

Book Reviews

A Scholar in the Shadow: Essays in the Legal and Theological Thought of Ibn Qayyim al-Ġawziyyah, edited by Caterina Bori and Livnat Holtzmann (Rome: Instituto per l'Oriente C. A. Nallino, 2010). Pp. ix +293.

Reviewed by Rodrigo Adem, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

This volume is part of the efforts of a growing academic movement to more accurately access the intellectual legacy of Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728/1328) and his student Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751/1350), two of the most prolific Islamic scholars of the Mamluk period and likewise most influential sources for contemporary Islamic thought. Editors Caterina Bori and Livnat Holtzmann are at the forefront of new research on these two thinkers that aims to anchor our understanding of their scholarly activity within their proper historical context and with the necessary philological depth. The function of this collection of essays is to encourage research and discourse on Ibn al-Qayyim's own particular legacy, as the conflation of his profile with that of his famous teacher has occurred since medieval times. The book has been divided into three thematic sections: "Society and Law," "God and Man," and "Body and Soul," which roughly translate to jurisprudence, theology, and philosophy, though theological and Sufi themes permeate the whole.

In the first of these sections Birgit Krawietz presents a preliminary introduction to Ibn al-Qayyim's *I'lām al-muwaqqi'in*, which, as she demonstrates, has been woefully neglected in academic studies on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). What she presents here suffices to argue not just for Ibn al-Qayyim's distinct profile from his teacher, but also to illustrate his formidable creative presence in his own right within the genre. Though brief, her contribution lays out instructive paths for future research. David Freidenreich's article focuses on Ibn al-Qayyim's better-known book on the jurisprudence of non-Muslim minorities in Muslim lands, the *Aḥkām ahl al-dhimmah*. Freidenreich takes a novel approach to the well-studied subject by using a case study on dietary restrictions to demonstrate how even a book on jurisprudence can serve as a window into complex theological considerations on Judaism and Christianity. Yehoshua Frenkel's contribution to this section is the most ambitious of the three, as it seeks to reintroduce Ibn al-Qayyim outright as a political theorist of Islamic Utopia. Perhaps such an assessment is in the eye of the beholder. It is hard to ignore, however, that those aspects of Ibn al-Qayyim's thought which Frenkel has adduced as proofs of his conclusion (i.e., the idealization of the earliest Muslims [*al-salaf*], the adoption



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of an austere moral code, and faith in the salvific efficacy of acts) do not distinguish Ibn al-Qayyim meaningfully from large swaths of other Muslim scholars; defining the term “utopian,” it must be added, has its own difficulties.

The second section of the volume commences with another welcome addition to the works of Jon Hoover, whose studies on Ibn Taymīyah’s thought have been groundbreaking. Here Hoover revisits the topic of theodicy that he has studied elsewhere, utilizing Ibn al-Qayyim’s *Shifā’ al-‘alīl* to explain the latter’s theological reasoning for God’s creation of the devil. The article also serves as a useful introduction to the state of Islamic discourse on theodicy and predestination during Ibn al-Qayyim’s time (as well as the titles of relevant contemporary studies for the subject). This is followed by Yasir Qadhi’s contribution, a short summary of Ibn al-Qayyim’s *Al-Ṣawā’iq al-mursalah ‘alā al-Jahmīyah wa-al-Mu‘aṭṭilah*, a diatribe against the harmful innovations of *kalām* in Islamic thought. Though on the brief side, the article can be utilized as a roadmap for future research, and it also includes a worthwhile discussion of the available published editions of the text. Abdessamad Belhaj’s contribution should be read in tandem with Qadhi’s, since it uses the same source text to focus on one of the text’s main topics—Ibn al-Qayyim’s perspective on the topic of metaphor (*majāz*)—and likewise provides the reader with further sources for investigation. This section of the volume concludes with an article by Ovamir Anjum, entitled “Sufism Without Mysticism?” While the question mark in the article’s title accurately suggests the difficulty involved in satisfactorily defining either one of the “-isms” mentioned, the article does a much better job when explicitly addressing what really is at play here: the popular notion of Ibn Taymīyah’s and Ibn al-Qayyim’s supposed antagonism to Sufism. Anjum skilfully dissects Ibn al-Qayyim’s *Madārij al-sālikīn* to access a text doubtlessly Sufi in pedigree, but nevertheless with a clear theological agenda at stake. The *Madārij* is a commentary on the *Manāzil al-sā’irīn* by Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī al-Harawī (d. 481/1089), a Hanbali Sufi whom Ibn Taymīyah never ceased to praise as *Shaykh al-Islām*, but who nevertheless used immanentist (viz. *ḥulūl*) elements deemed inadmissible from a stricter theological perspective. Ibn al-Qayyim’s task, then, was to salvage what he could of the legitimate Sufism in this text from the accrual of those problematic doctrines that Anjum labels “mysticism.” The feasibility of distinguishing between Sufism and mysticism aside, this should not distract the reader from this splendid presentation of one of the earliest extant examples of Sufi reformism.

The third section deals with topics more philosophical in nature, and therefore offers the reader a glimpse of some of the lesser-known aspects of Ibn al-Qayyim’s thought, given his reputation as a Hanbali literalist. This begins with an article by Irmeli Perho, who situates Ibn al-Qayyim’s understanding of Prophetic medicine (*al-ṭibb al-nabawī*) within Ibn Taymīyah’s as of yet underappreciated project



of reconciling revelation and reason, exemplified in the latter's *Dar' ta'arud al-'aql wa-al-naql*. Using case studies extracted from Ibn al-Qayyim's *Zād al-ma'ād*, Perho demonstrates how the former attempted to present Islamic medical teachings as being confirmed by contemporary scientific theories on the natural elements, disease contagion, and psychological wellbeing.

In the following article by Tzvi Langermann, however, the author takes a different perspective, stating that we ought to understand Ibn al-Qayyim's philosophical predilections as an example of the historical process of the accommodation or "naturalization of Hellenistic science" within the Islamic theological context. Using Ibn al-Qayyim's philosophical discussions of the soul as found in the *Kitāb al-Rūh*, Langermann situates the Hanbali scholar's engagement with "science" within a longer history of the accommodation of scientific concepts within *kalām*, highlighting Ibn al-Qayyim's indebtedness to the works of Abū al-Barakāt al-Baghdādī (d. 560/1165) and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209). It is an important point to make, and as Langermann acknowledges, it provides a case-study confirming one of Adam Sabra's most interesting theses on the role of science in Islamic society. Nevertheless, Langermann could benefit from acknowledgement of Ibn Taymīyah's particular role as rehabilitator of philosophy in the Hanbali school at that time, since while the then-defunct Baghdad school of Hanbalism had had its own engagement with *kalām* (exemplified in al-Qāḍī Abū Ya'lá [d. 458/1064], Ibn 'Aqīl [d. 513/1119], Ibn al-Jawzī [d. 597/1200], and others), the Damascene school dominated by the school of Ibn Qudāmah (d. 620/1223) seems to have abided by a strict prohibition of that Islamic science. Thus it cannot be taken for granted that Ibn al-Qayyim would have been able to access the scientific discourses of Islam were it not for Ibn Taymīyah's intervention in the Damascene Hanbali milieu. There is no doubt in my mind that Ibn al-Qayyim's generous assessment of Abū al-Barakāt, noted here by Langermann, is a reflection of his master's own indebtedness to that philosopher's work; so too are Ibn al-Qayyim's meticulous readings of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.

This brings us to the final contribution of this section and the volume, Geneviève Gobillot's article on Ibn al-Qayyim's *Kitāb al-Rūh*, where she provides a historiography of controversies on the nature of soul in Muslim thought, alongside noteworthy comparisons to their counterparts in Christian theology. Gobillot's most interesting discovery is Ibn al-Qayyim's reliance on the works of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. ca. 300/912) when mapping out the role of metonymy in revelation's description of the human soul; al-Tirmidhī is a thinker otherwise disparaged by Ibn al-Qayyim and his master for his writings on the Seal of the Saints so influential for Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240) and other speculative Sufis. This article, like the two which precede it, raises important questions about the nature of Ibn al-Qayyim's engagement with Islamic philosophical discourse, and suggests to



researchers the need to view his writings as a rich repository for intellectual discourses spanning centuries in their development.

The essay format necessarily has its limitations, and at times the reader senses the prematurity of the decision to collect papers on a subject which does not even have its own monograph yet. Nevertheless, researchers with interest in the topic are strongly advised to consult this volume for instructive paths of direction as well as its substantial bibliography. In the meantime, we eagerly await the fruits of Holtzmann's and Krawietz's landmark research collaboration on Ibn al-Qayyim which has been funded by the German-Israel Foundation and which should appear in the next few years.



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Le Bilād al-Shām face aux mondes extérieurs: La perception de l'Autre et la représentation du souverain. Edited by Denise Aigle (Damascus-Beirut: Presses de l'IFPO, 2012). Pp. 425.

Reviewed by Malika Dekkiche, Ghent University

This proceedings volume comes from a colloquium entitled “Le Bilād al-Shām face aux mondes extérieurs: La perception de l'Autre et la représentation du souverain,” held in Damascus in December 2008, as part of a broader research project “Le Bilād al-Shām face aux mondes extérieurs: Croisés et Mongols: Réactions, adaptations, échanges (XI^e–XIV^e s.).” It represents a good example of recent scholarly efforts in the field of Ayyubid and Mamluk studies to focus on the region of Bilād al-Shām. The volume is centered on two major themes: the Other and the Sovereign. It examines the different perception of these two actors by the population and society in Bilād al-Shām, this on the background of the Crusades and the Mongol invasions.

The volume begins with a general introduction by the editor and includes twenty articles (fifteen in French, five in Arabic) that follow either a historical or literary approach and question a number of sources from the different parts of Bilād al-Shām during the time under review. The contributions address the general issue of the *memoria* and, within that framework, the ways the sovereign was perceived and the diverse modes of reaction to the Other, as well as the modes of adaptation and exchanges between the Other and the local population. The articles are divided into four major themes.

The first theme, on the making of heroes or the perception of the sovereign, starts with a study of the figure of Saladin by Abbès Zouache. In this article, Zouache analyzes the ways Saladin was erected as a legendary figure by comparing contemporary sources (Latin/old French and Arabic) on the Battle of Montgisard (1177). This comparison shows that medieval European sources first contributed to Saladin’s legend, while the Arabic sources did not consider him any different from other heroes until a later period. Anne-Marie Eddé’s original contribution on Baybars’s representation in narrative and epigraphic sources looks at Baybars’s identification with Moses and Alexander the Great through the titles found in three inscriptions in the Bilād al-Shām. Of particular interest is the role attributed to Baybars’s companion, the shaykh al-Khaḍir al-Mihrānī, in this process of legitimization. Tahar Mansouri’s article on the portrayal of Sultan Qalāwūn according to *Al-Faḍl al-Ma’thūr* of Shāfi‘ Ibn ‘Alī is merely a summary of the information found in this biography of Qalāwūn without further analysis or comparison with other works. Dīma al-Shukr analyzes a corpus of poetry on the Crusades dated from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods that is preserved in nar-



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rative historical sources. She nicely draws up the images of the rulers as displayed through this corpus and compares these images to the perception of the Other (i.e., the Crusaders). Ajfān al-Ṣaghīr's very short article discusses more generally the perception of the Other and the representation of power over time according to a few secondary sources.

