

KUMAKURA WAKAKO

UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

Who Handed over Mamluk Land Registers to the Ottomans? A Study on the Administrators of Land Records in the Late Mamluk Period

Few details are known about the handover of the Mamluk land registers during the transition of rule from the Mamluks to the Ottomans. On the one hand, the empirical studies of Nicolas Michel and ‘Imād Abū Ghāzī have shown that some Ottoman land registers contain valuable Mamluk land records.¹ Such documentary evidence convinces us that the Mamluk land registers were brought to the Ottomans after the conquest in 923/1517. On the other hand, though, little attention has so far been paid to the process of the handover and the actors involved in it. This lack of concern has meant that we have accepted Stanford Shaw’s thesis that a person named ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn al-Jī‘ān discovered the Mamluk registers, despite the fact that he had already died by the time in question.² In this situation, Michel’s recent study offers us a great many details about the process of the Ottoman collection of the Mamluk registers. Yet it does not pay full attention to the identification of the person who handed over the Mamluk registers to the Ottomans, even though it points out the contradiction concerning ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn al-Jī‘ān.³

The present article aims at a close reconsideration of the handover of the Mamluk land registers to the Ottomans in order to reidentify the person in charge of the handover. This is significant, since by identifying this person we can know who administered the state land records in the Mamluk period and, furthermore, we can clarify how land documents were administered under Mamluk rule. In other words, such a study offers us fundamental knowledge about the bureaucrats who administered the records and the types of relationships that existed among

¹Nicolas Michel, “Les rizaq iḥbāsiyya, terres agricoles en mainmorte dans l’Égypte mamelouke et ottoman: Étude sur les Dafātir al-aḥbās ottomans,” *Annales Islamologiques* 30 (1996); ‘Imād Abū Ghāzī, *Ṭaṭawwur al-Ḥiyāzah al-Zirā‘iyah Zaman al-Mamālik al-Ḥarakisah: Dirāsah fī Bay‘ Amlāk Bayt al-Māl* (Cairo, 2000).

²For Shaw’s thesis, see Stanford Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt 1517–1798* (Princeton, 1962), 18; idem, “The Land Law of Ottoman Egypt (960/1553): A Contribution to the Study of Landholding in the Early Years of Ottoman Rule in Egypt,” *Der Islam* 38 (1963): 106–8, 126–27.

³Nicolas Michel, “Les circassiens avaient brûlé les registres,” *Conquête ottomane de l’Égypte (1517): Arrière-plan, impact, échos* (Leiden, 2013), 225–68. The author suspects who the person was, though the fact remains unclear (ibid., 244, n. 64).



them. Considering that the Mamluk land system, what we call the “*iqṭāʿ* system,” was the basis of the Mamluk regime,⁴ we can assume that the administration of the land records was an essential part of that regime.

Nevertheless, while a few studies on the Mamluk bureaucracy exist, the scholarship has hardly gone beyond the work of Bernadette Martel-Thoumian.⁵ This indicates the extent to which we have tended to focus on patronage and networks of the military elite when considering the Mamluk regime, and the comparatively little attention that we have paid to the functions of the civilian bureaucracy.⁶ To understand the overall picture of the Mamluk regime, we must produce more studies on the bureaucracy. In addition, studying the handover of the Mamluk land registers allows us to get a step closer to the continuities and changes that occurred between the Mamluks and the Ottomans, in terms of their land records as well as their bureaucracy. Recently a few studies have appeared dealing with the period of the transition of rule.⁷ We need to explore the period further, removing the boundaries that lie between the Mamluk and Ottoman periods.

Process of the Handover of the Mamluk Land Registers

The handover of the Mamluk land registers to the Ottomans is evidenced, over and above some mention in the chronicles, by two sources, the “Land Law” and the Ottoman land registers *daftar jayshī* (The Military Register) and *daftar*

⁴Sato defined the Mamluk regime as the ruling system that functioned through the close ties that connected the sultan and military elite, as well as urban society and rural society, by means of the distribution of *iqṭāʿ*s by the sultan, and *iqṭāʿ* management by the military elite who held *iqṭāʿ*s. See Sato Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam: Sultans, Muqṭaʿs and Fallahun* (Leiden, 1997), 146.

⁵Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l'administration dans l'État militaire mamlūk, 9e/14e siècle* (Damascus, 1991). Carl F. Petry has studied the career patterns of the civilian elite and their networks; see Carl F. Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981).

⁶Recent studies on the civilian bureaucracy have steadily mitigated this tendency. For example, see Igarashi Daisuke (五十嵐 大介), “Kōki mamulūkuchō no kanryō to jizenjigyō: Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ no jirei o chūshin ni (後期マムルーク朝の官僚と慈善事業—ザイン・アッディーン・アブドゥルバーサイトの事例を中心に—) [Bureaucrats and Their Charitable Works in the Late Mamluk Period with a Focus on the Case of Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ],” *Afuro yūrashia tairiku no toshi to kokka* (アフロ・ユーラシア大陸の都市と国家) [Cities and States of the Afro-Eurasia Continent] (Tokyo, 2014), 489–537; Ōta (Tsukada) Erina (太田(塚田)絵里奈), “Kōki mamulūkuchō yūryoku kanryō no jitsuzō: Zayn al-Dīn ibn Muzhir no kakei to keireki (後期マムルーク朝有力官僚の実像—ザイン・アッディーン・イブン・ムズヒルの家系と経歴) [Zayn al-Dīn ibn Muzhir: The Career and Lineage of an Influential Bureaucrat in the Late Mamluk Period],” *Shigaku* (史学) 83-2/3 (2014), 163–207.

