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Fifteenth-Century Arabic Historiography: Introducing a New Research Agenda for Authors, Texts and Contexts

Introduction

The Arabo-Islamic world of the later medieval period (thirteenth–sixteenth centuries) witnessed substantial transformations in the writing and reading of Arabic literary texts. For a long time, the study of these texts and of their diversity and changes was determined by the model of a “post-classical” literary field in fossilizing decline.¹ In the twenty-first century, however, new trends in literary and historical scholarship have been disengaging from these old, but still widespread, negative paradigms. They have managed to replace a condescending insistence on what Arabic literary texts no longer represented, or could no longer do, for more critical appreciations of what they really were, did, and meant for contemporaries. Modern scholars such as Thomas Bauer and Konrad Hirschler have shown how in late medieval Egypt and Syria these texts actually came to represent a crucial channel of elite communication and identity-formation. They have also stressed how this went hand-in-hand with a marked expansion in the sheer number of texts that were produced and ever more widely consumed. Hirschler in particular has demonstrated how from at latest the fourteenth century onwards increasingly more diverse social groups joined Syro-Egyptian educated elites in these processes not just by reading but also by producing texts.²

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¹See, e.g., the seminal presentation of Arabic literary texts from this period by Carl Brockelmann (1868–1956) in the third book of his *History of the Arabic Written Tradition* entitled “The Decline of Islamic Literature”, with the following additional qualification: “So, while much paper was covered with ink in Syria and Egypt during this period, precious little was written that was anything more than a substitute for something older that had been lost.” (Carl Brockelmann, trans. Joep Lameer, *History of the Arabic Written Tradition*, vol. 2, Handbook of Oriental Studies, section 1, The Near and Middle East, vol. 117/2 (Leiden, 2016), 6–7; originally published in idem, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden, 1949 [1st ed. Weimar, 1898–1902]), 2:7–8.

²Thomas Bauer, “Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 105–32; idem, “In Search of ‘Post-Classical Literature’: A Review Article,” *MSR* 11, no. 2 (2007): 137–67; idem, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität: Eine andere Geschichte des Islams*



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Arabic texts of history were part and parcel of this remarkable late medieval cultural and social transformation. The historiographical field indeed experienced an unprecedented explosion in the sheer volume and variety of texts that were produced.³ At the same time, this booming business of historiographical production underwent substantial qualitative changes, affecting the nature of the texts as well as the identities of their producers in highly interconnected ways. In the early 1990s, Tarif Khalidi identified these changes by introducing the term *siyāsaḥ* historiography. This refers especially to most of late medieval Arabic historiography's production in close proximity to the region's many different and often competing courts, and to its shared presentist concerns for recording above all configurations, transformations, and actions of various power elites. Over time rather straightforward chronographical or biographical listings of these power dynamics and elitist concerns gave way to more entertaining narratives, and even these lists may have been constructed in more complex literary ways than often has tended to be appreciated. Nevertheless, *siyāsaḥ* priorities continued to inform the majority of Arabic historiographical texts into the early modern period.⁴ One leading specialist of Arabic historiography, the late Donald P. Little (1932–2017), even suggested an intensification and culmination of this trend in what he defined as the “imperial bureaucratic chronicle” of the fifteenth centu-

(Berlin, 2011); idem, “Mamluk Literature as a Means of Communication,” in *Ubi Sumus? Quo Vademus? Mamluk Studies—State of the Art*, ed. Stephan Conermann, Mamluk Studies, vol. 1 (Bonn, 2013), 23–56; idem, “‘Ayna hādhā min al-Mutanabbī!’ Toward an Aesthetics of Mamluk Literature,” *MSR* 17 (2013): 5–22; Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands. A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh, 2012). See also Li Guo, *The Performing Arts in Medieval Islam: Shadow Play and Popular Poetry in Ibn Daniyal's Mamluk Cairo*, Islamic History and Civilization, vol. 93 (Leiden, 2012); Muhsin J. al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction* (Notre Dame, Ind., 2015); Adam Talib, *How Do You Say “Epigram” in Arabic?: Literary History at the Limits of Comparison*, Brill Studies in Middle Eastern Literatures, vol. 40 (Leiden, 2018).

³Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, vol. 1 (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970), 129–31; Konrad Hirschler, “Studying Mamluk Historiography: From Source-Criticism to the Cultural Turn,” in *Ubi Sumus? Quo Vademus?*, 159–86; idem, “Chapter 13: Islam: The Arabic and Persian Traditions, Eleventh–Fifteenth Centuries,” in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, vol. 2, 400–1400, eds. Sarah Foot and Chase F. Robinson, gen. ed. Daniel Woolf (Oxford, 2012), 279–81.

⁴Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, 1994), 182–231 (Chapter 5: History and *Siyasa*), esp. 183–84). See also Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, Themes in Islamic History (Cambridge, 2003), 103–23 (Ch. 6: Historiography and Society); Hirschler, “The Arabic and Persian Traditions,” 275–78 (“Historians and the Ruling Elites”); Nelly Hanna, “The Chronicles of Ottoman Egypt: History or Entertainment?” in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800)*, ed. Hugh Kennedy, The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453, vol. 31 (Leiden, 2001), 237–50.



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ry.⁵ Furthermore, these qualitative changes involved not just the texts of Arabic history writing, but also their authors' relationships with historiography as a practice. In fact, it has been convincingly argued for many decades that especially from the turn of the fourteenth to the fifteenth century, as Konrad Hirschler summarily phrased it, "the writing of history became a more self-conscious, and to some degree self-confident, cultural practice."⁶

As a result of these late medieval texts' richness and detail, their highly accessible *siyāṣah* priorities, and the—in comparison—relative scarcity and complexity of other types of sources, today's research on late medieval Syro-Egyptian lands, peoples, objects, texts, and ideas (i.e., on so-called Mamluk history) continues to rely heavily on this extensive historiographical production. For a long time, therefore, this research has primarily been concerned with the individual or collective histories of local and regional power elites. Recent decades have witnessed the gradual overcoming of such a particular bias, which tends to reduce the history of the Syro-Egyptian region to that of its power elites as represented in these highly self-conscious texts. This revisionism has been happening both through the adoption of new methodologies and approaches and through the expansion of the range of sources being examined.⁷ In these ways this critical turn has mainly tried to find ways to circumvent or neutralize the frames, narrative engagements, and overall authorial and ideological subjectivities of this historiographical material. Valuable as that is, this also means that genuine appreciations of these frames and narrative engagements remain wanting, and that these texts continue to be approached first and foremost as containers of facts, defined by all kinds of subjectivities that can simply be discarded. As will be further explained in this introductory article, discarding these has resulted in the actual nature, impact, and value of the substantial Arabic historiographical corpus, as a remnant of a particular and highly integrated fifteenth-century social and cultural practice, remaining hugely underexplored and significantly underestimated. Consequently, as a particular type of active participant in cultural production, social communication, and strategies of elite formation in the social worlds of late medieval Egypt and Syria, historiography continues to be poorly understood.

This special journal issue brings together five articles that were written in the context of a collaborative research project that aims to remedy this challenging situation in current understandings of late medieval Arabic history writing. This project, funded by the European Research Council and entitled "The Mam-

⁵Donald P. Little, "Historiography of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Epochs," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry, gen. ed. M. W. Daly (Cambridge, 1998), 413.

⁶Hirschler, "The Arabic and Persian Traditions," 267.

⁷See the survey in Hirschler, "Studying Mamluk Historiography."



lukisation of the Mamluk Sultanate-II (MMS-II): Historiography, Political Order, and State Formation in Fifteenth-Century Egypt and Syria,” runs for five years (2017–21) at Ghent University (Belgium). MMS-II is aiming to tackle this challenge by arguing with and beyond, instead of against or irrespective of, this historiographical production’s vexed interests and related subjectivities. The MMS-II project studies more specifically how not just fifteenth-century historians’ truth but also the political order of their courtly surroundings were constructed in textual practice. This introduction to this issue of *MSR* seeks to explain in more theoretical, programmatic, and empirical detail why and how MMS-II considers this textual relationship between history writing and dynamics of power to be a valid and valuable—yes, even a necessary—research perspective in the study of fifteenth-century Arabic historiography. It furthermore aims to explain how MMS-II research is unfolding in practice, and how this journal issue’s five articles tie in with this approach as well as with their wider context of fifteenth-century history writing. This introduction pursues these goals by first explaining how MMS-II considers the construction of political order, within the wider framework of a reevaluation of the concept and reality of state formation in fifteenth-century Syro-Egypt. It then presents the texts of history with which MMS-II engages, focusing especially on sketching the current state of scholarship on these texts. Third, this introduction explains in more detail how MMS-II research takes up a particular position within that scholarship and aims to connect the study of history writing with that of state formation. Finally, the fourth part summarizes not just how the five articles in this issue of *MSR* fit into this research program, but also what they contribute to it, both individually and collectively.

Rethinking State Formation and Political Order in Fifteenth-Century Syro-Egypt

Most understandings of late medieval Syro-Egyptian state formation tend to adopt an institutionalist, structuralist, and dichotomous approach to power relations. They arguably all tend to think of a Mamluk state and a Mamluk society that would have produced each other as “Mamluk” analytical and descriptive categories through bipolar state-society interactions. These interactions are always represented as having an autocratic, an oligarchic, or a symbiotic nature, and they are always assumed to have been rooted in an unchanging normative practice of the priority of the institution of military slavery.⁸ MMS-II consciously

⁸For useful syntheses of these understandings, see R. Stephen Humphreys, “The Politics of the Mamluk Sultanate: A Review Essay,” *MSR* 9, no. 1 (2005): 221–31; Albrecht Fuess, “Mamluk Politics,” in *Ubi sumus? Quo vademus?*, 95–118; Julien Loiseau, *Les Mamelouks (XIIIe–XVIe siècle): une expérience du pouvoir dans l’islam médiéval* (Paris, 2014). See critical reflections in Jo Van Steen-



breaks with this tradition and chooses to build on an alternative interpretive model of “the state” that was first proposed by the historian of modern Egypt Timothy Mitchell. This model perceives power as a ubiquitous and circulating relational phenomenon rather than as any absolute quality that would have distinguished the “haves” from the “have-nots.” It also sees the explanations for particular configurations of power relations as always participating in the collective imaginations of those configurations as correct or natural, that is, as a “state” that is preserving order and sovereignty by structuring “society.” Mitchell, expanding on the thinking of Michel Foucault, explains that from an analytical perspective it is more fruitful to step outside of this imagination, to reverse this imagined causality, and to think of “society,” or at least of particular configurations of social relations, as constructing the powerful notion of a socially transcendent “state” in ways that conform with, perform, and legitimate these configurations’ changing needs. In other words, this model understands social practices of power as constantly regenerating not just particular configurations of power, but also the creative imagination of these configurations as pertaining to the coherent and sovereign order of “the state” and its agents, mechanisms, sites, value systems, and resources.⁹

In line with the adoption of this model as analytically preferable, MMS-II situates the subjects of late medieval Arabic historiography and power dynamics within this interpretive framework of “the state” as an effect of social practices and their structuring imagination. MMS-II therefore understands the Cairo Sultanate’s process of state formation in the fifteenth century beyond the traditional narrow framework of the ongoing expansion and institutionalization of a bureaucratic apparatus. It rather sees this formation as driven by a process of endless socio-political transformations affecting, and affected by, statist effects that were produced, and reproduced, by a range of configurations of power relations that were particular to the fifteenth century. Otherwise formulated, it considers “the state”—and especially its contemporary representation with the equally

bergen, “Mamlukisation’ between Social Theory and Social Practice: An Essay on Reflexivity, State Formation, and the Late Medieval Sultanate of Cairo,” *ASK Working Paper 22* (2015): 1–48; Jan Dumolyn and Jo Van Steenberghe, “Studying Rulers and States Across Fifteenth Century Western Eurasia,” in *Trajectories of Late Medieval State Formation across Fifteenth-Century Muslim West-Asia—Eurasian Parallels, Connections, Divergences*, ed. J. Van Steenberghe, Rulers and Elites: Comparative Studies in Governance (Leiden, 2020), 88–155.