The second part of the volume concentrates on Baybars, and especially his *Sīrah*. The four articles included in this part are literary studies of the *Sīrat Baybars*. The first contribution, by George Bohas and Salam Diab-Duranton, presents new material to help understand the diverse processes used to establish the *Sīrah*. The two examples presented show how some texts were integrated into the original framework according to the different public. Based on the Damascene review of the *Sīrah*, Katia Zakharia studies the concept of the "kingly body" as exemplified in the story of the seven wounds of Sultan Baybars. She uses the image of the body as a text itself and presents an original analysis of the tale put in parallel with the Other's threat, be it the Franks, Mongols, or Isma'ilis. Francis Guinle's contribution addresses the topic of true and fake conversions as illustrated in several accounts in the Damascene review of the *Sīrah*. He analyzes the evolution of conversions after Baybars's accession to rule and the spread of Islam in Christian and Mongol lands through the sincere conversion of women marrying Muslims. The study uses strictly the *Sīrah*, without any comparative historical approach. Finally, Georges Dorlian studies the role of the *ʿayyār*, an inseparable character from the hero though very often criticized by society. He shows how the *ʿayyār* in the *Sīrat ʿAlī Zaybaq*, generally an antihero, emancipates and replaces the hero (i.e., the sovereign) and how this evolution somehow constitutes a criticism of the ruler.

The third part of the volume looks at Christian presences in Bilād al-Shām. Aoubakr Chraïbi introduces this part by illustrating the re-appropriation of old tales during the period of the Crusades that were adapted according to the need of the moment. Comparing diverse versions of a Bedouin text transformed over time, Chraïbi demonstrates how the text was rewritten by talented authors. With Mundhir Muḥammad al-Hāyik, we go back to historical analysis of the Other. In his well-documented article, he assesses the diverse groups (Franks, Mongols, Bedouins) and communities (Christian; Isma'ili) of Bilād al-Shām and proposes a comparative study of how these groups were perceived by and interacted with each other. Yūsuf Ghawānmah's contribution studies the efforts displayed by Muslim rulers and Franks during the Ayyubid period to maintain common interest, especially regarding commerce, mobility, and cohabitation, describing a general tolerance from Muslim rulers as illustrated through the treaties. ʿAmmār Muḥammad al-Nahār investigates the role and activities of Christian and Jewish communities in Mamluk society. After describing these communities' participa-



tion in diverse aspects of society, he provides a list of notices of famous Christian and Jewish scholars. This study is mostly based on primary and secondary sources in Arabic and does not use Western scholarship on the topic. Julien Gilet's essay reinvestigates the Battle of Marrī that took place between the Armenians and the Mamluks in 664/1266. While that battle has been dealt with by many scholars in the past, Gilet proposes an original study based on a great variety of sources, not only in Arabic but also in Armenian, Latin, old French, and Syriac. This article sheds new light on the battle and the way it has been kept in *memoria* by both parties. It is particularly welcome given the lack of secondary studies devoted to Anatolia. In her article on Ghāzān Khān's invasions of Syria, Denise Aigle goes back to the polemics about Ghāzān's conversion to Islam through an analysis of two already well-known corpuses: Ibn Taymīyah's fatwas and the correspondence exchanged between the khan and the Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn. The original aspect of this article is the study of the Qurānic quotations used by the Mamluks to discredit Ghāzān's claims in the light of his alliance with Christians. The last article of this section, by Mireille Issa, analyzes the perception of the Christian communities of Bilād al-Shām as reported by a Western traveller, Bishop Louis de Rochechouart, in the fifteenth century. Particularly interesting is the comparison of this account with an earlier one from the time of Crusades (*Historia orientalis* of J. de Vitry).

The last part of the volume is devoted to the perception of the Mongols in Bilād al-Shām. Thomas Herzog's article combines and puts in parallel fictional (*Sīrat Baybars*) and historical narratives to analyze the formation of a collective memory regarding the Mongols' invasions in Bilād al-Shām and how these were perceived by the population. By doing so, he demonstrates the importance of the *Sīrah* as a "founding memory." Exploring Syriac literature, Ray Mouawad discusses the legend of the "saving king" reported by Ibn al-Qilā'ī (fifteenth century). Through comparison with earlier texts, she is able to associate the emergence of this figure (saving king) with the Mongols, who were perceived by the Christian population as their only escape from Muslim rule. Alaa Talbi focuses on the impact of the Mongols' invasions on the Syrian population, especially the register of "fear," by a typological analysis of the vocabulary used in the narrative sources to express such feeling. Talbi appraises this vocabulary in the light of Pierre Mannoni's sociological study on the same topic. Finally, Marie-Anna Chevalier's well-documented contribution studies the Orders' responses and reactions in the aftermath of the Mongols' invasions, showing the ambiguity of the relations and alliances between the Franks, Mongols, and Orders.

This volume is a coherent contribution to the study of Bilād al-Shām during the time of the Crusades and the Mongol invasions. It deals with an important and very oft-neglected aspect of the time, namely, the Other and its interactions



with the state and local population. If some of the topics presented have been dealt with in the past, the comparative approach (historical and literary) followed in the volume, as well as the wide range of sources used by the contributors, constitutes a major appeal that compensates for some of the weaknesses found in individual articles.



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Towards a Cultural History of the Mamluk Era. Edited by Mahmoud Haddad, Arnin Heinemann, John L. Meloy, and Souad Slim (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg, 2010). Pp. xii +316.

Reviewed by Malika Dekkiche, Ghent University

This volume contains the proceedings of a conference held at the University of Balamand (Lebanon) in 2005, entitled “Towards a Cultural History of Bilād al-Shām during the Mamluk Era: Prosperity or Decline, Tolerance or Preservation,” which aimed at investigating cultural history during the time of Mamluk rule (1250–1517) in general and the complex relationship between the state and diverse social groups of Syria in particular. Whereas the conference originally focused on Bilād al-Shām, the present volume has been expanded to include Egypt as well. It converges with a new trend within the field of Mamluk studies to devote more attention to Syria, an area long neglected by scholars.

The volume includes eighteen articles in English (eleven), French (one), and Arabic (seven, all gathered in the second part of the volume) and is divided into five major themes. The first, which represents a third of the volume, looks at the interactions of religious communities, especially Christian and Jewish communities but also the Shi‘ah and Druze. Jørgen S. Nielsen’s introductory article discusses the participation of the *dhimmī* community in the Ayyubid and Mamluk state and society. After surveying the common scholarly approach and literature on the topic, Nielsen opens the way for new approaches and questions to be debated, focusing on the active participation of these communities in the state apparatus as a means for the state to maintain control despite frequent persecutions. This approach is followed by the next five contributions. Elias al-Qattar reviews Mamluk campaigns in Lebanon (Kasrawān) at the end of the thirteenth century and the state’s ambiguous attitude toward the Maronite, Shi‘ah, and Druze communities. David Thomas presents a case of correspondence aiming to justify Christianity, sent by Christians of Cyprus to Muslim religious scholars in Damascus—i.e., Ibn Taymīyah (in 1316) and al-Dimashqī (in 1321)—that illustrates the general misunderstanding between the two religious communities. The two contributions of Ahmad Hutait and André Nassar study the place of Christians in the Mamluk administration and society more generally in Cairo and Syria (Damascus and Aleppo), respectively. Finally, Ray Mouawwad analyzes the case of Christian martyrs in Tripoli in light of the too often neglected Syriac, Aramaic, and Karshūnī sources. All the articles presented in this section examine the relation and interaction between religious communities and the state, especially in light of the Mamluk confrontation with the Franks, and to a lesser extent with the Mongols, and how these conflicts influenced the ambiguous position of the



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state towards religious communities, which oscillated between oppression, persecution, and tolerance.

The next three parts of the volume concentrate on several fields of cultural production, beginning with the arts. The articles of Elyas al-Zayyat and Mat Immerzel/Adeline Jeudy investigate the issue of Christian art during the Mamluk period. Whereas al-Zayyat's contribution focuses on Christian art in Syria, Immerzel and Jeudy's contribution expands to include Egypt up to the fourteenth century, showing that Christian art took different forms and met different destinies in the two regions. Regarding Syria, both articles show that the Mamluk period was transitional, but neither catastrophic nor destructive. Immerzel and Jeudy's paper also underlines the problem of dating the Egyptian pieces due to frequent reuse of the objects. In a short article, Doris Behrens-Abouseif analyzes the increasing data found in the chronicles of the late Mamluk period for the craftsmen and artists owing to their progressive ascension to the higher class of society (an expanded version of this article has been published in *BSOAS* 74, no. 3 [2011]: 375–95). Howayda al-Harithy's article on the cultural role of Mamluk epigraphy in Tripoli closes this section.

The second aspect devoted to cultural productions concerns the historical literature. Antoine Doumit's article assesses the innovative aspect of al-Maqrīzī's work with regard to his writing of history. This study, mostly based on al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, lacks a certain comparative approach with other contemporary sources and would have greatly gained from the use of the abundant secondary literature on that author. As for Axel Havemann's contribution, it analyzes the importance of Ibn Iyās's *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr* for social history and "history from below," especially that of marginal groups.

The third section on cultural productions looks at the field of sciences during the Mamluk period. Two contributions concern the sciences strictly speaking and stress the time of Mamluk rule as a time of great accomplishment in that field. George Saliba's article on the astronomical sciences shows the great input of Mamluk astronomers in their effort to theorize and universalize those sciences. As for Floréal Sanagustin, he demonstrates how "prophetic" medicine (*al-ṭibb al-nabawī*) was codified during that period as a new type of narrative of origins. The last article of the section, by Anis Shaya, investigates coastal fortifications in Lebanon between the Franks and the Mamluks, with a focus on the construction of Tripoli during the reign of Sultan Qalāwūn in 1289. The quality of the pictures and maps provided in the appendices is unfortunately rather poor.

The fifth and final part of the book is dedicated to: "Cultural Contexts of Political Practice and Social Relations." Albrecht Fuess's article investigates the complex relationships between the Turkish Mamluk elite and their Arab subjects and shows the same pattern, demonstrated at the beginning of the volume, of am-



biguous interactions between an “outlaw” state (supported by the ‘*ulamā*’) and an oppressed population (here Arab Muslim). Ahmad Abdelsalam analyzes the evolution of the function of the *muḥtasib* from a religious position to a more administrative duty. This study is based on a previous one by Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Razzāq (*Annales Islamologiques* 13 [1977]: 115–78), which is summarized and expanded here with recent secondary studies. Finally, in a short contribution, Aliya Saidi presents an original study on mental illness among women stemming from polygamous marriage. Her analysis centers on the biographical notices found in al-Sakhāwī’s *Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’*.

The present volume represents a coherent contribution to the field of cultural history during the Mamluk period, and its attention to the region of Bilād al-Shām (especially Lebanon) is particularly welcome. A couple of problems are to be noted, however. First, editorial work, especially on bibliographic standardization, is somewhat lacking. This is also the case for the quality of some of the images provided in the appendices. Second, while a number of articles discuss original and often neglected topics—to name but a few, Thomas, Mouawwad, Immerzel-Jeudy, Abouseif, Saliba—others do not particularly add any new material or conclusions to the field. In this regard, I refer to the part of the volume devoted to “Historical Literature.” Moreover, some of the articles based mostly on primary Arabic sources often lack a critical analysis of them and either omit secondary historiography or use outdated works at times. Despite these problems, the volume remains an important contribution to the field of Mamluk studies, especially for scholars interested in the religious communities and the social and cultural life of Bilād al-Shām.



