

# **The Mamluk Historians and their Accounts on the Economy of Egypt for the Period of 872-922H/1468-1517AD**

*\*Wan Kamal Mujani*

## **Abstract**

Economics is said to contribute to history itself, to an understanding of the evolution of human societies in the past. A discussion concerning economic history necessarily draws on economic theory since economic history has been well defined as a part of history which requires certain knowledge of economics for its full understanding. Research on economic history also depends on data related to the chosen period. Needless to say, the discussion of economic history in the medieval period encounters difficulties such as the lack of relevant data on the economy. One of the reasons for this is that most of the historians during this period did not give a complete description of the economic situation. All data on economics merely appeared in works on political history and biographies. Information on trade and commerce, currency and goods pricing were not perfectly narrated. Therefore, this article endeavours to examine the Mamluk historians and their narratives on the economy of Egypt for the period of 872-922H/1468-1517AD. Even though, the Mamluk historians give scattered and incomplete information on economy, but the combination of all of these data enlighten us on a general opinion about the economy of Egypt and its situation during the period under review.

**Keywords:** Mamluk, historian, historiography, Economy, Egypt

---

\*Department of Arabic and Islamic Civilization,  
National University, Malaysia

## **Introduction**

The aim of this article is to discuss about the Mamluk historians and their accounts on the economy of Egypt for the period of 872-922H/1468-1517AD. In order to elaborate these matters, a sketch of biography of each Mamluk historians will be given, and this is then followed by a discussion of the economic data conveyed by them.

### **Ibn Duqmaq (750-809AH/1349-1407AD)**

Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Aydamur b. Duqmaq, known as Ibn Duqmaq, was a famous Egyptian scholar not only of history but also of *adab* and *fiqh*. Not much is known about his life except that his great grandfather was one of the amirs in the reign of Sultan Muhammad Qalawun (al-Sakhawi 1935, 1: 145). Ibn Duqmaq was an honest historian and did not criticize or disclose the weaknesses of others in his writing. He served in the Mamluk administration at Dimyat for a time. Ibn Duqmaq's works cover various fields, especially in history, and these have been referred to by later historians such as Badr al-Din al-'Ayni and Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani. Among his historical works are *al-Jawhar al-Thamin fi Sirat al-Khulafa' wa al-Salatin*, *'Iqd al-Jawahir fi Sirat al-Malik al-Zahir Barquq*, *Nuzhat al-Anam fi Tarikh al-Islam* and *al-Intisar li Wasitat 'Iqd al-Amsar* (Pedersen 1971, 3: 756).

*al-Jawhar al-Thamin fi Sirat al-Khulafa' wa al-Salatin* relates to this article and deals with the history of Egypt until 808AH/1405AD. It is a continuation of *Nuzhat al-Anam fi Tarikh al-Islam* which ends the discussion in year 779AH/1377AD. Ibn Duqmaq wrote *al-Jawhar al-Thamin* after Sultan Barquq encouraged him to continue *Nuzhat al-Anam*. This fact shows that rulers sometimes played an important role in the development of historiography. *al-Jawhar al-Thamin* is very important because it provides valuable data on the price of staple crops and food. The fluctuation of prices reflects the economic situation in the early part of the Circassian Mamluk period (Ibn Duqmaq 1982, 275,360).

### **al-Maqrizi (766-845AH/1364-1442AD)**

Taqi al-Din Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Ali b. 'Abd al-Qadir, known as al-Maqrizi, was born in Cairo in 766AH/1364AD. His family came from Ba'labak which is now situated in Lebanon. They migrated to Egypt

before the reign of Sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban (764-778AH/1363-1377AD), the third last of the Turkish Mamluk rulers. al-Maqrizi was brought up in a well known scholarly family. His paternal grandfather, 'Abd al-Qadir (d. 733AH/1332AD) was a *muhaddith* and an eminent savant in the *fiqh* of the Hanbali sect. His maternal grandfather, al-Shaykh Shams al-Din Muhammad (d. 776AH/1375AD) was a jurist at *Dar al-'Adl* in 765AH/1364AD and a teacher of the *fiqh* of the Hanafi sect at the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in 773AH/1373AD. Meanwhile, al-Maqrizi's father, 'Ali, served in various posts in the judiciary and also as a *katib Diwan al-Insha'* (a secretary in the chancery) (al-Maqrizi 1995, 35-40).

Besides his early education from members of his family, al-Maqrizi studied at the University of al-Azhar and was taught various subjects, such as *fiqh*, *hadith*, *usul al-din*, *adab*, *'ilm al-qira'at*, Arabic and mathematics by prominent Egyptian scholars. Among his masters were al-Burhan al-Amidi, Abu Ishaq al-Tanukhi, Zayn al-Din al-'Iraqi, Ibn Abi al-Majd and Siraj al-Din al-Bulqini. Nevertheless, al-Maqrizi's main teacher, who greatly influenced his ideas and way of historical writing, was 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khaldun. This was conceded by al-Maqrizi himself when he said that he was impressed by Ibn Khaldun and his book, *al-'Ibar wa Diwan al-Mubtada' wa al-Khabar* (al-Jalili 1966, 235).

al-Maqrizi was appointed to a variety of posts, involving administrative and scholarly functions, since he possessed wide knowledge and great skill. Among the posts that he held in Egypt were *katib Diwan al-Insha'*, Shafi'ite *qadi*, chief administrator at the Mosque of al-Hakim al-Fatimi, professor of *hadith* in *Madrasa al-Mu'ayyadiyya*, preacher at the Mosque of 'Amr b. al-'As and *muhtasib* (market inspector) of Cairo and Lower Egypt (Allouche 1994, 3). When he was in Syria (1408-1418AD), he served as a professor of *hadith* at *Dar al-Hadith al-Ashrafiyya*, as chief financial administrator of the Kalansiyya and administrator of *waqf* at the great *Nuri* hospital. In the reign of Sultan al-Nasir Faraj, al-Maqrizi was offered the post of *qadi* of Damascus, but he refused. During his stay in Mecca, he was appointed professor of *hadith* at *Masjid al-Haram*. Nevertheless, after the 820s, he never held any position and devoted himself to historical writing. He took this decision as he was dissatisfied with the Mamluk's official policy.

