MAMLŪK STUDIES REVIEW

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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Bruce D. Craig
The University of Chicago

Thomas T. Allsen (1940–2019)

Thomas T. Allsen died February 18, 2019, two days past his 79th birthday.

I met Tom Allsen on the first day of school in Mrs. Tibbits' fourth grade class in 1948. I was new to the school and he became my first new friend. Our friendship encompassed many shared life experiences: grade school, high school, a stint in the U.S. Army, and our undergraduate years at Portland State University. His route to becoming a scholar was long and circuitous. He graduated from Portland State in 1962 with a degree in history. As an undergraduate he developed relationships with two professors who served as inspiration and role models for the rest of his life, Morris Kirby Webb, who taught him East Asian and Russian history, and encouraged him to learn the Russian language, and Basel Dmytryshyn, a Russian history specialist.

He spent the next two years at the University of Washington where he earned an M.A. in Russian history, writing a thesis under the supervision of Donald Treadgold on Baron Von Ungern, who had led a detachment of Mongol irregulars in an attempt to end Chinese occupation of Mongolia. I have no doubt that his choice of topic was influenced by his early fascination with the Mongols which was the result of his having read Harold Lamb's two popular books on the Mongols in high school. The following year he studied Central Asian nomadic groups with the anthropologist Lawrence Krader, who also employed him to summarize Russian scholarship on the topic, at Syracuse University.

The next year found him as a Peace Corps volunteer in Iran, which first introduced him to the Persian language. After his Peace Corps service he made a detour into librarianship, earning an M.L.S. degree at the University of Oregon. At this time he also met Lucille Etheridge, who later became his wife. He then spent a year at the University of Alaska as a Russian bibliographer and another two years as an archivist at the University of Minnesota. When he arrived in Minnesota he began taking night classes in Chinese and Arabic. The polyglot nature of his later published scholarship is all the more impressive when it is known that he entered college never having studied a foreign language.

During his first two years in Minnesota he became acquainted with two young historians, Edward Farmer and Romeyn Taylor, both of whom were specialists in the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) of China, and were protégés of Francis Cleves of Harvard and Herrle Creel of the University of Chicago, respectively. After two years of library work he resigned his position and enrolled in Minnesota's Ph.D.

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program in Comparative Asian History. He received his Ph.D. in 1979, producing a dissertation "Politics of Mongol Imperialism: Centralization and Resource Mobilization in the Reign of the Grand Qan Möngke," which later became his first book, *Mongol Imperialism: The Politics of the Grand Qan Möngke in China, Russia and the Islamic Lands* (1987).

He spent the academic year 1979–80 as an Assistant Professor at the University of Western Kentucky and moved the following year to Trenton State College, which later became the College of New Jersey, where he remained for the rest of his teaching career. He retired in 2002 at the age of 62 and returned to Oregon, taking up residence next to the University of Oregon campus in Eugene.

During his teaching career he produced a large body of scholarship comprised of public lectures delivered all over the world, articles and chapters in collective works, and including three books: the afore-mentioned *Mongol Imperialism* (1987), *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* (1997), and *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (2001). After his "retirement" he produced two more: *The Royal Hunt in Eurasian History* (2006) and *The Steppe and the Sea: Pearls in Mongol History* (2019). His passing means we will not see the book that had consumed his thoughts for more than a quarter century, a work which would describe, trace, and analyze the phenomenon of bouts of alcoholic consumption as they became aspects of royal court ceremonial from East Asia to the Islamic world under the Mongols and Mamluks. His wife, Lucille, has informed me that he left another nearly finished manuscript dealing with the grain millet, which presumably grew out of his research on alcohol. He did write several articles on this topic and his CV lists five lectures on various aspects of it. He also created and taught a course on the topic, which I was told by one of his former students was immensely popular with undergraduates.

I must remark that, while he was a popular undergraduate lecturer, it is a shame that he was not at a university where he mentored graduate students. In spite of that he was a great resource and inspiration to scores of young scholars. He lectured widely in the U.S., Europe, and Asia and always came away from these experiences with the names and email addresses of youthful aspirants and established scholars with whom he maintained a lively correspondence. He was generous with his time and knowledge to a fault. This is borne out by the scores of acknowledgements he received in the published works of others.

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David Nicolle
Institute for Medieval Research, Nottingham University

The Iconography of a Military Elite: Military Figures on an Early Thirteenth-Century Candlestick (Part III)

Features to Note, and Comparative Material

The arrows shown on the candlestick are of necessity illustrated in a somewhat crude manner (photographs 7–11; figures 5 and 6). Nevertheless, they do show an exaggerated reality—as confirmed by surviving arrow shafts, whole or fragmentary—especially where the swelling around their nocks is concerned (photograph 40; figures 27a–b). Arrows, of course, appear frequently in other iconographic sources but only occasionally in sufficient detail for such an aspect of design to be exaggerated to a similar degree (photographs 39a, 41, and 42).[1]

Two bows appear on the Costa candlestick (photographs 8 and 9; figures 5 and 6). Their recurved shape and the acute angle to which their strings are drawn show them to be of composite construction. As such, they represent the type of bow which had dominated Middle Eastern, Central Asian, and Inner Asian archery since ancient times. Until recently very few such bows existed in the archaeological record of the medieval Islamic world, though the archery equipment excavated from an eighth–ninth century grave at Moshevaya Balka on the northern slopes of the Caucasus was probably in the same military-technological tradition as seen south of the Caucasus, within both Islamic and Byzantine territory (photograph 45). Several were then found in the Euphrates valley of Syria (photograph 43) and in an unfinished form in a tower of the Citadel of Damascus (photograph 44). In both the latter cases the bows or bow fragments date from the late twelfth to early fourteenth centuries. Bows of varied shapes—smoothly curved, strongly recurved, and angled, but almost certainly all of composite construction—appear frequently in the pictorial sources (photographs 28, 39b, and 41; figures 82, 126oo, 139, 150a, e, and f, 151, 160, and 181c).

Only one quiver appears on the Costa candlestick, and then only partially (photograph 9; figure 6). It is nevertheless clearly of the open-ended form in which about a quarter of the rear parts of the arrows are exposed. As usual, the open top of this quiver faces to the horse-archer's rear. Several large fragments of leather were found among other pieces of late Mamluk, mostly broken, military equip-

[1]See "The Iconography of a Military Elite: Military Figures on an Early Thirteenth-Century Candlestick (Part I)," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 18 (2014–15): 57–90 (http://dx.doi.org/10.6082/M1RX9977), for photographs 1–15c and figures 1–9. See "The Iconography of a Military Elite: Military Figures on an Early Thirteenth-Century Candlestick (Part II)," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 19 (2016): 193–299 (http://dx.doi.org/10.6082/M16971RQ), for photographs 16–58 and figures 10–185.

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ment in a building within the Citadel of Damascus. Some of these fragments have tentatively been identified as perhaps having formed parts of quivers or bow-cases.[2] As far as I am aware, however, the only other medieval quiver that comes at least from the frontiers of the early medieval Islamic world is that found at Moshevaya Balka, dating from the eighth or ninth centuries (photograph 45).

Quivers appear in Islamic and neighboring art sources throughout this period, though the type shown on the Costa candlestick tends to be associated with Turkish-influenced military cultures, most commonly from the twelfth century onward, and would seem to have been specifically designed for use on horseback (photograph 29; figures 126x [presumed from the presence of arrows just behind the horseman's seat], 138a, 139, 160, and 181a and c). Earlier quivers tended to have been of the "box" type in which much less of the arrows was visible. This box-type quiver often incorporated a flap which could fully enclose the arrows, and was usually shown hanging with the open top pointing forward (photograph 18; figure 106). It may also be significant that the box-type quiver returned to favor in several parts of the Middle East following the Mongol invasions (figure 178).

The absence of a bow-case with either of the two horse-archers on the Costa candlestick is worthy of note. It was, of course, quite common to show such troops with bows but lacking both quivers and bow-cases. During the early centuries bow-cases tended to be long and slender, designed to accommodate one or quite often two unstrung bows (photograph 20; figures 85 and 89). But this form was soon replaced by a shorter and broader case for a single bow in a strung state (figures 126x and oo, 150a and f, probably 167, and 172). Once again, the best surviving example is that from Moshevaya Balka (photograph 45).

Similarly, men armed with swords were not always shown with scabbards, so perhaps it should not be surprising that the one scabbard on the Costa candlestick is not being carried by the one man who fights with a sword (photograph 6; figure 3). This scabbard, which of course contains its sword because the cavalryman in question is wielding a lance, is hung at an angle on the man's hip. Because the lighter metal inlay is missing, details of how it was suspended cannot to seen with any certainty. Nevertheless, surviving scabbards from the Middle East and dating from roughly this period show that scabbards for both straight swords (as here) and curved sabers were hung from two straps to a sword-belt (photograph 46; figures 29, 32, and 36a–b). The front strap was shorter than the back, providing an angle that was convenient for drawing the weapon. The lower ends of these straps were attached to sometimes highly decorated mounts around the scabbard itself; the straps were usually in two parts buckled together to enable adjusting their length, and with their upper parts often divided in two. The latter feature

[2]D. Nicolle, *Late Mamlūk Military Equipment,* Travaux et études de la Mission archéologique syro-française, Citadelle de Damas, vol. 3 (Damascus, 2011), 185–92.

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spread the weight of the sword and scabbard to four points on the sword-belt, providing greater comfort and also stopping the scabbard from moving backward and forward too much. This system is also shown in varying degrees of detail in other pictorial sources (figures 82, 86, 89, 126a, e and x, 150f, and 185). Rarely the scabbard is shown with just one suspension point (photograph 29; figure 126c).

Of the two swords shown on the Costa candlestick, one is in use and one remains in its scabbard (photographs 6 and 7; figures 3 and 4). Note that in the photograph the curvature of the sword in use is largely, though not entirely, due to the curvature of the candlestick base. Nevertheless, even the drawing made from a pencil rubbing of this figure gives a hint of a curve to the blade, or at least to its lower edge. The blade also has a squared tip.

The most famous medieval Islamic text dealing with swords is, of course, that by al-Kindī who, writing in mid-ninth-century Iraq, provided the normal weights, lengths, widths, and places of origin of the types of swords commonly in use at his time.[3] How far al-Kindī's information remained valid for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is harder to judge. Relatively few swords can be stated with certainly to date from that period, though they probably include the blades of some weapons associated with later Abbasid caliphs which are now preserved in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul.

There is also no reason to doubt the authenticity of a sword reportedly found in Saladin's tomb in Damascus when it was opened for restoration at the end of the nineteenth century (figure 35). Known as "Saladin's Sword," it is preserved in the Askeri Muze in Istanbul. Its blade, however, bears the inscriptions *"made on the order of Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb,"* who was Saladin's father, and *"made by Sālim Ibn ʿAlī."*[4] Unfortunately, none of the surviving complete swords and sabers have the squared tip seen on the Costa candlestick (figures 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, and 35). The pictorial record is fortunately more varied where both straight swords and curved sabers are concerned (photographs 20, 23, 26, 29, and 39a–b; figures 86, 87a, 89, 92, 93, 103, 104, 112, 114, 117, 122a–b, 124, 126a, c, e, o, x–cc and nn, 128b, 137, 138a–b, 141a–b, 145b, 150f, 156b, 163a, 164c–e, 177a–b, 180, and 183–185).

A small but growing number of bronze objects which once formed parts of sword hilts have also come to light (figure 32), along with weapons that still have cast-bronze quillons and scabbard mounts (figures 29 and 32). There are also a few matrices or molds used in the casting of this kind of sword and scabbard elements. The dating of the latter had been a matter of controversy, but the early medieval

[3] Al-Kindī, *Medieval Islamic Swords and Swordmaking: Kindi's Treatise "On Swords and Their Kinds,"* trans. R. G. Hoyland and B. Gilmour (Oxford, 2006); idem, ed. A. R. Zakī, "Al-suyūf wa-ajnāsuhā," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Letters, Fuad I University* 14 (1952): 1–36; J. W. Allan, *Persian Metal Technology, 700–1300 AD* (Oxford, 1979), 83–87.

[4] D. Alexander, personal communication, March 2010.

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period originally proposed by David Alexander now appears to be strengthened by the discovery of additional objects.[5]

Two distinctly different types of spear or cavalry lance are shown on the Costa candlestick; a relatively short weapon with a single blade appears twice (photographs 10 and 11; figures 7 and 8). The differences in design, usage, and heritage between short and long spears have already been discussed, so here I will merely draw attention to some other representations of the single-bladed form in the iconographical record (photographs 15a–c, 18, 27, 28; figures 82, 98, 105, 106, 110, 126f, 135, 136, 138c, 155, 159b, 166, 175, 176, 181a, and 182a–b). Such spears are usually, though not always, shown as being relatively shorter than the double-ended form.

Double-ended spears are shown three times on the Costa candlestick (photographs 4, 6, and 12; figures 1, 3, and 9). These are clearly the sort of cavalry weapons that are elsewhere occasionally shown as being of almost exaggerated length. They are certainly not the same as the much shorter *zhūpin* spears or javelins that evolved as infantry weapons, though occasionally being shown in the hands of horsemen. While it would be foolish to definitively divide all representations of double-ended weapons into "long" cavalry *rumḥ* spears and "short" *zhūpin* javelins, they do tend to fall into two groups (long weapons: figures 80, 94, 134a–b, and 168; short weapons: figures 81, 88, 111, 140, and 142a–b). On very rare occasions two different blades have been found in an archaeological context that suggests a single weapon, though unfortunately the length of their presumed haft does not seem to have been recorded (figures 28a–b).

The Costa candlestick lacks sufficient surviving detail to tell whether its long cavalry spears had "knotted" bamboo hafts. Nevertheless, such weapons had a long pedigree and high prestige in the Islamic Middle East and beyond (see Appendix 3, published with Part II). They appeared in Coptic Egyptian art from at least the fourth or fifth century, though it is unclear whether the latter sources reflected an indigenous military tradition or that of neighboring nomadic Arab and other tribal peoples. Spears with bamboo or reed hafts were similarly shown in Gandharan art from northwestern India during the second and third centuries, often with two blades or at least a substantial pointed butt or foot.

It is therefore interesting to note that some of the earliest Arabic sources state that the best and most supple lances were made of Indian bamboo, though the finished weapons were reportedly manufactured in the Arabian coastal region then called Baḥrayn (the Persian Gulf coast from the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab to the Qatar peninsula). The resulting spears were described as normally being 10 cubits long,

[5]D. Alexander and H. Nickel, "Matrices for Sword Mounts," in *Notable Acquisitions 1979–80 [Metropolitan Museum of Art]*, ed. Philippe de Montebello (New York, 1980), 27.

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up to a maximum of 11 cubits.[6] Other sources maintain that long Arab spears were normally 11 cubits long during the seventh century, while short spears were around five cubits long.[7] Elsewhere long spears with bamboo hafts are shown in the art of the strongly Arab-influenced Byzantine province of Cappadocia in the tenth century, and on Islamic Andalusian ivory carvings dating from the early eleventh century. Illustrations of bamboo-hafted spears appear in Christian art from the mid-thirteenth-century Jazīrah (more particularly in the Mosul area) while somewhat later Iranian art still tended to associate the bamboo-hafted spear with Arab warriors. On the other hand, the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Turkish epic of *Dede Korkut* mentions a lance 60 hand-spans long,[8] while on another occasion putting such a weapon in the hands of specifically Turkish warriors.[9]

Shields appear twice on the Costa candlestick. One example is very convex, appears to be quite large, and is held by a heavily armored man wielding a double-ended spear (photograph 5; figure 2). Written sources, supported by the limited archaeological evidence, show that cavalry shields could be made from a variety of materials, ranging from wood and hardened leather to spiral cane bound with silk or cotton thread. There are even examples which are, at least partially, made of metal. Fully metallic shields were probably not known nor even necessary until the introduction of hand-held firearms in the late fifteenth or more likely sixteenth century. So the remarkable twelfth–thirteenth-century metallic shield elements found at Bishtam Qalʿah [Beshtam-Kala] in Transoxiana (figure 37) were probably a form of reinforcement or covering. Such a shield may have evolved from much more common, large metallic shield bosses (figures 38, 39a and c, and 40) and relatively frequent metallic shield rims (figure 39b). Large round shields rarely survive even in a fragmentary state (photograph 20), but were often shown in Islamic and neighboring art of this period. They could have a variety of decorations including tassels or fringes around their edges (photograph 21; figures 78b, 98, 104, 117, 126b–c, w, dd–ii, 179b, and 185).

There is no clear dividing line between shields that are here considered large and those considered small. It is an entirely arbitrary separation. Nevertheless, a shield carried by the only sword-wielding horseman on the Costa candlestick is clearly smaller than the first example (photograph 7; figure 4). Though small, it

[6] A. Von Kremer, *Culturgeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen* (Vienna, 1875), 78–79.

[7] Ali Mohammed Ali el-Gindi, "Martial Poetry among the Arabs in the Jāhiliyah" (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1952), 150.

[8] Anon., *The Book of Dede Korkut,* trans. G. Lewis (London, 1974), 44, 49, and 137.

[9] Ibid., 96, 135, and 143.

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is certainly larger than a buckler, though it is held in the man's left fist.[10] Shields or bucklers ranging from the relatively small to the very small appear quite frequently in the iconographic record (photograph 18; figures 78a and c, 82, 103, 122a, 123, and 170b).

One of the most striking features of the military figures on the Costa candlestick is the degree to which they, their weaponry, and their horse harness are decorated. This may, perhaps, be taken as further evidence that these horsemen are indulging in military display or some sort of *furūsīyah* exercises rather than real combat. Even their spears have three distinct styles of decoration and on four figures this consists of a pennon with two long streamers (photographs 4, 5, 10, 11, and 12; figures 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9). This surely brings to mind the question of those "Saracen" banners that some Crusader observers thought looked like "trousers." Discussions seeking to interpret what these "trouser-like" banners really were have suggested that they were a form of wind-sock, as was certainly used by some Turco-Mongol peoples of the steppes.[11] However, a simpler explanation may be found in the iconography of the Costa candlestick, namely that many of the pennons, flags, and banners used by medieval Middle Eastern Muslim armies during this period had two very long streamers attached. Nor were such flags uncommon in Islamic art from this period (photographs 15a–c and perhaps 23; figure 108) while earlier representations suggest specifically Turkish Central Asian origin (figure 106).

Three spears on the Costa candlestick have what might be described as large ribbons (photographs 4, 6, and 12; figures 1, 3, and 9). In two cases these are additional decorations on long, double-bladed spears that also have pennons with two streamers, but the ribbons are attached closer to the lower blade or large, pointed butt. Even on the third horseman (figure 3) these ribbons are closer to the small blade than to the main blade. Single or doubled ribbons on the hafts of spears or lances appear elsewhere in the pictorial record, sometimes in conjunction with another pennon or flag and sometimes as the only decoration on such weapons (photographs 15 and 23; figures 100, 126jj, 166, and 171a–b). Another of the spears on the Costa candlestick has what appears to be a sort of tassel added to its pennon (photograph 10; figure 7). Whether this was in any sense related to the spears topped with black ostrich feathers used by Abbasid light cavalry in the

[10] The question of the identification of small metallic buckler-shields, or the broadly flanged metallic bosses used in broader shields, has been discussed in some details by Dr. A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, *Islamic Metalwork from the Iranian World 8th–18th centuries, Victoria and Albert Museum Catalogue* (London, 1982), 128–30.

[11] W. Leaf, "Not Trousers but Trumpets: A Further Look at Saracenic Heraldry," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 114 (1982): 47–51.

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ninth–tenth centuries is unknown,[12] but the same combined decoration is clearly shown on an unused spear carried by one of the mounted crossbowmen on the Freer Gallery Canteen (photograph 15a).

The clothing worn by men in a military role in medieval Islamic civilization had been differentiated from that of men in a civilian role from an early date. The differences very clearly reflected the needs of a military life, permitting greater ease of movement and, of course, the need for many such men to spend long periods on horseback. During the early Islamic centuries riding gaiters had been adopted along with use of the stirrup (photograph 21; figures 86 and 91–95). These also became fashionable within the Byzantine Empire. From the eleventh and certainly from the twelfth century onward, soft riding boots of Turkish Central Asian origin dominated military fashions in most of the Islamic world (photographs 15a–c, 16, 23, and 27; figures 107, 109, 114, 118, 126a–c, e, and x, 150f, 158, 160, and 172). Perhaps for reasons of rank and ceremonial, gaiters worn over such boots continued to be used by high-status military figures or pages in the Great Seljuq court and were also occasionally shown in Iraq (figure 155). They were then readopted by the Mamluk elite in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Egypt and Syria (photograph 29). Whether the *shurmūzah,* or overshoe, worn over other footwear in twelfth–thirteenth-century Yemen was originally such a gaiter is again unclear. The word is understood to have had a Persian origin.[13]

All the figures on the Costa candlestick probably wear these Turkish-style, soft leather riding boots, clearly without gaiters. Fortunately the interpretation of such footwear is made easier by the finding of an identical boot during excavations of a late medieval fortress in northern Nubia (figures 43a–b). It was described in detail in a subsequent archaeological report:

> The upper portion is sewn from three pieces of soft, pebble-grained leather or pigskin [surely unlikely if this boot had been worn by a member of a Mamluk garrison]…. The sole is made of heavier leather than is the upper, and the heel has been reinforced internally with a second piece. The upward projection at the front of the knee shows that this was a riding boot, and a small projecting thong at the back of the heel may have been designed for the attachment of a spur. The boot had originally been dyed a red or maroon colour.[14]

Though no spurs are shown on the Costa candlestick, it is worth noting that, according to written sources, *mihmāz* spurs were sometimes worn with *khuff*—

[12] Ameer Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens* (London, 1921), 430–43.

[13] Ibn Ḥātim, *The Ayyūbids and Early Rasūlids in the Yemen (567–694/1173–1295),* ed. and trans. G. R. Smith, E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series, new series, 26 vol. 2 (London, 1978), 124.

[14] W. Y. Adams, *Qaṣr Ibrîm: The Late Medieval Period* (London, 1996), 177.

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large, soft leather riding boots—during the twelfth century,[15] and appear in some fourteenth-century Mamluk *furūsīyah* military training manuals (figures 182a–b).

The bandana worn by three horsemen on the Costa candlestick (photographs 5, 6, and 9; figures 2, 4, and 6) was not a particularly military garment. In two cases it is worn with other headgear—a helmet and a presumed *sharbūsh* (see below). It was clearly not the same as a small turban (photographs 21, 28, 29; figures 100, 108, 120, 126v and ee, 132a, 139, 156a, 158, 161, 164e, 170b, 181b, and 182a–b), though the fashion for two trailing ends was often shared by both. Illustrated examples go right back to art from the Umayyad period and it was subsequently worn by both military personnel and civilians (figures 110, 118, and 126u [without the trailing ends]).

In contrast, the *ṭirāz,* an embroidered band around the upper arm of a garment, was associated with elites, both military and civilian. It might be worn by no less than six horsemen on the Costa candlestick (photographs 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12; figures 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9), though in some if not all cases this might be a misinterpretation of what was simply meant to indicate short sleeves. Having emerged as a distinctly Islamic item of costume, the *ṭirāz* was clearly widespread during the early thirteenth century but would gradually disappear in Iran and some neighboring regions following the Mongol conquest.[16] Elsewhere it would survive for several centuries. Not surprisingly the pictorial record abounds with examples of this *ṭirāz* (photographs 23, 26, 28, 29, perhaps 42, and 51; figures 100, 107, 108, 115, 118, 120, 124, 126a–e, g, i–k, s–w and ee, 135, 136, 137, 139, 140, perhaps 141b, 143, 153, 155, 156b, 158, 159b, 160, 161, 162, perhaps 172, 177a–b, 176, perhaps 181a and c, and 182a–b).

Another garment associated with elite political and military status was the *sharbūsh* or *shurbūsh*. This fur or fur-lined hat with a sharply upturned brim and usually a decorative, perhaps gilded leather, plate above the brow was of Turkish or perhaps more particularly Seljuq origin and first appeared in the eleventh or twelfth century. Under Ayyubid influence it spread as far as Yemen, where there are two references to the *sharbūsh* being worn by amirs, presumably to indicate their rank.[17] Just one such *sharbūsh* may be shown on the Costa candlestick (photograph 7; figure 4), though this example lacks the brow-plate and might therefore be a small but unusually shaped turban. Similarly, one example of this headgear is shown on the closely related and better preserved Freer Gallery Canteen (photograph 15), where it does look more like a triangular turban. *Sharbūsh* fur

[15]L. A. Mayer, *Mamluk Costume* (Geneva, 1956), 18 n. 2, 35, 37, and 53.

[16]P. Ackermann, "Standards, Banners and Badges," in *A Survey of Persian Art,* ed. A. U. Pope and P. Ackermann, vol. 6 (London, 1939), 2773.

[17]Ibn Ḥātim, *Ayyūbids and Early Rasūlids,* 124.

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hats appear both clearly and in detail, or more dubiously, in many other pictorial sources (figures perhaps 114, 124, 128a–b, 155, 156b, 159, 162, 172, and perhaps 176).

There is a current orthodoxy in some parts of the Islamic world that maintains that it is, and always has been, religiously correct for a Muslim man to have the hair of his head cut short,[18] while his beard should be full. In fact there is very strong evidence that the early Muslim Arabs continued the pre-Islamic "Saracen" tradition of wearing their hair longer than that of most neighboring peoples. Over the following centuries iconographic evidence from practically every corner of the Islamic world shows that relatively long hair continued to be worn by members of the political and military elites, though perhaps not the religious elite. The rise to political and military dominance of the Turks from the later eleventh through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries led to some "military" hairstyles getting even longer, especially among the Turcomans who often continued their own tradition for braided locks.

Two of the horsemen on the Costa candlestick have full heads of hair, neatly cut to shoulder-length, falling into what might be called a "flip" (photographs 10 and 11; figures 7 and 8). With the possible exception of two other horsemen (figures 3 and 5) who seem to wear small close-fitting caps, and the man who might have a bandana (figure 6), these two men are the only ones on the candlestick whose hair is completely exposed and falling naturally. One of the small and very damaged figures shown on the top of the candlestick also has this hairstyle (photograph 14), though it does not appear on the Freer Gallery Canteen. As such, these men clearly do not have the very long, sometimes apparently braided, hair of those who might be regarded as "tribal" Turkish warriors or those wishing to be associated with the tribal Turcomans (figures 122a–b, 126a and g, 132a, 150e, 155, 156b, 159b, 162, and perhaps 172). This "flipped" haircut is also very different from that of traditional Bedouin Arabs.

Furthermore, such a style of full, sometimes shoulder-length hair had a long tradition among the military of Iran and the Middle East during the preceding Islamic centuries. It would also persist for many decades to come (photographs 16, 23, 26, 27, and 39a; figures 80, 81, 90–95, perhaps 98, 99, 100, 105, 107, 108, 115, 117, 118, 119a and c, 120, 124, 126v, 128a–b, 136, 137, 139, 145b, 146, 149a, 150f, 151, 161, 163a 174, and especially 177a–b). I would therefore venture to suggest that, in the context of early thirteenth-century Mosul where the Costa candlestick was prob-

[18]During the 1970s I worked on a highly illustrated book on Islamic history which was to be published by a Saudi educational charity. In addition to contributing to the text, I provided the pictorial information which an artist—the late lamented Angus McBride—would use in his historical reconstructions. Despite all archaeological and other evidence to the contrary, this Saudi charity insisted that all the orthodox Muslims in McBride's paintings must have close-cropped hair. Perhaps fortunately, this book never achieved publication.

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ably made, this hairstyle was used to identify the horsemen on the candlestick as members of the mamluk or *ghulām* elite of fully trained, professional soldiers.

The scarves seemingly thrown in a casual manner across the chests and shoulders of no less than six of the horsemen on the Costa candlestick (photographs 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11; figures 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8) may have been another form of military identification. Nevertheless it would seem to have been a geographically more limited and short-lived fashion which, introduced by the Seljuqs in the twelfth century, died out in the later thirteenth century. The habit is illustrated on a number of examples of Islamic art from a limited area of the Middle East during this period (photographs 15a–c; figures 117, 141a–b, 177a–b, and 181b). Scarves are similarly wound around polo-players on an inlaid basin dedicated to al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn, Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, now in the Museum of Islamic Art (inv. no. 15043) in Cairo, though I have not seen this object myself.[19]

The Costa candlestick may prove to be a significant source of information for the study of medieval Islamic horse harness, as it illustrates a variety of interesting features. Of the bridles shown, five appear in sufficient detail to warrant comment (photographs 4, 5, 7, 9, and 11; figures 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8). One of the most remarkable features of the development of the horse's bridle and bit in Iran and some neighboring regions during the very early medieval period was the adoption, for several centuries, of an almost muzzle-like bit that formed a sort of frame around the animal's mouth (figures 45, 79, 83, 94). The reasons for the development of such a device, and for its subsequent disappearance, remain a mystery.[20] Similarly, there seems to be almost nothing in the documentary evidence that can be certainly identified as referring to this "muzzle-bit" (see Part II, Appendix 4, for the terminology of more straightforward snaffle and curb bits).

Though this is clearly not the form of bridle shown on the Costa candlestick, some of the latter may nevertheless incorporate a high-standing and perhaps rigid metallic browband (figures 1 and 8), as shown elsewhere in the iconographic record (figures 96, perhaps 125a and c, 140, 148, 157, perhaps 163b, and perhaps 179) and preserved in the archaeological record (figures 44 and 46). Perhaps this was still known as the *jaflah ʿulīyah,* a metal or leather element above the bit. It was surely not the *ʿiṣāb,* which was a brow-band lying between the animal's eyes and ears.[21]

All the horses' bits on the Costa candlestick are of a straightforward curb type (photographs 5 to 12; figures 1 to 9). Their representation is essentially the same

[19]W. ʿIzzī, "An Ayyūbid Basin of al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn," in *Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honour of Professor K. A. C. Creswell* (Cairo, 1965), 253–54.

[20]Recently it has been suggested that the "muzzle-bit" enabled a rider to control his horse by pushing down on its soft nose and thus inhibit its breathing.

[21]G. Douillet, "Furūsiyya," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 2:952–54.

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as that seen in other pictorial sources and confirmed by the archaeological record (photographs 21, 27, 28; figures 46, 47, 48, 49a–c, 50a–c, 77a–b, 86, perhaps 92, 95, 101, 103, 105, 109, 110, 114, 116, 118, 122a and c, 124, 125a–d, 126a–b, 127, 128b, 134a, 138a–c, 145a–b, 149b, 148, 153, 157, 159b, 162, 163b, 165, 172, 175, 179, 181a–c, 182a–b, and 183). Nevertheless it is important to note that curb-bits were not universally used. Snaffle bits are also shown in pictorial sources, though surviving examples come from the Eurasian steppes rather than the settled zones of the Islamic world. Among the nomadic Turkish and Mongol tribal peoples of the steppes, a preference for snaffle bits (usually with psalion side bars during the early period up to the twelfth century) rather than curb bits surely reflects their different lifestyle and different military heritage. Perhaps not surprisingly, the curb bit declined in popularity in those parts of the Islamic world that fell under Mongol domination during the later thirteenth century, largely being replaced by the snaffle if the artistic record is to be believed. On the other hand, the curb bit did later make a comeback. One relatively gentle curb bit (photograph 47) was actually found among the very late Mamluk or very early Ottoman military debris recently published in Damascus.[22]

The breast strap, which stops a saddle from sliding backward, especially during the impact of close combat or when climbing a steep slope, is visible only on two of the horses (photographs 5 and 11; figures 2 and 8). Known as a *labab* in Arabic since at east early Islamic times,[23] the breast strap was known as a *kemeldürük* by the Central Asian Turks according to the eleventh-century Turkish scholar and lexicographer Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī.[24]

On the other animals with caparisons, horse armors, or extensive or highly decorated saddle blankets, the presence of a breast strap may usually be assumed, though it seems not to be shown on two horses which lack those previously mentioned coverings (photographs 7 and 9; figures 4 and 6). It is usually, though not invariably, shown in medieval art from those territories that became the Islamic world (photographs 15a–b, 16, 20, 21, 27, 28, and 29; figures 85, 86, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 109, 118, 121, 122a, 124, 125a–c, 126a, e, ff, kk, ll, mm, and nn, 127, 128a–b, 132b, 134a–b, 135, 136, 137 138b–c, 139, 140, 146, 149b, 153, 154, 157, 159a–b, 160, 162, 163b, 165, 172, 174, 174, 176, 179, 181a–c, and 182a–b).

Unfortunately the broken medieval saddles found in a southern tower of the Citadel of Damascus (see below) have yet to be studied in sufficient detail to see

[22]D. Nicolle, *Late Mamlūk Military Equipment,* 245, 248, fig. 190.

[23]Al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān,* ed. De Goeje (Leiden, 1866), 438; idem, *The Origins of the Islamic State,* trans. P. K. Hitti and F. C. Murgotten (London, 1916), 1:486; A. S. M. Lutful-Huq, "A Critical Edition of Nihayat al Su'l [Al-Aqsarā'ī]" (Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1956), [ed.] 330 and [tr.] 234.

[24]E. Esin, "The Horse in Turkic Art," *Central Asiatic Journal* 10 (1965): 199–200.

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whether they had attachment points for breast or crupper straps. According to al-Kāshgharī the crupper strap was called a *koşum* in medieval Turkish Central Asia.[25] This item of horse harness appears twice on the Costa candlestick (photographs 9 and 11; figures 6 and 8) and can be assumed to exist beneath caparisons, horse armors, and very large saddle blankets on the other horses. Like the breast strap, the crupper strap appears frequently in the pictorial record (photographs 15a–b, 21, 28, and 29; figures 85, 86, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 98, 100, 103, 104, 105, 106, 109, 110, 112, 114, 118, 121, 122a, 125d, 126a, d, e, kk, ll, mm, and nn, 128a–b, 134a–b, 135, 136, 138c, 140, 146, 149b, probably 152, 156c, 157, 158, 159, 160, 162, 165, 172, 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 181a–c, and 182a–b) but is not always present. Furthermore, breast and crupper straps were not always used together.

Large tassels had been used as harness decoration in some parts of the Middle East since pre-Islamic times (photograph 18; figure 85). A very similar tassel is attached to the crupper strap of one horse on the Costa candlestick (photograph 9; figure 6) and appears in a number of other pictorial sources (photographs 15a, perhaps 28, and 29; figures 92, 93, 94, and perhaps 179). In general, however, this form of crupper decoration seems to have been replaced by others following the Seljuq conquest of Iran, the Fertile Crescent, and Anatolia.

Where a cloth only covers the horse's rump it can, with confidence, be identified as a large saddle blanket, especially where it goes beneath the crupper straps. One such appears on the Costa candlestick (photograph 11; figure 8). Known as the *namad zīn* in the late tenth-century Persian *Shāhnāmah,* it could apparently be of woolen cloth or of felt.[26] During the following century it was called an *içlik* in Turkish Central Asia, according to al-Kāshgharī.[27] Three of the animals on the Costa candlestick have what appears to be separate or additional cloths that cover their necks (photographs 5, 7, and 9; figures 2, 4, and 6), though it possible that they reflect a single piece of heavy textile or felt that had a more complicated shape and also ran beneath the saddles. Large horse cloths, sometimes with extensions to their basically rectangular shape, were certainly used in the Islamic world at a later date (photograph 48). Considerably larger horse cloths are shown on three of the horses on the Costa candlestick (photographs 5, 7, and 9; figure 2, 4, and 6) while similar coverings appear in other pictorial sources (photograph 15; figures 126nn, perhaps 156c, and 161).

The saddles of all the horses on the Costa candlestick are visible to greater or lesser degrees. They are of a kind which, having developed during the early medieval period, remained largely unchanged for a remarkably long period. This basic

[25]Ibid.

[26]Firdawsī, *Shāhnāmah,* ed. J. A. Vullers (Leiden, 1877–80), 1053; idem, *The Sháhnáma of Firdausi,* trans. A. G. and E. Warner (London, 1905), 3:276.

[27]Esin, "The Horse in Turkic Art," 199–200.

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wood-framed saddle was known as a *sarj* in Arabic and a *zīn* in Persian. Poplar was widely used for the basic wooden frame,[28] including a raised pommel at the front, an upswept cantle at the back, and horizontal side bars that linked these elements. Both the pommel and the cantle were normally made of two pieces of wood, left and right, as stated in some documentary sources and confirmed by the admittedly limited archaeological record.[29]

This form of saddle provided a more comfortable seat than the fully developed "knightly" cavalry saddle used in Western Europe from the eleventh century until the end of the medieval period. A clear distinction was, in fact, made between these saddles at that time. For example, a document drawn up in Cyprus on 3rd November 1303 and eventually forming part of the *Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers* referred to *selles de croce* or *selles de cronce,* which were Turkish-style saddles—in other words examples of the *sarj*—and *celles d'armes,* which were deep "knightly" saddles.[30] The medieval Islamic *sarj* used in Central Asia, Iran, and the Middle East permitted greater movement and physical flexibility than the medieval European "knightly" saddle while remaining deep enough to provide a secure seat in combat. It was, in fact, the direct ancestor of the so-called "western saddle" used by the cattlemen of North America and was, to a considerable extent, also the ancestor of modern riding saddles.

A handful of such rigid wood-framed saddles, with their suspended, flexible leather seats, survive in the archaeological record (figures 51a–b, 52a–b, 53a–b, and 54a–e). They are, of course, much more abundant in the pictorial record, though the latter has to be used with caution because it shows the external appearance rather than the internal structure of such saddles (photographs 15a–c, 16, 18, 20, 21, 27, 28, and 29; figures 86, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 103, 104, 105, 106, 109, 121, 122a, 125d, 126a, b, d, e, kk, ll, mm, and nn, 128a–b, 138c, 139, 140, 143, 144, 145b, 146, 149b, 152, 156c, 157, 159a, 162, 165, 174, 175, 176, 179, 181a–c, 182a–b, and 183). Variations in external appearance largely reflected changes where the saddle flaps or shabrack were concerned. During the eighth to early eleventh centuries this was often very large indeed, hanging down as far as the rider's feet and being of either rectangular or rounded outline. These variations themselves seem to have reflected regional and perhaps ethnic identification as well as changing fashion.

[28]Firdawsī, *Shāhnāmah,* ed. Vullers, 722, 1053, and 1131; idem, *Sháhnáma,* trans. Warner, 2:374, 3:276 and 348.

[29]D. Nicolle, "Mamlūk Saddles, Surviving Fragments in their Historical Contexts," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras VIII: Proceedings of the 19th, 20th, 21st and 22nd International Colloquium Organized at Ghent University in May 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013,* ed. U. Vermeulen, K. D'Hulster, and J. Van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2016), 477–505.

[30]*Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de St.-Jean de Jérusalem,* ed. Delaville Le Roulx (Paris, 1894–1906), 64.

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Stirrups are, not surprisingly, used by the horsemen on the Costa candlestick, though with two apparent exceptions (photograph 10; figures 7 and 9) where the apparent lack of stirrups reflects either the loss of the candlestick's inlaid silver or tin, or carelessness on the part of the artist. In both cases, however, the position of the rider's leg and above all the angle of his foot show that, in reality, a stirrup was being employed. Meanwhile, the history of stirrups remains one that still exercises historians of technology. Called *rikāb* in Arabic, they had been known at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad in the early seventh century, though perhaps being of non-metallic construction, but were supposedly rejected by Muslims as a foreign, Persian, device that would weaken a horseman.[31] Stirrups were nevertheless widely adopted within most of the Islamic world over the next century or so,[32] though even in the late tenth century the cavalry of al-Andalus still supposedly resisted their adoption.[33]

A large number of medieval stirrups have been excavated by archaeologists or have come to light through the international art market, though by far the greater number are from the graves of pre-Islamic, nomadic peoples of the Eurasian steppes (figures 55 to 73). Stirrups had also appeared in Islamic art since the Umayyad period and were universal by the time the Costa candlestick was made in the early thirteenth century (photographs 15a–c, 16, 27, 28, 39, 49, 50, and 51; figures 86, 89, 92, 95, 98, 102a, 103, 105, 109, 111, 118, 121, 122a, 124, 125b–d, 126a, b, c, e, x, y, kk, ll, and nn, 128a–b, 132b, 136, 139, 144, 145b, 146, 147, 152, 153, 157, 158, 159a–b, 160, 161, 162, 165, 172, 175, 176, 178, 179, 181b–c, 182a–b, and 183).

Among the most important features of the Costa candlestick is its representation of horse armor (photographs 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12; figures 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9). Unlike the other styles of horse coverings on the candlestick, these are so extensive that their identification as protective armor rather than merely decorative caparisons seems justified, especially as all but one of them (photograph 4; figure 1) are also worn with a protective chamfron on the horse's head.

The subject of horse armor in the medieval Islamic world has only recently attracted detailed scholarly attention,[34] especially the differentiation between decorative coverings used to indicate status and those with a primarily protective

[31] Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Al-Bayān wa-al-Tabyīn,* ed. H. al-Sundūbī (Cairo, 1947), 19.

[32] Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ,* ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Cairo-Baghdad, 1965), 20–21; C. T. Harley-Walker, "Jāhiz of Basra to Al-Fath ibn Khāqān on the Exploits of the Turks and the Army of the Khalifate in General," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (October 1915): 646; al-Jāḥiẓ, *Al-Bayān,* 13–14 and 19–21.

[33] Ibn Ḥawqal, *Liber Imaginis Terrae, Kitāb Ṣūrat al-Arḍ,* ed. J. K. Kramers (Leiden, 1939) 1:113; idem, *Configuration de la Terre, Kitāb Ṣūrat al-Arḍ,* trans. J. K. Kramers and G. Wiet (Paris, 1964), 1:112.

[34] D. Nicolle, "Horse Armour in the Medieval Islamic Middle East," *Arabian Humanities* 8 (2017), http:y//cy.revues.org/3293.

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purpose. According to the eleventh-century Turkish lexicographer al-Kāshgharī, the simple fabric saddle cover was called an *al* in Turkish Central Asia. It was often used as a sign of rank,[35] as was the Arabic *ghashī* in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Yemen.[36] Of course this habit was also seen outside the Islamic world, probably in the Byzantine Empire and clearly in Rome since the eighth century.[37] The latter example was probably as a result of Byzantine influence or as a heritage from a more distant Roman imperial past, though it could also have betrayed some closer Islamic influence. A survival of this early medieval Roman habit may have been illustrated in a twelfth-century stone floor-mosaic which is known only through a much later drawing (figure 131).

These were not, however, horse armors. The latter was used by some elite Byzantine cavalry units in the tenth century, apparently being of the extensive style that covered virtually the entire animal, unlike the so-called Avar style of horse armor that covered only the front half of the horse.[38] Whether its adoption within Byzantium (figure 113 for a later Byzantine example) reflected direct influence from the peoples of the steppes, or, as I suspect, betrayed Iranian-Islamic influence at a time when both peoples were facing the threat of Turkish Central Asian horse archery remains unclear. It is nevertheless worth noting that, with the exception of a very obtuse and perhaps greatly exaggerated reference to Celtic Breton "horse armor" in the early ninth century,[39] proper horse armor was not used in Western Europe—outside Islamic al-Andalus—until the late twelfth century (figures 129, 133, 143, 169a–b, 170a, and 173a–b).[40] Nor would it become widespread among the knightly elite until the thirteenth century.[41]

Thus, the idea that the representation of horse armors on the Freer Canteen and the Costa candlestick reflect European or "Crusader" influence does not really stand up. The pictorial record is tantalizingly inadequate until the early thirteenth century, though it does support the documentary evidence's insistence that horse armor was used, albeit not widespread (photographs 15a–c and 18; figures

[35]Esin, "The Horse in Turkic Art," 199–200.

[36]Ibn Ḥātim, *The Ayyūbids and Early Rasūlids,* 126.

[37]P. Partner, *The Lands of St. Peter* (London, 1972), 15.

[38]J. F. Haldon, "Some Aspects of Byzantine Military Technology from the Sixth to the Tenth Centuries," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 1 (1975): 38; J. D. Howard-Johnson, "Studies in the Organization of the Byzantine Army in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries" (Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1971), 292.

[39]Ermold le Noir, *Poème sur Louis le Pieux*, ed. and trans. E. Faral (Paris, 1932), book III, 124, lines 1628–31; B. S. Bachrach, "The Origins of Armorican Chivalry," *Technology and Culture* 10 (1969): 168, n. 9.

[40]E. Oakeshott, *The Archaeology of Weapons* (London, 1960), 279–80.

[41]V. Norman, *The Medieval Soldier* (London, 1971), 227.

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79, 89, 90, perhaps 112, 126b and oo, 132b, 143, 183, and 184). There may even be some fragments of Islamic horse armor in the archaeological record, though their identification as such remains far from certain (photographs 52 and 53; figure 75).

Things are slightly more straightforward where the chamfron to protect a horse's head in close combat is concerned. It is shown four times on the Costa candlestick (photographs 6, 8, 10, and 12; figures 3, 5, 7, and 9). Furthermore one such chamfron was actually found during archaeological excavations at the southern Nubian capital of Soba (figure 74).[42] This is unlikely to have been made in medieval Nubia. While it may have been an ancient relic preserved since Roman or early Byzantine times for ceremonial parade purposes, it would seem more likely that this piece of horse armor came from neighboring medieval Egypt. A number of medieval Islamic and Middle Eastern Christian illustrated sources probably show the chamfron (photographs 15c; figures 90, 183, and 184) though the early ones can be disputed. A little later, toward the end of the thirteenth century, the medieval Latin term *copita* referred to what are thought to be the first hardened leather chamfrons used in Western Europe.[43] This was, of course, several decades after chamfrons, sometimes perhaps also of hardened leather, were used in the Islamic Middle East (see Part II for use of the terms *testinia* and *tishtanīyah* in the context of horse armor).

Fashions clearly had an impact upon methods of decorating the saddles of military or political elites. They include various aspects of saddle design, such as the addition of decorative tassels or the elaboration of existing straps for decorative purposes. Two of the saddles on the Costa candlestick seem to illustrate such a development. Here the three straps so often shown beneath the sides of a saddle are longer than normal and have apparent tassels at the ends (photographs 5 and 9; figures 2 and 6). What is less clear is whether such groups of three saddle straps (*fitrāk* in Persian) originally had something to do with the attachment of crupper straps or securing other aspects of the saddle, or were mainly used to secure other objects ranging from lassos to enemy heads.[44] Perhaps hidden beneath the very large saddle flaps in early representations, other illustrations of such groups of straps range from the simple and seemingly functional to examples that are even more decorated than those on the Costa candlestick (photographs 15; figures perhaps 103, 126c, e, and x, 135, 137, 138a–c, 139, 149b, 160, 162, and 179). They seem

[42]L. Allason-Jones, "Catalogue of Weaponry from Soba Excavations, 8–14 cents." (unpublished typescript, 1992).

[43]Oakeshott, *Archaeology of Weapons,* 280.

[44]Firdawsī, *Shāhnāmah,* ed. Vullers, 362 and 1183; idem, *Sháhnáma,* trans. Warner, 2:66 and 4:50; Muḥammad Ibn Manṣūr Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh, *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-al-shujāʿah,* ed. A. S. Khwānsārī (Tehran, 1969), 332–33.

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to have fallen out of fashion in the middle of the thirteenth century, at least in what became the Mamluk Sultanate.

Tassels were similarly attached to other items of horse-furniture, the most common being a throat tassel attached to a collar around the animal's neck, immediately behind its ears. This is shown four times on the Costa candlestick (photographs 5, 8, 9, and 11; figures 2, 5, 6, and 8). It was almost certainly of Turkish Central Asian origin, though also having been adopted by Sassanian cavalry (photographs 18 and 20; figures 83 and 85). Before battle Turkish warriors were reported as attaching such a tassel, called a *beçken;* this was mentioned in a poem quoted by al-Kāshgharī about the Uighurs. The Turks similarly attached other things to their horses' necks including beads, jewels, or even a lion's claw for presumably totemic purposes.[45] Another Turkish term for the tassel beneath a horse's throat was *qotuz,* which entered Arabic as *qutas.*[46] Such tassels apparently returned to fashion following the Turkish Seljuq conquest of Iran, the Fertile Crescent, and Anatolia (figures perhaps 116, 125a–d, 126d, 139, 144, 146, 158, 163b, 165, 172, 176, 181b, and 182a–b). In Mamluk Egypt and Syria such a neck tassel was known as a *zirr.*[47]

Two horses on the Costa candlestick appear to have tassels attached to their girths (photographs 11 and 12; figures 8 and 9), a feature which might appear elsewhere, though the illustrations are sometimes not clear enough to locate such tassels with precision (photographs 15a–c; figures perhaps 135, perhaps 138c, and 154). It was, however, never a widespread or prolonged fashion. In several such illustrations the presumed girth tassel could also be interpreted as tassels attached to the stirrups. The latter fashion certainly existed, being shown six times on the Costa candlestick (photographs 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11; figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8), but again it was not particularly widespread (photograph 15a; figures perhaps 111, perhaps 135, 138c, 146, 147, and 154).

A variation on such horse harness decorations was a scarf around the animal's head, attached to more commonly used decorative horse collars. It is shown four times on the Costa candlestick (photographs 4, 6, 10, and 12; figures 1, 3, 7, and 9). Whereas the tassel could be seen as a typically Turkish horse decoration, horse collars seem to be more typically Iranian. Having appeared in late Sassanian art,[48] they were soon appearing in Islamic art.[49] By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these collars were often known as *qilādah* or *mishaddah* in the Arab world,[50]

[45]Esin, "The Horse in Turkic Art," 197–98.

[46]E. Esin, in private conversation in London, 1976.

[47]Lutful-Huq, "A Critical Edition of Nihayat al Su'l," [ed.] 331 and [tr.] 36.

[48]D. Thompson, *Stucco from Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad* (Warminster, 1976), 15.

[49]M. Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam* (Oxford, 1975), 168.

[50]Mayer, *Mamluk Costume,* 15; Douillet, "Furūsiyya," 952–54.

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while in thirteenth-century Islamic northern India the Persian term *bar band* was used.[51] In eleventh- and twelfth-century Fatimid Egypt the most elaborate and valuable such horse collars were of gold chains with amber decorations,[52] while those used in early fourteenth-century Marinid Morocco were clearly impressive but perhaps of less intrinsic value. Unlike the tassels, such collars were shown in the iconographic record over a wide area and a prolonged period (photographs 15a–c, 28, 29, and 51; figures 86, 92, 103, 105, 109, 116, 118, 121, 122a and c, 125a–d, 126b, 138a–b, 139, 140, 144, 146, 149b, 153, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163b, 165, 172, 179, 181a–c, and 182a–b).

The knotting of a horse's tail may be seen as another form of decoration or cultural identification. All save one of the horses on the Costa candlestick have their tails knotted in this manner (the exception being photograph 10; figure 7). Quite why the latter animal's tail is not knotted is unknown. Although docked horse's tails do not seem to appear in the pictorial record of Islamic art from the seventh to fourteenth centuries, al-Balādhurī, writing in the ninth century, refers to such a procedure being adopted by some Muslim cavalry toward the end of the great Arab conquests. He was describing a minor skirmish that took place during a Muslim raid near the frontier of Sind in 44/664–65. Here, in the country of al-Qiqan (in what is now southeastern Afghanistan), the raiders were attacked by twelve "Turkish" horsemen riding horses described as *mahdhūfah,* translated by Hitti and Murgotten as having docked tails. Though these "Turks" were eventually all slain, the Muslim leader al-Muhallab Ibn Abī Ṣuffrah said; "How much more expeditious in manoeuvering were these barbarians than we were! [So] He had the tails of his own horses docked, being the first Muslim to do such a thing."[53] The Arabic verb *hadhaf* can mean taken away, cut off (sometimes specifically referring to hair) or suppressed, so it remains possible that the reality behind the story, related by al-Balādhurī two centuries after the event, actually recalled the widespread Turkish and Central Asian habit of tying up a horse's tail prior to combat. It was probably also done during training, as recorded by al-Kāshgharī in a Turkish poem during the eleventh century.[54] Such knotted tails are, of course, widespread in medieval and later Islamic art (photographs 15a, 28, 29, probably 51, and 50; figures 86, 89, 92, 94, 105, perhaps 106, 114, 118, 121, 126a, b, and oo, 128b, 134a–b, 136, 137, 138b–c, 139, 140, 149b, 153, 156c, 159b, 162, 165, perhaps 172, 174, 181a–c, 182a–b, and 184), though they were by no means universal.

[51] Mubārakshāh, *Ādāb al-ḥarb,* 332–33.

[52] M. Canard, "La procession du nouvel an chez les Fatimides," *Annales de l'Institut Orientale de la Faculté des Lettres d'Alger* 10 (1952): 375.

[53] Al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān,* 608; idem, *The Origins of the Islamic State,* 2:210–11.

[54] Esin, "The Horse in Turkic Art," 196–97.

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A final aspect of the figures on the Costa candlestick that requires comment is the actions of the horsemen themselves. The possibility that these figures reflect some aspects of *furūsīyah* training exercises has already been mentioned. Perhaps it is the very variety of their positions and actions that makes such an interpretation appealing. Nevertheless, some of these "combat positions" were a common part of the repertoire of artists and craftsmen in the pre-Islamic and medieval Islamic world. An archer shooting forward is a case in point (photograph 9; figure 6), this motif being widely used elsewhere (photographs 28 and 50; figures 160 and 181c). The archer shooting rearward (photograph 8; figure 5) was similarly popular (photograph 31; figure 139). Horsemen wielding swords in combat were, of course, a commonplace motif in many cultures, but the figure on the Costa candlestick adopts a slightly unusual attitude with his arm and sword fully extended (photographs 7 and 58; figure 4). Comparable positions are seen in a few other sources, though these tend to be from the same part of the Middle East and to be similarly dated (photograph 29; figures 126am, 128a, perhaps 145b, and 183). Most other illustrations of horsemen wielding swords place these weapons above the rider's head—in other words at the start rather than the completion of a blow. Hence it seems possible that the more unusual illustrations of an extended arm and completed blow might reflect cavalry fencing exercises in the *maydān* (photograph 58).

The abundance and variety of positions while using a spear or lance seem even more likely to reflect *furūsīyah* exercises in a *maydān*. On the Costa candlestick they include wielding with both arms and thrusting forward (photographs 10 and 11; figures 7 and 8). Of course it would be very difficult for a horseman to thrust rearward using this two-handed technique, or at least to do so effectively. Such a method of wielding a spear on horseback had been used since ancient times, but in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Middle East it seems already to have been considered old fashioned. Yet the tactic would persist throughout the medieval period in the Islamic world and beyond, though not, apparently, in Western Europe (photograph 3; figures 106, 110, 134a–b, 136, 159b, 172, perhaps 176, and 182a–b).

Wielding a spear with one hand, in what might have been regarded as a more modern manner, is shown four times on the Costa candlestick: twice to the front (photographs 4 and 5; figures 1 and 2 [of necessity because this horseman holds a large shield in his left hand]) and twice to the rear (photographs 6 and 12; figures 3 and 9). The spears in question are all of the long, double-ended type with a substantial blade or pointed foot at their rear ends. Comparable illustrations are found elsewhere in Islamic and neighboring art from this period (photographs 15a, 18, 27; figures 79, 94, 98, 105, 111, 126e, 135, 138c, 174, 175, and 181a).

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None of these horsemen use the Western European, Byzantine, and indeed Islamic, "couched" lance technique, which employed a relatively short but heavy weapon held behind its point of balance and with its weight supported by tucking the rear of the haft between the horseman's upper arm and thorax. The couched lance does, of course, appear elsewhere in medieval Islamic art of this and later centuries, including some particularly interesting examples on Turkish relief carvings from Afyon in Western Anatolia.[55] Though these are very difficult to date, some aspects of the figures suggest the early thirteenth century or a bit later.

[55]K. Otto-Dorn, "Türkische grabstein mit figurenreliefs aus Kleinasien," *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959): 75–76.

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Notes on Two *Manjanīq* Counterweights from Mamluk Shawbak

The Site and the Finds

The castle of al-Shawbak is located in Jordan, a few kilometers to the north of the homonymous town, along the road connecting Tafileh to Wadi Musa. A first archaeological campaign was conducted by Robin Brown in the 1980s in order to investigate the Late Islamic horizon of the settlement.[1] New research in the area, under the University of Florence's archaeological mission "'Medieval' Petra: Archaeology of the Crusader-Ayyubid Settlement in Transjordan," started in 2000.[2] The results gathered since then show that the Crusader installation was preceded by a Late Roman-Byzantine fortified settlement whose curtain wall is partially preserved in the inner part of the castle. Baldwin I, king of Jerusalem, apparently taking advantage of the remains of the previous fortification, built the castle in 1115 as part of the defensive apparatus of the eastern frontier of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, protecting the southern part of Transjordan and the road towards the Red Sea. Mentioned in Western written sources as Montréal due to its royal foundation, the castle became the political and military center of southern Transjordan and its success in this role is also expressed by its urbanistic development. After its fall into Muslim hands in 1189 as an aftermath of the defeat at Hattin (1187), the regional political importance of the castle was strengthened under the Ayyubids, who added monumental and productive buildings. According to written, epigraphic, and archaeological sources, a few years after the dismantling of the fortifications by the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl, his successor Lājīn

[1] R. Brown, "Summary report of the 1986 excavations in Late Islamic Shobak," *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* 32 (1988): 225–45.

[2] The research at al-Shawbak is part of the wider project "'Medieval' Petra: Archaeology of the Crusader-Ayyubid Settlement in Transjordan" started in 1986 by the University of Florence. On the goals, method, and results of the whole project see *Archeologia dell'insediamento crociato-ayyubide in Transgiordania: Il progetto Shawbak,* ed. G. Vannini (Florence, 2007); *Da Petra a Shawbak: Archeologia di una frontiera*, ed. G. Vannini and M. Nucciotti (Florence, 2009); G. Vannini and M. Nucciotti, "Shawbak: strutture materiali di una frontiera," in *La Transgiordania nei secoli XII–XIII e le frontiere del Mediterraneo medievale,* ed. G. Vannini and M. Nucciotti (Oxford, 2012), 135–44.

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built a strong, new defensive apparatus, including new bastions and towers, in 1297–98 (Fig. 1).[3]

In the 1990s, prior to the start of the "'Medieval' Petra" mission, the Department of Antiquities of Jordan undertook a clearance campaign in the area of the major monumental buildings in the northeastern part of the castle. During this work a quantity of stone elements was unearthed, which were stored in the vaulted halls underneath the upper church of Saint Mary (Fig. 2). Among epigraphic fragments, decorative architectural elements, millstones, and many spherical stone projectiles of various diameters, a particular element carved into a limestone block was recognized. Being conventionally indicated as "A" type (Fig. 3), it has a trapezoidal shape, with a convex base and a dovetail mortise carved on both faces with a square hole pierced through the thickness of the block (Fig. 4).[4]

Around 2000–2002 the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources completed a new clearance campaign for consolidation works in the southern part of the castle. During this campaign a second element of the same kind came to light. It is conventionally indicated as "B" type and although lacking a small fragment in the upper part, the general shape is quite similar to the "A" type, though smaller and thinner, every dimension being about half of those of the previous specimen (Fig. 5). It differs from the latter in the extension of the mortise, which goes from the top to the base of the element and is carved only on one face. The most evident difference with type "A" is the absence of the square hole and the presence of four holes drilled through the thickness of the block and located laterally to the central mortise (Fig. 6).

Discussion

If we consider the two specimens from al-Shawbak, although the archaeological context has been lost and a preliminary search for published archaeological comparisons did not succeed, their apparent similarity with drawings of counterweight artillery guided our research attempting to specify the type of engine to which the artifacts belonged, and to propose a reconstruction of the coupling system and of their chronology, starting from a concise review of Arab military treatises and related iconography. [5]

[3] M. Nucciotti, "Analisi stratigrafiche degli elevati: primi risultati," in *Archeologia dell'insediamento crociato-ayyubide in Transgiordania,* 45, 48; B. Walzer, F. Dotti, and M. Nucciotti, "Shawbak e la Transgiordania mamelucca," in *Da Petra a Shawbak,* 126–31.

[4] A. Vanni Desideri, "Un contrappeso da manjaniq dalle fasi mamelucche del castello di Mont Réal (Shawbak): Considerazioni tra archeologia e iconografia," in *Da Petra a Shawbak,* 122–25.

[5] A preliminary bibliography on Arabic military literature was provided by Rahman Zarky in 1965. On Islamic military technology see also: A. Y. al-Ḥasan and D. R. Hill, *Islamic Technology: An Illustrated History* (Cambridge, 1986), 93–120; D. R. Hill, *Studies in Medieval Islamic Technol-*

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The hurling engines to which the elements most probably belonged are indicated by the Arabic terms *ʿarrādah* and *manjanīq,* perhaps reflecting their different sizes, with the *ʿarrādah* being the smaller of the two.[6] More recently, it has been suggested, on the basis of the description by al-Ṭarsūsī, that the *ʿarrādah* was a pole-framed and the *manjanīq* a trestle-framed engine.[7]

This weapon, which probably originated in China as a traction-powered engine, appeared in the Mediterranean area with the Byzantine army in a hybrid design, combining human traction with gravity power.[8] Quickly reaching the Islamic milieu, it was used increasingly often during the Islamic conquest, from the siege of Mecca (683) to Baghdad (865).

A more advanced and effective counterweight type, the *trabuchium* or *biffa* of Western written sources, was developed in the Mediterranean area by the end of the twelfth century.[9] From this type, rapidly disseminated by Arab engineers toward the Far East, there evolved around the mid-thirteenth century the pivoting counterweight engine, or *biffa,* as it was called by Egidio Colonna in the *De re militari veterum ad mores praesertim medii aevi.*[10] Paul E. Chevedden recognized a relationship between the effectiveness of this new design and changes in the planning of passive (fortifications) and active (weapons deployment) defense of castles and cities starting with the renovation of the Islamic fortifications in the Latin East.[11]

It was in the Latin West that a new engine, powered by twin pivoting counterweights and therefore called *bricola,* originated. Its fortune spread in a relatively

ogy: From Philo to al-Ǧazarī, from Alexandria to Diyār Bakr (Norfolk, 1998), 99–115, specifically dedicated to trebuchet. See also the recent work by A. Tami, "L'art de la guerre au temps des Croisades (491/1098–589/1193): Du theocentrisme irrational aux influences mutuelles et adaptations pragmatiques dans le domaine militaire: Histoire" (Ph.D. diss., Université Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux III, 2012) dedicated to the cultural and technical aspects of warfare during the Crusades on both sides.

[6]J. F. Finò, "Machine de jet médiévales," *Gladius* 10 (1972): 25–43.

[7]P. E. Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet: A study in Cultural Diffusion," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 95.

[8]P. E. Chevedden, "Fortifications and the Development of Defensive Planning in the Latin East," in *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages: Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History,* ed. D. J. Kagay and L. J. A. Villalon (Woodbridge-Rochester, 1999), 36; idem, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet," 71–116. On the evolution of medieval artillery see M. S. Fulton, *Artillery in the Era of the Crusades: Siege Warfare and the Development of Trebuchet Technology* (Leiden-Boston, 2018).

