Book Reviews

Fāris Aḥmad al-'Alāwī, *'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah al-Dimashqīyah* (Damascus: Dār Mu'add lil-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī', 1994). Pp. 230.

Reviewed by Th. Emil Homerin, University of Rochester

'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah is one of the best kept secrets in the history of Arabic literature. Born into a leading Damascene family of judges, Sufis, and litterateurs during the Mamluk era, 'Ā'ishah received an excellent education, specializing in Sufism and poetry. During her lifetime she exchanged poems with members of the scholarly and political elite, and even had an audience with the Mamluk sultan al-Ghawrī shortly before her death in 922/1516. More amazing still is the fact that 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah is one of the few women in pre-modern Islamic history to have written a substantial amount of Arabic poetry and prose. Among her surviving works in manuscript are a Sufi manual, a poetic rendition of a work praising the Prophet by al-Suyūṭī, and two collections of her own poems, including a *takhmīs* of al-Būsīrī's *Al-Burdah*. This latter work probably inspired her two most famous works in praise of the Prophet, her *Al-Mawrid al-Ahná fī al-Mawlid al-Asná,* and her *badī'īyah,* popularly known as *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn,* both of which were published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Since that time, however, 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah has received little scholarly attention. A few references have been made to her in works of Arab bibliography, while W. A. S. Khalidi gave her a concise entry in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1:1109–10). A short notice, with a few of her poems, may also be found in 'Umar Farūkh's *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* (1984; 3:926–30), though she is absent from the recently published *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (1998). Nevertheless, over the years, scholars working in Damascus, especially 'Abd Allāh Mukhliṣ (1941), and Mājid al-Dhahabī and Ṣalāḥ al-Khiyamī (1981), have published a handful of articles calling for renewed attention to her life and writings. Based in large part on their work, Fāris Aḥmad al-'Alāwī has published a new study of the poet, together with editions of her *Al-Mawrid al-Ahná fī al-Mawlid al-Asná* (with the editorial assistance of Lu'ī 'Abd al-Ḥakīm Ghannām) and her *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Madḥ al-Amīn.*

Al-'Alāwī's study of the life 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah and her immediate ancestors (11–68) consists largely of quotations and paraphrases of Mamluk chroniclers and biographers, including al-Sakhāwī, Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī, and al-Ghazzī. He cites some of her poems found in these sources, pointing out their musical qualities

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and ‘Ā’ishah′s obvious tendencies toward Sufism and love of the Prophet. Al-‘Alāwī also notes ‘Ā’ishah′s admiration of al-Būsīrī′s *Al-Burdah*, but he fails to notice Ibn al-Fāriḍ′s influence which looms large in much of her verse. While this material may serve as a basis for further more detailed research, al-‘Alāwī′s review of ‘Ā’ishah al-Bā’ūnīyah′s writings is incomplete and, at times, inaccurate and misleading. For instance, he is unaware of the existence of her Sufi manual or the location of her work *Durar al-Ghā’iṣ,* based on al-Suyūṭī, though both may be found in Cairo′s Dār al-Kutub. Worse still, al-‘Alāwī has confused ‘Ā’ishah al-Bā’ūnīyah′s two separate *dīwān*s as one work. In 1981, Mājid al-Dhahabī and Ṣalāḥ al-Khiyamī described an autographed copy of her *dīwān* in Damascus dating from 921/1515, and containing six poems in praise of Muḥammad, including a *takhmīs* of al-Būsīrī′s *Al-Burdah,* and her famous *badī‘īyah* with her commentary on it. Al-‘Alāwī calls the work *Fayḍ al-Faḍl,* and adds that there are two additional manuscripts of the work in Cairo′s Dār al-Kutub. However, the Damascus manuscript does not bear this title, and had al-‘Alāwī actually seen the Cairo manuscripts he would have learned that they are a totally separate and earlier collection of ‘Ā’ishah′s Sufi verse.

Turning to al-‘Alāwī′s editions of her two poems, one finds a useful introduction to the history of celebrating the Prophet′s birthday, an overview of the *mawlid al-nabī* genre of prose and poetry publicly recited on that occasion, and a long list of those who composed on the subject. This is followed by a short discussion and outline of the contents of the *Al-Mawrid al-Ahná* (65–113). Al-‘Alāwī notes that he has added sections and sub-headings to the work, and then concludes with the shocking revelation that, because of the difficulty of acquiring a copy of the Cairo manuscript autographed by the author, he has chosen to re-publish the 1301/1883 Damascus edition (115–79)! The situation is the same for his edition of her *Al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn*, for which al-‘Alāwī used a 1304/1914 Cairo edition published on the margins of Ibn Ḥijjah′s *Khizānat al-Adab,* instead of the autographed Damascus manuscript (197–212). Al-‘Alāwī does provide a useful review of the *badī‘īyah* genre and its major practitioners (183–95), and his notes to both texts are generally helpful, though typographical errors are frequent throughout the book (but causing more irritation than confusion).

In short, al-‘Alāwī′s *‘Ā’ishah al-Bā’ūnīyah al-Dimashqīyah* may serve as a basic introduction to the life and work of this extraordinary woman and litterateur of the Mamluk period, while making two of her works more accessible. Yet, had al-‘Alāwī actually read and accurately edited some of the valuable manuscript sources, he could have made a far more significant and lasting contribution to the study of Arabic literature.

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Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras, II: Proceedings of the 4th and 5th International Colloquium organized at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in May 1995 and 1996. Edited by U. Vermeulen and D. De Smet (Leuven, Uitgeverij Peeters, 1998). Pp. 311.

REVIEWED BY PAUL E. WALKER, The University of Chicago

Similar to the earlier volume, *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras: Proceeding of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd International Colloquium organized at the Katholieke Univeriteit Leuven in May 1992, 1993 and 1994* (Leuven, 1995), issued by the same two editors (and reviewed by Stephen Humphreys in *MSR* II [1998]: 245–48), this is a collection of papers from later meetings of the International Colloquium centered at the Catholic University of Leuven (Louvain). Those assembled in this instance, sixteen in all (ten in French, three each in English and German), again cover a wide variety of, for the most part, unrelated topics in the history of Egypt and Syria for the Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk periods. By far the greatest portion deal with the Fatimids (eight out of sixteen). A few that ostensibly cover later periods have material on the Fatimids, although at the same time several from the Fatimid section carry some importance beyond that era alone.

One prime example is Heinz Halm's study of all the data about the Nubian *baqṭ* (the pact according to which Nubia was allowed, though continuing to be Christian, to enter into a kind of treaty relationship with the Muslims). Halm's purpose is to trace carefully the exact chronology of the provisions, set by various sources at different periods, which comprise this highly unusual treaty of mutual obligation. Thus, much of what he discusses concerns events prior to the Fatimids and concludes after them, with the eventual termination of Nubian independence and its Islamization under the Mamluks, the *baqṭ* thus rendered obsolete and meaningless.

Still, Mamluk scholarship is poorly represented overall, with only four short papers: two by Vermeulen (one on the caliphal *bay'ah* as given by al-Qalqashandī and another on correspondence of the Mamluk Faraj and the Marinid Abū Sa'īd during the brief stay of Tamerlane in Syria); one by J. Dobrowolski (on the funerary complex of Amir Kabīr Qurqumas in Cairo); and one by M. Van Raemdonck (on a Mamluk helmet now in the Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire in Brussels). The Mamluk section of the volume occupies only 46 pages as compared to 73 for the Ayyubids and 176 for the Fatimids. And it seems necessary to admit that the papers dealing with the earlier rather than later periods have greater special interest and value.

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For Fatimid history all the papers are quite useful, including among them M. Brett on the long-term implications of the powerful vizier al-Yāzūrī's fall from grace and execution, which led to sixteen consecutive years of chaos and decline; D. De Smet on the transfer of the head of Ḥusayn from Palestine to Cairo, as well as a second article on the evidence for the possibility of a Druze cult of the Golden Calf; Halm's discovery of important new information about the death of Hamzah, the founder of the Druze religion; J. Richard on Fatimid maritime bases; P. Smoor on Fatimid court poetry; and J. Van Reeth's reexamination of the problem of the reputed fraud practiced in the Holy Sepulchre and that church's destruction by al-Ḥākim.

There are four papers in the Ayyubid section, again each of interest: A.-M. Eddé on the geographical and ethnic origin of the populace of Aleppo in the thirteenth century (information made somewhat less essential by the subsequent publication of her 1999 book *La Principauté ayyoubide d'Alep*); L. Korn on the possible political implication of Saladin's building programs in Cairo, Damascus, and Jerusalem respectively; J. Thiry on the decline of North Africa over the eleventh and twelfth centuries and its causes (many aspects of the issue discussed here concern the Fatimids more than the Ayyubids), and Van Reeth on the evidence surrounding, and the meaning of, the bark kept in the mausoleum of al-Shāfi'ī.

For the most part these are papers of high quality. Each offers a serious contribution and individually they will have to be consulted by anyone working in the specific area covered.

The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society, edited by Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Pp. xiv, 306.

REVIEWED BY W. W. CLIFFORD, The University of Chicago

The eighteen articles contained herein began as symposium papers delivered at the Werner Reimers Foundation in Bad Homburg in December of 1994. Though characterized by its organizers, Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann, as a ″small conference,″ the congressional achievement was nevertheless big, presenting a wide range of insights into two principal avenues of current scholarship on *mamlūkīyah:* the structure of elite politics and the cultural divide between ruler and ruled in both Classical (1250–1517) and Neo-Mamluk (1517–1811) Syro-Egypt. While the work is a self-described attempt at forming generally ″an impression of

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the ′state of the art′ of Mamluk studies,″ its primary mission seems to be to account for the ″surprisingly durable″ nature of the Mamluk social system itself.

Were the foundations of this durability principally materialistic or ideological? Amalia Levanoni, in a very serviceable summary [″Rank-and-file Mamluks versus amirs: new norms in the Mamluk military institution″] of her earlier monograph, suggests that changes in the economic circumstances of the ″rank-and-file″ resulted in a proletarianization of Mamluk military culture. She finds the cause of this systemic revolution in the social pathology principally of one individual, Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who during his third reign introduced ″rapid advancement and easy access to material plenty.″ The proliferation of these ex-officio paramilitary pressure groups accelerated the anarchy of the fifteenth century.

Ulrich Haarmann′s contribution [″Joseph′s law—the careers and activities of Mamluk descendants before the Ottoman conquest of Egypt″], which represents the third and final revision of a signal paper originally delivered by him at the Seventh Oxford-Pennsylvania History Symposium in Oxford in 1977, argues against such cultural materialism, doubting that the perpetuation of ″the system of Joseph″—inducting aliens into military servitude in Egypt—produced a corresponding cultural apartheid between the ″foreign ruling nobility″ and their ″native subjects.″ Mamluk society was too permeable and dynamic, culturally integrated in part by its own hybridized social spin-offs, the non-Mamluk descendants of the Mamluks—the *awlād al-nās*—who mediated the social process in late medieval Syro-Egypt through their intercultural intellectual, paramilitary, and economic activity. Haarmann delivers a significant collateral blow to David Ayalon′s notion of Mamluk rule by a ″one-generation aristocracy,″ characterizing it as ″a social *absurdum*″ (p. 84). He finds in the fourteenth century many of the *awlād al-nās* in the upper echelons not just of the *ḥalqah* reserve but the regular army as well. So many, in fact, that Haarmann suggests they actually formed for a time their own ″subsidiary . . . military aristocracy″ (p. 66).

Donald S. Richards attempts to split the difference, proposing in his piece [″Mamluk amirs and their families and households″] that the Mamluk/*mamlūk* system was laced together by the group solidarity embedded in the various types of personal relationships, those of a ″contractual nature,″ those that were ″consanguineal″ and ″affinitive,″ as well as mimetic ones like the non-biological ″brotherhood″ of *ukhūwah*. All relational types were ultimately affected, however, by the material circumstance of land-holding. Whether in rural *iqṭā′āt* or urban development property, these families and households relied on rents drawn from agricultural plots, houses, shops, and markets. The conversion of public holdings into private estates and then, if possible, into charitable trusts *(awqāf)* proved a lucrative strategy in the fourteenth century for ensuring familial integrity. This materialist high tide was ″interrupted″ by upheavals in the fifteenth century that

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led to the decay, confiscation, and dissolution of property, particularly family *awqāf*. Richards gives the impression that these various *mamlūk* relational types were coextensive during the Classical period. But what about the balance of social power among them? Richards suggests that it was amidst the upheavals of the fifteenth century that the passing of ″power and status″ visibly altered. The ″collective ethos of the *mamlūks*″ declined and ″the recognition of kinship ties . . . intensified″ (p. 33).

Richards′ focus on the role of the household in the Classical period is reproduced in the several contributions to Neo-Mamluk history, though they disagree to what extent this similarity of form represented an actual cultural revival of Mamluk usages. Like Richards, Thomas Philipp ponders in his article [″Personal loyalty and political power of the Mamluks in the eighteenth century″] the cultural implications of different forms of social solidarity among the politicking post-Classical Mamluks. Multiple, horizontal bonds among *khushdāsh*s were not as strong as vertical, affective ones between sons and Mamluks of one common, immediate master. The indecisiveness of horizontal loyalties in the Neo-Mamluk period may help to explain the rash of *khusdāsh*-related assassinations in the eighteenth century, which became under ʻAlī Bey al-Kabīr an ″acceptable political ploy.″ The Mamluk system, which should perhaps have ended in 1786, remained perversely durable despite such practices. Daniel Crecelius in his article [″The Mamluk beylicate of Egypt in the last decades before its destruction by Muḥammad ʻAlī Pasha in 1811″] sees new recruitment patterns aimed at rebuilding Neo-Mamluk factions as similarly costly. In an argument reminiscent of Levanoni′s about the breakdown of Mamluk political order, Crecelius points out that the beys ″advanced their Mamluks more quickly than normal, took shortcuts in their training.″ Whereas Levanoni sees the Mamluk system falling prey to ambitious ″rank-and-file″ Mamluks in the fourteenth century, Crecelius argues that the Neo-Mamluk beylicate, ″which opened their households to recruits from new territories and new ethnic backgrounds,″ fell prey in its turn to restive ″mercenaries″ in the eighteenth century.