⁷Michel’s works explore the period of the transition of rule. See, for example, Michel, “Les rizaq iḥbāsiyya”; idem, “Disparition et persistance de l’*iqṭāʿ* en Égypte après la conquête ottomane,” *Turcica* 41 (2009).

aḥbāsī (The Charity Register). The “Land Law” consists of the norms for judging the legitimacy of vested land rights, i.e., *rizqah* (pl. *rizaq*: estates granted as pensions), *waqf* (pl. *awqāf*: charitable endowments), and *milk* (pl. *amlāk*: private land), and was promulgated under the rule of the governor of Egypt ‘Alī Pasha (r. 956–61/1549–53). The law prescribed that the legitimacy of land rights had to be judged by collating them with the records in the Mamluk land registers. This demonstrates that some Mamluk land registers had been handed over to the Ottomans and were in use under the new rule.⁸ In addition, *daftar jayshī* and *daftar aḥbāsī* offer us documentary evidence of this event. They record the legality of land rights judged according to the “Land Law,” consisting of summary records for each village and detailed records for each parcel of land rights. In each record, the right side of the paper shows the Mamluk records reprinted from a Mamluk register, and the left side shows the Ottoman land survey records of 933/1527–28.⁹ We know of a few Mamluk land registers handed over to the Ottomans from *daftar jayshī* and *daftar aḥbāsī* because the names of the registers from which the Mamluk land records were reprinted were always clarified by indicating the source, for example, “*bi-daftar* XXX.” This information tells us that the Mamluk records in *daftar jayshī* were almost all based on the Mamluk land register called *daftar al-jarākisah min al-jarīdah al-qadīmah* (The Circassian Register from the Old Register, hereafter referred to as the Circassian Register), and those in *daftar aḥbāsī* were based on the *daftar al-aḥbās zaman al-jarākisah* (The Charity Register of the Circassian Time); in addition, several types of Mamluk land register, such as *daftar al-amlāk wa-al-awqāf* (Register of milks and waqfs) and *daftar al-iqtā‘āt* (Register of *iqtā‘*s) were also utilized when they lacked the necessary information.¹⁰

⁸Shaw, “The Land Law,” 114–15. Shaw transliterated the text of the law (*ibid.*, 118–26) and translated it into English (*ibid.*, 126–37).

⁹For the compilation process and the contents of *daftar jayshī* and *daftar aḥbāsī*, see Michel, “Les rizaq iḥbāsiyya”; ‘Imād Abū Ghāzī, “Dafātir al-Rizaq al-Iḥbāsiyyah wa-al-Jayshīyah wa-Ahammiyyathā al-Arshifiyyah wa-al-Tārikhīyah,” *Al-Ruznāme* 2 (2004): 1–33; Kumakura Wakako (熊倉 和歌子), “Mamurū kuchō tochi seidoshi ni okeru shin shiryō: ejiputo kokuritsu monjokan shozō osumanchō tochi daichō (マムルーク朝土地制度史研究における新史料: エジプト国立文書館所蔵オスマン朝土地台帳『軍務台帳』) [A New Source for the Historical Study of the Mamluk Land System: The Ottoman Land Register *Daftar Jayshī* in the Egyptian National Archives],” *Annales of the Japan Association for Middle East Studies* (日本中東学会年報) 25 (2009), 59–81.

¹⁰For the registers quoted in *daftar aḥbāsī* and *daftar jayshī*, see Michel, “Les rizaq iḥbāsiyya,” 166–76; Kumakura Wakako (熊倉 和歌子), “Kōki mamurū kuchō ni okeru ejiputo tochi monjo gyōsei no shosō: osuman chōki ‘Gunmu daichō’ ni miru mamurū kuchō tochi daichō to sono riyō (後期マムルーク朝におけるエジプト土地文書行政の諸相: オスマン朝期『軍務台帳』に見るマムルーク朝土地台帳とその利用) [Administration of Egyptian Land Documents in the Later Mamluk Period: Land Survey Registers of the Mamluk Dynasty Recorded in the *Daftar Jayshī* from the Early Ottoman Period],” *Ochanomizu Shigaku* (お茶の水史学) 53 (2009), 52–75.

As to the process of the handover of the Mamluk land registers in the early years of Ottoman Egypt, Shaw's thesis concerning the framework of the handover of the Mamluk land registers has been accepted for a long time.¹¹ Shaw spoke of the discovery of the Mamluk land registers during the early period of Ottoman rule in Egypt in explaining the process of the establishment of Ottoman land policy.¹² We know from his account that there were three stages in the handover of the Mamluk land registers. The first was in 1522, when Ottoman officials discovered that the Mamluk land registers, which were said to have been burned or scattered, had been concealed in their own homes and among less important registers in the treasury by the scribes who had served the previous regime. In 1523, Muṣṭafá Pasha (r. 928–29/1522–23) ordered that the registers be returned and that the treasury be searched for them, though with little success. The second stage was in 1524, when the Ottoman governor Aḥmad Pasha (r. 929–30/1523–24) revolted against Ottoman rule. During the revolt, the scribes from the previous regime who joined him brought out the registers which they had concealed and used them to collect the money he needed to enforce his independent regime, though his attempt was ultimately put down. As a result, the Mamluk registers remained in the possession of the Ottoman treasury and were made use of as the main guide for the ensuing Ottoman cadastral survey of 933/1527–28. The final stage was in 1553, when the "Land Law" was promulgated. Although Shaw made little mention of the background to this in his argument, the text of the law shows that some time before the promulgation, an official named 'Abd al-Qādir of the Jī'ān family, whom Shaw identified in a note as Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Qādir ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Jī'ān, was ordered to search out the Mamluk registers, and many of them were subsequently uncovered.¹³

However, this thesis passes over the first steps of the process. As we shall see, certain chronicles indicate that some Mamluk registers were handed over to the Ottomans soon after the conquest. Thus the Ottomans must have had the opportunity to acquire the Mamluk registers immediately after the conquest. And, more importantly, this thesis incorporates the critical contradiction that Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Qādir ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Jī'ān, whom Shaw identified as the discoverer of the Mamluk registers, had died in 878/1473, meaning he was no longer alive at the time of the Ottoman conquest. The text of the "Land Law" does

¹¹After Shaw, Michel discusses the discovery and handover of the Mamluk land registers with more detailed information obtained from documentary evidence. See Michel, "Les rizaq iḥbāsiyya," 123, 169; Michel, "Les circassiens."