[9]For a discussion on the terminology see Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet," passim.

[10]E. Colonna, "De re militari veterum ad mores praesertim medii aevi," cap. XVIII, in *Collectio monumentorum, veterum et recentium, ineditorum,* ed. S. F. Hahn (Brunswick, 1724), 1:1–69.

[11]Chevedden, "Fortifications and the Development of Defensive Planning in the Latin East."

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short time eastward and lasted until the Renaissance when Francesco di Giorgio Martini gave two of the most famous and detailed, although latest (1472–77), descriptions of this engine in his *Opusculum de architectura* (Fig. 7).

Tracing the diffusion of the *bricola* from the western Mediterranean toward China, three main steps have been recognized. It seems that technical and practical knowledge of this design was first transmitted from the Latin West to the eastern Mediterranean thanks to the emperor Frederick II, who, according to Caffaro's *Annales,* sent some engines to the Near East in 1242.[12] Later on the new and more efficient artillery, since then called *manjanīq ifranjī* or *manjanīq firanjī* (mangonel of the Franks) because of its origin, was introduced as an updated ordnance in the Mamluk army.[13] The third step eastward was accomplished by Muslim artillerists serving in the Mongol army who transmitted the *bricola* to China where its name was changed into *hui-hui pao,* or Muslim trebuchet.[14]

From the iconographic point of view, the most complete description and the earliest available illustration of a counterweight *manjanīq* is the one displayed in *Tabṣirat arbāb al-albāb fī kayfīyat al-najāh fī al-ḥurub* (Instructions of the masters of the skills of the methods of salvation in wars) by Marḍī ibn ʿAlī ibn Marḍī al-Ṭarsūsī, written around 1187 and dedicated to Saladin.[15] The author specifies the details of the designs used among different peoples, including the Europeans, but the drawing is scarcely useful because of its overly schematic representation of the engine (Fig. 8). As to the transmission of this design, al-Ṭarsūsī attributes it to an Armenian master of weapons captured by the Fatimid army who offered his collaboration in exchange for his life and explained the principles of the new machine in Alexandria.[16]

The *Kitāb al-furūsīyah wa-al-manāsib al-ḥarbīyah* (Book of military horsemanship and ingenious war devices), written by Najm al-Dīn Ḥasan al-Rammāḥ

[12]Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet," 110, n. 143.

[13]Ibid., 109.

[14]On the diffusion of the counterweight trebuchet see P. E. Chevedden, "Black Camels and Blazing Bolts: the Bolt-Projecting Trebuchet in the Mamluk Army," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 8, no. 1 (2004): 102–6. A preliminary look at the throwing engine in medieval and post medieval China was provided by J. Needham, "China's Trebuchets, Manned and Counterweighted," in *On Pre-Modern Technology and Science: Studies in Honor of Lynn White Jr.,* ed. B. S. Hall and D. C. West (Malibu, CA, 1976). For an overview on China's medieval military technology see J. Needham and R. D. S. Yates, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 5, *Chemistry and Chemical Technology,* part 6, *Military Technology, Missiles and Sieges* (Cambridge, 1995).

[15]The treatise was first edited and translated into French by C. Cahen, "Un traité d'armurerie composé pour Saladin," *Bullétin d'Etudes Orientales* 12 (1947–48): 1–61 and more recently edited as Marḍī ibn ʿAlī ibn Marḍī al-Ṭarsūsī, *Tabṣirat arbāb al-albāb fī kayfīyat al-najāh fī al-ḥurub,* ed. K. Sander (Beirut, 1998).

[16]Quoted in Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet," 104–5.

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around 1280, contains a drawing of a launching engine (Fig. 9) recognizable as a pivoting counterweight *manjanīq*.[17] The counterweight has a nearly trapezoidal shape with a reinforced base connected to a vertical central element coupled to the beam, possibly indicating a wooden structure with a reinforcing metal frame.

The *Ǧāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* (Collected histories) by Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, composed around 1306, provides more detailed and abundant representations of *manjanīq*.[18] The plate depicting the siege of a town by the Mongol army gives a very interesting description of an engine ready to shoot (Fig. 10). The trestle frame appears particularly strong and is provided with several buttresses, giving the idea of a *manjanīq* of great size, able to project the round shells visible on the left. The hanging system of the triangular pivoting counterweight is very similar to the one it is possible to imagine for our "A" type. A keyhole-shaped plate, possibly metallic, is clearly visible and is coupled by means of a cylindrical joint pin provided with a cotter. On the other hand, the distance between the counterweight and the fulcrum of the beam as represented in the drawing is not realistic, being too short to be effective, but that could be explained by the author's general tendency to *horror vacui,* trying to fill the illustrations of the manuscript with as many details as possible.

A drawing included in the *Kitāb anīq fī al-manājanīq* (An elegant book on trebuchets) composed by Aranbughā al-Zaradkāsh in 1462–63 depicts a *manjanīq* with details similar to those in the latter document (Fig. 11). The beam is supported by the same kind of frame, and the counterweight, whose shape is similar to the two elements from al-Shawbak, is sustained by a presumably metallic element with an upper joint pin functioning as pivot point.

The last two documents are the most useful for the interpretation of the mortises and holes on the two counterweights from al-Shawbak and the reconstruction of their coupling system. In particular, the supporting system represented in Rashīd al-Dīn's manuscript helps us to understand the functional purposes of some details.

Taking into consideration the mortises and the holes carved into the trapezoidal-monolithic counterweights and comparing it with the illustrations of *manjanīq,* their different coupling system could be reconstructed as follows. In the "A" type, two (probably metal) plates with a keyhole shape were placed into the corresponding dovetail mortises, where a joint kingpin with a square section, passing through the thickness of the block, was fastened by cotter pins. A second

[17] Najm al-Dīn al-Rammāḥ, *Kitāb al-furūsīyah wa-al-manāsib al-ḥarbīyah,* ed. A. Y. al-Ḥasan (Aleppo, 1998).

[18] For a recent study on the manuscript see S. Kamola, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the Making of History in Mongol Iran (Ph.D. diss, University of Washington, 2013).

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joint pin with a round section passing through the round holes in the upper ends of the plates would have hung the counterweight to the beam (Fig. 12).

In the case of the "B" type, the presence of only one dovetail mortise reveals that for its correct coupling and use at least one more element was necessary, while the four holes were needed to facilitate the transport of the heavy counterweight but also allowed the assembly of the two elements (Fig. 13).

Defense Planning, Ordnance Deployment, and Effectiveness

When comparing iconographic and archaeological sources, a difference must be noted: while the manuscript by Rashīd al-Dīn does not show a connection between the keyhole metal plate and the counterweight, the "A" type artifact has a square hole in the middle of the mortise. Apparently the difference can be explained by the different materials of the two counterweights, i.e., the monolithic limestone element from al-Shawbak and the probable wooden box structure described in al-Zaradkāsh's and Rashīd al-Dīn's manuscripts. Actually, a wooden box counterweight was the simpler and more convenient solution as it made it possible to rapidly and easily increase the propelling mass using any available material, obviously an advantage during siege activities when specific materials might not be available.[19] Such considerations show that engines using two solid limestone or similar counterweights were not meant as offensive weapons to be used during an attack or siege, which would have required a certain flexibility of use, but were probably meant for defensive deployment.

The *manjanīq*s were installed on the bastions of the castle, on the basis of detailed reconnaissance and knowledge of the surrounding landscape. The limited possibility for adjustment provided by solid stone counterweights meant that the performance and the locations of the two *manjanīq*s were carefully planned and specifically designed. In fact, combining the possible direction of an attack, the necessary range, and the more suitable positions of the engine, it was possible to precisely plan the performance of the artillery while avoiding the construction of a more versatile but larger engine.

Based on comparison of iconographic sources, it is clear the counterweights from the castle of al-Shawbak belong to the more advanced gravity artillery, i.e., the pivoting counterweight type. If we take into consideration how the two counterweights are made, however, we can see that their mass could not be easily increased and, as a consequence, it would not have been possible to adjust their

[19]In this regard see the different raw materials identified during the archaeological survey in the surrounding area of the battlefield of Arsūf. In particular, most of the projectiles, since limestone was not available at the site, were made out of limestone blocks brought from the Samarian hills, some 15 km from Arsūf (K. Raphael and Y. Tepper, "The Archaeological Evidence from the Mamluk Siege of Arsūf," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9 (2005): 87–88.

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performance. For both artillery pieces only limited adjustments were possible, such as moving the counterweight along the beam or modifying the size of the missiles, consequently changing the range. Still, their masses were not sufficient to hurl effective projectiles, since counterweight "A" weighed around 450 kg and "B" only about 62 kg. This problem could only be explained if we consider the two counterweights as parts of a different and more advanced kind of engine. In the case of a *manjanīq firanjī,* the *bricola* of Western origin, twin counterweights (of about 450 kg each for the "A" type and around 150 kg each for the "B" type) could have provided more adequate gravity power, granting balance and stability to the engines at the same time, thus increasing their accuracy.

Such a reconstruction at the castle of al-Shawbak, with two different kinds of *manjanīq* of the *bricola* design (with different performance characteristics) deployed, could be explained as follows. A rapid survey of the topographical features of the area around the castle indicates that the most threatening elevations are located along a north/northeast-south/southwest axis (Fig. 14). Two major heights of around 1200 meters above sea level are located nearest, around 200 meters away, on both sides of the castle. Since these locations are the most suitable for the positioning of enemy artillery pieces they had to be covered by the defensive artillery. Other elevations to the west and northwest are also suitable for artillery attacks but they are too far from the castle curtain walls. The whole eastern sector is naturally protected by the slope.

Accordingly, the fortifications built by the Mamluk sultan Lājīn at the end of the thirteenth century included two large bastions, one facing northwest and the other against a possible attack on the south/southwest flank, each with a large, flat roof suitable for operating the engine and each provided with batteries of arrow slits arranged in multiple rows. Combining the locations with the hypothetical range deduced from the average different features of the engines (mass of counterweights and projectiles, lengths of the beams, etc.) it is possible to propose a reconstruction of the effective coverage of such artillery.

Judging from the place where the two elements may have been found, the engine provided with the "A" type counterweight would presumably have been placed on the northwest bastion, and the engine with the "B" type counterweight on the south/southwest bastion.

The whole defensive plan of al-Shawbak, based on perfect knowledge of the logistics, together with an evaluation of the possible locations of siege engines, fits perfectly with the advice included in the treatise by al-Anṣārī at the beginning of the fifteenth century. In book twenty he writes that once the siege take place, because of the limited resources of the defenders, they should know with

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maximum precision the weapons to be used and how to have the maximum effect on the enemy.[20]

The use of hurling engines as defensive weapons mounted on bastions or towers is well known from written sources: Anna Comnena quotes a *helepolis* (a kind of traction trebuchet) mounted on towers or ships[21] and Eustathios, bishop of Thessalonica, in *The Capture of Thessaloniki* remembers how in 1185 artillery deployed on the curtain walls defended the town against siege by the Normans.[22] In 1148 the *manjanīq*s of the Saracens defended the town of Tortosa, throwing missiles of around 60 kg.[23] Apart from these early examples, the major developments in the use of artillery as a defensive weapon coincide with the introduction of the counterweight trebuchet, which was much more threatening to fortifications than the traction version. The increased effectiveness of the new design of trebuchet led to a new way of planning the defenses of castles and cities, combining larger fortifications with the defensive use of artillery. A new system of defenses including thicker curtain walls and larger bastions combined with the deployment of artillery developed by the sultan Sayf al-Dīn al-Malik al-ʿĀdil was later also used by the Crusaders.[24] The clearest and most complete expression of this new defensive plan is the citadel of Damascus—later extended to Bursa (1218) and Mount Tabor (1215)—but reinforcements based on the same concept are to be found in many Ayyubid strongholds.[25]

A good but late representation of this new role of artillery is provided by al-Zaradkāsh's manuscript, which shows three different types of artillery (torsion, traction, and rotating counterweight) defending a fortified gate (Fig. 15). More than three decades earlier the curtain walls of Orléans were protected by an out-of-date trebuchet located on top of the tower of Saint Paul, which was soon replaced by a more effective cannon.[26]

In this regard, for the understanding of the castle's active defense system, the numerous limestone *manjanīq* missiles found during the excavation of area 6000 assume further importance. On the back of the apse of the lower church of the castle, next to the inner gate, at least two stratigraphic units (US) contained

[20] Al-Anṣārī, *Tafrīj al-kurūb fī tadbīr al-ḥurūb,* ed. G. T. Scanlon (Cairo-New York, 2012), 121.

[21] G. T. Dennis, "Byzantine Heavy Artillery: the Helepolis," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 39 (1998): 108–9.

[22] Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet," 94.

[23] A. A. Settia, *Rapine, assedi, battaglie: La guerra nel Medioevo* (Bari, 2002), 126.

[24] Chevedden, "Fortifications and the Development of Defensive Planning in the Latin East," 38–43.

[25] Ibid., 33–43.

[26] J. F. Finò, "Machines de jet médiévales," *Gladius* 10 (1972): 40, n. 52.

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manjanīq missiles, both included in Period 8.[27] The earlier stratigraphic unit 6079 contained a quantity of roughly spherical missiles with diameters of approximately 35 to 85 cm, obtained by processing limestone blocks (Fig. 16), which could be interpreted as an ammunition deposit *in situ*. In a later moment, evidently after such artillery had become obsolete, the floor (US 6040) underneath a vaulted ceiling (US 6052) was paved using a quantity of *manjanīq* missiles as mere building material. The study of these projectiles, still in progress, will furnish important information concerning the different sizes and weights of the projectiles that can help determine the performance of the counterweight artillery. At the moment, their average weight, estimated at about 60 kg, can be compared with the data recovered during the excavation at the site of Arsūf, where the battlefield of the siege led by Baybars has been archaeologically investigated. Given that the raw material is the same, the average diameter and weight of the missile stones from Shawbak correspond to the maximum used by the defenders of the fortress against the besieging Mamluk army, which mostly weigh between 16 and 35 kg—noticeably less than the 45 kg stones hurled by the *ifranjī manjanīq* used by the Mamluk army besieging Acre.[28]

As for the effectiveness of these bastion engines—usually hurling smaller projectiles as can be deduced from the description given by William the Breton of the siege of Bôves by king Philippe August: "nunc mangonellus, Turcorum more, minora saxa rotat"[29]—Jean Froissart writes in his *Chroniques* that in 1340 the defenders of Montagne destroyed the great trebuchet of the enemy with three shots.[30] The author of the *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta Regis Ricardi* describes how the defenders of the town of Acre used *manjanīq*s to destroy the attacking trebuchets of Henry of Champagne,[31] and the defense of the castle of Chinon, at the time of king Philippe August, also relied on a "petraria turquesia."[32] Artillery of the same type was also located on movable towers during offensive activities, as reported by Jean Froissart during the siege of Bergerac by the French in 1377.[33]

The reconstruction of the active defense of Mamluk Shawbak, as far as can be deduced by material sources, apart from the quantity of arrow slits arranged

[27] C. Molducci and E. Pruno, "Shawbak: lo scavo dell'area 6000," in *Archeologia dell'insediamento crociato-ayyubide in Transgiordania*, 56–69.

[28] Raphael and Tepper, "The Archaeological Evidence from the Mamluk Siege of Arsūf," 87, 99–100 (Arsūf) and 90 (Acre).

[29] D. J. Cathcart King, "Trebuchet and other Siege-Engines," in *Chateau Gaillard 9–10: Actes des Colloques Internationaux tenus a Basel (1978) et a Durham (1980)* (Caen, 1982), 460.

[30] P. Contamine, *La guerra nel Medioevo* (Milan, 2000), 270–71.

[31] Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet," 96.

[32] Finò, "Machines de jet médiévales," 40, n. 49.

[33] Ibid., 41–42.

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in multiple rows in the bastions, can now be completed with the deployment of a number of updated artillery pieces as part of a wider plan accomplished in 1293–94 under the rule of Sultan Lājīn. In particular, the new bastions and their locations, if intended as a consequence of the study of the surrounding landscape and the recognition of the main direction of a possible attack, seem to support this interpretation.

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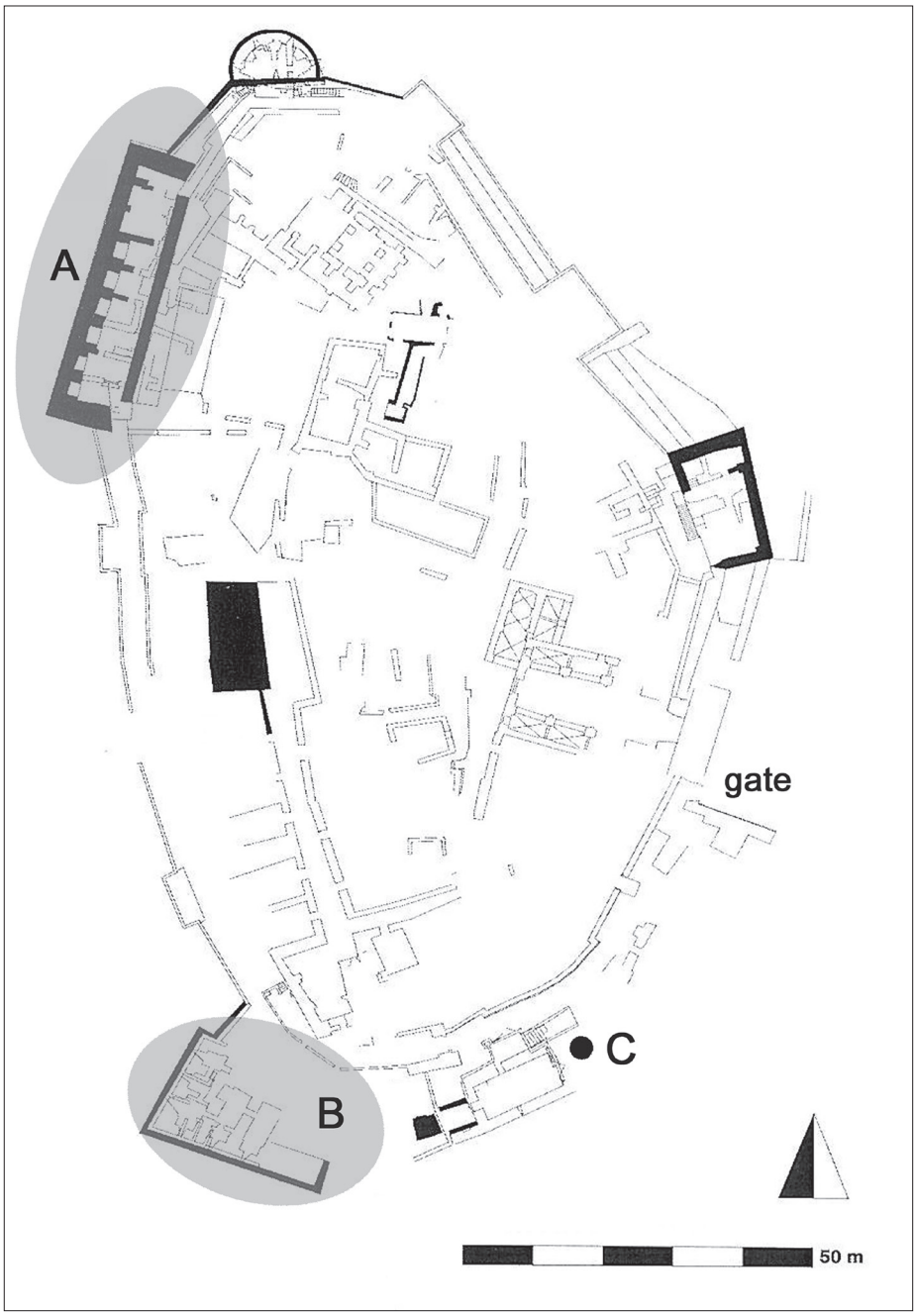

Fig. 1. Plan of the castle of al-Shawbak with the main Mamluk reinforcements of the late thirteenth century as indicated by the archaeological analyses (after Nucciotti, "Analisi stratigrafiche degli elevati: primi risultati"). Letters A and B show the probable areas of provenance of the two counterweights.

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Fig. 2. The *lapidarium* where the stone elements were stored after the first campaign of clearance. Among them the "A" type of counterweight is visible with projectiles of various size in the background. Photograph by the author, summer 1999.

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Fig. 3. The "A" type of counterweight. Photograph by the author, summer 1999.

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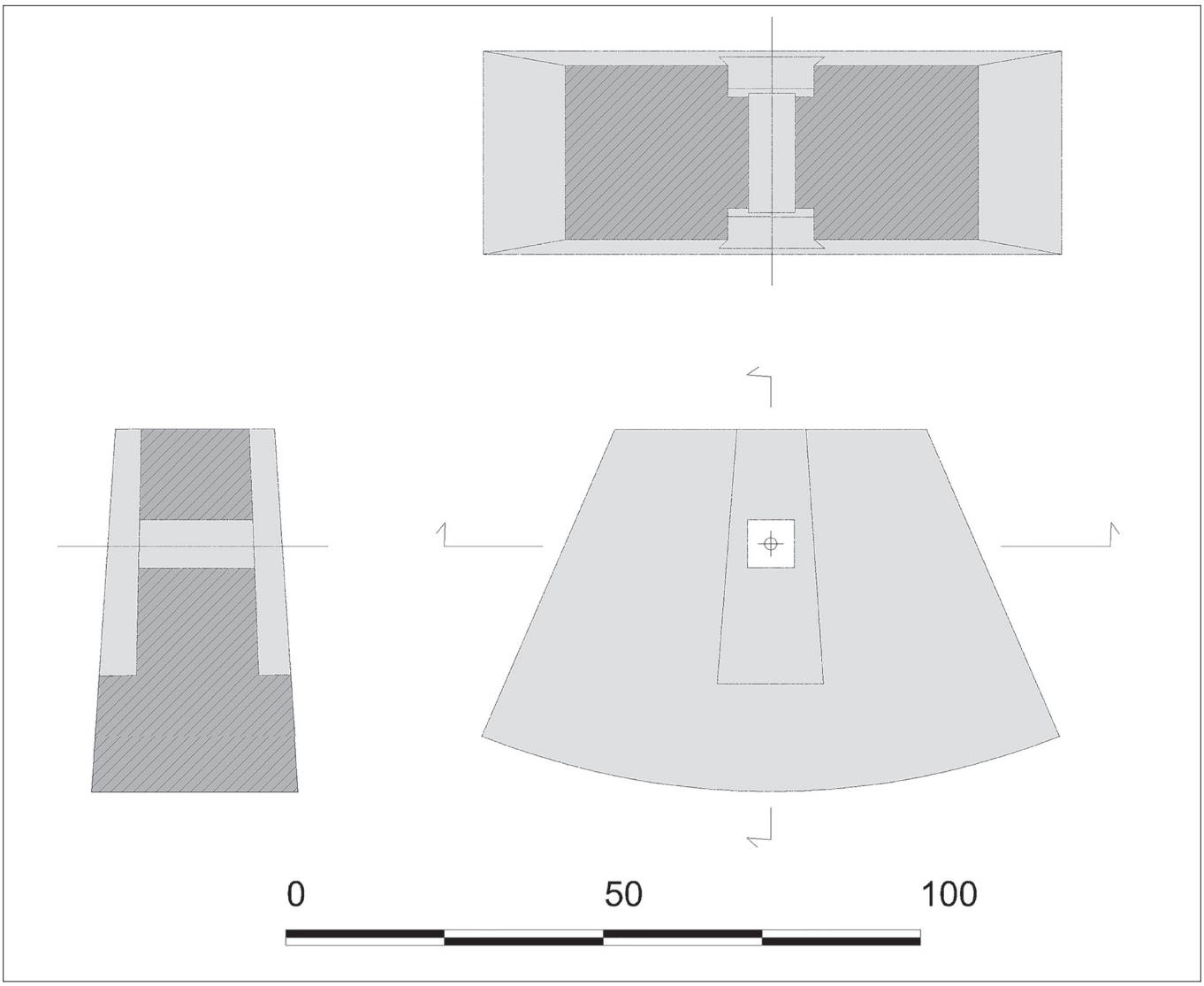

Fig. 4. The "A" type of counterweight. Drawing by the author.

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Fig. 5. The "B" type of counterweight. Photograph by the author, November 2012.

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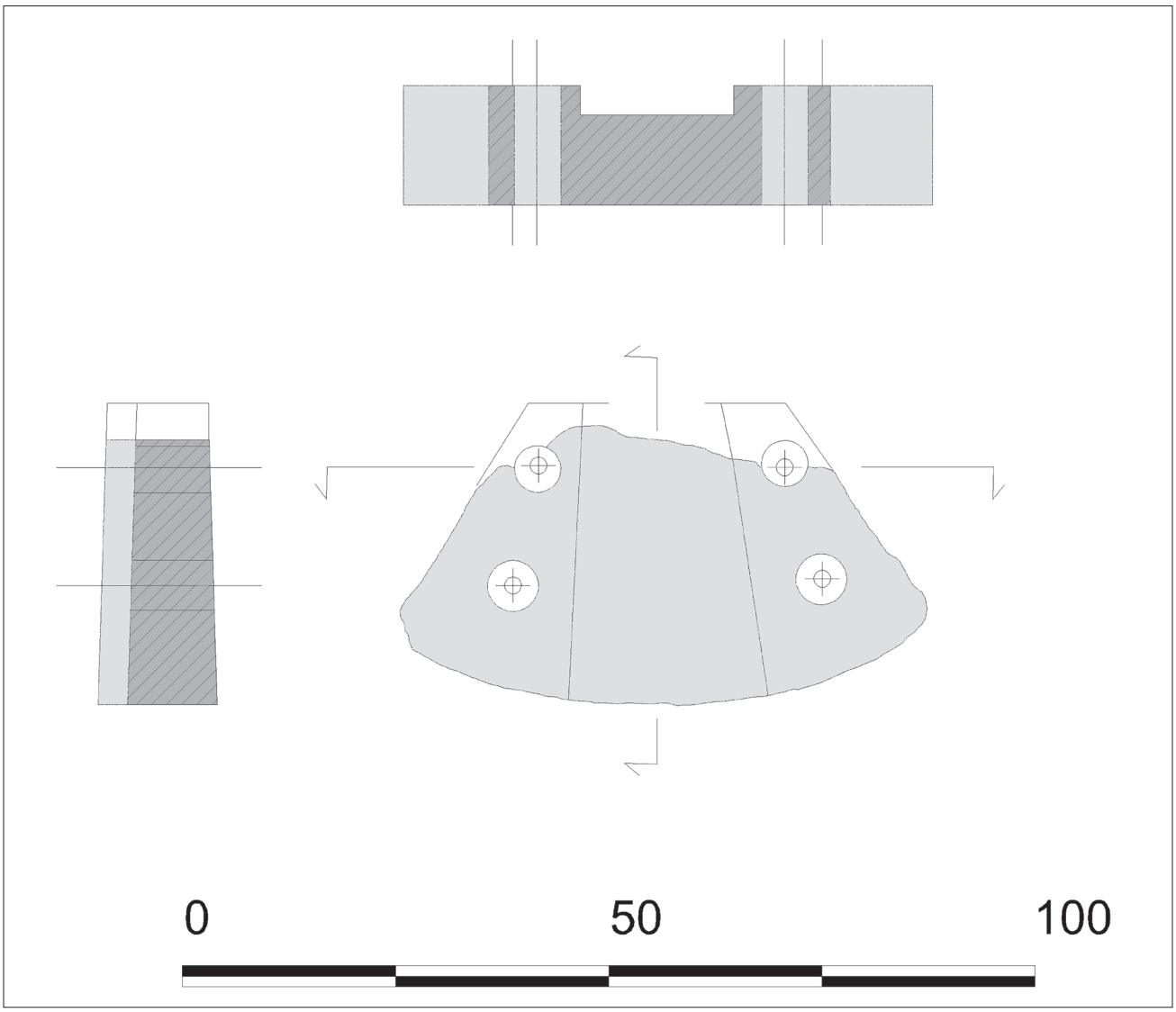

Fig. 6. The "B" type of counterweight. Drawing by the author.

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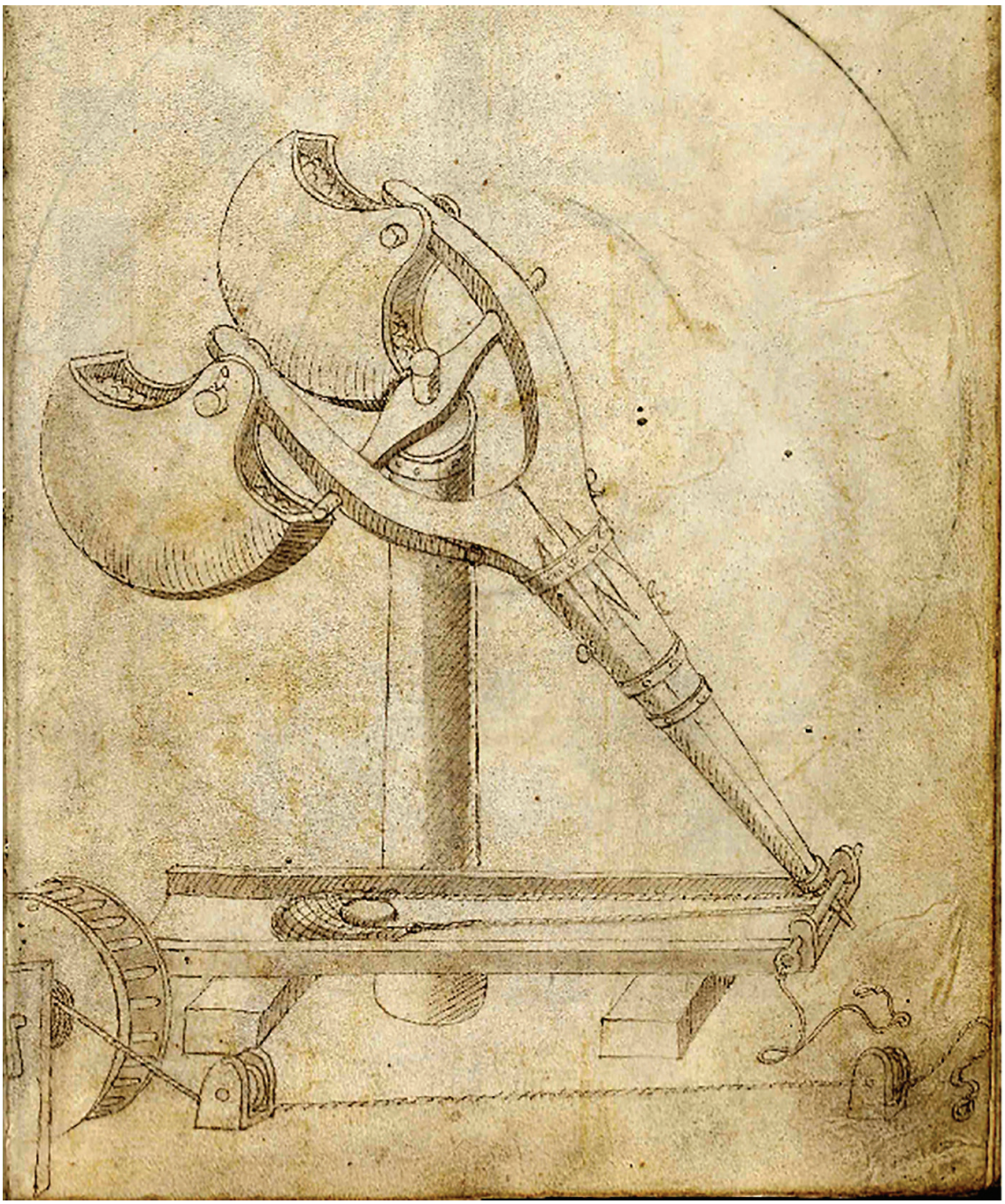

Fig. 7. Francesco di Giorgio Martini drawing of a *bricola*.

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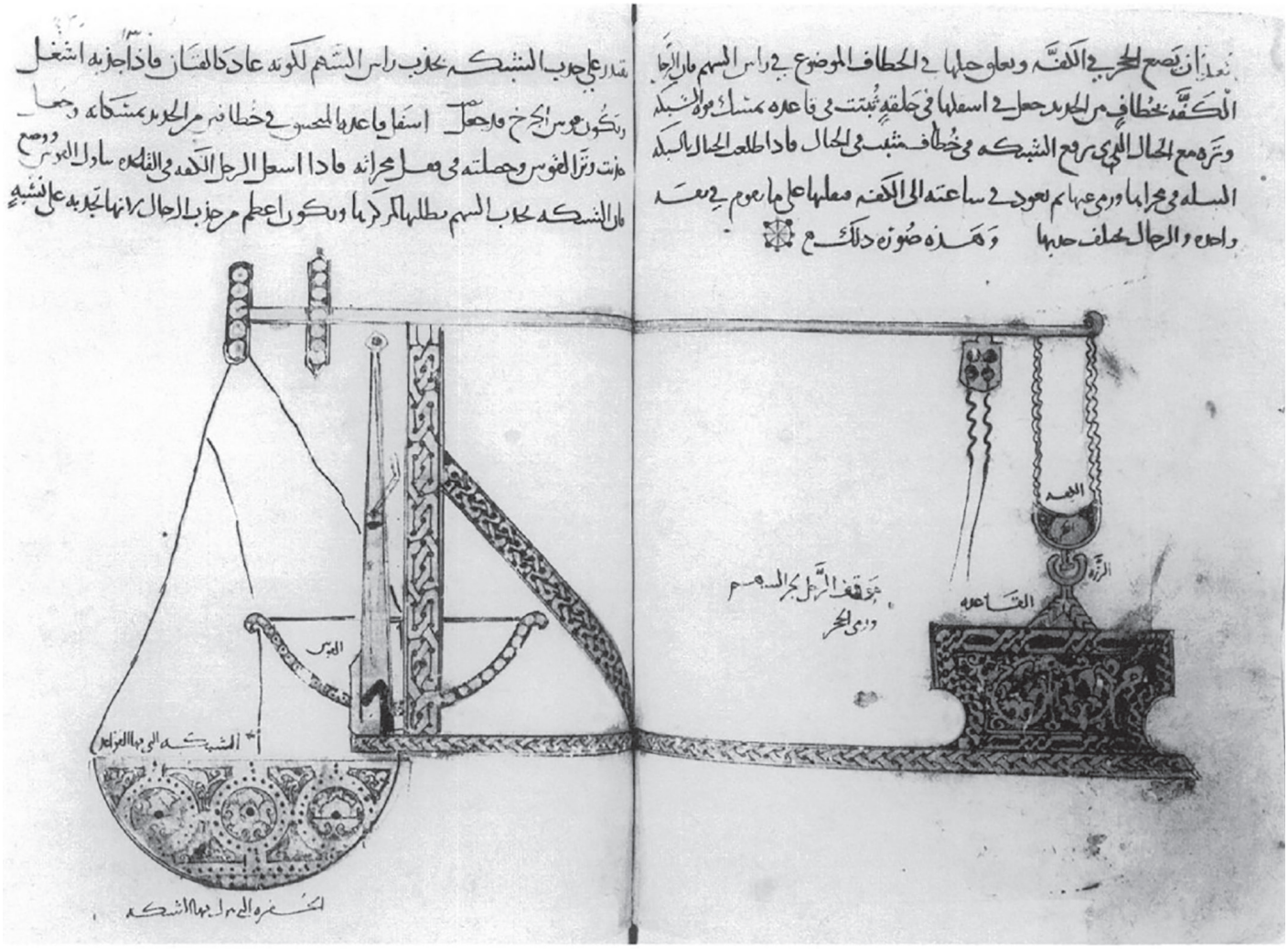

Fig. 8. The counterweight *manjanīq* represented in al-Ṭarsūsī's *Tabṣirat arbāb al-albāb fī kayfīyat al-najāh fī al-ḥurūb,* circa 1187.

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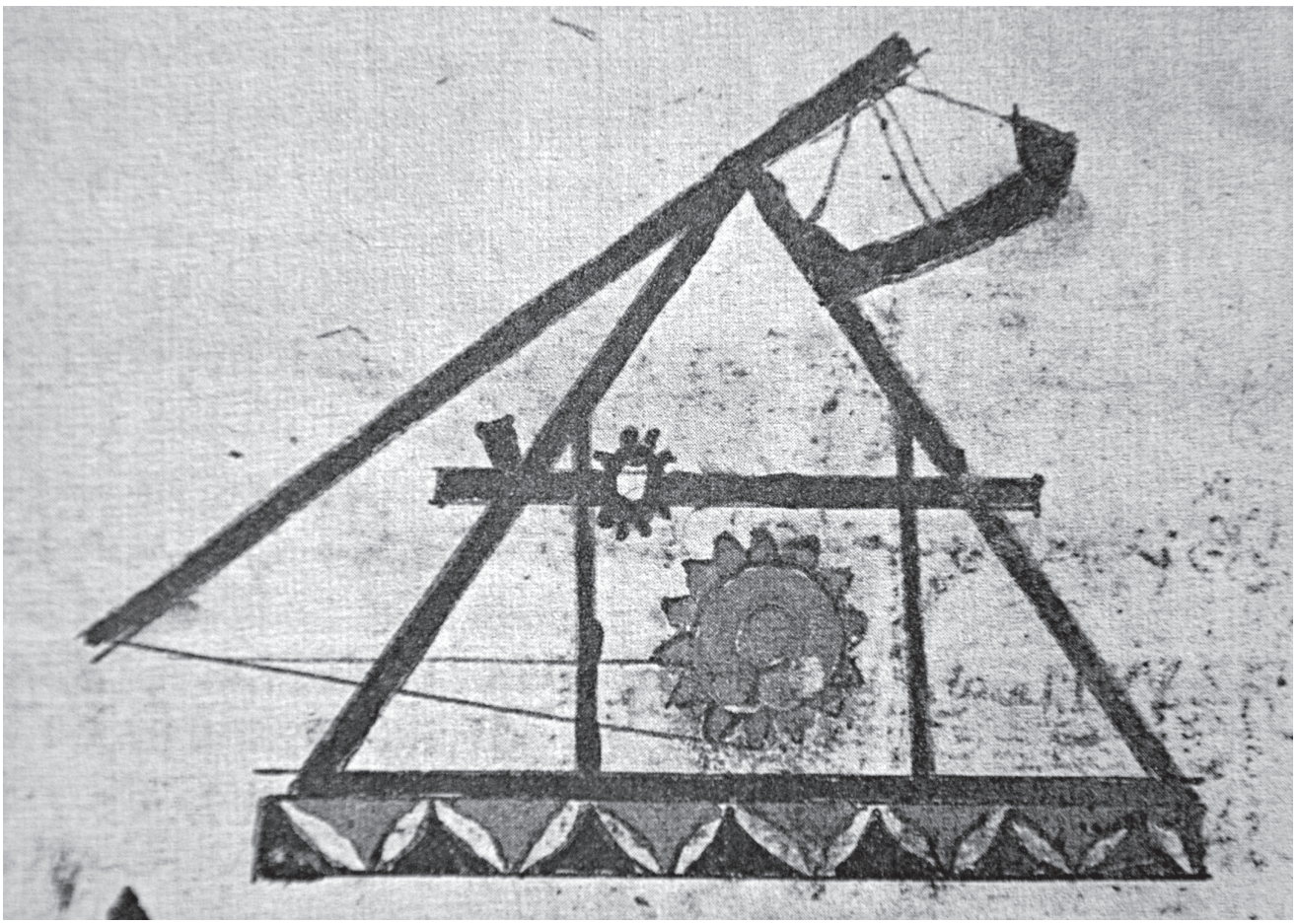

Fig. 9. A counterweight *manjanīq* in al-Rammāḥ's *Kitāb al-furūsīyah wa-al-manāsib al-ḥarbīyah*, 1280 (after al-Ḥasan and Hill 1986, p. 110, Fig. 4.15).

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Fig. 10. A Muslim counterweight *manjanīq* firing against the curtain walls of a town as represented in Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb's *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh,* 1306 (after Kamola 2013).

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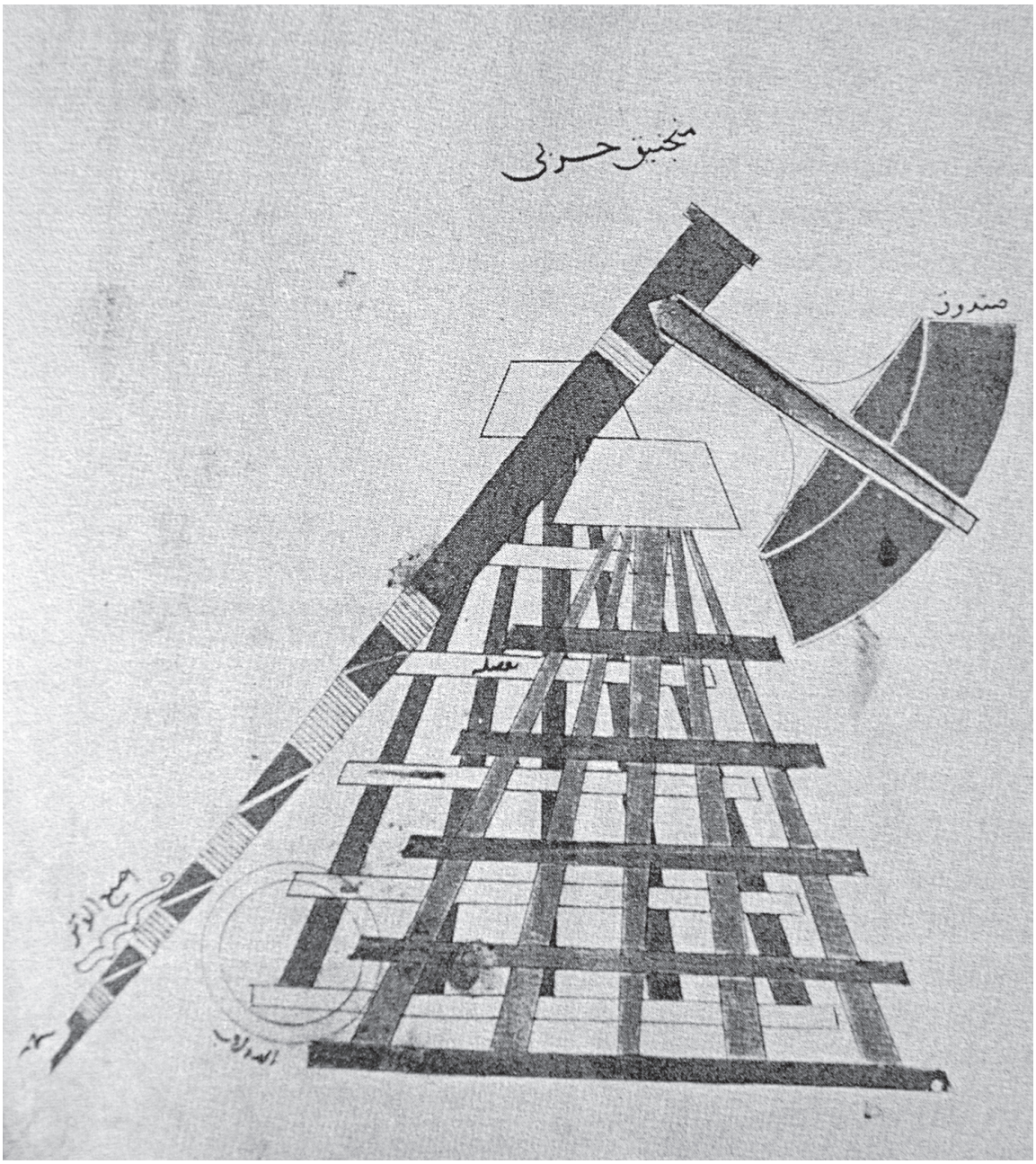

Fig. 11. A *manjanīq* represented in al-Zaradkāsh's *Kitāb anīq fī al-manājanīq,* 1462. Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul (after al-Ḥasan and Hill 1986, p. 101, Fig. 4.7).

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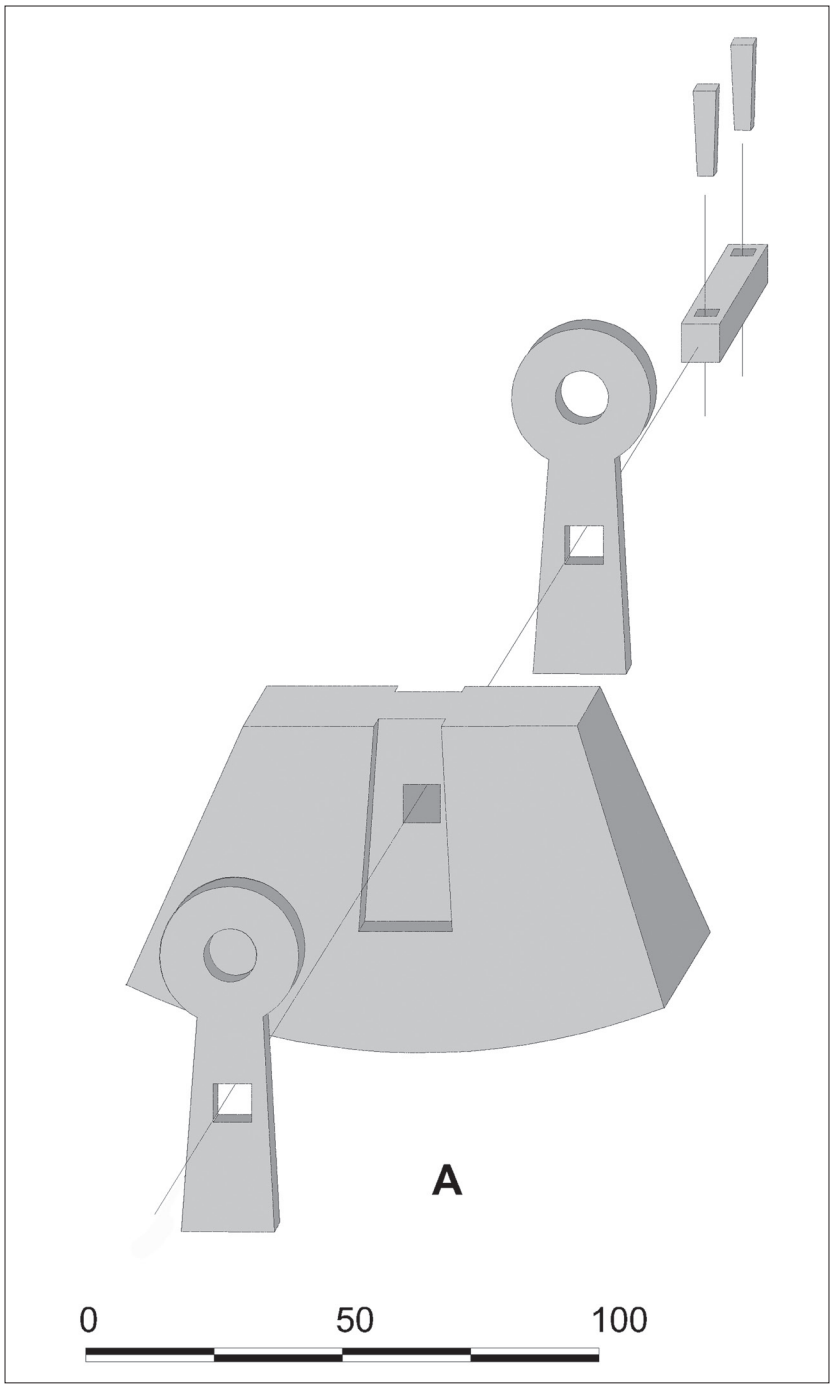

Fig. 12. Reconstruction of the hanging system of the "A" type of counterweight. Drawing by the author.

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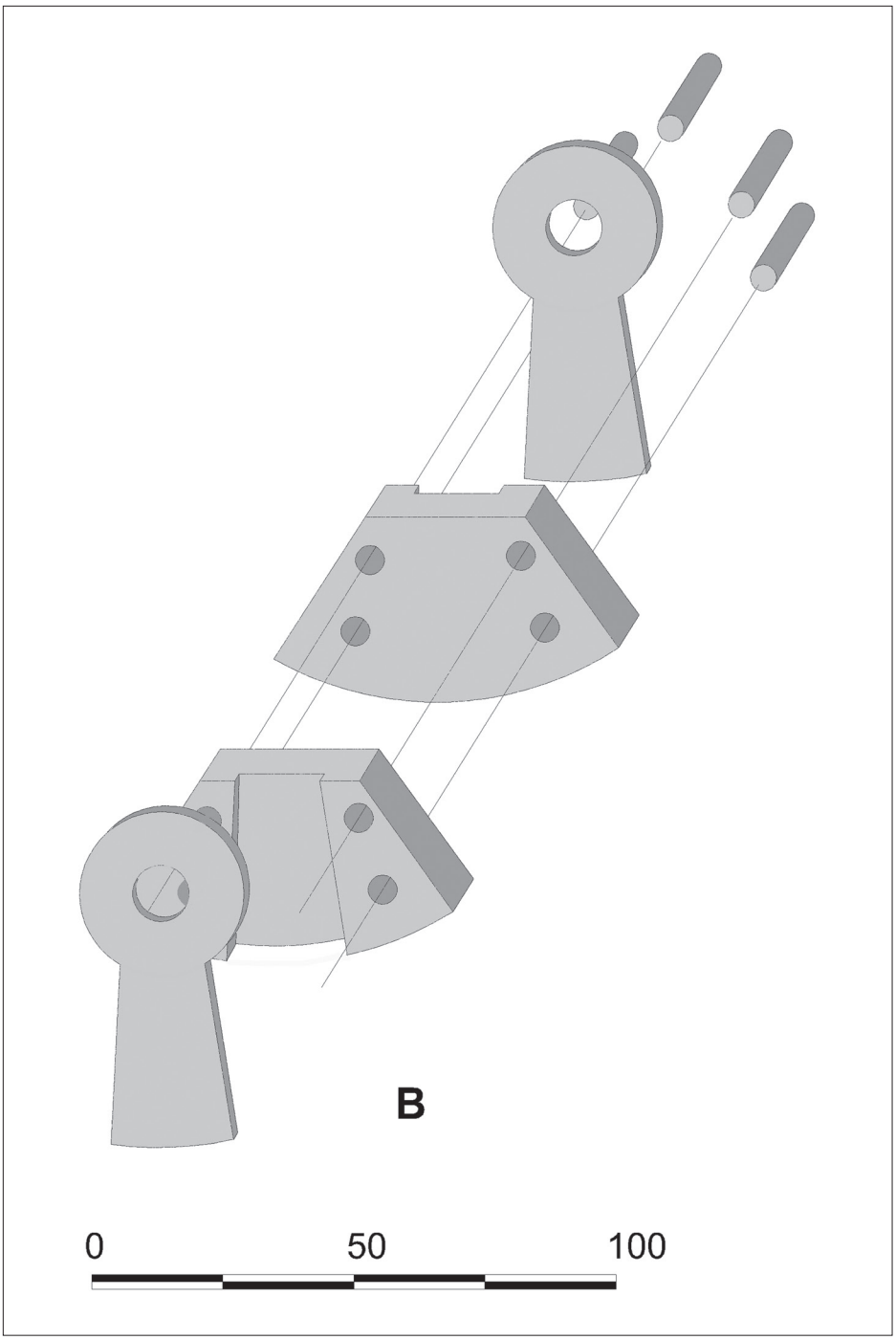

Fig. 13. Reconstruction of the hanging system of the "B" type of counterweight. Drawing by the author.

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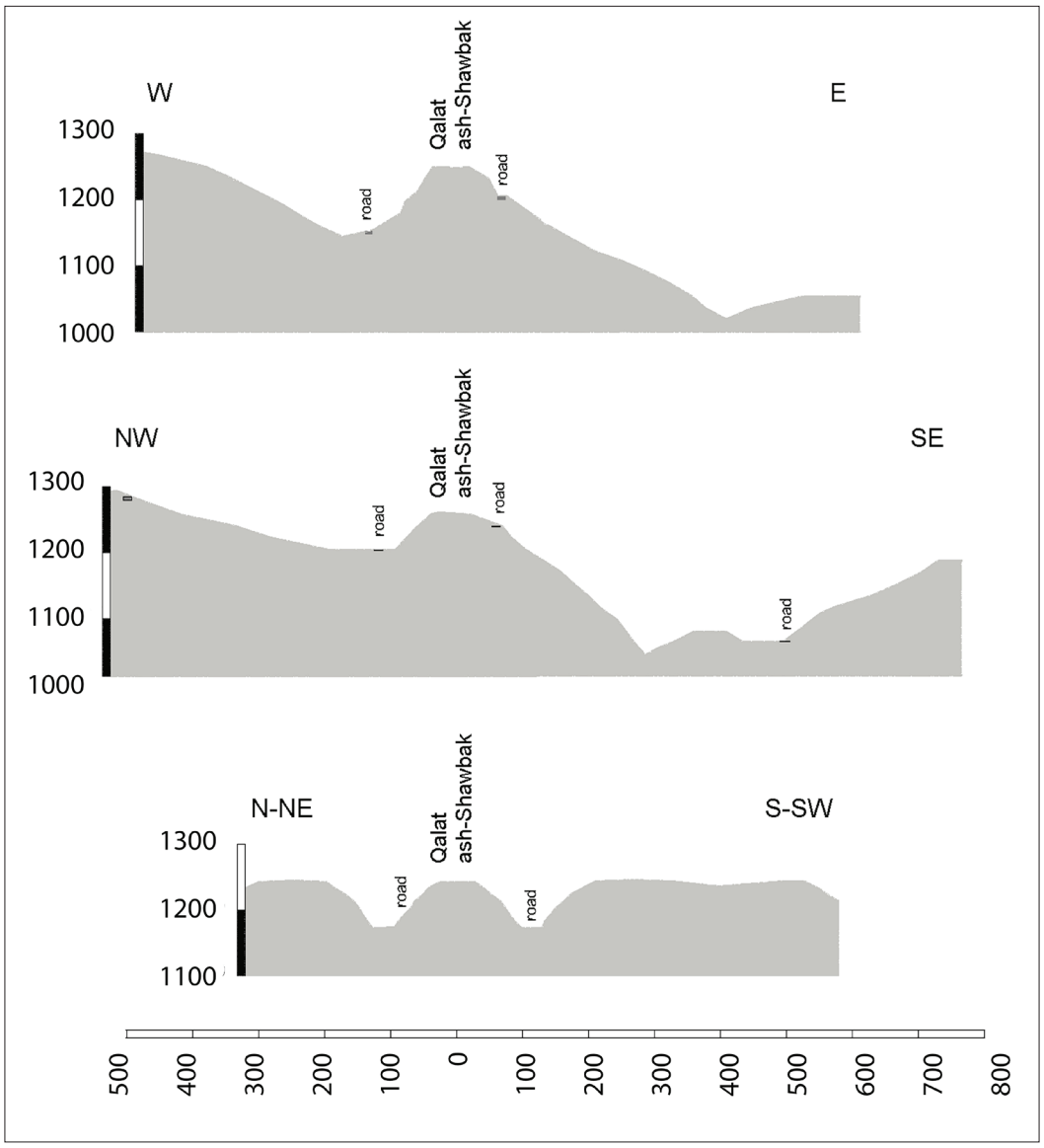

Fig. 14. Topographic sections of the area of Shawbak showing the more suitable elevation for an artillery attack. Elaboration by the author from the 1:25,000 "Maʿān" map by the Royal Geographic Centre.

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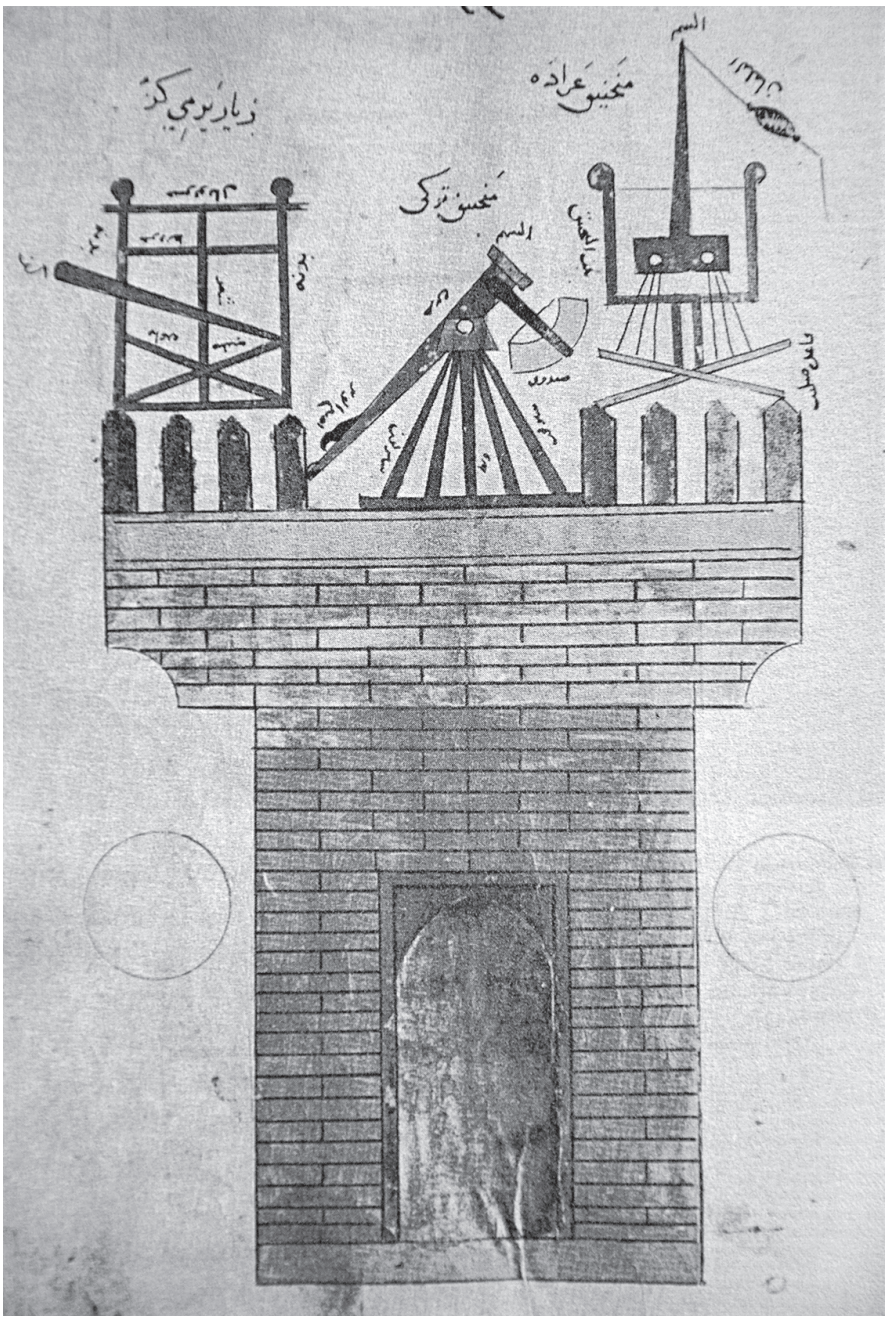

Fig. 15. Different types of artillery pieces defending a fortified gate: a torsion engine, a *manjanīq* and a traction engine. Al-Zaradkāsh's *Kitāb anīq fī al-manājanīq,* 1462. Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul (after al-Ḥasan and Hill 1986, p. 104, Fig. 4.9).

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Fig. 16. Area 6000, US 6079 under excavation (after Molducci and Pruno 2007).

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Mamluks of Jewish Origin in the Mamluk Sultanate

Students of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517) generally do not refer to the phenomenon of mamluks (i.e., slaves, and more specifically military slaves) of Jewish origin. David Ayalon noted that "there is hardly any trace of a Mamlūk of Jewish origin in the Mamlūk sultanate."[1] Moreover, it is thought that Jews were not considered suitable for warfare.[2] The only exception is perhaps the well-known "renegade" Taghrī Birdī the dragoman, who entered the service of the Mamluk Sultanate in the late fifteenth century and functioned as an envoy to Venice and other European powers and as a grand dragoman. John Wansbrough dedicated an article to this unique figure. Almost every European traveler visiting the sultanate in the closing decades of the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth century mentions him (Meshullam de Volterra is the first to mention him, in 1481). While Taghrī Birdī was probably of Spanish origin (perhaps of Valencian origin but born in Montblanch, southwest of Barcelona), it is not clear if he converted to Islam from Christianity or Judaism (he was perhaps a Marrano).[3] In ad-

I would like to thank my colleagues and friends Almog Kasher and Amir Mazor for reading a draft of this paper and making useful comments.

[1]David Ayalon, "Baḥrī Mamlūks, Burjī Mamlūks—Inadequate Names for the Two Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultanate," *Tārīḫ* 1 (1990): 45, n. 45. Ayalon intended to discuss the subject in more detail but unfortunately he passed away without publishing his research on the "racial composition" of Mamluk society.

[2]Gulay Yilmaz, "Becoming a Devşirme: The Training of Conscripted Children in the Ottoman Empire," in *Children in Slavery through the Ages,* ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Ohio, 2009), 121.

[3]John Wansbrough, "A Mamluk Ambassador to Venice in 913/1507," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26, no. 3 (1963): 503–5. On Taghrī Birdī, see also Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts and Crafts at the Mamluk Court," *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World* 21 (2004): 50; C. E. Bosworth, "Tardjumān," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., 10:236; Nicholas Coureas, "Envoys between the Mamlūk Lands and Cyprus under Venice (1473–1517)," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras VIII,* ed. Urbain Vermeulen, Kristof D'hulster, and Jo van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2016), 372–75; Marc von der Hoch, "Muslim Embassies in Renaissance Venice: The Framework of an Intercultural Dialogue," in *Cultural Brokers at Mediterranean Courts in the Middle Ages,* ed. Marc von der Hoch, Nikolas Jaspert, and Jenny Rahel Oesterle (Paderborn, 2013), 169–70; Frédéric Bauden, "The Role of Interpreters in Alexandria in the Light of an Oath (*Qasāmah*) Taken in the Year 822 AH/1419 AD," in *Continuity and Change in the Realms of Islam: Studies in Honour of Professor Urbain Vermeulen,* ed. Kristof D'hulster and Jo van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2008), 33; Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of*

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dition, as Wansbrough put it, "[d]espite his Turkish name and his patronymic Ibn ʿAbdallāh," and despite the fact that he was a minor amir, it is not at all clear if he was "a *mamlūk* in the then accepted sense of the term" [i.e., a military slave].[4] He appears to have occupied a civil post in the chancery and not a military one.[5] In a wider context he may be related to the phenomenon of Jews or Christians sent as envoys to Venice by Muslim powers during the fifteenth century,[6] and more specifically to the phenomenon of European converts (so-called "renegades") who by the closing decades of the fifteenth century came to play a major role as dragomans and envoys of Mamluk and Ottoman sultans to Venice.[7] Having

Europe (New York and London, 2001), 78–79; Anne Wolff, *How Many Miles to Babylon?: Travels and Adventures to Egypt and Beyond, 1300 to 1640* (Liverpool, 2003), 153–54; L. A. Mayer, "Motsaʾam ha-Notsri shel ha-Mamlukim," *Tarbiz* 23, nos. 3–4 (1952): 219–20; Pierre Moukarzel, "The Translators at the Chancellery of the Mamluk Sultans in Cairo," *Sawt al-Jamiaa* 11 (2017): 152.