⁹Timothy Mitchell, “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics,” *The American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991): 77–96, building upon Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, 1977); also Timothy Mitchell, “Society, Economy, and the State Effect,” in *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*, ed. G. Steinmetz (Ithaca, NY, 1999), 76–97; republished in *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, Blackwell Readers in Anthropology, vol. 9 (Malden, 2006).



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highly complex notion of *dawlah*—as an empowering but elusive collective idea of sovereignty, a powerful discursive strategy to integrate disparate sets of statist agents, mechanisms, sites, value systems, and resources, and a continuously re-imagined construction of order and sovereignty in the chaos of the endless formation and fragmentation of central power networks within the orbit of the royal court in Cairo.¹⁰

This different perspective enables another, non-traditionally “Mamluk” reading of the well-known fact that the sultanate’s relatively long history between the thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries was all but a continuous and linear one. There definitely was an appearance of three centuries of structural, institutional continuities, often identified with the notion of a long-standing sultanic state. This went hand in hand, however, with the repeated disintegration and violent fragmentation of successful configurations of power relations around particular constellations of military leaderships and elite households. In fact, particular historical conditions made the sultanate’s fifteenth-century configurations of powerholders entirely different from those of their predecessors. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the process of convergence of power relations and the related construction of social order actually witnessed a continued preponderance of moments of dynastic rule, topped for most of the fourteenth century by that of the Qalāwūnids. Throughout this period dynastically explained contingencies repeatedly managed to bind the process of regular elite fragmentation and re-orientation into imaginations of one dynastic order of legitimate empowerment and valid social and cultural organization.¹¹ The fifteenth century, however, was very different, and this was not in the least due to the recurrent failure of highly tenacious dynastic tendencies. Different configurations of old, new, and

¹⁰See also Jo Van Steenberg, Patrick Wing, and Kristof D’hulster, “The Mamlukization of the Mamluk Sultanate? State Formation and the History of Fifteenth Century Egypt and Syria: Part II: Comparative Solutions and a New Research Agenda,” *History Compass* 14, no. 11 (2016): 560–69, esp. 564–65; and especially, also for the complex notion of *dawlah*, Jo Van Steenberg, “Appearances of Dawla and Political Order in Late Medieval Syro-Egypt: The State, Social Theory, and the Political History of the Cairo Sultanate (Thirteenth–Sixteenth Centuries),” in *History and Society during the Mamluk Period (1250–1517): Studies of the Annemarie Schimmel Research College II*, ed. Stephan Conermann, Mamluk Studies, vol. 12 (Bonn, 2016), 53–88.

¹¹See, e.g., Jo Van Steenberg, “Chapter Nine: Ritual, Politics and the City in Mamluk Cairo: The *Bayna l-Qaṣrayn* as a Dynamic ‘Lieu de Mémoire’ (1250–1382),” in *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. A. Beihammer, S. Constantinou, and M. Parani, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453*, vol. 98 (Leiden, 2013), 227–76, esp. 258–66; Loiseau, *Les Mamelouks*, esp. 112–32; Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, 2008), esp. 145–48; Clément Onimus, *Les Maîtres du Jeu: Pouvoir et Violence Politique à l’Aube du Sultanat Mamlouk Circassien (784–815/1382–1412)*, Bibliothèque Historique des Pays d’Islam (Paris, 2019), esp. 125–57.



predominantly mamluk power elites succeeded each other as agents and clients of, especially, a series of seven sultans and their distinct leadership formations. This series began with the enthronement of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh in 1412, and continued with that of al-Ashraf Barsbāy in 1422, of al-Zāhir Jaqmaq in 1438, of al-Ashraf Īnāl in 1453, of al-Zāhir Khushqadam in 1461, and of al-Ashraf Qāytbāy in 1468. The latter accession began a much longer period of relative stability that continued until the turn of the sixteenth century and included not just the long reign of Qāytbāy (r. 1468–96) but also the much briefer one of his son al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 1496–98). This series of seven successful sultans then came to a conclusion with the accession of Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in 1501, after the break-up of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's dynastic project and the prolonged search for a new stable configuration of leadership.¹² Just as in the latter case of al-Ghawrī, each of these seven sultans and their supporters lacked effective dynastic links to connect, let alone explain, their violent successions and distinct claims to sovereignty: nevertheless, they all successfully made and sustained those claims.¹³

Modern scholarship has so far mainly dealt negatively with the question of what was actually happening here. It has preferred readings of crisis, breakdown, decline, corruption, subversion, decentralization, and privatization to understand the expanding gap between fifteenth-century statist perspectives and social realities.¹⁴ As explained above, MMS-II questions the particular state-society cau-

¹²Robert Irwin, "Factions in Medieval Egypt," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1986): 228–46; Amalia Levanoni, "The Sultan's Laqab—A Sign of a New Order in Mamluk Factionalism?" in *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society*, eds. Amalia Levanoni and Michael Winter, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453*, vol. 51 (Leiden, 2004), 79–115; Henning Sievert, *Der Herrscherwechsel im Mamlukensultanat: Historische und Historiographische Untersuchungen zu Abū Hāmid al-Qudsi und Ibn Tag̃ribirdī*, *Islamkundliche Untersuchungen*, vol. 254 (Berlin, 2003); Julien Loiseau, *Reconstruire la Maison du Sultan, 1350–1450: Ruine et Recomposition de l'Ordre Urbain au Caire*, 2 vols., *Etudes Urbaines*, vol. 8 (Cairo, 2010); Carl F. Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (Albany, 1994); Van Steenbergen, "'Mamlukisation' between Social Theory and Social Practice"; Albrecht Fuess, "The Syro-Egyptian Sultanate in Transformation, 1496–1498: Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad b. Qaytbay and the Reformation of Mamlūk Institutions and Symbols of State Power," in *Trajectories of Late Medieval State Formation across Fifteenth-Century Muslim West-Asia*, 201–23; Christian Mauder, *In the Sultan's Salon: Learning, Religion and Rulership at the Mamluk Court of Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–1516)*, *Islamic History and Civilization*, vol. 169 (Leiden, 2020).

¹³See Jo Van Steenbergen and Stijn Van Nieuwenhuysse, "Truth and Politics in Late Medieval Arabic Historiography: the Formation of Sultan Barsbāy's State (1422–1438) and the Narratives of the Amir Qurqumās al-Sha'bānī (d. 1438)," *Der Islam* 95, no. 1 (2018): 147–88; Kristof D'hulster and Jo Van Steenbergen, "Family Matters: The 'Family-In-Law' Impulse in Mamluk Marriage Policy," *Annales Islamologiques* 47 (2013) (dossier: "Famille," ed. Julien Loiseau): 61–82.

¹⁴See Jo Van Steenbergen, Patrick Wing, and Kristof D'hulster, "The Mamlukization of the Mamluk Sultanate? State Formation and the History of Fifteenth Century Egypt and Syria: Part I: Old Problems and New Trends," *History Compass* 14, no. 11 (2016): 549–59.



salinity that is implied in these readings. Rather than asking what went wrong in the social world of fifteenth-century Syro-Egyptian leaderships despite the available statist solutions, MMS-II asks how the “state” (*dawlah*) was made to look like a continuous and unwavering sovereign order and a coherent bureaucratic infrastructure when social realities were rather different. MMS-II suggests that Syro-Egyptian leaderships, their supporters and retainers, and their rivals and opponents must have participated in the imagination of particular narratives, and counter-narratives, of belonging, social distinction and structural continuity that explained away in non-dynastic ways the oft-violent accession and configuration of fifteenth-century sultanic leaderships. This making of the “state” as an ideational construct of a particular time and space and as a discursive effect of particular practices and realities of power is being explored in MMS-II.¹⁵

Rethinking Fifteenth-Century Arabic Historiographical Texts and Their Study

Among the practices involved in the process of explaining and signifying the power relations and leadership formations of the fifteenth-century sultanate, MMS-II’s research focuses on a specific set that materialized in the booming and changing business of contemporary history writing. The fifteenth century actually witnessed the active participation of different highly interconnected and deeply politically engaged generations of Egyptian, Syrian, and Meccan scholars, administrators, and courtiers in late medieval literary communication and *siyāṣah* historiography. Their ranks included towering personalities such as al-Maqrīzī (1365–1442), al-ʿAynī (1361–1451), Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (1372–1449), Ibn Taghribirdī (1411–70), and al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497) in Cairo, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah (1377–1448) in Damascus, and al-Fāṣī (1373–1429) and Ibn Fahd (1409–80) in Mecca. These different generations’ collective historiographical engagements created a remarkable number of historiographical works, often stretching across multiple volumes, mostly integrating detailed local or regional historical accounts into wider temporal or spatial frameworks. They all employed long-standing annalistic, dynastic, and biographical models to structure their texts. In the majority of cases, substantial inter-textualities connected these texts and moreover tied them strongly to

¹⁵For a highly relevant and inspiring parallel, see Heather L. Ferguson, *The Proper Order of Things: Language, Power and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses* (Stanford, 2018) (e.g., p. 3: “In administrative documents or in the various forms of history writing, commentaries, and reform manuals that proliferated along with the tempestuous movements of the day, neither cavalryman nor janissary adhered to the bounded social, political, and economic role assigned to them by statesmen, bureaucrats, and intellectuals. But both administrative document and intellectual treatise constructed an idealized system of governance that assigned clear divisions between social groups and sought to remedy present concerns by reasserting foundational principles.”)



the writings of predecessors, from those of the fourteenth-century authors Ibn Duqmāq (d. 1407) and Ibn al-Furāt (d. 1405) in Cairo and Ibn Kathīr (d. 1370) in Damascus, to the canonical texts of the patrons of the “medieval” Arabic chronicle and biography traditions Ibn Khallikān (d. 1282), Ibn al-Athīr (d. 1233), Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1200), and al-Ṭabarī (d. 923). All of this had remarkable and long-lasting effects on the establishment by the majority of these historians of their historical texts as authorities of historical truth for their own and earlier times. Many of these multi-volume texts therefore had, and continue to have, an unparalleled impact on the historical knowledge of their authors’ own time and space (as well as preceding times or other regions and localities), and they have been defining the historical writings of later generations of historians, such as Ibn Iyās (d. 1524) and Ibn al-Ḥimṣī (d. 1527–28), as much as those of modern specialists of late medieval Syro-Egyptian history. Modern research’s reliance on the rich detail of many of these texts for the study of thirteenth- to fifteenth-century Syro-Egyptian (and many other) historical realities continues to be substantial. This means that their fifteenth-century discursive perspectives are until today imposing their paradigmatic meanings on the historical understanding of much of the Islamic Middle Period (tenth–fifteenth centuries).