al-Maqrizi (1956, 1: 6) was the most famous Egyptian historian in the period of the Circassian Mamluks. His credibility in the field of history can be seen from his works and his distinguished pupils such as Abu al-Mahasin Yusuf b. Taghri Birdi. He wrote in a frank manner and not

for the sake of money. Although he had a close relationship with Sultan Barquq, Sultan al-Nasir Faraj, Amir Yashbak al-Dawadar and Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaykh, this did not prevent him from criticising the attitudes and policies of the Circassian Mamluk rulers. His comments can be found in *Ighathat al-Umma*, *al-Khitat* and *al-Suluk*. In fact he stood out as the most vocal critic of Circassian economic policy.

al-Maqrizi wrote more than one hundred works, including books, short monographs and encyclopaedia. Most of his works deal with history and can be classified into three areas namely, general Islamic history, the history of Egypt, and *sira nabawiyya*. The works that relate to the economy of the Circassian Mamluks for the period before 872AH/1468AD are *Ighathat al-Umma bi Kashf al-Ghumma*, *al-Mawa'iz wa al-'tibar fi Dhikr al-Khitat wa al-Athar* and *al-Suluk li Ma'rifat Duwal al-Muluk*. These three books show his depth of interest in the economy and they were based on his extensive knowledge and broad experience during his service for the Mamluk administration, especially when he was a *muhtasib*, because this post exposed him to the current situation at that particular time. These works also demonstrate his concern with the social history of Egypt and its people who always faced difficulties in their lives (Inan 1991, 86-7).

These books are very important because they contain information about the roots of economic decline in the early period of the Circassian Mamluks. Thus they assist in providing an understanding of the Circassian Mamluks' economic situation from 872AH/1468AD till 922AH/1517AD, especially in relation to agriculture, trade, money, currency, prices, natural disasters, government policies, and so on.

al-Maqrizi wrote *Ighathat al-Umma bi Kashf al-Ghumma* based on the economic crisis in Egypt in 806AH/1403AD. It was completed at the end of that crisis in Muharram 808AH/July 1405AD. The main purpose of al-Maqrizi in composing this book was to describe the factors which led to the economic crisis and how this catastrophe influenced the people at that particular time. According to al-Maqrizi, maladministration, the heavy taxation of the peasantry by fief holders and the unorthodox financial practices of the rulers were the main factors in this crisis. Bribery had resulted in unqualified persons being appointed as higher officials such as *muhtasibs*. Agricultural production had been decreasing since the cost of plantation activities such as ploughing, sowing and harvesting had increased. Consequently, the majority of the land remained uncultivated. The widespread circulation of copper *fulus* (copper coins) following the

cessation of the minting of silver coins in Egypt caused the *ghala'* (high prices). This phenomenon had been affecting the society and the economy. In his book, al-Maqrizi mentions in detail the currency, exchange rates, food prices and the measures which had been taken at that time (Allouche 1994, 1-24). This information helps to provide an understanding of economic conditions in the early part of the Circassian Mamluk period and the situation after 872AH/1468AD.

*al-Mawa'iz wa al-I'tibar fi Dhikr al-Khitat wa al-Athar* which was composed between 818AH/1415AD and 824AH/1424AD is the most famous of al-Maqrizi's works. This treatise, which is commonly referred to as *Khitat*, deals with the topography of some cities in Egypt in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. al-Maqrizi (1995, 64) discusses not only the geographical history of those cities but combines this material with detailed data on social, economic and politic matters. This method of writing is more profound than that found in earlier treatises such as that of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam (d. 257AH/870AD), al-Musabbihi (d. 420AH/1029AD) and Ibn al-Tuwayr (d. 617AH/1220AD). Meanwhile, the later writers on *Khitat*, such as 'Abd al-Rahman b. Hasan al-Jabarti (d. 1237AH/1822AD) and 'Ali Mubarak (d. 1311AH/1893AD), do not contribute new information. They only extract material from and summarise the book.

*al-Mawa'iz wa al-I'tibar fi Dhikr al-Khitat wa al-Athar* is essential in this article because it contains much economic data especially on agriculture. al-Maqrizi described the irrigation system, the agricultural land, agricultural practices, agricultural techniques, the crops grown in particular seasons, agricultural productivity, kinds of soils and the measurements used in the agriculture system. He also wrote about the exchange rate, the bazaars and market places of that time. However, he did not deal with all the agricultural land and tools which were used by the peasants in their cultivation (al-Sayyad 1971, 95-110).

The third book, *al-Suluk li Ma'rifat Duwal al-Muluk*, known as *al-Suluk*, is about the politics, economy and society of the Circassian Mamluks until 845AH/1441AD. It contains abundant information regarding the economy, especially monetary and price data. al-Maqrizi also gave accounts of the depreciation of agriculture and the government policies which depressed the merchants and led to the lessening of trade and commerce. It is worth noting that, in this material we can find an account of how the common people reacted to the economic problems. There were riots and violence each time there were shortages of food, extra taxes, changes in the value of the currency and unpopular decrees issued by sultans. In general, this

book shows al-Maqrizi's sharp criticism of the rulers. It also shows his concern for reporting the hardship suffered by the civilians.

### **Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (773-852AH/1372-1449AD)**

Another Egyptian historian who wrote about the economy of the Circassian Mamluks is Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Muhammad b. Muhammad, better known as Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani. He was born in Fustat in 773AH/1372AD. His family originated in 'Asqalan, Palestine, and migrated to Egypt at the end of the sixth century of the Hijra, during the reign of Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (1969, 1: 7-9, 14-5) belonged to a wealthy and distinguished scholarly family. His paternal grandfather Muhammad was a cloth manufacturer and a teacher of *hadith* in Alexandria. Muhammad's brother, 'Uthman, was a Shafi'ite judge in the same place. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani's father, 'Ali was a cotton merchant and adroit in *fiqh*, *adab*, Arabic and poetry.

After the death of his parents, Ibn Hajar was brought up by Zaki al-Din al-Kharrubi, a magnate and chief of the *karimis* (spice merchants). He was the person responsible for giving an education to Ibn Hajar by appointing some of the Quranic '*ulama*' as his personal teachers. After Zaki al-Din passed away in 787AH/1385AD, Shams al-Din Muhammad b. al-Qattan, an eminent Egyptian scholar, took responsibility for looking after Ibn Hajar. From this prominent scholar, Ibn Hajar learned *fiqh*, *lughah* and mathematics. He also studied *hadith*, Arabic, history, *qira'at*, *adab* and '*arud* from other '*ulama*', such as Sulayman b. 'Abd al-Nasir al-Ishbiti, Burhan al-Din al-Ibnasi, Nur al-Din al-Adami, Shams al-Din al-Ghimari, Nasir al-Din Muhammad b. al-Furat, Abu Ishaq al-Tanukhi and al-Badr al-Bashtaki (al-Sakhawi n.d., 230-33).