[4]Wansbrough, "A Mamluk Ambassador," 503; and see ibid., 507, n. 1. See more on the name Taghrī Birdī below at n. 34.

[5]Ibid., 505, n. 4.

[6]Von der Hoch, "Muslim Embassies," 165–68; for the sixteenth century, see for example Emrah Safa Gürkan, "Mediating Boundaries: Mediterranean Go-betweens and Cross-confessional Diplomacy in Constantinople, 1560–1600," *Journal of Early Modern History* 19, nos. 2–3 (2015): 116–20. On Jews and Christians functioning as interpreters in the Mamluk Sultanate see: Bosworth, "Tardjumān," 237; Eliyahu Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim bi-Mitsrayim ve-Suriya taḥat Shilton ha-Mamlukim* [The history of the Jews in Egypt and Syria under the rule of the Mamluks] (Jerusalem, 1944, 1951, and 1970), 1:326; Bauden, "The Role of Interpreters," 36, 58–60; Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah fī dīwān al-inshāʾ al-mamlūkī," *Majallat Majmaʿ al-Lughah al-ʿArabīyah al-Urdunī* 65, no. 1 (2003): 34–36. On Christians and Jews functioning as interpreters or translators under the Ottomans, see Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery,* 78–79; and see also Kemal Çiçek, "Interpreters of the Court in the Ottoman Empire as Seen from the Sharia Court Records of Cyprus," *Islamic Law and Society* 9, no. 1 (2002): 6–8. On Jews from Spain (mainly from Toledo, Seville, and Valencia) arriving in the Mamluk Sultanate during the second half of the fifteenth century, see Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:80.

[7]Von der Hoch, "Muslim Embassies," 169–72; Nicholas Coureas, "The Dispatch of Envoys between Mamlūk Egypt and Lusignan Cyprus: Evidence from the Chronicle of Leontios Makhairas," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras VIII,* 355; Bosworth, "Tardjumān," 237; Wolff, *How Many Miles to Babylon?* 11, 153; Snezhana Rakova, "Between the Sultan and the Doge: Diplomats and Spies in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent," *CAS Working Paper Series* 8 (2015–6): 19–20; Gürkan, "Mediating Boundaries," 112, n. 15. On converts in the Mamluk Sultanate as envoys to Europe and as interpreters of European languages, see more generally Coureas, "The Dispatch of Envoys," 349, 355; Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:90–91; Mayer, "Motsaʾam ha-Notsri," 218; and see also Arnold von Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff, Knight, from Cologne, through Italy, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, France and Spain, which he accomplished in the Years 1496 to 1499,* trans. Malcolm Letts (London, 1946), 69. On converts as dragomans in the Ottoman Empire, see more generally Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery,* 78–79; Gürkan, "Mediating Boundaries," 112–16; Tobias P. Graf, *The Sultan's Renegades: Christian-European Converts to Islam and the Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575–1610* (Oxford, 2017), 133–36.

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been a slave,[8] however, he belongs to the phenomenon of slaves, mostly of European origin, mentioned as dragomans *(tarājimah,* sing. *tarjumān)* and functioning as interpreters and translators of European languages in the Mamluk Sultanate starting in the Circassian period of the sultanate (1382–1517), anticipating a similar phenomenon under the Ottomans.[9] The phenomenon of dragoman slaves functioning as interpreters and translators of European languages in the Mamluk Sultanate has, to date, received relatively little attention.[10] More generally, Taghrī Birdī is part of the phenomenon of the gradually increasing presence of European/Anatolian slaves within the Mamluk Sultanate from the late Turkish period of the sultanate (ca. 1350–82), but more conspicuously during the Circassian period of the sultanate, mainly from the historical territories of the Byzantine Empire ("Rūmīs"), but also from Western Europe ("Franks").[11] Indeed, Mamluk sources and European travelers' reports do not mention dragoman slaves who functioned as interpreters and translators of European languages until that period.

[8] At least according to Peter Martyr, he was captured by corsairs and sold into slavery in Egypt. See Wansbrough, "A Mamluk Ambassador," 504; and see also Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī, *Muqaddimah fī dirāsat al-tarjamah wa-al-tarājimah fī dīwān al-inshāʾ al-mamlūkī* (Amman, 2008), 92–93; idem, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah," 28–29. His name, being a Turkish name given normally to slaves, also strongly suggests that he was indeed a slave, even if he did not have a military career. See more on this issue in n. 68, below.

[9] On the phenomenon under the Ottomans, see for example Pál Ács, "Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters," in *Die Türken in Europa in der Renaissance,* ed. Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (Tübingen, 2000), 307–16; and see also Graf, *The Sultan's Renegades,* 133–36.

[10] See on that the "Excursus on Slaves of European Origin Functioning as Dragomans during the Circassian Period" below.

[11] Koby Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred: (Changing) Attitudes towards Mongol and 'Christian' *Mamlūk*s in the Mamluk Sultanate," in *The Mamluk Sultanate from the Perspective of Regional and World History: Economic, Social and Cultural Development in an Era of Increasing International Interaction and Competition,* ed. Reuven Amitai and Stephan Conermann (Göttingen, 2019), 188–89, 194–96; idem, "The Names of the *Mamlūk*s—Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Solidarity in the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)," in *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule: Political, Social and Cultural Aspects,* ed. Amalia Levanoni (forthcoming); and see also Robert Irwin, "The Image of the Byzantine and the Frank in Arab Popular Literature of the Late Middle Ages," in *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204,* ed. Benjamin Arbel, Bernard Hamilton, and David Jacoby (London, 1989), 227; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations with Latin Europe," in *La frontière méditerranéenne du XVe au XVIIe siècle: Échanges, circulations et affrontements,* ed. Bernard Heyberger and Albrecht Fuess (Turnhout, 2014), 364; idem, *Practicing Diplomacy in the Mamluk Sultanate: Gifts and Material Culture in the Medieval Islamic World* (London, 2014), 107; and see also Ulrich Haarmann, "The Mamluk System of Rule in the Eyes of Western Travelers," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001): 6–9.

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As mentioned by Wansbrough, it is significant that Taghrī Birdī appears in Mamluk chronicles for the first time only in 1502.[12] He is mentioned only by Ibn Iyās (d. ca. 1524) who simply refers to him as Taghrī Birdī al-Tarjumān ("the dragoman") and never mentions his *nisbah*. Ibn Iyās also does not provide a biographical entry for Taghrī Birdī (possibly, but not necessarily, because Taghrī Birdī outlived him);[13] thus we have no information regarding his master or his early career in the Mamluk Sultanate.[14] More importantly, as mentioned by Doris Behrens-Abouseif, Mamluk authors do not refer at all to the origin of Taghrī Birdī;[15] it is mentioned only by European writers. More generally, Behrens-Abouseif noted that "Mamluk chroniclers deliberately avoided dedicating attention to the presence of Europeans at the sultan's court or to the European background of some emirs."[16] Thus, most of the European mamluks (and especially Western European mamluks) are mentioned in European travel accounts (or in history books or documents written by Europeans) and only occasionally in Arabic sources (in contrast to mamluks of Turkish or Circassian origin).[17] Mamluk authors also tend not to refer to the religious monotheistic pre-Islamic background of specific mamluks.[18] All this partially accounts for the fact that to date Taghrī Birdī is possibly

[12] Wansbrough, "A Mamluk Ambassador," 505.

[13] Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 367.

[14] Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden, 1960–1975), 4:32, 91, 120, 164, 195, 210, 316, 361–62; and see also Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts," 53. (Behrens-Abouseif mentions that al-Sakhāwī does not provide a biographical entry. While al-Sakhāwī sometimes provides biographical entries for persons who died in the tenth Islamic century [roughly the sixteenth century], normally his biographical dictionary is limited to persons who died in the ninth Islamic century [roughly the fifteenth century]).

[15] Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts," 53.

[16] Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 367; and see also Robert Irwin, "How Circassian Were the Circassian Mamluks?" in *The Mamluk Sultanate from the Perspective of Regional and World History,* 110. And see n. 66, below.

[17] Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Perceptions of Foreign Arts," in *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria—Evolution and Impact,* ed. Doris Behrens-Abouseif (Bonn, 2012), 313; and see also Irwin, "The Image of the Byzantine," 227; David Ayalon, "Mamlūk: Military Slavery in Egypt and Syria," in *Islam and the Abode of War* (Aldershot, 1994), 8–9.

[18] Mamluk historians only rarely explicitly mention that a mamluk was a Christian in his past. Aqūsh al-Raḥbī al-Manṣūrī (d. 1319) is said to have been a Christian from a Christian village near Irbil who was captured in a raid by Arabs and sold as a slave. See Abū al-Fidāʾ Ismāʿīl ibn ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr, *Al-bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah fī al-tārīkh* (Beirut, 1966), 14:95; ʿAlam al-Dīn al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Birzālī, *Al-muqtafī ʿalá kitāb al-rawḍatayn al-maʿrūf bi-tārīkh al-Birzālī,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2006), 4:370–71. Qarā Sunqur al-Manṣūrī (d. 1327) is said to have been a Circassian or a Christian from Qārā in Syria who was captured. See Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-durar al-kāminah fī aʿyān al-miʾah al-thāminah,* ed. ʿAbd al-Wārith Muḥammad ʿAlī (Beirut, 1997), 3:148. Iyās al-Nāṣirī al-Silāḥdār (d. 1349) is normally

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the only mamluk of Jewish origin that was identified in Mamluk sources. As for European mamluks, Behrens-Abouseif suggested that "there is more research to be done on this subject, for which it will be necessary to consult European sources and archives."[19] Still, some information regarding the pre-Islamic monotheistic background of mamluks (normally Christian but in rare cases also Jewish), and their specific origins in Europe, may be retrieved from Mamluk sources.

In what follows I will survey mamluks of Jewish origin that can be identified in Mamluk sources. Gaps in information about their geographical origin, which is usually lacking in Mamluk sources, will be filled with information given by European travelers or that can be deduced from the names given to them as slaves (see below). Like Taghrī Birdī, one of these slaves originated from Spain and functioned as a dragoman during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy (1422–38). He is mentioned by European travelers and has been known to Mamlukists for a long time, but to date he was not identified in Mamluk sources. Mamluk sources provide information suggesting that he had a military career before he became a dragoman; thus he seems to have been a mamluk in the full sense of the word. Other Jewish mamluks seem to have been of Circassian origin according to the names given to them as slaves; all of them are from the Circassian period of the sultanate (1382–1517). Mamluk sources mention that some of these mamluks were known as "Jews" or were accused of becoming "Jews" and then humiliated. Some of the information has already been noticed by Mamlukists, but when they refer to such instances they normally dismiss it as slander without considering the possibility that these mamluks were actually Jews (at least in their past). While it cannot be denied that the word "Jew" could be, and was, used as a pejorative, it should be noted that during the Turkish period of the sultanate (1250–1382), when most of the mamluks were Turks, Mongols, or Turco-Mongols, there are no reports of mamluks known as or accused of being Jews. Only during the Circassian

said to have been a Christian Armenian who converted to Islam. See ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal fī dhayl al-duwal,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Sidon and Beirut, 2002), 1:186; Abū Bakr ibn Aḥmad Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah,* ed. ʿAdnān Darwīsh (Damascus, 1977–97), 2:684–85. Exceptionally, al-Malaṭī refers in detail to the Christian past of Iyās al-Fārisī the Cypriot (d. 1478). He is said to have been captured when Cyprus was conquered by the Mamluks in 1426. He arrived in Egypt when he was more than 12 years old and probably a grown-up. Al-Malaṭī says that before arriving in Egypt he had the opportunity to study Christian religious law *(ʿalá qāʿidat al-Faranj)* and that his father was a bishop *(usquf).* In the Mamluk Sultnate he became a jurisprudent *(faqīh)* and it was said that some of his rulings were according to the law of the Franks *(jazm al-Faranj).* See ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan bi-al-muʿjam al-muʿanwan,* ed. ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Kundarī (Kuwait, 2011), 605–6. For less explicit references to the Christian past of some mamluks, see Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 194–201.

[19]Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts," 53.

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period, when most mamluks originated from the Caucasus and Europe where Jewish communities are known to have existed, do such reports appear. It is also only then that some European travelers visiting Egypt report that some of the soldiers of the sultanate were Jews. Moreover, during the Circassian period, such "accusations" apparently target only European or Circassian mamluks but never Turco-Mongols. All of this suggests that at least some of these mamluks were actually Jews, and that even if those specific individuals were not, the phenomenon of European and Circassian mamluks of Jewish origin was not unknown at that time.

Among the mamluks reported to have been Jews we find two Circassian-period sultans: the Circassian al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (r. 1438–53), admittedly in a report that seems to be a personal attack on him, and the Albanian al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam (r. 1461–68).

Shāhīn al-Tarjumān/Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī: A Mamluk of Jewish Spanish Origin

Earlier than Taghrī Birdī by about a half of a century, Pero Tafur, the Castilian knight who visited Egypt ca. 1437,[20] reports that the sultan's grand dragoman was "a native of Castile who was a Jew of Seville and a renegade." We know that this Jew was already the grand dragoman in 1426, because Tafur reports that the Cypriot king Janus II (d. 1458) gave orders to deliver him money for services rendered to his father Janus I the king of Cyprus (d. 1432) during his imprisonment in Cairo in 1426.[21] In fact, Mamluk sources confirm that in 1426 the sultan's (chief) dragoman *(al-tarjumān)* delivered to Janus I the Mamluk sultan's message regarding the demands for his release.[22] According to Tafur, when he visited Egypt the interpreter was about 90 years old, but during Tafur's stay in Egypt one of his wives gave birth to a son.[23] Tafur adds that the interpreter from Seville was originally called Haym (i.e., Ḥayim) but was later given (i.e., in the Mamluk Sultanate) the

[20] Pero Tafur, *Travels and Adventures 1435–1439,* trans. Malcolm Letts (New York and London, 1926), v.

[21] Ibid., 67, 72; and see also George Hill, *A History of Cyprus* (Cambridge, 2010), 2:490–91; Johannes Pahlitzsch, "The Mamluks and Cyprus: Transcultural Relations between Muslim and Christian Rulers in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Fifteenth Century," in *Acteurs des transferts culturels en Méditerranée médiévale: Ateliers des Deutschen Historischen Instituts Paris,* ed. R. Abdellatif, Y. Benhima, D. König, and E. Ruchaud (Paris, 2010), 115. On Janus' imprisonment see also Coureas, "The Dispatch of Envoys," 353.

[22] Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Kitāb al-nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah,* ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt et al. (Cairo, 1963–72), 14:303.

[23] Tafur, *Travels,* 72–73.

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name Saym.[24] As far as I know, Saym the chief dragoman (or dragoman of the sultan) first appears in documents related to Venetians residing in Egypt in 1419 (his name is normally spelled in these documents as "Saim"); the earliest is dated to January 1419.[25] He also appears, under the name "Sain the chief dragoman of the sultan," in a treaty concluded in 1422 between Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy and Venice.[26] The information we have suggests that starting from at least January 1419 and during most (perhaps all) of al-Ashraf Barsbāy's reign (1422–38) the grand dragoman was originally a Jew from Seville.

Tafur's report did not go unnoticed by students of the Mamluk Sultanate. Ashtor noted that during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy the chief interpreter was originally a Jew from Seville,[27] but he seems to have believed that he was a convert but not a slave. Ashtor wrote that he left Seville together with his father as a child in order to immigrate *(la-ʿalot)* to Jerusalem, and converted to Islam after his father's death.[28] According to Tafur, the chief interpreter was born in Seville "but had been carried as a child to Jerusalem with his father, who was a Jew."[29] The wording of Tafur may equally suggest that the chief interpreter was enslaved together with his father and then sold in Jerusalem (or to a master from Jerusalem). As we shall see in what follows, it is possible to identify al-Ashraf Barsbāy's chief interpreter in Mamluk sources and confirm that in all likelihood he was a slave.

A diplomatic treaty between the Catalan king Alfons the Magnanimous (d. 1458) and the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy, prepared in 1429 and signed in

[24] Ibid., 72.

[25] Georg Christ, *Trading Conflicts: Venetian Merchants and Mamluk Officials in Late Medieval Alexandria* (Leiden, 2012), 94, n. 193, 147–49, 172–73.

[26] Moukarzel, "The Translators," 151; idem, "The European Embassies to the Court of the Mamluk Sultans in Cairo," in *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies*: *Studies on Diplomacy and Diplomatics,* ed. Frédéric Bauden and Malika Dekkiche (Leiden, 2018), 702, n. 61. Moukarzel thought that his name appeared first in the treaty concluded with Venice in 1422, but his name appears already in documents from 1419.

[27] Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:90–91; and see also Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts," 50; Pahlitzsch, "The Mamluks and Cyprus," 115; Mayer, "Motsa'am ha-Notsri," 219; al-Durūbī, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah," 35; Moukarzel, "The Translators," 151; Christ, *Trading Conflicts,* 149, n. 28; Nicholas Coureas, "Envoys between Lusignan Cyprus and Mamluk Egypt, 838–78/1435–73: the Accounts of Pero Tafur, George Boustronios and Ibn Taghrī Birdī," in *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies,* 727, 729.

[28] Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:90–91; and see also Mayer, "Motsa'am ha-Notsri," 219 (*ʿala Yerushalayma*). According to Pahlitzsch "he moved to Jerusalem, where… he had converted from Judaism to Islam." See Pahlitzsch, "The Mamluks and Cyprus," 115. Christ mentions that he was "raised in Jerusalem." See Christ, *Trading Conflicts,* 149, n. 28. Behrens-Abouseif simply refers to him as "a converted European Jew." See Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts," 50. Moukarzel also refers to him simply as a European convert. See Moukarzel, "The European Embassies," 702.

[29] Tafur, *Travels,* 72.

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1430, mentions the amir Sayf al-Dīn Shāhīn al-Tarjumān ("the dragoman") as an envoy of the sultan.[30] Given the importance of the treaty, Shāhīn al-Tarjumān was in all likelihood the sultan's grand dragoman. As far as I know, Mamluk sources do not refer to any other person as "al-Tarjumān" during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy, so in all likelihood Shāhīn al-Tarjumān was the chief interpreter met by Tafur. According to Tafur, the interpreter from Seville was originally called Haym (i.e., Ḥayim) but was given the name Saym.[31] Given the fact that Europeans tended to heavily distort the names of the mamluks, it is quite likely that Saym (sometimes Sain) is a distortion of the name Shāhīn.[32]

There is also indirect evidence that helps link the interpreter met by Tafur to Shāhīn al-Tarjumān. As I have argued elsewhere, **Shāhīn** was a name that was normally given only to European/Anatolian mamluks (so-called "Franks" and "Rūmīs") starting from about the 1350s.[33] David Ayalon thought that the practice

[30] Mercè Viladrich, "Solving the 'Accursed Riddle' of the Diplomatic Relations between Catalonia and Egypt around 1430," *Al-Masāq* 14, no. 1 (2002): 25, 29; idem, "Jaque al Sultán en el 'damero maldito': Edición y traducción de un tratado diplomático entre los mercaderes catalanes y el sultanato mameluco (1429)," in *L'expansió catalana a la Mediterrània a la Baixa Edat Mitjana,* ed. Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol and Damien Coulon (Barcelona, 1999). The document is reproduced online in the "Arabic Papyrology Database" (APD) at www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Viladrich_Sultan_1&line=1 (accessed 29 August 2018). On the document, see also Frédéric Bauden, "Mamluk Diplomatics: the Present State of Research," in *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies,* 67 (items nos. 10–11).

[31] Tafur, *Travels,* 72.

[32] Moukarzel noted that the letter *shīn* does not exist in the Venetian dialect and was often replaced by Venetians by the letter *s,* and suggested that Sain is probably a deformation of Shāhīn. See Moukarzel, "The European Embassies," 702–3; idem, "The Translators," 151. He was not aware, however, of the document mentioning Shāhīn al-Tarjumān. It is tempting to speculate that Ḥayim was given the name Shāhīn also because of the vocal resemblance between the two names.

[33] Koby Yosef, "Ethnic Groups, Social Relationships and Dynasty in the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)" (PhD. diss, University of Tel-Aviv, 2011) [in Hebrew], 1:97, 2:133–35; and see Table A below. Mamluk sources refer at times to "Frankish" *(Faranj,* sing. *Faranjī)* mamluks, but normally they mention "Rūmī" mamluks. While it is reasonable to assume that most European/Anatolian mamluks indeed arrived from territories held, or once held, by the Byzantines, there is evidence that some mamluks arrived from Western Europe; evidence that the label "Rūmī" was sometimes used interchangeably with the label "Frank;" and that both terms were sometimes used to denote Europeans or Christians in general. See Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 188, n. 255, 191, n. 280, 195–96; and see Ayalon, "Mamlūk: Military Slavery," 9; Nadia Maria El-Cheikh, "Byzantium through the Islamic Prism from the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World,* ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington, 2001), 56; Koray Durak, "Who are the Romans? The Definition of Bilād al-Rūm (Land of the Romans) in Medieval Islamic Geographies," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 31, no. 3 (2010): 293–95; Yaacov Lev, "The Perception of the Others: Rūm and Franks (Tenth-Twelfth Centu-

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of giving specific names to mamluks originating from specific regions must have been very limited if these mamluks were not eunuchs. According to Ayalon, two exceptions to this rule were the names **Taghrī Birdī** and **Khushqadam**, which, as noted by Ayalon, were given to many Rūmī mamluks who were not eunuchs.[34] Eunuchs were normally given Arab-Muslim names that were not given to mamluks who were not eunuchs. Among the Arab-Muslim names that were given to eunuchs Ayalon mentioned three names that were given exclusively (or almost exclusively) to Rūmīs: **Fayrūz**, **Luʾu**ʾ, and **Muqbil**.[35] Some of the names given to eunuchs, however, were non-Arab names (mainly Turkish) that were given mainly to mamluks who were not eunuchs. In this category Ayalon mentioned only the name Khushqadam as a name given exclusively to Rūmīs. According to Ayalon, Shāhīn was a non-Arab name (a Persian name) that was commonly given to eunuchs; however, being a non-Arab name it was also given to mamluks who were not eunuchs. Ayalon did not mention whether it was given to slaves of a specific ethnic or geographical origin.[36]

As I have argued elsewhere, starting from the days of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (r. 1279–90) names were given to mamluks according to their origins. In contrast to what Ayalon thought, this practice was very widespread and it would seem that most names were given exclusively (or almost exclusively) to mamluks of specific origins. Names, however, could change their "ethnic destination" with changes in the ethnic composition of slaves brought to the sultanate, or with changes in perceptions of ethnic identities. Until the 1320s different names were given to Turks, "Tatars" (mainly Mongols), and to "other" slaves of European/Anatolian ("Franks" and "Rūmīs") or Caucasian origin (mainly Circassians). Starting in the 1320s Turks and "Tatars" began to be perceived as belonging to the same ethnic group (Turco-Mongols) and were given the same names, and slaves of European/Anatolian or Caucasian origin (mainly Circassians) were given different names (in previous publications I have sometimes referred to the group of European/Anatolian and Caucasian slaves as "non-Turks"). Starting in the 1350s it is possible to find names that were given (almost) exclusively to Caucasian slaves (mostly to

ries)," in *Dār al-Islām/Dār al-Ḥarb: Territories, People, Identities,* ed. Giovanna Calasso and Giuliano Lancioni (Leiden, 2017), 64–67.

[34]David Ayalon, "Names, Titles, and 'Nisbas' of the Mamluks," *Israel Oriental Studies* 5 (1975): 197–98, n. 26.

[35]David Ayalon, "The Eunuchs in the Mamluk Sultanate," in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet,* ed. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), 275–79. Ayalon mentioned that the name **Kāfūr** was given to Rūmīs and Hindīs (see ibid., 278–79) and that the name **Hilāl** was given to Rūmīs (see ibid.) I think that there is too little information to conclude that the name Hilāl was given exclusively (or almost exclusively) to Rūmīs, given the fact that, as Ayalon noted, some of the Arab names given to eunuchs were given to eunuchs of several origins.

[36]Ibid.

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Circassians but on some occasions also to other Caucasian people), and names that were given (almost) exclusively to European/Anatolian slaves (mainly referred to as Rūmīs), a phenomenon that must be related to an increase in the numbers of Circassian and European/Anatolian mamluks in the territories of the sultanate. By the Circassian period, the tripartite division between ethnic groups (Turco-Mongols, Caucasians, and Europeans/Anatolians) endorsed by a division of names became complete.[37] It should be remembered, however, that for various reasons mamluks could, on rare occasions, be given names that were normally not given to slaves from their place of origin.

We are lucky to have a report by the historian ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī al-Malaṭī (d. 1514) about the origin of his grandfather, Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1430), which includes information hinting at the "ethnic destination" of the name **Shāhīn** during the Circassian period. According to al-Malaṭī, Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī was a "Tatar" (i.e., a Turco-Mongol) from Saray in the so-called Golden Horde who became a slave of the Circassian sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (r. 1382–99). According to al-Malaṭī, "he was named Shāhīn only because at the beginning of the reign of al-Ẓāhir the Turco-Mongols were hated and excluded from positions" *(innamā summiya Shāhīn li-anna al-Tatar kānat fī awwal dawlat al-Ẓāhir fī maqt wa-ibʿād).*[38] This report makes it clear that at that time the name Shāhīn was normally not given to Turco-Mongols but to slaves belonging to one of the two other ethnic groups (Europeans/Anatolians or Circassians), and that it was given to Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī only because his master wanted to disassociate him from the group of Turco-Mongols against which he fought. In fact, almost all general remarks about "ethnic destinations" of names during the Circassian period are given by al-Malaṭī. Such remarks are normally given when referring to the fact that a mamluk received a name that did not fit his origin. One may speculate that because his grandfather Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī, who was a Turco-Mongol, received a

[37]For a general survey of name-giving practices during the Mamluk Sultanate, see Yosef, "The Names of the *Mamlūk*s." For a detailed discussion of the "ethnic destination" of about 300 names and a survey of mamluks that were given these names, see idem, "Ethnic Groups"; for changing perceptions of ethnic identities during the Mamluk Sultanate, see idem, "Cross-Boundary Hatred." Because the detailed survey of about 300 names is in Hebrew, and because the general survey of name-giving practices during the Mamluk Sultanate has not seen light yet, I have added to this article an appendix that briefly surveys the "ethnic destination" of some names; however, for references see idem, "Ethnic Groups."

[38]ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ ibn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim fī ḥawādith al-umūr wa-al-tarājim,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 2014), 4:120. Elsewhere, and before *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim* was published, I have speculated that Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī was not a Turco-Mongol (see Koby Yosef, "The Term *Mamlūk* and Slave Status during the Mamluk Sultanate," *Al-Qanṭarah* 34, no. 1 [2013]: 24–26). This, however, turned out to be a mistake.

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name normally given to European/Anatolian mamluks (see below), al-Malaṭī became sensitive to the issue of name-giving practices.[39]

[39]Two references by al-Malaṭī to slaves that received a name that does not fit their origin have to do with mamluks of al-Nāṣir Faraj (1399–1412). According to al-Malaṭī, al-Nāṣir Faraj changed the name of one of his Circassian slaves from Qibjaq to Khushkaldī, one of the names given to Rūmīs *(ism al-Arwām),* "because he hated the Circassians and their names" *(li-bughḍihi fī ṭāʾifat al-Ǧarkas wa-asmāʾihim),* and because due to his affection for him *(mayl)* he wanted to dissociate him from the Circassians *(arāda an yanfiya hādhā ʿanhum).* Later on he made him a close companion and promoted him. See al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 4:220–21. According to al-Malaṭī, Aq Sunqur al-Yashbakī (d. 1454) was originally the mamluk of the *atābak* Yashbak but later on came to serve al-Nāṣir Faraj. He was a Circassian but al-Nāṣir Faraj changed his name to Aq Sunqur (i.e., before that Yashbak had given him another name) because he hated the Circassian ethnic group. See idem, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 579. From this it becomes clear that during the Circassian period the names **Aq Sunqur** and **Khushkaldī** were given to Europeans/Anatolians and the name **Qibjaq** to Circassians. It is known that al-Nāṣir Faraj, whose mother was Greek, was assisted by Rūmīs in his struggle against the Circassians. See Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ziyādah and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr (Cairo, 1934–73), 3:1174. In order to dissociate some of the Circassian slaves who were his followers from their ethnic group he changed their names to names given to European/Anatolian slaves. It seems reasonable that masters were inclined to change names of mamluks if they were especially favored by them. Al-Malaṭī reports on a mamluk by the name of Ināl al-Zaynī (d. 1473–74) who was a favored slave of his master *(khaṣīṣ).* He was a Rūmī but was given by his master a name for Circassians *(Rūmī al-jins wa-sammāhu ustādhuhu ʿalá ism al-Ǧarākisah).* See al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 625. Ināl al-Isḥāqī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1481) was a mamluk of Jaqmaq already from the days when he was an amir and one of the first mamluks bought by him *(qudamāʾ).* Al-Malaṭī says that he was a Rūmī but his name was only rarely given to Rūmīs and was usually given to Circassians *(Rūmī al-jins wa-ismuhu min nawādir asmāʾ al-Arwām… yusammá bi-hi al-Ǧarākisah fī al-ʿādah).* See al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 626. From this we learn that at least during the Circassian period the name **Ināl** was given normally to Circassians. One may speculate that being one of the first slaves of Jaqmaq and probably his favored slave, Jaqmaq wanted to improve his career prospect by giving him a name that was usually given to Circassians, the dominant ethnic group at that time. It seems that during the days of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq European/Anatolian mamluks started to fill senior positions in greater numbers. See Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 195. Ibn Taghrībirdī, in what is probably the only refernce to the practice of giving slaves names that do not fit their origin by a Mamluk historian other than al-Malaṭī, says that **Alṭunbughā** al-Marqabī al-Muʾayyadī Shaykh (d. 1440) "was a Circassian but given a name of Turco-Mongols" *(Ǧarkasī al-jins lākinnahu summiya bi-ism al-Atrāk).* See Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-dalīl al-shāfī ʿalá al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo, 1998–2005), 1:152–53. Alṭunbughā al-Marqabī is known to have faithfully served his master Shaykh already when the latter was still amir and through all his struggles and tribulations *(min qudamāʾ mamālīk al-Muʾayyad Shaykh ishtarāhu lammā kāna min jumlat umarāʾ al-ʿishrīnāt… wa-dāma bi-khidmatihi fī ayyām tilka al-miḥan wa-al-fitan).* See Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī wa-al-mustawfá baʿda al-wāfī,* ed. Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo, 1984–2006), 3:78–79. Now, it is known that al-Muʾayyad Shaykh inclined towards Turco-Mongol slaves, and during his reign many amirs were Turco-Mongols. See David Ayalon, "The Circassians in the Mamlūk Kingdom," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 69 (1949): 142. It is therefore reasonable that in this case

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Table A surveys slaves named Shāhīn about whose origin we have information. It makes it clear that the name was normally only given to European/Anatolian slaves.

Table A: Slaves Named Shāhīn on Whose Origin There is Information[40]	
Name (Year of Death)	**Origin**
1. Shāhīn al-Ṭawāshī Zimām Dār Nāʾib al-Shaʾm (d. 1400)	Eunuch[41]
2. Shāhīn Dast al-Ashrafī al-Jamdār (d. 1404–5)	Eunuch[42]
3. Shāhīn al-Ḥasanī al-Ṭawāshī (d. 1412–13)	Eunuch[43]
4. Shāhīn al-Manṣūrī Shaykh al-Khuddām (died after 1420)	Eunuch[44]
5. Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1430)	Tatar (exception)
6. Shāhīn al-Rūmī al-Ẓāhirī Jaqmaq al-Ṭawāshī (d. 1468–69)	Eunuch/al-Rūmī[45]
7. Shāhīn al-Rūmī al-Mizzī	al-Rūmī[46]
8. Shāhīn al-Rūmī al-Nūrī	al-Rūmī[47]
9. Shāhīn al-Jamālī (d. 1514)	Rūmī[48]
a. Shāhīn al-Jalālī (mentioned in 1381)	Eunuch[49]

Shaykh wanted to dissociate a Circassian mamluk from his original ethnic group and connect him to the Turco-Mongols which he favored.

[40] The table first mentions persons who have biographical entries in Mamluk sources (numbers) and then persons who are only mentioned in Mamluk sources (letters). This is true also for the following tables.

[41] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh,* 4:126.

[42] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ* (Beirut, 1992), 3:294; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 3:442.

[43] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:294.

[44] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-tuḥfah al-laṭīfah fī tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Sharīfah* (Beirut, 1993), 1:440.

[45] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:294.

[46] Ibid., 3:295.

[47] Ibid., 3:294.

[48] Ibid., 3:293–94; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:420.

[49] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 3:442.

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b. Shāhīn al-Uljāʾī *nāʾib muqaddam al-mamālīk* (mentioned in 1400)	Eunuch[50]
c. Shāhīn al-Rūmī (appointed *nāʾib qalʿat al-Ǧabal* in 1412)	al-Rūmī[51]
d. Shāhīn al-Bahlawān (died after 1424–25)	Rūmī/not a eunuch[52]
e. Shāhīn al-Sāqī al-Ṭawāshī (mentioned in 1438)	Eunuch[53]

As can be seen from the table, except for Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī (number 5) all slaves named Shāhīn on whose origin we have information are defined as Rūmīs[54] or are known to have been eunuchs. Now, Circassians and Turco-Mongols are generally not known to have been eunuchs during the Mamluk Sultanate, and most of the eunuchs were Rūmīs or Ḥabashīs (Abyssinians),[55] so the eunuchs named Shāhīn were in all likelihood also Rūmīs. Therefore, it becomes clear that the name Shāhīn was normally given to European/Anatolian slaves. Shāhīn al-Tarjumān thus could well have been of Spanish origin. Note that according to Tafur, the grand interpreter whom he met ca. 1437 was about 90 years old and was brought as a child to Egypt, which indicates that he was brought to Egypt around the 1350s, exactly when European/Anatolian mamluks started arriving in the sultanate in greater numbers and exactly when names given exclusively to European/Anatolian slaves, such as Shāhīn, started to be used.

After establishing that Shāhīn al-Tarjumān was in all likelihood the interpreter of Jewish Spanish origin active during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy, it remains to be seen if he can be further identified in Mamluk sources. Mamluk sources provide a short biographical entry for a person by the name of Mūsá ibn Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī who functioned as chief of the military police *(naqīb al-jaysh)* for about a year starting from 1484–85. Mūsá ibn Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī was known as "Ibn al-Tarjumān" ("the son of the dragoman"), because this was the position of his father.[56] There are no other persons named Shāhīn that were known as "al-Tarjumān" during the Mamluk Sultanate except for the interpreter active during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy, so in all likelihood Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī was the

[50] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 12:214. In that year al-Maqrīzī twice mentions Shāhīn al-Ḥalabī who was *nāʾib muqaddam al-mamālīk*. See al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 4:1016. Shāhīn al-Ḥalabī became *muqaddam al-mamālīk* in 1401. See al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 4:1055.

[51] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 13:156.

[52] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 304.

[53] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 4:1071.

[54] Note that it is possible that some of these "Rūmīs" were in fact Western Europeans. See n. 33, above.

[55] Ayalon, "The Eunuchs," 272–73.

[56] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 10:182.

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interpreter of Jewish Spanish origin active during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbāy. Moreover, although the name Mūsá was used by Muslims during the Mamluk period, it was possibly the most common name among Jews,[57] which tempts one to speculate that Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī the dragoman named his son Mūsá due to his Jewish origins.

As far as I know, only two persons by the name of Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī are mentioned in Mamluk sources. Al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497) provides two short biographical entries for persons by this name:

> (1) "Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī. He was the governor of Jerusalem and the inkwell holder *(dawādār)* of the sultan in Damascus. He died on 19 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 837/27 June 1434. Ibn al-Labbūdī mentioned him."
>
> (2) "Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī. He was the chamberlain of Damascus. He was also the head of the Syrian pilgrimage caravan. He was also the governor of the citadel in Damascus. He died there in Shawwāl 844/February–March 1441. He was also mentioned by Ibn al-Labbūdī."[58]

The two amirs by the name of Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī who have biographical entries in al-Sakhāwī were apparently only afforded biographical entries previously by Ibn al-Labbūdī (d. 1490).[59] In addition, there is not much detail about either of them; both are said to have been active in Syria and to have died at about the same time, and both were presumably amirs of forty.[60] All this tempts one to think that perhaps the two were actually the same person. Moreover, al-Malaṭī (d. 1514), the only historian except for al-Sakhāwī (and apparently Ibn al-Labbūdī) who provides a biographical entry for a person with this name, refers only to Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī, the grand chamberlain of Damascus, who died in 1441.[61] On the

[57] Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* (Beirut, 1987), 5:402.

[58] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:295.

[59] Probably in his history book. On Ibn al-Labbūdī and his history book, see ibid., 3:293–94; Aḥmad ibn Khalīl Ibn al-Labbūdī, *Al-nujūm al-zawāhir fī maʿrifat al-awākhir,* ed. Maʾmūn al-Ṣāgharjī and Muḥammad Adīb al-Jādir (Damascus, 1994), 14.

[60] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* 7:184–86 (*nāʾib qalʿat Dimashq* and *nāʾib al-Quds* were supposed to be amirs of forty).

[61] Al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal,* 5:135. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī mentions a biographical entry for Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī Duwaydār Shaykh (d. 1410). See Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-abnāʾ al-ʿumr fī al-tārīkh,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1969), 2:470. However, as far as I know, no other historian refers to Shāhīn the Dawādār (or Duwaydār) of al-Muʾayyad Shaykh with the *nisbah* "al-Shujāʿī." Moreover, in the biographical entry of Shāhīn the Dawādār of al-Muʾayyad Shaykh, al-Sakhāwī says that he is quoting his master Ibn Ḥajar but does not include the *nisbah* "al-Shujāʿī" as part

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other hand, Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī, the governor of Jerusalem, is said to have filled this position between ca. 1427 and ca. 1429–30,[62] at a time when Shāhīn al-Tarjumān is known to have functioned as a dragoman in Cairo. Moreover, he is said to have died in 1434, which is before Pero Tafur met Shāhīn al-Tarjumān in Cairo. Therefore, I will assume that the information given by al-Sakhāwī (based on Ibn al-Labbūdī) is exact, that there were two persons named Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī, and that of the two only the one who was the governor of the citadel in Damascus and died in 1441 could have been Shāhīn al-Tarjumān.

Al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442) mentions the amir Shāhīn the chamberlain in Damascus at the head of the army of Damascus in 1417.[63] Later in that year, al-Maqrīzī and al-Malaṭī report that Shāhīn the chamberlain in Damascus was appointed governor of the citadel in Damascus.[64] Al-Maqrīzī says that he stopped being the governor of the citadel in Damascus in May 1418 but does not say whether he received a new appointment.[65] After that, this individual is not mentioned in the sources again. All of this actually fits the information we have on Shāhīn al-Tarjumān, the interpreter of Jewish Spanish origin. As mentioned, Shāhīn al-Tarjumān is first mentioned as chief dragoman of the sultan in Venetian documents starting in January 1419 (normally under the name Sain), only a few months after Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī disappears from Mamluk narrative sources. This is a striking coincidence that strongly suggests that the two are in fact the same person. If, as it seems, Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī was indeed Shāhīn al-Tarjumān, then he had a military career until he was about 70 years old, a relatively advanced age. After that, he became the interpreter of al-Ashraf Barsbāy and disappeared from Mamluk history books. It is no wonder that he died in 1441, shortly after Tafur visited Egypt, as he was about 90 years old at that time. It is also no wonder that Mamluk sources give little information about him since this is typical for slaves of European—and especially Western European—origin. That Mamluk sources stopped mentioning him when he became a dragoman is not surprising because such activities related to the European past of mamluks are routinely ignored by Mamluk historians.[66] Moreover, as we will see below in the "Excursus on Slaves of European

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of his name. He says that Ibn Ḥajar attributed him the *nisbah* "al-Shujāʿī," but he thinks that it was a mistake *(taḥarruf)*. See al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ*, 3:294. Ibn Ḥajar (and following him al-Sakhāwī) says that Shāhīn the Dawādār was brave *(shujāʿ)*, which is perhaps the source for the wrong attribution of the *nisbah* "al-Shujāʿī" to him.

[62] Mujīr al-Dīn al-ʿUlaymī, *Al-uns al-jalīl bi-tārīkh al-Quds wa-al-Khalīl*, ed. ʿAdnān Yūnus ʿAbd al-Majīd Abū Tabbānah (Amman, 1999), 2:274.

[63] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk*, 4:398.

[64] Ibid., 4:425; al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal*, 3:333.

[65] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk*, 4:442.

[66] And see at nn. 16–18 above.

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Origin Functioning as Dragomans during the Circassian Period," we know the identity of the grand dragomans in the Mamluk court in 1411–12,[67] so we know that Shāhīn al-Tarjumān could not have been appointed grand dragoman before about 1412, which fits the information we have that Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī had a military career until 1418, and makes it quite reasonable that at some point around 1418 Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī replaced the previous grand dragomans. To conclude, it is very likely that Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī was a slave of Jewish origin, who, in contrast to Taghrī Birdī, had a military career before he became a dragoman, and therefore was a mamluk in the full sense of the word. The fact that Mūsá, the son of the dragoman Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī, had a military career *(naqīb al-jaysh),* suggests that he grew up in a household where military service was not unknown, so whether the identification of the Shāhīn al-Shujāʿī who died in 1441 as the father of Mūsá is accepted or not, it remains relatively reasonable that Mūsá's father, Shāhīn al-Tarjumān the dragoman of Jewish origin, had a military career.

An Excursus on Slaves of European Origin Functioning as Dragomans during the Circassian Period

Shāhīn al-Tarjumān was one among several persons who were apparently slaves[68] that are explicitly mentioned as dragomans *(tarājimah*, sing. *tarjumān)* in Mamluk

[67] See below at nn. 78–83.

[68] In some cases the sources give information indicating that they were slaves (see below); however, in most cases it is assumed that they were probably slaves because they have names that were normally given to slaves (mostly Turkish names, but on rare occasions also Persian and even Arab names). See also n. 8, above. Most recently, Robert Irwin noted that although during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries most European renegades serving the Muslims entered into service after being captured and enslaved, at least some chose to travel voluntarily to the Islamic lands and converted there in order to further their careers. Irwin suggested that this was perhaps also the situation during the fifteenth century and noted that "one gets the impression that quite a few Europeans had entered into service as mamluks not after being captured and enslaved, but after voluntarily embracing the status of renegade"; see Irwin, "How Circassian," 109–13 (esp. 112). Still, it should be remembered that even during the sixteenth century most of the European renegades were captives and slaves. See Graf, *The Sultan's Renegades,* 73, 77. Moreover, while during the Ottoman period military slaves were given Muslim names, and thus it is not possible to tell a slave from a simple convert just by their names, during the Mamluk Sultanate slaves normally received Turkish names and simple converts seem to have taken Arab-Muslim names. For example, during the Mamluk period we know of several European converts who were not slaves that served as dragomans or envoys and had Arab-Muslim names. See Moukarzel, "The Translators," 146. I know of only one explicit case of Europeans who apparently were not slaves and converted to Islam in what seems to be a voluntary manner but still received Turkish names normally given to slaves. In 1327 two envoys that arrived in Cairo from Constantinople decided to convert to Islam. One of them became amir and the other a simple soldier. They received the names **Aq Sunqur** (this person became known as Aq Sunqur al-Rūmī) and

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sources, who engaged (or at least seem to have been engaged) in interpretation or translation of European languages during the Circassian period (and on rare occasions also in the late Turkish period).[69] As we will see, most of these slaves seem to have been of European origin. It is no wonder that these slaves appear only in the Circassian or late Turkish periods, because at that time, as mentioned, an increase in the number of slaves originating in Europe can be detected. Some of these dragoman slaves seem to also have had military careers. The phenomenon of dragoman slaves functioning as interpreters and translators of European languages in the Mamluk Sultanate has so far received relatively little attention.[70]

Bahādur. Both were names given at that time to non-Turks in general, i.e., to Circassian or European/Anatolian slaves (see Appendix). See al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 2:282–83; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab,* ed. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn et al. (Beirut, 2004), 33:173; and see also Moukarzel, "The Translators," 144, n. 3. This, however, seems to be a very unusual case. After referring to this case, al-Nuwayrī adds "and God knows best," suggesting that he found this incident very peculiar. It is also possible that the two were at least officially sold into slavery. Until proven otherwise, it seems reasonable to assume that Christian Europeans that received Turkish names normally given to slaves were probably indeed slaves, at least formally. It should be mentioned that in rare cases descendants of European/Anatolian slaves received Turkish names normally given to European/Anatolian slaves, but in such cases the name of the father is known.

[69]To be clear: as far as I know, before the late Turkish period only two persons who are explicitly mentioned as dragomans in Mamluk sources were possibly slaves (based on their names, at least). The first is Irghidlaq al-Tarjumān, who was in charge of translating letters into the Mongol language sometime during the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (1310–41); see Moukarzel, "The Translators," 142–43. The second is Aybak al-Kabakī al-Tarjumān, who translated the 1290 treaty between Genoa and the sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (r. 1279–90) from Latin into Arabic; see Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī, "Ḥarakat al-tarjamah wa-al-taʿrīb fī dīwān al-inshāʾ al-mamlūkī (al-bawāʿith wa-al-lughāt wa-al-mutarjamāt)," *Majallat Majmaʿ al-Lughah al-ʿArabīyah al-Urdunī* 26, no. 62 (2002): 51; idem, *Muqaddimah fī dirāsat al-tarjamah,* 63; Moukarzel, "The Translators," 143.

[70]Mayer has briefly referred to this phenomenon but did not elaborate or give examples. See Mayer, "Motsaʾam ha-Notsri," 218. Lewis mentioned that "[l]ittle is known about the dragomans employed by the Mamluk sultans of Egypt…though what evidence exists indicates that these were, for the most part, renegades from Europe," and then gave Taghrī Birdī as an example. Regarding the Ottoman period, Lewis mentioned that interpreters were many times "renegades"; see Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery,* 78–79. Based on that, Adrian Gully has suggested that "[i]t is not inconceivable, therefore, that much interpreting work in an earlier period had been carried out by Mamluks themselves or those of similar status described by Lewis," but did not adduce concrete evidence for that. See Adrian Gully, *The Culture of Letter-Writing in Pre-Modern Islamic Society* (Edinburgh, 2008), 89. Among the categories of translators *(aṣnāf al-tarājimah)* during the Mamluk Sultanate surveyed by al-Durūbī, he mentions Mamluk amirs *(umarāʾ al-mamālīk).* See al-Durūbī, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah," 19–24; idem, *Muqaddimah fī dirāsat al-tarjamah,* 82–87. Under this category al-Durūbī mentions four amirs who were, according to him, interpreters or translators *(tarājimah)* of European languages: Aqṭāy al-Mustaʿrib al-Ṣāliḥī (d. 1273), Iyāz al-Ṣāliḥī (d. 1288), Taghrī Birdī al-Tarjumān (d. after 1513), and Yūnus al-Tarjumān (d. after 1514). See idem,

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The first of these dragomans who seems, judging by to his name, to have been a slave is Balabān al-Tarjumān, mentioned in 1380 as having been killed by a Frank *(Faranjī)* who stabbed him during a *maẓālim* session concerning ownership of property held in front of Barakah al-Jūbānī (d. 1380), the most senior amir in Egypt at that time.[71] He was probably in charge of translating from some Western European language, and it is possible that he was the grand dragoman at the Mamluk court at that time.[72] The fact that he was in charge of translating from a

"Aṣnāf al-tarājimah," 20–21, 23; idem, *Muqaddimah fī dirāsat al-tarjamah,* 83, 86–87; and see also Moukarzel, "The Translators," 141, 151–52. In fact, Aqṭāy al-Mustaʿrib al-Ṣāliḥī and Iyāz al-Ṣāliḥī acted as envoys and are not mentioned explicitly as dragomans. Their engagement in interpretation or translation can only be inferred. Al-Durūbī does not refer to the origin of the Mamluk amirs who acted as translators or interpreters. While the origin of Aqṭāy is not known, it is interesting to mention that Iyāz al-Ṣāliḥī is said to have been Georgian or Rūmī. See al-Birzālī, *Al-muqtafī,* 2:135; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhīr wa-al-aʿlām,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 1989–2004), 51:298. On Yūnus al-Tarjumān, see nn. 113–14, below. Al-Durūbī mentions also the category of translators or interpreters who were captives *(asrá).* Under this category he mentions Taghrī Birdī al-Tarjumān (again) and Balabān al-Janawī (d. after ca. 1339). See al-Durūbī, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah," 28–30; idem, *Muqaddimah fī dirāsat al-tarjamah,* 92–94; and see also Moukarzel, "The Translators," 146. Again, Balabān al-Janawī is not mentioned explicitly as a dragoman and his engagement in interpretation or translation can only be inferred. In addition, it should be mentioned that while it is very reasonable that he was a captive, as far as I know the sources do not mention this fact explicitly. On Balabān al-Janawī see also n. 73, below. Most recently, Pierre Moukarzel noted that it seems that "during the fourteenth century, the persons in the Mamluk administration who spoke and wrote European languages were rare," and therefore during that period local Christians and Jews, and European traders or converts/"renegades," played a major role in translation at the court of the Mamluk sultans. See Moukarzel, "The Translators," 145–47. According to Moukarzel, the fact that there were not many persons in the Mamluk administration who spoke and wrote European languages eventually led during the fifteenth century to an increasing reliance by the Mamluk administration on European "renegades" in translation activities. See Moukarzel, "The Translators," 149. It is not clear if Moukarzel uses the word "renegades" in reference to converts in general or specifically to slaves. In another place he mentions that the majority of the translators were "European converts," and he does not seem to refer to slaves. See idem, "The European Embassies," 702; and see also idem, "The Translators," 146. Notwithstanding this, few of the examples he gives for translators during the fifteenth century were apparently slaves. See idem, "The Translators," 149–53. While the fact that there were not many persons in the Mamluk administration who spoke and wrote European languages explains why Europeans many times functioned as translators, it cannot explain by itself why specifically during the Circassian period an increase in the number of "renegades" acting as translators can be observed. As I argue, it is the increasing presence of European/Anatolian slaves within the territories of the Mamluk Sultanate starting from the late Turkish period that allowed an increasing reliance on slaves as translators of European languages.

[71] Al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal,* 2:164; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 3:379.

[72] However, he may have also been a commercial dragoman. On them see Bauden, "The Role of Interpreters," 33–63.

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European language suggests that he was European himself. This is also suggested by the fact that, starting in the Circassian period, the name **Balabān** seems to have been given exclusively to European/Anatolian slaves (see Table B, below).[73] Except for the incident leading to his death, Balabān al-Tarjumān is not mentioned in Mamluk sources, so we have no details about him and it is not possible to know if he had a military career.[74]

[73]For a detailed discussion of the name Balabān, see Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:68–69, 108, 2:39–42. It appears that already starting from the 1320s the name Balabān was given mainly to European/Anatolian mamluks, but until the Circassian period it was also given on some occasions to Caucasian (Circassian) mamluks (i.e., starting from the 1320s and until the Circassian period it was given to non-Turks in general and not only to Europeans/Anatolians). During that period, Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī mentions a manumitted slave (*ʿatīq*) of the amir Bahādur al-Muʿizzī whose name was Balabān the Genoese and whose original name in Genoa was Domenichino Doria. See Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Kitāb masālik al-abṣār wa-mamālik al-amṣār,* ed. ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yaḥyá al-Sarīḥī et al. (Abu Dhabi, 2001–4), 3:322; and see Irwin, "The Image of the Byzantine," 227–28. Al-ʿUmarī says that he met him when he was in prison, that is, ca. 1339. See Kamal S. Salibi, "Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī," in *EI2,* 3:758–59. Al-ʿUmarī also mentions ʿAlī ibn Balabān al-Jalabī as an informant about Europe alongside Balabān the Genoese and another mamluk of European origin, so it is quite likely that Balabān al-Jalabī was another mamluk of European origin. See al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3:404. At that period, however, the sources also mention Balabān al-Jarkasī, who according to his *nisbah* was probably a Circassian. See Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr,* 2:96.

[74]If Balabān al-Tarjumān was the chief interpreter it is possible that he was of Florentine origin. According to European travelers visiting Cairo in 1384 the grand interpreter of the sultan at that time was a Venetian Christian renegade who replaced in that position his father-in-law, a Florentine Christian renegade, after the latter had died. The travelers, however, do not mention explicitly that the two grand interpreters were slaves, and it is possible that they were simply converts. See Leonardo di Niccoló Frescobaldi, "Pilgrimage of Lionardo di Niccoló Frescobaldi to the Holy Land," trans. Theophilus Bellorini, Eugene Hoade, and Bellarmino Bagatti, in *Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine and Syria in 1384* (Jerusalem, 1948), 45, 53; Giorgio Gucci, "Pilgrimage of Giorgio Gucci to the Holy Places," trans. Theophilus Bellorini, Eugene Hoade, and Bellarmino Bagatti, in ibid., 106; Simone Sigoli, "Pilgrimage of Simone Sigoli to the Holy Land," trans. Theophilus Bellorini, Eugene Hoade, and Bellarmino Bagatti, in ibid., 166. According to Moukarzel, "[t]he post of the chief interpreter which was mentioned for the first time during the first half of the fourteenth century, during the reign of the sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad disappeared later. It was created again in the beginning of the fifteenth century." See Moukarzel, "The Translators," 149. The information we have actually suggests that the post appears already in 1384 and probably even earlier. It would seem that it is possible that there was more continuity to this post than Moukarzel would allow.

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Table B: Slaves Named Balabān during the Circassian Period on Whose Origin There is Information	
Name (Year of Death)	**Origin**
1. Balabān al-Khushqadamī (d. 1491)	Rūmī[75]
2. Balabān al-Damurdāshī (died after 1490–91)	Rūmī/Turkmen?[76]
a. Balabān Nā'ib Darandah (died after 1435)	Rūmī[77]

The next dragomans who, at least according to their names, were slaves are Shams al-Dīn Sunqur and Sayf al-Dīn Sūdūn, who are mentioned by al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418) as the translators *(al-tarājimah/al-tarjumānayni)* of letters sent from Venice and Cyprus to the Mamluk Sultanate in 1411 during the reign of al-Nāṣir Faraj (1399–1412), in all likelihood in their capacity as grand dragomans in the chancery *(al-tarājimah bi-al-abwāb al-sharīfah).*[78] According to Bosworth, the two were obviously Turks,[79] but the fact that their names are Turkish does not at all mean that they were Turks. As I have shown elsewhere, the name **Sunqur** was given exclusively to European/Anatolian slaves during the Circassian period (and see Table C below).[80] The name **Sūdūn**, however, was given exclusively to Circassian slaves starting from the late Turkish period.[81]

As for Sunqur, several notarial deeds of Giacomo della Torre from June–August 1412 mention Sunqur the grand dragoman of the sultan *(magnus trucimanus soldani),* who was originally a Genoese called Johannes Saiben who converted to Islam. The documents do not refer explicitly to his status and simply mention that he was a Muslim that had once been a Christian.[82] He is also mentioned (as Zanon

[75] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 708.

[76] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:19, 4:12.

[77] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 43; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 15:61.

[78] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* 8:126–28; and see also Bosworth, "Tardjumān," 326; al-Durūbī, "Ḥarakat al-Tarjamah," 49–50, 52; idem, *Muqaddimah fī dirāsat al-tarjamah,* 61, 64; see Moukarzel, "The Translators," 151. There is evidence that it was possible for two persons to jointly hold the position of grand dragoman. See Tafur, *Travels,* 96.

[79] Bosworth, "Tardjumān," 326.

[80] Yosef, "The Names of the *Mamlūk*s."

[81] Ibid.

[82] Francisco Javier Apellániz Ruiz de Galarreta, "Banquiers, diplomates et pouvoir sultanien: une affaire d'épices sous les Mamelouks circassiens," *Annales islamologiques* 38, no. 2 (2004): 297, n. 40. Document no. 5 mentions "sarazenus nomine Sonchor olim christianus vocatus a batismo Johannes Saiben januensis et magnus trucimanus soldani." I did not have access to the document itself and received the information from Francisco Javier Apellániz. I would like to thank him for kindly giving me this information.

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Saimben) in the translation into Latin of a treaty concluded with Venice in 1422 as the scribe alongside Sain (our friend Shāhīn al-Tarjumān), the great interpreter of the sultan.[83]

Table C: Slaves Named Sunqur during the Circassian Period on Whose Origin There is Information	
Name (Year of Death)	**Origin**
1. Sunqur al-Rūmī (d. 1415)	al-Rūmī[84]
2. Sunqur al-Rūmī al-Ḥanafī (d. 1479)	al-Rūmī[85]
3. Sunqur al-Zaynī al-Jamālī (d. 1497)	Rūmī[86]
4. Sunqur (the father of Aḥmad al-Ṭarābulsī who was a young man ca. 1485)[87]	Rūmī
a. Sunqur al-Rūmī al-Ṭawāshī al-Jamdār (mentioned in 1450 as an envoy to Bilād al-Rūm)	al-Rūmī/ Eunuch[88]

The next dragoman who, according to his name, was a slave is Shāhīn al-Tarjumān.[89] After him, the next one mentioned in Mamluk sources is Fāris, "the dragoman of the Franks" in the island of Cyprus *(tarjumān al-Faranj bi-jazīrat* [*bi-jizyat* in the text] *Qubruṣ),* who is reported to have returned to Egypt in 1451 after a long stay in Cyprus, where he was sent as an envoy. He brought with him 100 prisoners.[90] It seems that this Fāris was at that time, or became after

[83] Moukarzel, "The European Embassies," 702, n. 61; and see also idem, "The Translators," 151. So, it would seem that after Shāhīn al-Tarjumān replaced Sunqur as the grand dragoman, Sunqur continued to function as a scribe. See above n. 67.

[84] Al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal,* 3:283; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 4:308; and see also ibid., 4:71.

[85] Al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal,* 7:230.

[86] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-tuḥfah al-laṭīfah,* 1:429–30; idem, *Al-ḍaw' al-lāmiʿ,* 3:273.

[87] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 306.

[88] Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-duhūr fī madá al-ayyām wa-al-shuhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn ʿIzz al-Dīn (Beirut, 1990), 1:284; and see Ayalon, "The Eunuchs," 277. Ayalon mentioned the name Sunqur as one of the names given to eunuchs (and non-eunuchs) but did not refer to its "ethnic destination."

[89] According to Tafur, during his visit in Egypt ca. 1437 the Mamluk sultan appointed the Italian Nicolò de' Conti (d. 1469) to the position of grand dragoman together with the grand dragoman Shāhīn al-Tarjumān (just to make clear, Tafur of course refers to the latter as Saym). See Tafur, *Travels,* 96.

[90] Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿUmar al-Biqāʿī, *Iẓhār al-ʿaṣr li-asrār ahl al-ʿaṣr tārīkh al-Biqāʿī,* ed. Muḥammad Sālim bin Shadīd al-ʿAwfī (Riyadh, 1992–93), 1:128. We know of Fāris al-Turkmānī

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his return, the (grand?) dragoman of the Mamluk sultan, because a document by a Venetian notary from 1455 mentions a "drogman du sultan" by the name of "Feres" in Cairo in 1454.[91] As can be seen from Table D, below, from the late Turkish period (circa the 1350s) the name **Fāris** was normally given exclusively to European/Anatolian mamluks.[92] It is tempting to see a link between Fāris "the dragoman of the Franks" in Cyprus and a "Feres Mamaluco" who is mentioned in European sources and who was granted fiefs when he arrived in Cyprus in 1465 as an ambassador of the Mamluk sultan,[93] and to see a further link between both of these and Fāris al-Muḥammadī al-Fayrūzī, who is said to have been a Frankish Cypriot (item 4 in Table D),[94] but there is no clear evidence for that last link. Still, the link between Fāris the dragoman and "Feres Mamaluco" is reasonable because dragomans functioned as envoys many times and because the two are specifically related to Cyprus.

(perhaps a deformation of Fāris al-Tarjumān) who was sent by al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq as an envoy to Cyprus in August 1450. See Coureas, "Envoys between Lusignan Cyprus and Mamluk Egypt," 729; idem, "The Manumission of Hospitaller Slaves on Fifteenth-Century Rhodes and Cyprus," in *The Military Orders,* vol. 6.1, *Culture and Conflict in the Mediterranean World,* ed. Jochen Schenk and Mike Carr (London and New York, 2017), 109.

[91] A summary of the document is given online in "Notaires Vénitiens au Moyen Orient (1360–1520)" at http://notaires-venitiens.com/notaries/documents/view/202 (accessed 29 August 2018).

[92] For a detailed discussion see Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:96, 99, 2:136–37. Ayalon mentioned Fāris as a name given to eunuchs and non-eunuchs alike, although it was an Arab name. He did not refer, however, to the "ethnic destination" of the name. See Ayalon, "The Eunuchs," 276–79.

[93] Benjamin Arbel, "Venetian Cyprus and the Muslim Levant, 1473–1570," in *Cyprus and the Crusades/Kypros kai oi Staurophories,* ed. Nicholas Coureas and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Nicosia, 1995), 174; and see also Nicholas Coureas, "Mamluks in the Cypriot Chronicle of George Boustronios and Their Place within a Wider Context," in *Continuity and Change in the Realms of Islam: Studies in Honour of Professor Urbain Vermeulen,* ed. Kristof D'hulster and Jo van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2008), 146.

[94] Fāris al-Muḥammadī al-Fayrūzī is said to have fathered a son in Egypt ca. 1436–37 so he was present in the sultanate when Mamluk sources refer to Fāris the dragoman. Fāris al-Muḥammadī al-Fayrūzī was probably captured in one of the Mamluk military campaigns against the island of Cyprus in the late 1420s.

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Table D: Slaves Named Fāris Starting from the Late Turkish Period on Whose Origin there is Information	
Name (Year of Death)	**Origin**
1. Fāris al-Quṭlūqujā'ī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1399)	Rūmī[95]
2. Fāris al-Khāzindār al-Rūmī al-Ṭawāshī (d. 1421–22)	al-Rūmī/ Eunuch[96]
3. Fāris al-Ashrafī al-Rūmī al-Ṭawāshī (d. after 1450–51)	al-Rūmī/ Eunuch[97]
4. Fāris al-Muḥammadī al-Fayrūzī (d. after ca. 1495)	Frankish Cypriot[98]

Another dragoman whose name indicates he was a slave is Tanibak al-Tarjumān, who is said to have been returning to Cairo from Cyprus in 1461 with the annual tribute from the Cypriot king when he was caught by the supporters of the sister of the king.[99] At about the same time, Mamluk sources mention Jānibak al-Tarjumān who was sent to Cyprus in 1464, and European sources mention Jānī Beg the dragoman, who arrived in Venice as ambassador in 1465 and 1466.[100] Anselmo Adorno, who visited Egypt in 1470–71, mentions that the grand dragoman in Cairo at that time was named Zam Beg.[101] It is very likely that Tanibak al-Tarjumān and Jānibak/Jānī Beg/Zam Beg the grand dragoman were in fact the same person. In any case, at least during the Circassian period the name **Janibak** was normally given only to Circassians and not to European/Anatolian

[95] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* 8:373; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍaw' al-lāmiʿ,* 6:164.