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Suleiman A. Mourad and James E. Lindsay, *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology in the Crusader Period: Ibn 'Asākir of Damascus (1105–1176) and His Age, with an Edition and Translation of Ibn 'Asākir's "The Forty Hadiths for Inciting Jihad"* (Leiden: Brill, 2013). Pp. 222.

Reviewed by Anne-Marie Eddé, L'université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Ibn 'Asākir, traditionniste damascain et proche de Nūr al-Dīn (1146–74), est bien connu des historiens de la Syrie médiévale pour son monumental dictionnaire biographique des personnalités ayant marqué Damas, intitulé *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq* (Histoire de la ville de Damas).¹ Son rôle de propagandiste du jihad à l'époque de Nūr al-Dīn et plusieurs autres aspects de son travail ont également été étudiés par deux spécialistes reconnus de son œuvre, Suleiman A. Mourad et James E. Lindsay. Ces derniers nous offrent aujourd'hui l'édition et la traduction d'un petit traité beaucoup moins connu de cet auteur, rassemblant quarante hadiths ayant trait au jihad. Le genre littéraire des « Quarante hadiths » était très populaire au Moyen Âge car il permettait de retenir facilement les principaux hadiths sur un thème donné. Un tel recueil était destiné à être enseigné dans les milieux religieux mais s'adressait aussi, plus largement, à un public éduqué. Dans le cas du jihad, il pouvait également être lu dans les rangs de l'armée, à la veille d'une bataille, pour galvaniser les combattants.

Cet opuscule d'une quinzaine de folios est parvenu jusqu'à nous dans un unique manuscrit inclus dans un recueil de textes (*majmū'*) conservé par la bibliothèque Asad à Damas (*Majmū' lughah* 40). Son édition et sa traduction en anglais sont ici accompagnées d'un important commentaire organisé en sept chapitres dans lesquels les auteurs analysent successivement: (1) la vie et l'œuvre de l'auteur; (2) la naissance du jihad au début de l'islam; (3) son essor entre la Première et la Deuxième Croisade; (4) le rôle d'Ibn 'Asākir dans l'intensification et la réorientation de l'idéologie sunnite du jihad au XII^e siècle; (5) les quarante hadiths composant le traité; (6) l'intensification et la réorientation de l'idéologie sunnite du jihad au XIII^e siècle d'après les certificats d'audition (*samā'āt*) inscrits à la suite du texte; (7) l'héritage de l'intensification et de la réorientation de l'idéologie sunnite du jihad, du XIV^e siècle au début de l'époque moderne. Deux cartes, un plan de Damas, deux photos de la mosquée des Umayyades, une reproduction de la page de titre (67 r^o) et une autre des deux folios (79 v^o et 80 r^o) comprenant le colophon du texte et les sept premiers certificats d'audition, une bibliographie et des index complètent très utilement l'ouvrage.

¹ Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 80 vols., éd. 'Umar ibn Gharāmah al-'Amrāwī et 'Alī Shīrī (Beyrouth, 1995–2001).



La synthèse fournie dans les premiers chapitres sur la vie et l'œuvre de l'auteur ainsi que sur la naissance du jihad et son essor au lendemain de la Première Croisade est sans doute très utile, mais les parties les plus originales du commentaire sont celles qui traitent des professeurs qui transmirent des hadiths à Ibn 'Asākir, du rôle de ce dernier comme propagandiste du jihad sous le règne de Nūr al-Dīn, des thèmes abordés dans le traité ainsi que de la réception de l'ouvrage.

En comparant la liste des traditionnistes ayant transmis à Ibn 'Asākir des hadiths sur le jihad, telle qu'elle ressort du traité, à celle des traditionnistes mentionnés dans son *Mu'jam al-shuyūkh*, recueil dans lequel l'auteur fait la liste des quelque 1621 professeurs dont il a suivi l'enseignement, S. Mourad et J. Lindsay s'interrogent à juste titre sur le fait que les noms des traditionnistes, cités dans le *Mu'jam*, qu'Ibn 'Asākir côtoya à Damas et qui lui transmirent des hadiths sur le jihad, ne sont pas repris dans le traité des 40 hadiths. Des hadiths identiques (ou quasi-identiques) à ceux qui lui furent transmis par ces savants figurent bien dans le traité, mais selon des chaînes de transmission différentes avec comme informateurs directs des savants qu'Ibn 'Asākir aurait rencontrés en Irak ou en Iran. S. Mourad et J. Lindsay en tirent la conclusion qu'Ibn 'Asākir omit volontairement de les citer—de même qu'il omit de citer le traité sur le jihad d'al-Sulamī (m. 1106)—afin de montrer à ses contemporains et surtout à Nūr al-Dīn qui lui avait commandé ce traité qu'il était supérieur à tous les autres traditionnistes de Damas et que son savoir ne devait rien aux savants de cette ville. Le sens aigu qu'il avait de sa supériorité l'aurait conduit à taire le nom de ses devanciers. Cette interprétation, toutefois, uniquement fondée sur les silences de l'auteur et sur des variantes entre ses deux ouvrages, est discutable. Rappelons, d'une part, qu'il n'était pas rare qu'un traditionniste rapportât un même hadith selon différentes chaînes de transmission. D'autre part, si l'on demeure dans le domaine des conjectures, différentes interprétations pourraient aussi bien être proposées pour expliquer les silences de l'auteur: désir de rapporter les hadiths sur le jihad d'après des savants orientaux connus pour leur science et leur autorité dans ce domaine; le traité d'al-Sulamī n'étant pas un recueil de hadiths (même s'il en contient quelques-uns), Ibn 'Asākir n'aurait pas jugé utile de le citer, etc. En tout état de cause, et en l'absence d'indications claires de la part de l'auteur, il nous semble hasardeux et inutile de se livrer à de telles spéculations.

Les thèmes abordés dans le traité d'Ibn 'Asākir sont clairement analysés dans le chapitre 5: importance du jihad, châtiments de ceux qui le négligeraient et récompense pour ceux qui s'y consacraient, enfin conditions requises pour bénéficier des récompenses liées au jihad. Même si ces thèmes ne présentent en eux-mêmes aucune originalité, il est intéressant de constater l'aspect très normatif de la propagande du jihad en cette deuxième moitié du XII^e siècle. Plus frappante encore, comme le soulignent les auteurs, est l'absence dans le prologue



d'Ibn 'Asākir de toute référence précise aux ennemis visés par ce jihad: ceux-ci apparaissent désignés par les termes vagues de *amrād* (rebelles), *dhawā al-kufr wa-al-'inād* (les infidèles et les récalcitrants)² « qui ont, à cause de leur infidélité, terrorisé le pays et y ont répandu l'oppression et la corruption ». L'infidélité vise incontestablement les Francs présents dans la région. Peut-on en déduire, pour autant, que sont aussi visés les chefs musulmans, sunnites ou chiites, dont les querelles étaient jugées responsables de la faiblesse de la Syrie musulmane? La question reste, à mon sens, posée et rejoint celle qui est abordée dans certains autres chapitres sur la « réorientation » du jihad au XIII^e siècle et au-delà (p. 55–58 et p. 104–14). L'idée qui est développée par S. Mourad et J. Lindsay est la suivante: si Ibn 'Asākir désigne les ennemis contre lesquels le jihad doit être proclamé par des termes vagues, c'est à dessein afin de permettre à Nūr al-Dīn de déclarer le jihad aussi bien contre les « infidèles » que contre les autres musulmans (sunnites ou chiites). Autrement dit, le jihad se développa dans les milieux sunnites aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles non seulement en réaction à la présence des Francs dans la région mais aussi en réaction contre le chiisme qui s'était largement développé aux X^e et XI^e siècles au Proche-Orient. Cette hypothèse n'est pas sans soulever certaines interrogations. Que les dirigeants et les milieux religieux syriens aient lutté contre le chiisme aux XII^e–XIII^e siècles ne fait, bien sûr, aucun doute. Mais peut-on pour autant considérer ce combat comme un jihad au même titre que la lutte contre les « infidèles »? La réponse à cette question n'est pas simple et a beaucoup préoccupé les juristes sunnites médiévaux qui répondent le plus souvent par la négative. S. Mourad et J. Lindsay évacuent un peu trop rapidement le problème en affirmant qu'Ibn 'Asākir aurait justement choisi de composer un recueil de hadiths, et non un traité classique sur le jihad, pour éviter les épineuses questions juridiques. À l'appui de leur thèse, ils citent aussi (p. 107), pour le début du XIV^e siècle, Ibn Taymīyah qui déclara licite le jihad contre les Ismaéliens, les Nusayris et les Druzes. On notera cependant qu'en prenant cette position, Ibn Taymīyah eut soin de préciser que c'est parce que les Ismaéliens, les Nusayris et les Druzes ne sont pas considérés comme des musulmans par les sunnites, que le combat contre eux est permis. Par conséquent, l'idée que le combat du sunnisme contre le chiisme fut considéré comme un jihad, à partir du XII^e siècle, n'est pas réellement convaincante, en tout cas avec les arguments ici avancés.

Dans le chapitre 6, on lira avec beaucoup d'intérêt l'analyse riche en informations des onze certificats d'audition (*samā'āt*) que les auteurs traduisent à tort par « colophons ». D'un point de vue codicologique, en effet, le colophon est la « formule finale dans laquelle le scribe mentionne le lieu ou la date de la copie,

² Expression traduite par les auteurs par « the unbelievers and tyrants » mais le terme de *'inād* renvoie davantage à l'idée de résistance ou d'opposition obstinée qu'à la notion de tyrannie.



