaṣā and the Shāghūr and others so frequently that there was no quarter which had not been taxed during the one and one-half months since his arrival.111 Here the word ẓulm is used in reference to this taxation by his jamāʿah. On that day the inhabitants of the Shāghūr Quarter clashed with the jamāʿah of the sultan, and the sultan dispatched the army, against which the people fought, allied with the zuʾr. Meanwhile "the strength of the people and the zuʾr overwhelmed the army," defeating it, until the people of the quarter demanded that the governor of the citadel, sent as a messenger of the sultan, should transfer three officials (ustaḍār, ballāṣī, and the naqīb of the muḥtasib),112 all of whom were responsible for collecting taxes. On the 15th and 16th, the people constructed barricades in their quarters, fought the army, and forced it to retreat. At night the governor, fearing their attack, sent a mission of the governor of the citadel and judges, to talk to their representatives (akābir) and promised to accept their demands to abolish taxation on markets and houses and execute the tax-collectors (ballāṣī). The people of the quarter accepted his answer as satisfactory.113 This, however, was only a temporary concession. Three months later the governor began to levy taxes on the inhabitants again and attacked the zuʾr of the Shāghūr Quarter and others. This time, his army defeated the zuʾr, put their leaders to death, and pillaged the Shāghūr Quarter.114 The zuʾr could not cope with the governor’s army by themselves. It was the collaboration of the zuʾr and the common people that had brought them victory over the governor in the revolt of 907/1503.

The political change is clear from the stories of the civil war in 903 and the revolt in 907: First, while the declining power of the mamluk army was apparent, the armed people had gained sufficient strength to fight in place of the mamlukus, or to cope with them. The governors employed the zuʾr as infantry, which increased their own power. Second, the suburban quarters stopped depending on the power of the governor and instead initiated their own independent political actions. Third, the zuʾr played an important role in the popular movement of the quarter.

110Ibid., 250; idem, Iʿlām, 152.
111Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:249; idem, Iʿlām, 151.
112This naqīb had been a broker (simsār) and was blamed as a subordinate of the tyrant (Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:279).
113Ibid., 250–52; idem, Iʿlām, 152–54.
The Activity of the Zuʿr and Their Character

The original meaning of the word zuʿr is “thin-haired,” and it also has the meanings of “lacking in wealth” and “lacking in virtue.” At the end of the Mamluk period it designates a specific group of outlaws, using three variations of the root (zuʿr, ahl al-zaʿārah, azʿar). The words ghawghāʾ, awbāšh (both mean mobs), and manāḥīs (scoundrel) were also used to designate specific groups like the zuʿr. Here we examine their activities and their character, lumping them all together under the term zuʿr. (See Appendix Table, Activities of the Zuʿr in Damascus.)

Activities of the Zuʿr

We classified the activities of the zuʿr into four categories in Table 1:

Table 1. Types of Activities of the Zuʿr

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Actions and their Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Murder 30 (5 of these were victims) Plunder and attack 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Procession 13 Militia 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Struggle</td>
<td>Fighting 15 Revolt 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Arrest and Execution 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACTIVITIES OF THE ZUʿR

We classified the activities of the zuʿr into four categories in Table 1:


116 Activities of the zuʿr in Damascus were recorded for the first time in 889/1484, and thereafter reports of their activity suddenly increased, so that the number of reports concerning the zuʿr totaled 111 by the decline of the Mamluk Dynasty, according to the sources of Mufākahat, ʿIlām, Tāʾrīkh al-Buṣrāwī, and Taʾlīq. The term azʿar is used to designate individuals of the zuʿr, especially the head (Ibn Tūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:283, 259, 315; idem, ʿIlām, 181). The term zuʿr is a plural form of azʿar, designating the group of the zuʿr.

117 The words ghawghāʾ and awbāšh are sometimes connected to the word zuʿr, such as ghawghāʾ al-zuʿr and awbāšh al-zuʿr (see Appendix Table). The same group is described by both words, zuʿr and ghawghāʾ. Other words are also used to designate similar groups of the zuʿr; shabāb (originally youth): Ibn Tūlūn, Mufākahat, 2:105; idem, ʿIlām, 260, 266; manāḥīs (originally bandit): Ibn Tūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:66.

The activities in the first category are the most frequent, which shows that the zu‘r most commonly committed illegal acts of violence. In regard to murder, they intentionally killed ‘arifs, ballāṣīs, and naqībs who collected taxes,119 which means that these murders had a political basis. They could be hired to kill anyone—for example, to kill the aide of an arbitrary ruler (a‘wān al-‘azalāmah) or, just the opposite, to assassinate at the request of a ruler a shaykh who helped those who were unjustly oppressed.120 The targets of their plundering and attacks were indiscriminate. They were strong enough to attack with impunity even in the light of day, and to celebrate their success by holding a banquet at which they displayed their loot.121 Afterwards they sold the loot and pocketed the money.122 The zu‘r plundered as they pleased, especially when a state of anarchy prevailed owing to the death of a governor or to civil war, and the citizens feared them.123 They are differentiated from simple robbers (surraq, ḥarāmiyāh)124 stealing at night. We can say, based first of all on their behavior, that the zu‘r were an outlaw group that maintained its livelihood by violent acts such as plunder and murder.

If they had only committed illegal acts, they would soon have disappeared or lived at the edge of society. Their second role reveals their public function. They were conscripted as infantry by the governors and asked to participate in public processions such as receiving delegations. In Muharram 909/July 1503 the governor included the armed zu‘r in a procession, though he had previously prohibited the arming of the zu‘r.125 The third category is mass struggle, that is, combat among the zu‘r of different quarters (four cases) and revolts against the rulers (six cases). It is noteworthy here that the zu‘r organized the whole quarter for combat. In Dhū al-‘Hijjah 907/June 1502 the zu‘r of the Maydān al-Ḥaṣā Quarter rose as one against the governor in response to the execution of their leader. People fled their houses and the heads of the Musālā Quarter and others constructed barricades to defend their quarters.126 The fourth category, arrest and execution, represents the

---

121 Ibn Ṭūlūn criticized this banquet in his chronicle: They rob the poor by force. They shall never be happy no matter how much they are proud of their power and wealth. (Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:180).
122 Ibid., 239.
123 Ibid., 1:183–85, 2:27–28. On the fear of the citizens, see column ‘Fear’ in the Appendix Table.
125 Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:268.
126 Ibid., 258–59; idem, I‘lām, 160.
results produced by the activities in the other three categories.

The above-mentioned three categories describe the ambiguous character of the zu’r. The first category shows an outlaw character, those who did not hesitate to employ violence in the violation of the law. Their violence, however, was not only for their own interests, but had an additional effect on the city and its quarters. The second category tells us that their organized power was indispensable to citizens as well as rulers, to defend the city and its properties. Furthermore, from the third category, we see that they took over leadership of the battles to defend the quarter whether the inhabitants wanted them to or not. In all these categories, the activities of the zu’r were closely related to the socio-political changes of the city and the quarters.

RELATION TO THE RULERS
The governors could not ignore the habitual plundering and murders of the zu’r, since they not only destabilized the civil order, but also at times attacked the governors and their subordinates. Therefore the governors began to take action against the zu’r, for example by issuing a decree prohibiting the zu’r from arming themselves.  

Especially after the civil war in 903/1497 when the need for armed infantry increased, Governor Kurtbāy organized new troops by, on the one hand, conscripting ‘abīd (black slaves) from among the citizens and training them in the use of firearms, and on the other hand, clamping down on the zu’r until most of them fled the city during his reign.  

Soon after the revolt of 907/1503, the governor ordered the arms merchants to submit a document swearing not to sell arms to anyone but the mamluks.  

He began to take measures against the zu’r after the end of 907, arresting the zu’r leaders of the Maydān al-ḤaṣāQuarter and others and executing them on Dhu al-Hijjah 907/July 1502, attacking the Shāḥūr Quarter with the ‘abīd and mamluk army, killing the zu’r leaders of the Shāḥūr and the Qarāwinah in the battle, plundering the markets there, and burning the quarters.  

Both governors, having experienced the danger of employing the zu’r as auxiliary forces, intended to train the ‘abīd instead of the zu’r and to check the latter by the former.

Nevertheless these measures proved unsuccessful in the end. In reaction, the zu’r attacked the quarter of the ‘abīd and plundered it in Rabī’ I 910/August 1504.  

At the same time, the amirs began to hire the zu’r for their private armies.

127 Ibn Tülbīn, Mufākahāt, 1:197, 299, 314, 331.
128 Ibid., 201–3; al-Busrawī, Tārikh al-Busrawī, 228.
129 Ibn Tülbīn, Mufākahāt, 1:252.
131 Ibn Tülbīn, Mufākahāt, 1:280.
even though the hiring of the zu’r had been prohibited by decree in Shawwāl 905/May 1500.\textsuperscript{132} This decree was ignored by the amirs even after the great chamberlain (ḥājib al-ḥujjāb) remonstrated with Governor Arikmaṣ for giving arms to their leaders in Sha’bān 911/January 1506.\textsuperscript{133} Thereafter, the zu’r were always conscripted from each quarter and the role of the ‘abīd was completely eroded.\textsuperscript{134}

Why did these measures against the zu’r lack consistency and effectiveness? Our answer: because the zu’r were necessary and indispensable for the governors and amirs facing the declining power of the mamluks. Put another way, although mamluks were the sole military force for a long time, other military forces eventually appeared to compete with the mamluks around the turn of the sixteenth century. Therefore the governors needed to keep the zu’r on their own side, by bestowing robes of honor (khil’ah) and asking for an oath of homage,\textsuperscript{135} just as they did with the mamluks.

\textit{Relations to the Quarters}

The activities of the zu’r were usually related to the quarters in terms of organization. Table 2 shows their relations to the individual quarters:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Quarter & zu’r & Total \tabularnewline
\hline
Šāghūr & 24 & 11 \tabularnewline
Šālihiyāh & 11 & 5 \tabularnewline
Qubaybāt, & 4 for each & 2 for each \tabularnewline
Shuwaykah & & \tabularnewline
Bāb al-Jābiyāh & 2 & 1 \tabularnewline
Maydān al-Ḥaṣāq & & \tabularnewline
Muṣallā & & \tabularnewline
Qarāwīnah, & & \tabularnewline
Mazābil, & & \tabularnewline
Qabr ‘Aṭikah & & \tabularnewline
Qasr al-Hajjāj & & \tabularnewline
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Relations between the Zu’r and the Quarter}
\end{table}

Table 2 lists 68 cases and 11 quarters; of these 11 quarters, all except Bāb al-Jābiyāh were located in the suburbs of Damascus outside the city wall. The activities of the zu’r were most conspicuous in the suburbs. They seemed, however,

\textsuperscript{132}Ibn Tūlūn, \textit{I’lām}, 108. A similar decree is found in Ramadān 906 (Ibn Tūlūn, \textit{Mufākahat}, 1:233).
\textsuperscript{133}Ibn Tūlūn, \textit{Mufākahat}, 1:283, 295, 298; idem, \textit{I’lām}, 181, 197, 198–99. In addition, the two persons who struggled for the office of governor’s dawādār both hired the zu’r (Ibn Tūlūn, \textit{Mufākahat}, 1:269).
\textsuperscript{134}Conscription and imposition for expeditions was most frequent during the period 912–22/1506–16: in all, 13 cases, representing 62% of the total number.
to be present in all quarters, as the phrase “the zu’r of each quarter” appears.\textsuperscript{136} Furthermore they were also in the villages surrounding Damascus, as the head of the zu’r in the Shāghūr Quarter called on the zu’r of Damascus and the Ghūţah (surrounding villages of Damascus) to plunder and held a great banquet.\textsuperscript{137} The zu’r were most active in the five quarters of Shāghūr, Maydān al-Ḥaṣā, Śāliḥiyah, Muṣallā, and Qubaybāt, where they fought with each other, while also allying themselves to fight against the governor, especially if he oppressed them.\textsuperscript{138}

The quarter became a unit by which to organize the zu’r under their head (called by them shaykh or kabīr), especially in the above-mentioned major suburban quarters. The zu’r head of the Shāghūr Quarter was famous for being titled sharīf and sayyid (meaning descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad)\textsuperscript{139} and had wide influence over other quarters, as mentioned before. The heads of the zu’r in Maydān al-Ḥaṣā and Bāb al-Jābiyah were also heads (shaykh) of the quarters at the same time,\textsuperscript{140} which means the head of the zu’r not only led the zu’r in his quarter but also represented the quarter itself.

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE PEOPLE**

The zu’r were a menace to the population and their attacks and plundering were aimed at ordinary people as well as the wealthy and upper classes. Rivalry between the governors and the zu’r might have been a cause for the zu’r to seek revenge. The murders increased the blood penalty on the quarters. The following describes the zu’r in the quarters:

Taxation and property confiscation increased recently in each quarter, and the zu’r became angry, wanting to pay nothing at all. Some of them pressured the shops under their control, to make them sell at a higher price than other shops and to get kickbacks from them. When being taxed for the quarter, they tried to evade the imposed levy by transferring the money to other shops. They enjoyed their fill of food and drink, and were depraved in their exploitation of women and Muslim property. When you find a man brandishing a horrible dagger in the middle of his body, it is indeed

\textsuperscript{136}Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:316; 330; idem, I’lām, 208.