Michael Winter argues in his piece [″The re-emergence of the Mamluks following the Ottoman conquest″] in favor of a kind of cultural re-emergence in the post-Classical Mamluk period through the military household, though he characterizes it as the merging of separate traditions among Circassian Mamluk amirs and Ottoman beys by the eighteenth century into a common ″neo-Mamluk culture.″

Jane Hathaway in her contribution [″′Mamluk households′ and ′Mamluk factions′ in Ottoman Egypt: a reconsideration″] recognizes, too, the importance of the military household as a source of social solidarity in Ottoman Egypt but, unlike Philipp and Winters, is unsure to what extent it reproduced culturally ″comparable structures in the Mamluk sultanate.″ Like Richards, Hathaway sees diversity in

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household forms, everything ″from relatively informal barracks coalitions to highly articulated residence-based conglomerates.″ While these households were perhaps ″neither wholly Ottoman nor wholly Mamluk,″ she feels they represented the ″multifaceted political culture unique to the Ottoman period.″ It is interesting to see that this social solidarity apparently also had legs. While Mamluk households and families had directly controlled the countryside in their own right, efflorescent neo-Mamluk military households, as they drifted from the political center to the provincial periphery, also served directly as ″prototypes″ for local *a'yān* households, allowing them to better dominate their own regions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this way, ″the household served as a nexus between centre and province″ to a degree possibly it hadn't in the Classical Mamluk period.

Some cultural continuation from the Classical to the Neo-Mamluk periods can be detected. According to Nelly Hanna [″Cultural life in Mamluk households (late Ottoman period)″], inventories of the private library holdings in military households reveal that Neo-Mamluk beys, like Classical Mamluk amirs, ″were not completely ignorant of their cultural environment,″ that they, indeed, attained a level of intellectual and cultural sophistication not often associated with men engaged constantly in political violence. Hanna observes cultural continuities in terms of the numbers of books in Turkish, of orthodox religious titles as well as less orthodox Sufi literature, and of scientific titles (medical/veterinary, astronomical, alchemical). These beys, while not involved in ″intellectual production,″ did preserve the ″classical traditions. ″ More than that, they became a veritable source, like the ulama, for ″cultural transmission″ of those traditions by opening their private libraries to the public.

Contributors generally agree that both Mamluk and Neo-Mamluk military elites expressed social solidarity through segmentation into discrete and independent military households. They vary, however, on the degree to which the continuation of this Mamluk social form into the Neo-Mamluk period represented revival of Classical Mamluk cultural usage. The articles on military household/familial dynamics, which compose about half the volume, are clearly its core. But one can note approvingly the excellence of other related scholarship contained herein. Both Jonathan Berkey [″The Mamluks as Muslims: the military elite and the construction of Islam in medieval Egypt″] and Ulrich Haarmann [″The late triumph of the Persian bow: critical voices on the Mamluk monopoly on weaponry″], for instance, offer up thought-provoking discussion of the problems surrounding Mamluk cultural innovation in the Classical period. For the Neo-Mamluk period, Doris Behrens-Abouseif [″Patterns of urban patronage in Cairo: a comparison between the Mamluk and the Ottoman periods″] and André Raymond [″The residential districts of Cairo's elite in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods (fourteenth to eighteenth centuries″] reveal many continuities in the urban cultural landscape

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of Cairo. Behrens-Abouseif has determined, for instance, that many of the commercial and *waqf*-designated properties in the Ottoman period were ″already in existence during Mamluk times and often even belonged to Mamluk *waqfs*.″ Both ages supported religious construction, though Mamluk educational institutions gave way to neighborhood mosques and *sabīl-maktab*s in the Ottoman period. It was principally the lack of ″imperial vision″ in the Ottoman period that ensured that ″the Mamluk heritage was maintained and preserved until modern times.″ Raymond for his part finds ″a striking continuity″ from the thirteenth through seventeenth centuries in the urban distribution of elite residential areas, especially their continued domination of terrain from al-Qāhirah into the southern suburbs.

While Raymond′s article showcases sophisticated technical analysis of residential patterns in Cairo, the volume as a whole reveals no new critical method in the interpretation of Mamluk social history akin, say, to Michael Chamberlain′s social theoretical interpretation of Mamluk Damascus as a knowledge-based society. The collection is a superb glance back at the traditional social analysis that has brought the field of Mamluk Studies to the forefront of Islamic history but fails to anticipate the interpretive method of the ″new″ social history beginning to poke its nose under the tent.

Dīwān al-Muwashshaḥāt al-Mamlūkīyah fī Miṣr wa-al-Shām. al-Dawlah al-Ūlá (648–784 H./1250–1382 M.). Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad ʻAṭā (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 1999). Pp. 440.

Reviewed by Mustapha Kamal, The University of Chicago

Initially the *muwashshaḥāt* (or strophic poetry) was unique to the poetry cultivated by Andalusian poets. Because of its form and meters, the *muwashshaḥāt* has caused many debates among scholars; until now, there is no agreement as to whether the genre is derived from classical Arabic poetry (especially Abbasid poetry) or adapted from a native Iberian tradition preserved continuously since Roman times.[1] Whether or not one can scan the *muwashshaḥāt* by applying the canonical meters discovered by al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī (d. 174/791) is disputed by scholars, and the way in which the *muwashshaḥah* genre made its way into Egypt and the Levant has yet to be fully explained. But we do know that *muwashshaḥāt* were widely cultivated under the Ayyubids.

[1]Otto Zwartjes, *Love Songs From al-Andalus* (Leiden, 1997), 5–171.

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One of the most important theorists of the genre in pre-modern times was Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk (d. 609/1212) and, as his *Dār al-Ṭirāz fī 'Amal al-Muwashshaḥāt* proves, he studied both their meter and form extensively. For Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk, a *muwashshaḥah* is a series of words strung together in order to fit a special meter. If a *muwashshaḥah* is composed of six *aqfāl* and five *ajzā',* i.e., if it begins with a refrain, it is considered complete; but if it contains only five *aqfāl* and five *ajzā',* i.e., if it does not begin with a refrain, it is called acephalous or bald.

While the writings of Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk and others did much to foster an appreciation of this poetry, there has remained a gap in our knowledge of its later development under the Mamluks as well as a persistent prejudice against Mamluk literati and their contributions to Arabic literature in general. 'Aṭā´s book is therefore a welcome addition to the scholarly literature. In spite of the author´s announced intention to collect the Mamluk *muwashshaḥāt* in two volumes, only a single volume has appeared to date. It consists of three parts: the first records the output of Egyptian poets, the second that of Syrian poets, and the third of poets who visited Egypt between 648/1250 and 784/1382.

This book goes a long way toward addressing the prejudices about Mamluk literary culture which are still widespread among historians of Arabic literature, even among Arab scholars, in spite of the efforts of Muḥammad Kāmil al-Fiqī, Shawqī Dayf, 'Umar Mūsá Bāshā, Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām, Bakrī Shaykh Amīn, 'Abduh 'Abd al-'Azīz Qulqaylah, and others.[2] Mainstream historians of Arabic literature still describe Mamluk poetry as ″decadent, pallid, worn out, and lacking authenticity.″[3]

In this compilation, one is struck by the overwhelming number of vernacular *kharjah*s (pp. 73, 76, 106, 161, 172, 230, 236, 255, 290, 340, and 350), and the absence of non-Arabic ones, except for the following (p. 350):

> Halakī in qāla: yuq
> Yā insān ṭurkhān sinī yughmā sakam sanī.
> [What if he said: ″No″?
> O you, magnificent one, as you´re my booty, I´ll sodomize you
> time and again.]

The way in which these *kharjah*s are located in the *muwashshaḥāt* contradicts al-Ḥillī´s theory equating *kharjah* and *qufl*.

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[2]See Th. Emil Homerin´s important article ″Reflections on Arabic Poetry in the Mamluk Age″ in *Mamluk Studies Review* 1 (1997): 63–85.

[3]Ibid., 71.

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Reading this collection of *muwashshaḥāt*, we can only admire the skill and poetic versatility of two towering figures: al-Maḥḥār (d. 711/1311) and al-Ṣafadī (696–764/1297–1363). Al-Ṣafadī excels when he composes two *muwashshaḥāt.* In the first one, the hemistichs of every *bayt* (strophe) rhyme with one another (pp. 329–30); then to every line in this *muwashshaḥah,* al-Ṣafadī adds another hemistich. The new rhyme-words rhyme with one another. Thus, the rhyme-words in the first *bayt* of the first *muwashshaḥah* read as follows: *mālī, ḥālī, qāli*, and *thānī.* In the corresponding strophe of the second *muwashshaḥah,* the last two hemistichs of the first *bayt* read as follows: *mālī*/*bilā manāmi*, *ḥālī*/*bi-al-ibtisāmi*, *qāli*/*khawfa al-ti'āmi*, and *thānī*/*ba'da al-anāmi.*

With al-Ṣafadī, we see a tendency that will become a major trend in the poetic renaissance that al-Bārūdī (d. 1322/1904) and Shawqī (d. 1350/1932) spearheaded in the last decades of the nineteenth century, i.e., the poetic emulation of great texts. Al-Ṣafadī emulates al-Maḥḥār's *muwashshaḥah* (p. 237) whose opening line is:

> Mā nāḥat al-wurqu fī-al-ghūṣūnī illā hājat 'alá taghrīdihā law'atu al-ḥazīni
> [The turtledoves cooed on the branches causing the sorrows of the lovelorn one to flare up]

in his own *muwashshaḥah* (p. 275) which opens as follows:

> Mā tanqaḍī law'atu al-ḥazīnī aṣlan wa-law salā illā li-ḍarbin min al-junūni
> [The passion of the lovelorn one cannot come to an end, even though he forgets his sorrow, unless he has lost his mind].

Al-Maḥḥār himself had emulated Aydamur al-Maḥyawī's *muwashshaḥah* (p. 238 n.):

> Bāta wa-summāruhu al-nujūmu sāhir fa-man turá 'allamaki al-sahar yā jufūn
> [The stars were his only companions,
> who then taught you sleeplessness, O my eyes?]

This emulation is manifest especially in *muwashshaḥāt* whose rhyme scheme is particularly complex. An instance is given by al-Maḥḥār (p. 186):

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Ariqtu li-barqin lāḥa min dūni ḥājirī fa-ajrá dumū‘ī min shu’ūni maḥājirī
[I lost sleep over lightning that flashed between my (distant])beloved and me, causing my tears to flow)]

Another tour de force is al-Ṣafadī´s use of paronomasia (Ar. *jināS*). For example, the following *bayt* (p. 276):

Fī rīqihi ladhdhatu al-sulāfi lā fī ka’si al-mudām
Ra’aytu lī minhu fī irtishāfi shāfī min al-saqām
Aqūlu wa-al-ṣamtu fī i‘tikāfi kāfī ‘inda al-malām:
[His lips taste better than real wine
In them, I found cure to my disease.
And I say, when silence is the best answer to reproaches:]

In these three lines, the poet makes the three hemistichs rhyme with each other both horizontally and vertically. First he makes the first and middle hemistichs of each line rhyme with each other horizontally: *al-sulāfi* and *lā fī; irtishāfi* and *shāfī; i‘tikāfi* and *kāfī*. Then he makes the first hemistichs of the lines rhyme vertically: *al-sulāfi, irtishāfi* and *i‘tikāfi;* then the middle hemistichs rhyme: *lā fī, shāfī,* and *kāfī*. Then, he makes the last hemistichs rhyme: a*l-mudām, al-saqām,* and *al-malām*. This in itself would be considered a tour de force, but al-Ṣafadī takes the challenge a little further. In each line he creates a paronomasia between the rhyme-word of the first hemistich and the only word composing the second hemistich, e.g., *al-sulāfi* and *lā fī; irtishāfi* and *shāfī;* and *i‘tikāfi* and *kāfī*—as if the second word were coined by amputating a part of its predecessor.

In spite of its undeniable contribution to Mamluk literary studies, ‘Aṭā´s book suffers from a few imperfections. In his very short preface, he mentions the Khalilian meter of each *muwashhaḥah*. The truth is that al-Khalīl´s system does not apply to most of the *muwashshaḥāt* recorded in this collection. It suffices to look at the *muwashshaḥāt* on pages 195 and 198. ‘Aṭā has a moralistic approach to *kharjah*s. Most of the time, he comments on the wanton meaning of the closing line(s) with the following sentence: ″Kharjah kāshifah mājinah fāḥishah fāḍihah″ [revealing, brazen, obscene, and infamous *kharjah*]. ‘Aṭā considers that al-Ṣafadī´s sixth *muwashshaḥah* (p. 288) is homoerotic, whereas the ending strophe clearly mentions an adulterous woman complaining about her jealous husband. The book is full of typographical errors and incorrect vowelling. Sometimes the mistake is due to an incorrect reading of the line. For example, ‘Aṭā reads the following line (#33, p. 348):

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Wa-ghadatin qad sabāhā man ḥusnuhu al-badra ḍāhá
[A young woman was conquered by him whose beauty outshines the moon]

as

Wa-ghadatin qad sabāhā min ḥusnihi al-badru ḍāhī.

This reading does not make sense and breaks the rhyme between *sabāhā* and *ḍāhá*.

The present book has partially filled a serious gap in Mamluk literary studies. It complements Sayyid Muṣṭafá Ghāzī´s *Dīwān al-Muwashshaḥāt al-Andalūsīyah* (1979).

Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr, *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn: Dirāsah Uṣūlīyah Tārīkhīyah* (Cairo, 1998). Pp. 508.

Reviewed by Otfried Weintritt, Cologne University

This rather lengthy book comprises several parts that together form an intellectual and social biography of Ibn Khaldūn. It begins with a detailed account of his scholarly and political life and follows with an explication of the *Muqaddimah* and the various ways it has been read critically, detailing primarily Ibn Khaldūn´s discussion of the notion of *'umrān* (civilization). But the author´s chief interest is in asking a question as yet unposed by scholars: Why was the last period of Ibn Khaldūn´s life marked by so little intellectual activity?

During his time in Egypt (1382–1406) Ibn Khaldūn´s experiences were clearly not reflected in his scholastic output, which diminished substantially. His historiographic-literary interests had of course already found meaningful expression in the *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, including the famous *Muqaddimah*. When he arrived in Cairo, then, Ibn Khaldūn had essentially finished much of his life´s work, leaving really only a subsequent autobiography to compose. In this autobiography he certainly referred to Egypt, but only in passing. One might have reasonably expected that Ibn Khaldūn would have at least revised the *Muqaddimah,* if not penned an entirely new piece, to reflect the fundamental differences he observed between the geopolitics of Egypt, the *umm al-'umrān,* and those regions further west upon which his famous cycle of the rise-and-decline of tribal, kin-based dynasties was originally based.

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The reasons, Manṣūr presumes, are embedded in Ibn Khaldūn´s fundamental acceptance of the Sufi belief in the unity of the creator *(ʻaqīdat waḥdat al-fāʼil)*. This doctrine, that God as the originator of all human actions, good or bad, negates man´s free will, actually explains not only Ibn Khaldūn´s intellectual abstinence but increasing social seclusion during his Egyptian phase. Put simply, Ibn Khaldūn was reluctant to revise works—the *Muqaddimah* and the *Tārīkh* particularly—that formed a resume of his own frustrated ambitions in establishing political power for himself. They memorialized not his, but God´s decision not to bring him to high office (p. 496). Ibn Khaldūn´s ancestors had proven unable to found a dynasty themselves; his own efforts were equally devoid of success, despite his outstanding mental abilities *(ʻabqarīyah)*. Influenced already by his own view that the state can only be established and maintained through a tribal sense of solidarity *(ʻaṣabīyah),* Ibn Khaldūn now embraced with Sufic conviction the notion that he had failed because God had neither chosen him as His divine instrument nor provided him any *ʻaṣabīyah* with which to sustain his own extraordinary intellectual skills.