Nevertheless, from 796AH/1393AD, Ibn Hajar began devoting himself seriously to the study of *hadith*. Among the *muhaddithun* who guided him in this subject were 'Abd al-Rahim al-'Iraqi, 'Umar b. Ruslan al-Bulqini and Siraj al-Din b. al-Mulaqqin. Following the usual practice of the scholars at that time, Ibn Hajar travelled to some places to further his study of *hadith*. Among those places were some provinces of Egypt in 797AH/1394AD, Yemen and the Hijaz in 800AH/1397AD and Damascus and Palestine in 802AH/1399AD. Consequently, he emerged as a distinguished *hadith* expert not only in Egypt, but in the whole Muslim world in the Middle Ages. This is evidenced by his works and the fact that he had such well known disciples, such as al-

Sakhawi, al-Burhan al-Biq'a'i, al-Hafiz Taqi al-Din b. Fahd and Zakariya al-Ansari (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani 1966), 1: 11).

In his professional career, Ibn Hajar had various occupations, most of them connected with teaching and the judiciary. Among the teaching posts held by him were professor of *hadith* at *Madrassa Shaykhuniyya*, *Madrassa Mahmudiyya*, *Madrassa Jamaliyya al-Jadida*, *Madrassa Makutimuriyya* and *Dar al-Hadith al-Kamiliyya*. He also gave lectures in *fiqh* at *Madrassa Mu'ayyadiyya al-Jadida* and was employed as the head of *Madrassa Baybarsiyya*. He was appointed *imam* and preacher at the al-Azhar Mosque and 'Amr b. al-'As Mosque. Among the posts he held in jurisprudence was judge of *Dar 'Adl* from 811AH/1408-1409AD till his death. He was also appointed as chief Shafi'ite *qadi* several times for periods totalling twenty-one years (Rosenthal 1971, 3: 777). These occupations exposed him to the society, economic and political issues at that particular time.

Ibn Hajar wrote more than 150 books, most of which focus on *hadith* and other issues relevant to this subject. However, he wrote three books dealing with the history of Egypt, namely, *al-Durar al-Kamina fi A'yan al-Mi'a al-Thamina*, *Raf' al-Isr 'an Qudat Misr* and *Inba' al-Ghumr bi Anba' al-'Umr*. The first book contains the biographies of famous individuals in Egypt from 701AH/1301AD till 800AH/1397AD. The second book contains biographies of Egyptian judges from the emergence of Islam till the end of the eighth century of the Hijra. The last book, which relates to this article, deals with the major events which occurred in Egypt from 773AH/1372AD till 850AH/1447AD. Ibn Hajar (1969, 1: 4,22) also briefly mentions notable individuals in Egypt. The events narrated by Ibn Hajar reflect his wide experience regarding the societies and his relationship with the nobles. He cites all of his sources, the same approach he adopts in *hadith* writing. Thus his works are regarded as reliable and authoritative by most scholars. Important information that he conveys includes exchange rates, staple crops and food prices. It is based on these accounts that we can understand the position of the economy and business in the reign of Sultan Barquq, Sultan al-Nasir Faraj, Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaykh, Sultan Barsbay and in part of Sultan Jaqmaq's reign.

#### **al-'Ayni (762-855AH/1360-1451AD)**

Mahmud b. Ahmad b. Musa b. Ahmad, known as al-'Ayni, was born in 762AH/1360AD at 'Ayntab in northern Syria. Very little is known about his family. His father (725-784AH/1324-1382AD) was a scholar and held the post of *qadi* at 'Ayntab. al-'Ayni was brought up in an erudite family and received his early education in the *Qur'an* and *fiqh* from his father. Afterwards, he studied various subjects such as *sarf*,

Arabic, *mantiq*, *fara'id*, *nahw* and *balagha* with local '*ulama*'. Among his masters were al-Shams Muhammad al-Ra'i b. al-Zahid, al-Badr Mahmud b. Muhammad al-'Antabi, Ibn Salih al-Baghdadi, Khayr al-Din al-Qasir, al-Husam al-Rahawi, and 'Isa b. al-Khas b. Mahmud al-Sarmawi. al-'Ayni mastered Islamic sciences, especially *fiqh*, and he was reported to have replaced his father as a *qadi* (al-Sakhawi 1935, 10: 131).

In 785AH/1383AD, al-'Ayni made several journeys to places such as Aleppo and Malatya to pursue his studies. In 788AH/1386AD, during his travel on a pilgrimage, he met Shaykh 'Ala' al-Din 'Ali b. Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Sayrami (d. 790AH/1388AD), the head of *Madrasa al-Zahir Barquq* in Egypt. He was the person who was responsible for introducing and bringing al-'Ayni to the *madrasa*. In this college, al-'Ayni was initiated in the mystical doctrines of Sufism and took the opportunity to further his studies under Egyptian scholars such as Zayn al-Din 'Abd al-Rahim al-'Iraqi and Siraj al-Din 'Umar al-Bulqini (al-Halabi 1923, 6: 256).

The intimate relationships between al-'Ayni and some of the Mamluk officials, such as Amir Jakam b. 'Iwad, Amir Qalimatay al-'Uthmani al-Dawadar and Amir Taghri Birdi al-Qurdami, gave him the opportunity to hold the position of *muhtasib* of Cairo in 801AH/1398AD. However, he did not hold this job permanently, being dismissed and re-appointed several times. This was due to competition from other '*ulama*', such as al-Maqrizi, and because his enemies' incitement of the sultans. Other professional positions held by al-'Ayni were *nazir al-ahbas* (supervisor of pious endowment), professor of *hadith* in *Madrasa Mu'ayyadiyya* and chief Hanafite *qadi* (al-'Ayni 1967, 5-6).

al-'Ayni won the favour of Mamluk sultans due to his ability in the Turkish language. He was reported to have close ties with Mu'ayyad Shaykh, al-Zahir Tatar and Barsbay. He wrote some books in Turkish and translated his Arabic works such as *kitab al-Quduri* and '*lqd al-Juman*' into that language. He also composed some biographies of the sultans namely, *al-Sayf al-Muhannad fi Sirat al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh al-Mahmudi*, *al-Rawd al-Zahir fi Sirat al-Malik al-Zahir Tatar* and *Sirat al-Ashraf Barsbay*. His treatise which relates to this article is '*lqd al-Juman fi Tarikh Ahl al-Zaman*'. It is a universal history from the Creation till 850AH/1446AD. The economic information which is preserved in this book includes monetary data, and staple crops and food prices. This material can be found especially in relation to the

reign of Sultan al-Nasir Faraj, Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaykh and Sultan Barsbay (al-'Ayni 1987, 1: 375-6).