\textsuperscript{137}Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:283.


\textsuperscript{139}Sayyid: Ibn Ṭūlūn, Mufākahat, 1:219; sharīf: ibid., 225.

\textsuperscript{140}Ibid., 289, 332; idem, I’lām, 191.
a criminal who is short and ugly to support confiscation by the ruler.\footnote{\textit{Ibn T\={u}l\={u}n, I’l\={a}m,} 195. A similar description is found in Ibn T\={u}l\={u}n, \textit{Muf\={a}kahat}, 1:292–93, relating that the zu’r commanded the markets (s\={u}\={a}q) under them not to cooperate in the imposition. We find a description of Ibn Tawq in 901/1496 of the zu’r going around the markets in the inner city with their swords drawn and demanding money from the merchants and others (Ibn Tawq, \textit{Ta’l\={i}q}, 3:1437).}

As shown by this description, the zu’r in each quarter controlled the markets and shops from which they pocketed kickbacks to the extent that no one could do business without paying a kickback (f\={a}’idah) to them.\footnote{Ibn T\={u}l\={u}n, I’l\={a}m, 208.} In exchange, they protected (ya\={h}m\={u}) the shops from taxation by the governor.\footnote{Ibn T\={u}l\={u}n, \textit{Muf\={a}kahat}, 1:316; idem, I’l\={a}m, 208.} Considering this relationship between the zu’r and the quarter, the governor’s attempt to exact taxes from shops under their control was a threat to their control of the shops and the quarter itself. This is why they often killed ball\={a}ṣ\={i}s and ‘ar\={i}fs who collected tax from the quarter.

We now come to a re-examination of the popular revolt in 907/1503, especially the relationship between the zu’r and the quarter. The revolt began, it is clear, with the alliance of the Sh\={a}gh\={u}r and Mayd\={a}n al-Ḥ\={a}s\={a} Quarters. A victory of the people against the governor was achieved through an alliance between the zu’r and the common people. Three questions arise, however, about participation by the zu’r.

The first is whether the zu’r participated in the revolt from its beginning or later rallied the people in their support. The report of I’l\={a}m on the first clash says ‘the inhabitants (ahl) of the Sh\={a}gh\={u}r Quarter clashed with the jam\={a}’ah of the governor. Other zu’r appeared there after hearing of the clash, and united against the mamluk army.” The zu’r of the Sh\={a}gh\={u}r must have participated in the first clash and asked for help from other zu’r.

The second question is who the chiefs (ak\={a}bir)\footnote{Ak\={a}birhum: Ibn T\={u}l\={u}n, \textit{Muf\={a}kahat}, 1:251; ak\={a}bir al-ḥ\={a}r\={a}t: idem, I’l\={a}m, 154.} of the people were who met with the delegation of the governor on 16 Jum\={a}\={a}d\={a} I to talk about a peace agreement. Lapidus supposed them to be shaykhs of the quarters. He insisted that the shaykhs and the zu’r dealt separately with the governor in these negotiations and that the zu’r continued to murder officials, only afterwards making peace with the governor. In his study, he equates the shaykhs of the quarters with leading notables such as influential ulama who represented the interests of the inhabitants and negotiated on their behalf, and he assumes that they used the power of the zu’r as a counter-
balancing power to that of the governor.\textsuperscript{145} His lucid explanation contradicts the sources, however, concerning both this event and others. The sources do not use the term *shaykh* but rather *akābir* to designate the chiefs in the negotiations. As the word *akābir* was often used to designate the leaders of the *zuʿr*,\textsuperscript{146} it is possible to suppose that *akābir* here means the leaders of the *zuʿr*. Lapidus’ explanation is based on his thesis that the shaykhs and the ‘arīfs represented the interests of the inhabitants and negotiated on their behalf.\textsuperscript{147} As for the descriptions of the shaykhs and ‘arīfs of Damascus in the *Mufākahah*, *Iʿlām*, and *Tārikh al-Buṣrawī*, we find no cases in which they actually acted in the interests of the people of the quarter.\textsuperscript{148} Considering that a leader of the *zuʿr* was also the shayk of the quarter, and that the shaykhs of the quarters, along with the *ballāšīs* and *naqībs*,\textsuperscript{149} were denounced in a decree by the sultan, the assumption that the shaykh of the quarter was an autonomous representative for the inhabitants is far too simplistic.\textsuperscript{150}

Finally, the course of events after the treaty of 16 Jumādā I gives us a key to understanding the role of the *zuʿr* in the revolt. On 4 Jumādā II, the next month, the governor sent a messenger to the head of the *zuʿr* in the Shāghūr Quarter. The governor promised not to demand blood money for those killed in the fight, not even from those responsible for it, and concluded a peace (*ṣulḥ*) with the *zuʿr*, much to the relief of both the citizens and the governor. Then the *zuʿr* of the Shāghūr, Maydān al-Ḥasān, and Qubayyat quarters held a peace-making banquet for the governor.\textsuperscript{151} Observing these complicated procedures, we see that the *zuʿr* fought against the governor, and therefore the *zuʿr* anticipated the imposition of

\textsuperscript{145}Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 156–57.


\textsuperscript{147} Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 92–93.

\textsuperscript{148} Lapidus regards the shaykhs as mediators between the rulers and the common people, citing examples of the latter’s opposition to the former’s imposition in 890 (correctly 891) and in 907 (ibid., 93). These sources, however, simply describe the opposing ones as *al-nās* (citizens), and do not mention shaykh (Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, 1:254; idem, *Iʿlām*, 72–74).

\textsuperscript{149} In Dhū al-Ḥijjah 918/February–March 1513 a decree was issued to prohibit the activities of shaykhs of the quarters (*mashāʾik al-ḥārāt*), body guards (*ruʿūs al-nuwaḥ*), and *naqībs* (Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, 1:374). *Ruʿūs al-nuwaḥ* in general designates the office responsible for guarding the sultan, but the three cases in Damascus were all tax collectors (*ballāšī*: Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, 1:70, 221; Ibn Ṭawq, *Taʾliq*, 3:1509). The purpose of this decree was clearly to prohibit exploitation by these three offices. It is plausible to assume that the shaykhs of the quarters were actual rulers of the quarters, like the *zuʿr*, rather than communal representatives of the inhabitants.

\textsuperscript{150} Al-ʿUlabī in his study defines the shaykhs of the quarters as dominating the inhabitants of quarters and speaking in the name of the inhabitants before the provincial rulers, whereas the ‘arīfs dominated the inhabitants, taking root in the quarters and cooperating with the rulers in taxation. No reference is given, however, to the original sources (al-ʿUlabī, *Dimashq*, 95–96).

blood money. True peace could not come without a solution to the problem of
blood money. It is noteworthy that before making peace the governor was most
worried that his ballaṣīs would not perform their task and the collection of taxes
might stop. As mentioned above, the people demanded transfer of the ustādār
and ballaṣī who were responsible for tax-collection. The crucial issue was the
governor’s taxation of the quarters by his jamā’ah, and the zu’r’s resistance by
force.

This evidence leads us to conclude that the zu’r fought against the governor
throughout the revolt in 907/1503 simply to prevent taxation in their quarters.
They fought to defend their interests in the quarters, and not to aid the people.
This explanation is consistent with the character of the zu’r, who defended their
own interests at all times; the alliance between the common people and the zu’r
was possible because abolition of the tax was a common interest and goal for
both. The governors were eager to control the zu’r, and conversely the zu’r resisted
the arrest of their leaders with all possible force. Thus, they competed and
struggled with each other to gain control over the quarters. Whoever succeeded
there would get the money, whether as a tax or as a protection fee (ḥimāyah).

Social Background

The zu’r ruled the quarters of Damascus and their inhabitants during the final
years of the Mamluk period. At the same time, they confronted the authority of
the governors and thereby protected the inhabitants from the exactions of the
governors. For the quarter inhabitants, to take shelter under the zu’r meant protection
from the governor’s exploitation, and if one became a zu’r himself, he could
escape from the rule of both the governor and the zu’r and gain wealth and power.
The influence of the zu’r emerged suddenly and became widespread in a very
short time. This sudden development might be caused by such socio-political
change around the quarters.

It is difficult to know the organizational development of the zu’r and its inner
structure, because sources on the members and the organization of the zu’r are
scarce. In spite of this, we find among its members common people such as
brokers (dallāl), weavers (ḥā’ik), carpenters (najjār), and tin makers (samkarī). The
report of Ibn al-Mibrad (d. 909/1503), a Hanbali jurist, on a strange event of
mass assassinations in 902/1496–97 shows changes in the esteem for zu’r among
the ulama.

152 Ibn Tülin, Mufākahat, 1:252; idem, I’lām, 154.
153 See Appendix Table, nos. 60, 79, 81, and 92.
154 See note 116.
155 Ibn Tülin, Mufākahat, 1:204, 238, 2:105; idem, I’lām, 191.
This year, after the death of governor Qânsûh, a legal scholar published his opinion that the murder of the subordinates of unjust tyrants (zâlamah) should be permissible, and encouraged the zu’r to assassinate them. A simple-minded man killed a subordinate or gave silver coins to the zu’r to assassinate a subordinate. After the killing, the murderer declared that the person killed was a subordinate [of the unjust tyrant]. Due to this, so many fatalities occurred that about thirty persons were killed in the Şâlihiyah Quarter and about one hundred in the inner city. . . . I was asked about this issue two times. . . . [My answer is] both lack legality. The zu’r must not be encouraged.156

This opinion of Ibn al-Mibrad represented the traditional idea of the ulama to oppose both the zu’r and unjust rulers and not to justify the violence of the zu’r as a weapon against injustice. This idea had no power, however, due to the fact that rulers, chief judges, and the zu’r all competed with each other for profit and power. Therefore the new opinion that condoned the violence of the zu’r as a means of removing injustice is worth noting. Such an opinion must have encouraged the weak and suffering to seek the protection of the zu’r.

In this year of 902 murders by the zu’r and clashes among the quarters indeed continued, even up to the time of the great pilgrimage festival.157 On 14 Dhû al-Ḥijjah 902/8 August 1497, the zu’r of the Maydân al-Ḥasâ Quarter invited those of the Shâghûr, Qubaybât, and Şâlihiyah quarters and others to a banquet to make peace. Amirs, the nâ’ib al-qal’ah, and other mamluks participated as well as three persons who were rumored to be leaders of the zu’r; one was Taqî al-Dîn, deputy judge of Ibn al-Furfûr, and another was al-Sayyid Ibrâhîm, the naqîb al-ashrâf.158 The third, Ibn al-Muḥawjîb (d. 912/1506), is described as generous, with real power, someone to be asked for aid by those who suffered injustice, and visited by influential ulama and amirs.159 We cannot ascertain that these three were

156 Ibn Tülün, Muফakahat, 1:181–82. The response of Ibn al-Mibrad on this matter is held at the National Asad Library of Syria under the title “Al-Dhu’r fi Aḥwâl al-Zu’r” (Ms. 3243).
159 Al-Ghazzî, Kawâkib, 1:136–37. His influence on the governors and other ulama: Ibn Tülün, Muфakahat, 1:189, 202, 249, 307; al-Butrâwî, Târikh al-Butrâwî, 74, 178, 191, 223, 229; Ibn Ṭawq, Ta’liq, 1:194, 2:813, 3:1367, 1514. Another example is that the nâzîrs of the Umarîyah
in fact the leaders of the zu’r, but they must have had actual connections to the zu’r to mediate in their conflicts even though they did not hold high official positions.

The zu’r were illegal outlaws who acted in their own self interest, whether on the side of the rulers or on the side of the common people. Due to this ambiguous character, the governor could not subdue them, until they turned into the representatives of justice who opposed injustice often through violence.\textsuperscript{160}

**Concluding Remarks: The Changing Structure and Dynamism of Urban Society**

The purpose of this article has been to examine the theory of Muslim urban society and the Mamluk regime presented by Ira M. Lapidus, by re-constructing the structure of urban society at the end of the Mamluk period. Lapidus argued that the mamluks were able to rule Muslim urban society by combining the ulama and the common people into one social group. His theory is based on the assumption that three major groups—the mamluks, the ulama, and the common people—comprised that urban society. These three, however, were changing at the end of the Mamluk period.

First, the mamluks’ military power had weakened and they had become “salaried workers” in the city after losing their principle source of income (\textit{iqt`a}'). Meanwhile, influential amirs and provincial governors formed their \textit{jam`ahs}, organizing `abid and the zu’r as private troops and using subordinates like \textit{ballasi} to perform tasks of city administration and maintain their rule. The mamluks thus lost their unity as a political force, and social differentiation appeared among them. Second, a similar differentiation or polarization can been seen among the ulama. High officials such as the chief judges also organized their \textit{jam`ahs} by using subordinate staff in their faction to shoulder city administration and politics together with the influential members of the military, and to exploit the citizenry. Ulama other than the high officials seemed to be hired for these \textit{jam`ah} as subordinates or to depend on allowances from \textit{waqf} properties as before. Frequent struggles over \textit{waqf} institutions and \textit{waqf} properties\textsuperscript{161} suggest that \textit{waqfs} had been a major economic resource for the ulama. Ultimately they lost their dignity and role as religious and legal intellectuals and forfeited their influence on urban society, except for a few high officials like Ibn Furfür. Finally, the common people of the third stratum were

\begin{footnotesize}
Madrasah in the Şâlihiyah Quarter hired robbers (\textit{harâmiyah}) and the zu’r in opposition to the governor (see Miura, “The Şâlihiyya Quarter,” 159–60).