ou l'un et l'autre », ³ tandis que les certificats d'audition attestent qu'une ou plusieurs personnes ont lu ou entendu lire un texte devant un maître (*musmi*⁴) qui peut être l'auteur lui-même ou un transmetteur du texte. Les certificats d'audition qui figurent tous à la fin du manuscrit (à l'exception du plus tardif d'entre eux qui figure sur la page de titre) nous apprennent que le texte d'Ibn 'Asākir fut d'abord lu à Damas en présence de l'auteur lui-même en 565/1170 et en 569/1174, puis en présence de certains de ses élèves, et ceci jusqu'en 718/1318. Comme le font justement remarquer S. Mourad et J. Lindsay, trois certificats d'audition attestent de la lecture à Damas de ce traité entre le 26 février 1227 et le 16 mars 1227, c'est-à-dire à une époque où la nouvelle des négociations entamées dès 623/1226 entre le sultan d'Égypte al-Kāmil et l'empereur Frédéric II pour la remise de Jérusalem à l'empereur, en échange de son alliance contre al-Mu'azzam de Damas, était parvenue aux oreilles de ce dernier. Trois autres certificats datent des années 626–27/1229–30, soit la période durant laquelle eut effectivement lieu la remise de Jérusalem à Frédéric II au grand dam des habitants de Damas. Ces certificats viennent donc confirmer l'active propagande en faveur du jihad qui se développa alors dans cette ville et dont témoigne aussi l'historien Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī dans son *Mir'āt al-zamān*. Une propagande également destinée à protester contre les visées expansionnistes d'al-Kāmil qui cherchait alors à s'emparer de Damas. On peut être en désaccord, en revanche, sur l'hypothèse selon laquelle al-Mu'azzam aurait lui-même signé un traité avec Frédéric II avant son frère al-Kāmil (p. 97), car le passage de Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī⁴ sur lequel se fonde cette supposition est ambigu et peut prêter à diverses interprétations. Une lecture différente du passage en question pourrait être la suivante: « Al-Ashraf se rendit auprès d'al-Kāmil et arriva alors qu'il venait de remettre Jérusalem à l'empereur. Al-Ashraf en fut choqué et fit des reproches à al-Kāmil qui lui dit: "J'ai été contraint d'agir ainsi à cause d'al-Mu'azzam," signifiant par là que c'est al-Mu'azzam qui était responsable de la cession (littéralement: qui donna) à l'empereur des territoires compris entre la Jordanie et la mer avec les domaines s'étendant de la Porte de Jérusalem jusqu'à Jaffa et d'autres encore. » Autrement dit, d'après Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, al-Kāmil aurait fait porter à son frère la responsabilité du traité qu'il venait de signer lui-même avec l'empereur, en raison notamment de ses alliances politiques qui auraient poussé al-Kāmil à négocier avec Frédéric II.⁵

³ D. Muzerelle, *Vocabulaire codicologique: répertoire méthodique des termes français relatifs aux manuscrits, avec leurs équivalents en anglais, italien, espagnol, édition hypertextuelle* (Paris, 1985) (en ligne avec la traduction d'un grand nombre de termes codicologiques en arabe, sur le site de l'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes: <http://codicologia.irht.cnrs.fr/>).

⁴ Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-zamān fī tārikh al-a'yān* (Hyderabad, 1951), 8:654.

⁵ Notons que ni H. L. Gottschalk, *Al-Malik al-Kāmil von Egipten und seine Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1958), 146–60, ni R. S. Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids from Damascus,*



L'analyse des quatre premiers certificats d'audition a conduit S. Mourad et J. Lindsay à déduire que le manuscrit parvenu jusqu'à nous est une copie du manuscrit d'origine (sans doute autographe) effectuée par un traditionniste originaire de Séville, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Birzālī (m. 636/1239), grand-père du célèbre historien et traditionniste al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad al-Birzālī (m. 739/1339). Que le manuscrit ait été la propriété d'al-Birzālī est en effet confirmé par le certificat d'audition n° 10 (daté de 633/1236). Toutefois une analyse codicologique et surtout paléographique un peu plus argumentée aurait été nécessaire pour confirmer l'hypothèse qu'il en fut également le copiste. Al-Birzālī a rédigé sans aucun doute (car il s'exprime à la première personne) les certificats n° 3 et 4. Il a sans doute aussi recopié de sa main les certificats plus anciens (n° 1 et 2), car l'écriture est la même et son caractère maghrébin est incontestable. En revanche, on ne peut écarter d'un revers de plume, comme le font les auteurs (p. 83, n. 4), les différences qui apparaissent entre l'écriture de la fin du texte (telle qu'on peut la voir sur la reproduction du folio 79^v qui figure p. 103) et l'écriture des quatre premiers certificats. Ainsi la lettre *fā'* est-elle écrite avec un point au-dessus de la lettre à la manière orientale dans le texte alors qu'elle est écrite avec un point en-dessous de la lettre, à la manière maghrébine, dans les certificats. Comment conclure, dès lors, qu'il s'agit de la même écriture, celle d'al-Qāsim al-Birzālī? À première vue, ces deux écritures apparaissent assez différentes, l'une (celle de la fin du texte) plutôt orientale et l'autre (celle d'al-Birzālī pour les quatre premiers certificats) certainement maghrébine. Il est donc possible qu'al-Birzālī ait fait copier le traité d'Ibn 'Asākir par un copiste avant de retranscrire de sa main les deux premiers certificats. N'ayant pas accès au reste du texte, il nous est difficile de trancher, mais ces différences d'écriture auraient mérité, pour le moins, davantage d'explications.

Les certificats d'audition nous renseignent également sur les auditeurs et les lieux où se déroulaient les séances de lecture. Les listes des auditeurs comprennent d'éminents savants de Damas, signe de l'importance accordée, à cette époque, à l'idéologie du jihad en général et à l'enseignement d'Ibn 'Asākir en particulier. Les lieux où se tenaient les séances pouvaient être privés ou publics: le jardin des neveux d'Ibn 'Asākir dans la Ghouta de Damas ou la maison d'un notable; la Mosquée des Umayyades; les écoles de hadiths fondées par Nūr al-Dīn ou par sa veuve en 1175; ou encore al-Kallāsah fondée par Nūr al-Dīn comme extension de la Mosquée des Umayyades avec laquelle elle communiquait, celle-ci étant devenue trop exigüe. Notons, à ce propos, que le texte arabe mentionne ce lieu sous le simple nom d'« al-Kallāsah à Damas », ce que les auteurs ont traduit par « the Kallāsa School » en indiquant en note qu'il s'agissait d'une école de hadiths construite en

1193–1260 (New York, 1977), 183–84, 198, n'ont retenu l'interprétation d'une alliance d'al-Mu'azzam avec Frédéric II.



1160 sous le règne de Nūr al-Dīn (p. 92, n. 36, et p. 201). Toutefois, avant d'être une école, al-Kallāsah fut, du XII^e au XIV^e siècle, une salle de prière dans laquelle des cercles d'enseignement (notamment de hadiths) étaient organisés, tout comme dans la Grande Mosquée voisine dont elle formait une extension. Ce n'est qu'au XVI^e siècle que l'appellation de madrasa (collège d'enseignement du droit et des sciences religieuses) lui fut couramment appliquée avant d'être reprise par la plupart des historiens modernes.⁶

D'un point de vue formel, l'édition arabe du texte et sa traduction en anglais sont placées en vis-à-vis, ce qui rend la lecture facile et agréable. La traduction est dans l'ensemble très fidèle au texte. Quelques petites remarques de détail: au bas du folio 67b du texte arabe, une coquille rend une expression incompréhensible qu'il faut sans doute lire: *innahu lanā bi-al-mirṣād* expression que les auteurs ont traduite par « He is all-watching ». Sur ce même folio, la traduction d'al-Malik al-Ādil par « the just king » est exacte mais peut-être aurait-il fallu indiquer en note que c'était aussi le nom de règne de Nūr al-Dīn, car c'est ce qui permet de l'identifier comme commanditaire du traité. L'expression *ṣuḥḥa wa-thubita* (ceci fut authentifié et vérifié) qui figure le plus souvent à la fin des certificats d'audition n'est pas systématiquement traduite (cf. certificat 1 p. 185, certificat 3 p. 189, certificat 8 p. 197, certificat 9 p. 199).

On ne saurait dire assez l'importance qu'il y a à éditer scientifiquement, à traduire et à commenter des sources arabes restées jusqu'ici inconnues ou méconnues. Quelles que soient donc les petites divergences d'interprétation qui pourraient apparaître ici ou là dans l'analyse du jihad et de son évolution aux XII^e–XIII^e siècles, on ne peut que se réjouir de la publication de cet ouvrage et féliciter chaleureusement les auteurs pour ce travail aussi utile que réussi.

⁶ A.-M. Eddé, « Saladin's Pious Foundations in Damascus: Some New Hypotheses » in *Living Islamic History: Studies in Honour of Professor Carole Hillenbrand*, éd. Y. Suleiman (Edinburgh, 2009), 62–76.



Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras VI: Proceedings of the 14th and 15th International Colloquium Organized at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in May 2005 and May 2006. Edited by Urbain Vermeulen and Kristof D'Hulster (Leuven: Peeters, 2010). Pp. xiv +394.

Reviewed by Mathieu Eychenne, CNRS-UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée-Islam Médiéval, Paris

Sixième de la série *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, publié en 2010 sous la direction d'U. Vermeulen et K. D'Hulster, le présent volume réunit vingt-quatre articles, en anglais, français et allemand, tirés de communications scientifiques données par leurs auteurs à l'occasion des quatorzième et quinzième colloques internationaux du même nom organisés à l'Université catholique de Louvain, respectivement en 2005 et 2006. Privilégiant le choix fait depuis la première publication de cette série, les éditeurs du présent volume ont regroupé les différentes contributions en fonction des trois périodes chronologiques (fatimide, ayyoubide, et mamelouke), que couvrent ces manifestations scientifiques annuelles. Nous présentons ici, de façon plus ou moins détaillée, les différents articles non en fonction de leur ordre d'apparition dans le cours du recueil mais sur la base de ce qui semble, selon nous, pouvoir les rapprocher.

Plusieurs contributions présentent, et parfois étudient, des documents d'archives ou des manuscrits inédits. C'est le cas des articles de M. Brett, U. Vermeulen, P.-V. Claverie, F. Bauden, K. d'Hulster, et M. Wijntjes, qui contribuent ainsi à montrer toute la diversité des sources permettant d'écrire l'histoire de l'Égypte et de la Syrie entre le X^e et le XVI^e siècle. K. d'Hulster et M. Wijntjes mettent tous deux en évidence la richesse et la variété de la production littéraire au cours de la période mamelouke. En nous présentant, avec une érudition certaine, le *Shāhnāme-yi Türkī*, une traduction en turc ottoman ancien, entièrement versifiée, du grand classique de la littérature persane, le *Shāhnāme* de Firdawsī, K. d'Hulster illustre parfaitement le syncrétisme culturel, fortement imprégné par un substrat turco-persan, qui se développa, encouragé par le pouvoir lui-même, à la cour mamelouke. Terminé en 1511, l'ouvrage est dédié au Sultan Qanṣūh al-Ghūrī, qui contrairement à nombre de ses prédécesseurs, était bien connu pour sa polyglossie¹ et son amour de la littérature. M. Wijntjes, pour sa part, décrit une copie tardive, datant du XVIII^e siècle, du manuscrit de *al-Ḥiṣn al-ḥaṣīn min kalām sayyid al-mursalīn* de Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Jazarī al-Shāfi'ī. Rédigé, en arabe, à Damas dans le contexte de la guerre civile de 791–92/1389–90 qui opposa le Sultan Barqūq à plusieurs émirs mamelouks séditieux,

¹ Il connaissait l'arabe, le persan, le turc, mais également le kurde, l'arménien, le tcherkesse et d'autres langues caucasiennes.



cet ouvrage, composé de dix chapitres, aborde des thèmes aussi variés que la prière, les vêtements, le mariage, la nourriture, le voyage dans un pays étranger, le pèlerinage, la confrontation avec l'ennemi, la salutation, les maladies et les maux, le martyr, la prière aux morts, l'apprentissage du Coran, etc. M. Wijntjes les évoque par le biais d'une sélection de passages, traduits en anglais, et met en avant l'originalité de l'œuvre, véritable « cas de résistance non violente » selon elle, et sa conception par son auteur comme un manuel de survie en ces temps troublés, la conformation aux prescriptions rassemblées dans ce livre étant la meilleure façon de se prémunir contre les épreuves que l'on se voit infliger.