**Abu al-Mahasin Jamal al-Din ibn Taghri Birdi (d. 874AH/1469AD)**

Ibn Taghri Birdi was born in Cairo in 812AH/1408AD. His family had a close association with the government. His father, Taghri Birdi of Asia Minor origins, was among the higher-ranking officers with a position as *atabak* (a commander in chief) in the reign of al-Zahir Barquq. He was then appointed as *na'ib saltana* (a viceroy) of Damascus in the reign of Sultan al-Nasir al-Faraj until his death in 815AH/1412AD. Ibn Taghri Birdi was brought up by his sister Hajar who was first married to Nasir al-Din Muhammad b. al-'Adim, the Hanafi chief *qadi*, and later to Jalal al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman b. Siraj al-Din al-Bulqini, the Shafi'i chief *qadi* from whom Ibn Taghri Birdi obtained his early education. Later, under many noted scholars, he studied the usual learned disciplines, and also music, Turkish and Persian. He learned history from Taqi al-Din Ahmad al-Maqrizi and Badr al-Din al-'Ayni. These were two prominent Egyptian historians during his epoch. He was said to have an interest in writing narrative history after he heard al-'Ayni's works read to the Sultan Barsbay (Ibn Taghri Birdi n.d., 1: 10,24-5).

His knowledge of Turkish, his family ties with amirs such as Inal al-Nawruzi (d. 829AH/1425AD) and Aqbugha al-Timrazi (d. 843AH/1439AD) as well as his intimacy with several sultans especially Barsbay, Jaqmaq and Khushqaddam give him an almost unique position as a historian. In his writings, he presents a narrative account of events that occurred in the Mamluk court and civilian society during his lifetime (Ibn Taghri Birdi 1985, 1: 5-10). Based on his personal understanding about the Mamluk state, he amended a few mistakes found in the writings of al-Maqrizi, al-'Ayni and Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani. It is interesting to note that the close relationship between him and the government does not influence him to favour the Mamluks and in fact he frequently exposes the misdemeanour of the amirs and sultans. Moreover, he expresses his dissatisfaction with their attitude. Even though he was greatly criticised by other historians such as al-Sayrafi (d. 900AH/1495AD) and al-Sakhawi (d. 902AH/1497AD) because of his colloquialisms and inaccuracies, his credibility as a historian remains intact (Darraj 1974, 59-85).

Whatever criticism he received was because of his respected position in the community at that time as one of the *awlad al-nas* and non-Arabs. This undoubtedly caused certain individuals to find out his weaknesses. al-Sayrafi (1970, 175-82), for instance, condemned Ibn

Taghri Birdi for using the vernacular in his works, but at the same time acknowledged his expertise as the 'main pillar' and 'professor' in history. On the other hand, al-Sakhawi (1935, 10: 305-8) was famous for his blatant criticism, not only condemning Ibn Taghri Birdi but criticising most of the great historians during the Mamluk period such as Ibn Khaldun (d. 808AH/1406AD), al-Maqrizi and al-Biqa'i (d. 885AH/1480AD). Only al-Sakhawi's teacher, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani escaped his criticism. Such bias was chastised by al-Suyuti (d. 911AH/1505AD) in his book *al-Kawī 'ala Tarīkh al-Sakhawī* (Inan 1991, 124-6). The criticism made by al-Sakhawi towards Ibn Taghri Birdi has also attracted quite a number of modern historians to analyse to what extent the allegation is true and they have tried to maintain Ibn Taghri Birdi's reputation as the greatest historian of Egypt after al-Maqrizi (Wiet, 1929-30: 89-105; Ziyada, 1954: 26; Popper, 1956: 371-89).

The errors found in Ibn Taghri Birdi's writings occur merely in a few places and he in fact admits this and does not make any attempt to conceal it. Moreover, the mistakes were due to his incapability to recall and cover all the historical events especially when writing an extensive book such as *al-Nujum al-Zahira fi Muluk Misr wa al-Qahira*. At this juncture it is worth noting that had the writings of Ibn Taghri Birdi contain many inaccuracies, they would not have been regarded as the main reference by later historians such as Ibn Iyas (d. 930AH/1524AD) and others. Thus, it can be said that the writings of Ibn Taghri Birdi are admissible and capable of being one of the primary sources in this article.

The work of Ibn Taghri Birdi that contains information about the economy of the period 872-922AH/1468-1517AD is *Hawadith al-Duhur fi Waqa'i al-Duhur*. This chronicle covers from 845AH/1441AD to 12 Muharram 874AH/16 July 1469AD and was written with the intention of continuing al-Maqrizi's *al-Suluk li Ma'rifat al-Duwal wa al-Muluk* which ends the discussion on Egypt's economy in Dhu al-Hijja 844AH/May 1441AD (Popper 1960, 1: 138). Simultaneously, Ibn Taghri Birdi continued his *al-Nujum al-Zahira*, but omitted from it much of the *Hawadith* material regarding certain persons and the economic and political conditions. Even though his chronology merely touches on the first year and a half of this period (872-922AH/1468-1517AD), it lays down some of the information about economics at that particular time. However, this is not thoroughly discussed since the book mainly focuses on the Mamluk court and biographies. This information on economics does, however, provide some background

information regarding the economic situation of the Circassian Mamluks.

There are several matters mentioned by Ibn Taghri Birdi. These are the Nile flood levels, kinds of agricultural products, food prices, the exchange rate, government expenses on *jamakiyya* (the monthly pay) which had to be paid to Mamluks and the expenses allocated by Sultan Qaytbay in his military campaigns to fight against Shah Suwar. In addition, Ibn Taghri Birdi (1932, 3: 628,689,706,712) also mentions the plagues which caused many deaths and the Bedouins who ruined the agricultural activities.