¹²Shaw, "The Land Law," 106–9, 114–15.

¹³Shaw, "The Land Law," 127, n. 4. For Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Qādir ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Jī'ān, see Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden-Cairo, 1961–75), 3:91, and also person no. 21 in fig. 1 below.

not tell us exactly when ‘Abd al-Qādir uncovered the Mamluk registers, but the event certainly occurred under Ottoman rule. Shaw’s interpretation is therefore wrong. Who then was the ‘Abd al-Qādir of the Jī‘ān family?

To answer this question, we need to reconsider the situation in which the Mamluk registers were handed over at the time of the conquest by analyzing the historical sources that include accounts of the submission of the Mamluk registers to the Ottomans when the Ottomans started to rule Egypt. The sources I deal with here are the chronicles of Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 930/1524) and Ibn Zunbul (d. ca. 960/1552). The accounts about the situation of the Mamluk registers after the Ottoman conquest in each are as follows:

(a) Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i‘ al-Zuhūr*, 5:161

On 25 Muḥarram 923/17 February 1517, the *daftardār* granted al-Sharafī Yūnus al-Ustādār a gilt garment of velvet and appointed him as a consultant for tax revenue sources in the villages of Sharqīyah province in order to measure the villages and survey the *iqṭā’*s of the Circassian mamluks there, as well as the *rizaq* and the *waqfs*. Therefore he took lists (*qawā’im*) from the Jī‘ān family and went away to the province.

(b) Ibn Zunbul, *Wāqi‘at al-Sulṭān al-Ghūrī ma‘a Salīm al-‘Uthmānī*, 180¹⁴

[In 923/1517] the sultan [Selīm I] said to amir Khāyrbak “I want to know the tax revenue sources and the revenues in Egypt.” “Oh king, the only one who knows about that is the qadi Abū Bakr ibn al-Jī‘ān, a member of the Jī‘ān family,” Khāyrbak replied. Then the sultan summoned the qadi. When he arrived, Khāyrbak said to him “The sultan wants you to report the expected annual revenue for Egypt.” The qadi answered, “I will bring you the report tomorrow.” He presented all the registers (*dafātīr*) he brought and left. And he came up the next day, bringing the report in which all the land tax (*kharāj*) at the time of the conquest was written down.

The words that indicate what was handed over to an Ottoman official and the sultan respectively are “lists” (*qawā’im*) and “registers” (*dafātīr*). The “lists” in (a) are what the official received in order to conduct his land survey, and the “registers” in (b) are what Selīm I ordered to be submitted so he could know details of taxes in Egypt. Both must have been Mamluk land records, though we do not know

¹⁴Ibn Zunbul, *Wāqi‘at al-Sulṭān al-Ghūrī ma‘a Salīm al-‘Uthmānī*, ed. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im ‘Āmir (Cairo, 1997).

whether they were copies of the original ones or not. The sources tell us that the documents were uneventfully handed to the new regime when Selīm I was surveying tax revenue sources in Egypt.¹⁵

However, these records brought to the Ottoman government must have been only part of the whole and so incomplete.¹⁶ This speculation is supported by the fact that the land survey records of Fayyum province in the fiscal year 1517¹⁷ did not refer to any of the Mamluk land records, but only to the testimony submitted to the tax investigating commission.¹⁸ Moreover, on 17 Jumādā I 929/3 April 1523, Muṣṭafā Pasha ordered the Jīʿān family to bring the registers (*defterler*) to the citadel, and then ordered them to compile the *timār* (i.e., *iqṭāʿ*), *waqf*, and *milk* registers.¹⁹ This event clearly shows us that the bulk of the Mamluk registers were yet to be fully managed under the Ottoman government, at least down to the time the order was issued by Muṣṭafā Pasha. In 931/1525, after the revolt

¹⁵For the land survey, see Ibn Iyās, *Badāʿiʿ*, 5:149, 161–62.

¹⁶Michel, “Les circassiens,” 248. In fact, the Mamluk registers were not burnt or lost but were managed within the existing organization, which means that the Ottomans did not make positive efforts to involve themselves in management in the early years of the conquest.

¹⁷The land survey records are bound together with the Ayasofya manuscript of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Nābulusī’s *Tārīkh al-Fayyūm* (Fakhr al-Dīn ʿUthmān al-Nābulusī, “Kitāb Izhār Ṣanʿat al-Ḥayy al-Qayyūm fī Tartīb Bilād al-Fayyūm,” Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS. Ayasofya 2960). The whole manuscript consists of 175 folios, with the last three (fols. 172v–175v) devoted to the records. They contain records of twenty-seven villages in Fayyum province that were the financial resources of the *dīwān al-dhakhīrah* (Bureau of the Sultan’s Fisc). For further details about the manuscript, see Kumakura Wakako (熊倉 和歌子), “Nābulusīcho *Faiyūmu no rekishi* ayasofiya shahon ni heiroku sareta osumanchō ejiputo tōchi shonen no chōzei chōsa kiroku (ナーブルスィー著『ファイユームの歴史』アヤソフィア写本に併録されたオスマン朝エジプト統治初年の徴税調査記録) [Tax Survey Records of the First Year of the Ottoman Rule in Egypt, Contained in the Ayasofya Manuscript with Fakhr al-Dīn al-Nābulusī’s *Tārīkh al-Fayyūm*],” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* (アジア・アフリカ言語文化研究) 89 (2015): 79–118.