\textsuperscript{160}It is noteworthy that the outlaws called \textit{shuṭṭar} and zu’r fought against the injustice of judges, \textit{muhtar}s, and other officials, supporting the just rulers, sultans and caliphs, in the oral folk literatures of the Mamluk period such as \textit{Šīrāt al-Ẓāhir Baybars} and \textit{Šīrāt ʿAlī Ṭaybaq}. It might reflect the popular image of the zu’r, which shall be discussed in my future work.

\end{footnotesize}
ruled directly by the jamā‘ahs of the governors, influential amirs, and high officials, and they were also squeezed by force. In such severe conditions, the common people had only three possible choices: suffering the exactions unwillingly, being a subordinate of the person who ruled, or taking shelter under the protection of the zu‘r. The zu‘r, with their violence and organization, created in the quarters a domain that even the ruling power could not invade, ignoring authority and the law. The zu‘r can be regarded as jamā‘ahs inside the quarter for people who had no other way to participate.

In the cities, at the end of the Mamluk era, the provincial governors, amirs, high officials, and the zu‘r all formed their own factions (jamā‘ahs) to strengthen their domains and to achieve their own interests. They struggled with each other by force. Here, in fact, the three strata of mamluks, ulama, and the common people had already dissolved and lost their bases as social strata as well as political actors. They all began to move into the factions. Scholars have regarded such social mobilization so far as being, on the one hand, decline and depravity or corruption and, on the other hand, regarded social mobilization as disorder. Recent studies, however, have shed light on both mobilization and factionalization of society under Ottoman rule in Egypt and Syria. Although we might discuss at greater length whether the socio-political change discussed in my article was only a temporary phenomenon, appearing solely at the end of the Mamluk period, we should also consider the dynamism and potential inherent in any urban society that enables illegitimate organizations like jamā‘ahs and zu‘r to become cores of administration and rule, and to represent two contradictory notions of justice (‘adl) and injustice (zulm).

162 The growth of influential families, both military and civil, in Ottoman Egypt and Syria can be regarded as re-organization of the societies by the household factions. See Abdul-Karim Rafeq, The Province of Damascus 1723–1883 (Beirut, 1966); Linda Schatikowski Schilcher, Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries (Stuttgart, 1985); and James Reilly, A Small Town in Syria: Ottoman Hama in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (Oxford, 2002).
**APPENDIX TABLE: ACTIVITIES OF THE ZU‘R IN DAMASCUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Yr.</th>
<th>Mo./Day</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Quarters</th>
<th>Indiv.</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>889</td>
<td>10/?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>A, F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:441,</td>
<td>M1:66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>6/17</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:488</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:524</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>8/8</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:713</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>6/19</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>8/3</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1281</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>8/6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1282</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>11/11</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:166</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1386</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>12/29</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1437</td>
<td>extortion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>7/22</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1478</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>9/22</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1491</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>9/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1491</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:176</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1499</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:177</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>10/26</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>10/27</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>11/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:179,</td>
<td>T:1507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1511</td>
<td>Mazābil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1512</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>A, F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1512</td>
<td>police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/14</td>
<td>A, F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:180,</td>
<td>T:1513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/15</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T:1513</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/22</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/25</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>12/27</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1/12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>3/13</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>3/14</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>4/11</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>10/?</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>A; F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>3/16</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>8/25</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>9/6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>11/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Abbreviations and Symbols:**

Terms: A = zu'r; B = ahl al-za'ara; C = za'ar; D = combination of zu'r and ghawgha'; E = combination of zu'r and awbah; F = ghawgha'; G = awbah; H = mana'hs

Quarters: MH = Maydan al-Hас; SR = Shаghr; SA = Sаlihа; Q = Qubаyt; MU = Mustаl; SH = Shuwaykаh

Activities: Mu = Murder; P/A = Plunder/attack; Pr = Procession; Mi = Militia; F = Fighting; R = Revolt; A/E = Arrest/execution; O = Order; F = Fear

o = Murder in which zu'r was killed

Indiv.: This column designates cases in which a head of zu'r or the personal name of a zu'r was mentioned. The number indicates when two or more individuals were mentioned.

Sources: M = Mufakahat; I = I'laм; T = Talq

Continued on next page
### Appendix Table—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Mo./Day</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Quarters</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Indiv.</th>
<th>Pers. name</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>12/16</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I:109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>4/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I:121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I:122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>8/11</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>1/15</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:247</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:247</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>5/14</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:250; I:152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:251; I:154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:252; I:155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>6/17</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:252 banquet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>7/5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I:156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>12/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:258; I:160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>12/27</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:259; I:160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>A,F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:260; I:160 Qarawīnāh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:262 Qarawīnāh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:262</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I:164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>1/7</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:268</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:268</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:269</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>4/24</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:270 Bāb al-Jābiyāh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:279</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:280</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Column 1</td>
<td>Column 2</td>
<td>Column 3</td>
<td>Column 4</td>
<td>Column 5</td>
<td>Column 6</td>
<td>Column 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>3/14</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:280</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:281</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>6/3</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:283</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:283</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>6/10</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:283,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1:181</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>6/13</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:283,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1:181</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>6/16</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:284</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>8/4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:286</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>8/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:286</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>9/23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:287,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1:186</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>I:191</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bāb al-Jābiyah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:293,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1:195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>8/14</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:295</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>11/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:299</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:314</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:315</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:316,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1:208</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:320</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Qabr ʿĀrikah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>M1:330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:331</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>5/19</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:332</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>5/12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M1:344</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M:27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>8/5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M:24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>8/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>M:27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>8/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>M:27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>8/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M:27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>8/24</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>M:27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tot.   | 11  | 24  | 11  | 4   | 5   | 4   | 30  | 24  | 13  | 11  | 15  | 6   | 26  | 6   | 12  | 16  | 31  

© 2006, 2012 Middle East Documentation Center, The University of Chicago.

Richard J. A. McGregor

I would like to respond to Emil Homerin’s review of my book Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt: The Wafā‘ Sufi Order and the Legacy of Ibn ‘Arabī in MSR vol. 9, no. 2. Homerin is right to point out the difficulty in identifying clear lines of influence between mystical thinkers. The issue at hand is how to characterize the relationship between Ibn ‘Arabī and Muḥammad and ‘Alī Wafā‘. Since the Wafā‘s were not students within the well-known “Akbarian” school—that is, they did not identify themselves as systematizers or commentators on Ibn ‘Arabī’s work—we are obliged to comb through the Wafā‘ writings in search of similarities with Ibn ‘Arabī’s work. In this context Homerin writes “McGregor must undertake a more extensive and exacting comparison if he wants to assess the scope and strength of Ibn ‘Arabī’s influence on Muḥammad and ‘Alī” (p. 241). I would agree with this only in part. Yes, more comparisons (especially of material not relating to walā‘yāh) would be welcome, but I am confident that such subsequent work would support my characterization that Muḥammad and ‘Alī Wafā‘ have read Ibn ‘Arabī closely. However the picture becomes less clear once we realize that the Wafā‘s have gone a step further, and put the Akbarian system to work in their own mystical speculations (see p. 8). Thus the question arises as to what exactly we mean by “influence”? Certainly Ibn ‘Arabī’s technical vocabulary has been imported into the Wafā‘ writings, and so have many key concepts; but the Wafā‘s were not slavish, and the details of their doctrine of walā‘yāh, for example, differ significantly from Ibn ‘Arabī’s. They are deeply “influenced” by his wider hermeneutic, ontology, epistemology, and technical vocabulary, but at the same time they strive to assert their own insights and identities. How they manage to do both is fascinating, and should force us to examine what exactly we mean by “influence.” Homerin would argue that what I am calling the Akbarian influence may well be found elsewhere, with Ibn al-Fārīḍ for example. I would not dispute that the wider strokes of this mystical philosophy went beyond the writings of Ibn ‘Arabī, but my view is that so much of the Wafā‘ writing can be explained in light of Ibn ‘Arabī that he is certainly a primary “influence.” I am not sure how we could quantify the “scope and strength” of this influence. This said,
at the same time I am sure a full comparison of the Wafāʾ poetry with that of Ibn al-Fārīḍ would also yield interesting parallels (or influences), and certainly a closer reading of the Akbarian school figures (Qūnawī et al.) would be worthwhile. One final point: I would like to remind readers that the Arabic texts provided in the notes are unedited copies of the manuscript texts, and not typos (although neither the English nor the Arabic texts are completely free of those). See my “Note on Transliteration” for more on this.


Reviewed by Roger Allen, University of Pennsylvania

As the specific discipline of literature studies has come to define itself and to develop its own theoretical modes over the course of the last century or so, the need to write and, more often than not, to rewrite literary histories has come to be regarded as being part of a continuing process. In the case of the Arabic heritage, the literary historian enters a sphere in which the basic chronological parameters and esthetic criteria are often regarded as having been set long since, and within the contexts of both indigenous and external research. Scholars here confront a set of historical attitudes that can be viewed as a perfect model of the rise, decline, and renaissance model of generic developments (or lack thereof). Mamlūk Studies Review (and especially Volume VII and articles in Volume IX) has played a major part in attempts to challenge some of the critical postures and attitudes engendered by approaches to this topic that have set specific chronological boundaries to periods of efflorescence and decline. The Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258, for example, has been adopted as a convenient dividing-line between a “high” period before it and a “period of decadence” after it; all that in spite of clear signs of change in the anterior period and of continued creativity in the so-called “Mamluk” period that followed it (the latter being a period that Professor Thomas Bauer has recently declared to be “one of the apogees of Arabic literature” (MSR 9, no. 2 [2005]: 129).

The work under review here thus enters a subfield of Arabic literature studies in which traditional attitudes are already being challenged, although, it has to be admitted, mostly from outside the Arabic-speaking region itself. There is a certain irony here too, one that involves the as-yet-unexplored history of the origins and motivations at work in this usage of the term “decadence” to describe a six-century
period in Arabic literary history. As Bauer also points out as a contribution to that much-needed project, the process of tarring several centuries of literary creativity with the brush of “decadence” can be seen as part of the nineteenth-century agenda of European powers in order to justify their colonial intentions by underlining the “backwardness” of the peoples in the target regions (see esp. ibid., 105–7). Such lessons in the applications of history were, it would appear, well learned by Arab scholars such as Tāhā Husayn and Ahmad Amīn during their studies in France in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Within the context of the “tasʿannuʿ” of the title of this volume, it goes without saying, of course, that the juxtaposition of the “natural” (matbūʿ) and the “artificial” (maṣnūʿ) in discussions of Arabic poetry and debate over their relative virtues (particularly in the context of an increased emphasis on bādiʿ) had been part of the critical milieu at least since the time of Ibn Qutaybah (d. 889); indeed that very topic is the focus of a complete study by Mansour Ajami, The Neckveins of Winter (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984), not mentioned by the author of the current study (but then all the sources in this work are in Arabic). One can perhaps get a glimpse of the attitudes involved by posing the question as to whether the “tasʿannuʿ” of the title is best translated in English as “artifice,” with its mostly positive connotations—the process of acquiring a craft, or rather as “artificiality,” with its implications of contrivance and even lack of sincerity.

The author announces in both his prefatory and concluding material that he wishes to assess the phenomenon during the Mamluk era through two lenses: that of the period in question, and that of the contemporary era. He is to apply the principles he outlines to the poetry of two poets from the period: Ibn al-Wardī (d. 1349) and Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. ca. 1349). However, whatever the parameters that are cited and the intentions that are made, what emerges is a prolonged lament over the course of Arabic poetry and its modes of analysis, beginning with the publication of Kitāb al-Bādiʿ by Ibn al-Muʿtazz (d. 908). As has been noted many times, that particular work was actually a rather conservative gesture, in that it intended to show that the trend towards increased elaboration in the use of poetic devices was a matter of emphasis; Arabic poetry (and indeed the text of the Quran itself) contained many examples of the devices to which Ibn al-Muʿtazz had drawn attention. In his rapid survey of the development of artifice (or is it artificiality?—pp. 16–33), the author suggests that in the pre-Islamic era and the early period of the Islamic caliphate, the two elements of “naturalness” and “artifice” were in some kind of balance (p. 19), raising, of course, the question as to: in whose eyes and according to what criteria. This typically idealized scenario in analyzing the earliest periods in the Arabic poetic tradition is seen as undergoing a gradual change “which distanced it bit by bit from the element of content which is the basis of the tradition” (ibid.). The “problem” is, at least in the view of those
who would cast generic developments of this kind in negative terms, that subsequent poets and critics adopted Ibn al-Mu'tazz's categories (and especially his "muhassināt" [embellishments]) and proceeded to produce larger and larger lists of their examples. In this context Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī (d. 1058) comes in for his due share of opprobrium for the elaboration of devices in his Luzūmīyāt (p. 20), as do al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122) and al-Qādī al-Fādīl (d. 1200) for their similarly elaborate prose works (pp. 13, and 20–22). But the major culprits in this gradual and prolonged process are said to be the critics (p. 22): Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (d. 1005) and Ibn Rashīq (d. 1063?) are cited as merely two of those who assembled long lists of devices, until a time when one of the two poets whose works are analyzed in detail in this volume, Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, managed to assemble 104 of them. This led, we are told, to a change in the nature of the poetic art and the function of the poet; the concentration on form over content meant that "the poet no longer believed that poetry was an expression of his emotions and a portrait of his feelings" (p. 31). Poets resorted to imitations of each other and to attempts at besting their forebears; the study of plagiarism became a growth industry.