However, *Hawadith al-Duhur* does not deal with some important aspects of the economy of the Circassian Mamluks such as the income of the government and the industrial and commercial sectors domestically or internationally. Moreover, the way of presenting information on economic matters is typically too general without any further explanation and justification in the absence of quantitative data. For instance, merely comments on the decline in the proceeds of wheat and fruits without giving details of the amount of the decline.

#### **Ibn al-Ji'an (814-885AH/1412-1480AD)**

Yahya b. Shakir b. 'Abd al-Ghani b. Majid b. 'Abd al-Wahhab b. Ya'qub, known as Ibn al-Ji'an, was born in Cairo in 814AH/1412AD. His family was renowned in serving the Mamluk administration. His grandfather 'Abd al-Ghani worked as *katib diwan al-jaysh* (secretary of the army bureau) while his father Shakir used to serve as a *mustawfi diwan al-jaysh* (accountant of army bureau). Ibn al-Ji'an acquired various kinds of knowledge in *fiqh*, Arabic and *hadith* from the scholars of Egypt, Mecca and Medina. Among of his masters was Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, al-Qayati and al-Muhib al-Matari. He also learnt *fara'id*, mathematics and algebra from Ibn al-Majdi (al-Sakhawi 1935, 3: 291, 4: 248, 10: 226-9). With this educational background and training, he occupied the position of *mustawfi diwan al-jaysh* like his father until his death in 885AH/1480AD.

His book on the economy of the Mamluks is *al-Tuhfa al-Saniyya bi Asma' al-Bilad al-Misriyya* which was based on his experience in the administration. This book contains information on the provinces in Egypt and the names of villages belonged to these provinces, the area measurements of the villages, the *'ibra* (annual yield) that was obtained by each province, categories of land tenures, categories of agricultural land, the cultivated or uncultivated agricultural land, *iqta'* (fief) holders and so on (Ibn al-Ji'an 1974, 1-10). This information

covers the period from Sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban until Qaytbay. By means of this book Egypt's economy can be traced, especially as related to agricultural aspects.

### **al-Sayrafi (819-900AH/1416-1495AD)**

'Ali b. Dawud b. Ibrahim is more commonly known as al-Sayrafi or al-Jawhari or Ibn al-Sayrafi or Ibn Dawud. Nothing much is known about his life except a little information conveyed by al-Sakhawi and Ibn Iyas and the indirect testimony narrated by himself in his books. al-Sayrafi (1970, 1: 3-9) was born in Cairo into a family of moderate means. His father, Dawud, worked as a money changer in *Diwan al-Mufrad* (a special bureau for the purchase and maintenance of royal Mamluks) during the reigns of Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaykh, Sultan Barsbay and Sultan Jaqmaq until his death in 853AH/1449AD. Since his father died leaving no property behind, al-Sayrafi had to work in various occupations to support his large family. Thus, he worked as a jewellery trader, a money changer and also as a scribe. He replaced Muhib al-Din b. al-Shahna (d. 890AH/1485AD) in 871AH/1466AD as Hanafi chief *qadi* for a short while, but the position did not provide enough money for him. Moreover, it failed to bring him close to the state nobles and rulers at that time.

Nevertheless, it is to be noted that al-Sayrafi's background did not prevent him from becoming a scholar. He was reported skilful in the fields of *fiqh, tafsir, balagha, qira'at, usul al-din, mantiq* and history. Among his teachers in history were Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, al-Kafiji and al-'Ayni. Even though he received history education from the prominent scholars, al-Sayrafi failed to establish his name. The main factor which caused this was his lack of ability in the Arabic language which indirectly demonstrated his weakness. This can clearly be seen in his writing which contains many colloquialisms. On this basis, al-Sakhawi harshly criticised him. (al-Sakhawi 1935, 5: 217-19).

Nevertheless, the writing of al-Sayrafi (1970, 10-21) is still considered as one of the prime sources on the Circassian Mamluks. This is because of his position as the contemporary historian at that particular time. His teacher al-Kafiji once praised the contents of his writings on *sira nabawiyya* in *Nuzhat al-Nufus wa al-Abdan fi Tawarikh al-Zaman*. In fact, using colloquialisms in history writing was not only done by al-Sayrafi. Other historians, such as Ibn Taghri Birdi and Ibn Iyas, also used them. The use of colloquialisms was a common characteristic in the writing of history at that time. Moreover,

since the beginning of the reign of the Circassian Mamluks, the Arabic language was no longer considered as the medium of instruction. Arabic was ignored and received less attention since the rulers gave priority to the Turkish language. This situation strengthened the position of the Egyptian vernacular and most of the historians were influenced by this usage. In addition, most of the historians in the late Circassian Mamluk period were not purely Arabs. Nevertheless, the use of this vernacular did not affect the information that these historians intended to convey.

The work of al-Sayrafi (1970, 28,187,431,476-7) that relates to the economy of the Circassian Mamluks is *Inba' al-Hasr bi Abna' al-'Asr* which covers only the years 873-877AH/1468-1473AD. Other portions from the end of 877AH/1473AD until 885AH/1481AD have not survived. He wrote this book as a gift to Sultan Qaytbay in the hope that he would win the sultan's favour. Thus it can be seen that his writings are favourable towards Sultan Qaytbay and he defends the actions taken by that sultan. However, the information concerning economics conveyed by him was not distorted. He not only conveys information that is not given by other historians, but in the year of 875AH/1470AD and 877AH/1472AD, he gives detailed information on food prices. Therefore, he supplies additional information to that of the contemporary historians. Besides, it is also useful to compare him with other historians.

al-Sayrafi (1970, 261,362,489) mentions several economic points such as staple crop prices, the Nile flood levels and the natural disasters of plagues, droughts and infestation of locusts. He also states about the exchange rate and the expenses spent by Sultan Qaytbay in the military campaigns and the Franks who pillaged the vessels belonging to the merchants. However, the book written by al-Sayrafi does not give much information regarding the industrial and commercial sectors at that particular time except for a little account of the biography of the *tajir khawaja* (merchants with official ranking) and a brief explanation of the problems faced by the traders and the factory owners.

**'Abd al-Basit b. Khalil b. Shahin al-Malati (844-920AH/1440-1514AD)**

'Abd al-Basit b. Khalil b. Shahin al-Malati was born in Malatya in 844AH/1440AD. His family was from the upper class and members from it held various important posts during the reign of the Circassian Mamluks. His grandfather, Shahin was *na'ib* (provincial governor) of Jerusalem, while his father Khalil occupied the vizierate in Egypt and

at several times was a provincial governor in Aleppo, Safad, Kirk, Jerusalem, Malatya and Alexandria. Moreover, Khalil was well known as a learned and knowledgeable person in fields such as *fiqh*, *tafsir*, history, Arabic literature, and medicine (al-Sakhawi 1935, 3: 195,295). Khalil also wrote more than thirty books the most famous of which is *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamalik wa Bayan al-Turuq wa al-Masalik*.