¹⁸The record of Sīnarū village shows that the tax investigating commission relied on testimony for the lease that the persons in charge of the tax report possessed when they confirmed the tax levied on the village. This demonstrates that the Ottomans did not fully manage the Mamluk land records at the time. The following record is written after the names of the persons in charge of the tax report are registered: “According to the things that they showed in their hands, that is both the testimony of the lease from Jān Bulāṭ Abū Tursayn, who was the *iqṭāʿ* holder of the village, dated 20 Rajab 917/13 October 1511 and his handwritten contract and the receipt with his noble handwritings, the total sum (of *kharāj*): 150,000 dirhams, *diyāfah* (tributary goods): as the price for twenty-five pairs of local geese per year, 1,500 dirhams.” See MS Ayasofya 2960, fol. 174r; Kumakura, “Tax Survey Records of the First Year of the Ottoman Rule in Egypt,” 103. See also its transcription in *ibid.*, iv.

¹⁹Al-Diyārbakrī, “Tercūme en-nūzheh es-seniyyeh fī zikr el-ḥulefā vel-mülūk el-miṣriyyeh,” British Library MS Add. 7846, fols. 288a, 288b. See also Michel, “Disparition et persistance de l’*iqṭāʿ*,” 259; *idem*, “Les circassiens,” 233–34.



of Aḥmad Pasha, the governor Ibrāhīm Pasha (r. 931–32/ 1525–26) promulgated *ḳānūnnāme-i miṣır*, in which standards for judging the legality of land holdings that had been set during the Mamluk period, such as *iqṭā*'s, military *rizaq* (*rizaq jayshī*) and charity *rizaq* (*rizaq aḥbāsī*), were stipulated. The stipulation did not apply the method of collating the land records with the Mamluk land registers to judge the legitimacy of land rights. In addition, the cadastral survey registers of the fiscal year 933/1527–28 were compiled without reference to the Mamluk land records.²⁰ This indicates that the Ottomans had not completed the collection of the Mamluk land registers by that time, and what they did have was not enough for practical use. It was only when the Mamluk registers could be used practically that it became possible to promulgate the “Land Law.” In short, following the conquests, a portion of the Mamluk land registers had been handed over to the Ottomans in several stages, so that by the time the governor promulgated the “Land Law” the Ottomans had acquired most of them. Who was it then who was involved in the various steps? Who played the major role in the handover of the Mamluk registers? To reveal the protagonist, we must look at the preface to the “Land Law.”

(c) Preface to the “Land Law”²¹

Since the original Mamluk registers (*aṣl Çerâkise defterler*) were dispersed at the time of the conquest, a person named ‘Abd al-Qādir, a member of the Jī‘ān family, who had served as the scribe of military lands (*kâtib-i arâzî-i Ceys*) during the time of the Mamluk sultans and for some time thereafter, was summoned into the presence of the nobles (*şerîfler*), and by means of all sorts of coaxing and importunities and with great persistence, many of the dispersed registers were uncovered and most of the remaining ones were also found hidden in the registers kept in the treasury of Cairo.

This account does not tell us exactly when and by whom ‘Abd al-Qādir was summoned. While Shaw translated *şerîfler* as “governor,” i.e., ‘Alī Pasha, I am not certain whether this is correct. Therefore I have provisionally translated the term directly, considering that it may be possible to interpret this to mean that ‘Abd al-Qādir was summoned before the time of ‘Alī Pasha. Who then was this ‘Abd al-Qādir? As we have seen, it is difficult to support Shaw’s opinion that he was

²⁰The land survey of 933/1527–28 was one of the systematic surveys carried out in the early years of Ottoman rule. The records were thereafter positioned as the basic records for Ottoman land administration. For details of the survey and the records, see Muḥammad ‘Afifī, *Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Iqtisādīyah fī Miṣr fī al-‘Aṣr al-‘Uthmānī* (Cairo, 1991); Michel, “Les rizaq iḥbāsiyya,” 122.

²¹Shaw, “The Land Law,” 118–19, 127. This English translation is based on Shaw’s, with revisions.

Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Jī‘ān, as there is no one in the Jī‘ān family who fits. Moreover, the “Land Law” indicates that the ‘Abd al-Qādir of the Jī‘ān family was ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn Malakī. This is confusing because his family name was not Jī‘ān but Malakī.²² Who was this person? How is it that he was identified as a member of the Jī‘ān family?

The key must be the Jī‘ān family, whose members were also involved in the first stage of the process: Account (a) tells us they submitted “the lists” while the person in (b) was a qadi (judge) named Abū Bakr ibn al-Jī‘ān (whose name, however, we cannot find in the chronicles and biographies).²³ We encounter the Jī‘ān family again when Muṣṭafá Pasha ordered them to bring the registers to the citadel in 929/1523. The common feature linking these events is the involvement of members of the Jī‘ān family. These accounts indicate that the family, which features frequently in the Mamluk land registers, was closely connected with the administration of the Mamluk land documents, at least at the time of, and after, the Ottoman conquest.