This important body of fifteenth-century Arabic historiographical texts has so far been only partially and haphazardly identified and studied.¹⁶ In fact, Donald Little’s observation, made more than twenty years ago, that “critical analysis of the originality, sources, and possible interdependence of these and other [fifteenth-century] historians has not yet approached the level of scholarship on the [thirteenth- and fourteenth-century] historians,”¹⁷ remains remarkably valid for the majority of these texts. Since Little penned his assessment more studies about a handful of relevant texts and authors have been published. However, these studies all remain rather circumscribed and dispersed, and they are at best only partly concerned with the full scope of an author’s textual corpus, and not at all with the whole body of historiography produced in this period.¹⁸ In the major-

¹⁶For one of the very few and yet incomprehensive surveys, see Little, “Historiography of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Epochs,” 436–40.

¹⁷Ibid., 433.

¹⁸See, e.g., Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Izz al-Dīn, *Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī mu’arrīkhan* (Cairo, 1987); Li Guo, *Early Mamluk Syrian Historiography: al-Yunīnī’s Dhayl Mir’āt al-Zamān*, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts, vol. 21 (Leiden, 1998); idem, “Al-Biqā’ī’s Chronicle: A Fifteenth-Century Learned Man’s Reflection on His Time and World,” in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*, 121–48; idem, “Tales of a Medieval Cairene Harem: Domestic Life in al-Biqā’ī’s Autobiographical Chronicle,” *MSR* 9, no. 1 (2005): 101–21; Anne F. Broadbridge, “Academic Rivalry and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt: al-‘Aynī, al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī,” *MSR* 3 (1999): 85–107; idem, “Royal Authority, Justice, and Order in Society: the Influence of Ibn Khaldūn on the Writings of al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghribirdī,” *MSR* 7, no. 2 (2003): 231–45; Irmeli Perho,



ity of cases in which such texts are studied and used, longstanding heuristic traditions rooted in the philological origins of modern studies of medieval Islam are upheld. Mostly, this means that the detailed narratives of these texts are taken for granted as mere descriptive and at best selective or biased containers (as opposed to re/producers) of forms of (as opposed to claims to) historical truth. The focus of the majority of historiographical research has therefore mainly stuck to the study of technical and factual issues of originality, veracity, and inter-textuality.¹⁹

This remains far removed from the wider approach that Stephen Humphreys already called for in the early 1990s—an analysis of “the interplay between the life and career of a historian, the cultural currents in which he was immersed, and the development of his thought and writing.”²⁰ It remains even further removed from MMS-II’s concern for understanding historiographical texts as actively participating in discursive practices that connected power relations and claims to order and truth.²¹ For the much earlier thirteenth century Konrad Hirschler and

Ibn Taghribirdi’s Portrayal of the First Mamluk Rulers, Ulrich Haarmann Memorial Lecture, vol. 6 (Berlin, 2013); Sami G. Massoud, “Notes on the Contemporary Sources of the Year 793,” *MSR* 9, no. 1 (2005): 163–206; idem, *The Chronicles and Annalistic Sources for the Early Mamluk Circassian Period*, *Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts*, vol. 67 (Leiden, 2007); idem, “Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbā’s *al-Dhayl al-Muṭawwal*: The Making of an All Mamluk Chronicle,” *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 4 (2009): 61–79; Fozia Bora, “A Mamluk Historian’s Holograph: Messages from a *Musawwada* of *Ta’rikh*,” *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 3, no. 2 (2012): 119–53; idem, *Writing History in the Medieval Islamic World: The Value of Chronicles as Archives*, *The Early and Medieval Islamic World* (London, 2019).

¹⁹See, e.g., Haarmann, *Quellenstudien*; idem, “Auflösung und Bewahrung der Klassischen Formen Arabischer Geschichtsschreibung in der Zeit der Mamluken,” *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 121 (1971): 46–60; idem, “Al-Maqrīzī, the Master, and Abū Ḥāmid al-Qudṣī, the Disciple—Whose Historical Writing can Claim More Topicality and Modernity?” in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*, 149–65; Donald P. Little, *An Introduction to Mamlūk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalā’ūn*, *Freiburger Islamstudien*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden, 1970); idem, “A Comparison of al-Maqrīzī and al-ʿAynī as Historians of Contemporary Events,” *MSR* 7, no. 2 (2003): 205–15; Amalia Levanoni, “Al-Maqrīzī’s Account of the Transition from Turkish to Circassian Mamluk Sultanate: History in the Service of Faith,” in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*, 93–105; Kamāl al-Dīn ʿIzz al-Dīn, *Arbaʿat muʿarrikhīn wa-arbaʿat muʿallafāt min Dawlat al-Mamālik al-Ḥarākisāh* (Cairo, 1992).

²⁰R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: a Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), 135; also quoted in Li Guo, “Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art,” *MSR* 1 (1997): 27.

²¹For related understandings of history writing in adjacent fields of historical research, see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, “History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages,” *Speculum* 65, no. 1 (1990): 59–86; idem, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore, 1997); idem, “Foucault and the Problem of Genealogy,” *The Medieval History Journal* 4, no. 1 (2001): 1–14; Robert Doran, ed., *Philosophy of History after Hayden White* (London, 2013). Konrad Hirschler, who already moved in this analytical direction in his 2006 monograph



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Li Guo have shown important ways forward toward understanding both the reproductive agencies of Arabic historiographical texts in social practice and the related politics of historical truth and order.²² For historiography's wider context of late medieval cultural production, reproduction, and consumption in Syria and Egypt, key social practices such as patronage, competition, and knowledge transmission have furthermore been qualified in a number of highly inspiring and innovative ways in the works of, especially, Michael Chamberlain and Jonathan Berkey.²³ For the substantial number of Arabic texts of history that were written in the fifteenth century, the wide-ranging and impressive historiographical production of Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī has especially received substantial attention over the years. This great variety of studies and research were mainly published

Authors as Actors, refers in this context of an interpretive turn to meaning making not only to the writings of Spiegel, but also to the seminal impact of Clifford Geertz's *Thick Description* (1973); he aptly explained that "in recent decades 'meaning' has become an increasingly important concern in historical studies. Geertz is one of the influential writers who consider culture to be a system of symbols and meanings. Texts (in a very comprehensive sense) are mainly interesting as a part of this system: they have not so much to be explained as interpreted in order to grasp both their symbolic content and meaning, and are not seen as merely the direct outcome of material reality or of social processes. ... Thus, in discussing the texts under consideration in this study I will ask how they produced meaning ... [using as the criterion] for inclusion of information ... not necessarily their truth-value but possibly their significance within a specific context" (Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors as Actors*, SOAS/Routledge Studies on the Middle East [London, 2006], 4).

²²Hirschler, *Authors as Actors*; Guo, *Performing Arts*. Also important in this respect is Thomas Herzog, *Geschichte und Imaginaire: Entstehung, Überlieferung und Bedeutung der Sirat Baibars in ihrem Sozio-Politischen Kontext*, Diskurse der Arabistik, vol. 8 (Wiesbaden, 2006); idem, "Mamluk (Popular) Culture: The State of Research," in *Ubi sumus? Quo vademus?*, 131–58; Hirschler, "Studying Mamluk Historiography."

²³Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, 1994); idem, "The Production of Knowledge and the Reproduction of the A'yān in Medieval Damascus," in *Madrassa: la Transmission du Savoir dans le Monde Musulman*, eds. Nicole Grandin and Marc Bagorieau (Paris, 1997), 28–62; Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992); idem, "Tradition, Innovation and the Social Construction of Knowledge in the Medieval Islamic Near East," *Past and Present* 146 (1995): 38–65; idem, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East*, Publications on the Near East (Seattle, 2001); these types of social practices were also taken into account for the examination of fifteenth-century historians such as al-'Aynī, al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Ḥajar, and Ibn Taghrībirdī in Broadbridge, "Academic Rivalry and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt"; idem, "Royal Authority, Justice, and Order in Society"; Loiseau, *Reconstruire la maison du sultan*; Jo Van Steenberg, *Caliphate and Kingship in a Fifteenth-Century Literary History of Muslim Leadership and Pilgrimage: Critical Edition, Annotated Translation, and Study of Al-Dhahab al-Masbūk fi Dhikr man Ḥajja min al-Khulafā' wa-l-Mulūk*, Bibliotheca Maqriziana, vol. 4 (Leiden, 2016).



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in an Arabic collected volume edited by Ziyādah,²⁴ in detailed studies by ʿĀshūr and by Kamāl al-Dīn ʿIzz al-Dīn,²⁵ in various contributions to a 1997 conference volume *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*,²⁶ in a separate issue of *Mamlūk Studies Review*,²⁷ and in many articles, chapters, monographs, and even a dedicated series—the *Bibliotheca Maqriziana*—authored, commissioned, or edited by Frédéric Bauden.²⁸ Al-Maqrīzī truly stands out, however, as an exception to the general rule of a remarkable dearth of relevant scholarship on fifteenth-century historiography.²⁹

This imbalance in present day historiographical scholarship arguably goes back to the priority awarded to al-Maqrīzī’s writings in the wake of the pioneering French translations of parts of his contemporary chronicle in the mid-nineteenth century by Etienne Quatremère (1782–1857).³⁰ This imbalance was only very partly redressed by work on Ibn Taghribirdī in the mid-twentieth century

²⁴Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyādah, ed., *Dirāsāt ʿan al-Maqrīzī: Majmūʿat abḥāth* (Cairo, 1971).

²⁵Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr, “Aḍwāʾ jadīdah ʿalā al-muʿarrikh Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī wa-kitābātihī,” *Ālam al-Fikr* 14, no. 2 (1983): 453–98; ʿIzz al-Dīn, *Arbaʿat muʿarrikhīn wa-arbaʿat muʿallafāt*.

²⁶Kennedy, ed., *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*.

²⁷*MSR* 7, no. 2 (2003).

²⁸See, among others, Frédéric Bauden, “Maqriziana I: Discovery of an Autograph Manuscript of al-Maqrīzī: Towards a Better Understanding of his Working Method, Description: Section 1,” *MSR* 7, no. 2 (2003): 21–68; idem, “Maqriziana IV: Le Carnet de Notes d’al-Maqrīzī: l’Apport de la Codicologie à une Meilleure Compréhension de sa Constitution,” *Manuscripta Orientalia* 9, no. 4 (2003): 24–36; idem, “Maqriziana I: Discovery of an Autograph Manuscript of al-Maqrīzī: Towards a Better Understanding of his Working Method: Analysis,” *Mamlūk Studies Review* 12, no. 1 (2008): 51–118; idem, “Maqriziana VIII: Quelques Remarques sur l’Orthographies d’al-Maqrīzī (m. 845/1442) à Partir de son Carnet de Notes: Peut-on Parler de Moyen Arabe?” in *Moyen Arabe et Variétés Mixtes de l’Arabe à Travers l’Histoire*, eds. Jérôme Lentin and Jacques Grand’Henry (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2008), 21–38; idem, “Maqriziana XI: Al-Maqrīzī et al-Ṣafādī: Analyse de la (Re)Construction d’un Récit Biographique,” *Quaderni di Studi Arabi, Nuova Serie* 5 (2009): 99–136; idem, “Maqriziana IX: Should al-Maqrīzī Be Thrown Out with the Bath Water? The Question of his Plagiarism of al-Awḥadī’s *Khīṭaṭ* and the Documentary Evidence,” *MSR* 14 (2010): 159–232; idem, *Al-Maqrīzī’s Collection of Opuscles: An Introduction*, Bibliotheca Maqriziana, vol. 1 (Leiden, forthcoming).