[96] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍaw' al-lāmiʿ,* 6:163.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 540; al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍaw' al-lāmiʿ,* 6:163.

[99] Al-Malaṭī, *Nayl al-amal,* 6:98–99; idem, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 2:32–33.

[100] Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Extracts from Abû 'l-Maḥâsin ibn Taghrî Birdî's Chronicle Entitled Ḥawâdith ad-Duhûr fî Madâ 'l-Ayyâm wash-Shuhûr,* ed. William Popper (Berkeley, 1930–42), 3:455; Bauden, "The Role of Interpreters," 33; Von der Hoch, "Muslim Embassies," 168; Moukarzel, "The Translators," 152.

[101] Anselmo Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte, 1470–1471,* ed. Jacques Heers and Georgette de Groer (Paris, 1978), 209. At that time there was another dragoman in the court by the name of Cam Beg. Joos van Ghistele who visited Egypt in 1482–83 mentions a dragoman by the name of Jennibeey in Alexandria. See Joos van Ghistele, *Le voyage en Égypte de Joos van Ghistele 1482–1483,* trans. Renée Bauwens-Préaux (Cairo, 1976), 178. Arnold von Harff, who visited Egypt towards the end of the fifteenth century, mentions that the dragoman in Alexandria was a mamluk. See Von Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff,* 93.

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mamluks.[102] The same holds true regarding the name **Tanibak/Tānibak/Tānī Bak** (see Table E, below).[103]

[102] Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions that "only Circassians are called Jānibak in our days." See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* 4:235; and see Yosef, "The Names of the *Mamlūk*s." Moukarzel noted that Ibn Ṭūlūn mentions Jānibak al-Faranjī in 1502 and suggested that he and Jānī Beg the dragoman were the same person and therefore Jānī Beg was probably a "European renegade." See Moukarzel, "The Translators," 152; and see Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 367 (Ibn al-Ḥimṣī mentions him as Jānam al-Faranjī); and see Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān fī ḥawādith al-zamān,* ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut, 1998), 223 (Jānibak of Frankish origin *[al-Faranjī al-Aṣl]* died in 1504); and see Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Ṭawq, *Al-taʿlīq: Yawmīyāt Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Ṭawq 834–915 H/1430–1509 M: Mudhakkirāt kutibat bi-Dimashq fī awākhir al-ʿahd al-mamlūkī 885–908 H/1480–1502 M,* ed. Jaʿfar al-Muhājir (Damascus, 2000–7), 4:1547 (Jānibak seems to have been the brother of Tamurbughā al-Tarjumān the dragoman of Frankish origin. See on the latter below in this section at nn. 116–24). However, Zam Beg the dragoman mentioned by Anselme Adorno is known to have been in connections with Rafaele Adorno, the doge of Genoa, already between 1444 and 1447. See Adorno, *Itinéraire,* 208, n. 1. It seems, thus, that Jānī Beg/Zam Beg the dragoman and Jānibak al-Faranjī could not have been the same person. In any case, all this should remind us that on rare occasions Europeans/Anatolians could receive names that were normally given only to Circassians.

[103] Al-Malaṭī offers a Circassian etymology for the name. Even if linguistically not correct it strongly suggests that the name was given in his days to Circassians. See al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 1:233. And see n. 81, above, for another dragoman who at least according to his name (Sūdūn) was a Circassian slave. If indeed some interpreters were Circassian slaves it raises the question where did they learn European languages. According to Lewis, the Muslim world was reluctant to study non-Muslim languages (Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery,* 77; Gully, *The Culture of Letter-Writing,* 89–90; Moukarzel, "The Translators," 149). One of the possibilities is that they were captives or slaves in Christian lands where they acquired knowledge of European languages but then returned or came to Egypt. For example, Yashbak the Circassian was on a boat that had been intercepted by Franks while sailing to Egypt. The Franks took Yashbak to Cyprus where he served them for a while and learned acrobatic games. Later on he went to Egypt (Yehoshua Frenkel, "Some Notes Concerning the Trade and Education of Slave-Soldiers during the Mamluk Era," in *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean [c. 1000–1500 CE],* ed. Reuven Amitai and Christoph Cluse [Turnhout, 2017], 196). Asandamur al-Sharābī, who was a Turco-Mongol (Tatar) from the Golden Horde, became a captive *(usira)* in the Crimea and spent about 20 years among Europeans of many nations *(tadāwalathu aydī al-Faranj ʿalá ikhtilāf aṣnāfihā).* He is said to have seen most of Europe *(ghālib bilād al-Faranj).* Eventually, however, he arrived in Egypt. See al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 559. Interestingly, **Asandamur** was a name that, starting from some point during al-Ẓāhir Barqūqʿs reign, was given only to Europeans/Anatolians. After the reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq the sources mention Asandamur al-Jaqmaqī (d. 1460), who was a Rūmī, and Asandamur al-Sayfī (d. after ca. 1485), who was a Cypriot (al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 558–59). It would seem that after spending 20 years in Europe, Asandamur al-Sharābī was perceived as a European when arriving in Egypt. Another possibility is that they were in Christian lands during military campaigns and stayed there for a long time before returning to Egypt. For Circassian mamluks or amirs staying in Cyprus after a military campaign, see Arbel, "Venetian Cyprus," 174–77. Still, the possibility that they learned European languages in the territories of the Mamluk Sultanate cannot be excluded.

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Table E: Slaves Named Tanibak during the Circassian Period on Whose Origin There is Information[104]	
Name (Year of Death)	**Origin**
1. Tanibak al-Jarkasī Shādd al-Sharābkhānah (d. 1416)	al-Jarkasī[105]
2. Tanibak al-Jaqmaqī (d. 1441)	Circassian[106]
3. Tanibak al-Burdbakī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1458)	Circassian[107]
4. Tanibak al-Iyāsī al-Ashrafī Barsbāy (d. 1486)	Circassian[108]
5. Tanibak al-Jamālī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1503)	Circassian[109]
6. Tanibak al-Muḥammadī al-Ashrafī Ināl (d. after ca. 1485)	Brother of Jānibak and Jānam = Circassian[110]

Taghrī Birdī is the next dragoman with a name that indicates he was a slave. He is first mentioned by European travelers as dragoman in 1481. He was deposed from his position as grand dragoman in 1511 and imprisoned on the charge of treason.[111] He is last mentioned by European and Mamluk sources upon his release from prison in 1513.[112] According to Ibn Iyās, after the imprisonment of Taghrī Birdī the post of grand dragoman remained vacant until a mamluk by the name of Yūnus was appointed to the post in 1514. Before that, Yūnus was a *zaradkāsh,* that is, the person in charge of the sultan's armory, which is a military position. Later he was appointed deputy to Taghrī Birdī and finally grand dragoman.[113] This is a clear example of a mamluk who first filled military positions and then became a dragoman. European visitors to Cairo in 1512 report meeting the sultan's dragoman, a renegade Veronese by the name of Yūnus formerly employed

[104] For a detailed discussion see Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:75, 100, 113–14, 2:147–48.

[105] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:26.

[106] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* 4:22.

[107] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 278, 801–3.

[108] Ibid., 297, 799–800.

[109] Ibid., 804–5; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān wa-wafayāt al-shuyūkh wa-al-aqrān,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Sidon and Beirut, 1999), 2:169.

[110] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 811–12. It was already mentioned that at least during the Circassian period the name **Jānibak** was given exclusively to Circassians (see n. 102, above). The name **Jānam** first appears in the Circassian period and was also given exclusively to Circassians (Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:112–13, 2:149–50).

[111] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:210; Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 367.

[112] Wansbrough, "A Mamluk Ambassador," 505.

[113] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:361–62.

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in the sultan's armory.[114] This is clearly the same Yūnus on whom Ibn Iyās reports, who was perhaps then formally only the deputy of the grand dragoman but was *de facto* grand dragoman.

Another two dragomans, who at least according to their names were slaves, are mentioned in Mamluk sources in the late Mamluk period; however, in contrast to those above, who filled the post of dragoman in Cairo, they are mentioned as having occupied the post of dragoman in the court of the governor of Damascus. The first dragoman mentioned in Damascus is Fāris, who is mentioned by Ibn Ṭūlūn only upon his death in 1517: "On Saturday the 28th died the amir Fāris, who was a *mihmandār* [in charge of hosting visitors] and later a dragoman in the court of the governor [of Damascus]. He was not a bad person."[115] As mentioned, starting from the late Turkish period the name **Fāris** was given exclusively to European/Anatolian mamluks (see Table D above).

The second is the amir Tamurbughā al-Tarjumān al-Qijmāsī, who was the manumitted slave (*ʿatīq*) of the amir Qijmās and is first mentioned in 1490 when he was appointed secretary of the army in Damascus *(nāẓir jaysh Dimashq).*[116] In 1496 he was appointed to the military post of grand chamberlain *(ḥājib kabīr)* in Damascus.[117] Ibn Iyās reports in 1497 that "in Dhū al-Ḥijjah news about the death of Tamurbughā al-Tarjumān arrived from Damascus. He was not a bad person."[118] As far as I know no other historian provides a biographical entry for him. He is referred to with the *nisbah* "al-Faranjī" ("the Frank"), and is said to have been originally a Frank *(aṣluhu Faranjī),* so he must have been of Western European origin.[119] The name **Tamurbughā** seems to have been given exclusively to European/Anatolian mamluks during the Circassian period. Except for Tamurbughā

[114] Wolff, *How Many Miles to Babylon?* 153; and see also Moukarzel, "The Translators," 152–53.

[115] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 366. On the *mihmandār*s and their engagement in interpretation, see al-Durūbī, "Aṣnāf al-tarājimah," 19.

[116] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 101, 104, 110; and see ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf ibn ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad al-Buṣrawī, *Tārīkh al-Buṣrawī,* ed. Akram Ḥasan al-ʿUlabī (Damascus, 1988), 141. He is also referred to as the mamluk of Qijmās (see Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 138–40).

[117] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 140.

[118] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:369.

[119] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 138–39, 142; and see on him also Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 365; Moukarzel, "The Translators," 149. Francisco Javier Apellániz discussed in detail the good relationship that Tamurbughā al-Tarjumān had with the Venetians in Syria. He noted that the Venetians wanted him to be in charge of them because he was a Frank like them *(kāna Faranjī mithlahum),* and Tamurbughā seems to have acted in line with the interests of the Venetians. Still, as noted by Apellániz, his exact origin is unknown (Francisco Javier Apellániz Ruiz de Galarreta, *Pouvoir et finance en Mediterranee pre-moderne: le deuxieme Etat mamelouk et le commerce des épices [1382–1517]* [Madrid, 2009], 200–1; and see also Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 101).

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al-Tarjumān, the only other slave by the name Tamurbughā during this period on whose origin we have information is the sultan al-Ẓāhir Tamurbughā (d. 1475), who is said to have been Albanian.[120]

Interestingly, Ibn Ṭūlūn refers to Tamurbughā al-Tarjumān as a convert to Islam the few first times he mentions him *(al-Aslamī/al-mutasharrif bi-al-Islām).*[121] The reason for this is not entirely clear. Other mamluks who functioned as dragomans must also have converted to Islam, as mamluks in general normally (supposedly) did. Perhaps the emphasis on the conversion is something peculiar to Ibn Ṭūlūn, but there is also an alternative explanation. Ibn Ṭūlūn reports in 1497 on a Christian from the neighborhood of the Christians *(ḥārat al-Naṣārá)* who was the neighbor of Tamurbughā the grand chamberlain.[122] So it seems that Tamurbughā the Frankish dragoman lived among Christians and perhaps did not at first convert to Islam. This may be the reason it was important to emphasize that he was a convert to Islam when he was first mentioned in the sources as receiving appointments. It is even possible that he converted to Islam only when receiving an appointment became a possibility. Perhaps we have here a rare glimpse at the fact that some slaves did not automatically convert to Islam but kept their original religions. It is quite possible that European slaves of Christian origin, and more specifically Western European slaves, were more inclined to do so.[123] Such slaves

[120] Normally he is said to have been a "Rūmī." See for example al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍaw' al-lāmiʿ*, 3:40–41. Sometimes, however, his specific ethnic origin (i.e., Albanian origin) is mentioned. See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 16:376 *(Rūmī al-jins min qabīlat Arnaʾūṭ);* al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:305 *(Rūmī al-jins Arnaʾūṭī al-ʿashīrah);* and see also idem, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 782. Interestingly the name Tamurbughā seems also to have been given during the Circassian period to a grandson of a mamluk of "Rūmī" origin (idem, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 44). For a detailed discussion of the name Tamurbughā, see Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:74–76, 107, 2:74–75.

[121] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān,* 101, 104, 112, 121, 126.

[122] Ibid., 142.

[123] Ayalon mentioned that throughout the history of the struggle between Islamdom and the Byzantine Empire, the monotheistic background of Byzantine prisoners of war greatly diminished the chances of their conversion to Islam, which contributed to the establishment of an institution of ransoming and exchanging prisoners (David Ayalon, "Aspects of the Mamlūk Phenomenon, Part I: The Importance of the Mamlūk Institution," *Der Islam* 53 [1976]: 198). According to Ayalon, in order to facilitate conversion of mamluks to Islam, the Mamluks generally refrained from purchasing slaves from "civilized Christian countries of long-established Christianity" where antagonism to Islam existed. See idem, "The Mamlūks of the Seljuks: Islam's Military Might at the Crossroads," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 6, no. 3 (1996): 328, 325; idem, "The Mamlūk Novice: On His Youthfulness and on His Original Religion," *Revue des études islamiques* 54 (1986): 4–6. On ransoming of Christian captives, see also Frédéric Bauden, "L'Achat d'esclaves et la rédemption des captifs à Alexandrie d'après deux documents arabes d'époque mamelouke conservés aux Archives de l'État à Venise (ASVe)," *Regards croisés sur le Moyen Âge arabe: Mélanges à la mémoire de Louis Pouzet sj (1928–2002),* ed. Anne-Marie Eddé and Emma Gannagé (Beirut, 2005), 314–15. On Frankish prisoners of war who remained Christians and were not incorporated into

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would not have been incorporated into the military establishment, or, alternatively, would have remained rank-and-file mamluks until converted. It is clear that even after conversion Tamurbughā kept his connections with his former co-religionists. This could potentially have also happened with Jewish slaves. Haym (Shāhīn al-Tarjumān), the interpreter of Jewish origin, is said to have converted to Islam only after his father's death, which suggests that his father, who seems to have been enslaved with him, did not convert to Islam before he died.[124] Taking into consideration the fact that Jews or Jewish converts of European origin are known to have functioned as dragomans during the fifteenth century,[125] one may legitimately wonder if some of the slave dragomans of European origin, whose original religion is generally not mentioned in the sources, were also of Jewish origin.

Jewish Mamluks of Circassian Origin

Other mamluks referred to as Jews in Mamluk sources seem to have been of Circassian origin according to the names given to them. Al-Sakhāwī mentions a person by the name of Ibn Jānibak al-Yahūdī ("the Jew").[126] Al-Sakhāwī provides no information on him so his father, Jānibak al-Yahūdī, cannot be identified.[127] Notwithstanding this, it is clear that Jānibak al-Yahūdī belongs to the fifteenth century, and, as has already been mentioned, at least during the Circassian period the name **Jānibak** was given to Circassian slaves.[128]

Ibn Iyās provides a short biographical entry for the amir Uzbak al-Sharīfī (d. 1511): "in that month died a person who was amir of forty *(ṭablkhānah)* by the name of Uzbak al-Sharīfī. He was known as Uzbak the Jew *(al-Yahūdī).* He was not a good person *(ghayr mashkūr al-sīrah).*"[129] Before that, Ibn Iyās mentions his name twice in 1502 in lists of amirs of ten or of forty, so he seems to have had a military career.[130] As far as I know, no other historian refers to Uzbak al-Sharīfī.

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the Mamluk establishment, see Julien Loiseau, "Frankish Captives in Mamlūk Cairo," *Al-Masāq* 23, no. 1 (2011): 37–52.

[124] Tafur, *Travels,* 72; Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:91.

[125] See nn. 6–7, above.

[126] Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 11:219; and see also ibid., 11:239.

[127] Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions a person known as Ibn Jānibak *(yuʿrafu bi-Ibn Ǯānibak)* that became a *dawādār thālith* in Damascus in 1452 and is said to have served al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq for a long time. Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions that he had no respected genealogy nor merit *(lā yuʿrafu la-hu nasab wa-la ḥasab),* in what is probably a derogatory remark connected to his Jewish origins. Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 15:440.

[128] See n. 102, above.

[129] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:237.

[130] Ibid., 4:31, 33.

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Still, from the name it may be inferred that he was of Circassian origin. Again it is al-Malaṭī who provides general information about the "ethnic destination" of the name **Uzbak** during the Circassian period. Uzbak al-Ashrafī Ināl (d. 1484) was one of the favored mamluks *(khawāṣṣ)* of his master al-Ashraf Ināl (1453–61) and was expelled from Egypt upon his master's death.[131] According to al-Malaṭī, Uzbak "was a Rūmī but his name is not a name that is [normally] given to Rūmīs but rather one of the names [normally] given to Circassians" *(Rūmī al-jins wa-ismuhu bi-khilāf ism al-Arwām fa-innahu min asāmī al-Ǧarākisah).*[132] It becomes clear then that at least during the Circassian period the name Uzbak was normally given only to Circassians, which is corroborated by a survey of slaves named Uzbak during the Circassian period on whose origin there is information (see Table F below).[133] Being a favored mamluk of al-Ashraf Ināl, during whose reign several mamluks of European/Anatolian origin (more specifically of Cypriot origin) were promoted to senior positions,[134] it is quite possible that Uzbak al-Ashrafī Ināl was given a name of Circassians, the dominant ethnic group at that time, in order to facilitate his promotion.[135]

Table F: Slaves Named Uzbak during the Circassian Period (or Late Turkish Period) on Whose Origin There is Information

Name (Year of Death)	Origin
1. Uzbak al-Ibrāhīmī al-Ẓāhirī [Khāṣṣ Khurjī] (d. 1404)[136]	Apparently Circassian[137]
2. Uzbak al-Ashrafī Ināl (d. 1484)	Rūmī (exception)
3. Uzbak min Ṭuṭukh al-Ashrafī al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1498)	Circassian[138]
a. Uzbak (a *jundī* mentioned in 1380 as one of the relatives of the Circassian sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq)[139]	

[131] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 517.

[132] Ibid., 518.

[133] It is possible that it was given to Circassians already during the late Turkish period. For a detailed discussion of the name Uzbak, see Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:72, 99, 123–25, 2:22–23.

[134] Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 366.

[135] And see n. 39, above.

[136] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* 2:341.

[137] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 3:1174–77.

[138] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* 2:346.

[139] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 11:168.

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The reference to Uzbak al-Sharīfī as a Jew did not go unnoticed. Ayalon mentioned it but noted that "[i]t is quite doubtful, however, that he had been a Jew. It is more likely that he got that *'nisbah'* because of his not too good record."[140] Left unexplained is why exactly Uzbak al-Sharīfī was the only amir labeled as a Jew from among dozens and perhaps hundreds of amirs whose records were considered by Mamluk historians as "not too good."

The tendency to dismiss as slander or derogatory an assertion of a connection between a mamluk and the Jewish religion is not restricted to the case of Uzbak al-Sharīfī. Ashtor relates that in the absence of the sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (1468–96) from Cairo there was a conspiracy to depose him, and when the conspiracy was discovered the *dawādār* Yashbak min Mahdī (d. 1480) ordered that the conspirator have the Jewish yellow turban put on his head before he was led through the streets of Cairo in order to humiliate him. Ashtor refers to this incident in the context of a discussion of usages of the word "Jew" as a pejorative in a derogatory and humiliating manner and as evidence for negative attitudes towards Jews during the Mamluk Sultanate.[141] Clearly he excluded the possibility that there was an actual link between the conspirator and the Jewish religion. In this instance, Ashtor relied on Ibn Iyās, who related that in 1477 the conspirator, Burdbak Jibis, who was *amīr ākhūr,* was led on a donkey while wearing the yellow turban of the Jews in order to humiliate him and then expelled from Cairo, but does not mention that Burdbak was actually accused of being a Jew.[142] Al-Malaṭī, however, who provides a long biographical entry for Burdbak al-Sayfī Sūdūn min ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, known as Jibis, who died in 1484 at the age of about 70 years, mentions that Yashbak min Mahdī accused him of becoming a Jew *(ṣāra Yahūdī)* before putting on his head the yellow turban and leading him through the streets of Cairo.[143] Again, one may wonder why it is that among dozens of mamluks or amirs who conspired against Mamluk sultans it was only Burdbak Jibis that was accused of being a Jew.

Burdbak seems to have been a Circassian, as the name was normally given to Circassians during the Circassian period (see Table G below). As can be seen from the table, five of the Burdbaks on whose origin there is information were Circassians (numbers 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7), and one seems to have been a Circassian (number 5). One was a Georgian (number 8); however, as already mentioned, during the Circassian period Caucasian people seem to have received names normally given to Circassians. There is evidence that during that period Alans *(Āṣ),* Abkhazians *(Abāẓā/Abāzā/Abazā),* and *Akhūkh* (Ubykh?) received names given to

[140] Ayalon, "Names," 223.

[141] Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:63–65.

[142] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 3:136–37.

[143] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 656.

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Circassians.[144] While there is not much information about Georgians during the Circassian period, it seems reasonable to assume that they also received names given to Circassians at that period.[145] One of the Burdbaks was a Frankish Cypriot (number 2), which is a rare case of a mamluk receiving a name that would not normally have been given to persons of his origin. Al-Malaṭī does not provide

[144]During the Circassian period there is evidence for Alans receiving the names **Dawlāt Bāy**, **Shādbak**, and **Qānibāy** that were given to Circassians. See Yosef, "Ethnic Groups," 1:130–31; and see also idem, "The Names of the *Mamlūk*s." In fact, according to al-ʿAynī (d. 1451), the Alans were one of the Circassian peoples *(qabāʾil).* See Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, *Al-sayf al-muhannad fī sīrat al-Malik al-Muʾayyad Shaykh al-Maḥmūdī,* ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo, 1967), 26. There is evidence for Abkhazians receiving the names **Ināl**, **Nawrūz**, **Kasbāy**, **Jān Bulāṭ**, **Shādbak**, **Qānṣuwah**, and **Khāyirbak** that were given to Circassians. See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-manhal al-ṣāfī,* 4:249; idem, *Al-nujūm,* 16:385; al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:464, 332; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 5:483; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mutʿat al-adhhān min al-tamattuʿ bi-al-iqrān bayna tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-al-aqrān,* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Shaybānī al-Mawṣilī (Beirut, 1999), 1:373–74. In fact, the Abkhazians are explicitly referred to as a kind of Circassians by Mamluk historians *(al-ṭāʾifah min jins al-Ǧarākisah al-lādhīna yuqālu la-hum al-Abāzā).* See al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:332; and see also al-ʿAynī, *Al-sayf al-muhannad,* 26 (the *Abāzā* are one of the tribes *[buṭūn]* of the Circassians). Nawrūz al-Muḥammadī al-Ashrafī is said to have been known as "Abazā" which is "a kind of Circassian" *(wa-huwa nawʿ min al-Ǧarkas)* (al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:464) and Khāyirbak min Malbāy is said to have been "a Circassian [of the] Abkhazian [branch]" *(Ǧarkasī al-jins Abāẓā),* and is said not to have been born in the land of the Circassians *(bilād Ǧarkas)* but rather close to the land of the Georgians *(bilād al-Kurj)* (Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 5:483). As for Akhūkh, they received the names **Nawrūz** and **Shādbak** that were given to Circassians (see al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:289; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 3:395). Qānṣuwah al-Ghawrī is said to have known seven languages. The first five mentioned are Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian. The sixth language mentioned is Circassian, and the seventh is Abkhazian-Akhūkh-Alan *(Awaza Akhūkh Ās).* See Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī, "Kitāb Nafāʾis al-Majālis al-Sulṭānīyah fī Ḥaqāʾiq al-Asrār al-Qurʾānīyah," in *Majālis al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī: Ṣafaḥāt min tārīkh Miṣr fī al-qarn al-ʿāshir al-hijrī,* ed. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām (Cairo, 2010), 165. So, clearly Abkhazian-Akhūkh-Alan were considered at that time linguistically related and the closest to the Circassian language. Today, Abkhaz-Abaza is considered to be linguistically the closest to Circassian dialects (Karbadian and Adyghe), and to the recently extinct Ubykh. See Viacheslav A. Chirikba, "Abaza personal names," *Iran and the Caucasus* 17, no. 4 (2013): 391. The Circassians and the genetically and linguistically closely related Abkhaz-Abazas and the Ubykh made up the indigenous northwestern Caucasian peoples. See H. J. A. J. Smeets, "Ubykh," *EI2,* 10:766; Amjad M. Jaimoukha, *The Circassians: A Handbook* (Richmond, 2001), 19, 26. On the relatedness between Circassians, Abkhaz-Abaza, and Ubykh, see also A. Bennigsen and H. Carrère d'Encausse, "Beskesek-Abaza," *EI2,* 1:1190; Ch. Quelquejay, "Čerkes," *EI2,* 2:21–22; Amjad M. Jaimoukha, "Circassians, Modern," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 3rd ed., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_24624 (accessed 29 August 2018). It seems quite reasonable then that *Akhūkh* is the Arab rendering of Ubykh.

[145]There is one case during the Circassian period of a Georgian mamluk that was mistakenly thought by some people to be a Circassian. See al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 577. This also suggetsts a perceived proximity between the two groups.

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in this case a comment regarding the exception nor an explanation for it; however, it seems to resemble other rare cases in which a favored mamluk of European/Anatolian origin received a name normally given to Circassians in order to facilitate his promotion, a phenomenon that seems to be attested during the reigns of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq and al-Ashraf Ināl, who promoted many mamluks of European/Anatolian origin.[146] Burdbak al-Qubrusī al-Ashrafī is said to have been raised from a young age in Ināl's harem *(ḥarīm)* and he was later married to one of Ināl's daughters, so he was clearly a favored mamluk that was groomed from a young age.[147]

In any case, according to al-Malaṭī, "Jibis," the nickname of Burdbak the conspirator who is said to have been a Jew, is a Circassian word *(lafẓah Ǯarkasīyah),*[148] which leaves almost no doubt that Burdbak Jibis was a Circassian. Burdbak Jibis was clearly a military slave. He was originally a mamluk of al-Ashraf Barsbāy and it is explicitly stated that he stayed in the barracks. During the days of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq he became a *khāṣṣakī* and *amīr ākhūr* (probably *thālith*—a junior position in the royal stables filled by simple soldiers).[149] He seems to have been governor of Gaza during the reign of al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam.[150]

Table G: Slaves Named Burdbak on Whose Origin There is Information	
Name (Year of Death)	**Origin**
1. Burdbak al-Jakamī al-ʿAjamī (d. 1451)	Circassian[151]
2. Burdbak al-Qubrusī al-Ashrafī [Faranj] (d. 1464)	Frankish Cypriot (exception)[152]
3. Burdbak al-Ẓāhirī Jaqmaq [al-Mashṭūb] (d. 1470)	Circassian[153]
4. Burdbak al-Muḥammadī al-Ashrafī (d. 1483)	Circassian[154]

[146] See nn. 39, 131–35, above.

[147] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 662; Behrens-Abouseif, "Mamluk Artistic Relations," 366.

[148] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 654–55.

[149] Ibid., 655.

[150] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 16:259.

[151] He was a relative of ʿAlī Bāy min Ṭarābāy al-ʿAjamī (d. 1453) who was a Circassian. See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-duhūr,* ed. ʿIzz al-Dīn, 2:476. On Burdbak al-Jakamī, see al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ,* 3:7.

[152] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 662.

[153] ʿAlī ibn Dāʾūd al-Ṣayrafī, *Inbāʾ al-haṣr bi-abnāʾ al-ʿaṣr,* ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1970), 302–3.

[154] He was the relative of the Circassian sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy. See al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ*, 3:7; al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 667–68.

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5. Burdbak min Bakhshāyish al-Ashrafī Ināl (d. 1476–77)	The slave dealer who brought him to Egypt was Circassian[155]
6. Burdbak al-Sayfī Jarbāsh Kurt (d. 1480)	Circassian[156]
7. Burdbak al-Muḥammadī al-Ashrafī *(al-khāzindār)* (d. after 1501)	Circassian[157]
8. Burdbak al-Kurjī al-Ashrafī al-Khāṣṣakī (d. after ca. 1485)	Georgian[158]

So it seems that most of the mamluks that are said to have been Jews were Circassians. This is in all likelihood not a coincidence. Jewish settlement in the Caucasus may date as far back as the third century. After the Muslim invasion of the Caucasus in the seventh century there is evidence for immigration of Jews to the region, which continued until the thirteenth century but apparently became slower starting in the eleventh century. In 1254 the monk Wilhelm Rubruquis, a Flemish traveler, noted the existence of "a great number of Jews" throughout the eastern Caucasus.[159] The Mamluk historian Ibn Taghrībirdī reports that in 1452 "a Jew from among the merchants of Circassia" (*Yahūdī min tujjār al-Jārkas* [!]) was present in Cairo.[160] Ottoman records on the population in Kaffa in 1545 refer

[155] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 650, 647.

[156] He was a relative of the Circassian sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy. See ibid., 650–52; idem, *Nayl al-amal,* 7:268.

[157] Some said that he came from the same town as the Circassian sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy. See al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 665–67; and see also Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr,* 4:7 (he is last mentioned in 1501).

[158] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-majmaʿ al-mufannan,* 665.

[159] Mordkhai Neishtat and Michael Zand, "Mountain Jews," *Encyclopaedia Judaica,* 2nd ed., 14:580; and see also Dan D. Y. Shapira, "Caucasus (Mountain Jews)," *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World,* ed. Norman A. Stillman, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy1.athensams.net/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/caucasus-mountain-jews-COM_0005160?s.num=0&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world&s.q=mountain+jews (accessed 29 August 2018).

[160] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-duhūr,* ed. ʿIzz al-Dīn, 2:366; and see also Neishtat and Zand, "Mountain Jews," 14:580. The Circassian sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy (d. 1438) is said to have been sold by his father and eventually to have become the slave of a Jew. See Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:70. According to one report this Jew brought Barsbāy to Egypt *(jalabahu ilá Miṣr)* (al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 4:1065). According to another report, however, it seems that after he was bought by the Jew he was captured *(subiya)* and brought to Egypt *(juliba).* See idem, *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīdah fī tarājim al-aʿyān al-mufīdah,* ed. Maḥmūd al-Jalīlī (Beirut, 2002), 1:465–66. According to the first

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to three households of "Circassian Jews."[161] Isolated Jewish settlements could be found throughout the Caucasus until the twentieth century.[162]

As has been mentioned, there is evidence that starting in the 1350s there was an increase in the number of Circassian and European/Anatolian slaves present in the territories of the Mamluk Sultanate.[163] Until that time the so-called Golden Horde was the Mamluk Sultanate's main source for slaves. The decline of the Golden Horde and the Islamization of its Turco-Mongol inhabitants forced the Mamluk Sultanate to search for alternative sources for slaves. Consequently, the Caucasus gradually became the main source for slaves, and Europe/Anatolia became a secondary source.[164] Starting in the reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (1382–99), and more specifically in his second reign (1390–1399), the Circassians were favored and gradually became the majority in the territories of the Mamluk Sultanate.[165] Al-Qalqashandī, who completed his *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá* in 1412, wrote that in his days the Circassians had become the majority of the army and there were only a few Turco-Mongols in the army.[166] After a short recovery of the Turco-Mongols during the reign of al-Muʾayyad Shaykh (1412–21), the ethnic transformation became complete.[167] There is not a single biographical entry for a Turco-Mongol mamluk

report it seems that the Jew was a slave merchant, but it is not entirely clear if he was a Circassian; according to the second report it seems that the Jew was a Circassian, but not necessarily a slave merchant. Al-Maqrīzī hints that Barsbāy absorbed the bad qualities of his Jewish master *(talaqqana akhlāqahu wa-taṭabbaʿa bi-ṭibāʿihi)* (idem, *Al-sulūk,* 4:1065). Interestingly, Ashtor, who was well aware of al-Maqrīzī's comment, seems to have accepted the report about the Jewish master of Barsbāy as trustworthy despite its negative tone (Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:70). As mentioned, in another case where a connection between a mamluk and the Jewish religion was reported in Mamluk sources in a negative tone, Ashtor excluded the possibility that the mamluk was in fact a Jew (see n. 141, above). It suggests that Ashtor simply excluded the possibility of the existence of Jewish mamluks and accepted the report on Barsbāy only because he himself (a mamluk) was not said to have been a Jew.

[161] Dan D. Y. Shapira, "Krymchaks," *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World,* http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy1.athensams.net/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/krymchaks-SIM_000265?s.num=0&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world&s.q=Krymchaks (accessed 29 August 2018).

[162] Jane Hathaway, "Jews among the Grandees of Ottoman Egypt," in *Jews, Christians and Muslims in Medieval and Early Modern Times: A Festschrift in Honor of Mark R. Cohen,* ed. Arnold E. Franklin et al. (Leiden, 2014), 164.

[163] See n. 37, above.

[164] Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 187–89.

[165] See for example al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 3:943; Walter J. Fischel, "Ascensus Barcoch: A Latin Biography of the Mamlūk Sultan Barqūq of Egypt (d. 1399) Written by B. de Mignanelli," *Arabica* 6 (1959): 162; Ayalon, "The Circassians," 139–40.

[166] Ayalon, "The Circassians," 140.

[167] Ibid., 142.

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who arrived in the sultanate after the days of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (1438–53). European/Anatolian mamluks (Rūmīs) enjoyed al-Nāṣir Faraj's favor (1399–1412).[168] It seems that European/Anatolian mamluks started playing a more prominent role during the reign of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (1438–53), at a time when hardly any Turco-Mongols were arriving anymore.

In short, Mamluk historians started referring to mamluks as Jews only when mamluks started arriving from the Caucasus (Circassians) and Europe, where Jewish communities are known to have existed. During the Turkish period of the sultanate (1250–1382), when most mamluks were Turks, Mongols, or Turco-Mongols, no mamluk is said to have been a Jew. Moreover, even in the fifteenth century apparently only Circassian or European mamluks are said to have been Jews, and no Turco-Mongol mamluk is said to have been a Jew although some were still arriving. Importantly, when describing the Mamluk army in Cairo, Frescobaldi, who visited Egypt in 1384, says: "[t]heir soldiers are Turks, Tatars, Arabs, and some Saracens of Syria [i.e., Turkmens], and a few renegades such as Jews and Christians of every generation."[169] Frescobaldi was writing before the second reign of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq, at a time when Circassian and European/Anatolian mamluks were already present in greater numbers but still had not become the most conspicuous element in the army.[170] At that time, most of the army was still comprised of Turco-Mongols ("Turks" and "Tatars") and the mainly auxiliary forces of the Bedouins ("Arabs") and Turkmens. The Jewish and Christian "renegades" (i.e., slaves who converted to Islam) that Frescobaldi is referring to were in all likelihood Circassians and Europeans/Anatolians, and they are differentiated from the Turco-Mongols, among whom there were apparently no Jews or Christians. Frescobaldi's report makes it relatively clear that by the late fourteenth century few mamluks were originally Jews and that these mamluks most likely originated in the Caucasus and Europe.

The fact that sometimes when Mamluk historians of the Circassian period refer to a mamluk as a Jew they also add negative and derogatory remarks does not necessarily mean that these mamluks were not actually Jews and that the reference to them as Jews was mere slander. Though negative attitudes towards Jews also existed during the Turkish period of the sultanate,[171] and in fact the persecu-

[168] Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-sulūk,* 3:1174.

[169] Frescobaldi, "Pilgrimage," 48.

[170] For European travelers' reports from the fifteenth century mentioning Circassians and Europeans among the soldiers of the Mamluk Sultanate, see for example Ulrich Haarmann, "The Mamluk System of Rule in the Eyes of Western Travelers," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001): 6–16.

[171] See for example Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 1:336–47, 279–80; and see also Yehoshua Frenkel, "Conversion Stories from the Mamlūk Period," in *Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Middle Islamic Period: Jews in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Sultanates (1171–1517),* ed. Stephan Conermann (Göttin-

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tion of Jews was more severe during that period than it was during the Circassian period,[172] there is no evidence that Mamluk historians in that period referred to mamluks as Jews in order to slander them. All this suggests that at least some of the mamluks said to have been Jews were actually Jews. It is less likely that bad-behaving mamluks were said to have been of Jewish origin simply to slander them, and rather more likely that the (true) Jewish origin of bad-behaving mamluks was highlighted in order to make more general statements about the bad character of the Jews. The story about the Jewish conspirator Burdbak Jibis can also be seen as a "cautionary tale" against following and trusting Jews.[173] In any case, it is relatively clear that the phenomenon of European and Circassian mamluks of Jewish origin was not unknown during the Circassian period.

Two Mamluk Sultans of Jewish Origin? The Circassian al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (d. 1453) and the Albanian al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam (d. 1467)

As mentioned above, Ibn Taghrībirdī reports that in 1452 "a Jew from among the merchants of Circassia" was present in Cairo.[174] This report did not go unnoticed and was used by modern scholars as evidence for contacts between the Jews of the

gen, 2017), 78–82; Amir Mazor, "Jewish Court Physicians in the Mamluk Sultanate during the First Half of the Eighth/Fourteenth Century," *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014): 42; Luke Yarbrough, "'A Rather Small Genre': Arabic Works Against Non-Muslim State Officials," *Der Islam* 93, no. 1 (2016): 141, 146.

[172] Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 1:288, 303–23, 2:62–64, 87; Mazor, "Jewish Court Physicians," 38–41; Yarbrough, "'A Rather Small Genre,'" 139. Whether this led to a "decline" in the position of Jews is not relevant to the matter at hand, on that see Nathan Hofer, "The Ideology of Decline and the Jews of Ayyubid and Mamluk Syria," in *Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Middle Islamic Period,* 95–120; Mazor, "Jewish Court Physicians," 38.

[173] As noted by Jane Hathaway in the context of her discussion of Jewish mamluks among the Ottoman grandees, Muslim historians of the medieval and early modern eras deployed the experiences of individual non-Muslims in their narratives as examples of inappropriate behavior, and some accounts on the behavior of grandees of Jewish origin may be construed as a "cautionary tale against allowing a converted Jew to amass such a degree of military force." See Hathaway, "Jews among the Grandees," 162–63. On negative perception of Jews during the Ottoman period, see Michael Nizri, "Reflection on the Traits and Images Associated with Jews in Seventeenth Century Ottoman Sources," *Hamsa: Journal of Judaic and Islamic Studies* 4 (2017–18); Hakan T. Karateke, "An Ottoman Anti-Judaism," in *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands,* ed. Hakan T. Karateke, H. Erdem Çipa, and Helga Anetshofer (Boston, 2018); idem, "Evliyā Çelebī's Perception of Jews," in *Disliking Others;* Bilha Moor, "The Jew, the Orthodox Christian, and the European in Ottoman Eyes, ca. 1550–1700," in *Disliking Others.*

[174] See n. 160, above.

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Caucasus and Jewish communities in the Mediterranean.[175] It was also used by Yossef Rapoport in his discussion of the relations between royal justice *(siyāsah)* and religious law *(sharīʿah)* under the Mamluks.[176] According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, a Muslim brought suit before a Maliki qadi against the Jewish Circassian merchant and asked for a court order that would require the Jew to seek justice only through shariʿah courts. The qadi issued the order, but the Jew refused to accept it so the qadi had him beaten and imprisoned. The Jew complained to the sultan, al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq, who had the qadi brought before him and told him that royal justice runs the same course as religious law so the Jew could seek justice with the sultan. Then, al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq ordered the qadi imprisoned. Rapoport found in this report evidence for the authority of military courts in matters of commercial transactions and evidence for royal protection for foreign merchants.[177]

The historian al-Biqāʿī (d. 1480), however, offers a totally different and somewhat surprising explanation for al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq's actions. He reports on the incident with the "Circassian Jew" *(Yahūdī Sharkasī)* in a more detailed manner than Ibn Taghrībirdī. Whereas in Ibn Taghrībirdī's report the fact that the foreign merchant was a Jew seems marginal and there is no particularly negative tone in the report, al-Biqāʿī refers to the Jew's objection to the qadi's order as "stubbornness/disobedience to God" *(ʿinād)*, one of the negative qualities traditionally attributed to the Jews. According to al-Biqāʿī, al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq not only imprisoned the qadi but also ordered the beating and imprisonment of the Muslim who brought suit against the Circassian Jew. Then al-Biqāʿī comments that "the whole incident verifies the claim *(muṣaḥḥiḥah li-mā kāna yuqālu)* that this sultan was a Jew in Circassia, and that he remained a Jew *(kāna Yahūdī fī bilād al-Sharkas wa-annahu bāqin ʿalá dīnihim)* because he used to hurt the Christians but did not harm the Jews."[178] Al-Biqāʿī adds a report from Amīn al-Dīn Yaḥyá al-Aqṣarāʾī (d. 1475), a well-known religious scholar, also suggesting that al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq was lenient towards the Jews.[179] He concludes by mentioning that in general al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq the tyrant *(jabbār)* used to humiliate religious scholars. This made al-Biqāʿī think that what one of the smart and religious soldiers had told him was true, namely, that most of the military men remained committed to their original religion *(anna ghālibahum ʿalá adyānihim al-lātī kānū ʿalayhā)*. The only way to check if they were true Muslims is to examine their behavior towards the Muslim religious

[175] Neishtat and Zand, "Mountain Jews," 14:580.

[176] Yossef Rapoport, "Royal Justice and Religious Law: *Siyāsah* and Shariʿah under the Mamluks," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 16 (2012): 87.

[177] Ibid. And see also Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-duhūr*, ed. ʿIzz al-Dīn, 2:366.

[178] Al-Biqāʿī, *Iẓhār al-ʿaṣr*, 1:219.

[179] Ibid., 1:219–20.

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scholars. Those who do not respect Muslim religious scholars must still respect the religious scholars of their original religion.[180]

How should we treat the information given by al-Biqāʿī regarding the Jewish origins of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq? There is of course no real evidence that al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq, who is normally depicted as a strict Muslim who consulted religious scholars, favored the Jews in comparison to the Christians, and in his days Jews and Christians were both persecuted.[181] In addition, as already mentioned, the fact that the merchant was a Jew seems to be incidental and, as Rapoport noted, al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq's actions should be understood as royal intervention in matters of commercial transactions and as protection for foreign merchants in general. Moreover, as Li Guo demonstrated, "al-Biqāʿī's sentiment against Jaqmaq is extraordinarily personal. And so is his character assassination, so to speak, of the latter in his *Chronicle*."[182] The roots of al-Biqāʿī's hostility towards al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq are easy to detect. Al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq dismissed al-Biqāʿī from several positions which he held, imprisoned him, and then exiled him to India in 1453.[183] In order to damage the image of Jaqmaq, al-Biqāʿī used scandalizing anecdotes and critical comments. One example given by Guo is al-Biqāʿī's account of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq's marriage in 1451. While other historians report briefly on this marriage, al-Biqāʿī's story is lengthy and sensational. The bride is said to have been a minor originally engaged to Jaqmaq's son, and the dirty, old, impotent Jaqmaq could not perform intercourse with her on the wedding night.[184] Al-Biqāʿī says that Jaqmaq was "the problem of the era" and that all the chaos and turmoil of his reign were his fault. Jaqmaq is said to have been "sly and sophisticated, extremely tough, having the innate property of… evil, tyranny, malice, and jealousy," but he deceitfully knew how to hide his true nature.[185] To all this now should be added that he was in fact a Jew pretending to be a good Muslim.

The personal hostility of al-Biqāʿī towards Jaqmaq argues against accepting his report regarding Jaqmaq's Jewish origins as historically true and suggests that we are dealing here with personal slander. Still, given what we have established regarding Jewish mamluks of Circassian origin (see above), the possibility that Jaqmaq was in fact originally a Jew should not be totally excluded. Guo noted that

[180] Ibid., 1:220.

[181] Ashtor, *Toldot ha-Yehudim,* 2:72–75; and see also Mark R. Cohen, "Jews in the Mamlūk Environment: The Crisis of 1442 (A Geniza Study)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 47 (1984): 429–30.

[182] Li Guo, "Al-Biqāʿī's Chronicle: A Fifteenth Century Learned Man's Reflection on His Time and World," in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800),* ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2001), 140.

[183] Ibid., 123, 140.

[184] Ibid., 140–41.

[185] Ibid., 143–44.

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al-Biqāʿī's criticism and fierce attacks against al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq makes one wonder "since when did Mamluk historians begin to feel comfortable expressing their critical opinions on living rulers? And how far could they go?"[186] According to Guo, "it is unlikely that al-Biqāʿī would fabricate any of the stories in his writing," but he certainly had the liberty to comment on them and manipulate them.[187] Could al-Biqāʿī allow himself to manipulatively invent a Jewish origin for Jaqmaq because of his (true) support of a Jewish merchant? Or was his manipulation restricted to putting emphasis on Jaqmaq's (true) Jewish origin, normally ignored by historians and deemed irrelevant, as a manipulative and irrelevant explanation for his support of a Jewish merchant? As much as we would have liked to conclude that a Mamluk sultan of Jewish origin was found, it is advisable to curb our enthusiasm in this particular case. Still, our hopes to find a Mamluk sultan of Jewish origin do not end here.

In the biographical entry of Sultan al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam (d. 1468) the historian al-Malaṭī writes that he was "a Rūmī of the Albanian people" *(Rūmī al-jins Arnaʾūṭī al-qabīlah).*[188] Towards the end of the biographical entry, which is generally not particularly negative in tone, al-Malaṭī says that in his later days al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam became violent and his behavior bad. He concludes that Khushqadam was deceitful *(kathīr al-makr wa-al-ḥiyal)* and that while he perhaps hid it he was evil from the inside *(aswad al-bāṭin).* Directly afterwards, al-Malaṭī adds that a trustworthy person told him that Khushqadam was not a Christian Albanian but rather a Jewish Albanian *(kāna min Yahūd al-Arnaʾūṭ lā min Naṣārāhā)* and the fact that he was redheaded *(al-ṣufrah al-lātī kānat taʿlūhu)* is one of the best proofs that it was true; however, God knows best.[189] While at first sight this might appear as personal slander against al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam it may well be a general statement about the treachery of Jews deduced from the behavior of one particular Jew. Al-Malaṭī does not seem to have had anything personal against al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam. In fact, in the biographical entries of Khushqadam and that of al-Malaṭī's father Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Ẓāhirī (d. 1468), al-Malaṭī emphasizes that the

[186] Ibid., 147.

[187] Ibid., 147–48.

[188] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:445.

[189] Ibid., 3:447. Other historians also refer to the red hair of al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam; see Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 16:307 *("taʿlūhu ṣufrah dhahabīyah ḥasanah");* Ibn Taghrībirdī also mentions that his beard was blondish. Red hair is indeed much more common among Ashkenazi Jews than in the general population. In Medieval and Renaissance Europe red hair symbolized the fires of hell and its demons. Red hair was associated with Jews and Judas and connected to their treachery and demonic qualities. See for example Leonid Livak, *The Jewish Persona in the European Imagination: A Case of Russian Literature* (Stanford, 2010), 89–90. It is not clear at all if al-Malaṭī mentions Khushqadam's red hair in a negative manner. Ibn Taghrībirdī mentions that his red hair was beautiful and does not seem to use this description in a negative manner.

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two were close friends and companions *(ṣuḥbah baynahumā akīdah),*[190] and that Khushqadam used to respect his father *(yuʿaẓẓimuhu)*[191] and made him a close associate *(qarrabahu wa-ikhtaṣṣa bi-hi).*[192] In addition, someone who would have wanted to personally slander Khushqadam by saying that he was a Jew would have been less likely to add "but God knows best" to the report. Moreover, there was no particular reason for al-Malaṭī to claim that Khushqadam was specifically a Jew from Albania and not a Christian, because his opinion of Christians, like the opinion of other Muslim writers, was similarly negative, and they were also considered treacherous. For example, al-Malaṭī relates that he had a slave from Sardinia *(min ʿulūj Sardīnyah)* who converted to Islam and was manumitted by him. Al-Malaṭī says that he treated the slave kindly and trusted him, and the slave acted as if he was his obedient servant. At some point, however, he ran away with al-Malaṭī's property, renounced Islam *(irtadda),* and returned to Sardinia.[193] Later on al-Malaṭī found out that "this dog my slave in fact remained a Christian all the time keeping his infidel belief to himself and pretending that he was a Muslim" *(hādhā al-kalb mamlūkī kāna bāqiyan ʿalá dīn al-Naṣrānīyah mubṭin al-kufr muẓhir al-Islām).*[194] All this suggests that it is quite possible that al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam was actually of Jewish origin.

Jewish settlement existed in Albania perhaps as early as the late Second Temple period. Closer to the period of the Mamluk Sultanate, Benjamin of Tudela, who visited the area around 1169 or 1170, found Jews in the region. Some Hungarian Jews migrated to Albania in the wake of the Black Death in the fourteenth century. Toward the end of the century, they were joined by Jews expelled from France, and Romaniots from Salonica. In the late fifteenth century and afterward, Spanish and Italian exiles settled in Albania, many of them in seaports, and consequently the number of Jews in Albania increased.[195] Albania came under direct Ottoman rule between 1415 and 1417,[196]but Albanians already started fleeing from the Ottoman advance in the Balkans in the 1380s, and some sold themselves into

[190] Al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:445.

[191] Ibid., 4:129.

[192] Ibid., 4:127.

[193] Ibid., 2:229–30.

[194] Ibid., 2:294. And see also Yosef, "Cross-Boundary Hatred," 199.

[195] Yitzchak Kerem, "Albania," *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World,* http://referenceworks.brill-lonline.com.proxy1.athensams.net/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/albania-COM_0001160?s.num=0&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world&s.q=albania) (accessed 2 September 2018); and see also Simon Marcus, "Albania," *Encyclopaedia Judaica,* 2nd ed., 1:584.

[196] Kerem, "Albania."

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slavery.[197] From the second half of the fourteenth century, Albanians could have been enslaved in battles or border raids, could have sold themselves into slavery, or could have been captured in the course of Adriatic piracy.[198] From that period on, then, Albanian slaves could have reached the Mamluk Sultanate through the slave-trade or as gifts from the Ottomans.[199] Some of these slaves may well have been Jews and al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam may well have been one of them.

Concluding Remarks

Mamluk sources mention a few slaves that are said to have been Jews, and most of them seem to have had military careers (i.e., they were mamluks in the full sense of the word). Most of the time, references to mamluks as Jews by Mamluk historians are accompanied by a negative evaluation of their personalities or actions. Some of these references to mamluks as Jews have been noticed by Mamlukists, but they tend to dismiss them as slander. They claim that these mamluks were known as or said to have been Jews only because of their bad record, and do not consider the possibility that these mamluks were actually (or at least had been) Jews. It is not explained why mamluks are only rarely said to have been Jews despite the fact that dozens or even hundreds of mamluks are described negatively in Mamluk sources. The fact that when Mamluk historians refer to a mamluk as a Jew they also add negative and derogatory remarks does not necessarily mean that these mamluks were not actually Jews and that the reference was mere slander. While it cannot be denied that the word "Jew" could be, and was, used as a pejorative, it should be noted that during the Turkish period of the sultanate, when most of the mamluks were Turks, Mongols, or Turco-Mongols, there are no reports on mamluks that are said to have been Jews. We start hearing such reports only during the Circassian period, when most mamluks originated from the Caucasus and Europe, where Jewish communities are known to have existed.

[197] William D. Phillips Jr., *Slavery in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* (Philadelphia, 2013), 60.

[198] Nur Sobers-Khan, *Slaves Without Shackles: Forced Labour and Manumission in the Galata Court Registers, 1560–1572* (Berlin, 2014), 95–96. On piracy in the Mediterranean in the second half of the fourteenth century, see Benjamin Arbel, "Slave Trade and Slave Labor in Frankish Cyprus (1191–1571)," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 14 (1993): 156.

[199] On European/Anatolian slaves given as gifts to Mamluk sultans by the Ottomans, see Behrens-Abouseif, *Practicing Diplomacy in the Mamluk Sultanate,* 85–93. Only two Albanian mamluks are mentioned in Mamluk sources. The sultan al-Ẓāhir Tamurbughā is said to have been brought by a slave dealer to Syria (he was bought by the governor of Tripoli) ca. 1421, that is, shortly after Albania came under direct Ottoman rule. He must have arrived in Syria from the slave markets of Anatolia (al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 3:304–5; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm,* 16:376–77). Al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam was brought to Cairo by a Muslim slave dealer in 1412–13 or 1413–14, that is, shortly before Albania came under direct Ottoman rule; see al-Malaṭī, *Al-rawḍ al-bāsim,* 2:80, 3:445.

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It is also only then that European travelers visiting Egypt report that some of the soldiers of the sultanate were Jews. Moreover, during the Circassian period, the mamluks that are said to have been Jews seem to have been European (Spanish and Albanian) or Circassian mamluks but not Turco-Mongols. All this suggests that at least some of these mamluks were actually Jews, and that in any case the phenomenon of European and Circassian mamluks of Jewish origin was not unknown at that time.

Jane Hathaway has recently discussed the phenomenon of Jews or "Jewish mamluks" among the military grandees of Ottoman Egypt who "seem to have comprised a tiny Jewish parallel to the hundreds of Christian converts from well outside Egypt who every year joined the military-administrative elite of Egypt." Several such figures may be found between the early eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. As Hathaway noted· "[w]hile converted Jews may occasionally have joined the households of Egypt's governors and leading grandees during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is difficult to find any trace of them in the available sources."[200] Hathaway has connected the phenomenon to demographic transformations of the eighteenth century, i.e., mainly the influx of Georgian mamluks (captured in slave raids) into Ottoman territory starting from the seventeenth century displacing the recruits from the Balkans and Anatolia (*devşirme*),[201] but also the influx of Great Russians (Rus) captured in the Ottoman-Russian wars of the eighteenth century,[202] and Western European mercenaries who by the end of the eighteenth century started being recruited into Ottoman households.[203] While most of the slaves or recruits from these locations were Christians, the "occasional Jewish recruit" or "occasional Jew" captured and sold as mamluks were incorporated into the households like the far larger population of Christian recruits or slaves. As we have seen, a similar phenomenon may be detected during the Mamluk Sultanate. The appearance of Jewish mamluks in the sources is clearly connected to a demographic transformation starting circa the 1350s, i.e., the replacement of Turco-Mongol slaves from the Golden Horde by slaves originating mainly from the Caucasus (Circassians) but also from Europe. Also in the case of the Mamluk Sultanate, the "occasional Jewish *mamlūk*" could have been recruited alongside the much larger population of Christian mamluks originating in the Caucasus and Europe. Hathaway noted that the careers of all converted Jews were very much products of the "demographic transformation of the eighteenth century." Therefore, she concluded that "[w]hat we may call the 'Jewish *mamlūk*' phenomenon was *not* one that had existed from time

[200] Hathaway, "Jews among the Grandees," 155–56.

[201] Ibid., 166–67, 156, 159, 164.

[202] Ibid., 157.

[203] Ibid., 166.

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immemorial."[204] The phenomenon perhaps did not exist from time immemorial, but there is evidence that it already existed in the late fourteenth century.

[204]Ibid., 167.

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Appendix: "Ethnic Destinations" of Some Names Given to Mamluks during the Mamluk Sultanate

A. Names given during the Turkish period to "non-Turks," i.e., to Caucasians (practically all referred to as Circassians) and Europeans/Anatolians (Armenians are also attested but it is not entirely clear if they are considered to be Caucasians or Rūmīs):

Starting in the days of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn:

1. **Aqūsh** [apparently stopped being used during al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's reign]
2. **Baybars** [only Circassians are attested; however, until the 1350s there is no conclusive evidence for names given exclusively to Caucasians. Stopped being used in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad but reappeared as a name exclusively for Caucasians during the Circassian period]
3. **Lājīn** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
4. **Sunqur** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]

Starting (probably) in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (roughly the 1320s):

1. **Aq Sunqur** [only Europeans/Anatolians are attested; however, until the 1350s there is no conclusive evidence for names given exclusively to Europeans/Anatolians. Became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
2. **Bahādur** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
3. **Balabān** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
4. **Iyās/Iyāz** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
5. **Ṭurunṭāy** [its "ethnic destination" during the Circassian period cannot be determined conclusively, but it is reasonable that it became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians like all other names in this category]

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B. Names given exclusively to Caucasians (mainly Circassians but on some occasions during the Circassian period also to other Caucasian peoples such as Alans, Abkhazians, Akhūkh [Ubykh?], and apparently also Georgians):

Starting in about the 1350s:

1. **Barqūq**
2. **Ināl**
3. **Sūdūn**

Starting in the Circassian period:

1. **Abū Yazīd**
2. **ʿAlībāy/ʿAlī Bāy**
3. **Arikmās** [possibly starting as early as the 1350s]
4. **Aytamush**
5. **Azdamur**
6. **Barsbāy**
7. **Baybars**
8. **Burdbak**
9. **Dawlāt Bāy**
10. **Jakam**
11. **Jānam**
12. **Jān Bulāṭ**
13. **Janibak/Jānibak/Jānī Bak** [possibly as early as the 1350s]
14. **Jurbāsh**
15. **Kasbāy**
16. **Khayrbak**
17. **Kurtbāy**
18. **Mughulbāy**
19. **Nawrūz**
20. **Qānam**
21. **Qanibak/Qānibak/Qānī Bak/Qanibāy/Qānibāy/Qānī Bāy**
22. **Qānṣuwah**
23. **Qashtam/Qashtamur**
24. **Qāytbāy**
25. [probably] **Qibjaq**
26. **Shādbak/Shādhbak**
27. **Sībāy**
28. **Tanam**
29. **Tanibak/Tānibak/Tānī Bak**
30. **Ṭarabāy**

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31. **Ṭawkh**
32. **Ṭūmān Bāy**
33. **Uzbak** [possibly as early as the 1350s]
34. **Yalbāy**
35. **Yashbak**

C. Names given exclusively to Europeans/Anatolians:

Starting in about the 1350s:

1. **Fāris**
2. **Muqbil**
3. **Shāhīn**
4. **Taghrī Birdī**
5. **Taghrī Birmish**
6. **Tamurtāsh**

Starting in the Circassian period:

1. **Aqbughā**
2. **Aq Sunqur**
3. **Asandamur**
4. **Balabān**
5. **Iyās/Iyāz**
6. **Khushkaldī**
7. **Khushqadam**
8. **Lājīn**
9. **Qarājā** [possibly as early as the 1350s]
10. **Sunqur**
11. **Tamurbughā**
12. **Ṭūghān**

D. Names given exclusively to Turco-Mongols (but on some occasions during the Turkish period also given to Alans and Russians considered to be "Tatars"):

Starting (probably) in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (roughly the 1320s):

1. **Alṭunbughā**
2. **Aqbughā** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]

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3. **Aranbughā**
4. **Arghūn/Arghūn Shāh** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
5. **Asanbughā**
6. **Asandamur** [in all likelihood became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
7. **Baybughā**
8. **Kamishbughā** [possibly became a name exclusively for Caucasians during the Circassian period]
9. [probably] **Manjak**
10. **Qarābughā**
11. **Tamurbughā** [became a name exclusively for Europeans/Anatolians during the Circassian period]
12. **Ṭashtamur**
13. **Ṭaybughā/Ṭashbughā**
14. **Ṭāz**
15. **Ṭughaytamur**
16. **Tulaktamur**
17. **Yalbughā**

Starting from about the 1350s:

1. **Julbān** [perhaps only starting in the Circassian period]
2. **Kuzul**
3. **Ṣunjuq**
4. **Tumāntamur**
5. **Tamurbāy** [seems to have changed its "ethnic destination" during the Circassian period, but it is not entirely clear to which ethnic group it was given then]

Starting in the Circassian period:

1. **Aqbirdī** [became a name for Caucasians, apparently during the reign of al-Ashraf Ināl (this is a most unique case)]
2. **Qujqār**
3. **Qujuq**

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Beirut's Church of the Savior under the Mamluks

The history of Beirut from ancient times to the contemporary period has been the subject of several studies presented by historians of different nationalities who are interested in the history of the city and Lebanon in general. What is remarkable in these studies is the gap in the knowledge of the history of Beirut from 1291 to 1516, during the Mamluk period. Attempts to repair this situation did not succeed for lack of sufficient documentation concerning the Mamluk period. The intent of this paper, therefore, is to fill an important gap in the history of Beirut under the Mamluks: it is an attempt to restore and shed light on a part of the religious history of the city which included a holy and venerated place from the eighth century on.

The city of Beirut played an important commercial role under the Mamluks;[1] its port became the principal port on the Syrian[2] coast for loading spices and other products from India and East Asia. Beirut at that time was also known for the miraculous icon of Jesus Christ that was mentioned in chronicles and pilgrims' accounts from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries, depicting a miracle that took place in Beirut in the eighth century. At the beginning of the 1330s, the Franciscans settled in Beirut and obtained permission to restore and live in their convent there, and they recovered the cellar that had been consecrated as a church since the eighth century, the holy place where the miracle of the icon of Jesus Christ took place. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries this Church of the Savior contributed to the reestablishment of the Latin Church in the Mamluk Sultanate, represented by the Franciscans. Though the edifice was for much of its existence exceedingly small and obscure, we can learn more about belief and practice, as well as Christian-Muslim relations, from its history than from a study of a major cathedral or monastery. That is, the modest and typical of a rich religious past can be more revealing than the grand and exceptional. Neglected and forgotten during many centuries, the Church of the Savior in Beirut under the Mamluks was a key place of contact between Europeans and locals, both Christians and Muslims. This article aims to answer the following question:

[1]For information about Beirut under the Mamluks and its commercial role with Europe, see: Pierre Moukarzel, *La ville de Beyrouth sous la domination mamelouke (1291–1516) et son commerce avec l'Europe* (Baabda, 2010).

[2]Syria means a geographical space called by the Arabs Bilād al-Shām including the specific countries: Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan.

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though Beirut had been known in Europe in the Middle Ages for the miraculous icon of Jesus Christ, why did it only become a destination for European pilgrims and regain its importance and role in relations between East and West during the Mamluk period?