The Jī‘ān Family

The Jī‘ān family was one of the notable families of Egypt. They had been converted from Coptic Christianity, and produced many bureaucrats.²⁴ They emerged into the political spotlight in the reign of al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh (r. 815–24/1412–21) and remained important political figures throughout the late Mamluk period. Ibn Iyās writes of them as follows:

The Jī‘ān family has served seventeen sultans so far. They have managed the *dīwān al-jaysh* (military office) and the secretariats of the sultan’s private treasury since the beginning of the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy (r. 825–42/1422–38). They became famous at the beginning of the reign of al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh [and have remained so] for approximately one hundred and twenty years. They were not slighted, confined to prison, flogged by the lash, or [had property] confiscated, nor did they have any bitter experience. They were powerful, well treated and were not ignored at any time. They had no such experience until it happened to al-Shihābī Aḥmad ibn al-Jī‘ān. Successive sultans gave them important posts, and this circumstance continued until the reign of al-Ashraf Qānṣūḥ al-Ghawrī (r. 906–22/1501–16).²⁵

²² Shaw, “The Land Law,” 132; Michel, “Les circassiens,” 244, n. 64.

²³ Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l’administration*, 312–14.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 295.

²⁵ Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’*, 5:454–55.



In the early Mamluk period, the Jīʿān family seems to have served as bureaucrats for state accounting, though not many details exist concerning this. They appear as “*awlād al-Jīʿān mustawfī al-dawlah*” (chief financier) in 740/1339–40²⁶ and “*nāzīr al-iṣṭabl*” (supervisor of the sultan’s stable) in 753/1352.²⁷

In the late Mamluk period, while there are no detailed accounts about them in the chronicles, al-Sakhāwī’s (d. 902/1497) *Ḍawʿ al-Lāmiʿ*, a biography of notables in the ninth/fifteenth century, provides relatively rich information about the family, including their members, their professional careers, and their marriages.²⁸ Martel-Thoumian has collected the information in her study about notable families among the civil officials in the ninth/fifteenth century, which enables us to grasp the overall picture of the Jīʿān family in the late Mamluk period (see Figure 1).²⁹

Figure 1 shows some patterns in their careers. First, their sons succeeded to the post of *mustawfī* (bookkeeper) of the *dīwān al-jaysh* (nos. 1, 5, 14, 33, 35, 48, 58). Among them, the eldest sons (nos. 1, 5, 14, 33) had succeeded to the post by the time the third son Muḥammad (no. 35) was installed as *mustawfī*. Second, the younger sons succeeded to the post of *nāzīr al-khizānah* (supervisor of the sultan’s private treasury) and its *kātib* (clerk) (nos. 7, 10, 15, 21, 35, 38, 58, 59).³⁰ These career patterns are characteristic of the Jīʿān family compared with other notable families in the ninth/fifteenth century.³¹

There were certain reasons why Muḥammad was installed as *mustawfī* of the *dīwān al-jaysh* even though he was the third son of Yaḥyá ibn al-Jīʿān. First, when former *mustawfī* Abū al-Baqāʿ (no. 33) died suddenly in a surprise attack by mam-luks in 902/1497, the eldest son, ʿUmar (no. 48), the expected successor, had already died, in 894/1489.³² Second, Abū al-Barakāt (no. 34), a younger brother of Abū al-Baqāʿ, was also already deceased.³³ Therefore, the choice must have fallen on Muḥammad.³⁴

²⁶ Al-Shujāʿī, *Tārīkh al-Malik al-Nāsir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn al-Ṣāliḥī wa-Awlādihi*, ed. Barbara Schäfer (Wiesbaden, 1977), 65.

²⁷ Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah (Cairo, 1939–73), 2:881.

²⁸ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʿ al-Lāmiʿ li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ* (Cairo, 1934–36), 11:241–42.

²⁹ Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l’administration*, 295–319.

³⁰ The *nāzīr al-khizānah* shouldered responsibility for the accounts of the treasury. For more details about the post, see Igarashi Daisuke, “The Evolution of the Sultan’s Fisc and *al-Dhakhīrah* during the Circassian Mamluk Period,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 14 (2010): 94–95.

³¹ Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l’administration*, 295–319.

³² Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍawʿ al-Lāmiʿ*, 6:135.

³³ *Ibid.*, 11:3–4; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʿiʿ*, 3:209.

³⁴ Ibn Iyās, *Badāʿiʿ*, 3:363. He was appointed both *mustawfī* and *nāʿib kātib al-sirr* (deputy secretary).

This irregular appointment led to a small change in the family's career pattern. Muḥammad served as *mustawfī* until his death in 916/1510, after which his nephew Aḥmad (no. 58) was appointed as both *mustawfī* and *mutakallim fī al-khizānah* (consultant for the sultan's private treasury), while Muḥammad's sons (nos. 60, 61, 63, 64) were appointed as Aḥmad's assistants.³⁵ The family's eldest sons, who must also have been family heads at the time, had succeeded to the post of *mustawfī*. The authority as head of the family must have passed to the third son Muḥammad, then after Muḥammad's death, to his nephew Aḥmad. Though we cannot know the exact reason for the change in the family succession, the consistent importance of the post of *mustawfī* for the Jī'ān family is clear.

The *mustawfī* of the *dīwān al-jaysh* was actively involved in the administration of the land records and the calculation of tax revenues from *iqṭā's*.³⁶ In the late Mamluk period, no members from families other than the Jī'ān were appointed as *mustawfī*.³⁷ This implies that the post of *mustawfī* was a hereditary right of the Jī'ān family, which as a result administered the land records and their revenues. In addition, under their purview were land records concerned not only with the *dīwān al-jaysh* but also with other Egyptian land that was in the name of other *dīwāns*. The fact that Ibn Zunbul stated that "the only one who knows about that is the qadi Abū Bakr ibn al-Jī'ān, a member of the Jī'ān family" shows clearly that the family had administered all the Egyptian land records exclusively.

Malakī Family

Let us now return to the question of 'Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr, and who was likely to have submitted the Mamluk registers to the Ottomans. Though I could not find the answer in contemporary biographies, I found the key to the solution in *daftar jayshī*, where the following sentence was reprinted from the *Circassian*

³⁵Ibid., 4:181. He was appointed *mustawfī*, *nā'ib kātīb al-sirr*, and *mutakallim fī al-khizānah*.