The issue of *ʻaṣabīyah* itself in any case complicated any real hope of meaningfully revising a work like the *Muqaddimah*. Egypt was a long-settled agrarian society, enjoying both centralized power and a stable population—an *arḍ-shaʻb-dawlah*—which exuded a sense of place *(waṭan)* unknown to the nomadic societies with which Ibn Khaldūn was familiar. Indeed, as a place where tribes were few and politically powerless, Egypt must have appeared to Ibn Khaldūn the antithesis of the *ʻaṣabīyah*-driven tribal societies he had previously analyzed. In evaluating the Egyptian case, therefore, Ibn Khaldūn would have had to acknowledge that the model of Islamic civilization upon which he had built his intellectual reputation had only limited heuristic value after all.

Manṣūr also speculates that Ibn Khaldūn´s abiding enthusiasm *(taʻaṣṣub)* for his Maghrib homeland may have further inhibited his revision of the *Muqaddimah*. This is suggested by his inclusion in the *Kitāb al-ʻIbar* of Berbers, along with Arabs and Persians, as people significant in the historical formation of Islamic civilization. Yet of the seven chapters of the *ʻIbar* the Berbers appear only in the final two, a possible reflection of Ibn Khaldūn´s overwrought pride in his Maghribi origins.

Manṣūr further argues that Ibn Khaldūn may also have been alienated by his inability to achieve judicial reform while he was Malikite chief judge in Egypt. His principal aims were to abolish both bribes and the indiscriminate charge and counter-charge of unbelief within the Egyptian scholastic community. In this, Ibn Khaldūn was doomed yet again to failure. The judicial system of contemporary Egypt was replete with corruption, justice a virtually unknown quantity. The variety of schools of law in Egypt, unlike in the univocal Malikite Maghrib,

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encouraged a corrupt trade in *fatwá*s that resulted in a welter of contradictory legal scholarship. As a chief judge, Ibn Khaldūn could neither work under these conditions nor alleviate their irregularities. This was to prove his undoing.

These frustrations, according to Manṣūr, led Ibn Khaldūn to choose a conspicuously secluded life in Egypt marked by misanthropy, his colleagues apparently reciprocating his social distancing. He was viewed by them as unscrupulous, the product no doubt of his practice of *'aqīdat waḥdat al-fā'il*. He was seen, too, as a master of hypocrisy, a skill employed notably to win the favor of Sultan Barqūq in spite of having penned a *fatwá*—at the behest of Barqūq's rival, Mintash—charging him with unbelief.

Manṣūr feels that Ibn Khaldūn's general reticence in his autobiography about the country and people of Egypt reflected ultimately his feelings of superiority over his Egyptian colleagues and his refusal to become Egyptianized like other newcomers (e.g., Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Maghribī). Even the continued wearing of his native clothing can be interpreted as emblematic of Ibn Khaldūn's allegiance to his original Maghribi identity. Despite his alienation from the Egyptian intelligentsia, many of whom he did not even appear to have known, Manṣūr believes that Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual marginalization in Egypt, including his failure to generate disciples, can be lain at his own feet. He simply did not want to use his talents any further after having finished the *Kitāb al-'Ibar*. Manṣūr is inclined to see in Ibn Khaldūn's intellectual stagnation a reflection of his Sufic belief in the unity of the creator, which he illustrates with the common saying "rabbunā 'āyiz kidā." In this regard, the author mentions a report from the historian al-Sakhāwī that Ibn Khaldūn spent his final years on the banks of the Nile in the company of female singers and young men *(al-shudhūdh al-jinsī)* (p. 499).

The author's portrait of Ibn Khaldūn possesses one final thrilling, perhaps criminal stroke. While one cannot rule out natural causes in his apparent sudden death, Ibn Khaldūn may in fact have been the victim of foul play. The author notes that five other high-ranking scholars died during the political turmoil between 1387 and 1402, all possibly murdered. The chief culprit, Manṣūr believes, was a confidant of Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraj, Ibn Ghurāb, whose own death followed shortly that of the curmudgeonly Ibn Khaldūn.

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QĀSIM ʻABDUH QĀSIM, *ʻAṣr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk: al-Tārīkh al-Siyāsī wa-al-Ijtimāʻī* (Cairo: ʻAyn lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Buḥūth al-Insānīyah, 1998). Pp. 390.

REVIEWED BY THOMAS HERZOG, University of Halle

The book under review, written by Qāsim ʻAbduh Qāsim, head of the Department of History at the University of Zaqāzīq (Egypt), is part of a series of the author's recent works devoted to Ayyubid and Mamluk history and covers at least partly some of the subjects already discussed in his early publications: *Māhīyat al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah* (Cairo, 1993); *Dirāsāt fī Tārīkh Miṣr al-Ijtimāʻī* (Cairo, 1994); *Al-Ayyūbīyūn wa-al-Mamālīk: al-Tārīkh al-Siyāsī wa-al-ʻAskarī* (together with ʻAlī al-Sayyid ʻAlī) (Cairo, 1995); *Al-Sulṭān al-Muẓaffar Sayf al-Dīn Quṭuz, Baṭal Maʻrakat ʻAyn Jālūt* (Damascus, 1998); *Al-Khalfīyah al-Aydiyūlūjīyah lil-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah: Dirāsah ʻan al-Ḥamlah al-Ūlá, 1095–1099M* (Cairo, 1999); *Taṭawwur Manhaj al-Baḥth fī al-Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhīyah* (Cairo, 2000).

In general, Qāsim's study seems to have been conceived as an introduction to Mamluk history for students and educated laymen. The author uses a gripping narrative style writing history with a strong focus on the personal careers of some of the most important Mamluk sultans. Unfortunately, Qāsim slips at times into metaphysical interpretations of history, as, for example, when he speaks of the "historical mission" of the sultan Quṭuz, or into melodramatic utterances in the style of Jirjī Zaydān when he deplores the murder of the same sultan with the words: "Hākadhā jā'at nihāyat baṭal min abṭāl tārīkh al-muslimīn, kāna mil' al-ʻayn wa-al-qalb, aḥabbahu al-nās . . ." (p. 111).

In contrast to his promise to cover the history of the Mamluk Empire, Qāsim's book is a history of Egypt and of Egyptian society during the Mamluk period. Especially in the second part of the book nearly all examples focus on Egypt and Cairo; the Bilād al-Shām is practically absent from the study. As the title notes, the author's work is subdivided into two parts: political and social history. The first part of his study is divided into nine chapters: (1) The historical conditions of the rise of the Mamluk sultanate; (2) The political basis of the Mamluk sultanate; (3) Quṭuz: from mamluk to sultan; (4) The Mongol threat; (5) The battle of ʻAyn Jālūt; (6) The end of a hero; (7) Baybars and the constitution of the Mamluk state; (8) The reign of the Qalawunids and the end of the Crusaders' presence; (9) The state of the Circassian Mamluks. The second part of the book is divided into eight unnumbered chapters (Introduction; Andalusian travellers in Cairo; Egypt in the *Riḥlah* of Ibn Batuta; Markets and everyday life; Religious minorities and Egyptian society; Religious festivals and public feasts; Everyday professions; Famines, epidemics, and economic crises).

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As indicated by these titles, Qāsim´s work presents some peculiar features. First, in his presentation of the political history of the Mamluk sultanate, it is astonishing to see that he focuses on the first eighty years of Mamluk rule. Whereas the author narrates the history of the Bahri sultanate over about a hundred pages, he sums up the history of the Burji sultanate as a period of utter decline in less than twenty pages. Second, Qāsim´s special interest in Quṭuz (nearly fifty of the one hundred and fifty pages of the book´s first part deal with Quṭuz´s approximately two-year reign) is due to the fact that chapters 1–6 of his study are an exact reproduction of a large part of his monograph on this sultan, published in Damascus in the same year as the book under review (he doesn´t mention his own publication). The author´s concentration on the founders of the Mamluk sultanate is certainly exaggerated, especially with regard to his strongly negative description of the Circassian sultanate.

Whereas the first part of Qāsim´s study owes its structure to its chronological organization, the second part of his book appears to be somewhat unorganized. There is no obvious logical link between the different chapters of the second part. This part of his work resembles a collection of essays clumsily glued together rather than part of an integrated scholarly study. After a somewhat repetitive introduction to Mamluk society, the author inserts two chapters dealing with the reports of Andalusian travellers to Egypt and Cairo. These accounts inform us about the concept of *riḥlah* in the Islamic Middle Ages, but do not contribute much to our understanding of Mamluk society. After these two generally informative, but not very well integrated chapters, Qāsim presents the social history of Egypt and Cairo throughout the 267 years of Mamluk rule through the prism of market life. Here his descriptive method gives valuable, detailed information, usually supported with precise citations from Mamluk Arabic sources. The author introduces the theme of the religious minorities in Mamluk society in the following chapter, which is generally informative but again poorly linked to the preceding chapters. Similarly in the following chapters the reader is provided rich information about secular and religious feasts as well as on the different professions of everyday life but is deprived of an analytic approach based in modern historical methodology.

The author introduces his main thesis in his introduction and repeats it often throughout his study: the historical role of the Mamluks was the defense of the Arab and Muslim World against the Mongol threat and the colonialist ambitions of Europe which, according to Qāsim, began with the Crusades (p. 5). But ″once the external threats—the Frankish crusader entity *(al-kiyān al-franjī al-ṣalībī)* and the heathen Mongols—had disappeared, the Mamluk sultanate became a political and economic burden . . . and transformed itself into a monster that did not deserve to be saved″ (p. 6). According to the author, the intrinsic problem of Mamluk rule was the way in which Mamluk sultans ascended to power: Qāsim

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underlines in every chapter of his work that a political system whose leaders acquired power only by force following the principle of ″the rule to the victor *(al-ḥukm li-man ghalab)*″ was destined to internal disorder and political, economic, and cultural decay. To his mind it was the merely formal legitimation of Mamluk rule by the Abbasid puppet caliphs of Cairo ″that brought about hypocrisy in the political life of the Arab World, a phenomenon under whose consequences we suffer to the present day″ (p. 6).

The didactical repetitiveness with which the author reproduces every twenty pages his principal thesis cannot conceal that the reasons for the decay of Mamluk rule—the beginning of which Qāsim dates quite arbitrarily to the beginning of the Burji sultanate—are much more complex than he would have us believe. For instance, it is regrettable that he introduces one important cause for the decay of Mamluk society—the natural catastrophes and the plague at the end of the fourteenth century—only in the last chapter of the second part of his study. Finally the author does not explain how the Mamluk sultanate managed to remain in power for more than two and a half centuries while it was plagued by anarchy and corruption.

Qāsim´s book is very much source-based and leaves the impression that the author ignores most of the contributions of recent Western and Oriental scholarship (the most recent reference to a Western work dates from 1979; the Arabic secondary literature cited dates, except for the author´s own works, almost exclusively from the 1960s and 1970s). Although Qāsim´s book is largely descriptive and often quite repetitive, it may be of some interest for Western scholars not always at ease with Arabic sources because of his extensive use of printed and manuscript source materials, even if, just as Western scholarship did for a long time, he refers much too often to al-Maqrīzī (to whom he dedicated his *Taṭawwur Manhaj al-Baḥth fi al-Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhīyah*). But again, Qāsim seems to accept the sources at face value instead of critically contextualizing and evaluating them, just as, unfortunately, still too many Western scholars do.

Despite all criticism Qāsim´s book may be a useful introduction to the Mamluk era. His gripping narrative style and his extensive use of source materials render his book valuable reading for a wide circle of readers, especially when used in combination with other historical studies.

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Muḥammad al-Shushtāwī, *Mutanazzahāt al-Qāhirah fī al-'Aṣrayn al-Mamlūkī wa-al-'Uthmānī* (Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-'Arabīyah, 1999). Pp. 355.

Reviewed by Leonor Fernandes, American University in Cairo

The title of this book on places of promenade or recreation during the Mamluk and Ottoman periods raises the expectations of the reader eager to learn more about the social life of the inhabitants of Cairo during these periods. From the very first chapter, however, it becomes clear that al-Shushtāwī is not really interested in the social life of the inhabitants of Cairo but rather in urban development. Indeed, the author chooses to focus primarily on the development of urban centers which, as he mentions, became favorite places of residence and promenade during the periods under discussion. Al-Shushtāwī's painstaking effort to compile information from primary and secondary sources is remarkable. The reader is taken on a tour of the most important loci of entertainment such as the river Nile, ponds, islands, canals, and belvederes, but is left to ponder why people chose to go to such places and what type of social activity went on there. The reader has to wait for the last chapter where an attempt is made to put these places in a social context. However, no real analysis is provided and the reader is left with questions about places classified as *"mutanazzahāt."* For instance, visiting a religious foundation as a place of promenade in order to have "a good time" may not mean much to the reader and certainly requires an explanation (pp. 33, 39).

Al-Shushtāwī 's descriptions of the urban development of the islands of al-Rawḍah, al-Jazīrah al-Wusṭá, Jazīrat al-Dhahab, and al-Warrāq are quite interesting to follow. The island of al-Rawḍah is given particular attention (pp. 52–84) since it had become the favorite place for recreation and entertainment during the Mamluk period. It is there, we are told, that people used to go to celebrate weddings, seasonal festivals, and other unspecified festivities. There is a great deal of literature about this island. For instance, medieval scholars often wrote poetry describing the beauty of al-Rawḍah with its gardens and palaces. Passages from this literature are included in the last chapter . Al-Shushtāwī also mentions that al-Suyūṭī himself had been inspired by the beauty of al-Rawḍah and that he had issued a *fatwá* in 896/1491 stating that it was illegal for people to build on the shores of al-Rawḍah. Al-Shushtāwī claims that al-Suyūṭī's concern was to preserve the beauty of the island so it would remain a pleasure for the viewer, and a place of promenade (p. 52). However, the *fatwá,* whose title was "Al-Jahr bi-Man' al-Burūz 'alá Shāṭi' Nahr," was actually concerned with a point of law and not esthetics.

Urban space on the islands and areas around ponds and canals had become favorite places of residence for the elite who built their palaces and mansions there. Such places were often visited by people from all walks of life. Often, says

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al-Shushtāwī, people would visit at the invitation of the elite, who would open their doors for the masses to enjoy their gardens in an attempt to enhance their public image.