The Church of the Savior and the miraculous icon are not mentioned in the Arab sources of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Arab chroniclers of the Mamluk period were interested in events that took place in the Mamluk Sultanate and not in Beirut. The chronicles are rich in detailed information about the big cities, especially Cairo, Alexandria, Damascus, Aleppo, and Tripoli. Policy, society, the economy, and wars occupied most of these texts. Beirut, on the other hand, which was a port city dependent on Damascus, had only a secondary place in chronicles relating to Bilād al-Shām. It was Damascus which attracted the interest of authors, who mentioned Beirut only when it was attacked by the Europeans *(al-faranj)* or when referring to the constructions built in the city by the governors of Damascus. In general, the city of Beirut was almost absent from the Arab chronicles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

On the other hand, the work of Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá (d. ca. 1436) is a very important source for the history of Lebanon, and especially of Beirut, during the second half of the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth century.[3] The Buḥtur family, of which Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá was a member, was allied to the Mamluks and the district of al-Gharb—the mountain region southeast of Beirut—was under the Buḥtur amirs' authority. Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá cannot be compared to other chroniclers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: he was a historian of opportunity but of great interest. His text is interesting because the author lived in Beirut and witnessed events that took place there, and he was the only one of the Arab chroniclers to speak of the church held by the Franciscans that had existed since the Frankish domination of the city or to mention the miraculous icon.[4] He gave detailed information about the church because it had been transformed into a residence, with a stable, occupied by members of his family.[5] Apart from the church, however, he did not provide any information about the Franciscans and their presence in Beirut, and he did not mention the Christian presence in Beirut. In writing the history of his family, he mentioned Beirut because it belonged to the district governed by the Buḥtur amirs.

[3] Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá, *Tārīkh Bayrūt wa-akhbār al-salaf min dhurriyat Buḥtur ibn ʿAlī amīr al-Gharb bi-Bayrūt,* ed. Kamal Salibi and Francis Hours (Beirut, 1969).

[4] *"Wa-yazʿamūn ayḍan an kān bi-kanīsat al-faranj bi-Bayrūt qūnah khashabīyah fīhā ṣūrah muṣawwarah fa-ḍarabaha baʿḍ al-yahūd bi-sikkīn fa-ṣārat tanuzz daman wa-nuqilat hādhihi al-qūnah ilá Qusṭanṭīnīyah fa-ʿammarū ʿalayhā kanīsah yuʿaẓimunahā al-faranj."* Ibid., 9–10.

[5] Ibid., 106–7.

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As the Arab sources lack information on the Church of the Savior in Beirut during the Mamluk period, the use of European sources to reconstitute the importance of this church and its place in Beirut during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is justified.

The Miraculous Icon of Beirut

Heir of a rich past, Beirut has occupied an important place on the littoral of the Eastern Mediterranean through numerous historical periods. Its apogee dated from the moment when the Romans rebuilt it, erecting many monuments, but it was destroyed in 140 B.C. by Diodotus Tryphon, the king of the Seleucid Empire, during the wars between the successors of Alexander. The Roman general Marcus Agrippa, sent by the emperor Augustus, established two legions in Beirut and extended its territory to the sources of the Orontes *(al-ʿĀṣī)*. In 15 B.C. it became a Roman colony named Colonia Julia Augusta Felix Berytus. During the Roman period, Beirut was filled with remarkable monuments: a theater, a circus, baths, temples, and porticoes. In the third century, its school of Roman law was well known in the East. The monuments of the city were ruined by the earthquake of 551, then rebuilt by the emperor Justinian, but it never regained its former splendor.[6] Around the sixth century there were at least the following churches in Beirut: the Anastasis or the Resurrection, the Church of the Mother of God or Theotokos, the Church of Saint Jude, the Church of the Forty Martyrs, and the cathedral or basilica built by Archbishop Eustathius.[7] At the beginning of the seventh century, the situation within the Byzantine Empire became unstable because of the wars with Persia. The Muslim conquests that came at this time, as the Arabs invaded Syria and took Damascus, Aleppo, Antioch, and Jerusalem. The coastal cities fell one after the other and Beirut was taken in 635.[8] Under the Arabs, Beirut was part of the province of Damascus, and from then on it was considered the port of that city.

A miracle was reported to have happened in Beirut in 750[9] (the Synaxarion of the Maronite Church reported that it happened in 763 and the Martyrologium of

[6] Paul Collinet, *Histoire de l'École de droit de Beyrouth* (Paris, 1925), 22–23. The city experienced another earthquake in 554 and then a huge fire in 560 that completed destroying what was rebuilt. Louis Shaykho, *Bayrūt tārīkhuhā wa-āthāruhā* (Beirut, 1993), 59–60.

[7] Paul Collinet, *Histoire,* 59–75.

[8] Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān* (Beirut, 1978), 133.

[9] *"Cum autem requisitum fuisset pro signando in kalendario translationis huius die, compertum est, quod ipso die habetur memoria illius preclari miraculi, quod non longe ab Antiochia apud civitatem Berittum contigit, de iconia, in qua Dominice passionis opprobria per Iuedos renovata sunt, ut ex cronicis haberi potest, anno Domini septingentesimo quinquagesimo."* Paul Riant, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (Paris, 2004), 2:5–6.

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the Roman Church gave the date 765[10]): Jews were abusing an icon of Jesus Christ and making fun of it. When they pierced it with their knives and lances, blood miraculously flowed from it and this caused many Jews to convert to Christianity. At the Seventh Ecumenical Council (which took place in Nicaea in 787), many cases of wonder-working icons or miracles confirmed through icons were brought before the council.[11] The bishop of Beirut, Athanasius, presented a discourse on this miracle of the icon of Jesus Christ in Beirut. The house or synagogue in which the miracle took place was converted into the Church of the Savior.[12] The miraculous icon was sent to Constantinople and later to Rome. According to a legend it was an archeiropoieta image, not made with the hand of man, begun by Saint Luke and completed by an angel, and was miraculously transported by sea from Constantinople to Rome during the first Byzantine iconoclasm, which lasted from about 726 to 787.[13] It was preserved at Saint John Lateran basilica, where it remains. The icon represents Christ sitting on a throne, his right hand raised and his left hand holding a volume. It is today completely covered with silver ornaments of 1.48 m by 0.74 m. Only the face of Christ is visible. The eastern or Byzantine origin of the icon is established.[14] Putting the legend aside, the sources report that in 753 pope Stephen II (r. 752–57) made a procession of penitence by walking barefoot and carrying the icon from the Lateran to Santa Maria Mag-

[10]Būlus Ḍāhir, *Al-saniksār bi-ḥasab ṭaqs al-kanīsah al-inṭāqīyah al-mārūnīyah* (Kaslik-Lebanon, 1996), 96; Caesare Baronio Sorano, *Martyrologium romanum Gregorii XIII, Pontifex Maximus, Jussu editum, Et Urbani VIII* (Rome, 1630), 553. At the end of the eighth century, other accounts of conversion to Christianity attributed to the influence of icons similar to what happened in Beirut circulated in Mesopotamia and Palestine. May Jabre-Mouawad, "La mosquée du Sérail à Beyrouth: Histoire d'un lieu de culte," *Tempora: Annales d'Histoire et d'Archéologie* 14–15 (2003–4): 154–56.

[11]Ambrosios Giakalis, *Images of the Divine: The Theology of Icons and the Seventh Ecumenical Council* (Leiden, 1994), 46–47. The seventh ecumenical council of Nicaea (also known as the second council of Nicaea) was held to restore the use and veneration of icons which had been suppressed during the reign of the Byzantine emperors Leo III (r. 717–41) and his son Constantine V (741–75).

[12]Ḍāhir, *Al-saniksār,* 96; Touma Bitar, *Siyar al-qiddīsīn wa-sā'ir al-aʿyād fī al-kanīsah al-urthūdhuksīyah (al-saniksār)* (Douma, 1992), 1:65–66; Baronio Sorano, *Martyrologium,* 552–53; Joannes Dominicus Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et ampillisima collectio* (Florence, 1767), 13:24–32.

[13]Pierre Jounel, *Le culte des saints dans les basiliques du Latran et du Vatican au douzième siècle* (Rome, 1977), 120. For more information about the legend attributed to the icon, see: Fernand de Mély, "L'image du Christ du Sancta Sanctorum et les reliques chrétiennes apportées par les flots," *Mémoires de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France* 58 (1902): 113–44.

[14]Philippe Lauer, *Le palais de Latran: Étude historique et archéologique* (Paris, 1911), 93–95; also idem, "Le trésor du Sancta Sanctorum," *Monuments et Mémoires* 15 (1906): 22–24; Pierre Jounel, *Le culte des saints,* 120.

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giore hoping to ward off the invasion of the Lombards who threatened Rome, led by their king, Aistulf (r. 749–56).[15]

Fig. 1. The miraculous icon of the Christ at Saint John Lateran basilica in Rome (upload.wikimedia.org)

The anti-Judaism embedded in the foundation miracle story of this Beirut church cannot be understood outside the frame of the circumstances and events that marked relations between Christians and Jews in the Byzantine Empire, and which persisted throughout the centuries. A Jewish community lived in Beirut

[15] *"In una vero dierum cum multa humilitate solite procedens in letania cum sacratissima imagine domini Dei et Salvatoris nostri Iesu Christi quae acheropsita nuncupatur…."* Louis Duchesne, *Le Liber Pontificalis* (Paris, 1886), 1:442–43. Pope Leon IV (847–51) brought the icon with a procession to Saint-Adrien (in northwestern France) to chase away a terrible snake which ravaged the center of the city. The same rite was followed in 1470 by Pope Paul II (1464–71) for fear of the Turks. Philippe Lauer, "Le trésor du Sancta Sanctorum," 23. On the other hand, each year the two icons of Christ and the Mother of God were the object of a common homage of the Roman people for the Feast of the Assumption. Pierre Jounel, *Le culte des saints,* 120–21.

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under the Byzantines and had its own synagogue. Joshua the Stylite reported in his chronicle, which narrates the history of the Byzantine-Persian war between 502 and 506, that on 22 August 502 an earthquake struck Beirut and "the Jewish synagogue collapsed by itself."[16] From the fifth century restrictions imposed on the Jews by the Byzantines multiplied and the Jews revolted on several occasions. Under the emperor Heraclius (r. 610–41), the Persian conquest of Palestine demonstrated the hostility of the Jews to the Byzantine Empire, as numerous sources say that they assisted the invaders or took advantage of their presence to take revenge on the Christians. Heraclius, after he had conquered the Persians, decided to integrate them by force. In 634 he published an edict which compelled them to baptism on pain of death.[17] When Beirut was taken by the Arabs in 635, the greater part of its inhabitants fled to neighboring regions. Caliph Muʿāwiyah (r. 642–80) established a Jewish community in Tripoli.[18] It is probable that the bishop of Beirut's control of the synagogue of the Jews and its transformation into a church took place at the end of the Umayyad reign with the progressive repopulation of Beirut. The story of Beirut's miraculous icon justified and strengthened the Christians' attitude toward the Jews and gave the Christians a pretext to urge the Jews to leave the city and prevent them from returning. From the eighth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century, the sources make no mention of the presence of Jews in Beirut.[19]

The Church of the Savior was apparently destroyed at the beginning of the eleventh century during the reign of the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr-Allāh (r. 996–1021). According to al-Maqrīzī, more than thirty thousand churches and convents built by the Byzantines (al-Rūm) in Egypt and Bilād al-Shām were destroyed between 403/1012 and 405/1014, all their gold and silver was plundered, and their *waqf*s were confiscated.[20] No Christian construction has been found in excavations in Beirut or Lebanon dating from the time of the Arab occupation of the region in the middle of the seventh century until the arrival of the Latins at the end of the eleventh century. The total absence of Christian remains dating to this period was certainly due to the severe restrictions imposed by the caliph al-

[16] Joshua the Stylite, *Chronique de Josué le Stylite écrite vers l'an 515,* ed. Paulin Martin (Leipzig, 1876), 42.

[17] Pierre Maraval, *Le christianisme de Constantin à la conquête arabe* (Paris, 2001), 25–6.

[18] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān,* 133.

[19] The Jews began to settle in Beirut for trade at the beginning of the sixteenth century: in 1512, the Venetian merchants of Damascus made a request to the sultan to prohibit the Jews from going to the coast for trade. Joseph Toussaint Reinaud, "Traités de commerce entre la république de Venise et les derniers sultans mamelouks d'Égypte," *Journal Asiatique* 4 (1829): 45.

[20] Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-mawāʿiẓ wa-al-iʿtibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār* (Cairo, 1987), 2:495–96.

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Ḥākim on Christians with the destruction of their churches and monasteries.[21] In 1106–7 the Russian pilgrim Daniel visited Beirut, which was ruled by the Fatimids at the time, and spoke only about the miracle. He did not mention the church or even give a place where the miracle happened.[22] Though the miracle continued to be remembered, it seems that over time the church commemorating the icon's location was forgotten by Beirut's inhabitants and visitors.

In 1110 Beirut fell to the Crusaders. Before the Frankish conquest, Beirut had had an Orthodox suffragan bishop, subject to the archbishop of Tyre, who was in turn subject to the patriarch of Antioch. In 1112 a Latin bishop was appointed in Beirut, but, due to objections raised by King Baldwin I on one hand and the Latin patriarch of Antioch on the other, the appointment was delayed more than twenty years; it was not until 1133 that a Latin bishop of Beirut was finally consecrated, subordinate to the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem.[23] The Church of the Savior in Beirut is totally absent from pilgrim accounts of the twelfth century. The pilgrim John of Würzburg, who traveled to the Holy Land between 1160 and 1170, passed through Beirut and mentioned only the miraculous icon.[24] One of the twelfth-century pilgrims who visited Beirut believed that the miraculous icon was still in Beirut but does not report seeing it: around 1173, Theodoricus mentioned in his account that the icon was conserved at the cathedral of the city.[25] The Latin Church's possessions in Beirut were enumerated by Pope Lucius III (r. 1181–85) in 1184; there was no mention of the Church of the Savior.[26] In 1211–12, Wilbrandus of Oldenborg visited Beirut and mentioned the miraculous icon that had once been there but did not say anything about the Church of the Savior.[27]

[21] Nada Helou, "Les lieux sacrés de Beyrouth au Moyen Âge: Les deux églises de Saint-Georges," in *The Holy Portulano: The Sacred Geography in the Middle Ages,* ed. Michele Bacci and Martin Rohde (Berlin-Munich-Boston, 2014), 77–78.

[22] Sofiia Petrovna Khitrovo, "Vie et pèlerinage de Daniel, Hégoumène russe 1106–1107," in *Itinéraires russes en Orient* (Geneva, 1889), 54–55.

[23] Bernard Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States: The Secular Church* (London, 1980), 27–28, 70; John Gordon Rowe, "The Papacy and the Ecclesiastical Province of Tyre (1100–1187)," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 53 (1960): 160–89.

[24] *Peregrinationes tres. Seawulf, John of Würzburg, Theodericus,* ed. R. B. C. Haygëns (Turnhout, 1994), 103.

[25] "*Que ycona hactenus in eiusdem civitatis ecclesia, pontificali cathedra prefulgente, venerabiliter observatur.*" Ibid., 195–96.

[26] Rudolf Hiestand, *Papsturkunden für kirchen im Heiligen Lande: Vorarbeiten zum Oriens Pontificus III* (Düsseldorf, 1985), 205–8, nos. 70; 303–5, nos. 127–28. For information about the churches in Beirut during the Frankish period, see: Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus* (Cambridge, 1993), 1:111–19.

[27] Wilbrandus de Oldenborg, "Wilbrandi De Oldenborg Peregrinatio," in *Peregrinatores medii aevi quatuor Burchardus de Monte Sion, Ricoldus de Monte Crucis, Odoricus de Fore Julii, Wilbrandus de*

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Until the twelfth century, the Savior was the foremost patron of cathedrals and churches. By challenging the iconoclasm of the East, the popes propagated a hierarchical sequence of Savior, Mother of God, Apostles, and Saints whose relics and images were to be honored. Between the tenth and twelfth centuries, thirty-six churches in Rome were dedicated to the Savior.[28] From the twelfth century onward the story of the miraculous icon was commonly associated with Beirut as a result of the ecclesiastical orientation led by the Church of Rome. Guillaume Durand (d. 1296), the bishop of Mende, was a French canonist and liturgical writer who wrote the *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (before 1286), in which he considered the Church of the Savior in Beirut as the first church consecrated by Rome in honor of the Savior; this consecration was commemorated on November 8.[29] During this period many cities declared that they had the miraculous icon or a phial filled with blood that had flowed from it.[30] The miraculous blood was also transported from Beirut to Constantinople in the eighth century; most of the similar relics related to the passion of Christ and his death were at the Church of the Virgin Theotokos of the imperial palace.[31] Due to the conquest of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade in 1204, this relic was sent to Europe around

Oldenborg, ed. J. C. M. Laurent (Leipzig, 1864), 167.

[28] Arnold Angenendt, "In Honore Salvatoris," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 97, no. 2, and 97, nos. 3–4 (2002): 431–56 and 791–824; Jounel, *Le culte des saints,* 305–6.

[29] "*…Et inde mos inoleuit ut ecclesie consecrentur, cum prius tantum altaria consecrarentur; et propter hoc etiam miraculum, ordinauit ecclesia fieri memoriam dominice passionis quinto idus nouembris, et Rome consecrata est ecclesia in honore Saluatoris, ubi quedam ampulla cum illo sanguine reseruatur et sollempne festum tunc agitur.*" Guillaume Durand, *Gvillelmi Dvrandi Rationale Divinorum Officiorvm,* ed. A. Davril O. S. B. and T. M. Thibodeau (Turnhout, 1995), Capvt VI (De Ecclesie dedicatione), 64.

[30] Centuries later, following the model of the legendary transfer of the icon of Beirut from Constantinople to Rome in the eighth century, a legend of the Holy Face was elaborated in Lucca. According to a second tradition, Nicodemus, who buried the body of Christ, received the drops of holy blood, which, following a miraculous journey, would be carried inside the trunk of a fig tree to the coast where in due course the Monastery of the Holy Trinity at Fécamp (northern France) would arise. Jean-Guy Gouttebroze, "À l'origine du culte du Précieux sang de Fécamp, le Saint Voult de Lucques," *Tabularia "Études"* 2 (2002): 1–8. According to a Spanish tradition, the icon of Beirut arrived miraculously in Valencia in 1260. Anastas al-Karmalī, "Ṣalbūt Balinsiyah aw ṣalbūt Bayrūt," *Al-Mashriq* 11 (1908): 254–55. There was also an Italian tradition saying that the icon of Beirut arrived first in Lucca and later went to Rome. Petrus Cornelis Boeren, *Rorgo Fretellus de Nazareth et sa description de la Terre Sainte* (Amsterdam-Oxford-New York, 1980), 19.

[31] George P. Majeska, "The Relics of Constantinople after 1204," in *Byzance et les reliques du Christ,* ed. Jannic Durand and Bernard Flusin (Paris, 2004), 183–90. Robert de Clari, who participated in the Fourth Crusade, mentioned in his account that in Constantinople there was a church "that was so rich and noble," called the Holy Chapel, in which "we found very rich relics of Jesus Christ" and "a large part of his blood was found in a phial." Robert de Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople* (Paris, 1939), 178.

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1205: the chronicler Marino Sanuto mentioned that in 1205 the doge of Venice brought from Constantinople "the phial of the miraculous blood of Christ" and other relics. They were put in Venice in the sanctuary of the chapel of the doge.[32] According to the information collected by pilgrims who passed through Beirut during the thirteenth century, several phials filled with this miraculous blood were sent to the churches in Europe: in Rome, France, England, and other places.[33] Later, in 1384, the Florentine pilgrim Simone Sigoli said that "the precious blood of Jesus Christ" was brought from Beirut to Venice and placed in the Church of Saint Mark and was shown twice a year with great solemnity: once on the Ascension and once on Good Friday. He added that half of the blood of the relic was transported to Bruges in the country of Flanders and put in "the church of Saint Barbara or rather Saint Anastasia and it is shown every Friday with great solemnity; and also is shown on other solemn feasts of the year."[34] A phial of this miraculous blood was also found at the Church of Saint-Aubain in Namur (Wallonia-Belgium).[35] The Orthodox Synaxarion reported that Saint Baripsabas in Dalmatia had a phial of the holy blood of Jesus Christ which came from the icon of Beirut.[36] In 1200, Antonius, the archbishop of Novgorod, evoked the presence in the church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople of the image of Christ, saying that a Jew struck "the neck of the Christ with a knife and blood has flowed from it."[37]

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[32] *"...da Constantinopoli il doge ebbe la Croce d'oro col Legno della Croce, che portava Constantino imperadore di Roma in battaglia, del miracoloso Sangue di Christo in una ampolletta, e parte del capo di San Giovanni Battista, e il braccio di San Georgio martyre; le quali reliquie furono mandate a Venezia, e poste nella capella del doge, nel santuario...."* Marino Sanuto, "Vite dei duchi Veneziani," in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores,* ed. L. A. Muratori (Milan, 1733), 22:533.

[33] Denys Pringle, "Pilgrimages and Pardons of Acre (1258–63)," in *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, 1187–1291* (Farnham, 2012), 234.

[34] Simone Sigoli, *Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria in 1384 by Frescobaldi, Gucci and Sigoli,* ed. Fr. Theophilus Bellorini and Fr. Eugene Hoade (Jerusalem, 1948), 194. See also: Riant, *Exuviae sacrae,* 2:270.

[35] *"De Sanguine Salvatoris Domini, relato in brevi apostolico Nicolai, summi pontificis, item in donatione Philippe II, Namurcensis comitis & marchionis reliquiarum, quas donat ecclesiae Sancti Albani."* Riant, *Exuviae sacrae,* 2:200. It should be pointed out that after Constantinople was recaptured by the Byzantines in 1261, and from then until 1453 several relics continued to be exhibited in the churches of the city, including that of the miraculous blood of the image of Christ in Beirut. This indicates that the miraculous blood was divided into several phials. Majeska, "The relics," 183–90.

[36] Bitar, *Siyar al-qiddīsīn,* 1:65–66.

[37] *"Est etiam alia imago Christi quam Iudaeus quidam in faucibus perculsit."* Riant, *Exuviae sacrae,* 2:222. *"... un juif frappe au cou ce Christ d'un couteau, & il en sortit du sang; dans le diakonikon, nous baisâmes ce sang de Notre Seigneur, sorti de l'image."* Sofiia Petrovna Khitrovo, "Antoine, Archevêque de Nogorod: Le livre du pèlerin," in *Itinéraires russes en Orient,* 87.

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Blood occupied a central place in medieval culture. A symbol of death when it escapes from the body in too great a quantity, it can be a sign of sin and horror, but also of alliance, purification, and redemption, as shown by the strength of the analogy between the blood of Christ as a symbol of his Passion and the place devoted to blood in the medieval anthropology of human passions. This may explain the thirst for relics exemplified by the dispersion of the blood of Christ throughout the Byzantine and Latin worlds. Each church needed its relic and each bishop wanted relics for his diocese—if possible, more attractive than those of his neighbor. Abbeys and monasteries asked for relics, kings and popes sought relics for the greater glory of God and for their personal prestige. Relics were symbols of the spiritual presence of the Holy Land in the heart of Western Christendom and Byzantium, especially for the faithful who did not have the means to undertake the pilgrimage to Palestine and the holy places of the East. The widespread use of relics led to the creation of a real relics market in the Middle Ages. The period of the Crusades was favorable to the development of the relics market. Byzantium had discovered them, preserved them, and even manufactured them. Venice and the great Italian merchant cities imported relics and marketed them. The sack of Byzantium in 1204 had no other purpose than to seize its wealth and especially its relics.[38] The demand for relics was so enormous that the trade in them was officially tolerated by the Church, and thefts of the relics were frequent and even unofficially admitted.[39] Relics played a significant role in the context of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, both because the sites of their origin became holy places, and because of their role in propagating the image of the Holy Land through their diffusion to the various churches and chapels of Christendom. This dual importance led pilgrims to consider the quest for relics as one of the purposes of pilgrimage, either to visit the sacred objects' places of origin or to venerate those which were still there.[40] The famous relic of the blood from the icon, known throughout the Middle Ages as a tangible remnant of Jesus Christ, became a pilgrimage object in Europe and encouraged pilgrims to visit Beirut where the miracle took place.

[38] John Wortley, "The Byzantine Component of the Relic-Hoard of Constantinople," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 40 (1999): 353–78.

[39] Hubert Silvestre, "Commerce et vol de reliques au Moyen Âge," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 30, nos. 3–4 (1952): 721–39.

[40] Aryeh Graboïs, *Le pèlerin occidental en Terre sainte au Moyen Âge* (Paris-Bruxelles, 1998), 59–62.

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Between 1220 and 1240, the Franciscans settled in Beirut[41] and built a church known as the Church of Saint Francis.[42] They would leave around the end of the century, when the Mamluks took control of the area. As has been shown, no church dedicated to the Savior existed in Beirut during the Frankish period and any idea of rebuilding it from its ruins was totally abandoned. It was only with the return of the Franciscans around 1335, during the Mamluk period, that the Church of the Savior regained its importance to Europeans and the inhabitants of the city.[43] It seems that the ancient Church of the Savior, the remains of which were just a partially underground chamber, was totally abandoned and neglected by the Christians in Beirut, particularly the Melkites, for centuries.[44] Even the Latins showed no interest in restoring the church until the return of the Franciscans to Beirut in the fourteenth century. Why were the remains of the church neglected and forgotten from the eleventh till the fourteenth century? It is difficult to find an answer.

The Church of the Savior

In 1291 the Mamluks defeated the Crusader states, the Latins definitively left the Levant, and the Mamluks finally seized Beirut. The walls of the city and the citadel were dismantled; some churches were turned into mosques (such as the

[41] Jean Richard, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au Moyen Âge (XIII–XVe siècles)* (Rome, 1977), 38. For more information about the geographical spread of the order during the thirteenth century, see: Grado Giovanni Merlo, *Au nom de saint François: Histoire des Frères mineurs et du franciscanisme jusqu'au début du XVIe siècle* (Paris, 2006), 66–76.

[42] Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá, *Tārīkh Bayrūt,* 106–7; Nicolas de Martoni, "Nicolai de Marthono, Notarii, Liber peregrinationis ad loca sancta," *Revue de l'Orient Latin* 3 (1895): 626. Most likely they built the church after the death of Saint Francis in 1228; otherwise it could not be called the church of Saint Francis.

[43] For information about the Franciscans in Beirut, see: Pierre Moukarzel, "La présence des franciscains à Beyrouth sous la domination des Mamelouks (1291–1516) d'après les récits de pèlerinage," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 103, no. 1 (2008): 50–84.

[44] It seems that the number of the Melkites in Beirut was not large, which may explain why they did not vie for control over the ancient Church of the Savior against the claims of the Franciscans, which were supported by the European rulers and the Mamluk sultans. The decline of Byzantium reduced the Melkite communities in Syria and Egypt to a very precarious situation. The sources do not mention the Melkites in Beirut during the Frankish period and under the Mamluks. But in the fifteenth century they had an eparchy in Beirut, a part of a metropolis: in 1440, the bishop of Beirut was Michael, but there is no indication that his see was actually in Beirut. Perhaps he was the same as the bishop of Ṣaydnāyah (near Damascus) who was elected patriarch in 1451 under the name of Michael IV (r. 1451–56). Alfred Baudillart, *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1935), 3:632–33, 8:1308.

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Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist[45] and the Church of Saint Barbara[46]), and the rest of the churches were destroyed or transformed into residences. Some exceptions are the Church of Saint Georges outside the city (one mile east near the river of Beirut), and the Churches of Saint Nicolas and Saint Georges inside the city.[47] Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá provides details about the Church of Saint Francis and what became of it. In 1294 the amirs of the Buḥtur family, who were put in charge of defending Beirut, settled in the church, which stood to the east of the city but inside the wall. It was a large church and the amirs transformed it into a stable above which they established their residence. In time, the church was known as *al-salaf* (the ancients).

In 1334, the Genoese attacked the port of Beirut and seized a ship belonging to the Catalans. From then on, the chief of the Buḥtur family, the amir Nāṣir al-Dīn, decided to live closer to the sea and the church was occupied by the al-ʿAramūnīyūn, another branch of the same family.[48] At the beginning of the fifteenth century, after 810/1407, it was sold to members of the Banū Ḥamrāʾ[49] family, who dismantled the church and used its stones to build their madrasah. Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá added that at the time he was writing (after 1426) the church was in ruins.[50]

To summarize, we know that the church was large, that it was converted into a residence at the end of the thirteenth and during the fourteenth century, and that it no longer existed at the beginning of the fifteenth century. There is no evidence that this large church dedicated to Saint Francis was built during the Frankish domination of Beirut on the site of the ancient Church of the Savior, consecrated as early as the eighth century. It was another church dedicated to Saint Francis that was built during this time near the cellar or underground chamber that constituted the remains of the ancient church, since both were in eastern Beirut.

[45] Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá, *Tārīkh Bayrūt,* 34.

[46] Ogier d'Anglure, *Le saint voyage de Jérusalem du seigneur d'Anglure,* ed. Fr. Bonnardot-A-lognon (Paris, 1878), 11; Bertrandon de la Broquière, *Voyage d'Outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquière,* ed. Charles Schefer and Henri Cordier (Paris, 1892), 39; Anselme Adorno, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471)* (Paris, 1978), 347; Joose van Ghistele, "Le voyage en Orient de Joose van Ghistele (1481–1485)," *Revues générales de Bruxelles* 37–38 (1883–1884): 745; Francesco Suriano, *Treatise on the Holy Land by Fra Fr. Suriano,* ed. Fr. Theophilus Bellorini and Fr. Eugene Hoade (Jerusalem, 1949), 174.

[47] *"In hac civitate pulcra stat ecclesia sancti Nycolai constructa."* Ludolphus de Sudheim, "De itinere Terre Sancte," *Archives de l'Orient Latin* 2 (1884): 338; *"In qua civitate sunt due ecclesie, Sanctus Salvator et Beatus Georius; extra cuius civitatis muros, ad duo miliaria versus orientem, est ecclesia beati Georii martiris, ubi ipse occidit draconem."* Charles Kohler, "Le libellus de locis ultramarinis de Pierre de Pennis," *Revue de l'Orient Latin* 9 (1902): 380.

[48] From the village ʿAramūn in the region of al-Gharb (the mountains near Beirut).

[49] A branch of the Arabs of the Biqāʿ who settled in Rās Bayrūt.

[50] Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá, *Tārīkh Bayrūt,* 106–7.

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Moreover, we notice that Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyá made no mention of the return of the Franciscans to Beirut in 1335 and their installation in their convent next to the place where the miracle of the icon happened.[51] It is clear that the Franciscans possessed a large church in Beirut in the thirteenth century and lost it definitively with the occupation of the city by the Mamluks in 1291. When they returned around 1335 they were only allowed to restore their convent. They took back the cave which was the remainder of the ancient church of the Savior, and revived the veneration of a holy place in, and pilgrimage to, Beirut. They used the church to support their requests to the sultan for the recovery of a holy place and to justify their return to Beirut rather than some other town.[52]

The Church of the Savior is an example of a site that persisted through many centuries of profound and sometimes violent political change. In the eighth century it was a synagogue converted into a Byzantine church; it was destroyed in the eleventh century and lost in time, and then rebuilt in the fourteenth century and served by the Franciscans. It occupied an important place in the memory of the Europeans and was mentioned in Latin liturgical writings. The Latins played a major role in stimulating the veneration of the Church of the Savior, and because of the continuous service provided by the Franciscans from the fourteenth century till the sixteenth century, the church preserved its religious memories and remained a sacred place venerated by all who visited it. The Franciscans revived the glorious past of Beirut's Church of the Savior. They took care to keep their church, administering the sacraments, and offered assistance to Europeans settled in the territories under the authority of the Mamluk sultan. Their church in Beirut continued to exist for more than two centuries because they maintained good relations with the locals and gained their trust.

Pilgrims who visited Beirut in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries provide information about the church as it was under the control of the Franciscans. The Augustinian monk Jacobi of Verona visited Beirut in 1335. He noted that to enter

[51] The convent of the Franciscans in Beirut was established in the thirteenth century between 1220 and 1240. It was the convent of Saint Joseph. Girolamo Golubovich, *Serie cronologica dei reverendissimi superiori di Terra Santa* (Jerusalem, 1898), 216.

[52] Through agreements with the Mamluk sultan, the policy of the two sovereigns of Naples (Robert of Anjou and his wife Sancha of Majorca) led to the sultan's recognition of the Franciscan presence in the Holy Land and in Beirut as the sole representatives of the Latin Church, and to the revival of Christian worship in the holy places, including the stimulation of Western pilgrimage. For more information, see: Pierre Moukarzel, "The Franciscans in the Mamluk Sultanate: A Privileged Community Subject to the Politico-Economic Balance between Europe and the East," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras VIII,* ed. U. Vermeulen, K. D'Hulster, and J. Van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2016), 441–62.

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the church one had to descend fifteen stairs.[53] In 1349, Fra Niccolò of Poggibonsi said, "This church is half underground, and has two doors; before the altar two lamps always burn. There is a great indulgence."[54] In 1384, three Florentine pilgrims described the Church of the Savior. Lionardo di Nicolo Frescobaldi wrote that "In this city there is a church, which used to be officiated by the Friars of St. Francis, which is beautiful and devout, and the consul for the Venetians allotted it to us for our abode; and it is called St. Savior church."[55] Giorgio Gucci mentioned that the church was officiated almost permanently and every morning there was a mass: every day during his stay in Beirut (13 March to 10 April) he heard a mass led by a Florentine monk. During Holy Week and Easter the services were offered by several priests and friars.[56] Simone Sigoli found the church small and added that during the Frankish period there had been a bigger church that was destroyed when the city was recaptured by the Mamluks, and that later, with the consent of the sultan, the Christians had rebuilt a small church and called it Saint Savior's.[57] In 1395, the pilgrim Nicolas de Martoni visited the church and described it as a small vaulted room with only one altar, where mass was celebrated daily for the Venetian and Genoese merchants settled in Beirut. He also mentioned the convent, saying that in it there were several small dwellings to house the guardian, who lived on the alms of the European merchants visiting Beirut. This guardian of the convent of Beirut was subject to the guardian of Mount Sion in Jerusalem, who governed all parts of Syria.[58] Concerning the location of the Franciscan residences, he says that the convent and the ancient Church of the

[53] *"In illa civitate Baruch, est ecclesia Sancti Salvatoris, ad quam descenditur per gradus XV...."* Jacques de Vérone, "Liber peregrinationis fratris Jacobi de Verona," *Revue de l'Orient Latin* 3 (1895): 296.

[54] Niccolo di Poggibonsi, *A Voyage beyond the Seas (1346–1350),* ed. Fr. Theophilus Bellorini and Fr. Eugene Hoade (Jerusalem, 1945), 82.

[55] Frescobaldi in Bellorini and Hoade, *Visit to the Holy Places,* 88.

[56] Gucci in ibid., 148. Giorgio Gucci still believed that the crucifix inside the church was the miraculous icon of the eighth century: "And in this church there is a Crucifix, for which there is great veneration, because it is said that once a Saracen, to spite the Christians, entered the said church and with a rod began to strike this Crucifix, and as he struck it, it began to bleed; and ever since, as said, it is held in great reverence."

[57] Sigoli in ibid., 194.

[58] *"Modo non est nisi una lamia in qua est altare, et ibi omni die celebratur missa pro ipsis mercatoribus. Sunt alieque alie parve mansiones in quibus manet guardianus; quando ego fui, non erat in dicto loco nisi guardianus tantum qui illic vivit de elemosinis dictorum mercatorum et guardianus dicti loci est sub guardiano seu vicario loci Montis Syon, qui habet gubernare omnia loca Sorie."* Nicolas de Martoni, "Relation du pèlerinage à Jérusalem de Nicolas de Martoni, notaire italien (1394–1395)," *Revue de l'Orient Latin* 3 (1895): 626.

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Savior were beside each other in the eastern part of Beirut, 50 *braccia* (around 30 meters) from the city square.[59]

The information provided by the pilgrims of the fourteenth century is similar: the church was a small, vaulted chamber, partly underground, with two doors, and in use on a regular basis. There were no windows, adornments, icons, or frescos decorating the church. What is remarkable is that the mass was celebrated solely for European merchants and pilgrims; there is nothing in any source to imply the participation of the indigenous Christians (Maronites or Melkites).[60]

[59] Suriano, *Treatise,* 169.

[60] In 1941 Jean Lauffray discovered a small, partially underground church in Beirut. He wondered if it was the Church of the Savior. Jean Lauffray, "Forums et Monuments de Béryte: II: Le niveau médiéval," *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth* 8 (1946–48): 7–16. Comparing the information quoted in the sources with the remains of the discovered church we can find some similarities but we cannot adopt the hypothesis that it was the Church of the Savior.

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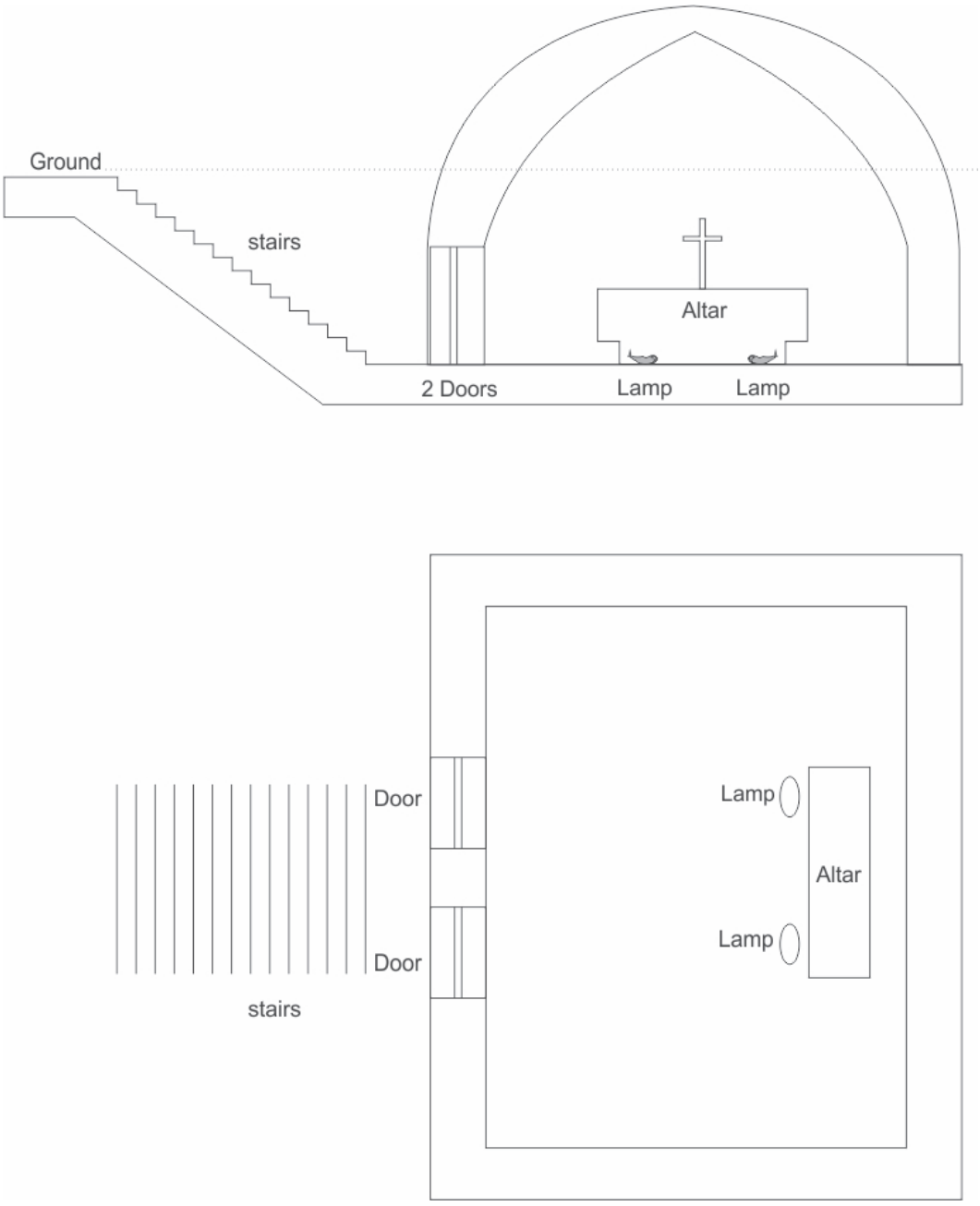

Fig. 2. The Church of the Savior in the fourteenth century (an approximate plan)

During the first half of the fifteenth century, according to the reports of European pilgrims who passed through Beirut, nothing had changed in the structure

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of the church or the convent, or in the status of the Franciscan brothers, though the number of monks in the convent had increased to between six and eight. It was considered one of the largest convents of the Franciscan custody in the East.[61] Between 1470 and 1480, however, the structure of the church was changed by adding an attic to divide it into two parts.

The pilgrim Johannis Poloner passed through Beirut in 1422. He spoke of an underground chamber transformed into a church with an altar; to enter it, one had to descend eighteen steps.[62] When the pilgrim Joos van Ghistele arrived in Beirut in 1481 his first visit was to the Franciscan convent. According to his description, it was dilapidated on the outside but well-kept inside, with a full garden of fruits and vegetables (oranges, figs, almonds, olives, lemons, and more) and a singular small church formed only of a crypt and an attic. He continued his description by saying that the Franciscan monks lived on pious donations and a voluntary tax paid by Christian merchant ships entering the port: a ducat for large ships and a half-ducat for small ones.[63] Van Ghistele also mentioned that the Maronites celebrated their services in the crypt and the Franciscans in the attic.[64] This proves that the Maronites did not have their own church in Beirut, so they shared the Franciscan church. Probably during the second half of the fifteenth century, the Franciscans of Beirut admitted Maronites into their order as brothers who settled permanently in the convent.[65]

[61] Golubovich, *Serie cronologica,* 216.

[62] *"In quodam habitaculo subterraneo hujus civitatis ostenditur imago salvatoris…Facta est ibidem capella cum uno altari, habens in descensu xviii gradus."* Titus Tobler, *Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae ex saeculo VIII, IX, XI, et XV* (Leipzig, 1874), 266–67. It is not known if he was mistaken in counting the steps or if alterations in the staircase of the church took place between the fourteenth and the fifteenth century.

[63] *"Eerst ten convente ende cloostere vanden observanten van Sente Fransoys oordene, daer zij zeere vriendelic ontfanghen waren ende hem lieden ghetoocht alle de woonsteden daer binnen, welc clooster schijnt van buuten een cleen vervallen huus wesende, wat gherepareert zijnde, maer als men binnen comt, zo es de plecke zeere ghenouchelic van alder tiere fruytboomen, van appelen van garnaten, oraengen, fighen, amandelen, oliven, lymoenen ende andere fruyten, ende zijn ghenouch voorsien van allen lygommenen ende salladrien… Ten onderhoudene van desen cloostere gheven alle de kersten scepen met cruus zeilen daer inde havene commende eenen ducaet, ende alle de smale scepen met seylen van sneden eenen halven ducaet…."* Joos van Ghistele, *Tvoyage van mher Joss van Ghistele*, ed. Ambrosius Zeebout (Hilversum Verloren, 1998), 63.

[64] *"Onder inde keercke staet eenen aultaer daer de kerstenen maroniten haerlieder dienst doen als zij daer commen… item boven up den soldere inde voorseyde keercke es oec eenen aultaer, daer de broeders vander observancien voorseyt haerlieder diensten ende ghetijden daghelicx up doen."* Ibid., 63.

[65] Pierre Moukarzel, "La présence," 75–76.

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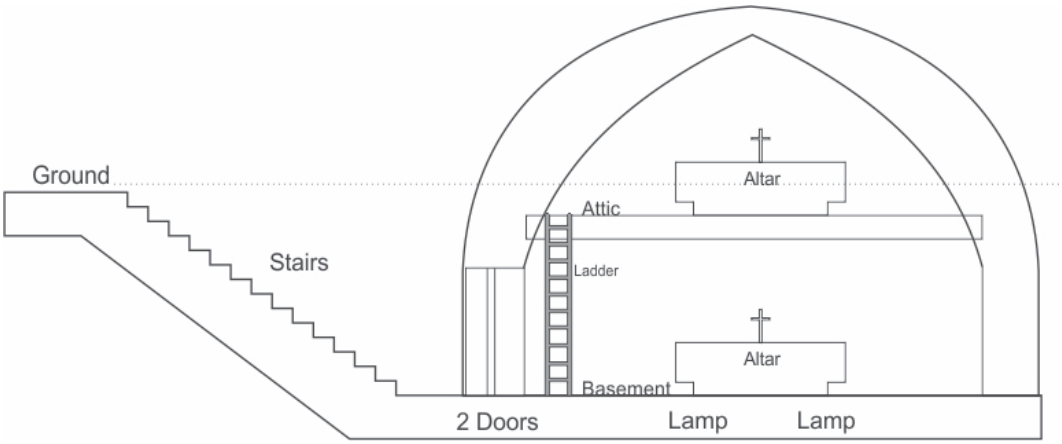

Fig. 3. The Church of the Savior in the fifteenth century (an approximate plan)

The information gathered on the Church of the Savior and the convent during different periods allows us to deduce that the Franciscans in Beirut during the Mamluks' reign failed to obtain permission to rebuild or enlarge their property (the convent and the church). They were only authorized to divide the inside of the church into two floors, probably by using planks rather than stones.[66] Perhaps they could not have engaged in larger construction efforts in any case, since their only means of subsistence in Beirut was the alms offered by European merchants who frequented the city for commerce.

The Importance of the Church of the Savior

The Church of the Savior in Beirut was important because it was the only Latin church that existed in a coastal city outside Palestine. Beirut at that period was the port of Damascus, which was the main market for spices and other commodities and products coming from India and the Far East. As a holy place the church played a number of roles. It attracted European merchants and pilgrims to Beirut, some of whom settled there. The Franciscans said mass for the sailors and merchants, took care of their spiritual needs and the sacraments, and lived on alms. They also hid fleeing slaves and renegades and helped them return to Christian countries aboard European merchant vessels.[67] The church was also a cemetery for Europeans who died in Beirut: in 1419, a Genoese merchant settled

[66] According to Islamic doctrine, it was forbidden to build new churches in important cities and towns of the Muslim world. But the *dhimmī*s were sometimes allowed to restore or rebuild churches which had fallen into ruin. Antoine Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-musulmans en pays d'Islam* (Beirut, 1995), 174.

[67] Suriano, *Treatise,* 169.

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in Beirut, specified in his will that he wanted to be buried in the Church of the Savior of the Franciscans *"in loco maiori ipsius ecclesie."* He bequeathed five ducats to the Franciscans for masses *"pro remissione sive alleviatione anime."*[68] The Franciscans not only carried out pastoral tasks for Europeans visiting or living in the Mamluk territories, but also sought to establish good relations with the local population. During the fifteenth century the Franciscans acted as a connection between the Holy See of the Catholic Church and the Eastern Churches, especially the Maronite Church: the Franciscans in Beirut put the Church of the Savior at the Maronites' disposal and the convent of the Franciscans beside this church became, from the second half of the fifteenth century, the basic center of relations and contacts between the papacy and the Eastern Christians in Syria. In 1439, Pope Eugene IV (r. 1431–47) received the oath of fidelity of the Armenian envoys at the Council of Florence. At about the same time the friar John, superior of the Franciscans in Beirut, arrived with a profession of faith and an act of obedience sent by the Maronite patriarch to the pope. In 1440, the Franciscan Anthony of Troïa was sent by the pope on missions to Eastern Christians, and in 1444 the Franciscan friar Peter of Ferrare, from the convent of Franciscans in Beirut, was appointed an apostolic commissioner to the Maronites and the Syrians.[69]

At the same time, the Church of the Savior contributed to establishing good relations with the local population, setting an example of cohabitation between Christians and Muslims at a time when relations between East and West were not always positive, often affecting Christians, Europeans and natives, living in the territories subject to the Mamluk sultan. According to Francesco Suriano, who was the guardian of the Franciscan convent in Beirut from 1481 to 1484, the Church of the Savior was venerated not only by Christians but by all Muslims of the country. He gave several examples of good relations between the Franciscans and Muslims in Beirut.[70]

The Church of the Savior allowed the Franciscans, as the guardians of a holy place, to reestablish the Latin bishop's see in the city at the end of the fourteenth century. The Latin bishopric of Beirut did not disappear when its seat no longer existed in Beirut after the occupation of the city by the Mamluks in 1291. This seat was not abolished but was moved to Nicosia, Cyprus.[71] In 1397, pope Boniface IX (r. 1389–1404) appointed the Franciscan Brother Blaise de Clusiano bishop of

[68]Charles Verlinden, "Marchands chrétiens et juifs dans l'État mamelouk au début du XVe siècle d'après un notaire vénitien," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 51 (1981): 47.

[69]Richard, *La papauté,* 70; Henri Lammens, "Frère Gryphon et le Liban au XVe siècle," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 4 (1899): 77.

[70]Suriano, *Treatise*, 170–72.

[71]Émmanuel-Guillaume Rey, *Les familles d'Outre-Mer de Du Cange* (Paris, 1869), 782.

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Beirut: "He must reside personally in his church and not exercise episcopal rights outside the city and the diocese."[72]

The Church of the Savior contributed towards the increase of the number of Franciscan monks in Beirut as more were required to serve the church, to provide provisions and goods to the Franciscans in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and to substitute for the Franciscans in the Church of the Resurrection.[73] It also occupied an important place in the pilgrimage networks established by Venice with the collaboration of the Franciscans. Starting in the 1380s, Venice had organized a system of transportation for pilgrims to the Holy Land that was complementary to the commercial transportation system. The pilgrims' galleys were an integral part of the merchant fleet system. The Venetian Senate authorized pilgrims to travel on board galleys bound for Beirut, which left Venice every year by August 24 or at the beginning of September. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, the influx of pilgrims was very large and Beirut galleys were for a few years the principal means of transport.[74] The Franciscans welcomed the pilgrims to the Holy Land from the moment of the ships' arrival in Beirut, they hosted travelers, and they guided pilgrims to Palestine. Thus, the Church of the Savior in Beirut was the first place visited by pilgrims who passed through the city before continuing their journey to Palestine.[75]

Conclusion

While aware that Beirut was not part of the Holy Land, all the European merchants and pilgrims who passed through Beirut remembered the splendor of its past and visited the church where a miracle happened in the eighth century. Its regular maintenance by the Franciscans during the Mamluk period was intended to and to perpetuate Christians' memory of Beirut's Christian past. The presence of the Church of the Savior in Beirut provided an opportunity to revive the glorious and sacred image of the city in spite of the changes that upset the East and contributed to the annihilation of the Latin presence there. It formed the basis for the reestablishment of the Latin Church in Syria from the fourteenth to the

[72] *"…cui ingiunse di risiedere personalmente nella sua chiesa e di non esercitare diritti vescovili fuori città e diocesi."* Giorgio Fedalto, *La chiesa latina in Oriente* (Italy, 1981), 1:212; Rey, *Les familles,* 782.

[73] *"Là ont noz freres ung couvent pour recepvoir les vivres et biens qui leur sont apportez de Chipre, pour transporter en Hierusalem et Bethleem."* Jean Thenaud, *Le voyage d'outremer de Jean Thenaud,* ed. Charles Schefer (Paris, 1884), 115; Norberto Risciani, *Documenti e firmani* (Jerusalem, 1936), 308.

[74] For more information, see: Eliyahu Ashtor, "Venezia e il pellegrinaggio in Terrasanta nel basso Medioevo," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 143, no. 2 (1985): 197–223.

[75] The pilgrims in Beirut also visited the place where Saint George killed the dragon. Moukarzel, *La ville de Beyrouth,* 90.

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sixteenth centuries and made it possible to enlarge the activities of Latin clergy outside Palestine.

Only a partial image of the Church of the Savior in Beirut could be restored here, due to the lack of documentation about Beirut during the Mamluk period and the scarcity of archaeological remains. Without such sources it is difficult to reconstruct the history and study the place that this church had in the memory of Beirut.

The Ottoman sultan Selim I (r. 1512–20) conquered the Mamluk Sultanate, defeating the Mamluks at the battle of Marj Dābiq in 1516, and then at the battle of Rīdānīyah in 1517. Under the Ottomans, the Franciscans continued to serve the Church of the Savior and were still sharing it with the Maronites. In 1564, the Portuguese Friar Pantaleam D'Aveyro, who stayed in the convent of the Franciscans, related that the church was divided in two equal parts in length and width: the upper part for the Franciscans and the lower part for the Maronites.[76]

In 1571, however, the Franciscans fled from Beirut due to the wars between the Ottomans and the Christian powers, and the fall of Cyprus to the Turks. They were compelled to withdraw with the Venetian merchants toward Aleppo. The Church of the Savior was converted into a *qayṣarīyah* (a market with a roof)[77] and the convent into a mosque,[78] and with that they disappeared. All that remained was an elliptical seal from the fourteenth century depicting Christ seated on a

[76] *"& na Igreja, que foi Synagoga, celebraõ os Frades os Officios divinos, & debaixo della tem os Christãos Maronitas, sugeitos ao Patriarca do Monte Libano, outra Igreja de mesmo tamanho em comprimẽto, & largura, na qual se ajuntaõ os Domingos, & festas, & nos mais dias, que entre si tem obrigaçaõ de ouvir Missa."* Pantaleam D'Aveyro, *Itinerario da Terra Santa, E suas particularidades* (Lisbon, 1685), 487. Pantaleam D'Aveyro described in his narrative the miracle that happened in Beirut in the eighth century and said that a phial of Christ's blood resulting from it was sent to Venice and was preserved with great veneration in Saint Mark's church. He indicated precisely its place inside that church: it was at the entrance on the left: "*quando entraõ á maõ esquerda."* Ibid., 487.

[77] *"Wa-fī hādhihi al-sanah ahālī Bayrūt waḍaʿū yadahum ʿalá kanīsat al-mawārinat fa-hajarūhā wa-jaʿalūhā qayṣarīyah…."* Isṭifān al-Duwayhī, *Tārīkh al-azminah,* ed. Boutros Fahd (Beirut, 1983), 438. The Maronite patriarch Isṭifān al-Duwayhī (r. 1670–1704) did not mention the church of the Savior in his chronicle; he designated it as the "church of the Maronites."

[78] *"…les religieux de l'ordre de Sainct François y auoient vn beau monastere qu'ils ont perdu par leur grand faute, depuis quelques années en ça les Turcs l'ayant pris pour faire vne mosquee."* Jacques de Villamont, *Les voyages du seigneur de Villamont, Chevalier de l'Ordre de Hierusalem, Gentilhomme de la chambre du Roy* (Paris, 1600), 224–25. With time this mosque would be known as Jāmiʿ al-Sarāyā. Du Mesnil du Buisson, "Les anciennes défenses de Beyrouth," *Syria* 2 (1921): 257. Camille Enlart, who studied the monuments in Beirut from the Crusader period, visited the city during the 1920s. On the convent turned into a mosque and the Franciscan church he wrote: "…the mosque does not offer any interest and no trace of any ancient vestige…. The crypt under the ancient buildings of the military administration is only a beautiful cellar, of Arab construction, of a later period to the Latin occupation." Camille Enlart, *Les monuments des croisés dans le royaume de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1925), 1:79.

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bench-shaped throne, holding the cruciferous globe with his left hand and blessing with his right, with the following legend:

> S: G: FR: MINORUM. LOCI: S: S. BARUTI (Sigillum Fratrum Minorum Loci Sancti Salvatoris Baruti [Seal of Friars Minor at the place of Saint Savior in Beirut]).[79]

Fig. 4. The elliptical seal commemorating the Church of the Savior in Beirut

[79]Gustave Schlumberger and Adrien Blanchet, *Collection sigillographique de MM. Gustave Schlumberger et Adrien Blanchet: Six-cent-quatre-vingt dix sceaux et bagues* (Paris, 1914), seal no. 664 and plate XXVII, no. 4.

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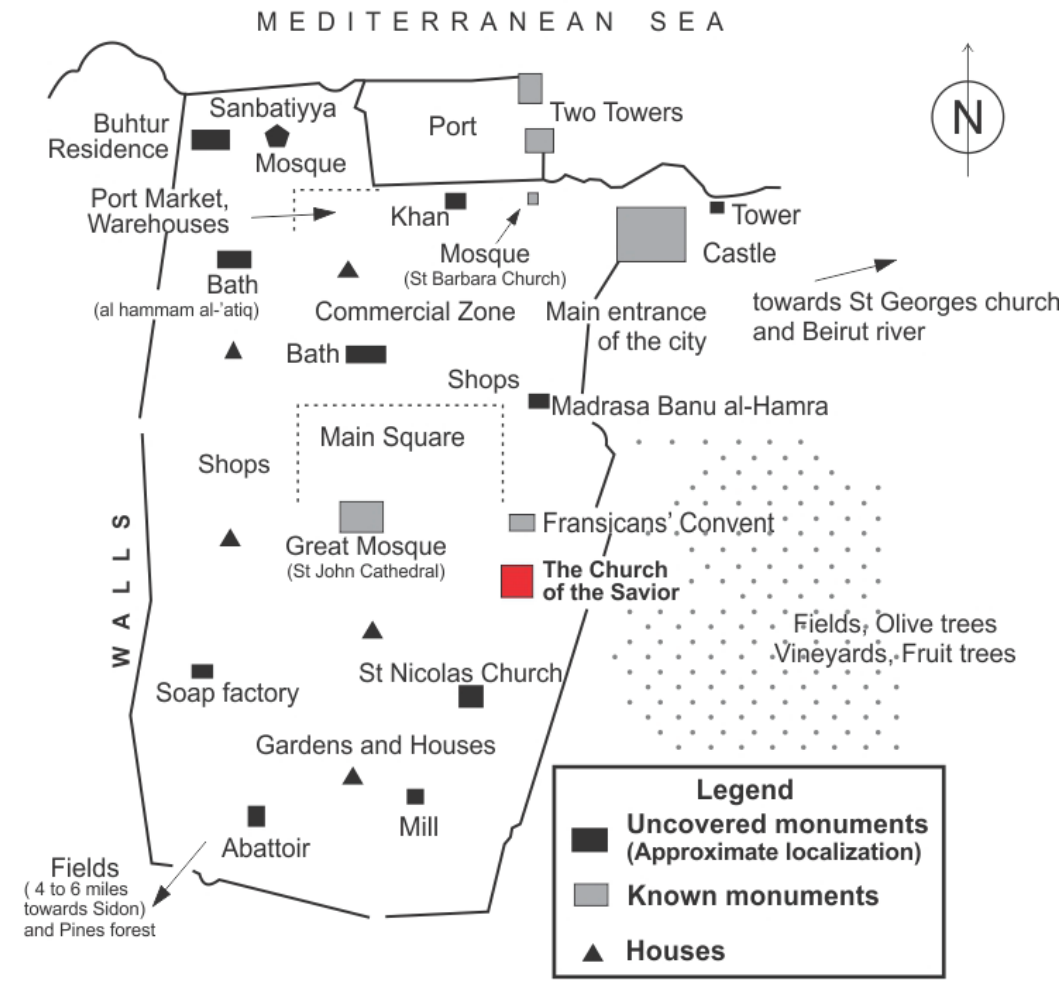

Fig. 5. An approximate plan of Beirut under the Mamluks

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An Arabic Marriage Contract and Subsequent Divorce from Mamluk Jerusalem: The Ḥaram al-Sharīf No. 302

Introduction

Documents from the Ḥaram al-Sharīf[1] are considered to be among the most important historical sources from Mamluk Jerusalem because there are so few narrative or documentary sources that chronicle the city in this period. In addition, they are the oldest extant documents concerning the affairs of the city's Muslims in particular, and its Jews and Christians in general. Among the most important of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf documents are those related to the situation of *dhimmī*s in Jerusalem during the Mamluk era.[2] As is well known, the Jews and Christians shared their lives in Jerusalem with Muslims, and the mingling of customs and traditions was a defining characteristic of the society of medieval Jerusalem.

This is a revised version of a paper given at Writing Semitic: Scripts, Documents, Languages in Historical Context: The Sixth International Society for Arabic Papyrology Conference, hosted by the Committee of Semitic Philology of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 7–10 October 2014. I would like to thank Matt Malczycki and Lucian Reinfandt, as well as the anonymous reader, for their helpful remarks on my edition of the document and for their useful comments on this paper. I am also grateful to them for checking my English.

[1]The Ḥaram documents consist of approximately nine hundred documents discovered in 1974–76 in Jerusalem at the Islamic Museum located at al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf. The vast majority of these documents are linked to the Jerusalem judge Sharaf al-Dīn ʿĪsá ibn Ghānim and to his period in office between the years 793/1391 and 797/1395. The sample of surviving documents—primarily estate inventories but also a few documents from other areas of the law within the qadi's competence—contradicts the assumption that the Ḥaram corpus is a systematically compiled archive of qadi records. It has been catalogued by Donald Little, and was the subject of a monograph by Huda Lutfi. See Linda S. Northrup and Amal A. Abul-Hajj, "A Collection of Medieval Arabic Documents in the Islamic Museum at the Ḥaram al-Sharīf," *Arabica* 25 (1979): 282–91; Huda Lutfi, "A Study of Six Fourteenth-Century Iqrārs from al-Quds Relating to Muslim Woman," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26 (1983): 246–94; idem, *Al-Quds al-Mamlūkiyya: A History of Mamlūk Jerusalem Based on the Ḥaram Documents* (Berlin, 1985); Donald P. Little, *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-Ḥaram aš-Šarīf in Jerusalem* (Beirut and Wiesbaden, 1984); Muḥammad ʿĪsá Ṣāliḥīyah, "Min wathā'iq al-Ḥaram al-Qudsī al-Sharīf al-Mamlūkīyah," *Ḥawlīyāt Kullīyat al-Adāb,* vol. 6., Monographs, vol. 26 (Kuwait, 1985); *Wathā'iq Maqdisīyah Tārīkhīyah,* ed. Kāmil J. al-ʿAsalī (Amman, 1983–89); Christian Müller, "The Ḥaram Al-Šarīf Collection of Arabic Documents in Jerusalem: A Mamluk Court Archive?" *Al-Qantara* 32, no. 2 (2011): 435–59.

[2]There are some studies that have examined the situation of *dhimmī*s in Jerusalem in the Mamluk era through these documents. See, e.g., Donald P. Little, "Ḥaram Documents Related to the Jews of Late Fourteenth Century Jerusalem," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 30, no. 2 (1985): 227–64, 368–70.

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Ḥaram al-Sharīf document no. 302 contains an Arabic marriage contract and subsequent divorce agreement. What makes this document especially significant is that it records a marriage between a Muslim groom and a Christian bride and then records their divorce. (It was not the first time this couple had married and divorced each other.) Marriage and divorce documents between Muslims and Christians seem to be rare.[3] Therefore, these two contracts are very important to developing our knowledge of the nature of the relationship between Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem during the Mamluk era, on the one hand, and society's attitude toward such relationships on the other.