³⁶There is little mention of the *mustawfī's* duties at the *dīwān al-jaysh* in the texts. For example, though Nuwayrī devoted pages to the *kātīb's* duties at the *dīwān al-jaysh* in his *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (vols. 1–18: Cairo, 1923–55; vols. 19–31: Cairo, 1975–92), 8:200–13, he did not provide detailed information concerning the *mustawfī's* duties. See also al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawā'iz wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid (London, 2002–4), 3:705–7, 734; Abraham N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and the Lebanon, 1250–1900* (repr. Philadelphia, 1977), 20–21.

³⁷Major notable families that produced bureaucrats appointed to leading posts in the late Mamluk period were Banū al-Hayṣam, Banū Fukhayrah, Banū al-Saffāh, Banū Naṣr Allāh, Banū Abī al-Faraj, Banū al-Kuwayz, Banū al-Bārīzī, Banū Muzhir, and Banū Kātīb Jakam. However, they did not produce any *mustawfīs* of the *dīwān al-jaysh*. For these notable families, see Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l'administration*, 189–294.

Register, “The *Circassian Register* written by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Malakī.”³⁸ This indicates that the *Circassian Register* that contained Mamluk land records was compiled by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Malakī. Who then was this ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Malakī? In the *Badā’i*, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Malakī suddenly appears as the *mustawfī dīwān al-jaysh* in 922/1516, taking the place of the Jī‘ān family, and he subsequently served the Ottomans after the conquest.³⁹ After that, he was brought to Istanbul with other bureaucrats for around five years from 923/1517 to 928/1522.⁴⁰ Although his name and career evidently correspond to the person mentioned in the preface of the “Land Law,” he clearly was a member, not of the Jī‘ān family, but of the Malakī family. Also, considering that the ‘Abd al-Qādir in question was a member of the Malakī family, it is possible that the Abū Bakr in (b) was Zayn al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Malakī, who was ‘Abd al-Qādir’s brother and had served as the *mustawfī dīwān al-jaysh* together with his brother.⁴¹ Nevertheless, they were thought to be members of the Jī‘ān family by the chroniclers and the author of the “Land Law.” As far as Abū Bakr was concerned, Ibn Zunbul even wrote down his name as “Abū Bakr ibn al-Jī‘ān.”

What then was the relationship between the Malakī family and the Jī‘ān family? Why did the sources attribute members of the Malakī family to the Jī‘ān family? The most reasonable answer available from Figure 1 is that these families were united by marital ties (nos. 36, 37, 66). The first was Yūsuf ibn Yaḥyá ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Jamāl ibn al-Sharaf ibn Sa’d al-Dīn ibn bint al-Malakī bearing the *nisbah* “al-Malakī,” who married two women from the Jī‘ān family (nos. 36 and 37). The second was Ibn al-Baṭrak al-Malakī (no. 66), though his wife was not a direct descendant of the Jī‘ān family. The Malakī family, like the Jī‘ān family, had converted from Coptic Christianity to Islam and seemed to have had a close connection with the *dīwān al-jaysh*. According to al-Sakhāwī, al-Sharaf ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Faḍl Allāh (d. 740/1339), known as Nashū, who had served as *mustawfī al-dawlah* and *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ* (inspector of the sultan’s private treasury) during the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (the third r. 809–41/1310–41), was the ancestor of the Malakī family.⁴² The father of the above-mentioned Yūsuf, Yaḥyá ibn bint

³⁸“Daftar Khāmis Wilāyat al-Gharbiyah Jayshī,” Cairo, Dār al-Wathā’iq al-Qawmīyah Register number 3001–000102, fol. 242v.

³⁹Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 5:5.

⁴⁰Ibid., 5:187, 230, 398, 457.

⁴¹Ibid., 5:5.

⁴²Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw’ al-Lāmi*, 4:251. For Nashū, see al-Ṣafadī, *A’yān al-‘Aṣr wa-A’wān al-Naṣr*, ed. ‘Alī Abū Zayd et al. (Damascus, 1998), 3:200–4; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A’yān al-Mi’ah al-Thāminah*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Jād al-Ḥaqq (Cairo, 1966–68), 3:42–44; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfi wa-al-Mustawfā ba’da al-Wāfi* (Cairo, 1984–2006), 7:390–93; idem, *Al-Dalīl al-Shāfi ‘alā al-Manhal al-Ṣāfi*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo, 1998), 1:434; idem,

al-Malakī (d. 841/1438), had served as *ṣāhib dīwān al-jaysh* (intendant of the army bureau).⁴³ After he died (when Yūsuf was still young), the post of *ṣāhib dīwān al-jaysh* was inherited by three people together: Yūsuf, his brother Ibrāhīm ibn bint al-Malakī, and their uncle ‘Abd al-Ghanī ibn bint al-Malakī (d. 848/1444).⁴⁴ Though I could find little out about Ibn al-Baṭrak al-Malakī and his relationship with the people known as “the son(s) of bint al-Malakī,” we can assume that Ibn Baṭrak’s father and the mother of the ibn bint al-Malakīs were both from the Malakī family.⁴⁵ *Daftar Jayshī* provides further detailed information about the relationships between the Jī‘ān and Malakī families. A record of a *milk* in Itfīḥ province shows that the *milk* had been purchased by a person who seems to be ‘Abd al-Qādir of the Malakī family. According to the records, the purchaser “‘Abd al-Qādir ibn al-Jamālī Yūsuf ibn Yaḥyá, who was known as Ibn al-Malakī” had purchased the land rights from al-Nāṣirī Muḥammad ibn Qānībāy and his son al-Zaynī ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ in 912/1506–7.⁴⁶ His name tells us that this ‘Abd al-Qādir was a son of Yūsuf and a grandson of Yaḥyá, who was known as Ibn al-Malakī. He is certainly the same person mentioned by al-Sakhāwī as Yūsuf ibn Yaḥyá ibn bint al-Malakī and the person who married two women from the Jī‘ān family; that is to say, the father of ‘Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr was from the Malakī family, while their mother was from the Jī‘ān family. Also, they were cousins of al-Shihābī Aḥmad ibn al-Jī‘ān (no. 58).

Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt et al. (Cairo, 1963–72), 9:323.

⁴³For Yūsuf, see al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’*, 10:336–37. And for his father Yaḥyá, see Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Inbā’ al-Ghumr bi-Abnā’ al-‘Umr fī al-Tārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Mu‘īd Khān (Beirut, 1967), 9:30; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’*, 10:230.

⁴⁴Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’*, 4:251.

⁴⁵We can find other Malakīs in the narrative sources. However, I could not find any definite relationships between these Malakīs and our Malakīs. For example, Tāj al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nashū al-Malakī (d. 782/1380–81), who had served as *wazīr* and *nāzir al-jaysh* (supervisor of the army bureau), and Karīm al-Dīn Akram ibn Shaykh al-Malakī (d. ?), who had served as *mustawfi dīwān al-jaysh*, bore the same *nisbah*. In addition, Tāj al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ruzzāq ibn Abī al-Faraj ibn Niqūlā al-Armanī al-Aslamī, a member of the Abū al-Faraj family, who had served as *wazīr*, *ustādār*, and *kāshif*, had borne the *nisbah* “al-Malakī” before, but the family seems to have been known as the Abū al-Faraj family from the time of Tāj al-Dīn’s son so they would not have been called “al-Malakī.” For Tāj al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 3:407; Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’*, 1:2:281. For Karīm al-Dīn Akram, see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2:879. For the Abū al-Faraj family, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbā’ al-Ghumr*, 3:182; Ibn Taghribirdī, *Manhal*, 7:314–18; idem, *Dalīl al-Shāfi’*, 1:420; idem, *Nujūm*, 14:152; al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-al-Abdān fī Tawārīkh al-Zamān*, ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1970–94), 2:432; Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l’administration*, 227–37.

⁴⁶“Daftar Wilāyat al-Qūṣiyah Jayshī,” Cairo, Dār al-Wathā’iq al-Qawmīyah Register number 3001–000111, fol. 8r.



These three people were contemporaries, and they had a close connection over and above their marital relationships. As I have mentioned above, the eldest sons of the Jī‘ān family succeeded to the post of *mustawfī dīwān al-jaysh* throughout the late Mamluk period. However, after Aḥmad ibn al-Jī‘ān (no. 58) was appointed the *nā‘ib kātib al-sirr* in the last years of the dynasty, ‘Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr subsequently took Aḥmad’s place as *mustawfī*.⁴⁷ Ibn Iyās indicated the position and hierarchical order of the Jī‘ān and Malakī families in his account of a parade held at the time of the military expedition against the Ottomans in 922/1516. He described that marching in procession after the leading figures such as Aḥmad ibn al-Jī‘ān, *nā‘ib kātib al-sirr* and *mustawfī dīwān al-inshā‘* at the time, were “the Jī‘ān family, clerks of the sultan’s private treasury (*awlād al-Jī‘ān kuttāb al-khazā‘in al-sharīfah*),” and “the Malakī family, bookkeepers of the military (*awlād al-Malakī kuttāb istiḥā‘ al-jaysh*).”⁴⁸ This procession also demonstrated to the Cairenes the close relationship between the two families in public and recognized their role in the Mamluk regime. Because the two families were related by marriage, both ‘Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr could be of the Jī‘ān family in terms of maternal ties as well as of the Malakī family in terms of paternal ties. They also had close relations in terms of their role as former *mustawfīs* and their successors. We can assume that they cooperated in performing their duties and were on visiting terms with each other.⁴⁹ It is therefore quite natural that contemporaries recognized ‘Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr of the Malakī family as members of the Jī‘ān family.

Conclusion

I have demonstrated in this article that those who were involved in the handover of the Mamluk registers to the Ottomans were two brothers of the Malakī family, ‘Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr, who had occupied the post of *mustawfī dīwān al-jaysh* from the last years of Qānṣūh al-Ghawri’s reign. My examination has shown that members of the Jī‘ān family had successively played a significant role in the administration of land records. The administration of land records had been undertaken exclusively by a specific family, that is, the Jī‘ān-Malakī family, throughout the late Mamluk period. They did not build up their position by marrying into the households of sultans or powerful military elites.⁵⁰ Rather, they

⁴⁷Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i‘*, 5:5.

⁴⁸Ibid., 5:40.

⁴⁹Their close relationship can be seen in some events. For example, when ‘Abd al-Qādir and Abū Bakr of the Malakī family were arrested for a delay in payment of their debts to a Greek merchant (*tujjār al-Arwām*), Aḥmad ibn al-Jī‘ān mediated between them; see Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i‘*, 5:180. In another event, both Aḥmad ibn al-Jī‘ān and Abū Bakr al-Malakī were suspected of illegally trading state lands; see *ibid.*, 5:424.

⁵⁰For their marital relations, see Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l’administration*, 316–18.



gained the firm trust of the sultans for their unsurpassed skills in bookkeeping and accounts, essential for land administration. Perhaps it is more precise to say that they were not so much powerful bureaucrats who made crucial decisions on the center stage of Mamluk politics as people working behind the scenes to offer basic resources and suggestions concerning the state's financial affairs for the military elite and other bureaucrats who were the decision makers. As a result, they came to take hold of confidential matters related to the Mamluks' fundamental resource, that is, land and land revenues.⁵¹ In addition, they exclusively inherited among themselves the position of *mustawfī* of the *dīwān al-jaysh* that played a vital role in Mamluk land administration. This fact also indicates that the family was the central unit in the Mamluk land administration, at least of the *dīwān al-jaysh*.