The author then proceeds to analyze the two above-mentioned poets in separate chapters. With Ibn al-Wardī, he concentrates on the individual aspects in the enhanced use of bādī devices (evident from the subdivision of the chapter into a number of specific muhassināt categories); with al-Ḥillī (and specifically his Durar al-Nuḥūr fi ʿImtīdāḥ al-Malik al-Mansūr [Pearly necklets concerning the eulogy of al-Malik al-Mansūr]) the author’s analytical method demands a more unified and comprehensive approach to the poems, particularly since they are mostly (and naturally, considering the title) panegyrics.

Not surprisingly, the result of such surveys of these two poets and their poems (indeed their individual lines) succeeds in providing confirmation of the generally negative image of the direction of the poetic tradition provided in the prefatory chapters.

This work then contextualizes a detailed study of two poets of the Mamluk era in a very particular way. In returning to my opening thoughts about the larger issues involved in contemporary studies of Arabic literary history in general and of this era in particular, I am left to wonder in what way(s) is the "deck stacked" in a study of this type. The author’s use of sources is excellent and extremely well referenced, but one is drawn inevitably to the conclusion that, by relying on sources, both pre-modern and modern, that clearly operate within a matrix of historical periodization and a view of generic development that prefers breaks (ruptures perhaps) to continuities, the verdicts to which this volume inexorably leads the reader are almost a foregone conclusion. Indeed the very introduction to the volume, by ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Ashtar, uses the term "khumūd" (decline) on its very first page. What I find missing in this study is any desire to call into question
the very parameters on which these assessments of broad cultural trends are based. For example, we can certainly read the poetry and the criticism of it (and, in this case, the critical analysis of both the poetry and its criticism), but what about the views of the audiences (including critics) that were contemporary with the poetry and poets? Are we really to believe that, for several centuries in Arabic literary creativity, the variety of audiences that listened to and read the poetry that was created within a certain time period and its cultural norms and expectations did not appreciate and even enjoy what they were hearing and reading? Are we supposed to blame them for "getting it wrong" on esthetic criteria? Or is it rather that an entirely different set of critical yardsticks were at work? I would suggest that, before we can really attempt to assess poetic creativity during this prolonged period, a more profoundly researched answer to that last question is a prerequisite.

This volume then provides a useful survey of the work of two poets of the Mamluk era, set against a study of the place of artifice in the poetic tradition that is firmly based in long-accepted opinions that may well need to be substantially revised.


REVIEWED BY NIALL CHRISTIE, University of British Columbia

In this book Suhayr Nuʿayni presents an account of the attack made on Alexandria in 767/1365 by the Lusignan King of Cyprus, Peter I (d. 770/1369). This is widely regarded as one of the last major actions undertaken by the Crusaders in the eastern Mediterranean, and despite the fact that the Latins only occupied Alexandria for a few days, it had a significant impact, exacerbating tensions between Muslims and Christians for years after the event and contributing to the slow decline and eventual downfall of Lusignan Cyprus in the ninth/fifteenth century. Until now Peter of Lusignan’s expedition has received relatively little attention from scholars in comparison to the other major Crusading expeditions, something that, while understandable in the face of its limited size and scope, nevertheless makes this book a welcome contribution to the field.

Nuʿayni begins her account of the events by surveying both previous scholarship on the attack on Alexandria and the sources that provide information about the events. She makes use of both primary and secondary sources from both Europe...
and the Middle East; she pays particular attention to the Kitāb al-Ilmām bi-al-Iʿlām of the Muslim eyewitness, al-Nuwayrī al-Sikandarī (d. after 775/1372), the Prise d’Alexandrie of the French poet Guillaume de Machaut (d. 778–79/1377), and the Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus of the Cypriot Greek chronicler Leontios Makhairas (d. c. 835/1432), but also makes use of a wide range of other sources from both the contemporary and later European and Middle Eastern literature.

The bulk of Nuʿayniʾs work is divided into five parts. In the first of these she provides a description of Europe and the Levant before the attack on Alexandria. Her account of the Levant focuses on the political, social, and economic situation of Egypt under the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Shaʿbān (d. 778/1377), and also details relations between the Mamluk sultanate and its neighbors in Iraq, Armenia, the Byzantine Empire, and Africa, while her account of Europe describes the various states of the region, again in political, social, and economic terms, before describing Cyprus in detail. In the second part of her work Nuʿayniʾ focuses more closely on the history of Cyprus preceding Peter of Lusignan’s expedition, examining the circumstances that led him to conceive the idea of attacking Alexandria, the motives ascribed to him by the sources, and his efforts to garner support for the venture in Europe. The following two parts of Nuʿayniʾs text describe the expedition itself, from Peter I’s departure from Venice on 7 Shawwāl 766/27 June 1365 through his capture of Alexandria on 24 Muḥarram 767/10 October 1365 to his eventual withdrawal from the city a few days later. Her account is detailed, and she both compares and analyzes the primary sources. The fifth part describes the aftermath of the attack and its impact on both the internal relations of the Levantine region and the wider interactions of the Levant and Europe, with particular attention paid to its effect on military and commercial interaction between Christians and Muslims and Europeans and Levantines.

Nuʿayniʾ concludes her work with an account of the subsequent “death” of the crusading movement and the Muslim response in the ninth/fifteenth century before providing an analysis of the events. She is highly critical of the attack, regarding it as a result of the papacy’s inability to change with the times and accept that it no longer directed the military might of Europe, something that was further exacerbated by a more widely-held, outdated European perception of political, economic, and military realities in the Levant. Meanwhile, Peter I is blamed for pursuing policies that merely consumed the resources of Cyprus and left it destitute, making it ripe for subjugation and conquest by external enemies, while he is accused of pursuing his venture for commercial and political rather than pietistic motives. Such a negative portrayal of the situation is, naturally, open to question, particularly when it comes to the issue of Peter I’s motives. While the attack has been regarded by some scholars as an attempt to dominate Mediterranean commerce, others have
regarded Peter I as being genuinely stimulated by a crusading zeal that he also displayed in earlier life.\(^1\) Thus the matter is somewhat more complex than Nu‘ayni‘ believes.

Shortcomings aside, Nu‘ayni‘s work is of great value as a detailed account of the attack on Alexandria that takes account of both European and Levantine sources. As such, it is recommended for scholars interested in this dramatic and controversial event.


REVIEWED BY WALID SALEH, University of Toronto

These two books cover different aspects of the intellectual life of the Mamluk era, and in so doing point to a regrettable absence of any substantial general study in English of the cultural and intellectual life under the Mamluks such as one is accustomed to read about medieval Europe. The first book is a study of the poetry of one of the leading intellectual figures of the Mamluk era, while the second is a survey of the educational system under the Mamluks. Before discussing them individually, a generalization about the milieu in which they were produced is in order. Both works share in obvious ways both the virtues and the faults typical of most secondary literature coming from the Arab Middle East. Invariably there is much to learn from such works, and this reviewer, for one, is a devoted reader of them. Despite their shortcomings, they offer the interested reader many insights and directions for study. Some are indeed indispensable in so far as they have carried out the first stage of assessing information available in the literature on a certain topic. Ultimately there is no telling when such works can be useful and there is no substitute for assessing each on its own merits.

The first work under review here, *Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Hajar*, makes clear two things: that the collected poems of Ibn Ḥajar are now available in print, and that a study

on this most important author is sorely needed. Like many of his peers Ibn Hajar wrote many important works in many different fields—altogether 216 works, according to the author of this study. This huge number of books makes it even harder for those planning to study his intellectual career. One only needs to point to his epoch-making commentary on al-Bukhari’s Sahih, Fath al-Barî fi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari, to realize that he is one of the most important of medieval hadith scholars. The current edition of Fath al-Barî is in 14 volumes, totalling about 8000 pages of finely-printed text. Recently his mu‘jam has been published—under the title Al-Mu‘jam al-Mufahras, edited by M. al-Mayâdînî (Beirut, 1998)—allowing us a rare opportunity to study what Ibn Hajar studied of previous Islamic scholarship.

Ayyub’s work is dedicated to a study of the poetry of Ibn Hajar and he makes clear that this study was part of his M.A. work, which also included the edition of Ibn Hajar’s unpublished second collection of poetry, Al-Sab’ (p. 5). This newly-published collection is different from his Diwan, which has been available for a while. We are not told this, however, and only by going through the footnotes and the bibliography does this fact become clear. The first one hundred pages of Ayyub’s work offer a biography of Ibn Hajar, which includes a full list of his works (pp. 77–87). The rest of the book is a study of the poetics of Ibn Hajar, and the approach here is squarely traditional. His poetry is analyzed through the lens of genres, eulogy, panegyric, etc. Ayyub’s critical vocabulary is anything but scholarly; we are still here in the realm of the school of “truth and beauty.” But in the course of this analysis we do learn that Ibn Hajar used to travel to Yemen to recite his poetry to their kings for money. This is a very interesting snippet of information, and unfortunately Ayyub does not inform us about his sources for it. The most interesting aspect of Ibn Hajar’s poetry, however, is his non-traditional poetry, the non-qasidah poetry, such as al-muwashshahat. The kharjahs of these poems were written in colloquial Egyptian dialect. This is rather important information to know and dialectologists should take note. The bibliography at the end of the book is important, as it includes a large number of secondary Arabic studies on the intellectual life in the Mamluk era, the only such studies available so far.

The second book under review, Al-Madâris by Jidah, is a better work on the whole, in so far as it is a more systematic study of the educational system of the Mamluk era. Most of the work is a listing of all the information available in the sources on madrasahs, their names, dates of establishment, and the names of professors who taught there. There is also an analysis of the curriculum, the students’ life, professors’ duties, etc. The merit of this work is that it offers a detailed survey of all the information available in primary sources, a task that is usually beyond most of us. Scholars wishing to write on the educational system
will benefit immensely from this work. As for the cultural life of the Mamluk era, we still await a study that will do justice to its monumental achievements in the cultural sphere.


REVIEWED BY JOHANNES PAHLITZSCH, Freie Universität Berlin

The foundation of Sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn (735/1334-762/1360) on Maydān al-Rumaylah (today Maydān Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn) opposite the Citadel could very well be termed the most magnificent building of the Mamluk period in Cairo. Thus, the edition of the long endowment deed (waqfiyāh) of Ḥasan’s foundation by Huwaydā al-Ḥārithī, who is Associate Professor for Architecture and Design at the American University of Beirut and already well known for her work on Islamic art and architecture with a special emphasis on the Mamluk period, is most welcome.

The waqfiyāh of Sultan Ḥasan has been transmitted in two copies, both in the possession of the Dār al-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmīyah in Cairo. The original parchment document (no. 40/6) of which a small portion has been published by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn in 1986 is damaged and has not been used by al-Ḥārithī. Instead, she relied on an obviously contemporary bound manuscript copy (no. 365/85). According to al-Ḥārithī a comparison of this copy with the fragments of the waqfiyāh demonstrate that it is an exact copy of the original. Also included in the bound copy and published by al-Ḥārithī are the texts that have been written on the back of the original waqfiyāh, namely a confirmation of the waqfiyāh, an


incomplete second waqfiyah with additional endowments and new personnel appointments, and a similarly incomplete list of further waqf lands in Egypt and Syria.

The first waqfiyah of Sultan Hasan follows the usual form of Islamic endowment deeds. After an introduction describing the religious merits of the waqf there follows the very casual statement that the endowed property belonged to the private property of the founder (pp. 1–5). This short remark stands in sharp contrast to the explicit formulas used in the waqfiyah of Ḥasan’s grandfather Qalāwūn. The description of the newly-erected buildings of Ḥasan’s complex (pp. 5–10) is followed by the long list of endowed properties in Egypt and Syria (pp. 10–148). It is remarkable to find foundations like the “waqf ‘alá al-Madrāsah al-Nūriyyah al-Ḥanafīyyah” and many other foundations included in the endowed properties without giving any reference to how they could be transferred to Ḥasan’s foundation—if by means of istibdāl or because the plague has ruined many foundations. As is well known, these descriptions of property could be of great value for topographical research. However, the waqfiyah of Ḥasan could be used as well for the study of the history of older foundations not only in Egypt but also in Syria, especially in Damascus. Then the purpose of the foundation and its different parts, namely the qubbah, the jāmi’, the madrasah, and the maktab al-sabil are given together with a list of its staff, their salaries, and instructions to distribute donations on specific occasions (pp. 148–73). The next section deals with the duties of the administrator (nāzir) of the foundation, the appointment of the founder’s family as administrators, and the general stipulations of the founder (shurūṭ) followed by the final legal formulas, the date, and subscriptions of witnesses (pp. 173–79). The fact that Ḥasan appointed himself as the first nāzir with all rights to change his foundation including the right of istibdāl might hint at the legal means that were used in the transfer of the above-mentioned waqf lands into Ḥasan’s foundation.