The last chapter of the book deals with what should have constituted the core of the study, that is, the social aspect of the *mutanazzahāt*. Here, the author decided to provide the reader with his definition of the word *mutanazzahāt,* which he refers to as being places where people could go to relax and enjoy a good time during special occasions such as seasonal festivals and religious feasts. This long chapter (pp. 269–353) is divided into four sections, each dealing with one sort of entertainment. The author focuses on the activities associated with places such as the Nile, ponds, belvederes, canals, and islands, where people would congregate. He also discusses what he refers to as the aberrant behavior *(al-amrāḍ)* associated with or resulting from celebrations taking place in such locations. Among the celebrations resulting in the gathering of large crowds he mentions religious occasions such as the birth of the Prophet and the procession of the *maḥmal*. Other festivities were associated with the Nile flood and had a national character, such as Wafā' al-Nīl. One of the sections deals with Coptic festivals which had assumed a national character and were celebrated by both Christians and Muslims, for example 'Īd al-Shahīd, Īd al-Nawrūz, and Īd al-Ghiṭās. The author mentions that the celebrations of Nawrūz and Ghiṭās had been discontinued by the middle of the Mamluk period, while those associated with the Nile survived even after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt. Due to the symbolism attached to some of these festivals, the author should have examined them in their changing cultural context. Reference to Huda Lutfi's article "Coptic festivals of the Nile: aberrations of the past?"[1] would have been useful.

This book is easy to read despite its numerous typographical errors and repetitions. The author should be given credit for attempting to take us back to this distant past and offering us a glimpse of the social life of Mamluk society. On the whole this is an interesting contribution to the field of Mamluk studies. A bibliography and an index would have been helpful.

[1] *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, ed. Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge, 1998).

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Muḥammad Fatḥī al-Shā'ir, *Al-Sharqīyah fī 'Aṣray Salāṭīn al-Ayyūbīyīn wa-al-Mamālīk* (Manūfīyah: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1997). Pp. 208.

Reviewed by Niall Christie, University of Toronto

This book presents a survey of the Egyptian province of al-Sharqīyah during the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras (564/1169–923/1517). The medieval Egyptian province of al-Sharqīyah lay, as the name implies, on the eastern side of the Nile delta, to the south of the province of al-Daqahlīyah. It originally occupied the entire area east of the Damietta branch of the Nile from the southern border of al-Daqahlīyah all the way to Cairo, but in 715/1315 the southern portion of the province was separated from it, becoming the province of al-Qalyūbīyah. Throughout the period the capital of Sharqīyah was Bilbays.[1]

Muḥammad Fatḥī al-Shā'ir opens his study with an examination of the development and geography of the province, from ancient times up to the end of the Mamluk sultanate. He then discusses the administration of the province and its role as a channel for communications (particularly by pigeon post) and the transport of snow and ice between Syria and Egypt.

The second part of al-Shā'ir's study concerns itself with the political and military role of the province, examining in particular Crusader activity in the area, its role in the rise of the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultanates, and the relations of these sultanates with the Bedouin of the area, both peaceful and otherwise. Some consideration is also given to the activities of brigands and instances of internal strife during the period.

The third part of the book focuses on the economic history of al-Sharqīyah. The author gives an overview of the *iqṭā'* (feudal estate) system under the Ayyubids and Mamluks, before proceeding with a description of how this system was administered in al-Sharqīyah. He then considers a number of other important features of the economic life of the province. He lists the canals and dams which were the responsibilities of the sultan, describes the most important crops grown in the area and also considers mines, local industries, and trade. The last part of this section discusses the economic effects of plague and famine on the province.
The next part of al-Shā'ir's work considers the social life of the province. He examines the major social groups living in the area, giving attention in turn to the Mamluk elite, the Bedouin tribes, the religious and scribal classes, the merchants, craftspersons, *dhimmī*s (tolerated non-Muslim communities under Muslim rule), and the peasantry. He then discusses the role of the province as a hunting retreat for the Ayyubid and Mamluk elites.

[1]G. Wiet and H. Halm, "Al-Sharḳiyya," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 9:356–57.

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The last major part of al-Shā'ir's work focuses on the religious and intellectual life of the province. He considers the role of various institutions, including *madāris* (legal schools), *makātib* (Quran schools), and *masājid* (mosques) before describing the religious and intellectual elite. He gives examples of noted individuals of the area, including teachers, poets, and judges. He then considers the sufis of the area, noting particularly famous groups and individuals.

Al-Shā'ir concludes that much of the importance al-Sharqīyah enjoyed during the period derived from its geographical position, forming as it did a gateway between Egypt and the other countries of the Middle East. This importance manifested in a number of ways, most notably in its becoming a center both of political significance for the Bedouin, and of commercial and intellectual activity.

The book has a large bibliography, which includes some works by European scholars. There is also a useful appendix containing tables describing the *iqṭā'āt* and *awqāf* (religious endowments) of the province, including their areas and incomes. A contents list is also included at the back.

Al-Shā'ir uses an extremely wide range of medieval Arabic sources in his study. His selection of sources includes works by historians, geographers, biographers, and writers of secretarial manuals. He also supports his primary material with a number of works by Middle Eastern and European scholars. As implied above, the number of European works used is small, but given that al-Shā'ir's emphasis is on information contained in the primary sources, this is not a major problem. However, use of a wider range of secondary material might have resulted in a more well-rounded study.

Al-Shā'ir's work is a valuable contribution to the scholarship of Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt. It is a wide-ranging survey of a number of different topics in the history and development of the province, and as such it provides a useful framework for further study of the area.

MUḤAMMAD AL-TŪNJĪ, *Bilād al-Shām ibbāna al-Ghazw al-Maghūlī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1419/1998). Pp. 200.

REVIEWED BY JOHANNES PAHLITZSCH, Freie Universität Berlin

While appearing to promise a study of the thirteenth century Mongol campaigns against Syria, this short book really serves only to invoke for modern Muslims the struggles of that age in order to reawaken their patriotic spirit and rouse them to a defense of their modern Arab homeland. For now, as then, maintains the author,

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Muḥammad al-Tūnjī, the covetous eyes of its enemies continue to be directed at al-Shām (pp. 5–6). Only the last third of the book actually embraces the subject matter of its own title. In reality, al-Tūnjī has produced little more than a nebulous overview of the Mongol conquests of the Islamic world.

The author begins with the foundation of the Mongol Empire under Chingiz Khān (pp. 10–46), describing the society and culture in its heyday. Al-Tūnjī´s verdict ultimately is that the Mongols have always been a primitive people lacking much cultural development—in contrast to the bedouin and Arab hill tribes who, following Ibn Khaldūn, remained generally superior to sedentary populations (p. 19). The cruelty manifested by the Mongols in their conquests is prime evidence, the author believes, of their primitive nature.

In discussing Chingiz Khān himself, al-Tūnjī has evidently not consulted a single one of his more recent biographies.[1] In particular his evaluation of the ″Great *Yāsa*″ is accomplished without specifying any primary source or even reflecting the doubts raised by David Morgan some years ago about the actual existence of a written legal code in Chingiz Khān´s day.[2] Furthermore, the author gives only short shrift to the turbulent history of the post-Chingizid division of the Mongol Empire into vast territorial appanages among his sons.

While attempting to explore the contours of Mongol religion (pp. 49–62) al-Tūnjī manages only to produce a general catalog of their shamanistic beliefs and contacts with other religions such as Buddhism and Christianity. Yet again, the authors fails to avail himself of any of the available secondary scholarship, such as Jean Richard´s study of papal missionary efforts among the Mongols.[3] The author can seem to find nothing more important to say about the subsequent conversion and advance of Islam under the Mongols except that history will not easily forgive them for the overall destruction they have wrought on Islamic civilization (p. 59).

The middle part of the book takes up Hülagü´s conquest of the Middle East (pp. 65–126). Al-Tūnjī believes that the Mongol prince was tasked originally by the Grand Khān Möngke to vanquish the Assassins, conquer Iran, conquer the Abbasid heartland, and then subjugate Syria and Egypt. He fails, however, to address the signal issue of whether Möngke intended these conquests to constitute

[1]For example, the biography by Paul Ratchnevsky, *Genghis Khan: His Life and Legacy* (Oxford, 1991).

[2]David O. Morgan, ″The ´Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān´ and the Mongol Law in the Īlkhānate,″ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49 (1986): 163–76.

[3]Jean Richard, *Le Papauté et les missions d´Orient au Moyen Age (XIIIe–XVe siècles)* (Rome, 1977).

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an empire proper for Hülagü.[4] The author argues principally that the ″Arab *ummah*″ was subjected in this period not only to a Mongol threat but to an equivalent Crusader one as well. Each conquest effort, he claims, relied primarily on Arab disunity for its success and aimed not only to occupy and exploit the region but exterminate its inhabitants as well. Al-Tūnjī′s effort at equating these two threats is merely another attempt at invoking for the modern Muslim reader the image of the Arab world under threat of foreign domination, especially from its old nemesis—the West. The Crusaders were after all of much less importance for Syria in this period than the Mongols and, unlike them, did not generally massacre Muslim populations (if one excepts the conquest of Jerusalem).

Al-Tūnjī is particularly interested in tracing the unequivocally pro-Mongol posture of indigenous Christians to the successful Mongol strategy of using *dhimmī*s as regional catspaws. Despite Hülagü′s actions at Baghdad and Damascus, only the slaying of the Christian population during the reduction of Aleppo exposed true Mongol intentions towards these *dhimmī* communities. While al-Tūnjī fails to consider the potential role of Christians in facilitating the fall of Abbasid Iraq, he does comment on the situation of the *dhimmī* population in neighboring Ayyubid Syro-Egypt. Because these Christian groups developed excellent relations with the Ayyubids, they were never tempted to cooperate with the Crusaders. What Christian transgressions transpired in Damascus are represented by al-Tūnjī as merely spontaneous, isolated attacks by a handful of individuals (p. 142). In short, he completely denies any tension between the Damascene Muslim and Christian communities. This is not entirely accurate. For instance, Hibat Allāh ibn Yūnis ibn Abī al-Fatḥ, a Christian treasurer in Ayyubid employ and no doubt a leader in the Melkite community of Damascus, used his wealth and influence to advance rather brazenly the interests of his co-religionists, most notably in renovating and expanding St. Mary′s Church. His zealotry proved his undoing, however. According to the historian Abū Shāmah, he was suspended from office and chained publicly to the portal of St. Mary′s, charged with misusing his office to subjugate Muslim interests to Christian ones.[5]

Al-Tūnjī has little to say, however, about the relationship of such *dhimmī* communities with subsequent Mamluk regimes. On the whole, he seems to think their interests were not greatly harmed despite his rather surprising claim that the

[4]For Möngke and his expansionist policy, cf. Thomas T. Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism: The Politics of the Grand Qan Möngke in China, Russia, and the Islamic Lands, 1251–1259* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1987).

[5]Abū Shāmah al-Maqdisī, *Al-Dhayl ʻalá al-Rawḍatayn,* ed. Muḥammad Zāhid ibn al-Ḥasan al-Kawtharī (Beirut, 1974), 156.

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Mamluks were less tolerant of other religions than the Ayyubids (p. 144).[6] His interest in the Mamluks themselves centers more around their crucial victory at the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt. Al-Tūnjī argues chiefly that, unlike the Abbasid caliph al-Mustaʻṣim, al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Baybars played a savior-like role in Islam by both unifying the region and demonstrating that the Mongols could be vanquished through decisive action. The author is offended by traditional historical works that denigrate this crucial Mamluk victory by minimizing the number of Mongol troops involved. To that end, al-Tūnjī wildly estimates the force left behind by Hülagü in Syria at 100,000 men (p. 161). More recent studies that have shown the Mongol occupation force to have been quite small—12,000 to 20,000 men—are ignored.[7] The author displays similar carelessness in treating the scholarship surrounding other issues. His coverage of the installation of the Abbasid caliphs in Aleppo and Cairo, for instance, overlooks Stefan Heidemann´s important work.[8] Also, his treatment of the long Mamluk-Ilkhanid struggle for Syria after ʻAyn Jālūt (pp. 173–90) manages to ignore Reuven Amitai-Preiss´s important work on this period.[9] The last Mamluk victory over the Mongols in 1303 provides al-Tūnjī one final opportunity to celebrate the unity of Arab arms over foreign aggression.

All in all, al-Tūnjī´s book, though based on older, standard works on Mongol history such as Saunder´s *History of the Mongol Conquests,* provides a generally reliable presentation of facts.[10] Its chief shortcoming lies in its failure to incorporate the research of more recent publications, even David Morgan´s general history.[11] Moreover, al-Tūnjī presents no new findings himself. Presumably, this was not his objective in the first place, given his prior background in literary history (p. 6). The author seems to have intended this book to rise above simple narration to consider social and religious developments, but even as a general introductory text it fails to achieve what any good handbook might—enabling students to delve more deeply into selected matters. Moreover, in spite of the seemingly non-partisan

[6]For the situation of the Christians under Mamluk rule cf., for example, Christian Mueller and Johannes Pahlitzsch, ″Baybars I and the Georgians in the Light of the Two New Arabic Documents from the Archive of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem,″ in *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society,* ed. Amalia Levanoni and Michael Winter (forthcoming).

[7]Cf. Reuven Amitai-Preiss, ″ʻAyn Jālūt Revisited,″ *Tāriḫ* 2 (1992): 119–50, with references to the older literature.

[8]Stefan Heidemann, *Das Aleppiner Kalifat (A.D. 1261): vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad über Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo* (Leiden, 1994).

[9]Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks:the Mamluk- Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995). Not mentioned is also Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt: Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the Thirteenth Century,* trans. Peter M. Holt (London and New York, 1992).

[10]Published in London, 1971.

[11]David O. Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA, 1986).

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depiction of events, the underlying intention of the author is readily discernible. Al-Tūnjī consciously presents Saladin and Baybars as role models able to vanquish foreign threats through their geopolitical unification of Syria. Only through such unity and decisiveness, the author insists, will modern-day, would-be conquerors of al-Shām be forestalled. It is perhaps for this reason that al-Tūnjī tries to minimize *dhimmī* pro-Mongol partisanship so as not to be seen as critical of the current Christian-Muslim condominium.

MAḤĀSIN MUḤAMMAD AL-WAQQĀD, *Al-Yahūd fī Miṣr al-Mamlūkīyah fī Ḍaw' Wathā'iq al-Jinīzah 648–923 H./1250–1517 M*. (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1999). Pp. 471.