²⁹For the fourteenth century, two more exceptions to this rule are now Elias Muhanna’s work on al-Nuwayrī’s encyclopedism, especially his *The World in a Book: al-Nuwayrī and the Islamic Encyclopedic Tradition* (Princeton, 2018), and Fozia Bora’s study of the historiography of Ibn al-Furāt, especially her *Writing History in the Medieval Islamic World*.

³⁰Etienne Marc Quatremère, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l’Égypte, écrite en Arabe par Taki-eddin-Ahmed-Makrizi; Traduite en Français... et Accompagnée de Notes Philologiques, Historiques, Géographiques, par Quatremère*, Oriental Translation Fund, 2 vols. (Paris, 1837–45).



by Gaston Wiet (1887–1971) and William Popper (1874–1963).³¹ Other fifteenth-century historians and their texts of history have never received any similar kind of sustained scholarly attention, and neither their writings, nor most of al-Maqrīzī’s writings, have ever been approached from the critical social and literary perspectives that Hirschler and Guo successfully deployed for the thirteenth century.³² More generally, this historiography’s active participation in processes of meaning making and knowledge construction, as well as in the wider discursive dimensions of those social practices, have remained almost entirely unexplored.³³ As a result, many questions remain to be asked, a truism that even applies to al-Maqrīzī’s atypical case. These questions include the issue of the effects on current historical understandings of this unbalanced quantitative relationship between scholarship on al-Maqrīzī and that on his peers and successors. They also concern the critical nature, academic status, and textual relationships of many editions of al-Maqrīzī’s and many others’ texts that have appeared in recent decades, and that continue to be published and republished, especially by various publishing houses in the Middle East. Finally, these many unresolved questions certainly also concern the impact on historical knowledge of the positioning of this body of texts at the interface between, on the one hand, the above detailed issues of the high social importance and functionality of late medieval Arabic texts in general and, on the other hand, the imagination of political order, sovereignty, and the “state” (*dawlah*) in a repeatedly fragmenting fifteenth-century socio-political context.

Studying Claims of Historical Truth and Political Order between 1410 and 1470

MMS-II engages with these many unresolved questions on the nature and impact of late medieval Arabic history writing. It asks above all the question of how historical texts participated in complex processes of explaining and making sense of power relations and leadership formations. It therefore puts the extant narrative sources at the center of the historical action that is being studied.

³¹Gaston Wiet, *Les Biographies du Manhal Safi* (Cairo, 1932); William Popper, *History of Egypt, 1382–1469 A.D., Translated from the Arabic Annals of Abu l-Maḥasin ibn Taghrī Birdī*, University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, vols. 13–14, 17–19, 22–24 (Berkeley, 1954–63); idem, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans, 1382–1468 A.D.: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghrī Birdī’s Chronicles of Egypt*, University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, vols. 15, 16, 24 (Berkeley, 1955–63).

³²An exception for the study of the writings of al-Maqrīzī is Van Steenberg, *Caliphate and Kingship*, 9–133 (Part 1: Study—The Cultural Biography of a Fifteenth-century Literary Text).

³³For the fourteenth century, some steps in this direction have recently been taken in Muhanna, *The World in a Book*, and in Bora, *Writing History in the Medieval Islamic World*.



MMS-II's chronological focus in this respect is on the period between the 1410s and the 1460s. Not only was this a period during which a succession of rather volatile configurations of Syro-Egyptian power elites appeared as a continuous series of six sultans and their courts;³⁴ this was also the time during which some of the most impactful Arabic historiographical texts of the medieval period were written, by al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrībirdī and by many of their aforementioned fifteenth-century peers.³⁵ At the very heart of MMS-II is the rethinking of this substantial but underexplored historiographical material that was produced between the 1410s and 1460s, from the perspective of how it may have participated in making contested claims to historical truth in general and to political order and sovereignty in particular.³⁶

As explained above, MMS-II suggests that between the 1410s and 1460s members and agents of different sultanic formations, their supporters and retainers, and their rivals and opponents must have participated in the imagination of particular narratives—and counter-narratives—of belonging, social distinction, and structural continuity, which explained away in non-dynastic ways the oft-violent accession of fifteenth-century sultans. MMS-II especially suggests that one of these narratives involved the discursive claiming of a particular historical truth, including via historiographical action, which MMS-II terms “Mamlukization.”

³⁴For similar considerations of this mid-fifteenth century period as a coherent unit for historical research, see Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 32–38 (“The Fifteenth Century Restoration: 1422–1470”), 32 (“Yet beginning with the reign of Sultan al-Muʿayyad Sheikh (1412–1421) and his successor Sultan Barsbāy (1422–1438) a partial restoration of the fortunes of the empire was achieved.”), 38 (“But from about 1470 fresh and cumulative strains pushed Mamluk Syria and Egypt into the vortex of complete economic, political, and social collapse from which they would ultimately be rescued only by incorporation into the Ottoman Empire.”); Robert Irwin, “Factions in Medieval Islam,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 118, no. 2 (1986): 228–46, on the so-called “Muʿayyadī faction, fl. 1400–1467. [The] Muʿayyadī mamluks of Sultan al-Muʿayyad Shaykh Above all the life cycle of the Muʿayyadī faction falls mainly within the lifetime of Ibn Taghrībirdī (1411–70)” (229); this life cycle ended with “Khushqadam’s reign (865/1461–872/1467) [which] was the Indian summer of the Muʿayyadī faction” (235).

³⁵See J. Van Steenberg, “Introduction: History Writing, *Adab*, and Intertextuality in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria: Old and New Readings,” in *New Readings in Arabic Historiography from Late Medieval Egypt and Syria*, eds. M. Termonia and J. Van Steenberg, Islamic History and Civilization (Leiden, 2021): “the biggest moment—in quantitative if not in qualitative terms—in the history of late medieval Arabic history writing was the subsequent period, between the 1410s and the 1460s ...”

³⁶See the parallel with Ferguson, *The Proper Order of Things* (e.g., p. 4: “The arguments contained here thus build on studies concerned with the relationship between empire and textuality and the mechanisms by which the circulation of documents characterized and, in the act of characterizing, produced a particular conception of sovereignty. This conceptual framework defined and supplemented imperial authority and was deployed in the midst of the varied crises [bureaucratic leaders] sought to address.”)



This refers to the construction of the collective imagination of one long-standing and continuous political order of the *dawlah* that made sense of the fifteenth-century realities of discontinuous and contested leaderships through a combination of dynastic amnesia and the social memory of a shared past of mamluk sultans and the regular succession, since the mid-thirteenth century, of their glorious periods of rule. Put another way, MMS-II's main research hypothesis is the invention between 1410 and 1470 of a tradition of one symbolic order of sultanic leadership, captured by the aforementioned neologism "Mamlukization." Discursively mediated by various practices that include the formulation of literary claims to historical truth, this invented tradition of "Mamlukization," MMS-II argues, stands for the construction of a particular genealogical social memory of one, longstanding, and continuous leadership of military slaves (mamluks, also more generally identified as *atrāk*) that makes sense of a socio-culturally fragmented fifteenth-century present through both the marginalization of dynastic realities and ideas and the cultivation of a shared and glorious past.

Driven by the need to test and refine this hypothesis and the revisionist historical and historiographical agendas that inform it, MMS-II's collaborative research project pursues three major objectives. These represent the macro-, meso-, and micro-perspectives of the study of, respectively, the entire historiographical corpus for the period 1410–70, specific textual traditions within this corpus, and the vocabularies and discursive registers that informed this corpus. Together they act as the interlocking interpretive and organizational layers at which MMS-II believes any response to questions concerning the agency and politics of history writing in the period 1410–70 should be situated.

Survey: Unlocking Fifteenth-Century Arabic Historiography (ca. 1410–ca. 1470)

MMS-II works with an inclusive definition of the textual specimens that are considered relevant. It includes in its analyses any Arabic literary text produced between ca. 1410 and 1470 (roughly from the execution of Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraj in 1412 to the accession of Sultan Qāytbāy and the organization of his court in the period 1468–70) in the localities most strongly touched by the political gravity of the Sultanate's court in Cairo (i.e., the Egyptian, Syrian, Anatolian, and Hijazi domains) which makes any kind of explicit or implicit claims to engaging with contemporary historical truths. This includes all the grand narrative annalistic chronographies and biographical dictionaries that have traditionally informed—and continue to do so—most research on Syro-Egyptian society and culture between the thirteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries. This also includes several other types of texts, such as panegyrics, individual biographies, treatises, and other specimens of Arabic prose and poetry, as well as some more "marginal" historiographical texts, produced in the many peripheries of the Sultanate's authority.



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To date, 31 authors from Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz have been identified as having produced one or more relevant historiographical texts in the 1410–70 time-frame (see appendix). Among these 31, there is a clear majority of authors (19) sharing the characteristic of having lived a predominantly Cairo-centered life. At the same time, these authors are almost equally divided between two generations (15 vs. 16). The first of these two generations consisted of men who were born before the 1390s. They closely experienced the different crises that affected life in Egypt, Syria, and wider Western Asia in highly transformative ways in the course of the first decade of the fifteenth century, and were all obliged to reposition themselves and often also their writings vis-à-vis that matrix moment and the subsequent post-1412 rebuilding of the Sultanate and its elites.³⁷ Their ranks were dominated by the authoritative personalities of al-Maqrīzī (1365–1442), al-ʿAynī (1361–1451), and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (1372–1449) in Cairo, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah (1377–1448) in Damascus, and al-Fāsī (1373–1429) in Mecca. The second generation included equally well-known historians, such as Ibn Taghribirdī (1411–70), al-Biqāʿī (1406–80), and Ibn Fahd (1409–80). Born in the 1390s and 1400s, their socio-cultural horizons were less defined by the troubled turn of the fourteenth to the fifteenth century. They were rather more affected by both the violent successions of fifteenth-century sultans and courts—in the early 1420s and the late 1430s, and then again in the mid-1450s and in the early and later 1460s—and the repeated searches for a new stabilization of power relations that followed each of these moments of substantial transformation.

The full corpus of these authors' relevant texts currently amounts to no less than 81, with a major preponderance of texts by Cairo-centered authors (58) and a slight imbalance between each generation's historiographical production (46 vs. 35) (see appendix). Quite a few of these texts consist of multiple volumes. Most of them have been preserved in part or in full in manuscript copies kept in major library collections around the world (especially in Egypt, Turkey, Europe, and the US) and have been published at least once in more or less critical editions. As one would expect, the well-known big names of fifteenth-century Arabic historiography feature most prominently on this list as its eight most productive contributors, jointly responsible for the production of almost two thirds of these texts (50, or 62%). Topped by al-Maqrīzī (11 texts) and then Ibn Taghribirdī (8), the latter ranks also include the Cairo-centered authors Ibn Ḥajar (7), al-ʿAynī (5), al-Qalqashandī (4), and al-Biqāʿī (4), as well as their Meccan peers al-Fāsī (6) and Ibn Fahd (5).

