

coming from Egypt.⁷³ Since Mamluk protocol required him to interact with the ambassador, Yalbughā may have taken the opportunity to send a private message to Ḥasan.⁷⁴ His later attempt to flee with his family to the Chobanids suggests he believed in his chances of a good reception there.

Regardless of his destination, Yalbughā's situation suggests that he in particular, and individual mamluks in general, had more connections to the outside world than is usually acknowledged. These connections may have involved not only the extended families of mamluk commanders, but slave merchants, as in Barqūq's case, secret messengers, as in Salār's case, or perhaps formal ambassadors, as in Yalbughā's case. This indicates that scholars must look outside the sultanate even when investigating internal Mamluk politics. At times it is difficult to discern the outlines of these relationships, which makes the task harder. But since these connections did at times factor in to Mamluk political decisions, it is necessary to try.

To conclude: One previously understudied element in Mamluk politics is the category of biological relations that includes not a mamluk's offspring, but rather the biological family he left behind in the old country. I have called the interest that mamluks showed in reconnecting with their long-lost relatives the Extended Family Impulse, and I see it as a related, but relatively ignored subcategory within the general idea of what I have termed the Dynastic Impulse. I have suggested that some mamluks reconnected with their existing biological families for both personal and political gain. We see this phenomenon play out most frequently as part of Mamluk success stories, when commanders reached high political, military, and economic levels, then sent home to bring their families to Cairo. Once the relatives arrived, the Mamluk commanders found jobs for the men, who might attain considerable influence in Mamluk society, or, more often, remain undistinguished. Overall this suggests that while the Mamluk military system was inimical to the appeal of biological family, actual mamluks themselves were not, and in some cases they went to considerable lengths to surround themselves with their kin.

⁷³ Ambassadors from Ilkhanid or post-Ilkhanid territory usually entered the Mamluk Sultanate from the northeast, passing through Aleppo and the smaller cities to Damascus, from which they headed on to Cairo. For the ambassador see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2:648.

⁷⁴ Since Ḥasan died in 1343/744, his brother and successor, Malik Ashraf (r. 1343–57/744–58), would have received this.