Les deux articles de P.-V. Claverie abordent l'apport de la littérature occidentale médiévale à l'histoire de l'Égypte et de la Syrie médiévales, au-delà des stéréotypes et caricatures produits par ce type d'écrits. Le premier article a pour sujet la bataille décisive et fondatrice de Manṣūrah qui se déroula entre Croisés et Mamelouks en 1250. Il relate notamment le récit inédit, livré dans une chanson, dont le manuscrit est conservé à la British Library, évoquant les faits de guerre des Templiers. L'auteur de la chanson livre ainsi un « témoignage exceptionnel sur l'accueil réservé aux 1500 hommes de Robert d'Artois dans les rues de Mansourah » et « rapporte le sort réservé aux croisés avec un luxe de détails rapportés par l'un des rares survivants de la bataille. » Quant au second article de P.-V. Claverie, il a pour objet un récit de pèlerinage, datant de 1335, rédigé par Jacques de Véronne, un ermite de saint-Augustin. Il montre qu'au-delà de l'hostilité de principe que ce genre de récit véhicule inmanquablement à l'égard de l'islam et au sentiment de supériorité affiché par son auteur tout au long du tableau général qu'il dresse, l'intérêt prononcé qu'il manifeste à l'égard du commerce dans le sultanat mamelouk peut nous fournir d'intéressantes pistes sur la situation économique de cette époque (p. 199–201).

La contribution de F. Bauden est particulièrement intéressante. Son point de départ est un document, daté de 821/1418 et conservé dans les Archives de l'État à Venise. Il s'agit d'un contrat conclu entre un prêtre vénitien et un courrier musulman à propos du transport d'une série de lettres privées du port d'Alexandrie jusqu'à Damas. Comme le rappelle l'auteur, des travaux de J. Sauvaget jusqu'à ceux, derniers en dates, de A. Silverstein, le système officiel de la poste aux chevaux (*barīd*) à l'époque mamelouke a été largement étudié. En revanche, les méthodes de communications entre individus et, plus particulièrement, l'acheminement des nouvelles d'ordre privé au sein de l'espace syro-égyptien, sont demeurés largement ignorés, la faute en grande partie aux lacunes documentaires et au désintérêt des auteurs de l'époque pour cette question. F. Bauden compare ce contrat à un document relativement similaire, étudié par S. Labib en 1962 et perdu depuis cette date. Son étude passe en revue les sobriquets qui caractérisaient certains de ces courriers, la nature des contrats qui les liaient aux commanditaires, les



conditions entourant le service contractualisé, les rémunérations, ou encore les distances parcourues à pieds et le temps qui était imparti pour la livraison des lettres. Dressant les contours d'un acteur, certes invisible mais néanmoins important de la vie sociale—dont le rôle a perduré jusqu'au XIX^e siècle au Maghreb et au Machreq jusqu'à l'avènement de nouveaux moyens de communications—l'auteur parvient à faire émerger une activité qui, selon lui, constituait une profession à part entière et éclaire ainsi un pan méconnu de la vie quotidienne à l'époque mamelouke.

L'étude du patrimoine architectural syro-égyptien est également présente dans ce volume (S. Laor-Sirak, H. P. Hanisch, M. Piana, L. Richter-Bernburg, A. Petersen, M. Frenkel). Les influences extérieures ayant enrichi le savoir-faire technique au cours de cette période et contribué à la formalisation d'une architecture spécifique sont questionnées. S. Laor-Sirak propose ainsi une nouvelle voie pour expliquer la naissance d'un élément architectural en pierre, les *muqarnas* « méditerranéens » (selon la typologie dressée par E. Herzfeld), emblématique des constructions syriennes, à partir du XII^e siècle: l'incorporation et la transmission de techniques et savoir-faire par l'intermédiaire de maçons et architectes arméniens ayant eux-mêmes, pendant plusieurs siècles, assimilé et réinterprété des méthodes plus anciennes et contribué à formaliser le passage du stuc ou de la brique—caractéristique des *muqarnas* « iraniens » (toujours selon E. Herzfeld)—à la pierre. Les influences arméniennes sur l'architecture islamique sont également au centre des préoccupations de H. P. Hanisch, mais cette fois dans le domaine de l'architecture militaire, à travers le système de mesure utilisé, la taille de pierre et les caractéristiques structurelles. M. Piana, pour sa part, aborde l'influence croisée sur le patrimoine architectural de la « nouvelle ville » de Tripoli établie à proximité de l'ancienne ville franque de Montpèlerin après sa conquête par les Mamelouks en 1291. À travers l'étude de différents bâtiments et infrastructures de la ville—notamment la citadelle, « site le plus approprié pour étudier la succession architecturale entre Francs et mamelouks »—l'auteur cherche à mettre en évidence l'adoption d'éléments empruntés aux Croisés comme base de leur construction par les Mamelouks.

Qu'il soit *jisr* (un pont de bateaux ou un ponton, bien que le terme serve à décrire également des ponts fixes) ou *qanṭarah* (un pont arqué en brique ou en pierre, héritier du pont romain), le pont n'est pas l'un des éléments de l'architecture islamique les plus étudiés et ce, en dépit de ce qu'il peut nous apprendre sur l'organisation du territoire et les moyens de circulation et de communication mis en œuvre par une société et un pouvoir. Dans la dernière partie de son article, A. Petersen dresse une liste non exhaustive de six ponts situés en Palestine, encore existants ou détruits mais connus dans la documentation (pp. 294–98). Leur implantation à l'intersection des grands fleuves et wadis et des grandes routes



terrestres, en particulier celui de la *via maris* qui conduit de l'Égypte à la Syrie à travers la plaine côtière de la Palestine, met en évidence l'axe principal de circulation de l'État mamelouk dans la région. Ici l'influence extérieure, et en particulier celle des Croisés qui occupaient la majeure partie du territoire avant la reconquête mamelouke, ne peut être mise en évidence, ceux-ci ayant préféré les voies maritimes pour les communications à longue distance. A. Petersen voit dans ce réseau de ponts un moyen mis en œuvre par le pouvoir mamelouk pour étendre et définir le territoire—tous les ponts étudiés par l'auteur relient l'axe de circulation principal entre Damas et le Caire—et une manière consciente, par le choix de leur emplacement, de faire de la Palestine, un pont entre deux centres de pouvoir (pp. 298–99).

Les articles de L. Richter-Bernburg et de M. Frenkel s'intéressent aux usages politiques du territoire par le biais du discours et du savoir littéraire produit par les contemporains sur l'architecture et sur le patrimoine. L. Richter-Bernburg confronte les points de vue esthétiques ou les jugements moraux sur le patrimoine chrétien et islamique de deux voyageurs, 'Alī al-Harawī et Ibn Jubayr, qui sillonnèrent la région à peu près à la même époque, dans le dernier quart du XII^e siècle. Il montre ainsi que le passé historique ou mythique, à travers les récits de fondation, par exemple, et les traces et témoignages architecturaux, est un des éléments centraux du discours mis en œuvre par les sociétés humaines dans la construction d'une nouvelle identité locale.

M. Frenkel, pour sa part, expose la façon dont les auteurs musulmans, ont, à partir du XII^e siècle, construit un discours cohérent intégrant les différentes couches du passé d'Alep et sa région, sur le plan politique (Grecs, Romains, Byzantins) et sur le plan de la topographie religieuse (paganisme, judaïsme, christianisme), afin de présenter un continuum historique menant à l'islam et aux réalisations de leur époque. Adoptant une conception historique résolument déterministe, selon elle, et un mode de narration téléologique, ces auteurs (Ibn al-Khashshāb, Ibn Shiḥnah, Ibn al-'Adīm, Ibn Shaddād, etc.), loin de chercher à cacher ou à effacer l'histoire pré-islamique de la région, s'efforcèrent au contraire de l'exposer comme un élément indispensable de l'histoire islamique. Les monuments, temples et lieux de culte anciens, associés au paganisme ou aux autres religions monothéistes, furent ainsi loués, réutilisés et réinterprétés par les historiens pour construire la topographie religieuse de la région d'Alep et renforcer son lien avec la Terre Sainte. M. Frenkel interprète ce processus comme un projet collectif de construction d'une nouvelle identité musulmane locale, mené conjointement par le peuple, les notables et les dirigeants politiques à partir d'une stratégie élaborée d'appropriation et d'isolement.

Non sans lien avec la construction des identités locales, J. Drory s'intéresse au cas d'un saint local palestinien de la première moitié du XV^e siècle, Ibn Arslān,



enseignant érudit qui, sans renoncer aux savoirs traditionnels, glissa progressivement vers le soufisme. Né à Ramla, il étudia, prêcha, conduisit ses activités en tant que soufi à Jérusalem et fréquenta un *ribat* à Jaffa. Ne s'étant jamais rendu en Égypte ou en Syrie, il fut néanmoins capable de fédérer un groupe actif de disciples, pour la plupart originaires de villes palestiniennes. En permettant l'émergence d'une telle figure—cas unique selon J. Drory—la Palestine, loin d'apparaître marginale et dépendante des énergies spirituelles extérieures, aurait contribué de façon originale au tissu spirituel de la culture islamique médiévale.

Ce sont d'autres aspects des contacts, des échanges et des influences entre l'espace syro-égyptien et le monde extérieur que ceux déjà évoqués précédemment concernant l'architecture que traite l'article de J. Yeshaya en s'interrogeant sur le jugement négatif que portent, aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles, les auteurs andalous sur la production poétique en hébreu de leurs homologues orientaux. C'est également le cas des deux articles que propose N. Coureas. Le premier a pour objet les relations commerciales entre le sultanat mamelouk et les Hospitaliers installés sur l'île de Rhodes, au milieu du XV^e siècle, dans une période de grande tension entre Catalans et Mamelouks. L'auteur montre la continuité des échanges et fait émerger une figure importante de ce commerce en la personne d'un marchand, natif d'Andalousie et établi à Alexandrie, très présent dans la documentation d'archive, que les sources latines nomment Sidi Galip Ripolli. À travers lui apparaît un groupe d'individus, de culture mixte, musulmane et latine, intermédiaires tout désignés dans les échanges commerciaux internationaux, capables de naviguer avec aisance entre ces deux mondes et également à même de jouer un rôle prééminent dans d'autres aspects des relations entre Hospitaliers et Mamelouks, comme le rachat des captifs, par exemple. Dans le second article, N. Coureas montre qu'en raison de la grande estime dont jouissait à Chypre, à partir du milieu du XIII^e siècle, la médecine arabe et les praticiens orientaux, l'exercice de leur fonction fut conditionné et restreint par la loi, au profit des médecins chrétiens pourtant moins réputés. Jusqu'au-delà du XVI^e siècle et de la période vénitienne, ces restrictions n'empêchèrent pas la préservation du savoir médical contenu dans les ouvrages de ces médecins orientaux grâce à une politique volontariste de conservation et de transmission.