The objective of MMS-II's survey component is not just to identify the full and remarkably extended corpus of Arabic historical texts that were produced in

³⁷On this "matrix moment," see Van Steenberghe, *Caliphate and Kingship*, 34–40; Broadbridge, "Academic Rivalry and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt."



the period 1410–70. MMS-II also aims to create a “cultural biography” for each of these texts, that records—or at least allows for the (often patchy) reconstruction of—its “social life” from its fifteenth-century conception until today.³⁸ This takes the form of a comprehensive bibliographic survey of these texts, with particular attention to questions of authorship, textual production, consumption and reproduction, materiality, and modern research. Basic research tools are still lacking for the comprehensive study of these texts and all other late medieval Arabic historiography. This includes not least the continued absence of dedicated reference works taking stock of relevant texts, the status of their textual preservation, the contexts of their production and consumption, and completed and ongoing relevant research. In the twentieth century, Carl Brockelmann’s *GAL* meant a huge breakthrough in this respect for the full scope of Arabic literature, but it is now outdated.³⁹ *Christian-Muslim Relations, A Bibliographical History, vol. 5 (1350–1500)* offers a much needed, extremely rich, and very useful upgrade, but takes a very specific approach to the subject.⁴⁰ Online resources such as the *Mamluk Bibliography Project* (University of Chicago Library, <http://mamluk.lib.uchicago.edu>) offer access to a comprehensive and continuously updated set of bibliographical metadata on Mamluk research published in any language of scholarship, but its ambitions, scope, and organization are very different from being a research tool for late medieval Arabic historiography. MMS-II therefore aims to combine all of these and related bibliographical data sets (e.g., <http://ottomanhistorians.uchicago.edu/en>, <http://www.fhrist.org.uk>, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/>, <https://www.islamic-manuscripts.net>, <http://orient-digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/>) and to enrich them with other relevant metadata. These also importantly include codicological and related data that give insight into the materiality of the corpus, gathered from on-site investigations in the major manuscript collections. All these data are published in an open, searchable bibliographic repository: Bibliography of 15th Century Arabic Historiography (BAH) (<http://ihodp.ugent.be/bah>).

³⁸See Igor Kopytoff, “Chapter 2: The Cultural Biography of Things: Commodization as Process,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, 1986), 64–91; Van Steenberghe, *Caliphate and Kingship*, 2–3.

³⁹Brockelmann, *GAL*; but see the recently begun project in Leipzig (timing: 2018–35) to update and expand upon Brockelmann’s work for Arabic literary texts from the period 1150–1850 (Bibliotheca Arabica—Towards a New History of Arabic Literature, <https://www.saw-leipzig.de/de/projekte/bibliotheca-arabica/intro>).

⁴⁰David Thomas and Alex Mallet, eds., *Christian-Muslim Relations, A Bibliographical History, vol. 5 (1350–1500)*, History of Christian-Muslim Relations, vol. 20 (Leiden, 2013). See also G. Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle* (Leiden, 2010).



Texts: Historicizing Fifteenth-Century Contexts, Structures, and Meanings of Arabic Historiography (ca. 1410–ca. 1470)

As detailed above, with the exception of al-Maqrīzī and his many texts, the substantial body of Arabic historiographical texts that was produced in the period 1410–70 has so far been only partially and haphazardly studied, if at all. MMS-II therefore pursues in-depth case studies of discrete sets of Arabic historical works from this period, with the precise aim of understanding and situating these texts at the performative interface between, on the one hand, power relations involving authors, audiences, and many others and, on the other hand, discursive meaning making endeavors, including making claims to historical truth and political order. The aim is not to publish new critical editions or annotated translations of these texts, but rather to push their understanding beyond mere positivist assumptions of originality and veracity, and thus to enable an entirely new and genuine assessment of the historical value of their inter-subjectivities.

This obviously cannot be undertaken as a comprehensive exercise for all the texts in the corpus. As the different papers in this special journal issue make clear, a selection of cases has been made, defined by pragmatic considerations of available material and expertise as well as by certain quantitative and qualitative criteria. The latter are informed by concerns both for the cases' centrality in as well as their representativity for the full corpus, and for their complementarity within the selection of MMS-II case studies as well as with ongoing and extant research. As a result, the textual traditions that are currently being studied in the context of MMS-II are those of al-ʿAynī, Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn ʿArabshāh, Ibn Taghribirdī and al-Biqāʿī, representing five distinct textual traditions that gave shape to one third of the entire corpus (27 texts).

Methodologically, these case studies of discrete sets of texts are informed by research approaches, insights, and tools developed within the overlapping contexts of New Historicism,⁴¹ narratology,⁴² and social semiotics.⁴³ Informed by

⁴¹Very broadly considered here as a combined interest in the textuality of history and the historicity of texts, thus necessitating the thorough contextualization of historiographical practice (see, e.g., Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, eds., *Practicing New Historicism* [Chicago, 2000]); for the value of contextualization in understandings of texts from late medieval Egypt and Syria, see also Hirschler, *Authors as Actors*.

⁴²The study of narrative structures which inform the compilation and organization of texts (see, e.g., Sandra Heinen and Roy Sommer, *Narratology in the Age of Cross-Disciplinary Narrative Research*, *Narratologia: Contributions to Narrative Theory*, vol. 20 [Berlin, 2009]; Stephan Conermann, ed., *Mamluk Historiography Revisited: Narratological Perspectives*, *Mamluk Studies*, vol. 15 [Bonn, 2018]).

⁴³The study of signification, or the awarding of meaning to “signs” (in this case historiographical writings), as a highly dynamic communicative process that is never fixed in form and content, because it is “multimodal” and continuously redefined by specific discursive and social realities,



these approaches and carefully deploying the research tools that they offer, each of these case studies focuses on three main issues:

- A. Establishing and revealing contexts. As the papers in this volume suggest, each case study reconstructs relevant aspects of the socio-economic, cultural, and political dynamics of continuity and change, as well as the author's positioning within them, his engagement with them through social practices such as competition, patronage, kinship or learning, and his texts' relations with these practices.
- B. Analyzing the text. Each case study pursues analyses of textual narratives from the perspective of structures such as story and plot, of textual strategies such as narrative modes, time, narrator, and focalization, and of inter- and para-textual relations.
- C. Unravelling meanings. Each case study defines textual themes, didactic purposes, and layers of meaning, and reconstructs texts of history as communicative acts and social performances in complex discursive contexts of power relations.

Vocabularies: Textualizing Historical Truth and Political Order (ca. 1410–ca. 1470)

There exists, at present, no systematic study of the vocabulary that these texts, their authors, and their audiences employed to construct their historical narratives. The field continues to have to rely on the standard lexicographical tools produced in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁴ After William Popper's technical lists for Ibn Taghrībirdī's chronicles,⁴⁵ nothing comparable has ever been attempted.⁴⁶ The third objective of MMS-II, therefore, consists of engaging in a study of the political vocabularies of Arabic historical works from the period 1410–70. It aims to identify and explain

in particular by the complex power relationships of those involved in the communicative act (see, e.g., Theo Van Leeuwen, *Introducing Social Semiotics* [London, 2005]; Fedwa Malti-Douglas, "Dreams, the Blind, and the Semiotics of the Biographical Notice," *Studia Islamica* 51 [1980]: 137–62).

⁴⁴Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 8 vols. (London, 1863–74).

⁴⁵Popper, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans*.

⁴⁶With noted exceptions, such as Nasser Rabbat, "Representing the Mamluks in Mamluk Historical Writing," in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*, 59–75; Mathieu Eychenne, *Liens personnels, clientèle et réseaux de pouvoir dans le sultanat mamelouk (milieu xiii^e–fin xiv^e siècle)* (Beirut, 2013), 31–55 ("Préambule: Le lien sociale dans les textes: Etude terminologique des sources de l'époque mamelouke"); Jo Van Steenbergen, *Order Out of Chaos: Patronage, Conflict and Mamluk Socio-Political Culture: 1341–1382*, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453*, vol. 65 (Leiden, 2006), 53–100, 127; idem, "'Mamlukisation' between Social Theory and Social Practice," 10–23.



the semantics of signifiers of particular discourses of political order that informed these texts and that, at the same time, materialized through them. This not only makes it possible to take stock of and to better understand these vocabularies. It also informs the preceding second textual objective, allowing us both to fully engage with MMS-II's main research question (the relation between constructions of historical truth and of order in 1410–70) and hypothesis (the Mamluk sultanate as a particular product of that relation).

These vocabularies of order, power, status, distinction, entitlement, and legitimacy (and of “Mamluk-” and “Turkish-”ness), and of their opposites, in the corpus are approached through the prism of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is an interdisciplinary approach that consists of a number of methods and techniques that have been developed in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, intellectual and conceptual history, and political sociology.⁴⁷ The implementation of a CDA-informed approach will be aimed first and foremost at identifying and explaining paradigmatic “chains of signifiers” of political order and at linking these textual political discourses to wider discourses that emerged from contemporary social practice. To pursue this, MMS-II is building a full digital corpus of its 81 texts, in a collaboration with the Open Islamicate Text Initiative (see appendix), and in an open format that allows for annotation and computational analysis on the text platform “Corpus: Texts from Late Medieval Egypt and Syria” (<http://ihodp.ugent.be/corpus>).

Overall, the dialectical interaction between these macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of socio-culturally informed historiographical analyses is expected to enable a much better understanding of the cultural history of political order in fifteenth-century Egypt and Syria. Furthermore, it will enable deeper comprehension of how some of the most informative extant cultural actors (historiographical texts)—rather than any dogmatic structural framework of state and society—participated in the shaping of that order in the social practice of their discursive engagements, narrative constructions, and wider inter-subjectivities.

The Historicization of Fifteenth-Century Authors, Texts, and Contexts

In December 2018 the MMS-II team organized a one-day workshop to present the first set of results from its research. Entitled “Fifteenth-Century Arabic Historiography: Historicizing Authors, Texts, and Contexts,” it was designed to discuss in substantial detail, with the much-appreciated input of five external respondents, the first drafts of the articles that are now being published in this special journal

⁴⁷See Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (3rd edition) (London, 2014); Jan Blommaert, *Discourse: A Critical Introduction* (New York, 2005).



issue.⁴⁸ These articles are part of the aforementioned meso-historical case studies of distinct textual sets that are currently being researched in the context of MMS-II, and that are organized, as mentioned above, around the historiographical repertoires of Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn ‘Arabshāh, al-‘Aynī, Ibn Taghribirdī, and al-Biqā‘ī. In these capacities, each of these articles represent an important first step in these different case studies. They each reconstruct different aspects of the fifteenth-century’s socio-economic, cultural, or political dynamics, and the respective authors’ positioning within these dynamics, their engagement with them through social practices such as competition and patronage, or the studied texts’ relations with these practices.

In the first article, Clément Onimus presents a case study of the narrative elaboration of a historical figure. It is argued that the amir Jakam (d. 1407) was awarded a particular status in fifteenth-century historiography. Although political troublemakers were generally denounced by the authors, Jakam, who took part in most of the internal wars of the reign of Sultan Faraj (1399–1412) and proclaimed himself sultan in Aleppo, enjoyed a *salvatio memoriae* under the pen of the Cairene and Syrian historians. The plurality of historiographers and the various and changing positions in the political and academic fields that they held during their lifetimes created a polyphonic and unstable representation of the past. Among those historians was al-‘Aynī, a client of Jakam. It is argued that, because of his intimacy with the amir, the style and contents of his historical writings changed with the evolution of the political situation from the disgrace of this defeated amir until the triumph of his faction, when one of its members, Barsbāy, became sultan. In fact, despite the polyphony of contemporary historiography, it appears that all historians converged on emphasizing Jakam’s justice, not only because they were integrated into Barsbāy’s network when it reached sovereign authority, but also because of the contrast it offered with representations of Sultan Faraj. This enables engagement with the question of the legitimacy of rebellion against a rightful ruler, and therefore the question of the role of the law in history writing by jurists and judges.