In editing the documents contained in MS 365/85 al-Ḥarīṭī follows the method of reproducing the text as it is “with no corrections, additions, or alterations except for some characters added for the purpose of clarity” (p. 10, English introduction). Furthermore she provides her edition with a double apparatus, giving in the first one some helpful information about the meaning of certain terms or the location of certain places while the second one is the critical apparatus. In view of the fact that a considerable part of the original waqfiyah still exists (according to

---

3In: Ibid., vol. 1 (Cairo, 1976), 337.
Amīn, a text of 1258 lines) it would have been very desirable to use both versions of the document for the establishment of the published text whenever possible. A comparison with Amīn’s edition of parts of the original waqfiyah shows that there are not only differences between the two versions as indicated in the apparatus of Amīn’s edition but that MS 365/85 even has a considerable lacuna which is filled by Amīn’s edition. It is true that al-Ḥārithī does mention this fact in a note. However, she does not give the missing the text (cf. p. 150, l. 4; Amīn, pp. 389–95, ll. 1209–58). Thus, al-Ḥārithī’s text cannot be called a critical edition of Ḩasan’s endowment deed based on all available copies of the document. Instead al-Ḥārithī’s edition should be described best as a reproduction of one specific version.

Unfortunately one’s faith in the reliability of this reproduction is shaken if one compares the few pictures of the manuscript published in the book with the printed text. So al-Ḥārithī’s text reads on p. 176, l. 15, yajrā with alif maqsūrah instead of yajrī as is indicated quite clearly in the manuscript (cf. the picture on p. 290). On the same page, l. 19, one has to read thubūthī as in the manuscript instead of thubūthi. On p. 209, l. 18, the manuscript has wa-min dhālika instead of min dhālika, which makes a difference in terms of syntax, and on p. 210, l. 2, something got mixed up between the footnote and the text (cf. p. 293). While the published text reads qirāt faddān the manuscript has qirāt min faddān. Confusingly, al-Ḥārithī states in note 2 that qirāt faddān corresponds to the manuscript, which should be corrected to read qirāt min faddān.

Al-Ḥārithī’s method to reproduce the manuscript unchanged might have the advantage of giving an unadulterated impression of the Mamluk court’s use of the Arabic language. However, one gets the impression of a certain methodological inconsistency when she follows the model of the manuscript in writing ḥā’ instead of tā’ marbūtah or alif mamdu’ah instead of alif maqsūrah at the end of the word while adding the missing diacritics in the middle of the word as in the case of mubīd al-tughātaṭ (p. 180, l. 5, cf. p. 291), to give just one example. On the one hand she substitutes ḥā’ at the end of al-tughātaṭ instead of tā’ marbūtah. On the other hand she changes the ‘ayn of the manuscript to ghā’. All in all it would have improved the legibility of the text to standardize the use of, e.g., tā’ marbūtah, alif maqsūrah, or hamzah at the end of the words as well.

With regard to headings, paragraphs and punctuation al-Ḥārithī follows the same method. Only the headings found in the manuscript, be it in the text proper or in margins, are inserted into the text. A few editorial measures like the addition of periods might have helped the reader to find his or her way through the very long descriptions of endowed properties. Furthermore al-Ḥārithī’s unsystematic insertion of headings and subheadings does not help to clarify the structure of the waqfiyah. So no heading, paragraph, or even a period separates the section on the
foundation’s expenditures from the section on the duties of the nāẓir (pp. 171–73). Especially in the case of the localization of the endowed property it is not helpful to find, e.g., the Madrasah al-Nūriyyah in Damascus, which is mentioned without any reference to its location, under the general heading of property in the diyār al-miṣriyyah (pp. 10 and 32).

Despite its editorial shortcomings—and maybe it should be taken into account that al-Hārithī is an art historian, not a philologist—the edition of Sultan Hāsān’s endowment deed is a very valuable contribution to the study not only of Cairo and its history, but also of the history of other cities such as Damascus and Antioch. In particular, the indices of people and place names are very important tools for future research.


REVIEWED BY THOMAS BAUER, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität

The editions under review are dedicated to two poets from the earlier period of the Mamluk era. Neither of them has got an entry in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, nor in the Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature. But they were famous enough in their time, and the editions under review prove that both are interesting, provide important material for a better understanding of early Mamluk cultural life, and doubtlessly deserve further study. The editors, however, seem to have had difficulties to find a publisher for their products, and therefore instead of a calligraphic layout and gold imprinted cloth (now standard with religious texts) one finds homemade, awkwardly printed books sometimes hard to read (and to obtain), as is the case with al-Maḥḥār’s Diwān, or full of printing errors and other shortcomings, as is the case with the Diwān of al-Jazzār.

Yahyá al-Jazzār (601–79/1204–81) is one of the first of the many craftsmen-poets of the period. He grew up in the butcher shop of his parents in al-Fustāṭ. When his father discovered that his boy could make verses, he presented him proudly to Ibn Abī al-Iṣba‘. “Well done,” Ibn Abī al-Iṣba‘ remarked on hearing the boy’s lines, “you are a good diver.” The father took this as a compliment for his son’s talent and brought a present of food to Ibn Abī al-Iṣba‘, but he had only meant that the son had not yet mastered the meters of poetry and was thus “diving” from one
This anecdote is important because it shows that poetry met with great interest even among craftsmen and that poetry was seen as a means to social advancement.

Al-Jazzār surmounted his problems with meters and, according to al-Ṣafadī, became the best poet of his time next to al-Sirāj al-Warrāq. His success as a poet allowed him to give up his job as a butcher and to try to earn a living by composing panegyric poetry. For a while this attempt proved successful, but in his later years he had to resume his craft as a butcher. To people who mocked him for that, he replied that as a butcher the dogs would run after him, whereas as a poet he had to run after the dogs. The life of al-Jazzār is therefore characteristic for the role of poetry in the Mamluk period as a whole in a twofold way. First, al-Jazzār is a good example of the spread of literary knowledge and practice in the whole of society right down into the class of merchants and craftsmen. Second, this increase in poetic production led to a lowering of its monetary value, so that it became increasingly difficult to earn one’s living only by composing poetry.

In his history of Mamluk literature, M. Zaghlūl Sallām had dedicated a comparatively long chapter to al-Jazzār and pointed to the poet’s importance. An edition of the Dīwān of al-Jazzār by the same scholar may meet therefore with great expectations. But it turns out to be a great disappointment. It is not easy even to figure out what exactly M. Zaghlūl Sallām edited. There is no description of a manuscript and not even a hint about what the basis of the present edition is. As a matter of fact, the whole introduction is nothing else but the very chapter on al-Jazzār from Zaghlūl Sallām’s history of Mamluk literature dating from 1971. No modifications or additions have been made. Though it is true that progress in the study of Mamluk literature is rather slow, it is not so slow that absolutely nothing has happened during the last three decades!

To find out what we have before us, we have to turn to another text on al-Jazzār that has been edited more recently. It is al-Ṣafadī’s notice on al-Jazzār in the twenty-eighth volume of Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt, which is, with its thirty pages, the longest entry in the whole volume. This volume is now available in an excellent edition by Ibrāhīm Shabbūḥ, who spent more effort and care on these thirty pages than Zaghlūl Sallām did for his entire edition. For in addition to the manuscript of the Wāfī, Shabbūḥ also used two manuscripts relevant for the poetry of al-Jazzār. The first is a selection of al-Jazzār’s poetry, compiled by the poet himself and dedicated to his close friend, the famous historiographer of

---

2 Ibid.
4 Ibrāhīm Shabbūḥ.
Aleppo, Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿAdīm (588–660/1192–1262), entitled *Taqāṭīf* (variant reading: *Taqīf*) *al-Jazzār*. It is preserved in a manuscript in Tunis. The second is a manuscript preserved in Istanbul and entitled *Al-Muntakhab min Shiʿr al-Shaykhayn*. It contains poems by al-Jazzār and his “sparring partner” al-Sirāj al-Warrāq. As becomes clear from a comparison between al-Ṣafadī’s article and M. Zaghluł Sallām’s edition, the latter used a film of the Tunis manuscript (without even mentioning this fact), and the edition is therefore not an edition of the *Diwān al-Jazzār*, but of the *Taqāṭīf al-Jazzār*. Sallām did not use the *Muntakhab*, though it is mentioned in a footnote on p. 7, and consequently a great portion of the poetry of al-Jazzār that has come down to us is missing in the edition.

As an anthology, the text edited by Zaghluł Sallām gives only a rather small selection of al-Jazzār’s poems, and for most of the longer poems only excerpts are given. The bulk of the poetry is *madḥ* and *ghazal*. The last part of the book is entitled “Al-Ḍirā‘ah al-Nājiḥah wa-al-Ḥidā‘ah al-Rājiḥah” and consists of twenty-eight poems in praise of the prophet, each comprising ten lines. Each poem rhymes on a different consonant of the alphabet, and the rhyme consonant is always also the first letter of every line. A further development of this scheme was used by al-Ṣafī al-Ḥillī in his *Durar al-Nuḥūr fi Madā‘iḥ al-Malik al-Mansūr*. Ibn ʿSaʿīd al-Maghribī, who was a friend of al-Jazzār, and the editor consider these poems as literarily inferior to al-Jazzār’s achievements in other genres, and I do not dare to contradict.

In the high proportion of *madḥ*, the low proportion of satiric, frivolous, and sarcastic epigrams, and the lack of a discernible influence of the spoken language, al-Jazzār’s poetry differs from that of other craftsmen poets like Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār. It is not easy to decide, therefore, to what degree al-Jazzār can be considered a “popular poet,” as the editor calls him (p. 5), notwithstanding al-Jazzār’s social origin and position. But this impression is, at least partially, due to the fact that in his *Taqāṭīf* al-Jazzār presents a selection of his poetry meant to meet the taste of an educated *kātib* who may not have been interested in the ups and downs of Cairene everyday life. So, e.g., al-Jazzār composed several pieces on his donkey. An elegy on this animal is quoted in al-Ghuzūlī’s *Maṣālīʿ al-Budūr* and mentioned in the editor’s introduction (p. 16), but only half of the twelve lines are given in the text (p. 40). We can read an even more complete version of seventeen lines now in al-Ṣafadī’s notice. Even more interesting is a poem that al-Jazzār puts into

---

the mouth of his little infant. In this poem, which is preserved in several sources, but not in Zaghluūl Sallām’s edition,8 al-Jazzār uses baby talk. So far, Ibn Sudūn was the only poet known to have used baby talk in his poems.9 Such findings show that it may indeed be reasonable to draw a line of popular poets from al-Jazzār to al-Mī’mār and further to Ibn Sudūn.

Further examples may demonstrate that the text edited by M. Zaghluūl Sallām is far from being exhaustive. In the recently published anthology Al-Muh˝ad˝ara≠t wa-al-Muh˝awara≠t by al-Suyu≠t¸ |, al-Jazzār is quoted five times with altogether sixty-two lines.10 This shows that al-Jazzār was not yet forgotten after 250 years, but it also shows that the Diwān that is now in our hands contains only a segment of al-Jazzār’s production, since only three of the sixty-two verses in the Muh˝ad˝arāt reappear in the Diwān. Among the missing pieces we find two elegies on the scholar ‘Izz al-Dīn ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, a short piece of three lines, and a long one of thirty lines, and a poem of twenty-three lines in praise of al-Zāhir Baybars on the occasion of the pilgrimage in the year 664. Not only are these poems missing from Sallām’s edition, we do not find it even a hint of a relationship between the poet and ‘Izz al-Dīn or Sultan Baybars. Especially important, both from a literary as from a biographical point of view, is the entry on al-Jazzār in Muhsin al-Amīn’s A’yān al-Sh˚ah.11 Interesting enough is the fact that al-Jazzār has got an entry in it. Further, al-Amīn provides the most detailed account of al-Jazzār’s life, and finally, the entry presents a remarkable poem rhyming on uzū/izū on al-Ḥusayn not given in any other source. The editor has not used these and other sources, which are crucial for the understanding of al-Jazzār and his poetry. And even those that were known to him were used in a superficial and negligent way. To mention only one example: The Diwān contains a short ‘Āshur`a ‘ poem that corroborates al-Jazzār’s veneration for the Ahl al-Bayt. Its first line is given in the edition as follows:

وبعيد عاشوراء بدكرني
وزرحا الحسين فيليب لم يعد

The poem is quoted—as the editor notes—in al-Šafadí’s Tamām al-Mutūn,12 but

---

8Ibid., 209–10.
this did not help to avoid the three mistakes, and the vocalization given in al-Ṣafadī’s
text, where we read ‘Āshūrā’ yudhakkirunī instead of ‘Āshūrā’u yudhkirunī, should
at least have been given as an alternative reading in the apparatus. According to
this source, the above line should be read as follows:

وَبِعَذْوَدُ عَاشُورَا يُذْكَرْتِي ْرُزُقُ الْحَسَينِ، فَلَيْتَ لَمْ يُعْدِ

‘Āshūrā’ comes back and reminds me of al-Ḥusayn’s affliction—
would that it never came back!