L'étude de J. Den Heijer et les seconds articles de J. Drory et M. Wijntjes présents dans ce volume se concentrent sur des personnalités politiques. J. Drory dresse un portrait de l'émir Yūnus al-Dawādār et revient sur sa carrière et sur le rôle important qu'il joua au cours du règne du sultan mamelouk Barqūq (1382–99). Ce sultan est précisément l'objet de l'article de M. Wijntjes. L'auteure compare les portraits qu'en firent le savant maghrébin Ibn Khaldūn et le marchand siennois de Damas, Bertrando de Mignanelli, tous deux sur la foi de leur rencontre personnelle avec le sultan, et conclut pour l'un et l'autre à la rédaction d'un miroir des princes, dont



l'objectivité n'était évidemment pas le souci principal. Quant à J. Den Heijer, faisant suite à son étude publiée dans le précédent volume de la série, il revient sur l'émir Nāṣir al-Dawlah ibn Ḥamdān et recherche les prémices de son virage pro-sunnite dans les événements antérieurs à sa tentative de révolution pro-abbasside, non couronnée de succès, contre le calife fatimide, menée en 462/1070.

Enfin, deux contributions évoquent les pratiques religieuses et sociales. Y. Frenkel retrace en détail le processus du mariage à l'époque mamelouke, de la demande à la signature du contrat, montrant le décalage existant entre la théorie des juristes et les pratiques quotidiennes des individus. Enfin, G. Schallenberg évoque le point de vue d'Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, au XIV^e siècle, sur les pratiques du *dhikr* (évocation) et du *samā'* (audition).

En dépit de la qualité et de l'aboutissement de certains articles, l'on ne peut que déplorer l'absence de problématique guidant la réalisation de ce recueil et le choix des éditeurs scientifiques de ne produire aucune thématique susceptible d'encadrer—et de donc sélectionner—les différentes contributions qui le composent. La grande densité—vingt-quatre contributions en seulement 400 pages—s'avère quelque peu nuisible à la mise en valeur de la plupart des différentes études, tout comme la répétition des contributions proposées par un même auteur, souvent à la suite l'une de l'autre. Au fil des années, la série *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, publiée chez Peeters, est ainsi bel et bien devenue le marqueur d'une certaine production scientifique² dans le champ des études historiques et archéologiques sur l'Égypte et la Syrie médiévale. Mais, par sa nature, ce sixième volume, comme ses prédécesseurs, ne laisse malheureusement d'autre choix au lecteur que de picorer çà et là, au gré de son humeur, les quelques articles susceptibles de l'intéresser.

² Notons en effet que douze des dix-huit contributeurs du présent volume de la série avaient déjà participé au précédent volume, en y publiant un, deux et parfois trois articles.



Issa M. Baidoun with a contribution by Warren C. Schultz, *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Israel Museum: The Paul Balog Collection: Egypt Vol. III, The Mamlūks 1248–1517*. Edited by Stefan B. Heidemann and Haim Gitler (The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, in association with Edizioni Università di Trieste & Numismatica Bernardi S. R. L. Trieste, 2011). Pp. 205.

Reviewed by Yehoshua Frenkel, University of Haifa

Payments and prices are often mentioned in Arabic and European sources written during the Mamluk period.¹ The well-known medieval savant al-Maqrīzī even wrote two screeds on these issues.² Already in the nineteenth century scholars commenced to publish works on Mamluk mineralogy and on coins, on their values, outlines, and history. Several catalogues of Islamic coin collections were published, mostly in Europe, but also in the Levant.

Students of Islamic numismatics and Egypt's history are familiar with the works of Paul Balog, whose life story and academic achievements are concisely presented by Stefan Heidemann and Haim Gitler in the introduction to the book reviewed here. This preliminary vita is followed by a study on the Mamluk mints. Warren Schultz, its author, provides an overview of the three metal Mamluk monetary schemes. He argues that the periodization of political dynasties differs from the changes in the monetary system. According to him the first period ends in the days of Faraj the son of Barqūq (d. 1412). The second period runs from the days of Barsbāy (r. 1422–37) to the Ottoman conquest of the Nile Valley (in 1517).

*The Mamluk Egyptian mint cities were Cairo and Alexandria. 920 coins from these two mints were part of Balog's collection that ended up in the Israel Museum. Issa Baidoun arranged this treasure chronologically, cataloguing them according to mint, ruler, and metal. In addition to the coin's weight,³ he provides a condensed description of the front face (obverse) and the back face (reverse). Bibliographical notes complete the report. On a separate page he provides a useful

¹ *The Arabian Nights Reader*, ed. Ulrich Marzolph (Detroit, 2006), 116–19.

² Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī (766–845/1364–1441), *Shudhūr al-'Uqūd fī Dhikr al-Nuqūd*. This work was published in several editions and translated: Silvestre de Sacy, trans., *Traité des monnaies musulmanes de Makrizi* (Paris, 1797); L. A. Mayer (Alexandria, 1933); Daniel Eustache, ed. and trans., "Etudes de numismatique et de metrologie musulmanes (Les Perles des Colliers ou traité des monnaies)," *Hespéris Tamuda* 10 (1969): 95–189. For an Ottoman epistle on this topic see Muṣṭafá ibn Ḥanafī ibn Ḥasan al-Dhahabī al-Miṣrī al-Shāfi'ī (1280/1863), *Tahrīr al-Dirham wa-al-Mithqāl wa-al-Raṭl wa-al-Mikyāl*, ed. Rāshid 'A. 'A. al-Ghafīlī (Beirut, 2011).

³ On the importance of this detail see Andrew S. Ehrenkreutz, "Contributions to the Knowledge of the Fiscal Administration of Egypt in the Middle Ages," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16, no. 3 (1954): 503.



list of the religious inscriptions that were struck on the coins. It would be useful to call readers' attention to the fact that the motto "*arsalahu bi-al-hudá*," which can be read on several coins, is close to verses 9:33 and 61:9 in the *Qurán*.

Bearing in mind that David Ayalon's important study "The System of Payment in Mamluk Military Society" is based exclusively on literary sources,⁴ it is helpful to remark that new works in Islamic monetary history concentrate on coins as a source. Certainly, the introductory articles and the detailed description bring the book to its place in the line of the advanced method in numismatic history that treats coins not merely as auxiliary data, but together with inscriptions and other visual artefacts, as a source for the study of sultans' self-images and political goals.

Indeed the importance of Mamluk coinage to the investigation of the sultanate's long history is visibly demonstrated in the catalogue under review.⁵ Thus for example Baybars's ideology is clearly reflected on his coins.⁶ Similar to it is Khalil ibn Qalāwūn's slogan "*nāšir al-millah al-muḥammadīyah / muḥyī al-dawlah al-abbāsīyah*." A third case in point is a coin of the famous Shajar al-Durr from Cairo (648/1250) that has the inscription: "*al-mustašimīyah al-šāliḥah malikat al-muslimīn wālidat al-malik al-manšūr Khalīl*," a line that clearly illustrates her propaganda.⁷

Hence, the book is a functional contribution to students of both Mamluk history and Islamic numismatics. As such it is surely an appropriate corollary to Paul Balog's works.

⁴ Paul Balog, "History of the *Dirhem* in Egypt from the Fātimid Conquest until the Collapse of the Mamlūk Empire," *Revue numismatique* 6, no. 3 (1961): 111.

⁵ A recent book which casts light on their royal titles and agnomens is Shafiq Maḥdī, *Mamālik Miṣr wa-al-Shām: Nuqūduhum, Nuqūshuhum, Maskūkātuhum, Alqābuhum, Salāṭīnuhum, 648–922/1250–1517* (Beirut, 2008).

⁶ Denise Aigle, "Les inscriptions de Baybars dans le Bilad al-Šam: une expression de la légitimité du pouvoir," *Studia Islamica* 97 (2003): 63–64; Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge, 2008): 45.

⁷ On her see Amalia Levanoni, "Šagar ad-Durr: A Case of Female Sultanate in Medieval Islam," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, vol. 3 [Proceedings of the 6th, 7th and 8th International Colloquium], ed. U. Vermeulen and J. Van Steenberg (Leuven, 2001): 209–18.



ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Shaʿrānī, *The Guidebook for Gullible Jurists and Mendicants to the Conditions for Befriending Emirs*, and *The Abbreviated Guidebook for Gullible Jurists and Mendicants to the Conditions for Befriending Emirs*. Edited and introduced by Adam Sabra (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2013). Pp. 217.

Reviewed by Th. Emil Homerin, University of Rochester.

ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī (899–973/1493–1565) was one of the most prolific Arabic writers in early Ottoman Egypt, composing an autobiography and a number of religious works, especially on Sufism and Muslim holy men. Among these works is the *Kitāb Irshād al-Mughaffalīn min al-Fuqahāʾ wa-al-Fuqarāʾ ilā Shurūṭ Ṣuḥbat al-Umarāʾ* and a slightly shorter version of this work entitled *Mukhtaṣar Kitāb Irshād al-Mughaffalīn min al-Fuqahāʾ wa-al-Fuqarāʾ ilā Shurūṭ Ṣuḥbat al-Umarāʾ*. As these titles suggest, both works deal with proper relations between religious men and government officials. The first work was composed in 951/1544 and its abridged version around 969/1562, during the Ottoman rule of Egypt, yet al-Shaʿrānī draws much of his material from Sufis and scholars of the late Mamluk period including Ibrāhīm al-Matbūlī (d. ca. 877/1472), Zakarīyā al-Anṣārī (d. 925/1519) and, especially, his revered illiterate shaykh, ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ al-Burullusī (d. 939/1532).

Throughout the history of Sufism, relations between mystics, mendicants, and government officials have been a vexing issue, with some Sufis completely avoiding officials while others have worked in their service. Al-Shaʿrānī takes a middle position counselling men of religion, and especially Sufi shaykhs, to avoid political patronage whenever possible while still offering spiritual support to officials if that could lead to positive moral and social outcomes. Both the *Irshād* and the *Mukhtaṣar* address the Sufi-official relationship, first in terms of the Sufi, and then in terms of the official. Al-Shaʿrānī repeatedly warns Sufis and other men of religion to shun the things of this world and to lead a scrupulous ascetical life marked by sincerity, piety, and equanimity so that they may give unbiased counsel to officials, which may prove beneficial in this world and the next. As for officials, they should believe unflinchingly in the shaykh and obey him as they would their earthly father. Still, as al-Shaʿrānī frequently notes with examples throughout both works, these ideals are rarely met, as charlatan Sufis and religious professionals befriend officials for food, wealth, and fame, while officials patronize presumed holy people in hopes of securing spiritual support in their worldly struggles for government positions and power. Not surprisingly, such hypocritical relations will only lead to naught or, worse, to divine chastisement perhaps in this world and most certainly in the next. God never answers the prayers of a shaykh who accepts questionable gifts or consumes improper or



forbidden food, such as that offered by government officials, and a shaykh, even if he were himself a great saint, will never be able to aid an official who is sinful and does not believe in him completely.