In the second article, Zacharie Mochtari de Pierrepont emphasizes how, through careful and selective historiographical construction, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalanī displayed religious charismatic authority in his main historiographical work, the *Inbā’ al-ghumr bi-abnā’ al-‘umr*. Through the discourse and lexicon related to religious charismatic figures, their followers, places where they gathered, and the institutions and elites to which they were linked, it is argued that Ibn Ḥajar narratively framed a set of behaviors by political, moral, and legal boundar-

⁴⁸These respondents were Frederic Buylaert (UGent), Malika Dekkiche (UAntwerpen), John Meloy (AUB Beirut), Arjan Post (KU Leuven), Eric Vallet (UParis 1–Panthéon-Sorbonne).



ies that were enclosed in the broader narrative representation of a contemporary cultural, social, and political order. As such, religious charisma was one expression of the various types of authorities which could act, compete, and legitimately participate in that order, as part of the changing social and political world of the Cairo Sultanate. The *Inbā'* was thus producing a historical meaning of its own, intimately connected to Ibn Ḥajar's own times and persona.

Mustafa Banister's article historicizes and explains the composition of Ibn 'Arabshāh's *Al-Ta'liḥ al-ṭāhir* (The Pure composition), a panegyric and brief historiographical work apparently written for the sultan Jaqmaq (r. 1438–53) approximately two years after the start of his reign. It is through the *Pure Composition*, a text closely linked to and written shortly after Ibn 'Arabshāh's more well-known biography of Tamerlane (r. 1370–1405), the *ʿAjāʾib al-maqdūr* (The Wonders of destiny), that the author sought to define himself, announce his availability to potential patrons, and perform his literary skills and past expertise. Decades after his death, the ominous specter of Tamerlane loomed large in Ibn 'Arabshāh's writings from the 1440s and helped sharpen the author's understandings of just rule, the dichotomy between good and evil, and the ideal relationship between Muslim subjects and their sultan.

In Rihab Ben Othmen's article, the life trajectory and career of Abū al-Maḥāsin Ibn Taghrībirdī is reconsidered beyond the well-known historiographical narratives about his Turkish background and his achievements as a historian. Informed by a literary-oriented approach, including Greenblatt's notion of "self-fashioning," this article examines how Ibn Taghrībirdī shaped his authorial identity throughout his different historiographical compilations. More specifically, it analyzes the way the author negotiated multiple and contrasting identities and how he cast himself in different roles simultaneously, as a Sunni scholar, a notable Turkish courtier par excellence, and a polished litterateur. By identifying and scrutinizing Ibn Taghrībirdī's self-fashioning strategies this study reveals his multi-layered narrative of identity. It suggests that the multiplicity of authorial voices and identities on display in his writings does not simply suggest a "hybrid identity." Rather, it forms part and parcel of the author's patterns of social advancement in the cosmopolitan and constantly changing social world of the late medieval Cairene court.

The final article, by Kenneth Goudie, aims at two complementary purposes. On the one hand, it provides an overview of how al-Biqā'ī sought to increase the social and cultural capital resources that he had at his disposal to build and expand the social network which underpinned his career in Cairo, a network which crumbled in the aftermath of Sultan Īnāl's death in 1461 and under the weight of three successive controversies (on the use of the Bible in *tafsīr*, the poetry of Ibn al-Fāriḍ, and the theodicy of al-Ghazālī). In doing so, it outlines in more detail al-



Biqā'ī's origins, before moving to discuss the key relationships—particularly his patron-client relationships—he established and how these facilitated his making his way in Cairo. Having done so, it turns to its second purpose: namely, it argues that the descriptive reconstruction of al-Biqā'ī's life and career should be read against the interpretative frameworks employed by the authors of our sources. By recognizing how thoroughly entangled our authors and texts are, and by appreciating their discursive strategies and intentions, we can begin to disentangle the emplotments of al-Biqā'ī's life from its social contexts and develop a more nuanced understanding of both al-Biqā'ī and his social contexts.

Several recurring and interconnecting issues emerge from these five papers, which deserve to be spelled out more explicitly, here and in future explorations, as remarkable determinants in the social and cultural worlds of fifteenth-century historiography. The Āmid campaign of 1433 appears as a fortuitous moment of convergence, when the social world of many of our authors was reshaped through the momentary entanglement of the scholarly and courtly networks of both Egypt and Syria. Launched by Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy (r. 1422–38) against ʿUthmān Beg Qarā Yulūk (r. 1403–35), leader of the Aqqyunlu Turkman configuration in East-Anatolia, the campaign to Āmid was part of the ongoing negotiation of the relationship between the sultan in Cairo and Qarā Yulūk in the Upper Euphrates basin. Its purpose, however, seems to have been twofold. On the one hand, it sought to resituate the Aqqyunlu within the political order of the Cairo Sultanate, after a period of conflict, through Qarā Yulūk's recognition of Barsbāy's ultimate authority. On the other hand, the campaign appears to have been equally, if not more so, about demonstrating Barsbāy's authority in the Syrian urban centers and their hinterlands, the loyalty of whose *nāʾibs* was not always assured. Thus, the campaign force comprised not only the army but also much of the court of Cairo, as well as a substantial number of scholars. The deployment of the full retinue of the sultan to Syria may thus have been intended to signal to potentially rebellious amirs the willingness and ability of Barsbāy to ensure obedience by presenting a paradigmatic and idealized image of the court, wherein scholars and military elites worked together in harmony.⁴⁹

Indeed, all of the historians studied in this volume were present for all or part of this campaign, or sought to take advantage of the opportunities it offered.⁵⁰

⁴⁹See, especially, Patrick Wing, "Submission, Defiance, and the Rules of Politics on the Mamluk Sultanate's Anatolian Frontier," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25, no. 3 (2015): 377–88; see also John Woods, *The Aqqyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*, revised and expanded edition (Salt Lake City, 1999), 52–53; Aḥmad Darrāj, *L'Égypte sous le règne de Barsbay, 825–841/1422–1438* (Damascus, 1961), 373–81.

⁵⁰See also Wing, "Submission, Defiance, and the Rules of Politics," 387–88.



Ibn Ḥajar and al-ʿAynī travelled in their capacities as chief Shafiʿi and Hanafi qadis. They remained behind in Syria when the army advanced northward and travelled together to al-ʿAynī's native ʿAyntāb. There Ibn Ḥajar stayed as al-ʿAynī's houseguest for ʿĪd al-fiṭr before both rejoined the sultan in Aleppo after his return from Āmid. Ibn Taghrībirdī, contrarily, continued with the personal entourage of Barsbāy all the way to Āmid, and his account stresses his involvement in some of the military engagements and diplomatic negotiations between Barsbāy and Qarā Yulūk, and also that it was his father-in-law Sharaf al-Dīn Ashqar who concluded the truce.⁵¹

Al-Biqāʿī, having attached himself to Ibn Ḥajar some two years earlier, accompanied his shaykh and took advantage of their passing by Damascus to inquire about his family history. Furthermore, it was outside of Damascus, in the small village of al-Qābūn al-Taḥṭānī, that Ibn Ḥajar held a literary salon for local scholars; among them was Ibn ʿArabshāh, a client of the shaykh ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī (1379–1438), who used the occasion to introduce himself to Ibn Ḥajar, whom he impressed and with whom he had a lengthy literary discussion. On his return to Cairo, Ibn Ḥajar praised Ibn ʿArabshāh and encouraged his own students to seek him out.

The Āmid campaign thus represents a powerful nexus in the formation of scholarly networks and client-patron relationships, which occurred against the backdrop of the political relations between Barsbāy and Qarā Yulūk and within the context of a profound attempt to assert the ideological—as opposed to the functional—authority of the Cairo Sultanate on the frontier.

The Āmid campaign further demonstrates, as has just been mentioned, that Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (1372–1449) played a pivotal role as a central mediator and broker of relationships and resources between many if not most of our authors. Following the spread of his masterwork, the *Faṭḥ al-bārī*, a commentary on al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* and a highly influential and well-regarded work of hadith studies, Ibn Ḥajar's reputation spread throughout the Islamic world and allowed him to accumulate positions in various institutions of knowledge or justice. In 1423, Sultan Barsbāy named him as chief Shafiʿi qadi, the highest judiciary position in the Sultanate, which he held (with some interruptions) until his death in 1449.⁵²

His personal status and standing in Cairo allowed him to weave an impressive web of acquaintances, friendships, and clients that served his knowledge, reputa-

⁵¹Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1992), 14:220–21.

⁵²See R. Kevin Jacques, *Ibn Hajar, Makers of Islamic Civilization* (London, 2010); Joel Blecher, “Ḥadīth Commentary in the Presence of Patrons, Students and Rivals: Ibn Ḥajar,” *Oriens* 41, nos. 3–4 (2013): 261–87; idem, *Said the Prophet of God: Hadith Commentary across a Millennium* (Oakland, 2018), 49–139.



tion, and self-promotion. This also helped him acquire the means to appear as one of the main brokers in the scholarly environment of Cairo. Ibn Ḥajar was thus a crucial node in the respective networks of many of the authors examined in the MMS-II project. He was at the same time an acquaintance of al-Maqrizī and a personal friend of both Ibn Qāḍī Shuḥbah and Najm al-Dīn Ibn Ḥijjī. He had numerous contacts among the scholars of Syria and trained many who came to Cairo, including al-Biqāʿī, one of his very close students. Ibn Ḥajar played a formative role not only in al-Biqāʿī's education but also in the development of his career. It was through Ibn Ḥajar's support that al-Biqāʿī received his first appointment to teach Sultan Jaqmaq, a position which allowed him to develop relationships with the political elite. Ibn Ḥajar was also a peer and colleague of two important patrons of Ibn ʿArabshāh: ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī and Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn al-Bārizī. There is little to suggest, however, that Ibn ʿArabshāh was successful in building a long-lasting relationship with Ibn Ḥajar, though Ibn ʿArabshāh's son did maintain a correspondence with him. One of Ibn Ḥajar's judiciary colleagues, al-ʿAynī, chief Hanafī qadi of Cairo, stood for a period as an academic and social rival, and their scathing competition seemed at some point to impede the functioning of the legal system. Yet, their later reconciliation, if not friendship, when both scholars ranked highly in the social hierarchy of the Cairo sultanate, also underlines the way that relationships evolve over time.⁵³

The Āmid Campaign also highlights the close links that many historians fostered with the court. These links with the court are perhaps best exemplified through panegyric. The cultural practice of composing panegyric literature, whether in the form of poetry or royal biography, is one that many of our fifteenth-century historians engaged in and that was linked closely to patronage practices. Peter Holt described such works as “literary offerings” written often on the occasion of a new ruler's accession to power and presented as a gift in the form of a book.⁵⁴ Indeed, panegyric as a genre was in the background of many of the historiographical activities of several of our authors: al-ʿAynī wrote at least two works of sultanic biography: *Al-Sayf al-muḥannad* for al-Muʿayyad Shaykh (r. 1412–21) and *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir* for al-Zāhir Ṭaṭar (r. 1421); Ibn ʿArabshāh penned his *Taʿlīf al-ṭāhir* for al-Zāhir Jaqmaq (or a member of his court); Ibn Taghrībirdī began writing his dynastic history of Egypt, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah*, for a son and heir of Jaqmaq (r. 1453); while al-Biqāʿī similarly read an unnamed panegyric work for Aḥmad ibn Īnāl (r. 1461). Though it is less clear if Ibn Ḥajar composed such works

⁵³On the latter relationship with al-ʿAynī, and also with al-Maqrizī, see also Broadbridge, “Academic Rivalry and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt.”