Unfortunately, this example is representative of the whole edition. Relevant
sources are either not used at all or only selectively. Even in al-Ṣafadī’s Tamām
al-Mughtūn we can find several lines by al-Jazza‘r which are not mentioned by the
editor of the Diwān (pp. 49, 64, 285). The text itself is marred by countless
mistakes, which cannot always be corrected as easily as in the example given.
Sometimes shaddah and vowel signs seem to be haphazardly distributed among
the consonant text. It is hard to believe that an experienced scholar and editor
such as M. Zaghlūl Sallām can be held responsible for the mess. In any case, this
combination of a defective edition and an out-dated study can hardly be considered
the last word on al-Jazzār.

The fame of al-Jazzār was overshadowed to a certain degree by the great poets
of the next two generations, but during his lifetime his renown even spread to
Syria and inspired a young man in Aleppo who was just beginning to write his
first poems to compose a muwashshahah in praise of al-Jazzār and to send it to
Egypt. This young man was Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn Mas‘ūd al-Maḥṭār (d. 711/1311),
also known as al-Kattān. The muwashshahah is found in al-Maḥṭār’s Diwān (p.
304-5). The headline that says that the poem is “in praise of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Jazzār
al-Mughtūn” has to be corrected to “Abū al-Ḥusayn,” since the poet, who is addressed
by al-Maḥṭār as “Yahyā,” is without doubt none other than Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Jazzār.
Therefore, it must have been composed in the year 679/1281 or earlier and thus is
one of the earliest preserved poems by al-Maḥṭār, most of which date between
683 and 711 (see the editor’s remark, p. 12).

Though al-Jazzār and al-Maḥṭār were of similar social origin, the latter’s fate
differed much from that of his older Cairene colleague, for, in contrast to al-Jazzār,
al-Maḥṭār managed to find patrons who allowed him to make a living from his
poetry. From the year 683 onwards, al-Maḥṭār stayed in Ḥamāh as a court poet to
the Ayyubid princes who still were allowed to govern this town under Mamluk

1

97–110.
sovereignty. The same constellation was to repeat itself half a century later, albeit with a more famous poet—Ibn Nubātah—and probably a more famous prince—Abū al-Fidāʿ—too. Al-Maḥḥār’s sultans were al-Malik al-Mansūr II (r. 642–83) and al-Malik al-Muzaffar III (r. 683–98), to whom he offered most of his panegyric odes and some of his muwashshahāt. Several poems are also dedicated to al-Mansūr’s brother al-Malik al-Afdāl, and a panegyric muwashshah is addressed to the latter’s son ‘Imād al-Dīn (no. 42, pp. 301–4), who is none other than Abū al-Fidāʿ, the future al-Malik al-Muʾayyad and patron of Ibn Nubātah. The comparatively simple style of al-Maḥḥār’s qaṣāʿid, however, seems to be closer to Bahaʿ al-Dīn Zuhayr than to Ibn Nubātah.

For this or for some other reason, later authors displayed only minor interest in the madiḥ poems of al-Maḥḥār. Al-Šafādī, to mention one example, dedicates quite a long article to al-Maḥḥār in his Aʾyān al-Asr (3:662–77), in which he does not quote from al-Maḥḥār’s panegyric odes at all, but only from his epigrams and his muwashshahāt. As a matter of fact, the muwashshah seems to be the proper domain of al-Maḥḥār’s poetic genius, in contrast to Ibn Nubātah, who perhaps only composed panegyric muwashshahāt on al-Malik al-Muʾayyad because al-Maḥḥār’s songs still resounded in the palace of Hāmāh. On the contrary, half of al-Maḥḥār’s Dīwān is made up of muwashshah and zajal—a quite unusual proportion for a court poet. In fact, with his more than sixty muwashshahāt, al-Maḥḥār provides the largest corpus of this poetic form in the Bahri Mamluk period. Despite its metric and rhythmic complexity, the muwashshah was considered a simpler and more popular form of poetry than the qaṣāʿidah. The audience expected from the washshāh not a sophisticated presentation of striking and original maʿānī, but a melodious arrangement of the well-known topoi of love poetry. After all, one must never forget that muwashshahāt were meant to be song texts. The editor has already drawn our attention to al-Maḥḥār and his crucial role for the Mamluk muwashshah in a recent publication, which inevitably overlaps with the present edition.13 It corroborates that al-Maḥḥār was a preeminent washshāh of the Bahri Mamluk period.

The same holds true regarding the vernacular brother of the muwashshah, the zajal. Al-Maḥḥār’s Dīwān contains the remarkable number of thirty-seven azjāl, which represent a major corpus of the Eastern zajal in its earlier period. Al-Maḥḥār was certainly not the first Eastern zajjāl. A zajal by Mujīr al-Dīn Ibn Tamīm (d. 684/1285) is quoted by al-Nawājī.14 But the genre was probably still in its formative
period in the East when al-Mahḥār wrote his contributions. As far as I can judge, the Andalusian model is more visible with him than with any other zajjal of the Mamluk realm. He considers Ibn Quzmān as his model and boasts that whoever hears his zajal will imagine that Ibn Quzmān is still alive (p. 360). Therefore it naturally follows that al-Mahḥār does not hesitate to use words typical of the Arabo-Andalusian dialect (such as the negative particle las). In the end of the first zajal in the Dīwān, al-Mahḥār declares that “Western are my words, though I am from Syria” (Maghribī lafẓī lākinnī min ahl il-Shām, p. 344). In this respect, his zajal differs remarkably from that of later authors such as al-Mi’mār or Ibn Sūdūn who only use their own (Cairene) dialect in the zajal. Cairo, however, plays a role even in the zajal of the Syrian al-Mahḥār. In zajal no. 13 al-Mahḥār depicts an elementary school (maktab) in a Cairene setting (qarib Darb il-Wazîr). The teacher (faqīh) sits at the door of his class like an amir, correcting, threatening, or even beating every pupil who is committing a speech error (alḥān)—quite a nice idea in a vernacular zajal (p. 361):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ثَمُّ مَكْتُبٌ قَرِيبٌ ذَرْبِ الْوَزِيرَ} \\
\text{وَفِيهِ الصَّبَابُ صَغَارٌ وَكِبَارٌ} \\
\text{وَقَلِبَهُ جَالِسٌ عَلَى بَابِ مَكْتُبِهِ} \\
\text{أَيُّ مِنْ أَذْنِي فِي الْكَلَامِ بِغَرَيْهُ} \\
\text{وَبُهِدُهُ ذَا وَدَاءٌ بَضَرِبِهِ} \\
\text{وَهُوَ جَالِسٌ بَيْنِهِمْ كَالمَأْمُورِ} \\
\text{الْمُسَرَّامَةُ واَلْأَدَّبُ وَالْوَقَارُ}
\end{align*}
\]

It seems that for this genre depiction the reality of Cairo and its dialect was more influential than that of Cordoba.

The editor had only a single (albeit old and reliable) manuscript at his disposal, or rather, a microfilm of it, since the original (formerly in Alexandria) seems to be lost now (p. 18). Considering this and the fact that only comparatively few quotations of al-Mahḥār’s poems in other sources could help him, one can only admire the formidable task that the editor has accomplished. As minor shortcomings one could mention the lack of a bibliography and the fact that the page numbers given in the index are not correct (one can find the poems though according to the number given to them). One should also mention the entry on al-Mahḥār in Ibn Taghrībirdī’s Manhal,15 which, however, does not provide verses absent from

---

‘Atā’s edition. In sum, ‘Atā has done an excellent job and we can only be grateful for having al-Maḥḥār’s poetry now in a reliable edition, which is deserving of a more lavish presentation. A careful edition like ‘Atā’s shows that one can only promote the cause of Mamluk literature by dedicating to it as much diligence and effort as is the custom with pre- and early Islamic poetry.


Reviewed by Th. Emil Homerin, University of Rochester

Rithā’, or “elegy,” is one of the oldest genres of Arabic poetry. The Arabic elegy probably arose out of pre-Islamic Arab lamentations for dead relatives, usually senior adult males. After the coming of Islam, poets gradually extended the genre to include other relatives, including women and children. Poets also composed elegies on important public figures, such as amirs, viziers, caliphs, and their family members, for whom the elegy served as a type of eulogy and obituary. Similarly, classical Arab poets composed verse lamenting the deaths of the Shi‘i imams, the destruction of Muslim cities by infidels, and the reversal of Muslim fortunes. The classical Arabic elegy, then, had a long and respected tradition. Poets of the Mamluk period added to this legacy, and this is the focus of Fann al-Rithā’ fī al-Shi’r al-‘Arabī fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal by Rā’id Muṣṭafā Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Raḥīm.

At the outset, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm never states why he confined himself to the first half of the Mamluk period. There is some justification for dividing Mamluk rule into two periods based on dynastic change, but ‘Abd al-Raḥīm does not state how this division is applicable to the study of elegy. Perhaps he simply wanted to limit his study in terms of sources and research time, or maybe he hopes to write a sequel, though I doubt that he will reach further conclusions to warrant this. Still, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm’s study is a very useful survey of the type of elegies composed during the Mamluk period.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm cites al-Mubarrad’s (d. 285/899) observation that an effective elegy may give consolation to the bereaved and contribute to proper public mourning. Yet ‘Abd al-Raḥīm has little else to say about the elegy’s uses and purposes, in general. Further, he does not discuss the origins of rithā’ or detail its developments

Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1999), 324–29.
but, instead, moves directly into the Mamluk period, categorizing and describing elegies in terms of the deceased. He begins with a chapter on deceased family members and close relatives (pp. 1–37) introduced by a brief discussion of poets’ elegies for themselves and the recurrent themes of the brevity of life and the inevitability of death. He then moves on to elegies on male relatives. Among these, the most frequent subject is the death of a son. ‘Abd al-Rahím observes this as a change from the Umayyad and Abbasid periods when elegies to brothers were more frequent. He notes that this may be the effect of Arab, Muslim society moving away from tribal life, in which brothers were valued as allies, toward urban living and the increasing importance of the nuclear family, in which sons were thought to preserve the family’s line and fortune. Citing numerous verses by a number of poets, ‘Abd al-Rahím shows that sons who died young were generally praised for their sinless life and handsome appearance, while older and grown sons were eulogized for their skills, learning, and virtue. Often the blissful life of the deceased son in heaven is compared to the living hell of the grieving father.

In contrast to the many poems on sons, ‘Abd al-Rahím could find only three short elegies written by sons for their fathers, and he is at a loss to explain why. It may be that ‘Abd al-Rahím would have found more examples had he searched further, especially in the many collections of Mamluk poetry still only in manuscript, which he obviously did not consult. It may be too, however, that most sons did not feel a pressing need to compose an elegy for their fathers, who were often eulogized by their contemporaries. Further, most societies regard the death of parents as a sad but inevitable event, and the natural, ordered passing of a generation, while the death of a child is often viewed as a shocking and tragic event requiring an explanation and extraordinary consolation.1

‘Abd al-Rahím dedicates his second chapter to elegies on men of state, especially the sultans (pp. 38–114). Often the elegists had once been in the employment of the deceased, and they are worried about their futures following their patron’s death. ‘Abd al-Rahím asserts that many of these elegies were written by poets interested more in their own prestige and financial security than in consoling the bereaved family. While this is undoubtedly the case for some poems, ‘Abd al-Rahím belabor the point and underestimates the possible friendship and respect that may have grown between poets and patrons. In addition, the sorrow and concern over an uncertain future voiced in many elegies may well have echoed feelings in the larger populace worried over possible chaos in the wake of a ruler’s death. Hence, the elegist’s praise of the deceased’s successor, usually his son, may reflect the

hope for a peaceful transition in power and the need to maintain a world with
order and sense.

‘Abd al-Rahım passes over such issues and concentrates, instead, on an inventory
of some of the themes and images found in these “royal” elegies. As in most
elegies, the deceased is presented in an ideal fashion and, in this case, the deceased
sultan may attain near mythical status as the manly, pious, Muslim ruler and
defender of Islam. Here, ‘Abd al-Rahım fails to make a connection that others
have made regarding elegy and eulogy in general, namely their ability to portray,
to a significant degree, a society’s norms and values regarding relations between
ruler and ruled, husband and wife, parents and children, etc. However, ‘Abd
al-Rahım does draw attention to descriptions of royal funerals in many elegies
and their usefulness for reconstructing some of the important funeral rites and
rituals of the Mamluk period. Finally, ‘Abd al-Rahım notes that the elegies on
sultans, generals, and other important men of state usually praise the deceased and
seek consolation in his certain heavenly reward. In the case of such great sultans
as Baybars and Qalāwūn, some of their battles and achievements may be dramatically
and, to a degree factually, recounted and praised. Yet a few elegies have a sharper,
negative tone. Often short and sometimes in more folk poetic forms, these invectives
castigate the deceased for bad behavior and an immoral life, and offer a curse in
lieu of praise. ‘Abd al-Rahım suggests that this may have provided some solace to
those victimized by the deceased, while serving as a warning to living officials
who cared for their own reputations and legacies.