Document no. 302 contains a marriage contract on the recto and a succeeding divorce agreement on the verso. Both contracts are drawn up in accordance with usual Muslim law and procedure, both are dated in the Muslim era, and both are witnessed entirely by Muslims. The marriage contract mentions a groom named ʿAbd Allāh and a bride named Saʿīdah. In the divorce agreement on the verso, Saʿīdah asks ʿAbd Allāh to divorce her in exchange for 400 dirhams, and he agrees. Islamic law refers to this kind of divorce as *khulʿ*.[4] In a *khulʿ* divorce, the wife seeks divorce from the husband in return for monetary compensation. In other words, she pays him for the divorce. ʿAbd Allāh was already Saʿīdah's ex-husband, so this had been their second marriage. This union did not last long: only nineteen months passed between the second marriage and the second divorce. Thus, from several points of view these documents are different enough from other known marriage contracts to deserve our special attention.

In fact, the incidence of divorce in Mamluk society was remarkably high. The frequency of divorce may have been—as Rapoport mentions—a simple result of the easy repudiation allowed by Islamic law.[5] Leila Ahmed reports that "the divorce nearly always occurred at the instigation of the husband. Occasionally references indicate that women in rare instances sought and obtained divorce, though generally at the price of relinquishing the right to see their children or after paying their husband a sum of money."[6] Nevertheless, Rapoport has written that "the majority of divorces in Mamluk society were consensual separations" and that

[3]There are ten marriage contracts in the Ḥaram al-Sharīf collection, but this document is the only one between a Muslim and a Christian. Although the vast majority of these documents are linked to the Jerusalem judge Sharaf al-Dīn ʿĪsá ibn Ghānim, it is difficult to link this document to this judge. Document no. 302 is signed by witnesses not working under the judge Sharaf al-Dīn. See Müller, "The Ḥaram Al-Šarīf collection," 446.

[4]See Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311), *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Cairo, 1960), 8:77; al-Ramlī (d. 1004/1595), *Nihāyat al-muḥtāj ilá sharḥ al-minhāj* (Cairo, 1413), 6:393.

[5]Yossef Rapoport, *Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society* (Cambridge, 2005), 5.

[6]Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, 1992), 106.

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"breaking up a marriage was rarely a one-sided affair."[7] However, according to Lowry, "the legal manuals often dwell upon the many forms of the male-initiated divorce *(ṭalaq)* at the expense of hiding the reality that female-initiated divorce *(khulʿ)* has been a frequent occurrence in the history of Muslim women as well."[8]

In his analysis of the issue of marriage and divorce in Jerusalem in the Mamluk era, Rapoport has reported—and I agree with him—that "the legal form of the majority of divorces in Mamluk society was consensual separation *(khulʿ),* although the formalities of divorce deeds concealed an interplay of various legal and extralegal pressures. In consensual separations, the wife gave up her financial rights—in particular her claim to the late marriage gift—in return for a divorce, and according to the legal phrasing women were always the initiators of consensual divorces; they would ask for the divorce and give up their financial rights in return."[9]

According to Tucker, we must distinguished between upper-class and lower-class marriage practices; she noted that lower-class women were much more likely to marry more than once and that there was an "impermanence" in lower-class marriages.[10]

Lowry has shown that *khulʿ* was more common than previously thought. There was also an instance of a dissolution of marriage *(faskh)* found in the Ḥaram documents based upon abandonment and the groom not paying the promised marriage gift.[11]

With regard to the legal form of the two divorces that happened between ʿAbd Allāh and Saʿīdah, a *khulʿ* divorce is a single irrevocable divorce (although there are differences of opinion on this). There is no waiting period *(ʿiddah),* and any remarriage with the ex-wife must take place with a new marriage contract and a new marriage gift. However, because this was the second divorce, if ʿAbd Allāh were to repudiate Saʿīdah a third time, it would trigger a "major" divorce *(al-baynūnah al-kubrá),* after which the couple could not remarry unless Saʿīdah had an intervening consummated marriage to another man.[12]

[7]Rapoport, *Marriage, Money and Divorce,* 112.

[8]Colleen Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce in Late Fourteenth-Century Jerusalem" (M.A. thesis, Portland State University, 2007), 162.

[9]Rapoport, *Marriage, Money and Divorce,* 72.

[10]Judith E. Tucker, "The Arab Family in History: 'Otherness' and the Study of the Family," in *Arab Women: Old Boundaries, New Frontiers,* ed. Judith E. Tucker. (Bloomington, 1993), 203.

[11]Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce," 193.

[12]Abed Awad, and Hany Mawla, "Divorce: Legal Foundations," *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women* (Oxford, 2013), 219–20.

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There are ten marriage and eight divorce contracts in the Ḥaram al-Sharīf collection.[13] Two of them are *khulʿ* divorce documents (nos. 44 and 302). All of the marriage contracts begin with *aṣdaqa* ("he bestowed") or *hadhā mā aṣdaqa* ("this is what he bestowed"), while the divorce contracts begin with the wife's name and that she "asked" or "requested" *(saʾalat)* that her husband divorce her by *khulʿ*. In the Ḥaram documents, the divorce decrees were written on the bottom or on the back of the marriage contracts. Eight of the ten marriage contracts mention a divorce either in the margin or on the verso.[14]

Rapoport mentions that "the main function of the marriage contract, apart from testifying to the validity of a marriage, was to record the marriage gift pledged by the groom at the time of the marriage. The groom's marriage gifts were specified in cash. They were divided into advance and deferred portions, with the advance payment almost always smaller than the deferred portion. Before the Mamluk period, the late payment was usually postponed for a set number of years. For example, a husband would pledge to pay the remainder of the marriage gift after five, eight or ten years. However, by the thirteenth century it had become common to divide the late portion into yearly installments. Alternatively, in some Mamluk marriage contracts the deferred portion was designated as a due debt, which was payable upon demand."[15]

Some scholars have studied the amounts of the marriage gifts mentioned in the Ḥaram al-Sharīf collection; Huda Lutfi studied eight documents that mentioned deferred marriage gifts owed by the husbands' estates to the wives and noted that the deferred marriage gifts were "modest," between 5 and 36 dinars.[16] When Lowry studied the ten marriage contracts in the Ḥaram al-Sharīf collection, she noticed that two documents mentioned a marriage gift in dinars and the rest used dirhams. She suggests that according to the approximate rate of exchange the dirham amounts would have been equal to between 6 and 25 dinars.[17]

[13] See Little, *Catalogue,* 300–6.

[14] Little, *Catalogue,* 300; Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce," 69, 133.

[15] Rapoport, *Marriage, Money and Divorce,* 35.

[16] Lutfi, *Al-Quds al-Mamlukiyya,* 285.

[17] Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce," 118.

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Ḥaram al-Sharīf Document No. 302[18]

Dates: Recto: 2 Rajab 794/25 May 1392
Verso: 4 Ṣafar 795/20 December 1392
General Description: The document is paper (28.5 cm × 28.9 cm), in good condition. There are some small holes in the middle of the upper part, and some traces of moisture. The recto contains a text of seven lines and three subsequent witnessing clauses. The judge's signature in the form of a motto *(ʿalāmah)* is written on the upper left side of the document. The verso has six lines and two witnessing clauses, as well as the judge's *ʿalāmah* above in the middle. The text on the verso is written in the upper left and upper right of the leaf, while the lower half is left blank.
Script: The text proper of both documents is written in a fair naskhi, that of the recto being larger and clearer. Diacritical points are lacking, except for a very few instances. The signatures of witnesses are written by several hands, all of which are more or less extremely cursive and contain peculiar ligatures as well as some typical abbreviations.

Arabic Transcription

Recto
(Heading)

1 عقده بطريق الشرعي

2 صالح بن خليل بن سالم الشافعي

(Text)

1 بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وصلي الله على سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه وسلم

2 اصدق المنلا جمال الدين عبد الله بن منصور بن ابراهيم المغربي النساج[19] بقرية قلنسوة مخطوبته سعيدة المراة الكامل بنت توما بن تواكيل

3 النصرانية ومختلعة المصدق المذكور بطلقة متقدمة على تاريخه الخالية عن الموانع الشرعية اصدقها على بركة الله وعونه وحسن

4 توفيقه وسنة نبيه محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم صداقا مبلغه من الدراهم النقرة الجيدة الوازنة معاملة يومئذ اربعمائة درهم نصفها

5 مائتا درهم حالة في ذمته وعليهما المعاشرة بالمعروف ان الله مع المتقين وولى تزويجها منه على ذلك بإذنها ورضاها الحاكم

[18] "The Islamic Documents from The Ḥaram al-Sharīf Collection in Jerusalem," microfilm held by Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, Collège de France, Paris (France). Plates 1–2.

[19] In the short description in Little's *Catalogue,* the groom's name is misread as al-ʿAbd lillāh (Servant of God) instead of al-Maghribī al-nassāj (Moroccan weaver). Little, *Catalogue,* 303.

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6 الواضع خطه الكريم اعلاه بولاية الشرع الشريف بعد ان وضح امره فقبل الزوج ذلك لنفسه قبولا شرعيا مخاطبا عليه شفاها

7 بلفظ الشرعي بحضور من تم العقد بحضورهم شرعاً وبه تم الاشهاد عليهما في ثاني شهر رجب الفرد سنة اربع وتعسمه

(أ)

8 حضرت العقد المبارك فشهدت بجـ(ميع)

9 ما فيه وما نص في تاريخه

10 كتبه محمد بن عبد المطلب

(ب)

8 حضرت

9 العقد المبارك

10 كتبه على بن ابراهيم

(ج)

8 حضرت العقد المبارك

9 وشهدت بجميع ما فيه

10 كتبه حسن بن عبد الله

Translation

(Heading)

1. Held legally by
2. Ṣāliḥ ibn Khalīl ibn Sālim al-Shāfiʿī

(Text)

1. In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. May Allāh praise our prophet Muḥammad and his household and companions and give peace to them!
2. Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Manṣūr ibn Ibrāhīm al-Maghribī al-nassāj, who lives in Qalansūwah village, has assigned a marriage gift to his fiancée Saʿīdah, the mature woman daughter of Tūmā ibn Tawākīl
3. the Christian who was separated by mutual consent from the bestower previously mentioned by means of a single divorce before this date, and free of legal impediment; he has assigned as a marriage gift to her with God Almighty's blessing and with his help

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4. in its success in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad, may Allāh honor him and grant him peace, a total marriage gift of silver dirhams, good and full, which at this time equal 400 dirhams, half of which is
5. 200 dirhams. It will be paid later, and they both must live together well (Allāh is with the righteous), and he who gave her in marriage to him accordingly accepted willingly that her representative in this contract be the magistrate,
6. who put his honorable signature above in accordance with the mandate of the Shariʿah law after he explained it. The husband accepted this (contract) in a legal manner and affirmed that orally
7. in accordance with the legal word, and in the presence of those in whose legal attendance the contract was completed, and has been certified on 2 Rajab of the year 794.

(a)

8. I attended the blessed contract and I have witnessed all that is in it
9. And what is written in it on this date.
10. Written by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭallab

(b)

8. I attended
9. The blessed contract
10. Written by ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm

(c)

8. I attended the blessed contract
9. And I have witnessed all that is in it
10. Written by Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad

Commentary

(Heading)

1. **عقده بطريق الشرعي** This phrase confirms the legitimacy of the contract and that the procedures were in accordance with Islamic law. It is an *ʿalāmah* notation containing a judge's recognition that a process took place in his court. Judges often wrote their mottos to the left of the *basmalah.*[20] It is called *ʿalāmah* because it is written in the place *(bayt, mawḍaʿ)* on a court record where the judge writes the motto that serves as his signature.[21]

[20] See al-Asyūṭī (d. 880/1475), *Ǧawāhir al-ʿuqūd wa-muʿīn al-quḍāh wa-al-muwaqqiʿīn wa-al-shuhūd,* ed. Muḥammad Surūr al-Ṣabbāh (Cairo, 1955), 2:369. For the use of the *ʿalāmah* by judges of late Mamluk and early Ottoman Egypt, see Rudolf Vesely, "Die richterlichen Beglaubigungsmittel: Ein Beitrag zur Diplomatik arabischer Gerichtsurkunden," *Orientalia Pragensia* 8 (1971): 12–18.

[21] See Little, "Ḥaram Documents Related to the Jews," 247.

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2. Ṣāliḥ ibn Khalīl ibn Sālim al-Shāfiʿī[22] is the judge who certified this contract; the title of the judge *(al-Shāfiʿī)* reveals that the contract was in accordance with the Shafiʿi school, which was prevalent at the time in Egypt and Syria.[23] The office of *qāḍī al-quḍāh* (chief judge) was limited to the Shafiʿi school in the era of the Ayyubid state and the first years of the reign of the Mamluks until 663/1265, when Sultan Baybars (658–76/1260–77) appointed four chief judges, each representing one of the four Sunni schools: Shafiʿi, Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali. Each judge was ordered to rule in accordance with his school.[24] Marriage and divorce contracts often followed the groom's school.[25]

(Text)

2. أصدق This word is not enough for the validity of the contract in accordance with the Shafiʿi school,[26] because this school requires the existence of an explicit word for marriage in the contract. The Hanbali view is similar, while the Hanafi school accepts a marriage contract with either an explicit or implicit reference to marriage. For the Malikis, it suffices to mention only the marriage gift.[27] However, there *is* an explicit reference to marriage in the fourth line in the document: وولى تزويجها منه. Therefore, the contract is perfectly in accordance with the Shafiʿi school.

   المنلا This is an Arabic name with a Turkish pronunciation. Derived from *"mullā,"* meaning Mr., teacher, shaykh, it is here pronounced *Manlā.* We should note the names in this line: the name of the groom (ʿAbd Allāh), his father (Manṣūr), and his grandfather (Ibrāhīm); his last name (al-Maghribī) and his *laqab* (Jamāl al-Dīn); and his place of residence (Qalansūwah).[28] Next come the names of the bride (Saʿīdah), her father (Tūmā), and her grandfather (Tawākīl). This detailed information is necessary in order to complete the contract in accordance with Islamic law.[29]

[22] There is not much information about this judge in the books of biography, except that Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī was one of his students. He might have been a Qalansūwah village judge working under the supervision of the Jerusalem judge Sharaf al-Dīn. See al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1496), *Al-jawāhir wa-al durar fī tarjamat Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Ḥajar,* ed. Ibrāhīm ʿAbd al-Majīd (Beirut, 1999), 205.

[23] ʿAlī al-Saʿīd ʿAlī, *Al-Quds fī al-ʿaṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo, 1986), 122.

[24] Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1372), *Al-bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah,* ed. Aḥmad Abū Mulḥim (Beirut, 1994), 13:284.

[25] Cf. documents nos. 321 and 610, where the judge was of the Hanbali school, as well as contract no. 646, where the judge was of the Hanafi school.

[26] Al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058), *Al-ḥāwī al-kabīr fī fiqh madhhab al-Imām al-Shāfiʿī* (Beirut, 1999), 9:152.

[27] See al-Asyūṭī, *Jawāhir al-ʿuqūd,* 2:19.

[28] This village lies north of Jerusalem, close to the Ramla area in Palestine. See Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), *Kitāb muʿjam al-buldān* (Beirut, 1977), 4:392.

[29] Al-Asyūṭī, *Jawāhir al-ʿuqūd,* 2:52.

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We notice that the groom is a Moroccan, and we know that there had been a community of Maghribis resident in Jerusalem since at least the late twelfth century.[30] There were many Moroccans in the city[31] and they had a quarter called *Ḥārat al-Maghāribah,*[32] in which were two *zāwiyah*s: *Zāwiyat al-Maghāribah* and a second, unnamed *zāwiyah* that was a hostel established as a residence for newly arrived male Moroccans.[33] The name of the bride's father, Tūmā, is the transcription of Thomas, but it is difficult to determine the origin of her grandfather's name (Tawākīl); it could be Georgian or Ethiopian.

المرأة الكامل This expression means that this woman is sane, adult, and free. These are essential conditions to validate the marriage contract. Marriage contracts do not state the exact age of a bride; rather this was identified in other ways. In the Ḥaram documents brides were described as either *al-bikr al-bāligh*[34] ("the adult virgin," *bāligh* meaning that she had reached puberty) or *al-marʾah al-kāmil* ("the mature woman," which usually meant that she had been previously married and was no longer a virgin).[35]

3. The word النصرانية indicates that Saʿīdah was a Christian while ʿAbd Allāh was a Muslim. This is not odd. It was commonplace in the Muslim community because Islamic law did not prevent Muslim men from marrying non-Muslim women from among the *ahl al-kitāb* (i.e., Jews and Christians).[36] This is echoed in a verse from the *Sūrat al-Māʾidah* (Q 5:5). Moreover, the Christian women have the same rights as the Muslim women.[37]

مختلعة This word indicates that she had divorced him by *al-khulʿ*. Since *khulʿ* is considered a final divorce, when they wanted to remarry they had to craft a new contract and marriage gift in accordance with Islamic law.[38] The phrase خالية من الموانع الشرعية means that there is nothing that makes this woman ineligible for marriage, such as currently being married to another man.[39]

[30] Little, "Ḥaram Documents Related to the Jews," 250.

[31] There were many Moroccans, male and female, mentioned in the Ḥaram al-Sharīf collection. Cf., e.g., documents nos. 126, 242, 364, 407, 833.

[32] Mujīr al-Dīn al-ʿUlaymī (d. 928/1522), *Al-uns al-jalīl bi-tārīkh al-Quds wa-al-Khalīl* (Najaf, 1966), 2:402.

[33] Little, "Ḥaram Documents Related to the Jews," 250–51.

[34] Cf., e.g., documents nos. 44, 317.

[35] See Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce," 96.

[36] See al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820), *Al-umm* (Cairo, 1990), 5:7.

[37] Al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī al-kabīr,* 9:220.

[38] Al-Ramlī, *Nihāyat al-muḥtāj,* 6:397; ʿĀmir al-Zaybārī, *Ahkām al-khulʿ fī al-sharīʿah al-islāmīyah* (Beirut, 1997), 135.

[39] Islamic law has determined fourteen reasons that prevent the marriage of a woman. See al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī al-kabīr,* 9:196–97.

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4. النقرة is a mixture of silver and copper, but silver is the predominant metal.[40] الوازنة means that these dirhams were full weight and neither blemished nor counterfeit.[41]

   معاملة means that the dirhams in question are approved for exchange by order of the sultan (sultans sometimes issued orders to prevent the use of certain currency).[42] The fact that these words indicate careful emphasis on the quality of these dirhams reflects *ipso facto* that there had been cases of fraudulent currency.[43] They set the amount of the marriage gift at 400 dirhams (about 15 dinars).[44] According to other Ḥaram al-Sharīf documents (e.g., nos. 291, 321, 610, 646, and 653)[45] dowries ranged from 150 to 600 dirhams, so the amount mentioned here suggests that the couple belonged to the middle or even upper middle class.[46]

4–5. The phrase نصفها مائتا درهم is an example of the practice of "halving the amount," which is common in Mamluk-era documents. "Halving the amount" was a cautionary measure designed to eliminate ambiguity in the numbers. This precaution was one of the conditions necessary in the creation of a legally valid contract document.[47] The term حالة means the groom would paid the *ṣadāq* upon demand. The authors of legal manuals allow the contracting parties to choose to pay the *ṣadāq* three ways: at the time of marriage *(maqbūḍ, muʾajjal),* in installments *(munajjam, muqassaṭ),* or upon demand *(ḥāll).*[48] The phrase وولي تزويجها refers to the fact that the woman's guardian *(walī)* in this contract was the judge, which indicates that she did not have living paternal relatives, the people who would normally have filled that role. In accordance with the Shafiʿi school: "Every marriage without a guardian is void," and it

[40] Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab,* 2:1369; al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* (Cairo, 1913), 4:180.

[41] See Anastās al-Karmalī, *Al-nuqūd al-ʿArabīyah wa ʿilm al-numīyāt* (Cairo, 1939), 47.

[42] Al-Munāwī (d. 1031/1621), *Al-nuqūd wa-al-makāyīl wa-al-mawāzīn,* ed. Rajāʾ al-Sāmrāʾī (Baghdad, 1981), 122.

[43] Ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥakīm, *Al-dawḥah al-mushtabikah fī ḍawābiṭ dār al-sikkah,* ed. Ḥusayn Muʾnis (Madrid, 1985), 181.

[44] The dinar was equal 26.5 dirhams in that period; see Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Rāziq, *La Femme au temps des Mamlouks en Égypte* (Cairo, 1973), 130.

[45] See some information about these documents in Little, *Catalogue,* 301–6. Cf. the chart for some marriage gifts mentioned in documents of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf in Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce," 146.

[46] The majority of the documents found in the Ḥaram collection that mention a marriage gift amount seem to have totals of less than 30 dinars. See Lowry, "Marriage and Divorce," 146.

[47] Ibn Farḥūn (d. 799/1396), *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām fī uṣūl al-aqḍīyah wa-manāhij al-aḥkām,* ed. Jamāl Marʿashlī (Riyadh, 1423), 1:201.

[48] See al-Asyūṭī, *Jawāhir al-ʿuqūd,* 2:62; Rapoport, *Marriage,* 52, n. 10.

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is not permissible for a woman (Muslim or *dhimmī*) to get married by herself without a guardian, regardless of whether or not she is a virgin.[49] In the absence of a guardian such as a father or grandfather, a judge could assume the role of *walī* for the purposes of the marriage contract.[50] The phrase بإذنها ورضاها is an important condition for the completion of the contract in accordance with the Shafiʿi school.[51]

6. In this line, the judge had completed the marriage proceedings in accordance with the Shafiʿi rules. Al-Shāfiʿī says: "The marriage is never completed unless the guardian says that the groom has become a husband to his bride, and the groom declares his acceptance of marriage" (لا يحل أبداً إلا بأن يقول الولي قد زوجتكها أو أنكحتها، ويقول الخاطب قد قبلت تزويجها أو نكاحها).[52]
7. من تم العقد بحضورهم شرعاً This phrase refers to the witnesses, since the marriage contract, according to the Shafiʿi school, is not complete without two male witnesses.[53] تعسمه, the year is often written in a kind of shorthand. Here, *tisʿīn wa-sabʿ miʾah* is abbreviated by *tʿsmah.*[54]

8–10. The signatures of three witnesses, although only two were required to ensure marriage contract validity.[55] The testimony of *shāhid al-ʿadl* (the witness of justice)[56] is a condition for the validity of the marriage contract in three schools (Shafiʿi,[57] Hanbali,[58] and Hanafi[59]) while in the Maliki school[60] the testimony is not required. Witnesses signed a contract with the word "I attended" حضرت in the past tense; this was a requirement for certification in contracts.[61] Although the bride was a Christian, all witnesses were Muslims. This is required for the contract's validity in the Shafiʿi school; if any witness is a *dhimmī* the contract

[49] Rules that apply in the marriage of a Muslim woman also apply in the marriage of a *dhimmī* woman. See al-Shāfiʿī, *Al-umm,* 5:7.

[50] Al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī al-kabīr,* 9:90.

[51] Al-Shāfiʿī, *Al-umm,* 7:165.

[52] Al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī al-kabīr,* 9:153.

[53] Ibn Qudāmah (d. 620/1223), *Al-mughnī* (Cairo, 1985), 7:7.

[54] Cf. Ḥaram document no. 554; Little, "Ḥaram Documents Related to the Jews," 236.

[55] Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-mughnī,* 7:7.

[56] This is a judicial function handled by a group of witnesses who are known for justice, carried out with the permission of the judge. See al-Māwardī, *Al-aḥkām al-sulṭānīyah wa-al-wilāyāt al-dīnīyah* (Cairo, 1969), 66; Muḥammad M. Amīn, "Shāhid al-ʿadl fī al-qaḍāʾ al-islāmī: dirāsah tārīkhīyah maʿa nashr wa-taḥqīq isjāl min ʿaṣr salāṭīn al-Mamālīk, *Annales Islamologiques* 18 (1982): 5.

[57] Al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī al-kabīr,* 9:27.

[58] Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-mughnī,* 9:347.

[59] Al-Sarkhasī (d. 483/1090), *Kitāb al-mabsūṭ* (Beirut, 1993), 6:19.

[60] Al-Qarāfī (d. 684/1285), *Al-dhakhīrah,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥajjī (Beirut, 1994), 4:398.

[61] Ibn Farḥūn, *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām,* 1:222.

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is illegal.[62] The Hanbali and Maliki schools agree with the Shafiʿi on this point, but the Hanafi school allows *dhimmī* witnesses if the bride is a *dhimmī.*[63]

Arabic Transcription

Verso

(Heading)

1 اعترف بذلك عندي

(Text)

1 الحمد لله

2 سالت الحرمة سعيدة الزوجة المذكورة باطنه زوجها عبد الله الحاضر معها ان يطلقها طلقة واحدة مسبوقة

3 باولى على مبلغ اربعمائة درهم بطن صداقها عليه المعين باطنه فاجاب سؤالها وطلقها الطلقة المذكورة

4 على العوض المذكور بانت بذلك منه ولا تحل له الا بعقد جديد بشرط الشرعي واقرت المطلق(هـ)

5 المذكورة انه لم يبق له بحق قبل مطلقها المذكور حقاً ولا طلباً ولا فضة ولا ذهباً ولا صداقاً

6 ولا كسوة ولا حق من حقوق الزوجية وبه شهد عليهما وذلك في رابع شهر صفر من سنة خمس وتعسمه

(أ)

7 شهد عليهما بذلك

8 كتبه محمد بن عبد المطلب

(ب)

7 شهد عليهما

8 كتبه على بن إبراهيم

Translation

(Heading)

1. He acknowledged that in my presence

(Text)

1. Praise be to Allāh!
2. The lady Saʿīdah, the wife mentioned on the opposite side, has asked her husband ʿAbd Allāh, who attended with her, to divorce her with a single divorce preceded

[62] Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-mughnī,* 7:8.

[63] See al-Sarkhasī, *Al-mabsūṭ,* 5:35; al-Kāsānī (d. 587/1191), *Badāʾiʿ al-sanāʾiʿ fī tartīb al-sharāʾiʿ* (Beirut, 1986), 253.

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3. by repayment of her marriage gift in the amount of 400 dirhams (specified on the opposite side). He agreed and divorced her accordingly
4. in consideration of the mentioned compensation. This is a final divorce, after which she is not permissible to him except with a new contract with legal conditions. She has acknowledged
5. that there is nothing remaining from the one divorcing her, neither right nor claim, neither silver nor gold, neither marriage gift
6. nor cloth nor any legal matrimonial claim. Witness to that on the 4th of the month of Ṣafar, of the year 795:
   (a)
   He gave witness to them in that matter
   Written by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭallab
   (b)
   He gave witness to them in that matter
   Written by ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm

Commentary

(Heading)

1. **اعترف بذلك عندي** This type of heading, which appears on several Ḥaram documents, is an *ʿalāmah* notation. Al-Asyūṭī gives several examples of such notations containing a judge's recognition that a process took place in his court, e.g., **جرى ذلك كذلك** (that took place in that manner), **جرى ذلك في حضوري** (that took place in my presence), **جرى العقد بينهما بذلك** (the contract took place between them to that end), etc.[64] This phrase refers to the husband, and this formula suggests that the judge knew the husband very well. If the judge had not known the husband he would have written the phrase **اعترف عندي بذلك** (he acknowledged that in my presence).[65]

(Text)

1. **الحمد لله** This is a conventional pious formula called *ḥamdalah*.[66] There were many formulas for *ḥamdalah* in the Ḥaram documents, such as **الحمد لله رب العالمين** (All praise is due to God, the Lord of the Worlds) in nos. 44 and 461; or **الحمد لله وحده** (All praise is due to God alone) in nos. 211 and 467.
2. In this line, Saʿīdah asked her husband ʿAbd Allāh to divorce her. This is her right in accordance with Islamic law if there is no compatibility in a mar-

[64] Cf. al-Asyūṭī, *Ǧawāhir,* 2:369–77.

[65] Ibid., 372, 375.

[66] See, e.g., Ḥaram documents nos. 609, 623, 646.

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riage.[67] This was a second divorce for them. It should be noted that this was *khulʿ,* although the word *khulʿ* is not expressly mentioned in the contract (the word used is *ṭalaq*). In the Shafiʿi school, a divorce is *khulʿ* as long as there was compensation, regardless of the word used.[68]

3. أربعمائة درهم To obtain the *khulʿ* the wife has to repay the husband the amount of the marriage gift. Therefore, it was necessary to mention the amount of compensation or the dissolution of the marriage would have been considered divorce and not *khulʿ*.[69] It was possible for the husband to get an amount higher than the value of the marriage gift paid by him.[70]
4. The word العوض indicates that this was *khulʿ,* not divorce, as mentioned previously. The word بانت means that this was a final divorce, and that it would not be permissible for the husband to get her back without a new contract and marriage gift. ولا تحل له إلا بعقد جديد confirms that this was a *khulʿ* contract, because *al-khulʿ* is considered طلاق بائن (final divorce). The woman cannot legally go back to the bed of her former husband without a new marriage contract.[71] The *tāʾ marbūṭah* in *al-muṭalaqah* is lacking.

5–6. The wife acknowledged that she got everything due to her from her husband, which is necessary to complete the contract,[72] because a *khulʿ* contract in accordance with the Shafiʿi school is considered a compensation contract, like a sales contract, since the husband has rights and the wife has a marriage gift.[73] Therefore, the wife repaid the marriage gift to her husband in order to attain *al-khulʿ*.

7–8. Signatures of two witnesses. They were the same witnesses who testified on the marriage contract.[74]

[67] Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148), *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān,* ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā (Beirut, 1408), 1:541.

[68] Al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī,* 10:9.

[69] Abū al-Ḥasan al-Tusūlī (d. 1258/1842), *Al-bahjah fī sharḥ al-tuḥfah* (Beirut, 1412), 1:644.

[70] Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-mughnī,* 7:247.

[71] Al-Ramlī, *Nihāyat al-muḥtāj,* 6:397.

[72] Al-Asyūṭī, *Jawāhir,* 2:369–77.

[73] Al-Māwardī, *Al-ḥāwī,* 10:30.

[74] Ibn Farḥūn, *Tabṣirat al-ḥukkām,* 1:185.

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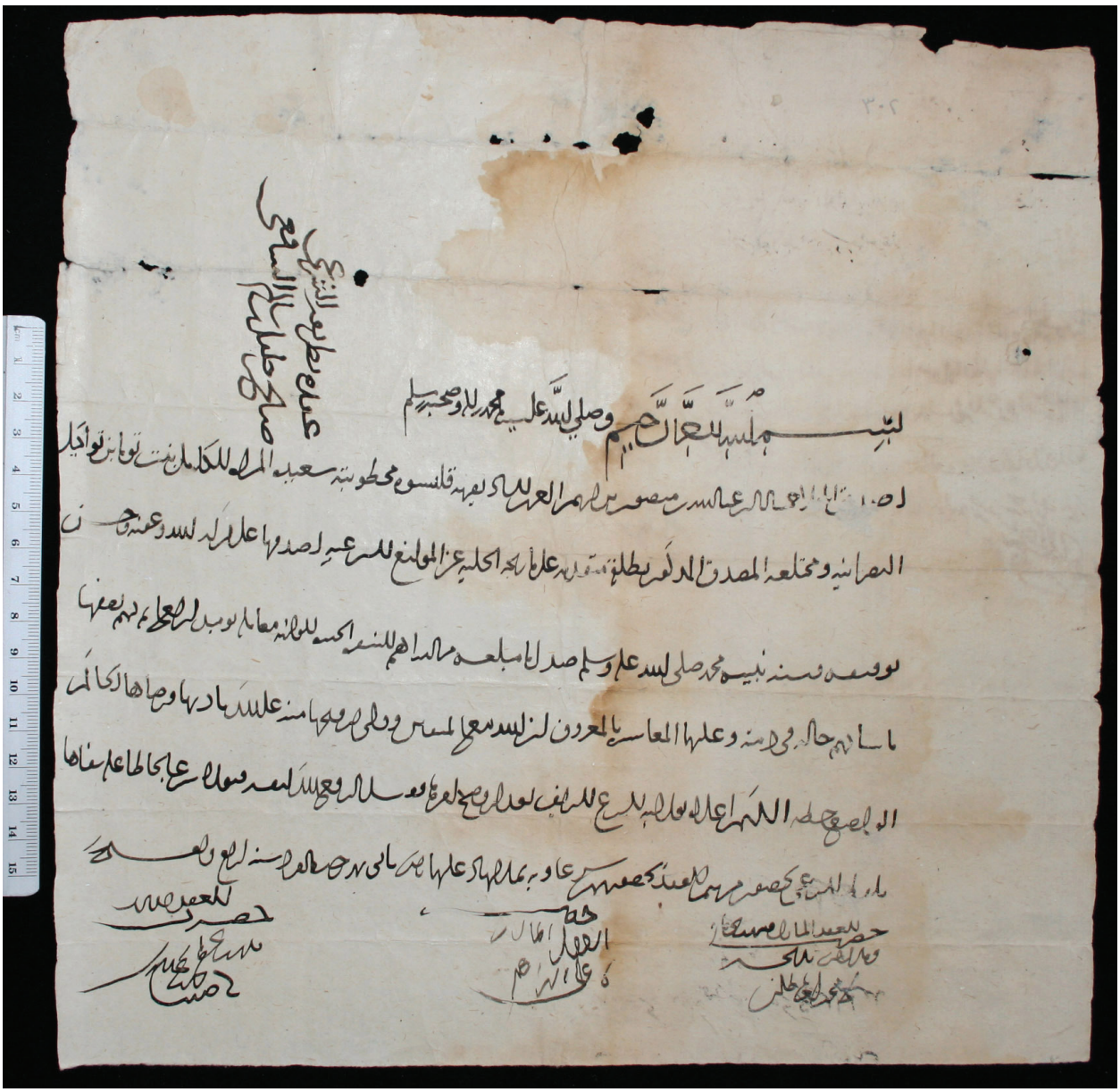

Figure 1.

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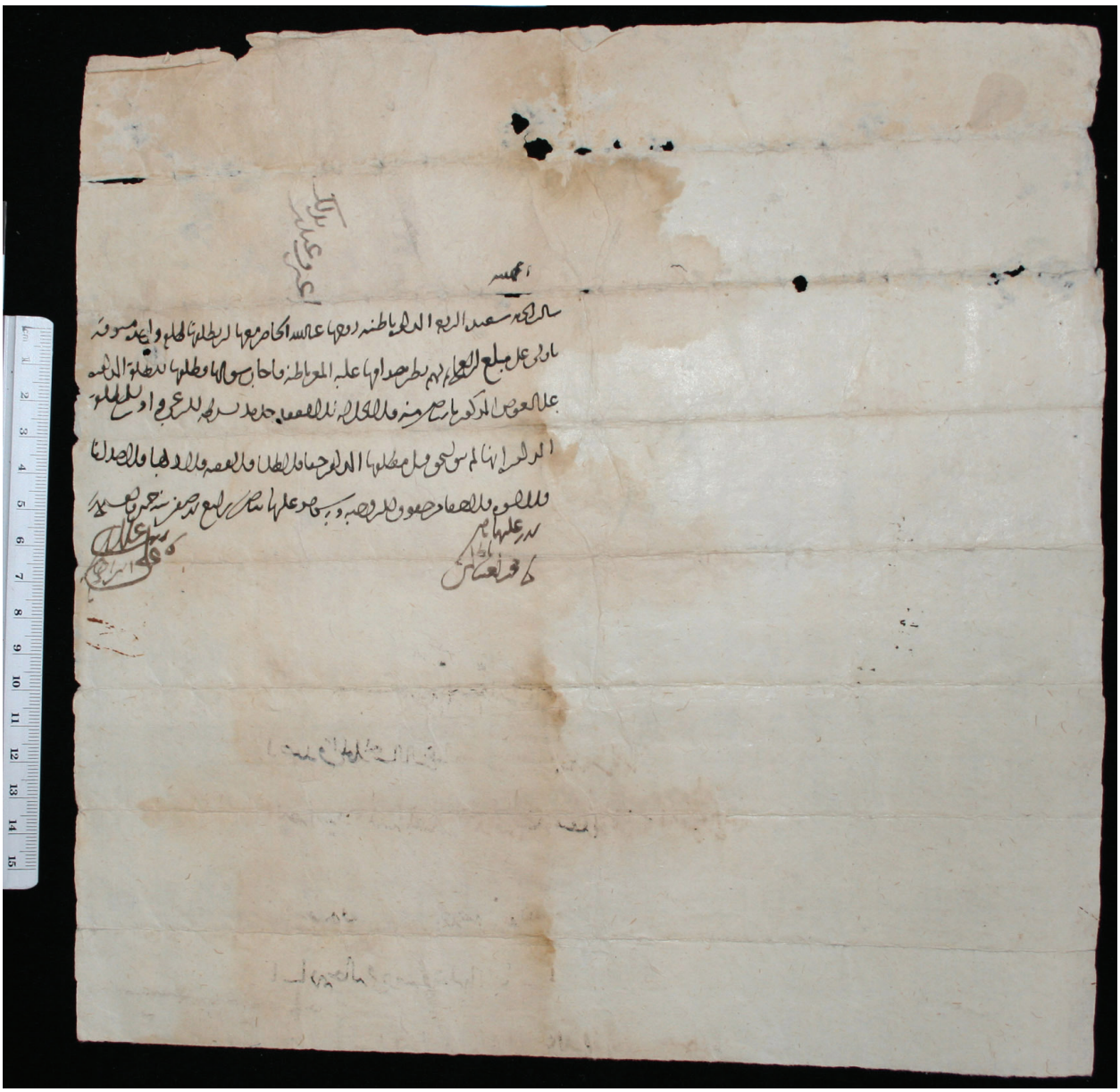

Figure 2.

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World Literature, Republics of Letters, and the Arabic Literary System: The "Modernists" in the Defendants' Bench—A Review Article

While preparing for publication the manuscript of my book, which offers a theoretical framework for the study of modern Arabic literature,[1] I read Muhsin Jassim al-Musawi's *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction* and two sequential articles by him on the same topic in the *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry,*[2] in addition to four articles in the same journal referring to his theses[3] and one response to all of them by al-Musawi.[4] I also had checked review essays in English and Arabic on the book published before my present essay was sent to the editor in its final version.[5] Unlike al-Musawi's book, his two sequential articles bear in their subtitles the term "Arab Modernity." In addition, whereas the "Islamic Republic of Letters" in the title of his book is qualified as "Medieval," the reader can hardly ignore the relevance of

A review article of *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction* by Muhsin Jassim al-Musawi (Notre Dame, IN, 2015).

[1]Reuven Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature: A Theoretical Framework* (Edinburgh, 2017).

[2]Muhsin Jassim al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part I)," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 1, no. 2 (2014): 265–80; "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part II)," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 1 (2015): 115–30. See also al-Musawi's earlier article on the topic, "The Medieval Islamic Literary World-System: The Lexicographic Turn," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 17 (2013): 43–71.

[3]Stefan Helgesson, "Tayeb Salih, Sol Plaatje, and the Trajectories of World Literature," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 2 (2015): 253–60; Tarek El-Ariss, "Let There Be *Nahdah!*" *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 2 (2015): 260–66; Francesca Orsini, "Whose Amnesia? Literary Modernity in Multilingual South Asia," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 2 (2015): 266–72; and Debjani Ganguly, "Polysystems Redux: The Unfinished Business of World Literature," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 2 (2015): 272–81.

[4]Muhsin Jassim al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 2 (2015): 281–86.

[5]For review essays of the book, see Mohammad Salama, "Bridging the Gap: A Review Essay of Muhsin al-Musawi's *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,*" *SCTIW Review* (19 November 2015): 1–6; Kristina Richardson's review essay in *Journal of Arabic Literature* 47, nos. 1–2 (2016): 209–13 (the general editor of the journal is al-Musawi himself); Dana Sajdi's review in *Journal of Early Modern History* 20, no. 2 (2016): 589–92; Marilyn Booth's review essay in *Journal of Islamic Studies* 28, no. 3 (2017): 382–86; and Elizabeth Lhost's review essay in *Reading Religion,* a website published by the American Academy of Religion (AAR) (19 May 2017). See also, in Arabic, Shīrīn Abū al-Najā's review essay in *Al-ḥayāh* (28 February 2016).

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al-Musawi's arguments to modernity. Moreover, the articles clearly recall various literary themes and cultural arguments examined in the book, even if in a more developed and sophisticated manner. Because of the theoretical gist and drive of al-Musawi's book and articles, and due to his declared ambition to contribute to better understanding of Arabic literature in its historical development, his contributions are important not only for the study of pre-modern Arabic literature, but for the study of modern Arabic literature as well. In my new book, I explain the significance of the uninterrupted continuity of Arabic literature from ancient times until the present day, in fact since the emergence of the Arabic language—long before the Arabic poetry known to us emerged in the fifth century.[6] Apart from the otherwise significant addition of the subtitle "Arab Modernity," there is so much overlap between al-Musawi's aforementioned studies and my own that I was initially tempted to change the title of my book to *The Modern Arabic Republic of Letters*. Both of our scholarly projects offer general frameworks for the investigation of Arabic texts[7] in their various contexts—including the relationship of these texts with literary works produced in other languages—albeit in different periods and based on varying methodologies and theoretical conceptions. However, I soon became aware of significant differences between al-Musawi's work and my own, differences that in the end led me to decide against changing my book's title, though not because I did not think that the term "republic" did not fit the theoretical framework presented in my book, as it will be clear in the following pages.

In *Modern Arabic Literature,* I argue that Arabic literature can be more adequately analyzed as a historical phenomenon when conceived of as a system that replaces the search for data about material aspects of literary phenomena with the uncovering of the functions that these aspects have. Arabic literature has been postulated to constitute a system or polysystem—a heterogeneous, multistratified, and functionally structured system-of-systems—kept in motion by a permanent struggle between canonical and non-canonical texts and models. The evaluation of the systems of successive periods springs from the oscillating movement between the periphery of the system and its center (here I could employ, instead of "system," the term "republic" as this term would be explained below). Such a system is inclusive and consists of all *literary* texts regardless of

[6] Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 182–93. As for the linguistic situation among the Arabs before the rise of Islam, see the significant contributions of Jan Retsö, such as *The Arabs in Antiquity: Their History from the Assyrians to the Umayyads* (New York, 2003), 591–99; and "What Is Arabic?" in *The Oxford Handbook of Arabic Linguistics,* ed. Jonathan Owens (Oxford, 2013), 433–50.

[7] Only *literary* texts in my study as I have defined them (Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 8–9). Al-Musawi does not clarify the character of the texts that he has investigated besides their having been written in Arabic.

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any hierarchies of value, namely, all texts that in a given culture or community have been imbued with cultural value—something which allows for higher levels of complexity and significance in the way they are constructed. Each text forms a system and at the same time is an element of a larger system, which is itself, in turn, a part of the greater system of the Arabic literary environment. That is to say, in each given period, a given text is placed at a particular point in the Arabic literary system according to its synchronic relative value. Diachronic value is assigned to the text by its paradigmatic position in the succession of synchronic systems, which acquire retrospective significance. Here, as previously indicated, my analysis avoids as much as possible any personal subjective evaluative assessments, at the same time reflecting the values and judgments of the relevant communities toward their literary texts in different stages and periods. Sociocultural distinctions of text production in the proposed system are conceptualized in terms of literary stratification: canonized versus non-canonized texts. By canonized texts, I mean literary works that have been accepted by dominant circles within Arab culture, that have become part of a community's historical heritage, and that have entered into its collective memory. Conversely, non-canonized texts are those literary works that have been rejected by the same circles as illegitimate or worthless and that are often in the long run forgotten by the community. This means that canonicity is not seen as an *inherent feature* of textual activities on any level, although canonicity in Arabic literature depends in general—but not always—on the language of production: *fuṣḥá* (the pan-Arab standard language) is the basic medium of canonized texts, whereas *ʿāmmīyah* (local dialects) is that of non-canonized texts. In addition, it means that, if not from the synchronic point of view, certainly from the diachronic perspective, we obviously lack the ability to explore most of the non-canonized texts that were created, and certainly not all of them.

In my book, I propose three categories of investigation for modern Arabic literature. The first is the investigation of the literary dynamics in synchronic cross-section—potential inventories of canonized and non-canonized literary texts in three sections: texts for adults, texts for children, and translated texts for adults and children. The resulting six subsystems—three canonized and three non-canonized—are seen as autonomous networks of relationships and as interacting literary networks on various levels. The internal and external interrelations and interactions between the various subsystems need to be studied if we wish to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the modern Arabic literary system. The second category consists of the study of the historical outlines of the modern Arabic literary system's diachronic intersystemic development, namely, the need to refer to the changes and interactions with various extra-literary systems that have determined the historical course of Arabic literature since the nineteenth

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century. The space between the text, its author, and the reader is understood as constituting both an economic environment (e.g., literary markets, publishing, distribution) and a sociocommunicative system that passes the meaning potential of the text through various filters (e.g., criticism, literary circles, groups, salons, public opinion) in order to concretize and realize it. All spaces related to literary production and consumption should be considered. For example, in order to determine the general characteristics of the historical development of Arabic literature from the start of the nineteenth century, we should look at the interaction of literature with extra-literary systems such as religion, territory, nation state, language, politics, economy, philosophy, gender, electronic media, Internet technologies, and social networks, as well as with other foreign literary and cultural systems. Finally, the third category is intended to concentrate on the historical diachronic development that each genre underwent and on the relationships between the various genres. Since literary genres do not emerge in a vacuum, the issue of generic development cannot be confined to certain time spans; emphasis must be put on the relationship between modern literature, on the one hand, and classical and medieval literature, on the other. Crucial in this regard is the concept of periodization, that is, how one is to delimit and define "literary periods." The complete study of literary dynamics in historical, diachronic development requires an analysis of every genre and subgenre separately, of the interrelationships and interactions between the genres, and of the interrelationships and interactions between the genres and the subgenres.

In my book, I raised as well several points for discussion concerning al-Musawi's studies, particularly those referring to the topics discussed in my book. Here, I want to look more closely at al-Musawi's scholarly project in the context of relevant theoretical contributions and within the framework of the study of Arabic literature in general. Al-Musawi opens the introduction (*khuṭbat al-kitāb,* "Preliminary Discourse") to his book as follows:

> This book argues that the large-scale and diverse cultural production in Arabic in the post-classical era (approximately the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries) was the outcome of an active sphere of discussion and disputation spanning the entire medieval Muslim world. I explore this production over a long temporal stretch and across a vast swathe of Islamic territories. My focus is on the thematic and genealogical constructions that were of greatest significance to the accumulation of cultural capital, which, I argue, constitutes a medieval Islamic "republic of letters."[8]

[8] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 1.

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In his conclusion, al-Musawi explains that his medieval Islamic republic of letters "implies an umbrella—literary world-systems that existed across Asia and Africa."[9] In what follows, I will further develop and expand upon some of the points that I made in my book in addition to new ones.

1. General Theoretical Contexts

Al-Musawi's use of the term "republic of letters" *(république des lettres)* relies on the meaning of the term established in two books: Dena Goodman's *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment*[10] and Pascale Casanova's *The World Republic of Letters.*[11] Coined by Pierre Bayle (1647–1706) to indicate a network of intellectuals who create and sustain cultural exchange,[12] this term is used by al-Musawi to refer to "a conceptual framework, an edifice, to account for a literary world-system in which Arabic functions as the dominating language." However, al-Musawi is careful to state that "its appropriation in this book entails no equation between Latin and Arabic in relation to national languages."[13] Casanova's conceptions are mentioned throughout al-Musawi's book in a mixture of hidden gratitude (probably for inventing the attractive title for her book and, then, for enabling him to use it in his project) and visible disagreement (emphasizing his own post-colonial non-Eurocentric theoretical conceptions). That is why we frequently encounter in al-Musawi's study utterances indicating that Casanova's model of world literature cannot be applied to "Arabic knowledge construction" but, at the same time, we see him refer to her model's parameters to delineate the Islamic world—although in the latter case, some of these references are inapposite—for example, Cairo is compared to Paris as the Greenwich Meridian of literature, and Arabic is compared to Latin in relation to national languages. However, anyone who has read Casanova's study would see that al-Musawi deals

[9] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 305.

[10] Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, 1994).

[11] Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA, 2004).

[12] See also the project "Mapping the Republic of Letters" at the Stanford Humanities Center (Stanford University); the following is from its website (http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/index.html, accessed 30 October 2017): "Before email, faculty meetings, international colloquia, and professional associations, the world of scholarship relied on its own networks: networks of correspondence that stretched across countries and continents; the social networks created by scientific academies; and the physical networks brought about by travel. These networks… facilitated the dissemination and the criticism of ideas, the spread of political news, as well as the circulation of people and objects.… [The project] aims to create a repository for metadata on early-modern scholarship, and guidelines for future data capture."

[13] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 9.

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only superficially with her conceptions without delving deeply into her arguments, or even, sometimes, without fully comprehending their meanings and implications. He would also see that al-Musawi overlooks the many insightful studies and critical reviews written about Casanova's book following its original publication in French (1999), its translation into Arabic (2002), and especially after its release in English by a distinguished publisher (2004). Without referring to these studies and reviews and the in-depth contributions in this regard to various literary and cultural systems, any attempt to use her conceptions is inadequate and not satisfactory.

Casanova's study and the notion of a "republic of letters" captured the attention and interest of a range of scholars with regard to their approaches to the study of literature and the production of literary value, all of them treating culture as a field, a structure, or an economy. Drawing on the language of politics, it reminds us that this is a field constituted by power and competition, a hierarchical structure. The study was praised by Bill Marx as "a marvelously stimulating look at the realpolitik of world literature and the authorities who run the marketplace of ideas."[14] Perry Anderson refers to it as "path-breaking":

> Here the national bounds of Bourdieu's work have been decisively broken, in a project that uses his concepts of symbolic capital and the cultural field to construct a model of the global inequalities of power between different national literatures, and the gamut of strategies that writers in languages at the periphery of the system of legitimation have used to try to win a place at the centre. Nothing like this has been attempted before.[15]

Others approached Casanova's study from various critical angles, some even arguing that her theory was erratic and implausible.[16] In brief, Casanova's point of departure is that, historically, the study of literature in the *modern* era has been dominated by nationalism. She believes that while we have been encouraged to think of literature exclusively in terms of *national* literatures, this approach is increasingly at odds with the realities of a *globalizing* world. As might be expected, she more or less ignores the question of official nationalism, which is one way of accounting for her avoidance, as Nergis Ertürk correctly observes, for example, of

[14]Bill Marx, "Review of *The World Republic of Letters,*" *Words without Borders* (n.d.), http://www.wordswithoutborders.org/book-review/the-world-republic-of-letters (accessed 30 October 2017).

[15]Perry Anderson, "Union Sucrée," *London Review of Books* 26, no. 18 (2004): 18.

[16]For important critiques of Casanova's model, see Christopher Prendergast, "Negotiating World Literature," *New Left Review* 8 (2001): 100–21; *Debating World Literature,* ed. idem (New York, 2004); and the special issue of *New Literary History* entitled "Literary History in the Global Age" (39, nos. 3–4 [2008]).

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Turkey and Turkish literature.[17] Thence, her book is dedicated to moving beyond nationalism in literary study and looking instead at how all books and authors participate in what she thinks of as a *world literary system.*[18]

Casanova (and Franco Moretti even before her[19]) tried to theorize the literary field as one global phenomenon and to propose new structures of interaction between literature and history.[20] Casanova's central hypothesis, as she argues at the very beginning of her book, "is that there exists a 'literature-world,' a literary universe relatively independent of the everyday world and its political divisions, whose boundaries and operational laws are not reducible to those of ordinary political space." The world literary space is autonomous and "endowed with its own laws,"[21] and the aesthetic map of the world does not overlap with the political one. Casanova describes a Darwinian literary market, where, in the battle for survival, outsiders crash in while insiders fend off challenges to their authority: "It is the competition among its members that defines and unites the system while at the same time marking its limits," and "not every writer proceeds in the same way, but all writers attempt to enter the same race, and all of them struggle, albeit with unequal advantages, to attain the same goal: literary legitimacy."[22] She deals with the transnational literary market and with the critical discourse on world literature as an autonomous, transnational, unipolar system ruled by the literary Greenwich Meridian.[23] Casanova discusses the concept of "symbolic and literary

[17] See Nergis Ertürk, "Those Outside the Scene: Snow in the World Republic of Letters," *New Literary History* 41, no. 3 (2010): 634. Cf. Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 160–74.

[18] The last emphasized term demonstrates the irrelevance of Casanova's conceptions to the literary texts and activities al-Musawi deals with in his book.

[19] Franco Moretti, *The Modern Epic: The World-System from Goethe to García Márquez,* trans. Quintin Hoare (London, 1996).

[20] See also Silvia L. López, "Dialectical Criticism in the Provinces of the 'World Republic of Letters': The Primacy of the Object in the Work of Roberto Schwarz," *A Contracorriente* 9, no. 1 (2011): 69–88.

[21] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* xii and 350, respectively.

[22] Ibid., 40. Cf. *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment to the Global Present,* ed. David Damrosch et al. (Princeton, 2009), 335.

[23] On the concept of world literature and the various positions, see the following selected publications: Ernst Elster, "Weltlitteratur und Litteraturvergleichung," *Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen und Literatur* 107 (1901): 33–47; idem, "World Literature and Comparative Literature (1901)," trans. Eric Metzler, *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 35 (1986): 7–13; Franco Moretti, "Conjectures on World Literature," *New Left Review* 1 (2000): 54–68; David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton and Oxford, 2003); *Other Renaissances: A New Approach to World Literature,* ed. Brenda Deen Schildgen et al. (New York, 2007); David Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature* (Chichester, 2009); idem, *Teaching World Literature* (New York, 2009); Emily Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (London, 2013); *World Literature: A Reader,* ed. Theo D'haen et al. (London and New York, 2013); and Ganguly, "Polysystems

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capital" on an international scale, asking what the components of literary capital might be: literacy rates and prizes, numbers of books published and sold, numbers of publishers and bookstores, judgments, and reputations. Language would be a major component of literary capital: "Certain languages, by virtue of the prestige of the texts written in them, are reputed to be more literary than others, to embody literature."[24]

Scholars have attempted to explore the implications of Casanova's book with regard to specific local literatures, exactly as al-Musawi has tried to do with Arabic literature, but most of them did it with much more attentiveness to its conceptions. Peter Kirkpatrick and Robert Dixon, for example, grapple with the notion of "world literature" and its meaning for Australian literary studies. While they frequently allude to Casanova's views, their book presents a far more pluralistic vision of *literary community*. They attempt to juxtapose "world literature" with the very different forms of "community" created by writers' circles, little magazines, and the like. They acknowledge the "slippage" between these two concepts: while the term "community" suggests *shared values and interests,* the "republic of letters" draws on the language of politics, reminding us that this is a field constituted by

Redux," 272–81. One of the definitions of world literature excludes any evaluative judgments or hierarchies of value, namely, "all of the world's literature, without pronouncing on questions of quality and influence" (D'haen, *World Literature,* xi). On Arabic fiction and world literature, see Tetz Rooke, "The Emergence of the Arabic Bestseller: Arabic Fiction and World Literature," in *From New Values to New Aesthetics: Turning Points in Modern Arabic Literature,* ed. Stephan Guth and Gail Ramsay (Wiesbaden, 2011), 201–13. On Arabic poetry and world literature, see Huda Fakhreddine, "The Aesthetic Imperative: History Poeticized," in *Manifestos for World Thought,* ed. Lucian Stone and Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh (London and New York, 2017), 147–54. On how Arabic literature has been introduced into world literature anthologies, see Omar Khalifah, "Anthologizing Arabic Literature: The Longman Anthology and the Problems of World Literature," *Journal of World Literature* 2 (2017): 512–26. On extending the paradigm of world literature beyond hegemonic global centers and attending to the trajectories that shape "literature in the world," see Helgesson, "Tayeb Salih, Sol Plaatje, and the Trajectories of World Literature," 253–60. On world literature and the demise of national literatures, see Claus Clüver, "The Difference of Eight Decades: World Literature and the Demise of National Literatures," *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 35 (1986): 14–24; idem, "World Literature—Period or Type? In Response to Horst Steinmetz," *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 37 (1988): 134–39; idem, "On Using Literary Constructs: In Response to Zoran Konstantinovic," *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 37 (1988): 143–44; Zoran Konstantinovic, "Response to Claus Clüver's 'The Difference of Eight Decades: World Literature and the Demise of National Literatures,'" *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 37 (1988): 141–42; and Horst Steinmetz, "Response to Claus Clüver's 'The Difference of Eight Decades: World Literature and the Demise of National Literatures,'" *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 37 (1988): 131–33.

[24]Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 17.

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power and competition.[25] Hayden White refers to Casanova's attempt to ground her history of literature in an idea of "literary temporality" and the way in which modern literature, originally identified with politics and nationalism, managed, "through a gradual accumulation of autonomy, to escape the ordinary laws of history." This allows her to define literature "both as an object that is irreducible to history and as a historical object, albeit one that enjoys a strictly literary historicity,"[26] but White points to the ambiguity in her use of the word "literary" and raises questions about the difference between "*literary* history of literature" compared to "*historical* history of literature."[27] Most criticism of Casanova, however, has referred to the book's claims for creating a method of canonicity for world literature, and thus has predictably focused on her neglect of certain authors and genres. The most thorough engagement with her work can be found in the collection edited by Christopher Prendergast.[28]

There is almost nothing of the above discussion in al-Musawi's study or articles. Although he acknowledges Casanova's work as an inspiration, al-Musawi does not take the book's theory as a point of departure either as a conceptual focus or even as a thesis to be rejected. It seems that what greatly captured al-Musawi's interest was Casanova's attractive title; otherwise, it is difficult to understand how he ignores even what could have served his arguments quite well.[29] Good examples for dealing with theoretical conceptions of world literature with regard to Arabic literature can be found in four studies, one published before and three after the publication of al-Musawi's book. The first is Nadia Al-Bagdadi's article in which she discerns three distinct phases and types of globalization: (1) *Oikumenical globalization* of late antiquity to the end of the Abbasid period; (2) *Expanding globalization* of the imperialist age of the late eighteenth to the twentieth century; and (3) *Dispersal globalization* of the current age. Confining literary movements to these three forms of globalization is a simplified scheme of more complex historical developments, Al-Bagdadi says, but "the heuristic advantage, however, opens up historical and theoretical perspectives on literacy, literature,

[25] *Republics of Letters: Literary Communities in Australia,* ed. Peter Kirkpatrick and Robert Dixon (Sydney, 2012), v.

[26] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 350.

[27] Hayden White, "'With No Particular Place to Go': Literary History in the Age of the Global Picture," *New Literary History* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 738–39. In addition, White offers Ami Elias' insights in her book *Sublime Desire: History and Post-1960s Fiction* (Baltimore, 2001).

[28] Prendergast, *Debating World Literature.*

[29] Such as the hope Casanova expresses at the very end of her book that her study will be a "critical weapon in the service of all deprived and dominated writers on the periphery of the literary world" in their struggle "against the presumptions, the arrogance, and the fiats of critics in the center, who ignore the basic fact of the inequality of access to literary existence" (Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 354–55).

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and interpretation at the interface of crossing cultures and civilizations. It will suffice here to sketch out the three phases with regard to the question under consideration."[30] Unlike Al-Bagdadi's, which does not refer at all to Casanova's conceptions though she deals with issues mentioned in her book, the other three studies discuss directly these theoretical conceptions as related to Arabic literature, with full awareness of their complexities. Rebecca Carol Johnson uses Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq's (1804–87) semi-autobiographical fictional travel narrative *Al-sāq ʿalá al-sāq fī mā huwa al-fāryāq* (Leg upon leg concerning that which is al-fāryāq) (1855) in order to examine critically world literature paradigms that see literary modernity as the entrance into world literary space's zones of equivalence. Providing many examples from the book, she argues that literary modernity does not appear as a world of literature that Arab authors entered, but as a world they accumulated in their texts by re-aggregating literary history as a collection of texts, translations of texts, and readings of translations of texts:

> The worldedness of literary reference in al-Shidyāq's sense is not one that supplants or is in conflict with national or local identifications. Nor is it universal style, form, or reason in disguise. He gathers styles, forms, and reasons—"connects the disconnected"—into an unstable archive of modernity that cannot be positioned within a single or uniform genealogy. Through a series of productive misreadings—by incorporating European modes and genres into his work as European, by creating fractured and heterogeneous audiences within his text, and by bringing Arabic literary standards to pass judgment on European texts—al-Shidyāq creates an aggregated global literary sphere and reminds us that the "world" in world literature is not a given; it must be manufactured, and from a particular and historically contingent location. In doing so, al-Shidyāq shows us how to take modern Arabic literature out of filiative or vertical narratives of development, and instead situate it within a larger network of transnational or horizontal associations that are embedded in, but not bound by, the material interactions that accompany them.[31]

Madeleine Dobie examines Casanova's theory, as well as those of Fredric Jameson and Franco Moretti. Focusing on the case of Algerian literature, she argues that narratives of world literature have tended to overemphasize the center-pe-

[30] Nadia Al-Bagdadi, "Registers of Arabic Literary History," *New Literary History* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 448–49.

[31] Rebecca Carol Johnson, "Archive of Errors: Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, Literature, and the World," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 20, no. 1 (2017): 44–45.

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riphery divide, neglecting other geographies of production and circulation. Guided by a logic of mimesis, theories of world literature have often "derived their definition of literature from the western canon and then sought equivalents and tributaries in the rest of the world." They "approach non-western literature as an offshoot or extension of European culture and make little effort to explore other cultural forms or alternative sites of production and reception."[32] It is interesting that neither Johnson nor Dobie refers to al-Musawi's book although it is unreasonable that they were not aware of its appearance and its direct relevance to their studies—one can by no means rule out that the reason is not disconnected from what will be argued below concerning al-Musawi's influential and prestigious status in the scholarship of Arabic literature. Another study, by Marie Thérèse Abdelmessih, does not mention explicitly Casanova's conceptions but refers to theories of world literature as well as to al-Musawi's arguments about the epistemological shifts effected by the vocational cultural practices such as in rituals, recitations, slogans, odes, songs, banners, and colors, while elaborating upon them in their several epochs of the Islamic republic of letters. However, when dealing specifically with world literature, she avoids referring to the gaps in al-Musawi's understanding of the principles of the relevant theories maintaining that "the formation of a universal canon should be founded on a cross-cultural reading of mainstream and peripheral literary models from world literature, while engaging critics and scholars from the North and the South in the process of theorization." She concludes that

> Restricting epistemology within a classical heritage or narrowed vocational practices related to an exclusive geographical location impedes access to a global dialogue. Rethinking critical approaches to Arabic initially requires rereading Arabic from a comparative perspective of distinct practices, within their continual intra-regional exchanges. Decolonizing the vocational from centralization, as well as hegemonic epistemic limitations, would enable scholars of Arabic to participate in the debate and address problems of global canon formation.[33]

In the following, I will refer to al-Musawi's study in the context of available scholarship on Arabic literature, and from time to time, when relevant, I will refer to world literature's theories and conceptions.

[32] Madeleine Dobie, "Locating Algerian Literature in World Literature," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 20, no. 1 (2017): 87.