Moreover, in both the *Irshād* and the *Mukhtaṣar*, as in other of his works, al-Shaʿrānī takes a dim view of his times, living as he believed in the final century before the return of the Mahdi and the eventual Day of Judgment. As such, people are increasingly morally weak and sinful and so ruled by oppressive officials. Yet, he urges men of religion to do what they can to ease the burdens of the common folk in hopes of doing some good. As Sabra sums up:

Al-Shaʿrānī's political theology emphasizes the divine source of political power, and therefore the divine right of the Ottoman sultan to rule. Only God may judge an unjust sultan, and a religious scholar has no right to undermine the political authorities by challenging their legitimacy. Instead, the religious scholars should advise the sultan and his officials to act within the limits set down in the *sharīʿa*, and intercede when possible for the oppressed. The proper role of the Sufi shaykh is as a spiritual advisor and intercessor with God for ordinary Muslims. This sacerdotal function is needed by sultans and officials as well, since as individuals they are subject to the same judgments in the Afterlife as other human beings. (pp. 13–14)

As Sabra also notes, there is much overlap and repetition between the *Irshād* and the *Mukhtaṣar*, and while the latter is entitled an abridgment, it is nearly as long. More significant, however, is the fact that al-Shaʿrānī compiled the *Mukhtaṣar* near the end of his life, and he is not afraid to make explicit references to and criticism of Ottoman officials. He quotes the lament by a chief judge regarding tax-farming, which was bleeding the villages, corvée labor in the countryside, and officials' lack of concern for the general welfare of the people. Among the oppressors were the several Bedouin chiefs among the Banū Baghdād, who had friendships with al-Shaʿrānī. Nevertheless, al-Shaʿrānī could not save them from execution for their crimes, and he cites such stories as warnings to current officials to mend their ways. For a similar pedagogical purpose, in several places in the *Mukhtaṣar* and the *Irshād*, al-Shaʿrānī lists forms of torture that corrupt officials have experienced at the hands of their superiors, including beatings, broken bones, reeds driven under fingernails, and being forced to wear a heated helmet, which could lead to an agonizing death.

These and other accounts in both works render them a valuable source for understanding religious, social, and political relations in late Mamluk and early Ottoman Egypt, and Adam Sabra has contextualized and described both the *Irshād*



and the *Mukhtaṣar* in his detailed introduction. Sabra first discusses al-Shaʿrānī's life within the Egyptian religious and political milieu followed by al-Shaʿrānī's views of politics and government, which were influenced by the writings of Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 637/1240). Then Sabra gives a fairly detailed description and analysis of the *Irshād* and then the *Mukhtaṣar*. This is followed by a timeline of al-Shaʿrānī's life and compositions, a brief description of the manuscripts used for his critical editions, and a bibliography. As to the Arabic editions themselves, short vowels are at a bare minimal, confined mostly to a few lines of verse and verses from the *Qurān*, and the *shaddah* appears only in *Qurānic* citations and the word *Allāh*. Though the absence of the *shaddah* can be mildly frustrating at times, the Arabic text is clear and well-edited, with variants at the bottom of the page. Adam Sabra is to be commended for his critical edition of the *Irshād* and the *Mukhtaṣar*, together with his insightful introduction.



Carl Petry, *The Criminal Underworld in a Medieval Islamic Society: Narratives from Cairo and Damascus Under the Mamluks* (Chicago: Middle East Documentation Center, 2012). Pp. viii +365.

Reviewed by Elias Muhanna, Brown University

The cities of the Mamluk period have long been portrayed in works of Arabic literature (from *The 1,001 Nights* to Gamal El-Ghitani's novel *Zaynī Barakāt*) as dens of iniquity filled with daring thieves, corrupt merchants, brutal policemen, and lecherous slaves. Carl F. Petry's very fine study of criminality in the Mamluk empire sheds significant light on the real murderers, swindlers, rapists, dissidents, and forgers of Cairo and Damascus, and in doing so reveals something important about the forces that held Mamluk urban societies together and threatened to pull them apart. Building on the work of Clifford Bosworth, Ira Lapidus, Jean-Claude Garcin, 'Alā' Ṭāhā Rizq Ḥusayn, and Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah, Petry's conceptual framework and guiding questions also draw upon studies of crime in pre-modern European societies, by scholars such as Barbara Hanawalt, Guido Ruggiero, and Edward Muir.

The sources of the present book are drawn from narrative accounts of criminal activity in Mamluk historical chronicles. This choice of sources is based on the absence of criminal registers from Cairo and Damascus prior to the Ottoman conquest. Petry regards the chronicles as abundant "compendia of data" with detailed accounts of crime mostly devoid of the ideological overtones and idealized descriptions found in other types of sources such as *fatāwá* collections (p. 3). The chronicles include works by Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 739/1338), al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442), Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449), Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451), Ibn Taghribirdī (d. 874/1469), Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (d. ca. 900/1495), Ibn Iyās (d. 930/1524), Ibn al-Ḥimṣī (d. 934/1527), and Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546). Taken together, they yield a corpus of more than a thousand incidents of criminal activity spanning a period of over one hundred fifty years in two large cities. Petry is careful to insist that such a sample set—despite being the "largest of its kind for the medieval period" (p. 4)—still does not permit easy statistical interpretations of, say, the relative frequency of different kinds of criminal activity, simply because of the sample bias of the compilers. Nonetheless, a few conclusions are advanced on occasion with caveats, such as the observation that male-on-male sexual assault is punished far less frequently than male-on-female sexual assault (p. 314) or that fornicators escaped any kind of penalty more often than imbibers (p. 312).

Following an introduction, the book contains seven chapters devoted to different categories of crime, namely public disturbance, theft and brigandage, corruption and fraud, morals and vice, religious dissidence, homicide, and "smart



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crimes” such as conspiracy and espionage. A ninth chapter addresses the subject of managing crime, followed by some summary reflections. Within each chapter, the category under consideration is broken down into further subdivisions; for example, “corruption” includes crimes of *waqf* manipulation, bribery, confiscation of assets, abuse of office, connivance with debtors and prisoners, embezzlement, fraudulent claims, forgery, false witness, forced labor, usury, etc. Petry details each of these felonies with a wealth of examples and copious translations from the sources. We learn of the formidable power of Bedouin bandits who could repel entire Mamluk squadrons (p. 47); the widespread illicit trade in alcohol and other intoxicants (pp. 124–34); the barricading of alleyways at night for fear of thieves (p. 90); a Persian confectioner accused of stuffing pastries with dog meat (p. 111); an instance of possible waterboarding (p. 255); and more. The book is a feast of lawlessness, a fascinating introduction to the gritty, perfidious, ingenious, dastardly, and corrupt characters of the Mamluk underworld.

Petry’s interest, however, lies not just in enumerating different types of crimes but also in exploring the agendas and viewpoints of his sources. Al-Maqrīzī’s copious, detective-like discussions of criminal acts (stemming from his experience as a market inspector) betray an interest in the marginalized sectors of society and the effects of their disenfranchisement upon the civil peace. Paying close attention to discussions of motive and mitigating circumstances in the accounts of the Mamluk historians—while bearing in mind the subjective and conjectural nature of any such evidence—enables Petry to arrive at an understanding of the points of stress in the Mamluk urban social contract.

The attention to narrative style also yields insights into the position of the Mamluk *‘ulamā’* vis-à-vis the political establishment and their willingness to criticize it in oblique ways. While the concept of freedom of speech is obviously anachronistic in this context, Petry argues that the chroniclers found ingenious ways to express their critiques by portraying in lurid detail the crimes that occurred in the cities of the empire. Dwelling at length on such incidents made the authorities look like they were incapable of maintaining order or, even worse, complicit in the most egregious offenses.

The ability of civilians to resist the predations of the Mamluk ruling establishment through the use or threat of violence is one of the most persistent and interesting themes in the book. We are speaking here of religious scholars who wielded judicial authority, but also influential merchants, powerful Bedouin clans, and even low-status residents of the provinces. For example, Petry relates an incident involving members of the Samnāwīyah tribe who rose up against a corrupt governor in Damietta, torturing and killing him and his deputy (pp. 91–92). Such acts of rebellion and mass disturbance were a primary means for civilians “to signal



dissatisfaction with regime policies or to exploit unrest for the purpose of robbery or plunder.” (p. 24)

The penultimate chapter addresses the ruling establishment’s challenges to manage crime, between the poles of principle and expediency (i.e., where the rubber of legal doctrine met the road of lived experience). Here, Petry examines prosecution rates and the punishments associated with different crimes in order to arrive at a sense of the purpose of punishment: was it mostly regarded as a means to deter future offense, or to redress injustices? Certainly, the deterrence power of grisly punishments is undeniable: governors deployed a variety of strategies almost as varied as the crimes themselves—e.g., bisection, crucifixion, torture, mutilation, stuffing corpses with straw and displaying them publicly—to frighten would-be criminals. On the other hand, the sources reveal that the authorities could occasionally be lenient when they stood to profit by looking the other way. As Petry argues, the chronicles depict a regime caught between accountability and culpability, both “genuinely concerned about the ubiquity of crime” and widely complicit in it (p. 323).

If there is a weakness in the book, it is the flip side of one of the book’s main strengths, namely the sheer amount of translated material from the chronicles. This can at times make the work feel like a police log of crime-related clippings. On the other hand, the excerpts will prove most valuable to scholars and students of Mamluk history interested in following Carl Petry’s lead and chasing down the suspects he has paraded before us in this pioneering and lucidly-written study.



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Li Guo, *The Performing Arts in Medieval Islam: Shadow Play and Popular Poetry in Ibn Dāniyāl's Mamluk Cairo*. Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts, vol. 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2012). Pp. xiii + 240.

Also mentioned here:

Theatre from Medieval Cairo: The Ibn Dāniyāl Trilogy. Translated and edited by Safi Mahfouz and Marvin Carlson. (New York: Martin E. Segal Theatre Center, 2013). Pp. xxvi + 197.

Reviewed by Adam Talib, The American University in Cairo

Li Guo's study of the life and works of Ibn Dāniyāl (1248–1310), the most famous classical Arabic dramatist, is a worthy and important contribution to the history of Arabic literature, as well as the social and cultural history of the Mamluk empire. Guo divides his study into three parts: the life and times of Ibn Dāniyāl (Part One), the history, style, and artistry of Arabic shadow plays (Part Two), and an English translation of one of Ibn Dāniyāl's surviving plays, *Ṭayf al-Khayāl*, rendered as *The Phantom* (Part Three). Behind each of these sleek and polished sections lies years of sustained and arduous philological research. Although Part One is focused primarily on Ibn Dāniyāl's biography, Guo brings in a considerable amount of literary evidence from Ibn Dāniyāl's plays and collected poems to enrich what could have been a one-dimensional representation. Part One is itself divided into three "acts." Such an approach will always provoke the methodological allergies of historians and students of literature respectively, but provided that both author and reader have matured past the stage of fetishizing positivism, it can allow for an engaging and illuminating discussion of historical actors who, in contemporary and near-contemporary accounts, are already presented as quasi-literary characters.

In this regard, Part One should be understood as Guo's reconstruction of the historical Ibn Dāniyāl with the acknowledged help of the man's literary works (see, e.g., p. 46: speculations about his family life). Here, too, Guo should be lauded for his frank discussion of misogamy and bisexuality in the work of Ibn Dāniyāl (pp. 148–51) as well as his entertaining use of gay slang in the translations of Ibn Dāniyāl's poetry. Although scholars are accustomed to finding such themes in classical Arabic poetry, it is important that we stop and consider what these may actually mean in the context in which they are presented. Personally, I am not convinced that "bisexuality" is the most appropriate way of describing the sexual attitudes presented in Ibn Dāniyāl's poetry, but it is refreshing to see a serious discussion of a complex, if common, phenomenon that is often disregarded. This literary-biographical approach is, in practice, very common among scholars of



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classical Arabic literature but few manage to pull it off with such style and self-awareness. It is not entirely without its missteps, however, as sentiments like “... Mamluk literary patronage was a business arrangement made between the patron and the poet” (p. 43) do not pass muster as either historical biography or literary history. I also find it peculiar that someone with as little patience for the *nasīb* as Guo seems to have (see pp. 37, 42, 71) should have devoted so many years to studying classical Arabic poetry.