⁵⁴Peter M. Holt, “Literary Offerings: A Genre of Courtly Literature,” in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, 1998), 3–16.



for the sultans of his career—Shaykh, Barsbāy, or Jaqmaq—we do know that he wrote a number of *qaṣīdahs*, at least one praising one of his patrons, the Abbasid caliph al-Mu‘taḍid II (r. 1414–41), on the occasion of the Āmid campaign.⁵⁵

In the case of the first four authors, we have to do with examples of writers involved with (or trying to gain access to) the court of the ruler. Their panegyric literary endeavors, engaging in a communicative act among the courtly elite, represented a strategy to consolidate (or acquire) positions and accrue cultural and symbolic capital through which to fuel the attainment of social and professional mobility. In the cases of al-‘Aynī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and al-Biqā‘ī, these works were also discussed or performed at the court and allegedly even read to their intended recipients. While conventional wisdom dictates that such works were often written or commissioned primarily to furnish a new sovereign with legitimacy for his reign, the MMS-II project is interested in moving beyond this now somewhat antiquated (though still relevant) notion to uncover *other* political, economic, or socio-cultural factors which led to their composition. Remaining attuned to the panegyric dimension of some of our works facilitates an investigation of the authorial voices of our historians as well as the agency of both author and text within the social world for which it was intended—thereby demonstrating the practical, performative functionality of historiography in a late medieval Islamic courtly setting.⁵⁶

Yet panegyric was not the only context within which historians operated, and it would be remiss to overlook the importance of their intellectual environment, and especially how that environment was defined in many ways by traditionalism. Traditionalism as a movement of Islamic theological thought and ethico-legal practice informed the world of norms, knowledge practices, and authorities of many of our authors, mostly as its adherents, sometimes as its opponents. This obviously had some impact on their historical imagination and history writing. By the fifteenth century traditionalism had come to stand for a longstanding and dominant intellectual trend that was most often defined in opposition to speculative theology (*kalām*), particularly in its Ash‘arī rationalist form. In line with the occasional identification of traditionalism’s adherents as the *ahl al-ḥadīth*, it maintains above all that greatest formal authority should be awarded to Qurānic scripture and, especially, the Prophetic model in practices of Islamic knowledge construction and, more specifically, theological and legal interpretation. As an umbrella term that joined together diverse groups, movements, and schools of thought, traditionalism actually managed to build itself an increasingly popular

⁵⁵ Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Jawāhir wa-al-durar fī tarjamat Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Ḥajar*, ed. I. ‘Abd al-Majīd (Beirut, 1999), 1:197.

⁵⁶ On the constitutive link between performative acts and late medieval courts, see Mauder, *In the Sultan’s Salon*.



identity claim, implying also referential reverence of the *salaf al-ṣāliḥ*, the first generations of Muslims. In the fifteenth century traditionalism had even come to occupy a decisive space in the cultural, religious, social, institutional, and political lives of the Cairo Sultanate, across the four communities of the Sunni schools of jurisprudence.⁵⁷

To date it is still hard to grasp the full contours and consequences of traditionalism in social and cultural reality. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, just like the Shafi'i and Hanafi chief judges and hadith specialists Ibn Ḥajar and al-ʿAynī, all of the historians examined in this special journal issue were also somehow involved in *fiqh* and hadith studies (with the notable exception, perhaps, of Ibn Taghrībirdī). Such specialization implied a particular cultural background and mind-set and a specific apprehension for and understanding of legal subtleties and methodologies, deeply anchored in forms of education and knowledge transmission that by this late medieval period were strongly marked by traditionalist practices and ideas, or at least by debates on the centrality of such practices and ideas. When considering the narrative construction of the authors' historiographical works, there is little doubt therefore that these productions were in some ways framed by their own background and positionality in religious studies. Traditionalism, its opposite Ash'arism, and, especially, the continuum of grey zones that connected the extremes of both intellectual visions thus informed the theoretical and epistemological framework in which the authors grew up and of which they were among the heirs, the keepers, and the authorities. This framework was directly linked to the changing social and political order they narrated, participated in, and shaped. As such, references to theological debates, questions of law—including the ambiguous legality of usurpation or rebellion, as demonstrated in the historiographical trajectory of Amir Jakam's case—and the display of the legal system, with its hierarchies and different actors, appear as important topics in all of their works of history.

Between the twin poles of proximity to the court and the intellectual context of traditionalism and its alternatives, our historians furthermore always wrote their texts of history as an articulation of their and their audiences' sense of belonging, that is, of their individual and collective identities. As suggested in different historiographical narratives of authorial selves or others, these identities were composite and fluid entities that were constructed and expressed through a set of shared cultural, social, and political references. Despite the multiplicity and entanglement of these entities, they were well-defined and quite distinct in each of the authors' writings. The Sunni-Islamic identity, as a fundamental and

⁵⁷See, e.g., G. Makdisi, "Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History I," *Studia Islamica* 17 (1962): 37–80; L. Holtzman, *Anthropomorphism in Islam: the Challenge of Traditionalism (700–1350)* (Edinburgh, 2018).



framing narrative, particularly informed the historical perception and practice of the bulk of our authors, regardless of their social or cultural background. More specifically, this fundamental and encompassing category of belonging, being articulated around a set of legal norms and moral-religious subtleties, steeped many historical narratives with the above-mentioned traditionalist outlook. The Turkish martial identity appears as a less encompassing and engaging category that was more exclusively reserved for authors who were related to the military, like Ibn Taghribirdi. Referring to a certain notion of elite-ness closely connected to the bounding idea of Turkish-ness, this category was defined through distinctive markers that included specific military apparel and horsemanship as well as warfare practices, and cultural issues of personal names and linguistic skills. Among other textually performed identities is the one invoking the litterateur or the “*adīb*.” Literary performances achieved by our authors, through varying uses of ornate prose and poetry quotations in their writings, connect with this more specific category of the “cultural intelligentsia.”⁵⁸

Juggling multiple identities and altering engagements with various categories of belonging were distinctive features of all texts examined in this special issue, most notably perhaps those by Ibn ‘Arabshāh (d. 1450) and his later student Ibn Taghribirdi. The latter’s shifting and manifold engagements bring to the forefront the subjectivities lying behind our texts. This also evinces how altering life experiences and patterns of social advancements left their impact on processes of textual construction. Ibn ‘Arabshāh’s experience, being kidnapped by Temür then relocated at the various courts of Transoxiana and Asia Minor, represents one of the more extreme examples, materializing in a diverse corpus of texts that defies simple classification and interpretation. More generally, this construction and articulation of identities in different historiographical compilations was achieved through a narrative process, whose evolving dynamics manifested in the authors’ varying self-positioning, both in relation to particular events or characters and to intellectual and normative expectations. Being essentially narrative, these categories of belonging came to be performed and negotiated textually in reference to broader cultural, social, and political stories. The stories that allowed for specific modes of telling and authorial positioning included large ones, such as that of the rebellion of the amir Jakam in 1406–7 or of the accession and empowerment of Sultan Jaqmaq in 1438, more subtle ones, such as those involving the performance of religious charismatic authority, and more personal ones, such as the life experiences of our authors. Indeed, as is demonstrated in all of the articles in this volume, in order to give a particular sense to their life-experiences

⁵⁸See, e.g., G. Van den Bossche, “The Past, Panegyric, and the Performance of Penmanship: Sultanic Biography and Social Practice in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria” (Ph.D. diss., Universiteit Gent, 2019).



and to their places in the world, authors like Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn ‘Arabshāh, al-‘Aynī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and al-Biqā‘ī tended to connect their personal tales with other encompassing and authoritative socio-political stories. Ibn Taghrībirdī’s multi-layered narrative was specifically grounded in a high courtly context, whereas that of Ibn Ḥajar also nurtured a particular world of religious authorities. As for al-Biqā‘ī, his interpretation of the trials and hardships he underwent was set in an eschatological context invoking divine immanence and the triumph of the Muslim community after tribulations. All stories were therefore not only told in a multiplicity of historiographical voices, but also made meaningful by these authors in ways that connected to their life experiences as well as to the categories of belonging to which they and their audiences felt compelled to appeal.



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Appendix: Survey of Fifteenth-Century Arabic Authors and Their History Writings (ca. 1410–70)

Geo-politically and generationally differentiated. (+ OpenITI unique text identifiers)

Cairo-Centered

Generation 1 (Born ca. Pre-1390)

A: *al-Maqrizī, Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-‘Ubaydī* (1365–1442, Cairo)

1. Kitāb al-muqaffā al-kabīr (0845Maqrizi.Muqaffa)
2. Al-Mawā‘iz wa-al-i‘tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār (0845Maqrizi.Mawaciz)
3. Al-Sulūk li-ma‘rifat duwal al-mulūk (0845Maqrizi.Suluk)
4. Shudhūr al-‘uqūd fī dhikr al-nuqūd (0845Maqrizi.ShudhurCuqud)
5. Durar al-‘uqūd al-farīdah fī tarājim al-‘ayān al-mufīdah (0845Maqrizi.DurarCuqud)
6. Al-Dhahab al-masbūk fī dhikr man ḥajja min al-khulafā’ wa-al-mulūk (0845Maqrizi.DhahabMasbuk)
7. Al-Bayān wa-al-i‘rāb ‘ammā bi-arḍ Miṣr min al-‘rāb (0845Maqrizi.Bayan)
8. Itti‘āz al-ḥunafā’ bi-akhbār al-a‘immah al-Fāṭimīyīn al-khulafā’ (0845Maqrizi.IqazHunafa)
9. Al-Ilmām bi-akhbār man bi-arḍ al-Ḥabashah min mulūk al-Islām (0845Maqrizi.Ilmam)
10. Al-Awzān wa-al-akyāl al-shar‘īyah (0845Maqrizi.AwzanWaAkyal)
11. Al-Ḍaw‘ al-sārī fī ma‘rifat khabar Tamīm al-Dārī (0845Maqrizi.DuSari)

B: *al-Aynī, Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad* (1361–1451, Cairo)

12. ‘Iqd al-jumān fī tāriḫ ahl al-zamān (0855BadrDinCayni.CiqdJuman)
13. Tāriḫ al-Badr fī awṣāf ahl al-‘aṣr (0855BadrDinCayni.TarikhAlbadr)
14. Al-Jawharah al-sanīyah fī tāriḫ al-dawlah al-Mu‘ayyadīyah (0855BadrDinCayni.JawharaSaniyya)
15. Al-Sayf al-muhannad fī sirat al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad (0855BadrDinCayni.SayfMuhannad)



16. Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fi sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir
(0855BadrDinCayni.RawdZahir)

C: Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Kinānī (1372–1449, Cairo)

17. Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-anbāʾ al-ʿumr (0852IbnHajarCasqalani.InbaGhumr)
18. Rafʿ al-iṣr ʿan quḍāt Miṣr (0852IbnHajarCasqalani.Rafcisr)
19. Al-Durar al-kāminah fi aʿyān al-miʾah al-thāminah
(0852IbnHajarCasqalani.DurarKamina)
20. Dhayl al-durar al-kāminah fi aʿyān al-miʾah al-thāminah
(0852IbnHajarCasqalani.DhaylDurar)
21. Dīwān Ibn Ḥajar (0852IbnHajarCasqalani.Diwan)
22. Al-Jawāb al-jalīl ʿan ḥukm balad al-Khalīl
(0852IbnHajarCasqalani.JawabJalil)
23. Badhl al-māʿūn fi faḍl al-tāʿūn (0852IbnHajarCasqalani.Badhl)