REVIEWED BY JOSEF W. MERI, University of California, Berkeley

Arabic studies that sensitively treat the history of the Jewish communities of the Near East are rare. Indeed, the history of Near Eastern Jewry has only recently become a legitimate topic of inquiry in the Arab and Islamic Middle East outside the bounds of traditional scholarship, which ordinarily focuses on Jewish and Arab nationalist ideologies in the modern context. Before the advent of political ideologies and nation states, Oriental Jews were integrated into the social, economic, and political life of their societies. The pre-modern context offers many fine illustrations of the complex social and economic relations and the professional and informal religious and spiritual associations that characterized inter-faith relations. During the Mamluk era in particular (648/1250–923/1517), scholars, theologians, historians, and travelers produced a cornucopia of historical, legal, and literary writings, which shed light on the economic, social, and political conditions under which Egyptian Jewry lived. This was also the most significant period for the development of the Jewish faith in the post-Talmudic period, when Islamic rituals and customs influenced Jewish prayer and other rituals and some Jews, including the descendants of the great Jewish physician and theologian Maimonides (1135-1204), were attracted to various forms of mysticism.

One noteworthy critical examination of the history of Jewish life in the Islamic world, which fortunately does not succumb to ideology, is Maḥāsin Muḥammad al-Waqqād's *Al-Yahūd fī Miṣr al-Mamlūkīyah fī Ḍaw' Wathā'iq al-Jinīzah* (The Jews in Mamluk Egypt in light of the Cairo Geniza documents). This is the first serious historical study to make effective use of the Arabic sources by presenting a thorough and balanced discussion of Egyptian Jewry and their participation in

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Egyptian society during the Mamluk era. By contrast, traditional studies do not, for instance, adequately consider the relatively uncommon occurrences of violence perpetrated against Jews. Waqqād sensitively grounds her discussion of such instances in her sources. Her work is an admirable achievement, exemplified by her meticulous and effective use of Arabic historical, literary, and legal sources as well as the Jewish sources upon which the works of Mann, Goitein, Cohen, and others rely. She has also made effective use of Jewish sources, including Judeo-Arabic and Arabic texts, though for Hebrew she generally relies on secondary sources or translated collections such as of Geniza documents and travel accounts.

This study is divided into four primary chapters in addition to an introduction, conclusion, table of contents, and appendices. The introduction provides a historiographical overview of the types of sources concerning the Jews of Egypt and a brief discussion of their status from early Islamic times in pre-Mamluk Egypt. As Waqqād observes in her introduction, the most notable authors writing on the history of Near Eastern Jewry are Jewish. However, the publication of this study underscores the need for international collaborative projects focusing on the history of the Jewish communities of the Near East. Chapter 1 explores the status of the Jews in the Mamluk state and the positions they held. Chapter 2 turns to their economic status, their professions, and trade activities. Chapter 3 looks at the internal organization of the various Jewish communities (Rabbanites, Karaites, and Samaritans) and their religious leadership and judiciary. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the Jewish family, holy days, and religious festivals.

While this study is methodical and logically ordered and the research meticulous, the footnotes and citation of western publications are inconsistent and sometimes works are poorly cited, as has come to be expected of much historical scholarship in the Middle East. Moreover, the editors could have been much more diligent in preventing typos and spelling mistakes, particularly in the citation of western sources.

Occasionally Waqqād displays uncritical moments, when for instance she interjects without proper attribution the mythical statement, which is grounded only in European Christian polemical sources against Judaism, that Jews employed Christian and Muslim blood during the preparation of Passover matzo (p. 378). Moreover, Waqqād takes for granted the twelfth-century Jewish sage and physician Moses Maimonides′ conversion to Islam (p. 59) without mentioning that his conversion was coerced. (Cf. Ibn al-Qifṭī′s (d. 1248) biographical account).

One of the most interesting sections of this book, which gives an intimate sense of the involvement of Egyptian Jewry in their society, is the section on *ziyārah* (pilgrimage) (pp. 393-95). Waqqād′s discussion of Jewish pilgrimage to Jerusalem *(aliyah)* seems rather inadequate. *Aliyah* is the religious commandment of pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which Jewish men observed during the Holy Days of

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Passover, the Festival of Weeks (Shavuot) and the Feast of the Tabernacles (Succoth). After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E., *aliyah* ceased to be incumbent upon Jews. Apart from the residents of Palestine, pilgrimage to Jerusalem was largely the province of wealthy merchants, theologians, and communal leaders and proved to be impossible for the vast majority of Near Eastern and European Jews, who hardly possessed the resources. It was only after the expulsion of the Jews from Iberia in 1492 and the Ottoman conquests of the early sixteenth century that Jewish immigration and pilgrimage significantly increased. When pilgrimage proved impractical for Oriental Jews, they found it necessary to develop alternate pilgrimage centers, which, although in terms of religious significance never surpassing Jerusalem, served to socially integrate them within their places of residence, as did the adoption of customs and rituals also practiced by Muslims. Although Holy Days were the most important occasions for the performance of *ziyārah,* it was performed regularly. Few recorded accounts of Egyptian Jews making pilgrimage to Jerusalem exist. Surviving Geniza accounts mention that Dammūh was one such place of pilgrimage for the Jews of Egypt. Such places as Dammūh served as alternative places of pilgrimage (p. 396). Here, Waqqād might have referred to Goitein´s discussion of Dammūh in *Mediterranean Society*.

Noteworthy is the appendix, which contains a number of Arabic and Judeo-Arabic documents, the latter translated into Arabic by the author.

Waqqād effectively and quite convincingly demonstrates that the Arabic sources reveal Jews enjoyed a relatively peaceful and stable state of coexistence with their Muslim neighbors and were integrated into many aspects of social and economic life. Overall, this study represents a significant and successful attempt to represent the history and society of the Jews of Mamluk Egypt and should be a welcome addition to the library of scholars of the medieval Near East and those interested in interfaith issues.

BAYBARS AL-MANṢŪR AL-DAWĀDĀR, *Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Tārīkh al-Hijrah: History of the Early Mamluk Period.* Edited by D. S. Richards (Beirut: United Distributing Co., 1998). Pp. 488.

REVIEWED BY LI GUO, University of Notre Dame

The work published here is Baybars al-Manṣūrī´s (d. 725/1325) account of the first sixty years of the Mamluk sultanate, from its formative years (650/1251) to the year 709/1310, which marks the beginning of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn

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Qalāwūn´s third reign. It constitutes the most important and original portion of the author´s famous *Zubdat al-Fikrah fī Tārīkh al-Hijrah,* a history of Islam in the tradition of al-Ṭabari and Ibn al-Athīr. This edition is, as the editor points out, ″a long overdue contribution to the study of the Mamluk state and . . . one more building block to be put in its place in the whole edifice of Mamluk historiography″ (p. xiii); and it is most welcome indeed.

The English introduction provides the reader with sketches of the author´s biography and a survey of his works, as well as a discussion of the importance of the *Zubdat al-Fikrah* and the author´s place in early Mamluk historiography. Richards stresses the particular difficulty in establishing Baybars al-Manṣūrī´s relationships with other contemporary historians because of the peculiar, if not unique, nature of his writing, ″which is consciously literary and poetic and therefore not immediately easy to compare with some of the more sober Mamluk historians″ (p. xxiii). This coming from a member of the Mamluk elite, whose mother tongue was not Arabic but who managed, nevertheless, to acquire ″to a notable degree the literary and religious culture″ (p. xv) of the Arabs, is truly fascinating. The fact that the *Zubdah* also contains a considerable amount of autobiographical material also helps to distinguish Baybars al-Manṣūrī from many of his fellow Mamluk historians. Modern scholars have long noted that Baybars al-Manṣūrī´s accounts of the events are unique in many ways. Donald P. Little, in his ground-breaking study of early Mamluk historiography,[1] has verified that Baybars al-Manṣūrī´s *Zubdah* offers many accounts of the events in which he had participated or which he had witnessed. Shah Morad Elham´s study, prepared under the tutelage of the late Ulrich Haarmann and remaining to date the only monograph in a Western language that is dedicated to Baybars al-Manṣūrī,[2] further reveals that the *Zubdah* is very different from the work of the more famous and mainstream historian al-Nuwayrī. My spot check of the present edition further confirms that a substantial number of Baybars al-Manṣūrī´s accounts are drastically different from those of other contemporary authors such as al-Jazarī, al-Yunīnī, and Ibn al-Dawādārī. In addition, Richards also observes that Baybars al-Manṣūrī gives a ″relatively large amount of space to events in Spain and North Africa″ (p. xxiv), the source of which remains unidentified. Surely we have here, in Baybars al-Manṣūrī, a historian with his own experience, his own sources, and his own voice.

The edition is based on the only two extant manuscripts (British Library Ms. Add. 23325 and Yale Ms. n. 1277 [Landberg 758]). Collation was made against

[1] *An Introduction to Mamlūk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalā´ūn* (Montreal, 1970), 4-10.

[2] *Kitbuġa und Lāǧīn: Studien zur Mamluken-Geschichte nach Baibars al-Manṣūrī und an-Nuwairī* (Freiburg, 1977).

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Badr al-Dīn al-'Aynī's *'Iqd al-Jumān fī Tārīkh Ahl al-Zamān,* a fifteenth-century chronicle that is known to have borrowed heavily from Baybars al-Manṣūrī. Some passages not found in the two manuscripts, but preserved in the *'Iqd,* are provided here as supplements (pp. 419–31). The edition is of the highest quality. It is diligently executed, with a generous textual apparatus, such as variant readings from the manuscripts, clarification of difficult passages, meters of the verses, etc. Very useful indexes include personal names, place names, and technical terms.

MAḤMŪD SĀLIM MUḤAMMAD, *Ibn Nubātah: Shā'ir al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Damascus, Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1999). Pp. 243.

REVIEWED BY THOMAS BAUER, Universität Münster

Good news first. In a series called *Silsilat al-A'lām* comprising monographs on the life and work of great poets, writers, and scholars of the Arab world, a volume has been dedicated to Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (686–768/1287–1366), the only poet of this age who has been granted this honor so far. But whoever might have hoped that this would be a sign of a new, less prejudiced, and less ideologically distorted appreciation of Mamluk poetry will be disappointed. Even those who at least expected some new factual insights will hardly be satisfied. Maḥmūd Muḥammad's book adds little if anything to 'Umar Mūsá Bāshā's groundbreaking study *Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī: Amīr Shu'arā' al-Mashriq* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1963, 1992). Two monographs about a man whom I would reckon without hesitation among the greatest pre-modern Arabic poets are certainly not too much, since even many basic facts about his work and biography remain to be elucidated. Let me only mention Ibn Nubātah's difficult but stimulating relation to al-Ṣafadī, his role as a writer of *inshā'*, and his achievements as an anthologist. But all these subjects are either only mentioned in passing or are not even touched upon in Muḥammad's book. Instead, the author limits himself to retelling the well-known facts about "the poet and his age" (pp. 7–23), "the content of his poetry" (pp. 24–130), and "his poetical style" (pp. 131–211). One can determine that everything that is found in Muḥammad's book has already been said (and often much better) by 'Umar Mūsá Bāshā, and everything that cannot be found in Bāshā's study is equally absent in Muḥammad's.

There would hardly remain any reason for saying more about this book were it not for the fact that, due to its author's distorted conception of literature and his complete ignorance of literary theory, this book turns out to be not a work *about*

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Ibn Nubātah but rather a lampoon *against* him. Since Muḥammad′s view of literature in general, and of the literature of the Mamluk period in particular, is still widespread (cf. Th. Emil Homerin in MSR 1 (1997): 71), some more detailed notes may be appropriate.

In his preface, the author apparently criticizes the notion of Mamluk literature as a phenomenon of ″decline consisting only of ornament and play with words″ (p. 5). But instead of refuting this attitude, Muḥammad does his best to corroborate it. ‘Umar Mūsá Bāshā, in his unsurpassed study, succeeded in recognising Ibn Nubātah′s *tawriyah*-saturated style as an exciting innovation that considerably added to the referential potential of Arabic poetry, and by comparing this sort of style to symbolism managed to demonstrate the modernity of Ibn Nubātah and to foster a better understanding of Mamluk poetry in general. Though Muḥammad mentions Bāshā′s study in his bibliography, his book gives the impression that Bāshā′s monograph was never written. Instead, Muḥammad′s book is a sad relapse into the belief that the only aim of literature is the ″natural expression of true emotions.″ This attitude is a trivialised and deformed version of the aesthetics of Western romanticism and was used by ″orientalists″ to disparage (and to protect themselves from the fascination of) an imagined ″Orient″ of irrationalism, ornament, and secret promises. In a process of self-colonialisation these notions have been adopted by some Arab intellectuals and directed against their own cultural heritage. It is surprising and disappointing that these things are still discussed. But exactly these ideas form the core and very essence of Muḥammad′s book. With every line of Ibn Nubātah′s poetry the author asks the question if it can be read as the ″natural expression of genuine feelings,″ or, to put it somewhat provocatively, if it is *kitsch* (which is obviously the author′s real literary ideal). To test the authenticity of the feelings behind a line he uses a well-known scheme. Since rhetorical devices such as *jināS* and *tawriyah,* according to his conviction, cannot arise from ″authentic feelings,″ one has only to look for such devices in order to find out if an elegy springs from real grief or constitutes merely professional craftsmanship (what great damage has been caused by considering both as incompatible!). By applying this method Muḥammad tries to show that there is more ″true feeling″ behind Ibn Nubātah′s famous (and really astounding) elegies on the death of his own children than behind his elegies on several princes, but I am afraid that this conclusion is reached mainly by overlooking the quite reasonable amount of *tawriyah*s even in Ibn Nubātah′s poems dealing with personal affairs. Whatever the case may be, I guess that Muḥammad must feel rather uncomfortable with his position as associate professor of Mamluk and Ottoman poetry. The poetry of these (and not only these) periods needs a different aesthetic approach and cannot be reasonably evaluated with an unreflective longing for *kitsch*.

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In order to present an example that shows how terribly Ibn Nubātah is misunderstood in this book, but also to give an idea about what could be done with his poetry, I would like to take a closer look at four lines that Muḥammad particularly dislikes and ruthlessly criticises. According to him, they are ″far away from truth . . . without apparent impression of a specific emotional experience″ (p. 163). These lines form the introduction to the *nasīb* of a poem in praise of al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Abū l-Fidā' (*Dīwān Ibn Nubātah*, p. 4):

> qāma yarnū bi-muqlatin kaḥlā'ī / 'allamatnī al-junūna bi-al-sawdā'ī//
> rasha'un dabba fī sawālifihī al-nam-/-lu fa-hāmat khawāṭiru al-shu'arā'ī//
> rawḍu ḥusnin ghannā lanā fawqahu al-ḥal-/-yu fa-ahlan bi-al-rawḍati al-ghannā'ī//
> jā'iru al-ḥukmi qalbuhū liya ṣakhrun / wa-bukā'ī lahū bukā al-khansā'ī//

Though a highly complex text like this is even more untranslatable than poetry normally is, I shall venture the following try:

(1) Gazing with dark eyes that taught me madness in consequence of *black (eyes)* / melancholia, there came
(2) a young gazelle on the cheeks of whom ants are crawling so that the poets´ minds are seized by the raptures of love.
(3) A garden of beauty is his face, above which jewelry sings for us—welcome to the lush garden full of rustling / *garden of the singer*!
(4) He treats me with harshness, his heart is (hard as) stone / *ṣakhr* for me, and my weeping for him is like the weeping of al-Khansā'!