As an *awlad al-nas* (the sons of sultans and amirs who was born as free men), 'Abd al-Basit (1987, 7-9) had the opportunity to receive a comprehensive and proper education. At an early stage, his father educated him. He later learned various kinds of knowledge from numerous eminent scholars in Damascus, Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Spain and Egypt. Among his masters in *fiqh* in Damascus were Qawam al-Din al-Hanafi (d. 858AH/1454AD), Hamid al-Din al-Nu'mani (d. 867AH/1462AD) and al-'Ala' al-Rumi. While in north Africa and Spain, he learned *nahw*, *'ilm al-kalam* and medicine. In Egypt, he learned Arabic, *balagha*, *hikma* and other subjects from prominent scholars at that time such as Najm al-Din al-Qirmi (d. 880AH/1455AD), Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Shamni (d. 872AH/1467AD), al-Sharaf Yunus al-Rumi, Ibrahim b. Muhammad al-Dayri, and al-Kafiyaji.

With this educational background, 'Abd al-Basit emerged as one of the most famous scholars in Egypt. According to his student, Ibn Iyas (1960, 4: 374), he was famous in the *fiqh* of the Hanafi sect, in medicine, history, and other subjects. There are seventeen of his works which discuss these subjects. However, despite his ability in Turkish and his holding a respected position among the *umara'*, he is reported never to have held any administrative position as had his father and grandfather except as a teacher in the *Madrasa Shaykhuniyya*. Unlike Ibn Taghri Birdi and al-Sayrafi (d. 900AH/1495AD), 'Abd al-Basit never received any comments and criticism from al-Sakhawi.

'Abd al-Basit's works that relate to the economy of the Circassian Mamluks for the period 872AH/1468AD until 922AH/1517AD are *al-Rawd al-Basim fi Hawadith al-'Umr wa al-Tarajim* and *Nayl al-Amal fi Dhayl al-Duwal*. These two works are to be found in manuscripts form. *al-Rawd al-Basim fi Hawadith al-'Umr wa al-Tarajim* is held by the Vatican Library and numbered Vat. Ms. 728 and Vat. Ms. 729. The first covers the introduction and events over a six-year period, from 844AH/1440AD to 850AH/1446AD, and the second covers the years from 865AH/1460AD to 874AH/1469AD. Manuscript no. 729

contains 260 folios. Each folio measures 27.5 x 18.5 cm and has thirty-three lines. 'Abd al-Basit wrote these manuscripts himself and the work was completed on 18 Rabi' al-Awwal 890AH/5 April 1485AD (Vida 1935, 69). (The writer opines that *al-Rawd al-Basim* which was written by 'Abd al-Basit did not end its discussion at the year 874AH/1469AD. Indeed, it extended to several years after. This was because when 'Abd al-Basit mentions several events that took place in 875AH/1470AD, 876AH/1471AD, 878AH/1473AD in *Nayl al-Amal*, he stipulates that these events were recorded briefly since they are mentioned in detail in *al-Rawd al-Basim*. The frequent verse used by him is '*wa qad bayyannah fi tarikhina al-Rawd al-Basim*'. This shows that the manuscripts of *al-Rawd al-Basim* that have reached us are not complete and are missing folios that particularly discussed the year of 875AH/1470AD and after). The information on the economy of the Circassian Mamluks that is applicable to this article is merely from 872AH/1468AD till 873-874AH/1469AD. This information is not much different from that given by Ibn Taghri Birdi and al-Sayrafi such as regards the staple crops, food prices and the Nile flood levels ('Abd al-Basit Vat. Ms.729, ff.104a-251b).

Another manuscript, *Nayl al-Amal fi Dhayl al-Duwal* is held by the Bodleian Library in Oxford and consists of two volumes. The first is numbered Hunt. 285 and comprises the introduction and the period from 744AH/1343AD to 840AH/1436AD. The second that is relevant to this article is numbered Hunt. 610 and consists of 404 folios. Each folio measures 33 x 24 cm and has twenty-one lines. These manuscripts were written in 1045AH/1635AD and cover the years 841AH/1437AD to 896AH/1490AD.

*Nayl al-Amal fi Dhayl al-Duwal* was written by 'Abd al-Basit with the intention of continuing the book *Duwal al-Islam* which was written by Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi. The second volume of the *Nayl al-Amal* (Hunt. 610) is a summary of *al-Rawd al-Basim fi Hawadith al-Umr wa al-Tarajim*. The information that relates to the economy of the Circassian Mamluks (872-922AH/1468-1517AD) in *Nayl al-Amal* is also similar to that given by other historians. Since this book records the events that occurred until 896AH/1490AD, however it provides information on later years. Among the information given by 'Abd al-Basit is that concerning staple crops and the prices of such as wheat, barley, broad beans, bread, mutton and beef.

'Abd al-Basit (Ms. Huntington 610, 237b-46b) also wrote accounts of the expenses that were allocated by Sultan Qaytbay for the military campaigns in fighting Shah Suwar and Hasan al-Tawil until both were defeated. He also mentions the preparations made by Qaytbay in

fighting the Franks who entered Alexandria and seized trade vessels and market goods.

'Abd al-Basit (Ms. Huntington 610, 202b-271a) reports in detail about the plagues that took place in 881AH/1476AD and which caused high mortality not only among civilians but also the Mamluk armies. The havoc caused by Bedouins is also reported. Beginning in 878AH/1473AD, 'Abd al-Basit narrates the story of the rebellions carried out by the *Mamluk Julban* (the Mamluks of the ruling sultan) who were dissatisfied with their treatment and demanded higher wages. Several points relating to the agricultural sector in Egypt, such as the Nile floods and natural disasters, are also mentioned.

Nevertheless, *Nayl al-Amal* does not convey continuous information from year to year and in fact there are breaks in information for several years. 'Abd al-Basit also does not refer to the industrial and commercial sectors at that time. On the whole, information given by him sometimes appears exaggerated and needs to be carefully examined.