D: Ibn ʿArabshāh, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh (1389–1450, Damascus, Cairo)

24. Al-Taʿlif al-tāhir fi shiyam al-Malik al-Zāhir al-qāʾim bi-nuṣrat al-ḥaqq
Abī Saʿīd Jaqmaq (0854IbnCarabshah.TalifTahir)
25. ʿAjāʾib al-maḥdūr fi nawāʾib Timūr (title variations)
(0854IbnCarabshah.CajaibMaqdur)
26. Fākihāt al-khulafāʾ wa-mufākāhāt al-zurafāʾ
(0854IbnCarabshah.FakihatKhulafa)

E: Ibn Nāhiḍ, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Juhanī al-Kurdī (1356–1438, Aleppo, Damascus, Cairo)

27. Sīrat al-Malik al-Muʾayyad (0841IbnNahid.SiraShaykhiya)

F: al-Qalqashandī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Fazārī (1355–1418, Cairo)

28. Qalāʾid al-jumān fi al-taʿrif bi-qabāʾil ʿArab al-zamān
(0821Qalqashandi.QalaidJuman)
29. Nihāyat al-arab fi maʿrifat qabāʾil al-ʿArab
(0821Qalqashandi.NihayaArab)
30. Maʾāthir al-ināfah fi maʿālim al-khilāfah (0821Qalqashandi.Maathir)



31. *Ḍawʿ al-ṣubḥ al-musfir wa-janá al-dawḥ al-muthmir*
(0821Qalqashandi.DawSubhMusfir)

G: *Ibn H̄ijjah al-Ḥamawī, Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn ʿAlī (1366–1434, Hama, Cairo)*

32. *Qahwat al-inshāʾ* (0837CaliIbnHijjaHamawi.QahwatInsha)

H: *Anonymous (? , Cairo)*

33. *Muzīl al-ḥaṣr fī mukātabāt ahl al-ʿaṣr* (800Anonymous.MuzilHasr)

Generation 2 (Born ca. Post-1390)

A: *Ibn Taghribirdī, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf al-Atābakī (1411–70, Cairo)*

34. *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.NujumZahira)
35. *Mawrid al-laṭāfah fī man waliya al-salṭanah wa-al-khilāfah*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.MawridLatafa)
36. *Ḥawādith al-duhūr fī madá al-ayyām wa-al-shuhūr*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.HawadithDahriya)
37. *Al-Dalīl al-shāfi ʿalá al-manhal al-ṣāfi* (0874IbnTaghribirdi.DalilShafi)
38. *Al-Baḥr al-zākhīr fī ʿilm al-awwal wa-al-ākhir*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.CilmZakhir)
39. *Al-Manhal al-ṣāfi wa-al-mustawfá baʿda al-wāfi*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.ManhalSafi)
40. *Al-Kawākib al-bāhirah min al-nujūm al-zāhirah*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.KawakibBahira)
41. *Manshaʾ al-laṭāfah fī dhikr man waliya al-khilāfah*
(0874IbnTaghribirdi.ManshaLatafa)

B: *al-Zāhirī, Ghars al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn (d. 1468, Cairo)*

42. *Zubdat kashf al-mamālik fī bayān al-ṭuruq wa-al-masālik*
(0872Zahiri.ZubdatKashf)

C: *al-Biqāʿī, Burhān al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan Ibrāhīm ibn ʿUmar (1406–80, Damascus, Cairo)*

43. *Izhār al-ʿaṣr li-asrār ahl al-ʿaṣr* (0885Biqaci.IzharCasr)



44. ‘Unwān al-‘unwān bi-tajrīd asmā’ al-shuyūkh wa-ba‘ḍ al-talāmīdhah wa-al-aqrān (0885Biqaci.Cunwan)
45. Al-‘lām bi-sann al-hijrah ilā al-Shām (0885Biqaci.Iclam)
46. ‘Unwān al-zamān fī tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-al-aqrān (0885Biqaci.CunwanZaman)

D: *Ibn Quṭlūbughā, Zayn al-Dīn al-Qāsim ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥanafī (1399–1474, Cairo)*

47. Tāj al-tarājim fī ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanafīyah (0879IbnQutlubugha.TajTarajim)
48. Talkhīṣ tāj al-tarājim fī ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanafīyah (0879IbnQutlubugha.TalkhisTaj)

E: *al-Banbī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Muḥyawī (1386–1474, Cairo)*

49. Al-‘Uqūd al-durriyah fī al-umarā’ al-Miṣriyah (0865Banbi.CuqudDurriya)

F: *Ibn Bahādur, Kamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Mu’minī (d. 1473, Cairo?)*

50. Kitāb futūḥ al-naṣr fī tārikh mulūk Maṣr (0878IbnBahadur.FutuhNasr)

G: *al-Maqdisī/al-Qudsī, Muḥibb al-Dīn Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Khalīl al-Qāhirī al-Shāfi‘ī (1416–83, Cairo)*

51. Badhl al-naṣā’ih al-shar‘īyah fīmā ‘alā al-sulṭān wa-wulāt al-umūr wa-sā’ir al-ra’īyah (0888Qudsi.Badhl)

H: *al-Sahmāwī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1463, Cairo)*

52. Al-Ṭaghṛ al-bāsim fī ṣinā‘at al-kātib wa-al-kātim (0868Sahmawi.ThaghṛBasim)
53. Al-‘Urf al-nāsim min al-ṭaghṛ al-bāsim (0868Sahmawi.UrfNasim)

I: *al-Qalqashandī, Najm al-Dīn Ibn Abī Ghuddah Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Fazārī (1395–1471, Cairo)*

54. Qalā’id al-jumān fī muṣṭalaḥ mukātabāt ahl al-zamān (0876Qalqashandi.QalaidJuman)
55. Nihāyat al-arab fī ma’rifat ansāb al-‘Arab (0876Qalqashandi.Nihayah)

J: *al-Ghazzī, Raḍī al-Dīn Abū al-Barakāt Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (1408–60, Damascus, Cairo)*



56. Bahajāt al-nāzirīn fī tarājīm muta'akhhirī al-Shāfi'iyah
(0864RadiGhazzi.BahjatNazirin)
57. Sīrat Jaqmaq (0864RadiGhazzi.SiratJaqmaq)

K: Ibn Ḥatlab al-Ghazzī, 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh (al-Hanafī Ibn al-Hanbalī?) (d. 1455, Cairo?)

58. Al-Murūj al-zakīyah fī tawshiyat al-durūj al-khiṭābiyah
(0859IbnHatlabGhazzi.MurujZakiyya)

Syria-Centered:

Generation 1 (Born ca. Pre-1390)

A: Ibn Buḥtur, Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyā al-Tanūkhī (d. 1436, al-Gharb/Beirut)

59. Tārīkh Bayrūt: wa-huwa akhbār al-salaf min dhurrīyat Buḥtur ibn 'Alī amīr al-gharb bi-Bayrūt (0840IbnBuhtur.TarikhBayrut)

B: Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (1377–1448, Damascus)

60. Tārīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah (dhayl muṭawwal)
(0851IbnQadiShuhba.TarikhIbnQadiShuhba)
61. Al-I'lām bi-tārīkh ahl al-Islām
(al-tārīkh al-kabīr) (0851IbnQadiShuhba.TarikhKabir)

C: Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣiriyyah, 'Alā' al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Jibrīnī al-Shāfi'ī (1372–1439, Aleppo, Tripoli)

62. Al-Durr al-muntakhab fī takmilat tārīkh Ḥalab
(0843IbnKhatibNasiriya.DurrMuntakhab)

D: al-Bā'ūnī, Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad, al-Shāfi'ī al-Dimashqī (1374–1466, Damascus)

63. Tuḥfat al-shurafā' fī tārīkh al-khulafā' (Farā'id al-sulūk fī tārīkh al-khulafā' wa-al-mulūk) (0871Bacuni.Tuhfah)

Generation 2 (Born ca. Post-1390)

A: Ibn al-Shihnah, Muḥibb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (1402–85, Aleppo, Cairo)

64. Nuzhat al-nawāzir fī rawḍ al-manāzir (0890IbnShihna.NuzhatNawazir)



B: Ibn Khaṭīb al-Nāṣirīyah, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad (d. 1456, Aleppo?)

65. Mukhtaṣar al-durr al-muntakhab fī takmilat tāriḫ Ḥalab
(0860IbnKhatibNasiriya.MukhtasarDurrMuntakhab)

C: Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr (1400–70, Damascus)

66. Al-Durr al-thamīn fī manāqib Nūr al-Dīn
(0874QadiShuhbah.ManaqibNur)

D: Anonymous

67. Ḥawliyat Dimashqīyah 834–39 (0800Anonymous.Hawliyat)

Mecca-Centered**Generation 1 (Born ca. Pre-1390)****A: al-Fāsī, Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-Ṭayyib Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Makkī (1373–1429, Mecca)**

68. Shifā’ al-gharām bi-akhbār al-balad al-ḥarām
(0832AbuTayyibFasi.ShifaGharam)
69. Al-‘Iqd al-thamīn fī tāriḫ al-balad al-amīn
(0832AbuTayyibFasi.CiqdThamin)
70. Al-Zuhūr al-muqtaṭafah min tāriḫ Makkah al-musharrafah
(0832AbuTayyibFasi.ZuhurMuqtatafa)
71. Al-Muqni’ min akhbār al-mulūk wa-al-khulafā’ wa-wulāt Makkah al-shurafā’ (0832AbuTayyibFasi.Muqnic)
72. Muntakhab taḥṣīl al-marām min akhbār al-balad al-ḥarām
(0832AbuTayyibFasi.MuntakhabTahsilMaram)
73. Tuḥfat al-kirām bi-akhbār al-balad al-ḥarām
(0832AbuTayyibFasi.TuhfatKiram)

B: al-Shaybī, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Qurashī al-‘Abdarī (d. 1433, Mecca)

74. Al-Sharaf al-a’lá fī dhikr qubūr al-Mu’allā (0833Shaybi.Sharaf)

C: al-Ṣāghānī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Ḍiyā’ al-‘Umarī al-Qurashī (d. 1450)

75. Al-Baḥr al-ʿamīq fī manāsik al-muʿtamir wa-al-ḥājj ilā al-bayt al-ʿatīq (Tārikh Makkah wa-al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah wa-al-qabr al-sharīf) (0854Saghani.BahrCamiq)

Generation 2 (Born ca. Post-1390)

A: Ibn Fahd, Najm al-Dīn ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Makkī (1409–80, Mecca)

76. Ithāf al-warā bi-akhbār Umm al-Qurā (0885IbnFahd.IthafWara)
77. Al-Durr al-kamīn bi-dhayl al-ʿiqd al-thamīn fī tārikh al-balad al-amīn (0885IbnFahd.DurrKamin)
78. Muʿjam al-shuyūkh (0885IbnFahd.MucjamShuyukh)
79. Al-Tabyīn fī tarājim al-Ṭabariyīn (0885IbnFahd.Tabyin)
80. Al-Lubāb fī al-alqāb (0885IbnFahd.Lubab)

B: Al-Ḥusaynī, Tāj al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Muḥammad (d. 1470, Mecca)

81. Al-Rawḍ al-mugharras fī faḍāʾil al-Bayt al-Muqaddas (0875Husayni.RawdMugharras)