Taken at face value these four lines form a quite ordinary, conventional but well formed *ghazal* depicting the fascination of the beautiful beloved and the pains of the lover. But what seems so conventional at first sight is in fact a very complex piece of art. Each line contains a *tawriyah,* the form of *double entendre* that was so popular in Ayyubid and Mamluk times that Ibn Ḥijjah even called the whole period the ″age of the *tawriyah,*″ and Ibn Nubātah was unanimously considered the era´s chief master of the technique. The *tawriyah* makes use of the fact that many words have more than one meaning, and it must be constructed in a way that although only one of its meanings is primarily intended, the hearer/reader is made aware of the other, non-intended meaning of the word. In the case of these four lines, we have no less than three different kinds of *tawriyah*. In the first line, the lyrical I is obviously going mad because of the black eyes of the beloved.

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However, *sawdā'* means also ″black bile, melancholia″ which enables a medical interpretation of the line. Since the context points to the primarily intended meaning, we are confronted with a *tawriyah mubayyanah*. The situation in the next line is more complex, obviously too complex for Muḥammad, whose knowledge of the poetic tradition does not prove sufficient to understand it. Again dominated by Western standards of the nineteenth century, in this case in the field of sexual morals that have even forcefully been changed by the colonial powers, Muḥammad does not recognize that the beloved is of the male sex and that the ″ants″ that are creeping up his cheek are not a simile for ″crumbs of her perfume″ but for ″his downy beard,″ one of the main subjects of Arabic love poetry from the time of Abū Tammām until the middle of the nineteenth century (cf. my *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts* [Wiesbaden 1998], 225–80; see 264 f. for many references to further comparisons between the beard and ants in the love poetry of the ninth and tenth centuries). The comparison is not new at all, but Ibn Nubātah adds a *tawriyah* by stating that the downy beard ″seizes the minds of the poets.″ By mentioning the word *shu'arā'* the hearer becomes aware of the fact that *al-naml* is, just as *al-shu'arā'*, the name of a surah of the Holy Quran. This form of *tawriyah*, which becomes only conspicuous by means of another *tawriyah*, is called *tawriyah muhayya'ah*. Muḥammad cannot see any relation between the names of the surahs and a *ghazal*; it is only ″mannerism″ (p. 163) to seek relations between things that have nothing to do with each other. Well, ants are, as I said, a very common image in love poetry, and I can think of one or another relations that could possibly be found between poetry and poets. And we will see later how the Quran comes in.

The third line adds the acoustic dimension to the optic one. The beloved's face is a garden (a common image), but a garden is only perfect when birds sing in it. Instead of birds, the beloved's garden here is filled with the rustling of his adornment (perhaps his earring); therefore it is a *rawḍah ghannā'* which one can interpret as ″a garden, a singer.″ That is how far Muḥammad came, stating that the whimsical poet ″describes the garden as one of singing that comes from singing″ (p. 163). This note, intended to mock Ibn Nubātah, falls back on its author by proving his lack of the linguistic competence to understand Ibn Nubātah's poems. The intended meaning of *ghannā'* is not that derived from the root *gh-n-y*, but that from the root *gh-n-n*. *Ghannā'* can also be the feminine of *aghann* and means as an epithet to a garden ″abounding with herbs in which the winds murmure by reason of the denseness of its herbage″ (cf. Lane, s.v., adapted). It is an old Arabic expression for a *locus amoenus* and therefore makes excellent sense in this line. The *tawriyah* in this case is a *tawriyah murashshaḥah* in which the context (″singing″) points to the not intended meaning (″singer″). It is no shame to fall into the trap of a

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tawriyah murashshaḥah, as Muḥammad did here, as long as one does not blame the poet for one´s own misunderstanding.

The fourth line complains about the reluctance and harshness of the beloved whose ″heart is of stone (*ṣakhr*),″ a very common theme of love poetry. As a result, the lover must weep, and the poet compares his weeping to that of the pre-Islamic poetess al-Khansā' who spent many years composing elegies on the death of her beloved brother whose name was Ṣakhr. Since the brother´s name is clearly not intended by the word *ṣakhr* in the first hemistich, this is a *tawriyah murashshaḥah* again.

It is not true that these lines are really ″mannered.″ They contain only a single *jināS* (*ghanná–ghannā'*) and are, provided an average acquaintance with poetic language, not particularly difficult to understand if one disregards the *tawriyrah*s. And this is quite possible, since the lines yield perfect sense even without thinking about melancholia, the Quran, and al-Khansā's brother. But of course the *raison d'être* of these verses lies in their *tawriyah*s, much to the dislike of Muḥammad who holds that it is the task of the poets to produce a straightforward expression of emotions (for which purpose, by the way, no poets are needed at all). But what if emotions are not a straightforward thing? Feelings do not exist independently from the culture of which their bearer forms a part. Emotions have their social and situational context, find their cultural interpretation, have their own history, and carry in themselves their own ambiguities. This was, in some way or another, already known to the Arab love poets of the preceding centuries. Never, however, could this factual complexity be transformed into poetry with such literary complexity as it was by the use of the *tawriyah* in the Mamluk period. In these four lines, Ibn Nubātah succeeds in an unprecedented way in providing a broader context for the feelings of love and to put them in the frame of other emotions and of the factors that constitute the condition of human emotionality. From line one we can infer that there is a biological basis to feelings. In line two we are referred to the Quran, which not only talks about emotions evoked or pretended by poets (Q. 26:225: ″al-shu'arā' . . . fī kulli wādin yahīmūn″—this *āyah* is clearly alluded to in Ibn Nubātah´s line), but is in itself a text that has always been experienced as loaded with extreme emotionality that eventually even led to the death of its readers (in the case of the *qatlá al-Qur'ān*). From religious emotions we are taken to emotions caused by nature as reflected in garden and flower poetry, alluded to in line three. And finally, and probably as a sort of climax, the emotions of love are paralleled with those of grief caused by the death of a close relative in line four. Perhaps it is not only the well-known parallel between love and death that is suggested here, but also the historical depth of feelings by alluding to the names of two historical figures. The reader is thus referred to the biological, religious, natural, and historic dimension of emotions. It is a stupid criticism to say that the

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elements hinted at in the form of the *tawriyah* have nothing to do with the ″authentic″ feelings of love. Instead, it is quite obvious that the subject of love is consciously avoided in the images which are hinted at by the secondary meanings of the *tawriyah*s, or rather the theme of love is accompanied by a subtext in a way similar to the technique of the *leitmotiv* in Wagner′s *Ring,* where the music provides for a second textual layer that interprets, comments, and often counteracts the layer of discursive language. What is achieved in the *Ring* by music is achieved in Ibn Nubātah′s poetry by the ambiguity of the *tawriyah* that enables the poet to create a second textual thread that accompanies, reflects, and adds to the primary text. Ibn Nubātah may not always be so successful with his *tawriyahs* as in the quoted example, but his poems are always interesting and mark an achievement that clearly opens a new and fascinating chapter in Arabic literary history, and, since I do not recall any obvious parallels in other literatures, even in the history of world literature.

In any case, there remains a lot to be said about Ibn Nubātah, but not much about Muḥammad′s superficial and prejudiced text. Instead of wasting one′s time with this book it should be spent much more profitably by reading Ibn Nubātah′s poetry itself. And anyone who wants to read a book about this poet can be advised to read ‘Umar Mūsá Bāshā′s outstanding study, which still remains one of the best books on Mamluk poetry.

Aḥmad Qadrī al-Kīlānī, *Al-Malik al-‘Ālim Abū al-Fidā’, Malik Ḥamāh.* Introduction and Notes by ‘Abd al-Razzāq Kīlānī (Damascus: Al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘Ilmīyah, 1998). Pp. 112.

Reviewed by Niall Christie, University of Toronto

This book is an edition of a biography of Abū al-Fidā’, one of a number of biographies of notables of Ḥamāh written by the scholar Aḥmad Qadrī al-Kīlānī (1886–1980), who was himself a native of the city. An introduction and notes are supplied by the editor, ‘Abd al-Razzāq Kīlānī, who knew the author personally. This is the first printed edition of the work itself, which up until this time existed only in manuscript.

Abū al-Fidā’ was an Ayyubid amir, historian ,and geographer. Born in Damascus in 672/1273, he was a cousin to Maḥmūd II, the prince of Ḥamāh. He witnessed the siege of Marqab (Margat) in 684/1285 and took part in a number of later campaigns against the Crusaders. His account of the fall of Acre to al-Ashraf

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Khalīl in 690/1291 is particularly well known. When the Ayyubid principality of Ḥamāh was suppressed in 698/1299 he remained in service to its Mamluk governors, and eventually managed to secure the governorate for himself in 710/1310. He was appointed sultan of Ḥamāh by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 720/1320, continuing to rule until his death in 732/1331. His best known works are a universal history covering the pre-Islamic period and Islamic history to 729/1329, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh al-Bashar,* and a geography, *Taqwīm al-Buldān.*[1]

'Abd al-Razzāq Kīlānī's introduction occupies the first quarter of his edition of Aḥmad Qadrī al-Kīlānī's work. He gives a description of the origins and history of the Ayyubid sultanate up to and including the sultanate of Abū al-Fidā' at Ḥamāh. 'Abd al-Razzāq Kīlānī's choice of sources is fairly narrow, relying primarily on Abū al-Fidā's *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh al-Bashar* and the chronicle *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah* by Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), as well as the modern *Mawsū'at al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī* by Aḥmad Shalabī. The introduction then proceeds with a description of the life and works of Aḥmad Qadrī al-Kīlānī himself, written from the perspective of a man who knew him personally, and including a number of personal anecdotes. Several of Aḥmad Qadrī al-Kīlānī's associates are also described in footnotes to this part. The information presented in the introduction is primarily descriptive, with little discussion of the material.

The major part of the rest of the work consists of Aḥmad Qadrī al-Kīlānī's biography of Abū al-Fidā'. The first part of this is a chronological account, describing his birth, upbringing, education, character, military experiences, and career in Damascus, before giving an account of his gradual achievement of the governorate and then sultanate of Ḥamāh. Al-Kīlānī then presents a number of panegyric poems written for Abū al-Fidā', before describing other actions he performed during his life, most particularly his pilgrimages and visits to Jerusalem. The works of Abū al-Fidā' are also discussed, including sources, content, translations, and publication details. Finally, he describes Abū al-Fidā's death, elegies written to his memory, and the architectural remains from the construction he conducted during his life. The narrative is almost entirely descriptive, with al-Kīlānī making little attempt to analyze the material. However, this is not his purpose. He presents a biography of Abū al-Fidā', seeking merely to describe his activities and achievements, not to carry out a detailed examination of his motives or any other deeper topics. Footnotes by 'Abd al-Razzāq Kīlānī explain individual points in the narrative, providing useful supplemental information, but the editor has not made any further attempt to update al-Kīlānī's work to take account of more modern scholarship.

[1]H. A. R. Gibb, ″Abū 'l-Fidā',″ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 1:118–19.

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Al-Kīlānī makes use of a number of Arabic sources in his account of Abū al-Fidā's life. His major source is Abū al-Fidā's *Tārīkh,* but he also makes considerable use of the biographical dictionary *Durar al-Kāminah* by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) and takes some information from other sources. However, although he cites page and volume numbers, he does not cite which editions of works he is using, nor is there a bibliography given in the book, something which might create difficulties for future research on the passages cited. Al-Kīlānī generally allows the sources to speak for themselves, quoting large sections of text and often allowing them to form a significant part of the narrative. His particular reliance on Abū al-Fidā's own account makes his biography seem somewhat one-sided. On the other hand, it also gives the reader an insight into Abū al-Fidā's major preoccupation, the achievement of the sultanate over Ḥamāh. However, the work might have benefited from more balanced use of the sources.

The book concludes with an afterword by 'Abd al-Razzāq Kīlānī, in which he assesses Abū al-Fidā's achievements, most particularly his ability to preserve the Ayyubid sultanate at Ḥamāh despite the fact that the Ayyubid dominance of Egypt and Syria had been extinguished by the Mamluks considerably earlier. The afterword also concludes the historical survey of the Ayyubid sultanate begun in the introduction.

Al-Malik al-'Ālim Abū al-Fidā: Malik Ḥamāh is a useful book, for two reasons. Firstly, it provides a basic, clear, thematic account of the life of the sultan. Abū al-Fidā' has been given relatively little attention by modern scholarship.[2] Hence this book draws welcome attention to this important figure which has been mostly lacking up to this point. Secondly, the book is useful as a collection of Arabic texts related to the life and works of Abū al-Fidā', making it worthy of examination by scholars wishing to conduct further research on the sultan.

[2]The most notable exception to this is a partial translation of the *Tārīkh* by P. M. Holt, entitled *The Memoirs of a Syrian Prince: Abu'l-Fidā', Sultan of Ḥamāh (672–732/1273–1331),* Freiburger Islamstudien, vol. 9 (Wiesbaden, 1983).

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The Cairo Heritage: Essays in Honor of Laila Ali Ibrahim. Edited by Doris Behrens-Abouseif (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2000). Pp. 341.

REVIEWED BY BETHANY J. WALKER, Oklahoma State University

This high-quality festschrift offers a fitting tribute to one of the most influential figures in Cairene studies. As a social historian, art historian, educator, and conservationist, Laila Ali Ibrahim has impacted scholarship on the ″Mother of the World″ on many levels. Her commitment to and love for Cairo are evident in several key articles and monographs on the historic city, in her many years of activism to save its monuments and neighborhoods, and in her generosity towards resident and visiting scholars, among whom are the contributors to this volume.

The essays in this festschrift represent a good mix of Egyptian and non-Egyptian scholarship on the city. The authors regularly cite one another, and the overlap of themes and references makes for a coherent, well-structured text. The volume is organized into four sections, all of which illustrate Laila Ali Ibrahim′s intellectual interests and scholarly contributions. Each examines Cairo from a different vantage point, beginning with a bird′s eye view of the city as a whole, going then to its monuments and the furnishings of those monuments, and concluding with the dilapidated state of the modern neighborhoods collectively known as ″Islamic Cairo.″ The sections are tied together by the common theme of *waqf* and its impact, for good or bad, on the medieval and modern city.

Part One, entitled ″History,″ examines the historiography of Cairo, in which al-Maqrīzī plays a particularly visible role. Jean-Claude Garcin′s article ″Outsiders in the City″ appropriately opens the volume with a discussion of the character of the Mamluk city, whether it was a foreign and colonial creation forced on Egyptians or, rather, a natural stage in the development of the larger Egyptian state. To this end he considers the integral roles played by the outsider/newcomer in Islamic history and argues that the Mamluks were ″acceptable strangers″ whose monumental urban creations were reflections of indigenous state development. His ″inner outsider″ is, thus, a useful model for art history and should be introduced to the debates on the character of Mamluk art, which emphasize its ″renaissance″ of classical Islamic styles.