Parts Two and Three treat the medieval Islamicate performing arts of the title. Part Two is both a state-of-the-art of Arabic shadow plays as well as a survey of Ibn Dāniyāl’s theatrical production. Indeed were it not for Guo’s detailed explication of the stylistic and generic features of Ibn Dāniyāl’s plays in Part Two, it would be very difficult to follow the translation of *Ṭayf al-Khayāl* in Part Three. The translation of *Ṭayf al-Khayāl* is readable, entertaining, and well annotated. It also gives a good idea of the bawdy tenor of Arabic popular culture in the Mamluk period. Faults in the translation are surely due to the poor status of the text rather than any shortcoming of the translator.

It is astonishing that Guo has been able to synthesize such complex and dense material into a remarkably readable and informative discussion, and in doing so has led the way for further research by Arabists as well as non-Arabist theater historians. It is significant, too, that Guo was able to incorporate new readings from the manuscripts available to him in this study (notably Ayasofya MS 4880-1). In two appendices, which researchers are bound to find essential, Guo details the manuscripts and printed sources of Ibn Dāniyāl’s work. Of course, anyone who reads this book (or indeed this review) should bear it in mind that Ibn Dāniyāl’s language is notoriously difficult. In fact, while reading Guo’s book one is first filled with gratitude to the author followed by deep frustration that a more critical edition of Ibn Dāniyāl’s plays and poems does not yet exist. That frustration has festered for at least two decades by now, however, as even a cursory glance at reviews of the Kahle edition attests. I mention only in passing here that Amr Moneer of South Valley University (Qena, Egypt) is said to be planning a new edition of Ibn Dāniyāl’s *Ṭayf al-Khayāl*.

In the hope that a more reliable edition will not be too long in coming, I offer a few emendations here for the benefit of readers and researchers. As befits a long anticipated study such as this one, Guo’s book has already attracted the attention of competent reviewers like Emily Selove and Geert Jan van Gelder (writing in the *Journal of Islamic Studies* and the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* respectively) so I will avoid being redundant in my comments. Having said that, I must say that while van Gelder is correct in pointing out in his review that Guo’s vocalization of *Ḥabīzā* (pp. 118, 205–6) is clearly incorrect, his suggestions (*jabīzī*: “my dry bread,” *khabīzī*: “my baked bread”) are altogether less likely than



a toddler pronouncing the more common word *ḥabībī* as *ḥabīzī*. In the same passage, Guo fails to recognize the baby-talk [or child-directed language] word *mum/mamma* (“food”). The other incomprehensible word in that line, *b-f-ā*, is perhaps related to another baby-talk word: *buff*, “bread.”¹

Occasionally, it is the mixing of Persian words (or the perceived mixing of Persian words) that causes difficulty. For example on p. 82, Guo is too trusting of the editor of Ibn Dāniyāl’s poetry collection, M. N. al-Dulaymī, who explains erroneously (*Mukhtār*, p. 144 n. 146) that a Persian character in one of Ibn Dāniyāl’s works is saying, “*yā ānjā*” (nonsense in Persian) when it is clear from the printed text itself that the character is saying, “Come here!” (*biyā [ī]njā*). It is worth noting here that al-Dulaymī’s edition is full of errors, which Guo occasionally replicates in translation. Elsewhere (p. 120), Guo believes that the Arabic *sarqīn* (attested as Arabized Persian in Steingass) is the “Egyptianized” form of the Persian *sarjīn*, which of course does not exist; the Persian word is *sargīn* with *gāf* (a phoneme that does not occur in Standard Arabic). There is a fair bit of Persian in Ibn Dāniyāl’s poetry, of course, just as one finds in the work of other Iraqi poets like Abū Nuwās and Ibn al-Ḥajjāj. Guo finds the use of Persian words as technical vocabulary in the game of backgammon remarkable (p. 119), but these, mostly numerical terms, are of course still used in Cairo today. I confess that I am not satisfied with the translation of the verses on p. 119. Unfortunately, the reproduction of the Dār al-Kutub (Cairo) copy of the MS that I have access to is missing the second half of this poem and it is not clear whether Guo is emending his reading of the printed *dīwān* (based on the Dār al-Kutub MS) with another manuscript in his possession. *Yakay* cannot mean “one-one” in either Arabic (*yakān/yakayn*, *yakkān/yakkayn*) or Persian (*yak-yak*); I can think of two more probable interpretations: *aṣbaḥtu yak-kan* could mean “I got stuck in the first point on the board” or perhaps “I rolled a one.” The word *shāsishī* is not comprehensible to me; Guo suggests that it is a corruption of *shash-sih* (six-three) while al-Dulaymī reads it as six. Both are possible, but I would have expected *sih-shash* (three-six) in Persian. In either case, I believe the hemistich can be better interpreted as “I got stuck in the first point [on the board] when I was defeated by a six-three [or six].” In the second verse, I would interpret *al-sha’īr* as “the other die” not a Persian adverb with the Arabic definite prefix—*dūwī* thus meaning “a two” not “two-two”; likewise *arsh* is an attested Arabic word.

Occasionally, Guo’s translations exaggerate Ibn Dāniyāl’s ribaldry—as if that were necessary! Is this the academic equivalent of the zeal of the converted? I do not know, but the Persian expression *kāse dāghatar az āsh* comes to mind. The description “whose shadow is the pubic hair at its base” (p. 169) is simply a misren-

¹See Charles A. Ferguson, “Arabic Baby Talk,” in *Structuralist Studies in Arabic Linguistics: Charles A. Ferguson’s Papers, 1954–1994*, ed. R. Kirk Belknap and Niloofar Haeri (Leiden, 1997), 184.



dering of “from behind, his shadow is [the width] of a single hair,” i.e., the boy is lithe. Also the expression *abghá min al-ibrah* cannot mean “who could also screw like a needle” as Guo would have it (p. 88). In fact, it is a common enough expression, which Geert Jan van Gelder and I were able to find in al-Hamadhānī’s *Al-Maqāmah al-Dīnārīyah* and al-‘Askarī’s *Jamharat al-Amthāl*. Muḥammad ‘Abduh explains the expression thus: “A needle is for poking and pricking so someone who is like a needle is a person who is obnoxious and injurious to people. Perhaps it comes from a young woman who fornicates because some thread remains inside the eye of the needle” (p. 221). Following ‘Abduh’s first gloss, W. J. Prendergast translates the expression as “O more rebellious than a needle!” (p. 166) as does Marina Montanaro “più ribelle di un ago” (2:110). Unfortunately, al-‘Askarī writes that the expression *abghá min ibrah* is one of the new coinages (*amthāl muwalladah*) that he did not include in his collection as he found them ugly (*lam tuthbat fī al-tarjamah li-qubḥ alfāzihā*), but that the meaning is well known (*ma‘rūf*) (1:206). I cannot think of any one characteristic that links the second items in the construction (*abghá min*), which al-‘Askarī lists: needle, hatchet, padlock, and jawbone, but the expression is clearly negative. In the context of Ibn Dāniyāl’s poem, I presume it must be related to the specific sexual desire (*ubnah*) mentioned in the preceding hemistich. Perhaps, then, provisionally the expression could be understood as “a stubborn and intractable desire” to, in this case, be anally penetrated. On the same page (88), the word *mushāshāhu* likely refers to the two soft mud banks of the canal, rather than the Devil’s “body and soul.” In the list of character names (“The Art of Name-Calling,” pp. 123–30), it is strange not to see reference to the work of Jacqueline Sublet (“Nom écrit, nom dit,” *Arabica* 44, no. 4 [1997]: 545–52). In that article, one occasionally finds better renditions of the characters’ names: e.g., Ḥassūn al-Mawzūn: “Chardonneret *l’Equilibriste*” (Gold-finch the acrobat); ‘Usaylah: I find “Petite goutte de miel” (honey-drop) more plausible than Guo’s “Perfumer’s Little Broom”; Abū al-‘Ajab: is better rendered as “Celui qui fait des merveilles” (Miracle-Man) than “Father of the Wonder Boy.” Both Sublet and Guo translate the epithet “al-Sharmāt” (*pace* Sublet: “al-Sarmāt”) as the amulet-maker, which is not incorrect, but I would translate the word as “Ripper” or “Tatter-er.” The name Zaghbar, which Sublet translates as “Chenu” (Hoary) and Guo tentatively renders as “Dusty Shred,” simply means “Fluff.” Guo takes the name of the priest character Marra Qird to mean “Monkey-passing,” whereas I think it more likely a joke on the word *mār* (the honorific title of saints). These minor quibbles aside, Guo’s achievement is significant and indeed I hope it will be transformative.

As an aside, I would like to point readers to a volume of translations that appeared shortly after Guo’s monograph. Safi Mahfouz, chair of the department of English Language and Literature at UNRWA University (Amman), and Mar-



vin Carlson, Sidney E. Cohn Professor of Theatre, Comparative Literature, and Middle East Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center, have together translated all three of Ibn Dāniyāl's extant plays. Theirs is a practical translation—indeed the plays were given a reading in New York on 8 April, 2013—and it is the first complete translation of Ibn Dāniyāl's plays into English. The plays have already been translated into Italian (F. Corrao) and French (R. Khawam). The translators acknowledge their debt to these translators, as well as Li Guo, in the preface to their collection, *Theatre from Medieval Cairo*. I do not believe it is practicable to review these translations closely because, as I have previously mentioned, the Arabic text on which they are based is not satisfactory, but the translations are readable and the translators provide helpful notes and explanations for non-Arabist readers. Teachers of classical Arabic literature or world theater will find these texts useful for teaching and performance, provided that they work in institutions less prudish than my own.

In addition to Guo's exceptional study and the other studies cited therein, readers may like to peruse studies by Marcus Milwright (*Muqarnas* 28 [2011]: 43–68), Muṣṭafá Abū al-ʿAlā' (*Muḥammad b. Dāniyāl al-Mawṣilī: Dirāsah Mawḍūʿīyah wa-Fannīyah* [Alexandria, 2002]), Dror Ze'evi (*Producing Desire*, Chapter 5), and the work of Ra'ed Abdel Raheem (see several issues of *Majallat Jāmi'at al-Najāh lil-Abḥāth: al-ʿUlūm al-Insānīyah*) and his student Taghreed W. M. Koni (M.A. thesis, al-Najah National University, Palestine, 2013).

Miscellaneous errata: *ballīq* read *bullayq* (p. 118). Ibn al-Hubbārīya read Ibn al-Habbārīya (p. 148). On p. 149, Guo's emendation of the printed text is unnecessary: *buzāl*, the bung-hole of a wine cask, is the preferred reading, but is not an allusion to another sex act. Rather the persona is saying that because he experiences no "lust" (*shabaq*) toward his wife, he has to get drunk to have sex with her.