#### **Abu al-Barakat Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Iyas al-Hanafi (852-930AH/1448-1524AD)**

Abu al-Barakat Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Iyas al-Hanafi known as Ibn Iyas was born in Cairo in 852AH/1448AD. Not much is known about him since he held an ordinary position among his contemporaries. Most authors do not mention him in their works. The biographical data regarding him can only be gleaned from his own writings. Like Ibn Taghri Birdi and 'Abd al-Basit, he was also from the *awlad al-nas*. A great grandfather of Ibn Iyas, Azdamur al-'Umari al-Nasiri (d. 771AH/1370AD) once served in various positions during the reign of Hasan and al-Ashraf Sha'ban. Among the positions held by him was *amir silah* (grand master of the armoury) in 757AH/1356AD, viceroy of Tripoli in 764AH/1362AD, then viceroy of Aleppo, then again *amir silah* in 768AH/1366AD. Ibn Iyas's grandfather who died circa 830AH/1427AD was *dawadar thani* (second executive secretary) during the reign of Sultan al-Nasir Faraj. His father, Ahmad (824-908AH/1421-1502AD) was *ajnad halqa* (a free corps) who served under Sultan Qaytbay. He also seems to have had close relations with many amirs and high officials.

Ibn Iyas received his education from two prominent scholars, namely the polymath Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti and the Hanafi jurist and historian

'Abd al-Basit b. Khalil. Ibn Iyas was regarded as the last distinguished historian of *madrassa tarikhyya misriyya* in the medieval ages since after him the *madrassa* became inactive and passive. After Ibn Iyas, no great historians emerged until the rise of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti in the eighteenth century. Ibn Iyas was also a worthy successor to the great historians of the Circassian period because of the role he played as an observer and interpreter of the transition from Mamluk to Ottoman rule. His work that concerns the economy of the Circassian Mamluks in the period of 872-922AH/1468-1517AD is *Bada'i al-Zuhur fi Waqa'i al-Duhur*. This book is of great importance because it is the only source written by a historian who was an eyewitness to the decline of the Mamluk state under the Sultans Qaytbay, Qansuh al-Ghawri and al-Ashraf Tumanbay, the defeat of the Mamluks by the Ottomans, and the subsequent occupation of Egypt ('Inan 1991, 152-68).

Despite Ibn Iyas's close relations with the ruling circles, his writing still contains criticisms towards them. For instance, Ibn Iyas criticises Sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri for the defeat of Circassian Mamluks. According to him, al-Ghawri caused a deficit in the finances of the state, the corruption of the administration, strife among the Mamluks, and negligence of artillery. It is said that the criticisms took place due to al-Ghawri abolishing Ibn Iyas's *iqta'*. Nevertheless, his writings do not always criticise the rulers since there are places where he acknowledges and appreciates their contributions, especially after the Ottoman occupation of Egypt (Brinner 1971, 3: 812-13).

The writings of Ibn Iyas resemble those of Ibn Taghri Birdi and al-Sayrafi in that they are written in an almost vernacular style. The main focus in his writings is *al-khassa* (the social elite) compared to *al-'amma* (the common people). After presenting the events that occur in a particular year, he ends with obituaries of famous men. Ibn Iyas took information from the earlier historians on the events that happened before his period. The events that took place in his period are dealt with in more detail and are based on his own observations.

The information on economics given by Ibn Iyas (1960, 3: 38,209,304, 4: 66,184,217,379, 5: 52) is not comprehensive since his writings focussed merely on political events. He conveys information on havocs caused by the Bedouins, the immoral attitude of the rulers who wasted a lot of money and the natural disasters such as the plagues and the insect infestation of plants. Besides, he also mentions about the attacks from the external enemies such as the Ottomans and the Portuguese and the military costs. In this book, Ibn Iyas explains that the sultans took various measures to cover the

expenses such as corrupting the currency and imposed high taxes for trade and commerce.

### **Ibn Tulun (880-953AH/1475-1546AD)**

Muhammad b. 'Ali b. Ahmad b. 'Ali, commonly known as Ibn Tulun, was born in 880AH/1475AD in Sahiliyya, a suburb of Damascus. He was of Turkish descent and belonged to a family which was famous in business. His grandfather, Ahmad, and Ahmad's brother, Ibrahim, were among the *khawaja* merchants and ran their trade in Sahiliyya, Damascus and Mecca. Ibn Tulun received his early education at *Madrassa Hajjiyya* and *Madrassa al-Kawafi*. He was then educated by famous scholars in the traditional Islamic sciences as well as in secular sciences such as medicine, astronomy, mathematics and engineering. In 899AH/1493AD, he was awarded an *ijaza* (authorization) which allowed him to teach in the mosques or colleges and in 911AH/1505AD he was awarded an *ijaza* to give a *fatwa* (legal opinion) (Ibn Tulun 1973, 54-5,66-9,74). During his lifetime, he occupied numerous teaching and administrative posts of a religious nature. Most of his life was devoted to scholarship and writing and he seems to have avoided any political involvement under the Mamluk and Ottoman regimes.

In spite of the fact that Ibn Tulun wrote in various fields such as *hadith* and *fiqh*, his writings on history are more conspicuous. His historical writings deal with the end of Mamluk rule and the beginning of the Ottoman occupation of Syria and have become the main sources of the history of the Middle Ages for modern historians. Ibn Tulun was influenced by the works of his teachers and other historians at that time. His topics in historical writing are almost the same as those they wrote about. Furthermore, he summarised their books. Among Ibn Tulun's teachers in history were Jamal al-Din Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Hadi al-Hanbali (d. 909AH/1503AD), Abu al-Mafakhir 'Abd al-Qadir al-Nu'aymi (d. 927AH/1520AD) and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Other historians who were his contemporaries were al-Burhan al-Biqā'i and Ibn Iyas (Ibn Tulun 1973, 85-7).

Two of Ibn Tulun's books which touch on the history of the Circassian Mamluks especially in Syria were *I'lam al-Wara bi Man Waliya Na'iban min al-Atrak bi Dimashq* and *Mufakahat al-Khillan fi Hawadith al-Zaman*. The first is about the Mamluk governors who ruled Damascus from the reign of the Turkish Mamluks until the Ottomans took control of that city. Even though the book expanded on politic

events, it remains important in this article as it contains economic data such as staple crops and food prices. Ibn Tulun (1973, 65,90,199) also gives information about market places and estates belonging to Sultan Qaytbay in Damascus. In this book, we also find information about the Mamluks' military campaigns against their northern enemies, for instance, Shah Suwar, Hasan al-Tawil and the Ottomans. The second book, *Mufakahat al-Khillan*, is a chronicle of Egypt and Syria covering the years 884-926AH/1479-1520AD. Despite the lack of specific discussion of the Mamluk economy, it contains a few facts on food prices, *khawaja* merchants and government policy towards silk industry owners. Information about caliphs, sultans, amirs, governors, and *qudats* which is useful for this article, can also be found in this book (Ibn Tulun 1962, 1: 8-9).