Because of his centrality to Cairene historiography and to Mamluk studies as a whole, al-Maqrīzī is the subject of two articles by Nasser Rabbat and Sabri Jarrar. Rabbat assesses al-Maqrīzī′s *Kitāb al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* as a product of *khiṭaṭ* writing (descriptions of the planned urban quarter) and traces the evolution of this genre from *faḍā'il* (merits of cities) and *tarājim* (biographies of urban notables) literature to *masālik* (historical topography)

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treatises. He suggests that what distinguishes al-Maqrīzī from other *khiṭaṭ* writers is his overarching theory of history, heavily influenced by Ibn Khaldūn, and his concern, like that of Ibrahim, for recording Cairo's monuments before they disappear. Although the heavy and at times awkward prose makes Jarrar's article difficult to read, his suggestion that al-Maqrīzī's unique contribution was in his "alternative, architectural approach to history" (p. 32) is thought-provoking. Jarrar argues that the Mamluk historian uses the concepts of *khiṭaṭ* (in this case "streets") and *āthār* (structures on those streets) to construct a hierarchical system of describing Cairo's urban space. Al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*, however, is not nearly as systematic in its descriptions of streets and monuments as Jarrar would have us believe. The amount of detail and the extent of storytelling (poetry, various asides, and "gossip") in al-Maqrīzī's accounts depended on the sources that were at his disposal. Moreover, an explanation for al-Maqrīzī's interest in "urban realism," to use Jarrar's phrase, is missing from this essay.

The volume's editor, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, rounds out Part One with an essay on the Mamluk sultans' use of family *waqf* to supplement amiral incomes. Not only does the author's new data challenge the traditional understanding of the economic position of the *awlād al-nās*, but I believe it will be useful for explaining the financial mechanisms behind the urban patterns achieved in Cairo in the early Mamluk period.

Part Two, "Architecture and Urban History," focuses on Cairo's monuments and the institutions that created them, and what impact they had on urban design. Most of the articles in this section relied on *waqfīyāt* as primary sources, *waqf* being the primary institution through which the urban fabric was transformed. As with Part One, this section opens with a theoretical essay. In his trademark oratorial style, Oleg Grabar presents a model for explaining the architectural inscriptions that punctuate the old city's landscape, suggesting that people write on buildings primarily to explain the building's purpose. He claims that the most significant contribution of Islamic architecture was the semantic function of architectural inscriptions, in which writing was part of the building's fabric. If so, we should extend Grabar's argument to the level of the city: such inscriptions were also an integral part of the urban fabric. Thus, they should be read as a source of information on what patrons valued in their city, what they found beautiful in it, and how they hoped to transform it.

The five following articles address specific architectural problems and are concerned with identifying or dating particular monuments. In his essay on the Ibn Ṭūlūn minaret, Tarek Swelim revives the controversy over the date of the extant minaret, suggesting that the base is Ayyubid and the *mabkharah* early Mamluk. Finbarr Flood, in his study of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's Bāb al-Sa'āt on the Citadel, illustrates another way in which Umayyad architecture, and specifically

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the Great Mosque of Damascus, influenced the monuments of Qalawunid Cairo. On the basis of written sources, Flood argues that the Cairene gate served the same purpose as the gate of the same name in Damascus: to provide access from the congregational mosque to the palace. In an act of historical and literary wizardry, Howayda al-Harithy identifies the Turbat al-Sitt described by al-Maqrīzī with the Qubbat wa-Īwān al-Manūfī of the Southern Qarāfah. According to al-Harithy, what stands today are the remains of a *qubbah-zāwiyah* complex and the earliest identified domed *zāwiyah* of the Mamluk period. In keeping with the volume's theme of recording disappearing monuments, Chahinda Karim tries to reconstruct the original appearance of the mosque of Ulmās al-Ḥājib, which the author claims is the earliest surviving congregational funerary mosque in Egypt. The debate over the origins of the Mamluk *qā'ah* reappears in Bernard O'Kane's analysis of the influence of domestic on religious architecture. This well-argued essay, which traces the evolution of Cairo's sacred architecture to the fifteenth century through the adoption and adaptation of such spatial and decorative devices as the widened *qiblah īwān* and the *kurdī,* could have benefited from the inclusion of floor plans.

Waqf is the focus of the next four essays in this volume. These essays as a group are methodologically the strongest part of the volume. The authors suggest ways in which the Mamluks and Ottomans rezoned, revived, and otherwise transformed the city through creative manipulation of the *waqf* system. In recreating the history of a fifteenth-century *qaysarīyah* that no longer exists, Husam Ismail makes a strong case for the extensive use of *istibdāl* in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods and demonstrates ways it which it transformed *waqf*-"protected" properties on the *qaṣabah*. Mamluk success in re-urbanizing Cairo through the manipulation of the *waqf* institution is the subject of Sylvie Denoix's article. She argues that *waqf* made possible the rejuvenation of the *qaṣabah* by putting a variety of income-producing properties in the neighborhood, thereby diversifying the local economy. In a similar vein, Leonor Fernandes presents several fifteenth-century examples of the ways that *istibdāl,* the semi-legal exchange of *waqf* properties, not only transformed entire urban quarters but made *awqāf* themselves possible. She demonstrates how *istibdāl* worked as a legal process and suggests that it was well suited to the Mamluk's urban policies of the period, when "downtown" land was scarce and the economy was troubled. In André Raymond's study of a seventeenth-century *sabīl* near Bāb Zuwaylah, it was outright sale of an endowed property that allowed it to exchange hands, making possible its financial survival.

The second section of the volume closes as it began, with a theoretical essay on architectural esthetics. In this case the author, Khaled Asfour, considers the relevance of Mamluk architecture to contemporary Arab architectural design, bringing attention to the ways in which the medieval architects personalized their edifices. It was the tension between innovation and tradition in the façade, decorative

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program, and articulation of internal space, Asfour contends, that made Mamluk monuments an integral part of the urban fabric. His emphasis on the relationship of building façades to the thoroughfares is particularly relevant to programs for the old city's revival, as presented later in the book.

Part Three of the Ibrahim festschrift, "Decorative Arts," deals with the production structure of ceramics and glassware. With the publication of wasters of Ayyubid and Mamluk lusterwares from Fusṭāṭ, Abd al-Ra'uf Ali Yusuf is able to demonstrate that Cairo, as well as Damascus, was a center of production for luster-painted pottery. Moreover, on the basis of stylistic analysis, he suggests that a variety of wares produced in the Mamluk period were fired together in the same kilns. While such kiln debris as wasters is critical new data, neither of these theories on Mamluk ceramics is new. Yusuf's bibliography is a bit out-of-date, particularly in light of laboratory techniques that are now widely used. Petrographic analysis, in particular, has discredited the old argument that migration of potters accounts for the wide distribution and decentralized production of the more expensive glazed wares, such as lusterware.[1]

J. M. Rogers' study of Mamluk glass surveys the archaeological evidence for its distribution and export. He suggests, on the basis of decorative and materials analysis, that there were workshops that specialized in enameling, using ready-made glass blown elsewhere. The poor quality of the generic dedicatory inscriptions in Arabic that decorate many vessels leads Rogers to believe there was no central control for the production of "secular" glass. A comparison with identical inscriptions from other media, however, suggests that changes in the market, rather than the structure of production, may account for variation in inscriptional content and calligraphic quality.[2] To better illustrate his arguments, photographs of the glass vessels in question would have been welcome.

In the final section of the volume, "Preservation of the Urban and Architectural Heritage," representatives from the World Bank, Harvard University's Department of Urban Planning and Design, and the American University in Cairo suggest ways in which to arrest and repair the decay of "Islamic Cairo." Ismail Serageldin's economic analysis of urban renewal reminds the reader that saving the historic core of Cairo is possible only through city-wide renewal projects. He calls for a revitalization of the economic base of the old city by using cultural heritage

[1]Scott Redford and M. James Blackman, "Lustre and Fritware Production and Distribution in Medieval Syria," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 24 (1997): 1–15; Robert B. Mason, "Medieval Egyptian Lustre-painted and Associated Wares: Typology in a Multidisciplinary Study," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 34 (1997): 201–42.

[2]For this alternative interpretation based on an analysis of contemporary sgraffito ware, see Bethany Walker, "The Ceramic Correlates of Decline in the Mamluk Sultanate: An Analysis of Late Medieval Sgraffito Wares," Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1998, 199–277.

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methods. Given the current move towards eco-tourism, the development of archaeological heritage sites, and the participation of academics in NGOs, his models for report-writing and fund-raising are appropriate and timely. Based on a graduate seminar offered at Harvard University, François Vigier strongly urges that project directors maintain the concept of *ḥārah*, which is the most important unit of the medieval city, when planning improvements in circulation (streets) and parking in Islamic Cairo. His emphasis on the integrity of the medieval quarter echoes statements made by Denoix and Asfour earlier in the volume.

The concluding essay in the volume is a bittersweet tribute to Islamic Cairo by John Rodenbeck. Like Vigier, Rodenbeck strongly supports area conservation, with an emphasis on streets and neighborhoods, over the restoration of individual monuments. He is critical of recent restoration designs that do not take into account entire neighborhoods, such as the USAID-funded project administered by the American Research Center in Egypt. The author overlooks, however, the very successful restoration of Bayt Suhaymī, an ARCE collaboration, that has included the cleaning and repavement of Darb al-ʻAṣfūr (just off of the *qaṣabah*), as well as the economic revival of the block of shops facing the house.

Rodenbeck emphasizes that in spite of the many conferences convened and organizations formed since the 1980s to address the decline of the old city, few of their initiatives have been put into action, and the medieval quarters of Cairo may be gone by the next generation. His sobering message has resonated with this scholar, who recently took a dozen Oklahoma State University students for their first visit to Islamic Cairo: ″those of us will disappear who were once able to recognize that neither memory nor legend can ever take the place of the real thing″ (p. 338).

Although occasional grammar mistakes and missing words, the result of poor editing, detract from the book, this festschrift is a well-balanced, multi-disciplinary contribution to scholarship on Cairo. Mamluk specialists will find it a valuable addition to their libraries.

War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean, 7th–15th Centuries. Edited by Yaacov Lev (Leiden, New York and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1997). Pp. 410.

REVIEWED BY W. W. CLIFFORD, The University of Chicago

This assembly of fourteen variegated inquiries into the characteristics of the medieval Middle Eastern military institution is taken, the editor readily concedes, ″from a

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broad perspective″ and with an ″arrangement″ that might appear ″arbitrary.″ The consequence of such broadness and randomness is predictable. Lev´s volume, like other collections of its kind, suffers a good deal from topical fragmentation, particularly among the first half dozen so-called ″early Muslim period″ offerings—a highly diverse mix of technological, literary, and administrative perspectives that, whatever their individual merits, seem collectively to add or clarify little about the institutional structure or process of the medieval Syro-Egyptian military. Only Lev´s contribution, ″Regime, Army and Society in Medieval Egypt, 9th–12th Centuries,″ really brings us anywhere near this goal. He considers principally the troubled emergence of the institution of military slavery in the Tulunid-Ikhshidid period. Despite uncertainty about the long-term macroeconomic impact of military slavery, particularly on urban development, Lev is otherwise unequivocal in his conclusion: ″In fact, the destructive nature of the institution of military slavery was manifested already during the Tulunid-Ikhshidid period″ (p. 150). The article affords him a natural opportunity to reiterate his long-standing complaint about the consequences of such a system on the later Fatimid state. Indeed, Lev´s chief purpose in this article seems to be to rediscover in the Tulunid-Ikhshidid ninth–tenth centuries his earlier prejudice against a system he believed ultimately responsible for the Fatimid twelfth-century collapse.

Lev achieves much better results with a more coherent cache of Mamluk-related offerings. Both Anne-Marie Eddé and Reuven Amitai-Preiss consider the composition and dynamic of the military class in thirteenth–fourteenth century Syro-Egypt, providing collaterally a welcome critique of David Ayalon´s long-enshrined reconstruction of the early Mamluk military institution. Eddé revives in her article ″Kurdes et Turcs dans l´armee ayyoubide de Syrie du Nord″ one of the key issues Ayalon no doubt believed he had settled—the significance of Kurds in the late Ayyubid military structure. She suggests that ethnic antagonisms not just between Kurds and Turks but among Turkish and non-Turkish (e.g., Armenian) *mamālīk* effected ties of loyalty among the Syrian soldiery. Moreover, while the Syrian army on the brink of the Mamluk period could still be considered dominated by Turks, an important role continued to be played by Kurds, whose influence actually increased after 1250–51/648 as a result of a concatenation of socio-political circumstances: loss of power by the free-born Turkish families associated with the Zangids, adherence of Syrian Turks to the new Mamluk regime in Cairo, and the continued loyalty of Kurdish families like the Qaymarīyah to the Syrian Ayyubids.

Eddé is moved at the end of her piece to temporize her conclusions, claiming her remarks represent only a ″slight nuancing of D. Ayalon´s perspective on the Ayyubids″ (p. 236). Perhaps. But no such disclaimer can be applied to Amitai-Preiss´s head-on confrontation with yet another aspect of the Ayalon legacy, at the beginning of his article ″The Mamluk Officer Class During the Reign of Sultan Baybars.″

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Grappling with an issue left conspicuously unaddressed in his earlier book,[1] Amitai-Preiss reveals here finally his unreserved support for the position long espoused by R. S. Humphreys *contra* David Ayalon concerning the institutional origins of the Mamluk army.[2] In what constitutes perhaps the most important, certainly controversial, statement in the whole of the Lev volume, Amitai-Preiss observes candidly: ″Even taking into consideration . . . the reservations of Ayalon, it appears that Humphreys is correct on a number of important points: the early Mamluk army (at least after A.D. 1260) was bigger, better organized and more centralized than its Ayyubid precursor. Humphreys is right in attributing these ´reforms´ to a large degree to Baybars´s need to create a military machine capable of dealing with the ongoing [Ilkhanid] menace. . . .″ (p. 269).

In fact, Amitai-Preiss takes his cue in this article from a topic raised initially by Humphreys and later reconsidered by Robert Irwin—the composition and underwriting of the senior officer corps under Baybars. He affirms that while the Mamluk military establishment was not exclusively of slave origin, many of the officer class were *mamālīk*, the Ṣāliḥī and Ẓāhirī amirs particularly enjoying the lion´s share of Baybars´s munificence. Amitai-Preiss´s extrapolation about the foundation of Baybars´s power rightly stresses his attempts at making stakeholders in his regime of all officer grades, even amirs whom he characterizes as ″unaffiliated . . . nobodies.″ In re-evaluating Baybars´s consolidation of power over his Mamluk colleagues it is perhaps time to recognize finally his true political skills, not as a despotic leg-breaker but rather as a consummate deal-maker.