[33] Marie Thérèse Abdelmessih, "Rethinking Critical Approaches to Arabic Comparatively, in a 'Post' Colonial Context," *Interventions—International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 20, no. 2 (2018): 205, 206–7 respectively.

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2. Terminology

For a study considered to be, as Suzanne P. Stetkevych writes in her endorsement of al-Musawi's book, "the starting point for a new generation of scholarship" on pre-modern Arabic literature, the intelligible use of terms and the appropriate justifications for the use of each term are crucial. That is why it is important to clarify in detail what makes the term "republic of letters" suitable, besides its decorative attractiveness, as an "umbrella term"[34] in a study on *Arabic* literature. Moreover, if the term's appropriation, according to al-Musawi himself, "entails no equation between Latin and Arabic in relation to national languages," one has to ask what justifies the borrowing of this very term from a specifically "literary world-system," where the relationship between the major language (=Latin) and the national languages is fundamental.[35] Casanova's conceptions, which are indebted to world-systems theory as developed by Fernand Braudel and his concept of an "economy-world," and especially to Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of literature as an autonomous social field in which competition for symbolic capital in the cultural field supersedes yet also mirrors the wider competition for power,[36] make a case for an international theory space, which has developed its own standards, canons, and values operating separately from national literary systems. According to Dena Goodman, the "French Republic of Letters rose with the modern political state out of the religious wars of the sixteenth century, out of the articulation of public and private spheres, citizen and state, agent and critic." The basics of this Republic were established in the "Parisian salons, from which networks of social and intellectual exchange were being developed to connect the capital with the four corners of France and the cosmopolitan republic." Its aim was "to serve humanity and [its] project was Enlightenment."[37]

However, apart from brief references to both studies in his "Preliminary Discourse" and some quotations from Casanova's book in subsequent pages, nowhere does al-Musawi provide any coherent explanation for the shared views and conceptions between either Goodman's or Casanova's concepts of republic of letters and his own. At the same time, in justifying his focus on rhetoric, in a visible

[34] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 305.

[35] Some of al-Musawi's statements regarding the comparison between Arabic and Latin are obscure and ambiguous. Take, for example, the following: "Although Arabic remained a language of conversation and discussion among writers and scholars, *it was so only in the shadow of other empires and city-states;* hence, it cannot be compared to Latin. Its relation to other competing and challenging vernaculars is a dialectical one, *a record of give and take,* but also as the most recognized by scholars from non-Arab regions" (al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 283 [my emphasis]).

[36] Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art: genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (Paris, 1992); and *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field,* trans. Susan Emanuel (Cambridge, 1996).

[37] Goodman, *The Republic of Letters,* 2, 52 respectively.

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attempt to imitate the authors of the post-classical or pre-modern period,[38] al-Musawi refers to the Arabic translation of the term "republic":

> The recourse in rhetoric to indirection, or *laḥn al-qawl* (i.e., implicitness), and to *taʿrīḍ* (dissimulation, connotation, concealment) signifies the other side of written and verbal transactions in this *jumhūr* (majority) of littérateurs, which is the basis for Arab and Muslim modernists' application of the term *jumhūriyyah* (i.e., republic). In this verbal domain, the root and conjugation of the verb *jamhara* also connote dissimulation. Hence, both verb and noun are loaded in Arabic in a binary structure, negation, or *taḍādd* (based on opposites or contrasts—*aḍdād*), implying both revelation and concealment.[39]

Al-Musawi implies here that the etymology of the Arabic term for "republic" is relevant to his conception of the "republic of letters" and that, since "both verb and noun are loaded in Arabic in a binary structure, negation, or *taḍādd,*" is also relevant to it. Al-Musawi, however, does not further elaborate on his claim. The original meaning of the verb *jamhara,* from which the term *jumhūrīyah* ("republic") is derived, is "[to collect] together a thing or earth, or dust." The same verb also denotes dissimulation: thus, *jamhara ʿalayhi* (or *lahu* or *ilayhi*) *al-khabara* means "he acquainted him with a part of the news, or story, and concealed what he desired or meant," or "he acquainted him with a part of the news, or story, incorrectly, or not in the proper manner, and omitted what he desired or meant."[40] In *one* source only, there is a view that the verb *jamhara* is of the category *aḍdād,* which is to say that it is a *ḍidd* (plural: *aḍdād*), the Arabic term for a word with two basic meanings with one meaning being the opposite of the other (i.e., a contronym): thus, *jamhar lak al-khabara jamharatan* means "he acquainted you with a minor part of the news and concealed its main part."[41] However, this is *not* an obvious case of the category of *aḍdād,* since *jamhar* in its main meaning, from which the word *jumhūrīyah* is derived, as well as in its marginal meaning, does not connote a meaning and its total opposite such as, for example, the word *jawn,* which means both "black" and "white," or *jalal,* which means both "great" and

[38] Hereafter, the terms "post-classical" and "pre-modern" are in general used interchangeably. On what makes that period both post-classical and pre-modern, see Roger Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* ed. Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (Cambridge, 2006), 8–17.

[39] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 2–3.

[40] E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Beirut, 1968 [1865]), s.v. *jamhar.*

[41] ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Lughawī, *Kitāb al-Aḍdād fī Kalām al-ʿArab,* ed. ʿIzzat Ḥasan (Damascus, 1963), 182.

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"small," or *ḍidd* itself, which ironically has the contrary meanings "opposite" and "equal."[42] On the other hand, it is not clear at all what the benefit is to al-Musawi's argument for the "republic of letters" if "both verb and noun are loaded in Arabic in a binary structure, negation, or *taḍādd*."[43]

In any event, al-Musawi writes about a period when the term *jumhūrīyah* did not exist and the terms concerning literary and cultural activities were different from those that have been used since the late nineteenth century (see my discussion of the term *adab* below). Thus, there is a need to clarify the terms al-Musawi uses throughout his study, such as "cultural production" and "cultural activity," as well "literary production," "literary life," and "literary value." The aforementioned term "literary world-system" is also used without clear definition, sometimes by an indirect allusion to Casanova's arguments or to an interpretation of one of her book's reviews.[44] In my recent book, I explain what I mean by terms such as "literary system," "literary text," and "culture,"[45] among others, and my definitions evidently differ from those of al-Musawi such as they are—and they are, as I have been arguing, rather vague.

[42]Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon,* s.v. *ḍidd.*

[43]In an interview with the Arabic press before the publication of his book, al-Musawi referred to its title as *Jumhūrīyat al-adab fī al-ʿaṣr al-Islāmī al-wasīṭ* (*Al-sharq al-awsaṭ,* 22 January 2013), but after its publication he preferred to translate it as *Jamharat al-ādāb fī al-ʿaṣr al-Islāmī al-wasīṭ* (*Al-khalīj,* 30 June 2015). He justifies the use of *Jamharat al-ādāb* for "republic of letters" by arguing (wrongly!) that the term alludes to the contrary meanings of *jamʿ wa-tafrīq* ("joining and separating") (*Al-bayān,* 30 June 2015):

لأن جمهر تعني الجمع والتفريق، وهي أصل للجمهوريّة كمفردة توازي ما درج عليه الفرنسيّون، فدلالتها ديمقراطية لاسيّما أنها تشتمل على الضدّين، وتتيح عبر الجمع والتفريق، الاحتجاج واختلاف الرأي والجدل والمناقشة. وبالتالي، إحياء الفضاء العام اللازم لتنامي الظواهر المختلفة مؤسساتيّاً ومعرفيّاً

In a review of the book, Shīrīn Abū al-Najā translates its first part as *Al-jumhūrīyah al-Islāmīyah lil-ādāb* (*Al-ḥayāh,* 28 February 2016). Casanova's book was translated into Arabic by Amal al-Ṣabbān as *Al-jumhūrīyah al-ʿālamīyah lil-ādāb* (Cairo, 2002).

[44]Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 89, where al-Musawi bases his argument on a partial and inaccurate quotation from Joe Cleary, "The World Literary System: Atlas and Epitaph," *Field Day Review* 2 (2006): 202. In an article published two years before he published his book, al-Musawi refers to Casanova's arguments but only mentions Cleary's review in a footnote. The article opens with two sentences about the "major restructuration and hence proliferation of the literary world-system" that are "motivated and driven by the corporate effort of grammarians and writers, an effort that in the case of English drew impetus from a sustained privileging of literature in a self-assertive nationalism" (al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Literary World-System," 43). Cleary mentions "the efforts of men of letters, grammarians and lexicographers" (Cleary, "The World Literary System," 202), but in a different context. It is debatable as to how al-Musawi actually "applies" this, in the next sentence, to the medieval and pre-modern Islamic cultural world-system, when he argues "that grammar, lexicography, and literary production assume *even more significance* as evidenced in the massive production and demand" (my emphasis).

[45]See Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 2–3; 4; 11, n. 11; 2–3, respectively.

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3. Temporal Spaces and Borders

Al-Musawi's book refers to the "postclassical era (approximately the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries),"[46] but one has to wonder about the uniformity of this long time span and the assumed difference between it—or a section of it—and between other periods such as the eleventh and nineteenth centuries. For example, the essential characteristics of *literary* production in Arabic did not dramatically change between the tenth and twelfth centuries. Furthermore, in Chapter 2 al-Musawi deals with the tenth-century encyclopedic work *Ikhwān al-ṣafā'* (The brethren of purity), considering it the "prototype for an Islamic republic of letters"[47] and thus complicating the issue of the temporal spaces and borders of his imagined "republic." In any event, before the late nineteenth century, modern literary conceptions had not as yet penetrated Arabic literature, and therefore it is important that the particular characteristics of the "twelfth through the eighteenth centuries" and how they can be distinguished from those of other periods, both previous and subsequent, be fleshed out. Here, theoretical studies dealing with periodization, as mentioned above, may help as well as contributions by other scholars of Arabic literature who have dealt with this issue. For example, in the introduction to *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period* (2006), Roger Allen, the most prominent and experienced contemporary scholar in the field of Arabic literature, eloquently explains in detail why the volume he edited with D. S. Richards treats "the vast period between approximately 1150 and 1850 as a separate entity."[48] In addition, in my recent book, I deal with the topic of periodization from a *literary* point of view, and the parameters I use to distinguish between periods may also be relevant to al-Musawi's research project.[49]

4. Territorial, Physical, and Metaphorical Spaces

Casanova's book, on which al-Musawi relies, is concerned with what one might call the "geopolitics of literature." In his review of the book, Terry Eagleton writes the following:

[46] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 1.

[47] Ibid., 15.

[48] Allen and Richards, *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* 20. For a review article of the book, see Thomas Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature': A Review Article," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (2007): 137–67. And see as well the response of Salma Khadra Jayyusi, whose article in the book was described by Bauer (p. 159) as falling "far short of scholarly standards" (Salma Khadra Jayyusi, "Response to Thomas Bauer," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 12, no. 1 [2008]: 193–207).

[49] See Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 176–81.

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> Literary works, so it claims, are never fully intelligible in themselves; instead, you have to see them as belonging to a global literary space, which has a basis in the world's political landscape, but which also cuts across its regions and borders to form a distinctive republic of its own. Like geopolitical space, this literary republic has its frontiers, provinces, exiles, legislators, migrations, subordinate territories and an unequal distribution of resources. It is a form of intellectual commerce in which literary value is banked and circulated, or transferred from one national currency to another in the act of translation … like the political sphere, too, the republic of letters is wracked by struggle, rivalry and inequality between the literary haves and the have-nots. There are "peripheral" or "impoverished" literary spheres … Such underdeveloped pockets are poor in literary capital, lacking publishers, libraries, journals and professional writers. Dominating their cultural resources is Old Europe, with its literary capital located firmly in Paris.[50]

Al-Musawi refers to Cairo of the post-classical era as the literary capital of the medieval Islamic republic of letters—a "cosmopolitan" city by virtue of its place and by virtue of its being a "nexus that witnesses a dialogue among schools of thought, scholastic controversies, scientific achievements, poetic innovations and shifts in expression, the massive use of prose for statecraft, and soaring heights of Sufi poetry that simultaneously derive and refract worldliness from common tropes."[51] In addition, "the influx of scholars, poets, travelers, and entrepreneurs continued markedly into the nineteenth century and played a significant role in giving the city its cosmopolitan features." Scholars from all over the Islamic world "settled in Cairo or at least stopped there for a while. Others were satisfied with an imaginary stopover, which was sustained and given shape through Sufi

[50] *New Statesman,* 11 April 2005, http://www.newstatesman.com/node/198469 (accessed 30 October 2017).

[51] In his review of al-Musawi's book, Mohammad Salama argues that "one of the book's persuasive arguments is that we give Egypt, especially Cairo, its long overdue literary recognition that Casanova assigns exclusively to Paris" ("Bridging the Gap," 2). However, it seems that al-Musawi does not see Paris and Cairo as competing on the same track; he argues that Cairo "stood to the postclassical Islamic world *as* Paris stood to Europe" (al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 7 [my emphasis]). In his over-praising of al-Musawi's book and wholesale adoption of his arguments, Salama attributes to al-Musawi several achievements and accomplishments that the latter had never wished or intended to realize. For example, Salama writes that al-Musawi criticizes Casanova for resorting to "Eurocentric statements" and then quotes a sentence by al-Musawi regarding Paris (p. 2) which can by no means be understood as critical of Casanova. Salama's review of the book, which lacks critical perspective, is typical of most if not all the reviews of al-Musawi's studies during the last two decades (see below).

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networks and an innovative reliance on the antecedent tradition of poetry and writing." Additionally, Cairo escaped destruction and as "a safe enclave, it functioned in a way similar to its multiplying compendiums and lexicons."

However, can we *truly* consider Cairo to be a "cosmopolitan space," as al-Musawi argues, against the backdrop of his own argument that following the fall of Baghdad the "Arab center could not hold for long"? Al-Musawi does admit that the emergence of "an alternative center in Cairo was accepted, but not as wholeheartedly as had been the case with Baghdad."[52] Here, the status of Paris in Casanova's model, from which al-Musawi drew his inspiration to refer to Cairo as cosmopolitan, is very important. In Casanova's view, because of its long accumulation of literary prestige and its relative freedom from political concerns, Paris serves as the Greenwich Meridian of literature, which "makes it possible to estimate the relative distance from the center of the world of letters of all those who belong to it."[53] Casanova and Moretti have tried to establish new paradigms that recreate a globalist literary discourse and a systematic apparatus that can render a literary world comprehensible while distancing itself from the discourse of postcolonial studies. The aim, as Silvia L. López correctly mentions, is to "reinstate models of a global understanding of literary production that have in the long run a depoliticizing effect, be this achieved through the adoption of an empirical Darwinian model of the evolution of literary forms or through the redeployment of the concept of literary autonomy, this time with all the clocks set to the Greenwich Meridian."[54] Cairo, however, can by no means be considered as the Greenwich Meridian of Arabic literature during the post-classical or pre-modern period.

For Casanova's republic, the central hypothesis is that "there exists a 'literature-world,' a literary universe relatively independent of the everyday world and its political divisions, whose boundaries and operational laws are not reducible to those of ordinary political space."[55] In short, it has its own specific politics. That being said, the "literature-world" is not, as Joe Cleary explains in his review of Casanova's book, "some free-floating cosmopolitan cultural zone that transcends or is independent of political space either." It has "its own capitals, its own core and peripheral cultural regions, and its own laws of canonization and capital accumulation."[56] We can measure the power, prestige, and volume of linguistic and literary capital of a language not in terms of "the number of writers and readers it has, but in terms of the number of cosmopolitan intermediaries—publishers, editors, critics, and especially translators—who assure the circulation of texts

[52] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 6–7, 45–46, 51, 71, 25, and 132, respectively.

[53] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 88.

[54] López, "Dialectical Criticism," 70.

[55] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* xii.

[56] Cleary, "The World Literary System," 199.

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into language or out of it." In addition, "the great, often polyglot, cosmopolitan figures of the world of letters act in effect as foreign exchange brokers, responsible for exporting from one territory to another texts whose literary value they determine by virtue of this very activity."[57]

Theoretical research on the topic of cosmopolitanism has seen significant developments during recent decades, including its use in relation to the Middle East; this has been shown concerning Alexandria as a cosmopolitan city at the turn of the twentieth century and concerning subsequent periods, such as the developments and changes following the "cosmopolitan turn" and the intensified globalization during the last decades.[58] It is assumed that there is a need for certain urban, social, and cultural dimensions for a city to be considered as cosmopolitan or for a global society to have cosmopolitan features. Also, as it has been proven in various societies, cosmopolitanism in general, certainly in the pre-globalization world, is the product of very limited periods, certainly not of long periods of six or seven centuries.[59] Such was the case, for example, with Baghdad after its establishment in 762, when the city enjoyed, for a limited time span, a pluralistic and multiconfessional atmosphere with multicultural ethnic and religious gatherings of Muslims, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, pagans, Arabs, Persians, and various other Asian populations. That cosmopolitan atmosphere was inspired by the leadership of the caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 754–75), who from Baghdad propagated an open and multicultural policy toward religious minorities.[60] The political, religious, and cultural supremacy of Baghdad as the center of the flowering of al-Manṣūr's Islamic empire encouraged and inspired the multicultural environment not only in the city itself, but also throughout other cities, close and remote alike. A contemporary text describing typical gatherings that would take place in the southern city of Basra in the year 156 (772–73) may serve to illustrate such a pluralistic environment (the fact that those gatherings were held in Basra, the site of the production of the aforementioned encyclopedic work *Ikhwān al-ṣafāʾ,* which was depicted by al-Musawi as a "prototype for an Islamic republic of letters," is not a coincidence):

> Khalaf ibn al-Muthannā related: Ten persons used to meet in Basra regularly. There was no equivalent to this gathering for the diversi-

[57] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 21.

[58] Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 267–69. And see now also David Tal, "Jacqueline Kahanoff and the Demise of the Levantine," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 32 (2017): 237–54, where the author connects cosmopolitanism with the term "Levantinism."

[59] Cf. Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 267.

[60] Françoise Micheau, "Baghdad in the Abbasid Era: A Cosmopolitan and Multi-Confessional Capital," in *The City in the Islamic World,* Salma K. Jayyusi (gen. ed.) and Renata Holod et al. (spec. eds.) (Leiden, 2008), 219–45.

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> ty of the religions and sects of its members: al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad—a *sunnī* (Sunni), and al-Sayyid ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥimyarī—*rāfiḍī* (Shiite), and Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-Qaddūs—*thanawī* (dualist), and Sufyān ibn Mujāshiʿ—*ṣufrī* (Khārijī), and Bashshār ibn Burd—morally depraved and impudent, and Ḥammād ʿAjrad—*zindīq* (heretic), and the exilarch's son—a Jew, and Ibn Naẓīr—*mutakallim al-naṣārá* (a Christian theologian), and ʿAmrū the nephew of al-Muʾayyad—*majūsī* (Zoroastrian), and Rawḥ ibn Sinān al-Ḥarrānī—*ṣābiʾī* (Gnostic). At these gatherings, they used to recite poems, and Bashshār used to say: your verses, O man, are better than *sūrah* this or that [of the Quran], and from that kind of joking and similar things, they declared Bashshār to be a disbeliever.[61]

Not in its literary heritage, and nowhere in the historical chronicles of Cairo, could we find any text related to similar pluralistic "cosmopolitan" gatherings.[62] Notwithstanding the fact that the glorious and multicultural cosmopolitan image of Baghdad concealed a day-to-day reality of a city which suffered from all kinds of difficulties and troubles, just like any other medieval city, its cosmopolitan na-

[61] Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-wafāyāt al-mashāhīr wa-al-aʿlām, ḥawādith wa-wafāyāt 141–160H,* ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī (Beirut, 1988), 383. For another version of this episode, see Jamāl al-Dīn ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1930), 2:29 (= 1992 edition, 2:36–37). On that liberal cultural atmosphere, see also Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-Udabāʾ* (Beirut, 1991), 3:242–44. On the atmosphere of freethinking in Basra and on the participants in such gatherings, see also Ibn Warraq, *Why I Am Not a Muslim* (Amherst, NY, 2003), 254–56. Ibn Warraq (b. 1946) is the pen name of a secularist author of Pakistani origin and founder of the Institute for the Secularization of Islamic Society; he believes that the great Islamic civilizations of the past were established in spite of the Quran, not because of it, and that only a secularized Islam can deliver Muslim states from "fundamentalist madness." On an open debate in the classical Muslim world, which included Jews, see Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥumaydī, *Jadhwat al-muqtabis fī Tārīkh ʿUlamāʾ al-Andalus,* ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo and Beirut, 1989), 1:175–76; Walter J. Fischel, "'Resh-Galuta' (*Raʾs al-Jālūt*) in Arabic Literature," in *Sefer Magnes* (English title: *Magnes Anniversary Book*), ed. F. I. Baer et al. (Jerusalem, 1938), 181–87; Duncan B. MacDonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory* (Lahore, 1960 [1903]), 194; Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1957), 5:83–85; and Steven M. Wasserstrom, *Between Muslim and Jew: The Problem of Symbiosis under Early Islam* (Princeton, 1995), 113, and the references in n. 71.

[62] The closest text we found is about the Fatimid vizier of Jewish origin Yaʿqūb ibn Killis (930–91), a gifted administrator and a lover of Arabic belles lettres who wrote books on Islamic law and the Quran; he used to hold weekly Tuesday gatherings, *majlis* sessions, at home and provided stipends for scholars, writers, poets, jurists, theologians, and master artisans participating in them. Fridays he would convene sessions at which he would read his own works (Mark R. Cohen and Sasson Somekh, "In the Court of Yaʿqūb ibn Killis: A Fragment from the Cairo Genizah," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 80, nos. 3–4 [1990]: 283–314).

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ture remained in the Arab cultural imagination for many centuries to come, but was not for a long period a reality on the ground. For example, European travelers visiting Baghdad during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reported that several of its quarters were neglected, although the city was still at the time a center of commerce with an international atmosphere, where three main languages (Arabic, Persian, and Turkish) were spoken. Even during the 1920s and 1930s, as well as during the 1960s, Baghdad was known for its remarkable religious tolerance, multicultural atmosphere, and ability to bear witness to the peaceful coexistence of all of its inhabitants,[63] but this was for very short periods.

Also, al-Musawi argues that the pervasive Islamic consciousness that takes the Arabic language as its pivotal point seems more important here than a metropolitan-peripheral demarcation:

> Under precarious and ever-shifting politics, centers at any given time may be replaced by other centers, and scholars are compelled to develop their own counterstrategies in a vast Islamic domain where theological studies hold sway. Thus, the issue of centers and peripheries is secondary in relation to cultural activity.[64]

Apart from the premise that the very use of the term "republic of letters" demands the adoption of the center-periphery binary, it seems unlikely that the issue of centers and peripheries could be "secondary in relation to cultural activity" in any "republic of letters." Studies of the hierarchy of cultural activities indicate that the idea of any literary or cultural system is based on the hypothesis that, although the activities within a periphery, any periphery, essentially differ from those at the center, all cultural activities should be taken into account—those of the center as well as those of the periphery.[65] According to Casanova's study, Paris established itself as the center, namely, as the city with the most literary prestige on the face of the earth: "The exceptional concentration of *literary* sources that occurred in Paris over the course of several centuries gradually led to its recognition as the center of the *literary* world."[66] Quoting this very sentence, al-Musawi writes that "such description is no less applicable to Cairo; it stood to the post-classical Islamic world as Paris stood to Europe,"[67] but no scholar of Arab-Islamic

[63] Diane Duclos, "Cosmopolitanism and Iraqi Migration: Artists and Intellectuals from the 'Sixties and Seventies Generations' in Exile," in *Writing the Modern History of Iraq: Historiographical and Political Challenges,* ed. Jordi Tejel et al. (Hackensack, NJ, 2012), 391–401. See also Reuven Snir, *Baghdad—The City in Verse* (Cambridge, MA, 2013), 5–8.

[64] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 2.

[65] As proposed in Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 35–99.

[66] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 54 (my emphasis).

[67] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 7.

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civilization can testify to that. Moreover, al-Musawi does not refer only to *literary* texts and activities, for he states that his "interdisciplinary critique conforms to a contemporaneous definition of the term *adab,* one through which aesthetics, the sciences, and crafts of professions transform the cultural landscape at the same time as they undergo ruptures and shifts."[68] In Chapter 6, al-Musawi refers to an ancient definition for the same term that was offered by Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Akfānī (d. 1348) in the translation of George Makdisi (1920–2002):

> *Adab* is a field of knowledge by virtue of which mutual understanding of what is in the minds is acquired through word-signs and writing. The word and writing are its subject-matter with respect to their communication of ideas. Its benefit is that it discloses intentions in the mind of one person, communicating them to another person, present or absent. *Adab* is the ornament of the tongue, and of the finger tips. By virtue of *adab,* man is distinguished from the rest of the animals. I have begun with *adab* because it is the first element of perfection; he who is devoid of it will not achieve perfection through any of the other human perfections.[69]

Al-Musawi adds the following:

> The term *adab* refers to both a field and a practice, meaning that there is a littérateur, *adīb,* who is distinctly different from the "scientist" or *ʿālim,* especially when both terms can be inclusive of all learned people … Throughout the course of Islamic history and before the advent of a European modernity, the term *adab* as literature was inclusive of poetry and prose but not restricted to them. Its semantic field included refinement and good manners, in the tradition of the notion of *belles lettres,* while at the same time partaking of an all-inclusive network of knowledge with no specific boundaries. It was only with the arrival of European modernity through colonization or incorporation that *adab* became institutionalized as a term referring specifically to literary writing, a process mediated through colleges fashioned after French and British models, all the way to the Higher Teachers' Colleges in Egypt and later Baghdad. Those colleges also happened to include among

[68]Ibid., 14.

[69]George Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West* (Edinburgh, 1990), 93. It is quoted from Ibn al-Akfānī's *Kitāb irshād al-qāṣid ilá asná al-maqāṣid,* ed. Maḥmūd Fākhūrī et al. (Beirut, 1998), 18. Cf. al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 180–81, where Makdisi's translation is quoted, according to al-Musawi, "with some editorial changes" (369, n. 7), which, in my view, are unnecessary.

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> their graduates the most influential literary figures associated with literary modernity.[70]

Unlike Casanova, and because there is no equation between *belles lettres* and *adab* in its pre-modern sense, al-Musawi argues that the pre-modern Islamic republic is not merely *literary.*[71] With respect to *adab* in its *modern* sense—the *literary* dimensions of cultural production—one can perhaps agree that Cairo in the modern period, at least during the first half of the twentieth century,[72] stood in relation to the Arab world as Paris did to Europe. However, there is no consensus among scholars regarding Cairo as the *literary* center throughout the time span of the post-classical Islamic era, particularly against the backdrop of the fragmentization of the Arab literary center after the fall of Baghdad.

Also, it is difficult to write about any "republic of letters" in the post-classical era without being aware of several significant studies in the field of world literature, including Janet Abu-Lughod's *Before European Hegemony.* In her book, Abu-Lughod deals with the formation of a "world system" in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, referring to the network of contacts from northwest Europe to China across the Middle East and India. This system consisted of eight subsystems; the Middle East was a geographic fulcrum with strategic world cities like Baghdad and Cairo. They stood out "as dual imperial centers, but their linkages through overland and sea routes tied them selectively to an 'archipelago' of hinterlands."[73]

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[70] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 181–82 (for other references and indications for the term *adab,* see also 369–70, n. 7). See also George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh, 1981), 79, 214, 306–7, 309; and the numerous mentions in Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism* (see index). On *adab* and the tradition of Islamic encyclopedic writing, see Elias Muhanna, *The World in a Book: Al-Nuwayri and the Islamic Encyclopedic Tradition* (Princeton, 2017), 7–11, 38–42.

[71] It is important in this regard to mention the view that the Arabic concept of *adab* carries much the same sense as eighteenth-century French literature: "learning and good breeding" (D'haen, *World Literature,* 321).

[72] See Reuven Snir, *Arabness, Jewishness, Zionism: A Struggle of Identities in the Literature of Iraqi Jews* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 2005), 75, n. 192. See also the findings that came out of a special project initiated by the Egyptian magazine *Al-risālah* in 1936: writers from all over the Arab world were asked to report on the state of the "literary life" *(al-ḥayāh al-adabīyah)* in their region. This report was published in successive issues *Al-risālah;* most of the reports mentioned the central status of Egypt in Arabic culture and the marginality of other regions (cf. Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 151n, 168n, 246n).

[73] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, A.D. 1250–1350* (New York, 1989), 14. And see now the important book of Michael Allan, *In the Shadow of World Literature: Sites of Reading in Colonial Egypt* (Princeton, 2016), and the insightful review of it by Hoda El Sharky in *Journal of Arabic Literature* 48 (2017): 327–49.

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5. The Corpus

Unlike the body of texts investigated in Casanova's model, the "extensive corpus" of texts that al-Musawi examines "through various lenses"[74] and the potential texts that he considers as belonging to his "republic" do not include only *literary* texts, as we have just seen from the latter's definition of the term *adab*. Notwithstanding my view that, like Plato's ideal republic, a republic of letters is something that can only exist in literature,[75] when the texts al-Musawi deals with are *literary*—whatever definition of the term is adopted—they are in fact largely limited to what I describe in my book as non-canonical literature.[76] Indeed, because of the diglossia that exists in the Arabic language, there is no doubt that literary production in *ʿāmmīyah* should be an important part of the Arabic corpus in any "Islamic republic of letters." Such non-canonical production has unfortunately been largely ignored by most "canonical" scholarship, and from this point of view, al-Musawi's study is very important against the backdrop of traditional scholarship, especially in its refusal to ignore literary texts in *ʿāmmīyah* within their relevant contexts. Arabic underwent, as al-Musawi correctly writes, "some of its most serious transformations … in the form of nonclassical modes and practices" as well as the "upsurge of the so-called *ʿāmmī* (colloquial) poetry." And, "There was an equally large production of works of *lesser merit* over these centuries, which were intended to nourish a broad populace in quest of knowledge." No less important is the awareness that these activities "are no less foundational for cultural capital than the belletristic cultural tradition" and that, along with bringing canonical works into communal use, poetry and rhetoric "are no longer the monopoly of the elite."[77] The cultural creativity of the "street" (quotation marks in the original) and popular responses to literature are mentioned as "part of this vibrant encounter and unfolding" within the "republic of letters" and are contrasted with the literary production of "scholars and other elites."[78] This "cultural creativity" refers to popular performances in public urban spaces such as markets, mosques, hospices, and colleges, as well as Sufi *dhikr,* mourning rituals, festivities, and epics (along with an increasing awareness in compendiums of such activities).[79] All

[74] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 8.

[75] Partly because, as Jacques Derrida argues, literature can be thought of as being "the institution which allows one to *say everything, in every way*" ("This Strange Institution Called Literature: An Interview with Jacques Derrida," trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, in *Acts of Literature,* ed. Derek Attridge [London, 1992], 36).

[76] Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 65–89.

[77] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 7, 11 (my emphasis), 50, and 166–67, respectively.

[78] Ibid., 9, 43, and 62.

[79] Ibid., 17–18, 48–50, 79, 120, 270–72, 298–303.

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these activities allude to the "democratization of space as a central characteristic of the republic of letters" and the "increasing power of the Arab-Islamic street."[80] Also, the "street," understood as the language of the common people, "made its way into the writing and compilations of highly recognized scholars and poets." The "street" is "the stage on which the body and its physiological expressions in terms of eating and drinking practices are given free rein, which takes them far beyond normative conservative restraints."[81] According to al-Musawi, the republic of letters transcends the boundaries of learned scholars and reaches into the very fringes of society:

> Nonclassical poetic subgenres, especially the ones with street registers, cover the lands of Islam from Andalusia and North Africa to Mosul in the North of Iraq and bring into circulation words, images, and rhythms that also raise serious questions regarding the efforts of current scholarship to assign specific geographical and territorial locations and identities to popular literature.[82]

Also, the republic of letters "was forced to expand its parameters so as to host the street, and it did so in the relative absence of the court, whose role as a literary and cultural center had diminished since the decline of the caliphate."[83]

Unfortunately, no chapter of al-Musawi's book focuses on the genres *zajal* or *muwashshaḥ*. Also, various popular cultural activities of the period, such as the semi-theatrical forms of entertainment, should have been mentioned.[84] One of the literary works included in the non-canonical corpus that al-Musawi examined is the *Thousand and One Nights,* on which he had already published extensively.[85]

[80] Ibid., 43 and 119–20, respectively. On "street poetry," see 263–70.

[81] Ibid., 245 and 286, respectively.

[82] Ibid., 134.

[83] Ibid., 263.

[84] See, for example, Shmuel Moreh, *Live Theatre and Dramatic Literature in the Medieval Arabic World* (Edinburgh, 1992); and Reuven Snir, "Al-ʿanāṣir al-masraḥīyah fī al-turāth al-shaʿbī al-ʿarabī al-qadīm," *Al-Karmal: Abḥāth fī al-lughah wa-al-adab* 14 (1993): 149–70. In his book, al-Musawi mentions incidentally and cursorily the assemblies and memorial processions and practices to commemorate the tragedy at the Battle of Karbalā' in 680, which "possessed sufficient resilience to resist elite censorship or repression," and scholars tend to regard them as being separate from literary culture. Brief mentions are also made of several popular epics (pp. 48–50) and of *khayāl al-ẓill* (puppet shadow theater) (p. 26).

[85] See, for example, *Scheherazade in England: A Study of Nineteenth-Century English Criticism of the Arabian Nights* (Washington, DC, 1981); *Alf laylah wa-laylah fī naẓarīyat al-adab al-inklīzī* (Beirut, 1986); *Mujtamaʿ alf laylah wa-laylah* (Tunis, 2000); *The Islamic Context of the Thousand and One Nights* (New York, 2009); and *Al-dhākirah al-shaʿbīyah li-mujtamaʿāt alf laylah wa-laylah: Al-sard wa-marjaʿīyatuhu al-tārīkhīyah wa-ālīyatuhu* (Beirut, 2016). On the growth of modern Arabic fic-

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But al-Musawi uses these stories only for thematic purpose, such as for "a testimony to the power of knowledge." When referring to their "successful entry into Europe," he should have noted that their entry into Europe would later be the cause of the gradual change of their status in the Arabic literary system.[86] The emergence of popular genres and the achievements of the "street" poets and writers in the post-classical era justify the rejection of the Orientalist discourse regarding the decadence and decline of Arab culture during this period.[87] That very Orientalist discourse reflects the paradigm that sees political changes as pivotal in their effects on cultural life. For example, the destruction of Baghdad in 1258 by Hulagu has been unjustifiably engraved on the Arabs' memory as the fundamental reason for what was seen as the destruction of their great medieval civilization and the cause of its cultural stagnation until the renaissance *(nahḍah)* in the nineteenth century.[88] Prompted by European Orientalists, Arabs placed emphasis on the descriptions of the killing of many of the local scholars and men of letters by the Mongol army, the demolition of cultural institutions, the burning of libraries, the throwing of books into the Tigris, and the using of these books as a bridge to cross the river. While I was writing the introduction for *Baghdad—The City in Verse* (2013), I encountered many such texts in historical narratives and literary histories, as well as in a variety of other sources in both poetry and prose. Furthermore, modern Arab officials have used the devastation caused by Hulagu for their own "patriotic" aims, one prominent example of this being the late Egyptian president Gamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir (1918–70). In another example, a high-level Syrian government official was even quoted as saying, "in deadly earnest," that "if the Mongols had not burnt the libraries of Baghdad in the thirteenth century, we Arabs would have had so much science, that we would long since have invented the atomic bomb. The plundering of Baghdad put us back centuries."[89]

The emphasis laid by al-Musawi on non-canonical literature is a very fresh approach to the scholarship of Arabic literature—my book provides the rationale and reasoning for the inclusion of non-canonical production from the point of

tion against the background of the increasing interest in *Thousand and One Nights,* see also al-Musawi's *The Postcolonial Arabic Novel: Debating Ambivalence* (Leiden, 2003).

[86] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 12 and 12, 311, respectively. On this, see also the references in Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 91n, 93n.

[87] Al-Musawi mentions briefly, without any detailed elaboration, popular epics such as *Sayf ibn Dhī Yazan, Al-amīrah Dhāt al-Himmah, Al-sīrah al-hilālīyah,* and *Al-Ẓāhir Baybars* (p. 50); the colloquial *mawwāl* (p. 96); and the *zajal* (p. 126).

[88] On this, see Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," 13: "[W]ithin a literary-historical context the year 1258 cannot serve as a useful divide … the most significant processes of change in that context belong to an earlier period."

[89] On Hulagu's destruction of Baghdad and what has been engraved in the Arabs' collective memory, see Snir, *Baghdad,* 26–31.

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view of aesthetic legitimization as well as from the standpoint of the actual people who are constituent of Arab culture.[90] Nevertheless, the "layered structure," according to al-Musawi, which held together the "seemingly disparate modes of writing, rewriting, compilation, revision, commentary, and disputation in nearly every field of knowledge,"[91] seems to be incomplete and unbalanced, as there is paradoxically almost *no mention* of what was considered in the pre-modern period to be *canonical* poetry and prose. This absence in such a study that aspires to explore "the large-scale and *diverse* cultural production in Arabic in the postclassical era" (my emphasis) is unjustifiable, certainly when it is expected to inspire the new generation of scholars of pre-modern Arabic literature. A brief look at the contents of *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period* (2006) reveals the wealth of "elite poetry" and "elite prose" that existed side by side with "popular poetry" and "popular prose."[92] Thomas Bauer's contributions in this regard are extremely important.[93]

6. The "Revolutionary Vernacularizing Thrust"

Al-Musawi argues that the concentration of scholars, authors, and copyists in Cairo and other Islamic centers valorized Arabic but also prompted what he calls, borrowing Casanova's words, the "revolutionary vernacularizing thrust" noticeable throughout the Islamic world. Al-Musawi refers to that "thrust" as making

> heavy use of lexical transmission, appropriation, and transference of Arabic grammar, rhetoric, and poetics. National languages also brought into Arabic their own distinctive traits … Arabic itself underwent some of its most serious transformations, in the form of nonclassical modes and practices that were theorized by several prominent scholars, and in the upsurge of the so-called *ʿāmmī* (colloquial) poetry. Hence, in spite of linguistic divergence, a common Islamic literary, theological, and symbolic field emerged that warrants the present discussion of an Islamic republic of letters. The

[90] See Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 14–19.

[91] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 8.

[92] Allen and Richards, *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period,* v–vi. See also Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," 17–21.

[93] See, for example, Thomas Bauer, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 105–32; and idem, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature,'" 137–67. See also a special issue of *Annales Islamologiques* (49 [2016]) under the title "Arabic Literature, 1200–1800: A New Orientation," edited by Monica Balda-Tillier and Adam Talib.

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> massive production that *has unsettled Arab modernists* attests to this cultural space.[94]

I will refer below to al-Musawi's campaign against the "modernists," which "necessitates" his argument that "the massive production [has] unsettled Arab modernists," and only concentrate here on his approach to the "vernacularizing thrust." Casanova, while engaging the prior work of Benedict Anderson on nationalism,[95] speaks of the "revolutionary vernacularizing thrust of capitalism" as the first stage in the genesis of a *world literary space* that "saw the exclusive use of Latin among educated men give way first to a demand for intellectual recognition of vulgar tongues, then to the creation of modern literatures claiming to compete with the grandeur of ancient literatures."[96] The second major stage in the enlargement of the literary world, according to Casanova, corresponds to the "philological-lexicographic revolution" that saw the appearance in Europe of new nationalist movements associated with the invention or reinvention of national languages and the creation of popular literatures. The third and final stage was the process of decolonization, which marked "the entry into international competition of contestants who until then had been prevented from taking part."[97] Almost nothing of these three stages exists in al-Musawi's analysis of the genesis of world *Islamic* literary space. Here, it is instructive to refer to Abdelfattah Kilito's important observation regarding the importance of understanding the literary output of the post-classical period on its own terms, because it is relevant in the present context:

> To us it seems more appropriate to regard Arabic poetics on its own terms and so to avoid treating the subject as some kind of deviation from a model realized in other times and under other skies. The governing principle should be derived from characteristics that are intrinsic to it, not those of works from some other poetics.[98]

[94] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 7 (my emphasis).

[95] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York, 1991), 39.

[96] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 47–48.

[97] Ibid., 48.

[98] Abdelfattah Kilito, *Les séances: récits et codes culturels chez Hamadhani et Hariri* (Paris, 1983), 136; translation according to Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," 20. For the Arabic translation, see Abdelfattah Kilito, *Al-maqāmāt: Al-sard wa-al-ansāq al-thaqāfīyah,* trans. ʿAbd al-Kabīr al-Sharqāwī (Casablanca, 1993), 114. Cf. Christina Phillips, "An Attempt to Apply Gérard Genette's Model of Hypertextuality to Najīb Maḥfūẓ's *Malḥamat al-Ḥarāfīsh,*" *Middle Eastern Literatures* 11, no. 3 (2008): 297. For the need for "homegrown modernity" and the issue of extroversion and introversion, see Helgesson, "Tayeb Salih, Sol Plaatje, and the Trajectories of World Literature," 253–60. See also Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and*

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In this regard, the experience of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., concerning black discourse of criticism is illuminating:

> The Western critical tradition has a canon, as the Western literary tradition does. I once thought it our most important gesture to *master* the canon of criticism, to *imitate* and *apply* it, but I now believe that we must turn to the black tradition itself to develop theories of criticism indigenous to our literatures.[99]

7. The Role of Sufism

Al-Musawi frequently mentions the challenge posed to dominant ways of thought through the agency of Sufism because it "involved a liberated sensibility in a loving God's universe" and because it was "a challenge to official schools of thought since it disturbs and unsettles their paradigms of self-righteousness and dogma."[100] Also, "Sufi terminology strips language of its denotative role and sets it free. Words and nature leave their signifiers behind and assume new life in the soaring of the liberated Sufi experience, which may be seen as a partial anticipation of *postmodern musings on madness and poetry*." Sufi orders as well "turned Sufism into *a poetic enterprise and practice in a God-loving universe* … its significance for the republic of letters extends even beyond its deconstruction

the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia (Chicago, 2011). Unlike al-Musawi, who posits his analysis as a counter-narrative to the European impact on Arabic literary modernity, Ricci deals with the inter-Asian travels of Arabic and brings into focus an Arabic cosmopolis in south and southeast Asia, underscoring as well "the power of literature to create, enable, and sustain far-reaching transformation" (Ronit Ricci, "World Literature and Muslim Southeast Asia," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature,* ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir [London and New York, 2014], 504. Cf. Ganguly, "Polysystems Redux," 278–79). See also Thomas Bauer's suggestion concerning the need to "listen patiently to Mamluk authors and carefully analyze their texts, to elucidate their own aesthetic standards, and judge their texts by this rather than apply a yardstick of heroism that does not match the participational aesthetics of the Mamluk middle class" (Thomas Bauer, "'Ayna Hādhā min al-Mutanabbī!': Toward an Aesthetics of Mamluk Literature," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 17 [2013]: 21–22. Cf. Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature,'" 144). In her review article of the aforementioned Allen and Richards, *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period* (2006), and Khaled al-Rouayheb's *Before Homosexuality in the Arabic-Islamic World 1500–1800* (Chicago, 2005), Hilary Kilpatrick emphasizes "the need to abandon modern concepts that stand in the way of understanding the texts and contexts of the period under discussion, and to analyse perceptively the terms used by the people of the time" ("Beyond Decadence: Dos and Don'ts in Studying Mamluk and Ottoman Literature," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 12, no. 1 [2009]: 78).

[99] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Editor's Introduction: Writing 'Race' and the Difference It Makes," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn 1985): 13.

[100] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 78–79.

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of the prosaic and the mundane; for its striking freedom and newness in vision and illumination also necessarily downplay structures of authority and power."[101] Because I have extensively written on the intersection between Arabic literature and Sufism from the latter's rise until the second half of the twentieth century,[102] I can say here that one must distinguish between the role of early Sufism in reviving Arab society and culture, the various literary genres included in this revival, and the negative phenomena later attributed to Sufi orders, especially in the pre-modern period.

8. Identitarian Markers in the Makeup of "Modernity" and the *Nahḍah* Project

In a follow-up article to his book, al-Musawi refers to three socio-communal markers of formative presence in the makeup of "Arab modernity" and its concretization in the nation-state: first, "the use of a poem from the medieval period to provide the structure and syntax of the Arab national flag in the fight for independence from the Ottomans"; second, "the reclamation of the Mamluk terms of parity between state administration and the role of the intelligentsia"; and third, "the generation of lexical conversation and lexicographic production with deep roots in both genealogical tradition and rhetorical ancestry." According to al-Musawi, these three instances "are strongly linked to identitarian politics and hence also raise questions regarding the complexity of the so-called Awakening *(nahḍah)* project, with its many preoccupations, concerns, methodologies, and conspicuous appropriations from colonial culture." Al-Musawi shows how these three markers were deployed in the Arab world at the end of the nineteenth century against a landscape most often "grounded in negativity, shrouding the period in concepts of decadence and loss, blotting it out as unfortunate anticlimax to an otherwise golden age."[103]

The fact that these three "identitarian markers" from the pre-modern period are reproduced in the nineteenth century by intellectuals that contributed to the Arab "awakening" by no means implies *any* overall attitude toward the

[101] Ibid., 142–43 (my emphasis) and 309 (my emphasis), respectively.

[102] See, for example, my following studies: "Sufi Elements in Modern Arabic Poetry 1940–1980" (in Hebrew) (Ph.D. thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1986); *Rakʿatān fī al-ʿishq: Dirāsah fī shiʿr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī* (Beirut, 2002); and *Religion, Mysticism and Modern Arabic Literature* (Wiesbaden, 2006). On the Sufi experience and on "musings on madness and poetry," which are not necessarily postmodern, see Reuven Snir, "The Poetic Creative Process according to Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣabūr," in *Writer, Culture, Text: Studies in Modern Arabic Literature,* ed. Ami Elad (Fredericton, NB, 1993), 74–88.

[103] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part I)," 272. More details about these markers appear on pp. 272–80.

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pre-modern period. On the contrary, these intellectuals found themselves drawn to leading conceptualizations and tropes that "differ in a significant way from the dominant disparagement of the [pre-modern] period" *only because they were glancing unbiasedly toward their past heritage,* choosing and picking what they considered suitable for their contemporary needs. That is why I utterly disagree with al-Musawi's abstruse or simply superfluous argument:

> Unless we are willing to conceive the consolidated and intense conversation at the turn of the nineteenth and early twentieth century between religious thinkers, secularists like Faraḥ Anṭūn and Yaʿqūb Ṣarrūf, and journalists and writers as being a site of vigorous national awareness, we are bound to overlook not only the permeation of the culture of the middle period into the "modernity" project, but also the relevance of the politics of the medieval Islamic republic of letters. Even when seemingly subdued, that earlier cultural tradition, with its many paradigmatic and axial categories, continued to inform the modernity project and at times unsettle its excessive internalization of Western orientations.[104]

This is a one-sided and unbalanced reflection on the culture and politics of "the medieval Islamic republic of letters" and their relevance to the "modernity project" at the turn of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which unnecessarily overemphasizes the "unsettling" of the "excessive internalization of Western orientations." The most current research on the period has by no means challenged the conception that the "modernity project" used *all means at its disposal* without distinguishing between various orientations and periods.

9. Lexicons and Translation

Referring to the just-mentioned "lexicographic production with deep roots in both genealogical tradition and rhetorical ancestry," in Chapter 3 of his book al-Musawi writes about the "lexicographic turn in cultural capital." The diligence shown by scholars during the nineteenth century in their pursuit of lexicography and the deep roots of their production in both genealogical tradition and rhetorical ancestry are presented against the backdrop of massive lexicons and encyclopedic dictionaries composed across the Islamic lands during the pre-modern period. The scholarly and academic neglect of this "lexicographic turn," according to al-Musawi, speaks to an "educational failure":

[104] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part I)," 275.

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> The textual archeological archive, visible at its clearest in its lexical component, is usually bypassed in modern academic discussions, not only inside the Arab world but also in Western academies that instead are exclusively focused on periodicals, narratives, and text-based disciplines. People tend to forget that the lexicographical presence presupposes not only grammatical and linguistic knowledge, but also a full-scale corpus of aural and literate culture.[105]

Al-Musawi's attitude toward lexicographic production, however, is by no means consistent. Referring, for example, to Edward William Lane's (1801–76) efforts in producing his lexicon, al-Musawi writes that the "purpose and expediency" behind these efforts could not have been lost on Arab intellectuals and scholars:

> What could be more conducive to *imperial expansion* than the training of its personnel in Arabic and to have *empire philologists* on demand to explain and justify means and notions of *command, control, and ultimate takeover*? … The *empire* generates its interests through a lexical mapping that preserves *verbal utility* in the colonized lands through a pragmatic use of native languages under the positivist drive. In the colonial production of lexicons and their implementation in teaching colonial personnel, *the defining criteria involve utility and interest.*[106]

Against the background of this negative attitude toward the author of one of the best Arabic-English dictionaries in scholarly research, the lexicographic efforts of "early advocates of Arab modernity" to bring Arabic into "the domain of the struggle for independence" are described by al-Musawi in the most favorable terms:

> The link between these initiatives and the earlier lexicographical movement that was so noticeably strong in the middle period is the new emphasis on social groups, their use of language, and their actual practices … From Buṭrus al-Bustānī and al-Shartūnī to Fāris al-Shidyāq and Father Anāstās Mārī al-Kirmilī [*sic*!] and beyond, *the lexicon now became more or less a verbal reconstruction of the nation. In a deft and highly conscious systematization, verbal roots with meanings relevant to nation building increase in number in keeping with needs and priorities.*[107]

[105] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part II)," 116.

[106] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part I)," 278 (my emphasis).

[107] Ibid., 279 (my emphasis).

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This Manichean distinction between the wicked "colonial production of lexicons" and the blessed "verbal reconstruction of the nation" is so biased and one-sided from the academic scholarly point of view that al-Musawi's far-out conceptualizing could not possibly induce any change in the current certitude of serious scholars that Lane's dictionary is irreplaceable, certainly as compared to other relevant dictionaries, among them those mentioned by al-Musawi himself (although Lane died before completing it and the sections completed by his nephew, after the root QD, are not on par with the rest of the book).[108] In line with the post-colonial, or better post-scholarly character of the way al-Musawi discusses this issue, one can be sure that if instead of Edward William Lane the name here had been Anwar Walīd Labadī, he would have never dare utter any critical remark against this dictionary or its author. Exposing another important scholar to the danger of being labeled as an "empire philologist" who should be considered part of "the colonial production of lexicons and their implementation in teaching colonial personnel," I will quote what A. J. Arberry (1905–69) wrote about Lane's dictionary:

> Lane's *Lexicon* is a work of such fundamental importance and of such matchless excellence that praise for it is quite superfluous … It is certainly true to say, that every work produced in this century relating in any way to Arabic studies has drawn heavily upon the *Lexicon*. It is a sufficient tribute to its unique greatness, that to this day it remains supreme in the field of Arabic lexicography: *no scholar or group of scholars has produced anything to supplant it.*[109]

Al-Musawi develops the evil/good dichotomy into what he describes obscurely as "an ironic twist of fortune" whereby paronomasia and antithesis establish a presence in imperial rhetoric, the word *empire* (i.e., lexicons) being put into the service of a world empire, and the word *qāmūs* ("dictionary") itself grew genealogically over time and became "no longer only a container of lexis, but rather a *generator of identity and nationhood.*"[110] However, there is another dimension to this false Manichean distinction, and it concerns al-Musawi's xenophobic attitude toward non-Arab philologists, since this is the only reason for which Lane is described as an "imperial" opportunist, whose scholarly criteria involve nothing but "utility and interest." Had al-Musawi troubled himself to read Lane's scholarship without such prejudices, he would have discovered the great difference

[108] Arab scholars as well referred to the great merits of Lane's dictionary; see, for example, ʿAdlī Ṭāhir Nūr, *Al-mustashriq al-kabīr Edward William Lane* (Cairo, 1973), 237–54.

[109] A. J. Arberry, *Oriental Essays: Portraits of Seven Scholars* (London, 1960), 116 (my emphasis).

[110] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part I)," 279 (my emphasis) and 280 (my emphasis), respectively.

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between Lane, for example, and Richard Burton (1821–90), the translator of the first unexpurgated English version of *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah* (1885–88), who projected, according to Rana Kabbani, every imaginable kind of sexual perversion onto the Orient using the *Arabian Nights* "to express himself, to articulate his sexual preoccupations" as well as to "serve as an occasion for documenting all manner of sexual deviation." Moreover, his fascination with the *Arabian Nights* "was greatly enhanced by the fact that they upheld his own views on women, race and class."[111] On the other hand, Lane was by no means what al-Musawi calls an "empire philologist," as he never offered his services "to explain and justify means and notions of command, control, and ultimate takeover," and his lexicon did not serve to teach "colonial personnel" with the defining criteria involving "utility and interest." Lane explained his decision to translate the *Arabian Nights* as follows:

> I consider myself possessed of the chief qualifications for the proper accomplishment of my present undertaking, from my having lived several years in Cairo, associating almost exclusively with Arabs, speaking their language, conforming to their general habits with the most scrupulous exactitude, and received into their society on terms of perfect equality.[112]

Accordingly, he even saw fit to "domesticate" and "sanitize" the texts of the stories, removing or changing "objectionable" tales and anecdotes—thus rendering them "so as to be perfectly agreeable with Arab manners and customs."[113] Against the negative attitude of al-Musawi toward Lane, certainly inspired by Edward Said's campaign against the "Orientalists," Lane included,[114] here is how Leila Ahmed concludes her study of Lane's life and works and of the British ideas of the Middle East in the nineteenth century:

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[111] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule* (London, 1986), 7, 60–61, and 48, respectively. On the association of the Orient with sexual fantasies, see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1985 [1978]), 190; and Derek Hopwood, *Sexual Encounters in the Middle East: The British, the French, and the Arabs* (Reading, UK, 1999), 180–82. Cf. Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 94.

[112] E. W. Lane, *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* (New York, 1914 [1859]), 1:xii.

[113] Ibid., 1:xvii. Cf. Sandra Naddaff, "The Thousand and One Nights as World Literature," in D'haen, Damrosch, and Kadir, *The Routledge Companion to World Literature,* 489–90.

[114] Although Said credits Lane as a scholar who used his residence in Egypt "for the specific task of providing professional Orientalism with scientific material," he does not hesitate to write that "[Lane's] identity as counterfeit believer and privileged European is the very essence of bad faith, for the latter undercuts the former in no uncertain way" (Said, *Orientalism,* 157–58 and 161, respectively). For a more balanced attitude toward Lane, see Mansour M. A. Dhabab, "Representations of the Western Other in Early Arabic Novels (1900–1915)" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 2005), 56–59.

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> To disclose a living culture to the members of another, to disclose it so as to show its ways and beliefs as entirely intelligible, to respect, in the presentation of these, their intrinsic validity—to the extent that a native of that culture can assent to the general accuracy of the presentation—is a formidable achievement. It is the more formidable, and the more urgent, in relation to a people and a culture respecting which the author's native culture, as is the case with the Europeans and the peoples of the Near East, possesses a rich and assorted heritage of myths, legends, and emotively highly charged and often hostile traditions. And although the dissipation on [the] literary level of many of the myths and legends relating to the Arab world by no means automatically entailed the eradication of emotional and imaginative attitudes and habits pertaining to it—habits, some of them, ingrained over centuries and so remarkably pertinacious—Lane's work created for his compatriots a clearing within which such attitudes could not easily and openly flourish, and equipped them with the means to thrust further back the darkness.[115]

The issue of translation presents another example of al-Musawi's biased methodology. In his campaign against the "modernists" (to which I will refer in detail below), al-Musawi dedicates long sections to the 1920 preface by Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889–1973) to the Arabic version of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's (1749–1832) *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers,* translated from the French by Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt (1885–1968),[116] as well as to the issue of translation in general.[117] Referring to Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's preface, al-Musawi writes about the implications of negativism, "as they lead to a *deliberate negligence* on the part of some *nahḍah* scholars to overlook significant and in fact groundbreaking contributions to the theories of translation as laid down by al-Jāḥiẓ, for example." Furthermore, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, to whom al-Musawi refers in the aforementioned quotation, "may be excused for his indiscriminate critique of some nineteenth-century verbosity that sounds jarring enough to those acquainted with Abbasid and European-informed prose writing, [but] there is little reason to justify his *repression* of the Abbasid source on translation."[118] How al-Musawi reached this "insight" is very instructive and may

[115] Leila Ahmed, *Edward W. Lane: A Study of His Life and Works and of British Ideas of the Middle East in the Nineteenth Century* (London and New York, 1978), 199.

[116] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Ālām Werther,* trans. Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt (Beirut, 1968 [1920]).

[117] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part II)," 121–30.

[118] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part II)," 115 (my emphasis) and 121 (my emphasis), respectively.

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give us an illuminative hint about the prejudiced motives of his campaign against the "modernists." The great "sin" of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, according to al-Musawi, is that in his aforementioned preface he did not mention al-Jāḥiẓ's contributions to the theories of translation. Reading the preface, one cannot understand how several sentences therein, whose general aim is to praise al-Zayyāt for the translation of the book, could have led al-Musawi to build such a house of cards. The preface *was not written for the scholarly community,* but rather for a wider readership, and it was not meant to be a scientific introduction to the book. As it was a popular preface addressed to the common reader, any discussion about theories of translation would have undoubtedly been a troublesome distraction.

10. Extroversion-Introversion and the Impact of "Colonial Modernity"

In his response to al-Musawi's contribution in the "Forum on Literary World Systems" of the *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry,* Stefan Helgesson argues that the crucial theoretical question raised by al-Musawi's study concerns tensions between extroversion and introversion. He summarizes al-Musawi's argument as follows: the *Nahḍah* scholars should have been more introverted—instead of adopting the values and ideals of the European enlightenment, the deep time of the Arab republic of letters when "monographs, massive lexicons, and encyclopedic dictionaries" were produced across the lands of Islam, the writers in question could have supplied the *Nahḍah* with the basis for a homegrown modernity.[119] According to Helgesson, an *attentiveness* to the dynamic relationship between extroversion and introversion affords the most promising theoretical point of departure for a world-literary study that remains alert to the diversity of literatures in the world and yet evades the risk of reifying national or linguistic provenance. Enlisting two examples to illustrate his argument—the Sudanese writer al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ (Tayeb Salih) (1929–2009) and the South African writer Sol Plaatje (1876–1932)—Helgesson concludes his essay with the following:

> What we are learning as we extend the paradigm of world literature beyond hegemonic languages and global centers of (cultural) capital is the inherent potential of reconfiguring the problem not just from within any given geohistorical location, or, for that matter, through a recognition of the diachrony of reception as a "thick" history in its own right, but ultimately by *attending to the combined,*

[119] Helgesson, "Tayeb Salih, Sol Plaatje, and the Trajectories of World Literature," 254.

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> *contradictory, and proliferating trajectories that shape literature in the world.*[120]

Al-Musawi's response to this engagement implies a misunderstanding of Helgesson's argument:

> For a cultured society, Arabic was "cosmopolitan" and universal, even when rulers were not necessarily bound to this practice. Hence, Stefan Helgesson's point is valid in trying to navigate between "extroversion and introversion" *as a third space between one model and another.* No culture can have its world systems or universal and cosmopolitan spread without this reach-out in regions other than its hinterland; the Arabic model with its Afro-Asian multiple centers had its knowledge construction and cultural capital beyond ethnicity and boundaries. Hence, it was wider than any of its components and more complex than regional or city-state formations.[121]

Helgesson talks about attentiveness to the "combined, contradictory, and proliferating" trajectories of the extroversion-introversion dynamics as a theoretical point of departure for a world-literary study, presenting al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ and Sol Plaatje as good examples. Al-Musawi refers to "a third space between one model and another." Helgesson speaks neither about spaces between models, nor about "reach-out in regions other than its hinterland" but simply about the means of scholarly approaches to the literatures of the world at large.

In her own response to al-Musawi's contribution, Francesca Orsini writes that the echoes of al-Musawi's arguments can also be found in South Asian scholarship and public debates, many of which are over the impact of "colonial modernity" and the issue of the "amnesia" that afflicted intellectuals and scholars. The summation of her comments is as follows:

> [M]ore productive than a *critique of modern intellectuals and their "amnesia*," or a historical narrative about the inevitable rise of the juggernaut English (or French) and the obliteration of everything else in their wake, is to be wary of *single-strand and monolingual historical narratives* (Arabic existed in a multilingual world, too), and conceive of space, whether local or further flung/wider, as the

[120] Helgesson, "Tayeb Salih, Sol Plaatje, and the Trajectories of World Literature," 260 (my emphasis).

[121] Al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 285 (my emphasis).

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> "multiplicity of stories so far," and attend to those stories and the different configurations they produce.[122]

Referring to pre-modern periods described as "dark middle ages" of "religious and cultural oppression," Orsini argues that the consolidation of colonial power in India, for example, ended the age-old power of Sanskrit learning to shape Indian intellectual history. Instead of responding to Orsini's main argument, or paying attention to the difference between the colonial role in India and that in the Muslim world, where it failed to erode the status of *fuṣḥá,* al-Musawi's response implies, to say the least, a misunderstanding of Orsini's meticulous arguments:

> While, as Francesca Orsini argues, Sanskrit flourished on the eve of colonialism, and continued to do so for some time, *Arabic had struggled to sustain its circulation among rhetors, grammarians, poets, jurists, and philosophers*. From the twelfth to the end of the eighteenth centuries, Arabic was the language of lettered societies. But what Sheldon Pollock argues *can be applicable when we try to account for dissemination and limit*. For a cultured society, *Arabic was "cosmopolitan" and universal, even when rulers were not necessarily bound to this practice.*[123]

One can hardly follow the rationale of al-Musawi's response, in which everything becomes mixed and confused. Orsini argues that, due to the multilingual and multicultural nature of the world and due to the fact that no single language was completely hegemonic, the early modern Indian story could also be told as a story of the *persistence* of the high languages of Sanskrit and Persian in particular, and in fact the story of the wider dissemination of Persian well into the colonial period. Al-Musawi refers to Sheldon Pollock's "argument," which is irrelevant to Orsini's engagement—she mentions Pollock's scholarship in regard to "Sanskrit knowledge systems on the eve of colonialism" as a "cosmopolis" that was eroded in the historical process of "vernacularization" only to offer an example of a pre-modern system similar to al-Musawi's pre-modern republic. When al-Musawi

[122]Francesca Orsini, "Whose Amnesia? Literary Modernity in Multilingual South Asia," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2, no. 2 (2015): 272 (my emphasis). Orsini attributes "the *multiplicity* of stories so far" to Doreen Massey's definition in *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005, p. 9 [my emphasis]). From the three propositions Massey offers in order to make the case for an alternative approach to space, the first refers to space as "the product of interrelations," the second understands space as "the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity," while the third asserts that "perhaps we could imagine space as a *simultaneity of stories-so-far*" (p. 9 [my emphasis]. On p. 89, Massey writes that "any 'simultaneity' of stories-so-far will be a distinct simultaneity from a particular vantage point").