How then were they treated by the new ruler? When Khāyrbak (r. 923–28/1517–22) entered Cairo in triumph and started to rule Egypt as *malik al-umarā'* in 923/1517, he reappointed Aḥmad ibn al-Jī'ān as *nā'ib kātib al-sirr*, the same position he had occupied before the conquest.⁵² The following year, 924/1518, Aḥmad ibn al-Jī'ān was appointed *kātib al-sirr* and reached the highest position possible for a bureaucrat.⁵³ Though his career under the new regime was not successful, as he was suspected of an illegal land transaction,⁵⁴ he held important positions such as *kātib al-sirr* and *daftardār* at the beginning of the Ottoman administration in Egypt.⁵⁵ Eventually he was put to death, suspected of conspiracy with Aḥmad Pasha in his revolt.⁵⁶ After his death, the Jī'āns seem to have disappeared from the center stage of history. On the other hand, with regard to the Malakī family,

⁵¹The only source of complete land records from the late Mamluk period, written by Yaḥyá ibn al-Jī'ān, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Sanīyah bi-Asmā' al-Bilād al-Miṣrīyah*, also implies the family's exclusive role. For more on this unique work, see Kumakura Wakako, "Mamurūkuchō kōki ejiputo no tochi chōsa kiroku no keishō to kōshin—Ibn al-Jī'ān *Ejiputo no muramura no namae ni tsuite no kagayakashiki shihō al-Tuḥfah al-Sanīyah* no saikentō o tsūjite (マムルーク朝後期エジプトの土地調査記録の継承と更新—イブン・アルジーアーン『エジプトの村々の名前についての輝かしき至宝 al-Tuḥfa al-Sanīya』の再検討を通じて) [The Administration of Egyptian Land Survey Records in the Later Mamluk Period: A Review of *Al-Tuḥfah al-Sanīyah*]," *The Toyo Gakuho* (東洋学報) [The Journal of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko] 92, no. 1 (2011): 95–120. This article is a codicological work on MS Huntington 2, the original manuscript of *Al-Tuḥfah al-Sanīyah* preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford University. See also Michel, "Les circassiens," 245.

⁵²Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i*, 5:208–9.

⁵³Ibid., 5:276–77.

⁵⁴Ibid., 5:424.

⁵⁵Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils et l'administration*, 312.

⁵⁶Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib al-Sā'irah bi-A'yān al-Mi'ah al-Āshirah*, ed. Jibril Sulaymān Jabbūr (Beirut, 1945), 156; Michael Winter, *Society & Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt: Studies in the Writings of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rānī* (New Jersey, 1982), 26–27, n. 11.

Abū Bakr took up his position as *mustawfī* in 923/1517,⁵⁷ while ʿAbd al-Qādir was brought to Istanbul for five years beginning in 923/1517, as mentioned above. After returning to Cairo, ʿAbd al-Qādir must have been ordered to recover the Mamluk registers, and set about doing so. Subsequently they make no more appearance in the historical record.

Our examination of how the administration of the land documents was handed over in the process of the transition of rule from the Mamluks to the Ottomans has revealed that two families, the Jīʿāns and the Malakīs, had a role in the administration of land documents from the late Mamluk period to the beginning of Ottoman rule in Egypt. The Egyptian land records, which had been kept for generations within their families, were transferred to the Ottomans in stages. Finally, they were reprinted in Ottoman land registers such as *daftar jayshī* and *daftar aḥbāsī*, and were referenced officially until at least the seventeenth century.⁵⁸ Comparing Mamluk and Ottoman attitudes toward land record management, the series of events described reveals a drastic change during the transition period. While in the Mamluk period, management depended on the households of specific families, the Ottomans tried to manage land records systematically within a government institution. This attitude obviously surfaced from the 1520s, which indicates that the issue should be examined and understood in the context of the centralization which took place during Sulayman’s reign.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Ibn Iyās, *Badāʿi*, 5:210.

⁵⁸Ibn Abī al-Surūr al-Bakrī, *Al-Minaḥ al-Raḥmānīyah fī al-Dawlah al-ʿUthmānīyah wa-Dhayluhu al-Laṭāʾif al-Rabbānīyah ʿalā al-Minaḥ al-Raḥmānīyah*, ed. Laylā Ṣabbāgh (Damascus, 1995), 315; idem, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Bahīyah fī Tamalluk Āl ʿUthmān al-Diyār al-Miṣrīyah* (Cairo, 2005), 131; ʿAfīfī, *Al-Awqāf wa-al-Ḥayāh al-Iqtisādīyah*, 52–54; Michael Winter, “Ottoman Egypt, 1525–1609,” in *The Cambridge History of Egypt 2* (Cambridge, 1998), 125–26.

⁵⁹Kumakura Wakako, “16 seiki faiyūmu-ken no mizu, zeī, kiroku kanri: Osumanchō ejiputo tōchi shoki no suiri gyōsei ni miru tōchi taisei to sono tenkai (16世紀ファイユーム県の水・税・記録管理: オスマン朝エジプト統治初期の水利行政に見る統治体制とその展開) [Water, Taxes and Records Management in Fayyum Province in Sixteenth-Century Egypt: the Early Ottoman Rural Government System and Its Development Seen from Water Use Administration], *Tōyōshi kenkyū* (東洋史研究), 73, no. 3 (2014): 471–506. A revised version of this article is forthcoming in English.



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