In chapter three, ‘Abd al-Rahım reviews elegies on the men of the pen, the
many religious scholars and litterateurs in Mamluk domains (pp. 116–66). These
elegies were often composed by colleagues and students and, too, by poets formerly
patronized by the deceased. Generally, the deceased is praised for his learning,
piety, generosity, and forbearance, and occasionally for his courage in facing the
infidels in battle, or for standing up for the community against unjust rule. Eminent
scholars, including Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728/1328) and Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d.
756/1355), were often the subject of many elegies, some of which mentioned the
deceased’s fields of learning and specific writings by name. Secretaries, too, were
praised in elegies for the power of their pens to do good and correct wrongs, and
poets offered consolation to the bereaved by lauding such pious legacies. References
to the Quran and hadith are frequent in these elegies, which often depict the
deceased as alive and well in heaven, in his writings, and in his obedient children
and learned students.

‘Abd al-Rahım reviews elegies on women in his fourth chapter (pp. 167–96).
He claims that there is a scarcity of these elegies. Certainly there are fewer elegies
for women than men, and ‘Abd al-Rahım is probably correct to attribute this to
women’s lower social status in the Mamluk period. Nevertheless, he cites many
examples and could have offered even more, especially had he known of Abū Ḥāyyān’s (d. 745/1344) many elegies for his grown and accomplished daughter Nuḍār (d. 730/1329). ² Such elegies by fathers for daughters and husbands for wives are a valuable and largely untapped resource for the study of male-female relations in the Mamluk period. Why ‘Abd al-Raḥīm segregated women relatives from the men is not clear, particularly as they are treated with the same respect as their male counterparts. Deceased wives of the elegist or of his colleagues are depicted as pious and generous, of good character, and sometimes learned. Deceased women may be likened to a buried treasure or a secluded maiden, and physical attributes may be lauded in ideal terms (i.e., a face like the full moon), which one finds, but less frequently, in elegies on male relatives. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm may be right to assume that women are more often compared to elements of nature, and men to civilization and learning, though this is by no means a hard and fast rule in Mamluk elegies. Moreover, when a wife’s death is likened to the setting of the sun, for instance, this may not denote the loss of physical beauty (especially if the wife was elderly), so much as to the poet losing the “light of his life.”

This raises one of the major short-comings of this book, namely the author’s apparent lack of analysis regarding nearly universal themes involving death, dying, and symbolic immortality. The eclipse of the sun or moon, the setting of the sun, moon, and stars, the broken branch, the wilting of the redolent flower, the departure of the traveler, and many other motifs occur time and again in world literature and art to symbolize, not just the loss of beauty and love, but above all death. Yet, they imply new life as the sun, moon, and stars will rise again, the leafless tree and dead flower will sprout anew in spring, while the traveler will safely arrive at a heavenly home. While ‘Abd al-Raḥīm is certainly aware of the symbolic associations of many such themes, he never fully acknowledges their essential function to place the sorrow of the bereaved in larger contexts (of nature, society, religion, etc), in order to assert that while the deceased is gone, they are not annihilated but live on in their legacies and, of course for Muslims, in heaven.³

In the fifth chapter, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm recounts many elegies composed on Muslim cities that were devastated by the Mongols or Crusaders, including Baghdad, Damascus, and Alexandria (pp. 197–253). Occasionally, a poet may attribute this catastrophe to God’s retribution against the sinful life of the city’s inhabitants though, more often than not, the tragedy is seen as a wake up call for Muslims to take up arms and defeat the infidel. While acknowledging dramatic and stylistic

²Homerin, “A Bird Ascends the Night.”
dimensions of these elegies, ‘Abd al-Rahîm also points to their possible historic value as some of the elegists were eye-witnesses to the destruction of the Muslim cities that they lament. Weapons and battles are sometimes described in detail, and while the infidels are often depicted as vicious dogs, filthy pigs, or other unsavory characters, the Mamluks are not always lauded as lions and heroes. This was especially the case in elegies on the sack of Alexandria in 767/1365, which resulted, in part, because the Mamluk forces fled the city without fighting.

‘Abd al-Rahîm gathers together a number of topics in his sixth chapter, including elegies on animals, broken drinking goblets, lost arrows, slave boys, singers, the banning of hashish and wine, and the loss of the good life of debauchery (pp. 254–301). These elegies are frequently works of humor and satire, and this chapter features many verses from the shadow plays of Ibn Dâniyâl (d. 710/1310). Elegies on the death of male slaves, however, are serious poems, and of some significance. Several recount the poet’s grief at the loss of a young slave boy, whom the poet was raising and educating as he had his own sons. Other elegies for youthful male slaves (ghîlman) resemble elegies for concubines in that love and the physical beauties of the young man are the focus of praise. Had ‘Abd al-Rahîm compared such elegies with those on concubines, instead of segregating men and women, he might have found that it is not the sex of the deceased so much as his/her social status that determines whether the deceased’s physical or moral features will be the major subject of praise.

‘Abd al-Rahîm devotes his seventh and final chapter to elements of form and style (pp. 303–401). Once again, this is a largely descriptive chapter, in which he takes up routine notions of poetic harmony and unity, which are easily achieved in the rithâ’ since its subject is the deceased and reflections on life and death. He notes the frequent quotation of the Quran and hadith as sources of consolation, particularly in assuring the bereaved that there is a life after death. He mentions some of the classical poets, including Abû Tammâm (d. ca. 232/845), al-Mutanabbî (d. 354/965), and al-Ma’arrî (d. 449/1058), frequently referred to in Mamluk elegies, and briefly discusses poetic influences. He also catalogs various stylistic elements, including the use of repetition, interrogatives, imperatives, etc., that elegists employed to heighten the tone and pitch of their poems. ‘Abd al-Rahîm draws attention to the frequent appearance of scholarly terms and jargon in elegies as indicative of their authors’ academic and scribal background, and he ends with a discussion of the rhetorical devices (badî’) that were quite popular in the Mamluk period. Unlike many scholars of Mamluk literature, ‘Abd al-Rahîm does not dismiss badî’ with contempt. Rather, he notes that if used in excess, it will distract the reader from the poem’s theme, while its judicious use may enhance the poem’s form and content. ‘Abd al-Rahîm argues forcefully that antithesis (tibâq) and paronomasia (jinâs) are particularly suited to elegy. Antithesis accords especially
well with elegy given the natural contrasts between life and death, joy and sorrow, night and day, etc.; as for paronomasia (jinās) and similar devices, when carefully applied they add to the musical qualities of any verse.

Despite these insights, ‘Abd al-Rahīm occasionally makes the common mistake of equating simplicity with sincerity, and rhetorical style with insincerity, a false dichotomy that has plagued the study of Arabic literature. For example, he cites the rhetorical verses composed by al-Ṣafadī on the death of Abū Ḥayyān’s daughter Nuḍār as being forced and artificial due to the use of rhetorical devices, yet had ‘Abd al-Rahīm read Abū Ḥayyān’s own elegies to his daughter, he would have found many of the same devices, and this applies to many poets of the time, including Ibn Nubātah who composed a number of elegies on his dead children. 4 Further, ‘Abd al-Rahīm questions the sincerity of emotions and grief underlying other elegies, particularly those composed on the children and women folk of colleagues, whom the poet may have seldom met due to social constraints of the period. It may well be true that most of these men did not know or interact with the female members of a colleagues’ family, though we do not know this for certain. However, this lack of personal contact does not render the elegists’ words insincere. Today, many of us send sympathy cards with verses that we never even composed, yet most of us are sincere in our expressions of condolences to others. I think that we must view the elegies from the Mamluk period in the same light. They were publicly recognized and, perhaps, expected forms of condolence exchanged among the learned and ruling classes of Mamluk society and, as such, an important means of social discourse about life and death, love and friendship. To question the sincerity of these elegies is to miss an important and quite intended function. 5 ‘Abd al-Rahīm should have understood this as he cites (p. 196) several “Thank You” poems composed in response to elegies previously received in sympathy for a lost loved one. While ‘Abd al-Rahīm focuses on stylistic similarities of the poems, he ignores their social dimension and relevance.

This is indicative of the major flaw in his study, which is the lack of critical analysis on many themes and issues. ‘Abd al-Rahīm never analyzes a complete elegy in any detail, and he often abridges his quotations without telling his reader. Moreover, he fails to read elegies from the Mamluk period in the larger context of elegy, in general, and, as is the case with many Arab scholars, he cites almost nothing by Western scholars relevant to his topic. To his credit, he has cited in his bibliography most of the many Arabic works written on rithā’. Despite its

shortcomings, *Fann al-Rithā‘ fi al-Shi‘r al-‘Arabī fi al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī al-Awwal* offers a detailed description of elegies composed in the Mamluk period, and a tantalizing glimpse into their importance for the study of Mamluk society.


**Reviewed by Niall Christie**, University of British Columbia and Corpus Christi College, Vancouver

This edited volume comprises eight articles dealing with a variety of issues related to the city of Jerusalem during the second/eighth to fifteenth/twentieth centuries. Of these, five are of direct relevance to the Mamluk period (648–922/1250–1517), while the others are likely to be more peripheral to the interests of the readership of this journal. All but one of the articles derive from a round-table discussion of Jerusalem in the Middle Ages held at the 28th Deutscher Orientalistentag in Bamberg in March 2001.

In the introduction, the editors set out the scope of their volume; they seek to explore the social rather than political or religious history of the city, focusing in particular on the interaction of its inhabitants with the urban fabric. In doing so, they present articles that make particular use of sources that are consulted less frequently by modern scholars than the historical chronicles, including legal documents, inscriptions, and architectural remains.

Given this emphasis, it is fitting that the first two articles, "Primary Sources on Social Life in Jerusalem in the Middle Ages," by Khader Salameh, and "The Arabic Stone Inscriptions in the Islamic Museum, al-Ḥaram ash-Sharif, Jerusalem," by Salameh and Robert Schick, introduce two such types of sources. In the first article, Salameh surveys the collections of documents held in three institutions in Jerusalem, the Aqṣā Mosque Library, the Islamic Museum, and the Shari‘ah Court at the Ḥaram al-Sharīf, which collectively include documents dating from the first/seventh to fourteenth/twentieth centuries, many of which are relevant for the study of the Mamluk period. Salameh pays particular attention to what these documents reveal about the role of *awqāf* (charitable endowments) in Jerusalem. The second article complements the first by drawing attention to the Arabic stone inscriptions found in the Islamic Museum in Jerusalem, which include tombstones and dedicatory, Quranic, and building inscriptions. Eleven examples, ranging in
date from the second/eighth to the thirteenth/nineteenth centuries (including three from the Mamluk period), are given in Arabic, Arabic transliteration, and English, with illustrations of the actual artifacts also being included.

The next article, "Manifestations of Private Piety: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Fatimid Jerusalem," by Andreas Kaplony, addresses the ways in which people of all three faiths reacted to the holiness of the city during the Fatimid period (358–492/969–1099). Drawing in particular on the Safarnāmah of Nāṣir-i Khusraw and the Faḍāʾil Bayt al-Maqdis of Ibn al-Murajjā al-Maqdisī, Kaplony shows that personal piety could manifest in a number of ways, including the performance of pilgrimages, the establishment of residence at holy sites, seeking to die and/or be buried in the holy city, donations of lamps, oil, and carpets, and the patronage of architectural work and institutions. Thus Kaplony explores religious observance as conducted by members of all social classes during the period.

Moving from the Fatimid to the Ayyubid period, the next two articles consider the attention paid to Jerusalem by Saladin (d. 589/1193) and his descendents. In "The Transformation of Latin Religious Institutions into Islamic Endowments by Saladin in Jerusalem," Johannes Pahlitzsch examines Saladin’s foundation of three religious institutions, a madrasah, a khānqāh, and a hospital, as part of his re-Islamization of the city after the Muslim conquest of 583/1187. Pahlitzsch shows that Saladin sought to ensure a smooth transition in the administration of both Muslim and non-Muslim religious institutions during the Muslim takeover, only changing their religious affiliations if such changes helped with this transition. An edition and translation of the waqfīyah (endowment document) of the khānqāh is included. Meanwhile Lorenz Korn, in "The Structure of Architectural Patronage in Ayyubid Jerusalem," considers Ayyubid architectural patronage in the city, demonstrating that the fact that relatively few buildings were founded by Saladin’s descendents (with the exception of his nephew al-Muʿazzam ʿIsá [d. 624/1227]) is indicative of the city’s decline, in the Ayyubids’ eyes, from a symbol of the jihad to an unimportant town that could be traded away for political ends.

The last three articles of the volume are concerned, either directly or indirectly, with the Mamluk period. Yehoshua Frenkel’s "The Relationship Between Mamluk Officials and the Urban Civilian Population: A Study of Some Legal Documents from Jerusalem" uses a variety of waqfīyāt, petitions, decrees, and death registers to show how these documents can shed light on the history of those individuals normally neglected by the historical narratives. Frenkel demonstrates that while the Mamluk rulers used awqāf as a means of establishing their legitimacy as rulers, the lower classes could also make use of the institution in a variety of ways to assert themselves in the public sphere. Frenkel includes texts and translations of two decrees in support of his argument.