Yehoshua Frenkel´s contribution, ″The Impact of the Crusades on Rural Society and Religious Endowments: The Case of Medieval Syria (Bilad al-Sham),″ dovetails neatly with Amitai-Preiss´s, demonstrating just how Baybars underwrote economically this consolidation of power. Just as Ayyubid and early Mamluk regimes continued the Crusader practice of allocating assets and properties to fund religious establishments in Syria so, too, they embraced the Latin Kingdom´s policy of enserfment, continuing to convert local cultivators *(fallāḥūn)* into sharecroppers *(muzāri'ūn)* in order to guarantee better their system of military land assignment. Though clearly controverting shari'ah this practice, Frenkel opines, proved ″a powerful device to forge bonds of loyalty between the *sultan*s and the *amir*s″—just as suggested by Amitai-Preiss.

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[1]Reuven-Amitai Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid war, 1260–1281*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, England, 1995).

[2]See, R.S. Humphreys, ″The Emergence of the Mamluk Army,″ *Studia Islamica*, 45 (1977),:67–99; 46 (1977): 147–82; David Ayalon, ″From Ayyūbids to Mamlūks,″*Revue des Etudes Islamiques* 49 (1981): 43–57; reprinted in *Islam and the Abode of War: Military slaves and Islamic adversaries* (Aldershot, 1994): 43–57.

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The contributions by John Masson Smith, Jr., and Bernadette Martel-Thoumian shift focus away from the military institution itself to consideration of its operational art. Smith's contribution "Mongol Society and Military in the Middle East: Antecedents and Adaptations" is actually a strategic consideration of Mongol logistical and tactical shortcomings in their thirteenth–early fourteenth-century Syrian campaigns, but can be considered a kind of rejoinder to Amitai-Preiss's prior observations in his book, *Mongols and Mamluks,* about the relative merits of the two opposing forces in Syria. Most interestingly Smith, who did not have access to *Mongols and Mamluks* at the writing of his article for this volume, attempts to argue for the very Mamluk military superiority that Amitai-Preiss attempted to deny in his book. Whereas Smith believes that in light of their larger horses, armor, swords, and high-speed archery, "[m]an for man, and horse for horse, the Mamluks were better than the Mongols" (p. 255), Amitai-Preiss earlier wrote: "Taken as a whole, the Mongols were not significantly inferior soldiers to their Mamluk enemies, in spite of certain differences in arms, horses and tactics."[3]

Smith and Amitai-Preiss are even more diametrically opposed on the issue of the logistical limitations of Syria itself to Mongol military operations. Smith stresses the "ecological constraints" of climate and geography on the availability of water and fodder sufficient for "a short campaigning season for a [Mongol] force big enough to meet strategic requirements" (pp. 254–55). Amitai-Preiss, however, minimized these considerations, insisting that "[l]ogistical problems did not prevent the Mongols from invading Syria with large forces, nor do they fully explain [their] withdrawal . . . when the Mongols did succeed in occupying the country."[4]

The compact excellence of Smith's article contrasts with the slower-paced artisanship of Bernadette Martel-Thoumian's piece "Les dernières Battailles du grand émir Yašbak min Mahdī." While Smith vigorously diagrams the operational problems confronting the Mongol army in Syria, Martel-Thoumian attempts a more subtle sketch of the operational competence displayed by the late Mamluk military institution on the Syro-Mesopotamian frontier. While not fruitless, her long and elaborate narration of events threatens at times to overwhelm the reader, nearly camouflaging her principal insight, that while possessing superior numbers and probably comparable equipment, the Mamluks somehow proved militarily incompetent in dealing with Dhū al-Qadr and Aqquyunlu challenges between 1468/872 and 1481/885. Why? Martel-Thoumian is ultimately better at raising the question than answering it. Her general conclusion, that the manpower costs and

[3]Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 229.

[4]Ibid, 229.

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political humiliation attendant on these defeats opened the province of Aleppo to the possibility of future (i.e., Ottoman) invasion, seems rather patented as well.

In sum, Mamlukists are undoubtedly the victors in this volume, which in spite of its cost is worth obtaining for both its historical and historiographic insights into the institutional problems of war-making in late medieval Syro-Egypt.

QĀSIM ʻABDUH QĀSIM, *Al-Sulṭān al-Muẓaffar Sayf al-Dīn Quṭuz, Baṭal Maʻrakat ʻAyn Jālūt* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1998). Pp. 176.

REVIEWED BY AMALIA LEVANONI, University of Haifa

This book is the seventy-first volume in the series *Aʻlām al-Muslimīn* (Celebrated Muslims) and is dedicated to the figure of Sultan al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz (1259–60), the fifth sultan of the Mamluk state (1250–1517). It has six chapters, a preface and a summary.

The author places at the center of the discussion of Sultan al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz´s curriculum vitae the principal issue with which historians and historical philosophers have been occupied for years: Man´s desires as a reason for deeds in history. In other words, have ″history´s heroes,″ by their intended actions, been the cause of historical events or was it the forces and processes embodied in history that have brought about its movement in a direction over which ″the heroes″ had little control? However, it is clear also that celebrated men in history reflect in their actions the values of the society in which they live and therefore their deeds all move towards a historical consequence compatible with the desire of society. Based on these arguments, the author feels that Sultan Quṭuz, too, was a product of contemporary Muslim society and that despite his short period of rule, the course of history moved in only one direction, that of his decision to protect Islam and the Arab region *(al-minṭaqah al-Arabīyah)* from the enemies of Islam. Quṭuz took the stage of history to fulfill the role designated for him, that is, to lead the Muslims to victory over the Mongols at the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt. These are the main arguments developed by Qāsim in the six chapters of the book.

The first chapter is a review of the political situation in the Muslim states on the eve of the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt in the face of the Mongol threat from the east and the Crusader threat from the west. Adopting the traditional perception of leadership in Islam that one of the principal roles of political leaders is to protect Islam from threats from without by means of jihad, the author maintains that the Ayyubids and the Mamluks after them played an identical historical role. The

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moment the Ayyubids stopped playing this role, adopting a policy of coexistence with the Crusaders, their purpose ended and some new factor was supposed to take their part on the stage of history (pp. 20–22). Evidence of this is that the Mamluks succeeded in vanquishing the Crusaders, who had invaded Egypt in the Seventh Crusade led by Louis IX (648/1249), while the Ayyubids were otherwise engaged in internal political conflicts.

The second chapter sets out in detail the Mamluk system and the management of the military, political, and religious administration in the Mamluk state in order to explain the background against which Quṭuz progressed from mamluk to sultan.

The third chapter focuses on Quṭuz´s rise through the Mamluk ranks until, as sultan, he led the Mamluk army into battle against the Mongols, who had just laid waste the Islamic countries in the east.

While Chapter Four deals with the Mongols, from the beginning of the conquest of Bukhara in 1220 up to the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt, the fifth chapter describes the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt itself and attempts to determine its historical importance for Islam. Qāsim´s assessment is that the victory over the Mongols did nothing to change the destiny of Islam, as held by scholars, especially the Europeans, because the sheer size of the Muslim population in the east was such that it prevented the Mongols from destroying it! In contrast, a real threat was posed to Islam by the Crusaders in the Arab region because their objective was to settle the region with European immigrants (pp. 17, 120–22).

The sixth chapter describes the circumstances of Quṭuz´s death, and more precisely, his murder by Mamluk amirs from a rival faction, al-Baḥrīyah. Apart from violence and bloodshed in the power struggles that were characteristic of the mamluk factional system, the author notes that since Quṭuz had mounted the stage of history to play a definite historical role, its completion necessitated his departure (p. 158).

This study is problematic for a number of reasons. First, it leans heavily on a meta-historical theory which assumes that Islam is the only true faith and thus is destined for universal dominion. This hypothesis is the basis of traditional Islamic historiography and has been perceived as driving the course of Islamic history. Accordingly, the rise and fall of dynasties, like the Ayyubids and their replacement by the Mamluks, did not change the course of history. Dynasties appear on the stage of history and disappear from it to serve the purpose of this basic assumption. This perception has prevented the author from dealing analytically and critically with the primary sources he relies on. Thus the author has not discussed effectively contradictions in the primary sources regarding the events of the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt and has not dealt with the issue of the inclusion of folkloristic myths and legends in historical narrative. Moreover, he has not referred to the vast body of modern research conducted over recent decades on the Mamluks´ relations with

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the Crusaders and Mongols, and more specifically, on the battle of ʻAyn Jālūt. The important studies by P. M. Holt, D. Ayalon, D. O. Morgan, P. Jackson, R. Amitai-Preiss, and others have not been deemed worthy of mention.

This book is therefore a narrative reflecting what is written in the primary sources on the subject in question and is loyal to the value perceptions expressed in them (see pp. 14, 15, 22, 33, 83, 84, 89, 101, 104, and elsewhere). These failures apart, a number of instances were noted in this book of citations from primary sources and of references to modern studies without the author making mention of them (pp. 25, 32, 33).

The principal contribution of this book is, therefore, that it is likely to serve as a primary source for research on myths in contemporary societies that are built around historical figures, figures from the Middle Ages for example, in order to foster present-day ideologies and values.

MAS'ŪD AL-RAḤMĀN KHĀN AL-NADWĪ, *Al-Imām Ibn Kathīr: Sīratuhu wa-Mu'allafātuhu wa-Manhajuhu fī Kitābat al-Tārīkh* (Damascus and Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1999). Pp. 353.

REVIEWED BY AMINA ELBENDARY, The American University in Cairo

In the very first volume of this journal Li Guo lamented the lack of adequate biographies of even the major Mamluk historians. Such studies, he argued, would help ″frame Mamluk history not only in political, social, military and institutional, but also personal and intellectual terms.″[1] And indeed a biography of Ibn Kathīr promises to be not only the story of such an influential man′s life, but also a glimpse into a whole school of Mamluk intellectuals and their relationships with each other and with the powers of the time. This latest biography of Ibn Kathīr by Mas'ūd al-Raḥmān Khān al-Nadwī falls short of such expectations.

The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with Ibn Kathīr′s biography and his writings and the second dealing with his methodology in *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah*.

The author has diligently extracted all references to Ibn Kathīr′s life and work from the historian′s own writings, mainly from his *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah*. He has also studied almost all of what the medieval biographical dictionaries have to say about Ibn Kathīr. Thus the first sections of this present volume read as a

[1]Li Guo, ″Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art,″ *Mamluk Studies Review,* 1:43.

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remarkable and detailed *curriculum vitae* of the Mamluk historian. Hence we know many of the books Ibn Kathīr studied, the ulama he studied with, and the students who eventually studied under his tutelage. We get a glimpse of the social and political ties that bound various schools and generations of ulama together. The author details all the works Ibn Kathīr is said to have authored, including those which are mentioned in medieval sources but have not survived. The picture that emerges of Ibn Kathīr is of a man whose intellect spanned a wide array of disciplines and genres: from Quranic studies to hadith, and from history to poetry.

Yet while the author hints at various squabbles between ulama, some of which had their effects on Ibn Kathīr's career, he does not proceed from there to contemplate the political power plays that informed a Mamluk historian's career. Especially frustrating is the lack of analysis of Ibn Kathīr's relationship with Ibn Taymīyah and its implications for their scholarship. The same is true of references to Ibn Kathīr's relationship with ruling authorities, which is not treated in depth by the present author. The historian's views on *al-isrā'īlīyāt* and his scathing criticism of scholars of "the people of the book," while repeatedly referred to in the present volume, are not at all analyzed with reference to the historical context in which they occurred.

Though al-Nadwī proposed to offer a *"sīrah"* of Ibn Kathīr, the reader is left knowing rather little about the man and his personality. And as the author's own meticulous footnotes attest, this is not simply a question of the availability of primary sources and their inherent biases. There is a lot that could have been read between the lines to offer a more lively portrait of this scholar who continues to influence the way historians read Mamluk history.

The second part of the book deals with Ibn Kathīr's methodology in writing *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah*. This section stands well on its own as a historiographic study of Ibn Kathīr's *magnum opus*. And indeed it appears to have been previously published by the author in 1980.[2]

Here al-Nadwī offers a useful summary of the various chapters of *Al-Bidāyah* as well as a thorough analysis of the different sources on which Ibn Kathīr relied in writing each of them. He also points out how Ibn Kathīr proceeded to critique these sources while composing the book so that the text is not simply a compilation of previous writings on Islamic history. Al-Nadwī discusses which sources Ibn Kathīr relied on, and how, and which sources he avoided and why. Al-Nadwī argues that Ibn Kathīr preferred to rely on sources whose authors were, like him, well-versed in religious studies (p. 319).

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[2] *Ibn Kathīr al-Mu'arrikh: Dirāsah Taḥlīlīyah li-Kitābihi al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah* (Aligarh, 1980).

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Ibn Kathīr′s rich scholarly background made his *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah* a hybrid text between history and hadith. Al-Nadwī points out, as is evident upon a careful study of the text, how Ibn Kathīr′s scholarly background in religious studies and particularly in hadith and *tafsīr* influenced his historiography. This is especially evident in the chapters dealing with early Islam and the Prophet Muḥammad′s *sīrah* (pp. 166, 319–320). From al-Nadwī′s analysis we get the impression that Ibn Kathīr was first and foremost an alim before being a historian.

In *Al-Bidāyah* Ibn Kathīr often digresses from the topic he has been discussing to the extent of adding anecdotes and fables that in al-Nadwī′s view do not belong in a general history book. But luckily for the modern historian he took after Ibn al-Jawzī in recording weird and unusual events including natural disasters, plagues, and price increases—that in addition to events of high politics as well as social and cultural developments (pp. 279–280).

Despite al-Nadwī′s references to many of Ibn Kathīr′s sources he did not compare *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah* to other works in this genre of universal history which could have highlighted the historian′s originality as well as served to place him in an intellectual and historical context.

In both sections of the book al-Nadwī′s pursuit seems to have been carried out in almost total isolation from the contemporary disciplines of history and Arabic studies; the author does not refer to any modern secondary sources of Mamluk history. Similarly, he does not engage in any debate with modern schools of historiography. Indeed in his preface to the second section of the present book, dated March 1979, al-Nadwī complains of the lack of sources available to scholars of Islamic and Arabic studies in Indian libraries.

Mas‘ūd al-Nadwī has produced an interesting if rather traditional account of Ibn Kathīr′s life and career. In general, the book—especially in its first sections—is infinitely more descriptive than analytical. The author does not push any of his findings further to their logical conclusions. The book does, however, with its careful record of Ibn Kathīr′s writing and the sources he relied on, pave the way for a more modern (perhaps even postmodern) biography of Ibn Kathīr.

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