[123]Al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 284–85 (my emphasis).

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insists on presenting Arabic as always being "cosmopolitan and universal"—something with which no serious scholar can agree—he misunderstands Pollock's conception as well. Much more important, following Shu-Mei Shih[124] Orsini refers to the "technologies of recognition" that "selectively and often arbitrarily confer world membership on literatures." Those technologies are "mechanisms in the discursive (un)conscious—with bearings on social and cultural (mis)understandings—that produce 'the West' as the agent of recognition and 'the rest' as the object of recognition, in representation."[125] Here, al-Musawi could have used these technologies as analytical modes to support his argument "with respect to the need to explore other formations of world systems beyond the specific models that scholars of European literature have presented,"[126] but he failed to do so. All in all, Orsini's response implies a strong reservation about al-Musawi's campaign against the "modernists" (see below): in her words, it is a "critique of modern intellectuals" and their "amnesia," which regretfully causes al-Musawi to sink, in her words, into "single-strand and monolingual historical narratives."

Both Helgesson and Orsini mention issues in world literature that need considerably more reflection and exploration, whereas al-Musawi avoids delving into the same significant issues and does not refer to the new turn toward world literature in the last decade, which in some measure was a result of a disciplinary crisis in American comparative literature in the second half of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s. In the same regard, one can find an excellent survey in Dennis Sobolev's recent study, where he analyzes the problems of the textual volume of the corpus under investigation and the cross-cultural translation, the conceptual reflection and the principles of taxonomization, the sociologically oriented reshaping of literary studies and research methods, the problem of "cultural regions," and the homogenization and reification of the objects of study. According to Sobolev, the resultant theoretical complications and unsolved problems seem to outweigh the contribution of the school of world literature to the understanding of literary texts, processes, and structures. He underscores the necessity of returning to the disciplinary self-reflection of comparative literature,

[124] Shu-Mei Shih, "Global Literature and the Technologies of Recognition," *PMLA* 119, no. 1 (2004): 16–30; reprinted in D'haen, *World Literature: A Reader,* 259–74.

[125] Shih, "Global Literature and the Technologies of Recognition," 16–17. Orsini identifies those technologies as "ignorance, distaste, and indifference," but in fact, these may be the result of the five modes of recognition that Shih refers to as belonging to the academic discourse and the literary market: the return of the systematic, the time lag of allegory, global multiculturalism, the exceptional particular, and postdifference ethics.

[126] Al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 282.

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the reappraisal of its basic questions and tasks, as one of the major goals of the study of culture at the present moment.[127]

11. Culture, Scholarship, and Accountability

Al-Musawi's book was nominated for the 2016 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for "Arabic Culture in Other Languages" because "it presents a compelling argument against the commonly held opinion that Arabic literature, since the glorious peak of the Abbasids, has somehow failed to be modern, and instead became locked in conventions that were stultifying and rarefied, created only for a small circle of initiates who were themselves censored and censuring."[128] In his endorsement of the book, Roger Allen writes that al-Musawi's study refutes "the orientalist-inspired notion of a 'period of decadence' in the Arabo-Islamic cultural heritage … With al-Musawi's work, the medieval Arabo-Islamic 'slough of despond'—to cite Bunyan's well-known English phrase—can, one hopes, be forever laid to rest."[129] And al-Musawi is generally right in his rejection of the paradigm that sees political changes as pivotal in their effects on cultural life (although one may reject his decisive relevant statements).[130]

Scholarship aside, however, one cannot ignore al-Musawi's sharp critical attitude throughout many sections of his book toward those he calls "Arab and Muslim modernists" or "architects of [Arab] modernity," who, in his words, failed to dissociate the "political disintegration" from "the ongoing cultural dissemination and exchange across the Islamic world."[131] He accuses them of misreading their past, of falling back "on a series of negations and denials of [its] merit," and of internalizing the "European Enlightenment disparagement of the Middle Ages

[127] Dennis Sobolev, "The Concept of 'World Literature' and its Problems" (in Russian), in *Noscere est comparare: Komparativistika v kontekste isotricheskoi poetiki* (Comparative literature in the context of historical poetics), ed. Olga Polovinkina (Moscow, 2017), 20–53.

[128] According to http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=75978 (accessed 17 July 2016). Al-Musawi did not win the award.

[129] Allen elaborates on what he terms the "decadence paradigm" in "Transforming the Arabic Literary Canon," in *New Geographies: Texts and Contexts in Modern Arabic Literature,* ed. Allen et al. (Madrid, 2018).

[130] Al-Musawi argues that there was no cultural decline but only "political disintegration": the six centuries of political upheaval and loss of a specific or unitary Islamic discourse, according to al-Musawi, "pose a number of challenges to any positivist claims. *Undaunted by this upheaval,* cultural production and its multiplicity across large swathes and times require systematic reading to uncover significant epistemic shifts that should take us beyond a blanket disparagement of an age of decadence and stagnation" (al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 282 [my emphasis]).

[131] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 11 (see also 144).

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… in their zealous duplication of a seductive Europe."[132] The failure to connect effectively with the rich culture of the past and to establish emotive and cultural links with the Muslim populace, according to al-Musawi, can "easily induce *architects of regression* to involve regions and peoples in schisms and disorder."[133] Al-Musawi also holds the "modernists" *accountable for the failed education system* in the newly emerging *Islamic* nation-states because of the "depreciation of premodern Arabic cultural production," which "amounts to a substantial disengagement from a tradition that was much needed for the promotion of education and culture in the newly emerging *Islamic* nation-states."[134] In short, the experienced reader, certainly any scholar of Arab culture, has the feeling that al-Musawi functions here not only as an unbiased scholar and literary critic, but as an active participant in Arab cultural life and, moreover, as an integral part of the Arab-Islamic community in what is presented as the struggle against Western powers and their "internal collaborators."[135]

Unlike most Western scholars of Arabic literature, even those of Arab origin, al-Musawi could be seen as somewhat "justified" in the effacement of the borders between research and participation in a culture. Al-Musawi is now an integral part of the international Western community of scholars and critics of Arabic literature that warmly adopted him and, moreover, made him one of its doyens, perhaps the first one. Born in al-Nāṣirīyah in Iraq in 1944, and having obtained his Ph.D. from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada, in 1978, al-Musawi now holds the prestigious Chair for Arabic Literature at Columbia University. Since 1999, he has been a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Arabic Literature* (*JAL*), the only professional journal dedicated to the study of Arabic literature, and in recent years he has been serving as its general editor. Before moving to the West, physically, metaphorically, and spiritually, al-Musawi had

[132] Ibid., 5, 308–9, and 15, respectively.

[133] Ibid., 11 (my emphasis).

[134] Ibid., 45 (my emphasis).

[135] More than forty years earlier, al-Musawi published a book on Iraqi oil, the struggle with the oil companies, and "the great robbery of the Iraqi people's treasures" (Muḥsin Jāsim al-Mūsawī, *Al-nafṭ al-ʿirāqī: Dirāsah wathāʾiqīyah min nanḥ al-imtiyāz ḥattá al-taʾmīm* [Baghdad, 1973]; the quotation is from p. 7). One can sense the parallel lines, according to al-Musawi, between the material and spiritual robbery of Arab-Islamic treasures (cf. al-Mūsawī's following publications: *Al-thawrah al-jadīdah: Dirāsāt taḥlīlīyah fī al-siyāsah wa-al-iqtiṣād wa-al-fikr* [Beirut, 1973], 5–10; *Al-istishrāq fī al-fikr al-ʿarabī* [Beirut, 1993]; *Al-nukhbah al-fikrīyah wa-al-inshiqāq: Qirāʾah fī taḥawwulāt al-ṣafwah al-ʿārifah fī al-mujtamaʿ al-ʿarabī al-ḥadīth* [Beirut, 2001]; and *Al-naẓarīyah wa-al-naqd al-thaqāfī: Al-kitābah al-ʿarabīyah fī ʿālam mutaghayyir, wāqiʿuhā, siyāqātuhā wa-bunāhā al-shuʿūrīyah* [Beirut, 2005], 63–69. Al-Musawi plans to publish a monograph entitled *Arab Modernists' Struggle with the Past* [according to al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 282]).

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been for more than two decades an integral part of the literary, cultural, and academic Arab life and its *jumhūr* of littérateurs, sensing its vibrant rhythm and vivacious beating heart, feeling its pains, and looking for ways to push it forward. As an active writer, he published five Arabic novels, and as a scholar, he published numerous scholarly books and articles in Arabic. He taught at major Arab universities such as Baghdad University, Amman National University, Sanʿa University, Tunis University, and the American University of Sharjah. Also, he played a dominant role in government cultural institutions in Baghdad during the regime of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn (1937–2006),[136] serving as the director of the publishing house Dār al-Shuʾūn al-Thaqāfīyah al-ʿĀmmah, the president of the board of directors of another publishing house, al-Adīb al-ʿArabī, and the editor-in-chief of the journal *Istishrāq*. He also served as the editor-in-chief of *Āfāq ʿarabīyah* in Tunis.

But who are those "modernists" whom al-Musawi holds accountable for the failed education system in the newly emerging Islamic nation-states? And with whom does al-Musawi debate, sometimes less as an unbiased critic and literary historian and more as an active proponent with a very clear agenda for the present and particularly for the future? In his "Preliminary Discourse," al-Musawi mentions Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889–1973), Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt (1885–1968), and Salāmah Mūsá (1887–1958) who, in his words, "have long internalized a European Enlightenment discourse and looked with suspicion and distrust in the past and its massive accumulation in cultural capital."[137] At the end of Chapter One, al-Musawi refers to the "hasty conclusions of the kind often encountered in the writings of many Arab and Afro-Asian modernists," but, apart from the three names mentioned above, all of them Egyptian, he did not mention other names of those "many."[138] In one place in the book he mention the Lebanese Christian Jurjī

[136] Al-Musawi's brother ʿAzīz al-Sayyid Jāsim (1941–91) was executed in prison upon the orders of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn (for his profile, see al-Musawi's book *Reading Iraq: Culture and Power in Conflict* [London, 2006], 144–46. On his views, see the same book, which is dedicated to his memory). Al-Musawi himself, who served in his various positions in Iraq under Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, was accused, for no fault of his own, of collaborating with the regime, even after the murder of his brother (see the reactions of readers to a report on al-Musawi, especially comments 2 and 7, at http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/07/14/157569.html [14 July 2011] [accessed 16 February 2017]).

[137] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 5.

[138] Ibid., 58. In an article al-Musawi published before the release of his book, he referred to the Iraqi poet Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (1926–64) as a "modernist" as well (al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? [Part I]," 268). In an interview before the publication of his book, al-Musawi argues that the project of the Arab *Nahḍah* had failed because of "the rupture between the rural areas *(rīf)* and the city, namely, the intellectual started to deem himself above his roots and despise them, like what Ṭāhā Ḥusayn has done in *al-Ayyām* (*The Days*)" (https://www.alaraby.co.uk/portal [21 October 2014]). For an earlier version of al-Musawi's accusations against the "modernists," see al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Literary World-System," 51–52.

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Zaydān (1861–1914),[139] who was active mainly in Egypt, but he does not mention, for example, great Lebanese "modernists" such as Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819–83) and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (1805–87). In what follows, I will respectfully disagree with al-Musawi's position. I will do so not as a proponent of any agenda, of course, but as a student of Arabic literature who has read most, if not all, of his writings and those of the "modernists" he named in his recent work.

I previously mentioned the unjustifiable attitude of some Orientalists to premodern Arabic literature at large as a "period of decadence," but nowhere could I find in the writings of al-Zayyāt, Mūsá, or Ḥusayn the sweeping statements al-Musawi attributes to them, as for example that the *whole* "literary output of the medieval Arab and Islamic nation-states is *ineffectual*."[140] Feeling that literary sensibility should be altered in order to enable an overhaul of Arabic literature, they indeed rejected some literary values of the post-classical period, but they did so following previous writers who had in various ways already expressed their criticism of the state of the culture in their own era. One of these writers was Yūsuf al-Shirbīnī (1591?–1688), whose *Kitāb hazz al-quhūf bi-sharḥ qaṣīd Abī Shādūf* (Brains confounded by the ode of Abū Shādūf expounded)[141] is a humorous ac-

[139] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 111.

[140] Ibid., 5 (my emphasis). In a detailed note, al-Musawi quotes publications by the "modernists" in an attempt to prove that they "looked with suspicion and distrust at the [medieval Arab, and Islamic] past and its massive accumulation in cultural capital" (324, n. 10). Sahar Ishtiaque Ullah duplicates al-Musawi's arguments, accusing the "modernists" of "misreading of a massive corpus of evidence and at worst a deliberate neglect of an incredibly vast undertaking of post-classical literary production" ("Postclassical Poetics: The Role of the Amatory Prelude for the Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters," *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 3, no. 2 [2016]: 203–25). Checking closely the references in the aforementioned note by al-Musawi, it is difficult to find how the relevant writings could support these sweeping arguments; suffice it here to mention Salāmah Mūsá, *Al-tathqīf al-dhātī aw kayfa nurabbī anfusanā* (Cairo, 1947), 75–80; idem, *Mā hiya al-nahḍah* (Beirut, 1962), 137–41; Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī, *Al-khiṭāb al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir: Dirāsah taḥlīlīyah naqdīyah* (Beirut, 1982), 34–38; as well as what is cited in Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," 14–15. One can find citations of Arab intellectuals who found themselves confronting the dilemmas of the cultural transformation that followed the interaction of the Arab world with the West (see, for example, Aḥmad Amīn, *Zuʿamāʾ al-iṣlāḥ fī al-ʿaṣr al-ḥadīth* [Cairo, 1965], 7. Cf. Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," 2). However, even these citations should not be taken literally, but as another indication of the decline of the Arabs' cultural self-image and the huge gap between the august status enjoyed by Arab culture in the Middle Ages and its feeble modern counterpart (see Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 232–37).

[141] See Yūsuf al-Shirbīnī, *Kitāb hazz al-quhūf bi-sharḥ qaṣīd Abī Shādūf* (*Brains confounded by the ode of Abū Shādūf expounded*), vol. 1, ed. Humphrey Davies) (Dudley, 2005); and Yūsuf al-Shirbīnī, *Yusuf al-Shirbini's Brains Confounded by the Ode of Abū Shādūf Expounded* (*Kitāb hazz al-quhūf bi-sharḥ qaṣīd Abī Shādūf*), vol. 2, trans. Humphrey Davies (Dudley, MA, 2007). On al-Shirbīnī's work, see al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 147–74. See also Mattityahu Peled,

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count of the lifestyles and habits of speech of peasants during the period of Ottoman rule in Egypt in a mixture of genres, styles, and diction. Writing that this work "plays havoc with a solid canon that staunchly adhered to verisimilitude and truth, while at the same time enrolling in its ranks jurists of disputable and unreliable knowledge," al-Musawi himself refers to its "dashing satire on elitism, pedantry in scholarship, and the compendious and commentarial surplus, and its biting irony directed toward certain religious circles and sham Sufism."[142]

Referring to the "modernists" as the "reluctant heirs" of the medieval body of knowledge, al-Musawi argues that their "disillusion with [that] cultural production was primarily informed by a European discourse but was also driven by a misreading of the compendious and commentarial effort of the period." He explains that they

> could not discern the significant redirection of cultural capital to escape imitation, while simultaneously assimilating ancient and classical knowledge. In fact, by appropriating and classifying these sources rather than duplicating them, postclassical scholars and littérateurs embarked on what Pascale Casanova terms a "diversion of assets."[143]

Some observations are necessary here regarding the way al-Musawi understands the meaning of the term "diversion of assets": First, his argument that a "seductive Europe" was the root of all evil and the driving force behind the "modernists" in their role as "architects of regression" who internalized the "European Enlightenment disparagement of the Middle Ages" does not, to say the least, do Arab culture any justice. Kilito's aforementioned call "to regard Arabic poetics on its own terms" and "to avoid treating the subject as some kind of deviation from a model realized in other times and under other skies" should guide us here as well. In a short, brilliant essay, Tarek El-Ariss refers directly to al-Musawi's thesis, including the latter's argument about the *Nahḍah* as "the other appellation for Arab modernity,"[144] while suggesting that the *Nahḍah* texts be freed from the *Nahḍah* as a "'modernity' project" and from "the dominant narrative of rise and decline, and from their intertextual and ideological dependency on European modernity as a model to be borrowed or resisted." El-Ariss argues that the *Nahḍah*'s "civili-

"Nodding the Necks: A Literary Study of Shirbīnī's *Hazz al-Quḥūf*," *Die Welt des Islams* 26, no. 1 (1986): 57–75; Ṭāhir Abū Fāshā, *Hazz al-quhūf bi-sharḥ qaṣīdat Abī Shādūf* (Cairo, 1987); and Mohamed-Saleh Omri, "*Adab* in the Seventeenth Century: Narrative and Parody in al-Shirbīnī's *Hazz al-Quḥūf*," *Edebiyât* 11, no. 2 (2000): 169–96.

[142] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 83 and 96, respectively.

[143] Ibid., 5.

[144] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part I)," 265.

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zational practices could not be reduced to notions of civilization associated with Orientalism as [a] system of othering and cultural superiority." Instead, he refers to it as "this potential, this vague thing that everyone is practicing without knowing what it looks like or whether it will be achieved or not or to what end." Moreover, it is a speech act: let there be *Nahḍah!* Therefore, there is a need to decolonize the *Nahḍah* and "allow it to make its own meaning, however contradictory and inconsistent with historical narratives and ideological critique."[145] Second, the term "diversion of [literary] assets"[146] is used by Casanova, following the poet and critic Joachim du Bellay (1522–60), to refer to the redirection of "the gains of Latinist humanism—a vast collection of knowledge derived from translation and commentaries on ancient texts" to the profit of French, a language that was less "rich." As a result, by the time of Louis XIV France reigned as the "dominant literary power in Europe."[147] Nothing similar to that happened in what al-Musawi considers as the medieval Islamic republic of letters if only for the simple reason that, to use Casanova's words, the gains of Arab classical humanism, though they helped other Muslim nations consolidate their cultures, were by no means used to the benefit of another single specific language in a way that would result in the establishment of a new dominant literary power to replace Arabic. Furthermore, even if we adopt al-Musawi's use of Casanova's conception, as far as I know no "modernist," certainly not al-Zayyāt, Mūsá, or Ḥusayn, decried those works that successfully assimilated ancient and classical knowledge while redirecting cultural capital to escape imitation. They rightly decried texts that, in al-Musawi's words, failed in the act of "redirection of cultural capital to escape imitation." If there is any blame to be leveled against the "modernists," it is their elitist attitude toward the popular cultural production consumed by the masses, which in turn caused them to decry and even to ignore popular texts and activities.[148] According to the conceptions adopted in my studies, and in this respect I completely

[145]El-Ariss, "Let There Be *Nahdah!*," 261, 264, 265, and 266, respectively. In his response to El-Ariss' intervention, al-Musawi does not refer directly to El-Ariss' major arguments regarding the *Nahḍah,* but mainly reiterates his accusations against the "modernists"—those "prominent intellectuals [who] thought of themselves as leaders of thought like the European Enlightenment figures, locating themselves in that European moment of a century earlier, cutting themselves doubly from their immediate history and the challenge to the age of reason brought about by the rising imperial culture of nineteenth-century Europe" (al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 281). On the *Nahḍah* and modernity, see also Tarek El-Ariss, *Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political* (New York, 2013).

[146]Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 54. Casanova uses as well the terms "diversion of literary wealth" (p. 46), "diversion of [literary/symbolic] capital" (pp. 53, 99, 157, 235, 284), and "diversion of resources" (p. 233).

[147]Ibid., 53–54.

[148]Ṭāhā Ḥusayn opposed the dialects in literature; see Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 28–31.

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agree with al-Musawi, texts and activities of this nature should be considered as an integral part of any cultural system.

In a passionate apologetic section entitled "The Fight for Culture: Compendiums and Commentaries,"[149] al-Musawi denounces the "modernists" for their tendency to negate rhetoric as superfluity and denigrate the tradition of commentaries and compendia in the pre-modern Arab-Islamic period.[150] Emphasizing the importance of the tradition of *shurūḥ* ("commentaries"), *dhuyūl* ("supplements"), and *ḥawāshin* ("marginal notes")—"a paper empire, of words on words, and *kalām ʿalā kalām* (metadiscourse)"[151]—which flourished during the post-classical period, al-Musawi takes refuge in Michel Foucault's (1926–84) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (French: *Les mots et les choses: Une archéologie des sciences humaines*) (1966).[152] After Foucault, al-Musawi quotes Michel de Montaigne (1533–92): "There is more work in interpreting interpretations than in interpreting things; and more books about books than on any other subject; we do nothing but write glosses about each other." Foucault comments on de Montaigne's words: "These words are not a statement of the bankruptcy of culture buried beneath its own monuments; they are a definition of the inevitable relation that language maintained with itself in the sixteenth century." Al-Musawi argues that Foucault's analysis is an attempt to define commentary and gloss as the infinite proliferation of the interpretation that justifies what Foucault describes as the "sovereignty of an original text." It is the text "that offers its ultimate revelation as the promised reward of the commentary." Thus, it is the "interstice occurring between the primal Text and the infinity of Interpretation" that accounts for the proliferation in interpretation, commentary, and gloss, which take writing to be a substantial part of the "fabric of the world."[153] Al-Musawi relies as well on Jorge Luis Borges' (1899–1986) idea of "a minutely drawn map that negates the original" and Christine Brooke-Rose's (1923–2012) argument that "disclaiming rhetoric is itself a figure of rhetoric."[154] He suggests that the "strikingly widespread recourse to compendiums, the rise of the polymath, and the vogue of *shurūḥ,* of explications of an original text, all suggest a process in which designated classification

[149] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 97–103.

[150] Ibid., 98–99, 118.

[151] Cf. Rashīd Yaḥyāwī, *Al-kalām ʿalá al-kalām fī al-turāth: Madākhil li-maqāṣid al-taʿrīb wa-al-tadyīn* (Amman, 2015).

[152] Al-Musawi relies on Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (Paris, 1966), 38–46 ("The Writing of Things").

[153] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 98–99. The quotations are from Foucault, *The Order of Things,* 45. For an earlier version of these arguments, see al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Literary World-System," 51–52.

[154] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 118.

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and centers of institutionalized knowledge were being undermined."[155] In short, arguing that the "lengthy pre-modern era remains relatively understudied, especially in terms of what Brinkley Messick associates with a 'calligraphic state,'"[156] al-Musawi makes use of texts by Foucault, Borges, and Brooke-Rose in defense of the tradition of commentaries and compendia of the pre-modern Arab-Islamic period.

These texts, however, by no means support al-Musawi's arguments. First, it seems that Messick's "calligraphic state" is irrelevant to al-Musawi's arguments. Messick traces "connections between the literary processes behind the constitution of authority *in* texts and the social and political processes involved in articulating the authority of texts." The types of text involved in Messick's research activity, intended to contribute to the specific history of Yemen, are basic manuals of shariʿah jurisprudence and their commentaries.[157] Second, there is a substantial difference between sixteenth-century European commentaries according to Michel de Montaigne and the *shurūḥ* tradition.[158] Moreover, the "modernists" voiced their criticism in real time when they were endeavoring to change the face of Arab culture and save it from what they considered to be the negative phenomena of the pre-modern tradition; al-Musawi's criticism of them is possible *thanks* to their efforts. Third, Yūsuf al-Shirbīnī's aforementioned *Kitāb hazz al-quhūf bi-sharḥ qaṣīd Abī Shādūf* would not have parodied, in the words of al-Musawi, "an ongoing and firmly established *shurūḥ* tradition"[159] unless that tradition had seemed *at the time* to be superfluous in essence. That is why, even according to al-Musawi, al-Shirbīnī "dislodges the entire practice of these commentaries, not only by creating a distance between a hilarious ode and the commentator, but also by giving himself the freedom to poke fun at many practices that are normally buttressed by serious material or apocryphal detail."[160] And fourth, examining the few critical surveys of *Arab* scholars in the nineteenth century of contemporary literature, such as that by the Syrian Jurjī Murquṣ (1846–1912), we find that their opinion of the poetry of the time, which is an extension of the pre-

[155] Ibid., 132.

[156] Ibid., 98.

[157] Brinkley Morris Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley, 1993), 1–12.

[158] For a discussion of the trends of "compilation and elaboration" in the post-classical period against the backdrop of what had preceded them, see Allen, "The Post-Classical Period: Parameters and Preliminaries," 8–13.

[159] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 158.

[160] Ibid., 153.

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vious century, was not high.[161] And this was many years before the emergence of the "modernists"!

All in all, al-Musawi speaks assertively against the "modernists" and about their "wholesale" and "sweeping" "resistance," "rejection," and "denigration" of their past and its "cultural values" and "intimidating cultural capital."[162] Additionally, in one section, referring to Casanova's book and one of the in-depth reviews of it, he finds fault with the "modernists" for the following failure:

> What is lost on modernists is a simple premise expressed by Casanova in her *The World Republic of Letters*: "It is necessary to be old to have any chance of being modern or of decreeing what is modern." In a review of her book, Joe Cleary puts this point as follows: "Only countries that can claim a venerable and distinguished historical stock of literary capital get to decree what is and is not 'fashionable' in literary terms."[163]

The context of Casanova's aforementioned "premise" is her argument that "the ability to decree without fear of challenge what is or is not 'fashionable,' in the domain of haute couture and elsewhere, permitted Paris to control one of the main routes of access to modernity … Paris managed to sustain its position—at least until the 1960s—as the center of the system of literary time." Only then, Casanova adds the following:

> The temporal law of the world of letters may be stated thus: *It is necessary to be old to have any chance of being modern or of decreeing what is modern*. In other words, having a long national past is the condition of being able to claim a literary existence that is fully recognized in the present.[164]

In his review of her book, Joe Cleary refers to Casanova's argument, but unfortunately, al-Musawi in the quote above does not cite Cleary's full text, which runs as follows:

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[161] See Hilary Kilpatrick, "Modern Arabic Literature as Seen in the Late 19th Century: Jurji Murqus's Contribution to Korsh and Kipichnikov's *Vseobshchaya Istoria Literatury*," in *Studying Modern Arabic Literature: Mustafa Badawi, Scholar and Critic,* ed. Roger Allen and Robin Ostle (Edinburgh, 2015), 91–92. Cf. the instructive anecdote told by Ṭāhā Ḥusayn about his interview with Shukrī Bāshā, the sultan's *chef de bureau (ra'īs al-dīwān al-sulṭānī),* regarding the change in Arabic poetic sensibilities (Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 159).

[162] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 9, 11, 14, 24, 97–98.

[163] Ibid., 11–12. See also 111–14: "A number of things that are lost on most modernists … The enhanced devotion to rhetoric that has engendered so much negative criticism against the so-called age of superfluity" (p. 114. See also 135, 142–43, and 159–62).

[164] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 89–90 (emphasis in the original).

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> In other words, only countries that can claim a venerable and distinguished historical stock of literary capital get to decree what is and is not "fashionable" in literary terms. But, since what constitutes up-to-dateness or the literary present is constantly changing—"the only way in the literary world to be truly modern is to contest the present as outmoded—to appeal to a more present present, as yet unknown, which thus becomes the newest certified present."[165]

In his attack against the "modernists," al-Musawi argues that they did not understand what Casanova describes as the "temporal law of the world of letters," namely, the condition of being able to claim a literary existence that is fully recognized in the present as having a long national past. But Cleary adds that this is because "what constitutes up-to-dateness or the literary present is constantly changing," and here he quotes, with some inaccuracies, Casanova's statement in a section entitled "What Is Modernity?" that "the only way in the literary *space* to be truly modern is to contest the present as outmoded—to appeal to a *still* more present present, as yet unknown, which thus becomes the newest certified present."[166] In other words, contrary to what al-Musawi attributes to the "modernists," *they did exactly what Casanova recommends*—they tried to contest the outmoded present by appealing to another present in order to make it "the newest certified present." Moreover, when Casanova speaks about the "fashionable" in literary terms, she is only referring to *belles-lettres.*[167]

Another charge al-Musawi levels against the "modernists" is that they adopted a basic equation between secularism, on the one hand, and humanism and modernism, on the other.[168] And here, al-Musawi expresses his opposition to the argument presented by Hamid Dabashi that Arab humanism "remained canonical in its commitment to the imperially imposed language of the Arab conquerors and their tribal racism."[169] Al-Musawi has reservations about defining Arab humanism as necessarily being tied to conquest and gain:

> The republic as the dialogic space for poetics and politics claims its freedom from power as the condition for its humanist conver-

[165] Cleary, "The World Literary System," 199–200. The quotation is from Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 91.

[166] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters,* 91. The words in *italics* are those in which Cleary does not quote Casanova accurately.

[167] See the aforementioned anecdote told by Ṭāhā Ḥusayn about his interview with Shukrī Bāshā, the sultan's *chef de bureau (ra'īs al-dīwān al-sulṭānī)* (Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 159).

[168] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 310–11.

[169] Hamid Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism* (Cambridge, MA, 2012), 79–80 (quoted in al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 54. See also 40, 46–47, and 54–57).

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> sations. Hence, the use of Arabic and the spread of a culturally oriented Islamic identification in no way negate the racial manipulation of genealogical divides to ensure privilege in times of conquest.[170]

Reading carefully the relevant texts and scholarship, Hamid Dabashi's included, and closely examining and analyzing al-Musawi's aforementioned argument leave no doubt that this charge is totally unjustified but for lack of space I will not elaborate here on this topic.

12. Cognitive Dissonance and Common Fallacies

Having been a student of Arabic literature for the last 45 years, and having read almost everything written by the major Arab thinkers and writers in the formative period of modern Arabic literature, I am greatly disturbed by al-Musawi's unjustifiable and biased campaign against the "modernists." But, much more than that, I am very dismayed by the *almost complete and utter silence of the entire academic community involved in the study of Arabic literature,* whose major scholars, as revealed in their published works and as I know them from firsthand knowledge, very much appreciate these "modernists" that al-Musawi labels "architects of regression." Communicating with various scholars, both distinguished and young, I could not find even one who does not have serious reservations regarding al-Musawi's campaign, about which, unfortunately, no scholar has so far dared to write, with the exception of Marilyn Booth, who writes as follows.

> Such wholesale dismissal of these individuals' bodies of thought, which are not monochromatic, along with dismissal of a presumably larger group labelled simply as 'modernists', does not do justice to the nuanced—if at times ambivalent—relationship that many Arab intellectuals of the past two centuries have had to the past that al-Musawi excavates. *Even those modernists (as a group they are memorably called 'architects of regression' [p. 11]) who embraced intellectual heritages of western Europe and saw this as the road to their own societies' modern future did study and honour their own past*—its 'middle' period as well as that of the earlier 'golden age'.[171]

Some reviewers of *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction* could not avoid making critical comments, even if extremely cautious: as already shown in brief above, under the polite cover of praise, Tarek El-

[170] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 56.

[171] *Journal of Islamic Studies* 28, no. 3 (2017): 385 (my emphasis).

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Ariss presented significant counter-arguments, mostly between the lines. Tipping her hat to the author "for his erudition and Herculean capacity for tackling multitudes—perhaps hundreds—of authors and voluminous texts," Dana Sajdi writes that "one cannot be but in awe" of al-Musawi's project, but she indicates that he "bites off more than he can chew, or perhaps more than he is able to share with his readers." Among the gaps in the book, for example, the reviewer mentions that "the book's employment of the 'republic of letters' seems to be a ploy to reconcile two frameworks that do not necessarily fit: on the one hand, an open premodern world-system … and Mamluk imperial consolidation and centralization," on the other. Also, al-Musawi ignored significant contributions by scholars such as Janet Abu-Lughod or cited others without using them: "Had the various contributions of Khaled al-Rouayheb and Nelly Hanna been integrated, as opposed to merely cited, into the book, some of the observations about the later period would have been different."[172] Elizabeth Lhost writes that "the author's tendency to re-articulate his position, relative to Casanova, in seemingly every chapter hinders his ability to replace the tired narrative of European ascendance—which tends to discredit Arabic literature from the medieval period altogether—with an engaging account of his alternative vision, or to provide the reader with a sense of the rich textures, delightful details, and fascinating tidbits that populate the literature he praises."[173] Charles Burnett writes that al-Musawi takes terms and concepts from Pascale Casanova and Michel Foucault but one is left to draw his own "conclusions as to how the Islamic 'Republic of Letters' differs from the early modern European phenomenon with the same name. Al-Musawi provides plenty of material on which to make these comparisons. Yet, in the last analysis, the value of his book is not so much that it argues for a European-style 'Republic of Letters' in the Islamic area, as that it draws attention to the richness of Islamic literature in a neglected period, and describes its themes, its continuities and ruptures, and its distinctive characteristics."[174] The other scholars mentioned above who expressed reservations toward al-Musawi's arguments (i.e., Helgesson, Orsini, and Ganguly) are not part of the scholarly community of Arabic literature, and they did so in spite of being unfamiliar with the relevant scholarship.

This unfamiliar academic "silence" in the scholarship of Arabic literature could not conceivably occur in the scholarship of any other literature whatsoever, wherein its founding fathers were defamed in such an aggressive manner and with such unbalanced and biased scholarly theses being generated. But, and I can testify to this from my own personal experience of several decades, the scholar-

[172] *Journal of Early Modern History* 20, no. 2 (2016): 591.

[173] *Reading Religion,* website published by the American Academy of Religion (AAR) (19 May 2017). http://readingreligion.org/books/medieval-islamic-republic-letters (accessed 16 October 2017).

[174] *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 2, no. 3 (2017): 353.

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ship on Arabic literature is a "special case," more especially against the backdrop of the waves of pressure generated in Middle Eastern scholarship by Edward Said, who together with Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha have come to be seen as what Dennis Walder calls "the three police officers of the postcolonial."[175] Said's *Orientalism* (1978), together with his academic reputation and total immunity from criticism whatsoever by *all* scholars of Arabic literature—a blind worship of a god-like scholar not to be found among any other similar international scholarly communities of *critics* of any other literature—as well as Said's nationalist Palestinian agenda, have left a deep imprint on the scholarship in the field. One of the consequences is the "generous" attitude toward Arab scholars and academics by the Western scholarly community—a generosity colored by a compulsion to apply less rigorous critical judgment to them. Unlike, for example, Israeli-Jewish scholars in the field of Arabic literature who have been collectively suffering from the effects of the BDS (Boycott, Divest, Sanction) movement, even if they fiercely oppose Israeli governmental policy, Arab scholars are immune to any criticism save for very rare cases.[176] It is only in this light that I can at all understand how some of al-Musawi's slander and defamatory statements against great Arab intellectuals were published several years ago, so far without almost any significant response, even though al-Musawi presents arguments that are unacceptable in academic scholarly discourse. For example, more than once al-Musawi refers insultingly to the "modernists" as using straw man arguments:

> Although *nahḍah* intellectuals needed a *straw man to justify their call for transformation and discontinuity with the [pre-modern] past*, they could not bypass some of its landmarks—that being the case with lexicons, for example. Entrenched in between, they either come up with *illogical proposals and selective categorizations* or end up by indulging in a sweeping denial of any cultural significance in the cultural production of the past five centuries … If the study of the Abbasid past produced significant readings and discussions, they were primarily intended to problematize other questions, such as the ninth–tenth century translation movement from the Hellenistic tradition. In other words, the seeming *nahḍah* espousal of an Abbasid Golden Age (750–978), with its widely proclaimed indebtedness to Greek philosophy and science, partially duplicates

[175] Dennis Walder, *Post Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford, 1998), 4.

[176] Such as Thomas Bauer's aforementioned critique of Salma Khadra Jayyusi's article in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (2007): 137–67.

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> a comparable proclaimed European filiation with a Greco-Latin tradition.[177]

And, again, in the same article:

> [Ṭāhā Ḥusayn] needs to prove his thesis that the West leads the Enlightenment and hence the cultural dependency of Egypt. Another is *a latent desire to repress sources of power in an Arab/Islamic cultural tradition in order to use the recent past, the Mamluk and premodern periods, as his straw man, to be beaten and dismissed as unwanted past*, an awkward memory to be dumped forever in order to align consciousness with an enlightened Europe that has put its medieval past behind. As a leading figure in the *nahḍah* movement, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn is the sum-up of anxieties, contradictions, and achievements that happen to be a translational interstice.[178]

And in another article:

> Arab modernists show an enormous anxiety that is common in periods of transition, especially under the impact of British and French cultural achievement. The desire to be their Other, the European, and the need to retain native magnanimity drove them to the classical past of an Abbasid empire, a Golden Age, a lighthouse that justifies importation of a colonial culture in times of regression and decadence that the recent past signifies for them in terms similar to what the Middle Ages signify to the Enlightenment.[179]

Reading al-Musawi's recent studies closely and exploring his arguments against the background of his scholarly and other activities before and after his moving to the West, several points seem to be in order:

First, notwithstanding his proven academic and scholarly excellence, during the last two decades al-Musawi has been enjoying exclusive privileges no one else has had in the scholarship of Arabic literature. The only explanation for that *immunity* is that he is an Arab scholar publishing in English in a scholarly community characterized by a culture of confrontation and suffering from a specific "cognitive dissonance"[180] known from other similar communities.[181] Most, if

[177] Al-Musawi, "The Republic of Letters: Arab Modernity? (Part II)," 117–18 (my emphasis).

[178] Ibid., 127 (my emphasis).

[179] Al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 283.

[180] According to Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford, 1957), especially 1–31.

[181] See, for example, my studies about the Palestinian authors writing in Hebrew in Israel such as "'Hebrew as the Language of Grace': Arab-Palestinian Writers in Hebrew," *Prooftexts* 15 (1995):

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not all, of those who comprise the international Western scholarly establishment of Arabic literature,[182] which prides itself on being pluralistic and leftist-liberal-oriented, hold postcolonial allegiances and are in general eager to be generous toward the literary and scholarly production of the "other"—the subject of their investigation, in this case Arab writers and scholars—avoiding as much as possible voicing any disparaging or critical attitude toward them. Among the dozens of reviews written on al-Musawi's many books, one cannot find even one with any significant reservations, without enveloping them in a lot of praise and flattery. At the same time, just for comparison, as an Israeli-Jewish student of Arabic literature, together with my colleagues, we frequently suffer from the results of BDS activities,[183] but also from other exclusionary actions and operations not related to the boycott against Israel. For example, we are not on the list of scholars who deserve to be invited to conferences or participate in scholarly projects, to be members of editorial boards, to write reviews, or who are simply worthy to be mentioned in their publications. The latter exclusion is backfiring on them because a scholar who is writing on a specific topic and does his best to avoid mentioning a book or an article published on the very same topic only damages his own reputation as a true scholar. Surprisingly, or perhaps not, scholars *in the Arab world,* Palestinians included, are eager to cooperate with us in all scholarly fields, while Western scholars, or Arab scholars adopted by the Western establishment, with only a few exceptions (Roger Allen is a towering example), are hesitant, to say the least, in their connections with Israeli-Jewish scholars.

Second, al-Musawi presents contradictory arguments without being exposed to any criticism. For example, he writes about the "paradoxical intersection" that leaves the *Nahḍah* intellectual in a liminal space, in perpetual trial, even when "voicing triumph and targeting others with sardonic sarcasm as Ḥusayn did in his seminal autobiography, *The Days*." According to al-Musawi, "autobiography signals unease, not contentment. Otherwise, how can we understand the massive growth of autobiographical writing?" But immediately afterwards, al-Musawi mentions that "this autobiographical stream speaks of an unverified belief in

163–83; and "'Postcards in the Morning': Palestinians Writing in Hebrew," *Hebrew Studies* 42 (2001): 197–224.

[182]I use the term "scholarly establishment" advisedly. As much as a political establishment is based not on merit but on power, so "scholarly establishment" refers not just to elements within the scholarly community but also to the power relations that structure it. It is that hegemonic group in a community's scholarship that has succeeded in establishing its authority over all other groups (cf. Reuven Snir, "Synchronic and Diachronic Dynamics in Modern Arabic Literature," in *Studies in Canonical and Popular Arabic Literature,* ed. Shimon Ballas and Reuven Snir [Toronto, 1998], 93).

[183]See Snir, *Modern Arabic Literature,* 274 n.

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one's role, a mastery of one's fate, worth communicating and circulating widely to help justifying one's role for posterity." The following is also unintelligible:

> Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's struggle against his blindness and the limits it imposed on his life generated a search for a larger vision, more comprehensive and encompassing, to involve the liberation of a nation … *Biographical, autobiographical, or narrative accounts signify a self writ large to account for communal or national issues.* As a significant threshold to nation, the act of narration provides us also with conditions of possibility and estrangement. *The Days* of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, for example, could not become so seminal for subsequent writing without its power to incite, invite, and demarcate venues for self-dependency, sovereignty, and acclamation of Orientalists' knowledge and methods in approaching and even reading Arabic.[184]

Third, on the whole, al-Musawi's arguments against the "modernists" suffer from certain common fallacies. For example, they use ad hominem attacks and resort to offensive remarks that should scarcely be found in respectable scholarly and academic discourses: the "modernists" are the "architects of regression," the "reluctant heirs" of the medieval body of knowledge, and their arguments are nothing but "wholesale" and "sweeping" "resistance," "rejection," and "denigration" of their past and its "cultural values" and "intimidating cultural capital"; and they misread their past, and falling back "on a series of negations and denials of [its] merit," they internalize the "European Enlightenment disparagement of the Middle Ages … in their zealous duplication of a seductive Europe." Moreover, al-Musawi, who accuses the "modernists" of using straw man arguments, as seen above, himself uses such arguments. He frequently attributes to them distorted weaker arguments, misrepresenting their positions, only to "successfully" defeat them. It seems that al-Musawi is so aware of his undisputedly strong position among scholars of Arabic literature in the West, and is so certain that no one will dare to make any critical comments about his arguments (and he is right if we go by the reviews written during the last twenty years on his publications, including the book discussed in the present article), that he has allowed himself what no scholar would dare. This is undoubtedly a specimen of the "argument from authority" fallacy.

13. Conclusion

Muhsin Jassim al-Musawi's *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction* is a thought-provoking book and an eye-opening study for

[184] Al-Musawi, "The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters as World Model," 283 (my emphasis).

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scholars of Arabic literature. His campaign against the "modernists," however, acts as an incentive to ponder al-Musawi's motivation as being more than just scholarly in nature. He refers to the "Islamic constellation of knowledge as a movement with its own identifiable features and regenerative processes that *could have nourished the present and led it safely out of wars, disasters, and colonial incursions*." And he alludes to the "complexity, diversity, and magnitude of medieval cultural production, which has daunted modernists and their counterparts in the West and caused them to fall back on a series of negations and denials of merit." Among the accusations he levels against the "modernists" is that they deprecated certain "Islamic practices" considering them to be "regressive and hence not conducive to progress and modernity."[185] In alluding to Jean Le Rond d'Alembert's (1717–83) "Preliminary Discourse" that accompanied the first volume of Diderot's *Encyclopedia of Arts and Sciences* (1751), al-Musawi's "Preliminary Discourse" is instructive; it shows that he is not satisfied with academic investigations of the past alone, as seen from the fact that his sequential articles on the topic have the phrase "Arab modernity" in their subtitles. In this regard, the final lines of his *Conclusion (Al-khātimah)*[186] are illuminating because they speak not only on the past but on the present and the future as well:

> Hence, the long-established Western equation between secularism and humanism needs to be challenged whenever it is applied outside the specific domain of a European Renaissance. *Only through better engagement with this past, with rigorous interrogation of its successes and failures, can modernists build up a sustainable view of the present and thus be at peace with themselves.* Diversity and dissent constitute a marked feature of Islamic culture, one that valorizes and invigorates a republic of letters with its many conspicuous or discrete worlds in what amounts to no less than seismic *Islamica*.[187]

I disagree with al-Musawi when he accuses the "modernists" of "a substantial disengagement from a tradition that was much needed for the promotion of education and culture" and of failing to engage with their past and build up "a sustainable view of the present." It is a simplification of the challenges the "mod-

[185] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 306 (my emphasis), 308–9, and 310, respectively.

[186] In his *Khuṭbat al-kitāb (Preliminary discourse)* (pp. 1–20) and *Al-khātimah (Conclusion)* (pp. 305–11), al-Musawi imitates, mainly through the wording of the titles he selects, the style of the post-classical Arabic writers as well that of Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, who was until 1759 co-editor with Denis Diderot (1713–84) of the *Encyclopédie* (*Encyclopedia of Arts and Sciences*) (1751–72), one of the largest collaborative ventures of the republic of letters (see al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 323, n. 2, as well as pp. 103 and 144).

[187] Al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters,* 311 (my emphasis, except for the last word).

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ernists" faced at the time. A brief look at the articles that Ṭāhā Ḥusayn published in the Egyptian press over a period of almost sixty years gives a completely different picture.[188] Last, but not least, one should notice that al-Musawi has defamed *only* Egyptian and *only* dead "modernists," those that cannot respond to his arguments; he ignores many Christian "modernists," based on the parameters he set up, as well as those who are still active. That is why, in concluding the *Khātimah* (Conclusion) of the present review article, I will now quote some lines by the Syrian poet ʿAlī Aḥmad Saʿīd, better known as Adūnīs (b. 1930), perhaps the greatest of all contemporary Arab "modernists" (which does not mean that I agree with everything that Adūnīs writes![189]), and unlike the false accusations leveled by al-Musawi against al-Zayyāt, Ḥusayn, and Mūsá regarding their attitude toward the pre-modern period,[190] the following lines are undoubtedly sweeping:

منذ سقوط بغداد وقيام السلطنة العثمانيّة،
تحوّل الدين إلى مجرّد أداة عنفيّة لخدمة السلطة.
لا نجد، على سبيل المثل، في تاريخ السلطنة العثمانيّة كلّها، على مدى أكثر من
أربعة قرون، مفكّراً عربيّاً واحداً، أو فنّاناً واحداً، أو موسيقيّاً واحداً، أو شاعراً واحداً، أو عالماً واحداً.
هكذا كان لا بدّ من مجيء أتاتورك للأتراك،
ومن أن تبدأ حركة النهوض العربيّ.

Since the fall of Baghdad and the establishment of the Ottoman Sultanate,
Religion has become only a harsh tool in the service of authority.
We do not find, for example, throughout the history of the Ottoman Sultanate, during more than
Four centuries, even one Arab intellectual, or one artist, or one musician, or one poet, or one scientist.
That is why it was necessary that Atatürk would come to the Turks,
And that the Arabic renaissance would start.[191]

[188] See *Turāth Ṭāhā Ḥusayn: Al-maqālāt al-ṣuḥufīyah min 1908–1967* (Cairo, 2002). Of the numerous articles that refute al-Musawi's accusations, I will mention only two: an article published in *Majallatī* (1 June 1936) entitled "Tanẓīm al-*Nahḍah*" (Organizing the Renaissance) (pp. 419–23); and another article published in *Musāmarāt al-jayb* (18 January 1948) entitled "Mushkilat al-lughāt al-ajnabīyah" (The issue of foreign languages) (pp. 610–11).

[189] In fact, I agree with most of the arguments put forth in Thomas Bauer's aforementioned review of Salma Khadra Jayyusi's theses (Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature'").

[190] In a recent article, al-Musawi discusses Salāmah Mūsá's conceptions in an appropriate and balanced manner, and more importantly, with more thorough scholarship with regard to the "modernists" than he does in his book reviewed here (Muhsin Al-Musawi, "Postcolonial Theory in the Arab World: Belated Engagements and Limits," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 20, no. 2 [2018]: 174–91).

[191] Adūnīs, "Madārāt: Lafẓ yuwaḥḥid wa-ʿamal yubaddid," *Al-ḥayāh,* 29 May 2015.

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Book Reviews

Il Kwang Sung, *Mamluks in the Modern Egyptian Mind: Changing the Memory of the Mamluks,* 1919–1952 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017). Pp. viii, 239.

Reviewed by Orit Bashkin, The University of Chicago

Il Kwang Sung wrote a fascinating work. Written in a lucid and accessible style, and grounded in a rich and interdisciplinary archive, Sung's work explores the ways in which modern Egyptians imagined the Mamluk past before the rise of Gamal Abdel Nasser (Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir) to power. The book convincingly argues that there was no one, stable, memory of the Mamluk Sultanate and the Mamluks in Ottoman Egypt. Rather, different groups of politicians, intellectuals, and writers presented their own versions of the Mamluks in Egypt.

Sung accentuates the need to move beyond binary notions of Egyptian historiography which assumes that Egyptian historians normally praised Arab rulers who governed Egypt and Arabized rulers like Saladin, while denouncing most non-Arab rulers as responsible for Egypt's decline before the modern era. Sung acknowledges that both intellectuals who were nostalgic for Ottoman imperial unity, and their rivals, writers affiliated with the Egyptian royal household, for whom modern Egyptian history started with Muḥammad ʿAlī, downplayed Egypt's Mamluk past. And yet, Sung demonstrates persuasively that many Egyptian historians and intellectuals wrote works of fiction and nonfiction in which the Mamluk rulers featured as national icons and as men (and one woman) whose histories conveyed important historical lessons for modern Egyptians.

The work is theoretically sophisticated, as Sung seeks to intervene in conversations about history-writing and memory formation. In the Egyptian context, the book is a useful addition to the thoughtful works by Yoav Di-Capua, J. A. Crabbs, Marilyn Booth, and Stephen Sheehi that examined the ways in which historians and writers of historical fiction appropriated the Egyptian past in relation to such modern themes as nationalism, abolition of slavery and the harem system, racial theories, forms of political governance, and modern forms of knowledge. Sung likewise pays much heed to works in the field of memory studies and collective memory formation (Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, and in the Egyptian context, Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski). These theoreticians underlined the ways in which nations and nationalists construct notions of shared memories through printed materials, like history textbooks, and physical objects, like public monuments.

Sung's complex theoretical framing allows him to explore various memory sites (to use Nora's expression); his book takes us to national projects, such as

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projects sponsored by the royal place aimed at producing books exploring Egypt's history, and state-produced history textbooks, in which the history of the Mamluks was mediated to educated individuals and high-school students. However, Sung also believes in the ability of subjects to produce their own vernacular memories, and for this reason he is interested also in readings of the Mamluk past in newspapers, plays, and historical novels. He illustrates how these Egyptian authors both challenged and adopted national narratives current in the state production. Furthermore, his analysis explains how knowledge produced by professional historians like François Charles-Roux, Gabriel Hanotaux, and Gaston Wiet, whose works were published in Egypt, finds its way to school textbooks and newspaper articles.

Sung is interested in understanding what motivated modern nationalists to write about, and, at times, celebrate, a period when Egypt was controlled by individuals who arrived from other lands and who spoke a different language than Arabic. Within this context, he identifies different forms of Egyptian nationalism. A dominant national Egyptian ideology at the time accentuated territoriality, and highlighted Egypt's unique historical, sociological, and cultural features, from the days of the Pharaohs to the present; such writes coined concepts like "Egyptian literature" *(al-adab al-miṣrī)* which referred to Egyptian history-writing, fiction, and other forms of narrative prose within this national framework. This national view was increasingly challenged by Pan-Arab and Pan-Islamic nationalism[s] which linked Egypt's past to larger Arab and Muslim imperial frameworks and underscored the significance of transregional and transnational political structures. Consequently, each nationalist camp appropriated Mamluk history to tell different tales about the past in order to serve their goals in the present. Thus, for the territorial nationalist camp the Mamluk era represented a time when the Egyptian state flourished, continuing its glory from antiquity, while their rivals saw it as a manifestation of the glorious Islamic past in which Muslim rulers defeated Mongols and Crusaders and in which Islamic culture thrived. Sung, nonetheless, also identifies some common narratives which shift between camps. All writers were somewhat obsessed with Shajarat al-Durr, Baybars, and the fall of the sultanate. The stories of the first female sultana, of a brave warrior who defeated the Mongols, and of a host of tragic historical characters facing their inevitable demise in the years 1516–17, were too rich to give up, and therefore authors of different political views retold their stories in varying shapes and forms.

A wonderful aspect of the book is its exploration of historical novels. Sung discovered a wide range of Egyptian novels dedicated to the Mamluk era, and he presents interesting close readings of several. Those include: Muḥammad Saʿīd al-ʿAryān's *ʿAlá Bāb Zuwaylah* ("On Zuwaylah Gate") and his *Shajarat al-Durr;* Jūrjī Zaydān's *Shajarat al-Durr* and *Istibdād al-Mamālīk* ("The Tyranny of the Mam-

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luks"); Muḥammad Farīd Abū Ḥadīd's *Ibnat al-Mamlūk* ("The Mamluk's Daughter"); and Aḥmad Shawqī's play *Riwāyat ʿAlī Bey al-Kabīr aw Dawlat al-Mamālīk* ("The Story of ʿAlī Bey al-Kabīr or the Mamluk Dynasty"). These texts, especially the ones by Zaydān, were extremely popular in modern Egypt. Just as today medieval fantasies and historical dramas captivate the imagination of contemporary audiences, the intrigues, the backstabbing, and gendered politics that accompanied the rise of the Mamluks to power greatly appealed to Egyptian audiences in the interwar period. In most of these narratives, the Bahri Mamluks, such as Baybars, Quṭuz, and Shajarat al-Durr, became Egyptian national heroes. Sung clarifies that the novels were not independent of their surrounding milieus. A current narrative in the public sphere was that both the Circassian era and the Ottoman eras were marked by despotism and subjugation. The novels convey these narratives, although the search for positive heroes produces a great interest in ʿAlī Bey al-Kabīr, who is celebrated as an Egyptian hero. The fact that a great number of these national heroes did not see themselves as Egyptians mattered little to these novelists.

Nationalism, however, was only one theme, amongst many, which occupied Egyptian Mamlukomania. *Mamluks in the Modern Egyptian Mind* underscores the many ways in which historians, novelists, and journalists evoked the Mamluk past in the service of a wide range of contemporary concerns. The anticolonial struggle was serviced by narratives celebrating victories over the Mongols and the Crusaders. Monarchists saw the successful Mamluk rulers as precursors to the dynasty of Muḥammad ʿAlī. Most importantly, narratives about Mamluk rulers epitomized political allegories. When denouncing Mamluk rulers in Ottoman Egypt, Egyptian authors aimed to illustrate to modern Egyptians that a political system based on tyrannical oppression leads to decline of state and society (a theme that became globally important in the 1930s). Similarly, during this period, some Egyptian thinkers debated whether the Egyptians themselves were Arabs or not; at times, proponents of territorial nationalism argued they were not. Sung examines the ways in which these racial discourses related to the history of the Mamluks. Liberal thinkers believed that Egyptian non-Arabs, including the Mamluks, *became* Egyptians by staying in Egypt and integrating into Egyptian culture and society. Sung, moreover, is able to illustrate that these conflicting national narratives were taken *ad absurdum*. In this regard, the most poignant example is that of secular thinker Salāmah Mūsá. The latter believed in Egyptian territorial nationalism; his passionate convictions led him to argue that the Egyptians were not Arabs, but a mix of races. The racial integration of the non-Arab Mamluks into Egyptian society helped Mūsá to support the claim that Egyptians were not Arabs and to emphasize the non-Semitic racial features of modern Egyptians. At the same time, to Mūsá, a great champion of Western culture, the Mamluks

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epitomized oppression, autocracy, and tyranny, qualities he associated with the East. He thus wanted them to play no role in Egyptian history and rejected their usefulness as a historical model. To be an Egyptian nationalist, in other words, Mūsá had to accept and reject the Mamluks at the same time.

I would have liked Sung to provide more details about the historical representations of Arab historical figures from the Mamluk period; studying the ways in which modern Egyptians wrote about Ibn Taymīyah or Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī could have complicated the story presented in the book. More attention to the spatial dimensions of this story (for example, the ways in which the new Egyptian state preserved Mamluk archeological sites) could have been of interest. But in general, this is a compelling and interesting read. Historians of the Mamluk era will be interested to see how the histories they know so well were utilized in modern period. Historians of the modern Middle East will find here much reflection on the manners in which modernity produces historical memories through its print cultures. It might be useful to teach portions from this book not only in classes on modern Middle Eastern history but also in ones on medieval and early modern Egyptian and Islamic history, perhaps taught with one of the novels Sung discusses (Zaydān's *Shajarat al-Durr* is now available in a beautiful English translation by Samah Selim). This could teach students the ways in which modern Egyptians revisited the histories discussed in their classes. It could also be an effective tool against orientalism, reminding our students, who are debating fervently gender and power relations in shows like *Game of Thrones,* that fellow students, in interwar Egypt, have done the same, as they debated what lessons they might learn from the tales of Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī or ʿAlī Bey al-Kabīr.

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Selections from Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshā by al-Qalqashandi, Clerk of the Mamluk Court: Egypt: "Seats of Government" and "Regulations of the Kingdom", from Early Islam to the Mamluks, edited by Heba al-Toudy and Tarek Galal Abdelhamid. Routledge Medieval Translations (London: Routledge, 2017). Pp. vii+ 470.

Reviewed by Malika Dekkiche, University of Antwerp

The name of al-Qalqashandī is certainly familiar to anyone interested in the history of the Mamluk Sultanate, its organisation, and its functioning. This fifteenth-century secretary has indeed gone down in history because of his most famous work *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ,* an encyclopedic work on the *inshāʾ* production (chancery production) of the Islamic states from the time of the Prophet up to the early fifteenth century. This encyclopedia, edited in 14 volumes, addresses most every aspect of the art of writing, from calligraphy, style issues, and writing material to required skills for secretaries, presenting not only detailed theoretical explanations, but also concrete examples through the many copies of original samples it provides. Beyond its focus on the art of writing, however, the *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá* in fact covers all aspects related to the chancery as well, such as the evolution of the administration and administrative practices, but also geographical and organizational concerns for governance, etc., making the work a true history of Islamic governance and administration over time. Because of the encyclopedic character of the work, al-Qalqashandī based his work on an incredible amount of sources, many of which are now lost.

Scholars have long recognized the value of this work, and many parts of it have been studied in detail and sometimes even translated. But since Gaudefroy-Demombynes' famous 1923 translation in *La Syrie à l'époque des Mamelouks d'après les auteurs arabes,* no attempt was made to present a coherent and "full" translation of the work (or at least of part of the work). This is now finally initiated, thanks to Heba El-Toudy and Tarek Galal Abdelhamid, the two translators of the present volume. The translation of this essential author comes at the right time as the field of Mamluk Studies has recently witnessed an increased activity in the domain of translation. The *Bibliotheca Maqriziana* is one remarkable example of that trend (critical editions and translations of al-Maqrīzī's works), but many other initiatives are being taken in that direction for other Mamluk authors.

Due to the extent of al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá,* however, the translators have only been able to concentrate on a short portion of the work concerning Egypt from the second Treatise on Human Geography *(al-maqālah al-thānīyah, fī al-masālik wa-al-mamālik):* "The Established Seat of Government," including Fustat, Cairo, and the citadel (Part I of the book) and "The Regulation of the Kingdom" from early Islam up to the Ikhshidids; under the Fatimids; and during

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the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods (Part II). Part I is mostly concerned with the topographical description of Fustat, Fatimid Cairo, and the citadel, recounting their urban development, and their evolution over time, based on the model of the *khiṭaṭ* (neighborhood by neighborhood, including a list of all mosques, madrasahs, *khānqāh*s and *ribāṭ*s, and hospitals). Part II addresses mainly the basis of government, its organization and staff, as well as its attributes during the Fatimid caliphate and the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultanates. The translation of the work is preceded by a short introduction, and followed by a detailed glossary. If the translation of the text is sometimes quite literal, the translators have nevertheless extensively commented and explained the text—and technical words and concepts—in the footnotes, the extent of which demonstrates the amount of work delivered.

Such an ambitious work, however, does not come without some shortcomings that should be mentioned. First and foremost, in this era of the "translation wave," it is rather surprising that the editors based their translation on the edition of the work that was made in the early 1900s, and did not even consult *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshá*'s manuscripts. As many similar projects of translation have shown, the consultation of the manuscripts, as well as the comparison of the different versions of the works, and the consideration—if not integration—of the para-textual features is now considered the rule in the field of critical edition and translation. In this respect, it is therefore difficult to consider the translation as truly critical. Furthermore, the critical apparatus in the footnotes is nowhere made explicit (for example, the distinction between the footnotes merely translated from the Arabic edition of the text and those added by the translators of the present volume; the reference to problematic translation is not coherent through the text). Finally, the text should have been reviewed more carefully as it still contains many misspelled words, and the transliteration is not uniform or always correct.

A second shortcoming is the lack of a proper introduction to the selection of the work translated. While the editors focused their introduction on the author, his work, and the *inshāʾ* genre to which it belongs, they, on the one hand, neglected to consult some very relevant—and updated—literature on these topics (for example, they still refer to al-Khalidī's *Al-maqṣid al-rafīʿ al-munshaʾ al-hādī li-dīwān al-inshāʾ,* which has been identified since 2009 as being *Al-thaghr al-bāsim fī ṣināʿat al-kātib wa-al-kātim,* authored by al-Saḥmāwī). But even more importantly, on the other hand, the editors entirely neglected to address the importance of the work within the encyclopedic trend of the time (compared to other contemporary chancery manuals, or to an author such as al-ʿUmarī), and to discuss the particularity of the selection they translated on Egypt (as part of the *masālik wa-al-mamālik* trends). This particular selection of the work has been already extensively used by scholars for many different studies, and therefore could have been better contextualized (many of those—classical—studies are in fact ignored

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throughout the text, such as Ayalon's studies on the Mamluk army, and William Popper's *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans*).

Nonetheless, because of the importance of the contents of al-Qalqashandī's work, with the explanatory footnotes and glossary, this volume is indisputably a nice addition to the scholar's library, as well as to a broader (non-specialist) audience.

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Arabic Transliteration System

Romanized Arabic in *Mamlūk Studies Review* follows the Library of Congress conventions, briefly outlined below. A more thorough discussion may be found in *American Library Association–Library of Congress Romanization Tables* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1991): http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/romanization/arabic.pdf.

ء	ʾ	خ	kh	ش	sh	غ	gh	م	m
ب	b	د	d	ص	ṣ	ف	f	ن	n
ت	t	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	q	ه	h
ث	th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	k	و	w
ج	j	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	l	ي	y
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	ʿ				
		ة	h, t (in construct)			ال	al-		

ـَ	a	ـُ	u	ـِ	i
ـً	an	ـٌ	un	ـٍ	in
آ	ā	ـُو	ū	ـِي	ī
ـَا	ā	ـُوّ	ūw	ـِيّ	īy (medial), ī (final)
ى	á	ـَو	aw	ـَي	ay
				ـَيّ	ayy

Avoid using apostrophes or single quotation marks for *ʿayn* and *hamzah*. Instead, use the Unicode characters ʿ (02BF) and ʾ (02BE).

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

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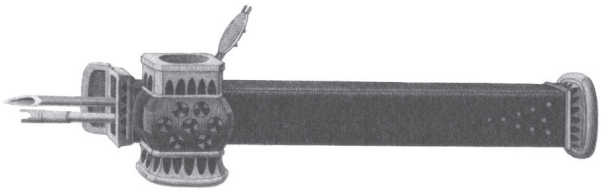

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