Joseph Drory addresses the issue of natives of Jerusalem working in the heartland
of the Mamluk realm in ‘Jerusalemites in Egyptian Society during the Mamluk Period.’ Drory notes that both medieval sources and modern scholars regard inhabitants of the holy city as having contributed little to the Mamluk state. Drory proposes to disprove this assertion, which he does by presenting case studies of three chief judges of Jerusalemite origin who became highly influential in Egyptian religious and political circles in the eighth/fourteenth to tenth/sixteenth centuries, showing that contrary to received wisdom, natives of the city did rise to positions of considerable prominence in Egyptian society.

The final article of the volume, “The Walls and Gates of Jerusalem Before and After Sultan Süleyman’s Rebuilding Project of 1538–40,” by Mohammad Ghosheh, surveys the development of the city’s wall and gate defenses from the Ayyubid to the early Ottoman periods. Much of Ghosheh’s article is devoted to the Mamluk period, and he shows that contrary to the general opinion, the Mamluk city did have some walls, built at least in part through the efforts of the city’s population, as is apparent from statements in several court records. Ottoman court records also prove to be useful, revealing information about the work conducted on the walls of Jerusalem during the early Ottoman period. Ghosheh concludes by noting that current scholarly opinions about the defenses of Jerusalem and the historical sources that refer to them must be re-evaluated in the light of the new evidence contained in the Mamluk and Ottoman court records, of which he provides illustrations and edited texts of several. The volume concludes with a bibliography.

As should by now be apparent, Governing the Holy City is an important volume for its contributions to modern understanding of the social history of Jerusalem. However, it is even more important for its use of hitherto largely neglected legal documents and inscriptions from archives and museums in Jerusalem. Scholars of the medieval Middle East, and the Mamluk period in particular, are beginning to make increasing use of such sources in their research; this volume, with its surveys of available resources and its presentation and use of numerous texts and translations of such sources, can only help to encourage this healthy trend.
In a 2004 review for this journal of an edition of one work by al-Šafadî (d. 764/1363) and a study of another, I noted the burgeoning interest in this author in both the Middle East and the West, and expressed the hope that the trend would continue. I am gratified to say that it has not only continued but intensified. The Beirut-Wiesbaden edition of al-Šafadî’s massive biographical dictionary, *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, now lacks only three of its thirty volumes; his dictionary of contemporaries, the *A’yān al-‘Aṣr*, has been available since 1998 in a serviceable if not optimal six-volume edition; and his voluminous correspondence (almost a biographical dictionary in itself, as well as a literary anthology), the *Alḥān al-Sawāji’*, appeared in two volumes in an excellent edition in 2004.

Muḥammad ‘Āyish is one of several recent enthusiastic converts to Šafadî studies. Besides the *Law’at al-Shākî*, under review here, he has also edited al-Šafadî’s amusing parody of the genre of literary commentary, the *Ikhtīrā‘ al-Khurā‘*, and is promising an edition of the *Tashnîf al-Sam’ bi-Insikāb al-Dam*, one of al-Šafadî’s many “theme” anthologies, this one focusing on tears. But the field is getting crowded. A first critical edition of the *Tashnîf* appeared already in 2000 (it was published earlier, uncritically, in Cairo in 1903), as did one of the *Ikhtīrā‘* (never previously published). In 2003 al-Šafadî’s “beautiful boy” anthology, *Al-Ḥusn al-Šarī‘ fi Mi’at Malāh*, was edited for the first time. But the prize for industry at this point must go to Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Majīd Lāshīn, who in 2005 published

---

first editions of al-Šafadī’s *Al-Rawḍ al-Bāsim wa-al-‘Arf al-Nāsim* (a general anthology of his own poetry), his *Šarf al-‘Ayn* (a “theme” book on eyes), and his *Al-Hawl al-Mu‘jib fī al-Qawl al-Mu‘jib* (one of a series of studies on particular rhetorical figures).8 Most importantly, Lāshīn has also published the most comprehensive biography and study of al-Šafadī to date, an impressive work that will be basic for all future Šafadī studies.9

If it is his, the *Law’at al-Shākī wa-Dam’at al-Bākī* (The Sufferer’s pain and weeper’s tear) must count as al-Šafadī’s most enduringly popular work. At least twenty-five manuscripts of it are known, it was the first of his works to be printed (in a lithograph edition in Cairo in 1857), and it was republished at least a dozen times between 1864 and 1922, in Cairo, Istanbul, Hims, and Tunis. In form it is a *maqāmah* (also described in some manuscripts as a *risālah*), but the two terms were virtually synonymous in the Mamluk period), a relatively brief prose narrative, giving an account in the first person of the narrator’s love affair with a young Turkish soldier. The plot is minimal—the two meet by chance, fall in love on the spot, arrange to meet a week later, spend a happy night of love, and then part—but proceeds extremely slowly, since the point is not the story but the language, which is an elaborately rhetorical rhymed prose, punctuated at regular intervals by short passages in poetry. The verses, whose authors are never identified (this was conventional in the *maqāmah* genre), usually recast what has just been said in prose, a procedure that reflects the popularity of both *ḥall al-nazm* (prosification) and *nazm al-manthūr* (versification) among the littérateurs of the period.10 The improbabilities of the plot—of which there are many, such as the reproaches the beloved directs at the lover when they first meet, accusing him of abandoning the good sense he knows he has always shown in the past by not falling in love—are to be explained by the fact that the entire exercise is driven by the conventions of love poetry, not in any sense by reality.11

In the introduction to his new edition of this text (the first since 1922, to the best of my knowledge), Muhammad ‘Āyish briefly reviews al-Šafadī’s life and works (a very incomplete and rather perfunctory list); summarizes the *Law’ah*’s plot (laudably avoiding any editorial comment on its homoerotic theme); lists

10Both devices have been analyzed by Amidu Sanni, *The Arabic Theory of Prosification and Versification* (Beirut-Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998).
some of the previous printed editions of the work and describes the manuscripts on which he has relied for his own; discusses the problem of its authorship; and explains how he has gone about editing it. All of this is presented clearly and succinctly, but there are some issues that merit comment.

The most important of these is the question of authorship. ‘Āyish is sufficiently cautious about this that the cover of his book reads “attributed to (al-mansūb li-) al-Ṣafadī.” In fact, as he explains in some detail, while the majority of manuscripts do in fact attribute the work to al-Ṣafadī, there are others that assign it to no fewer than four other authors: Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥilli (d. 752/1351), Ibn Ḥaṭḥīb Dārayyā (d. 811/1408), Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥarfīrī (d. 967/1560), and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Māridīnī (ninth/fifteenth c.). The only one of these he takes seriously, however, is Zayn al-Dīn, since that attribution appears in both the Shadharāt al-Dhahab of Ibn al-‘Imād and the Kashf al-Zunjūn of Ḥajjī Khalīfah (whereas an attribution to al-Ṣafadī appears nowhere in the bio-bibliographical tradition, nor does al-Ṣafadī seem ever to mention the title in his own works, despite his habit of frequent cross-referencing among them). ‘Āyish is nevertheless inclined to accept the attribution to al-Ṣafadī, although offering no real arguments for it beyond a vague claim of similarity of style between the Lawʿah and al-Ṣafadī’s correspondence as reproduced in his Alḥān al-Sawājī.

Lāshīn has now gone into this question in somewhat greater detail. He is also inclined to grant al-Ṣafadī’s authorship, but besides appealing, like ‘Āyish, to style and to the preponderance of the manuscript evidence, he also notes that most of the (unattributed) poetry in the Lawʿah also appears (attributed) in al-Ṣafadī’s other works, especially in the Wafi, and lists quite a number of examples, including a two-line poem that is not only in fact by al-Ṣafadī himself but serves as the introduction to one of his unpublished works, a collection of literary exchanges from the past with the title Al-Mujāraḥ wa-al-Mujāzah fī Mujārayāt al-Shuʿara’. He also notes that at one point the beloved, addressing the narrator, refers to “your imam al-Shafi’ī,” which is exactly how al-Ṣafadī, a fervent adherent of the Shafiʿi school of Islamic law, would have done it; and, less convincingly, argues that the narrator’s describing himself as a sabb dam’uḥu mithl ismihi (“a besotted one whose tears are like his name”) is a reference to al-Ṣafadī’s personal name, Khalīl, which literally means “close friend,” the intended meaning being that the narrator’s tears (which do appear in great abundance throughout the text) are his inseparable companion. (It seems more likely, however, that the reference is to the word sabb itself, which can mean “poured out” as well as “besotted.”)

This question cannot be settled in a review, but a few further considerations may be noted. ‘Āyish has done an admirable job of tracking down most of the

---

12Lāshīn, Al-Ṣafadī, 95-98.
authors of the Law’ah’s poems (87 out of 145), and they fit quite well with al-Ṣafadī’s authorship. At least five are by al-Ṣafadī himself (‘Āyish notes three, to which Lāshīn has added one, and I have identified another); seven are by his colleague and sometime friend Ibn Nubātah; a number of others are by other colleagues and friends, including one by Ibn al-Wardī and another by his early mentor Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd; and none seem to postdate his own lifetime. Were the work later, one would expect the occasional appearance of a later poet.

On the other hand, there are serious questions about the relationship between this work and some other titles mentioned in contemporary sources. One of al-Ṣafadī’s very first works was a maqāmah (or risālah) titled ‘Ibrat al-Labīb bi-‘Athrat al-Kā’ib (A Lesson for the perspicacious from the stumbling of the disconsolate [lover]), which he himself tells us he composed in emulation of a maqāmah enjoying enormous popularity in Cairo when he arrived there in 727/1327, the Marātī’ al-Ghizlān of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir.13 The text of the latter has been tracked down by Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila in al-Nuwayrī’s Niḥayat al-Arab (where the author but not the title is given), and is in fact an account of an affair with a young Turkish soldier.14 Al-Ṣafadī’s ‘Ibrah (which is also in some manuscripts called “Al-Maqāmah al-Aybakiyyah,” suggesting that it was his only, or at least his most famous, maqāmah) has never been published; but any temptation to identify it with the Law’ah would seem to founder on the fact that both the ‘Ibrah and the Law’ah are included, side by side, in a Bodleian manuscript (MS Sale 34). Further complicating matters is the fact that al-Ṣafadī informs us that at some point he studied with Ibn Fadl Allāh al-‘Umarī the latter’s Dam‘at al-Bākī,15 about which nothing further appears to be known, while some manuscripts (and one early publication) of the Law’ah, while attributing it to al-Ṣafadī, call it Dam‘at al-Bākī wa-Law‘at al-Shākī. One can only hope that further investigation of manuscripts of the Law’ah, and the now long overdue publication of the ‘Ibrah, will help clear up this situation.

The resources ‘Āyish had mustered to establish his text are very far from ideal. For his base (aṣl), he has relied on a 1331/1912 Cairo printing, apparently purely on the basis of availability, since he himself points out its poor quality. This he has collated with two relatively recent manuscripts from the library of Maḥmūd Sab‘ al-Mustashār (not further identified) in Cairo, the first (“S”) dated

13Al-Ṣafadī, A’yān al-‘Aṣr, 3:496.
15Al-Ṣafadī, Wāfī, 8:255; A’yān, 1:420.
1272 and attributing the work to Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī and the second (’D’) undated (?) and attributing it to Ibn Khaṭīb Dārayyā. Besides frequent minor textual variations among these, manuscript ’Ṣ’ frequently supplies additional words and phrases, which the editor has mostly included in his text, in brackets. The apparatus lays out all significant variants in lucid fashion. I have in turn collated the text with the 1922 Cairo edition by Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Ḥārūn, which supplies yet more minor variations, lacks almost all the additions from ’Ṣ’, and turns out to have a major lacuna that becomes apparent only from the collation. (Ḥārūn also supplies some attributions for the poetry, which do not always agree with those of ʿĀyish.)

In textual terms, then, we are hardly better off than we were in 1922, and must continue to await a truly critical edition. ʿĀyish’s printed text is certainly easier to read than the older ones, however, and he has supplied quite a lot of vocalization, almost all correct, and is sensitive to both the meaning and the scansion of the poetry. His work in tracking down the verses in other sources is to be appreciated. A table of verses at the end (first rhyme word, meter, author if known, number of lines, page number) is helpful. The only other end matter is a bibliography of primary sources, but for a short work of this kind no further indices would be expected.
List of Recent Publications


Arabic Transliteration System


The definite article is always lower case, except when it is the first word in an English sentence. The *hamzah* is not represented when beginning a word, following a prefixed preposition or conjunction, or following the definite article. Assimilation of the *lām* of the definite article before “sun” letters is disregarded. Final inflections of verbs are retained, except in pausal form; final inflections of nouns and adjectives are not represented, except preceding suffixes and except when verse is romanized. Vocalic endings of pronouns, demonstratives, prepositions, and conjunctions are represented. The hyphen is used with the definite article, conjunctions, inseparable prepositions, and other prefixes. Note the exceptional treatment of the preposition *li-* followed by the article, as in *līl-sultān*. Note also the following exceptional spellings: Allāh, billāh, lillāh, bismillāh, mi’ah, ibn (for both initial and medial forms). Words not requiring diacritical marks, though following the conventions outlined above, include all Islamic dynasties, as well as the following terms: Quran, sultan, amir, imam, shaykh, Sunni, Shi'i, Sufi. Common place-names should take the common spelling in American English. Names of archaeological sites should follow the convention of the excavator.

© 2006, 2012 Middle East Documentation Center, The University of Chicago.