### **Ibn al-Hanbali (908-971AH/1502-1563AD)**

Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hasan, better known as Ibn al-Hanbali, was born at Aleppo in 908AH/1502AD. He belonged to a family who were scholarly in the sciences of Islamic religion, especially in the *fiqh* of the Hanbali sect. Some of his family members served as *qadi* at Aleppo. Ibn al-Hanbali (1972, 1: 7-8) was educated in the early stages by his father, Ibrahim b. Yusuf. Afterwards, he pursued his studies under the local '*ulama*' and others who visited Aleppo. Among the sciences he learnt were the *Qur'an* from al-Shaykh Ahmad b. al-Husayn al-Bakizi, *fiqh* from 'Abd al-Rahman b. Fakhr al-Nisa', *qira'at* from al-Shihab Ahmad al-Hindi, *hadith* from Muhammad b. Sha'ban al-Dayruti, mathematics from al-Shaykh Muhammad al-Khanajari and *balagha* from al-Shaykh Musa al-Rasuli.

Ibn al-Hanbali was a prolific writer and wrote more than fifty books on a range of subjects. *Durr al-Habab fi Tarikh A'yan Halab* is his biography of famous men and women in the ninth and tenth centuries of the *Hijra*. It contains a description of 633 individuals who were either from Aleppo or visited that city. Despite the fact that the book focuses on the life of individuals, it reveals information about the social, economic and political situation at that time. For example, Ibn al-Hanbali (1972, 1: 21-9, 2: 45-6) mentions the plagues which occurred in Syria in 897AH/1491AD and the battle between the Circassian Mamluks and their enemies in northern Syria. He also describes in detail Sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri and his government policies, which were brutal and extravagant in spending money.

### **Conclusion**

There were many prolific historians during the Mamluk period and they contributed to the development of Mamluk historiography by documenting information about society, politics and the economy during their times. The works of these historians were, however, focused more on social and political history than economy. Most of the historians during this period did not give a complete description of the economic situation. All data on economics merely appeared in works on political history and biographies. Information on agriculture, industry, commerce and the monetary system was not given in detail. However, the combination of all these data can give us a general idea about the economy of Egypt and its situation during the period under consideration.

### Bibliography

- 'Abd al-Basit b. Khalil Shahin al-Malati. 1987. *Nuzhat al-asatin fi man waliya Misr min al-salatin*, ed. Muhammad Kamal al-Din 'Izz al-Din 'Ali. Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya.
- Idem. *al-Rawd al-basim fi hawadith al-'umr wa al-tarajim*. Vat. Ms. 729, The Vatican Library.
- Idem. *Nayl al-amal fi dhayl al-duwal*. Ms. Huntington 610, The Bodleian Library.
- Allouche, Adel. 1994. *Mamluk economics – A study and translation of al-Maqrizi's ighathah*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- al-'Ayni, Badr al-Din. 1967. *al-Sayf al-muhannad fi sirat al-malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh al-Mahmudi*, ed. Fahim Muhammad Shaltut. Cairo: Dar al-Katib al-'Arabi lil Tiba'a wa al-Nashr.
- Idem. 1987. *'Iqd al-juman fi tarikh ahl al-zaman*, ed. Muhammad Muhammad Amin. Vol.1. Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-'Amma lil Kitab.
- Brinner, W. M. 1971. "Ibn Iyas." In *The encyclopaedia of Islam (New edition)*, ed. B. Lewis et al., vol.3, 812-13. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- al-Halabi, Muhammad Raghib b. Mahmud b. Hashim al-Tabbakh. 1923. *I'lam al-nubala' bi tarikh halab al-shahba'*. Vol.6. Aleppo: al-Matba'at al-'Ilmiyya.
- Ibn Duqmaq. 1982. *al-Jawhar al-thamin fi siyar al-muluk wa al-salatin*. Mecca: n.p.
- Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani. 1969. *Inba' al-ghumr bi anba' al-'umr*, ed. Hasan Habashi. Vol.1. Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'la lil Shu'un al-Islamiyya.
- Idem. 1966. *al-Durar al-kamina fi a'yan al-mi'a al-thamina*. Vol.1. N.p.: Matba'at al-Madani.
- Ibn al-Hanbali. 1972. *Durr al-habab fi tarikh a'yan Halab*, ed. Mahmud Hamd al-Fakhuri & Yahya Zakariya 'Abbara, vol.1. Damascus: Manshurat Wizarat al-Thaqafa.
- Ibn Iyas, Muhammad b. Ahmad. 1960. *Bada'i al-zuhur fi waqa'i al-duhur*, ed. Muhammad Mustafa. Vols.3-5. Cairo: n.p.

- Ibn al-Ji'an. 1974. *Kitab al-tuhfa al-saniyya bi asma' al-bilad al-Misriyya*, ed. B. Moritz. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyat al-Azhariyya.
- Ibn Taghri Birdi. N.d. *al-Nujum al-zahira fi muluk Misr wa al-Qahira*. Vol.1. N.p.: al-Mu'assasa al-Misriyya al-'Amma lil Ta'lif wa al-Tarjama wa al-Tiba'a wa al-Nashr.
- Idem. 1985. *al-Manhal al-safi wa al-mustawfi ba'd al-wafi*, ed. Muhammad Muhammad Amin. Vol.1. Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-'Amma lil Kitab.
- Idem. 1932. *Hawadith al-duhur fi mada al-ayyam wa al-shuhur*, ed. William Popper. Vol.3. California: University of California Press.
- Ibn Tulun. 1973. *I'lam al-wara bi man waliya na'iban min al-Atrak bi Dimashq al-Sham al-Kubra*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azim Hamid Khattab. Cairo: Matba'at Jami'at 'Ayn Shams.
- Idem. 1962. *Mufakahat al-Khillan fi Hawadith al-Zaman*, ed. Muhammad Mustafa. Vol.1. Egypt: Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya.
- 'Inan, Muhammad 'Abd Allah. 1991. *Mu'arrikhun Misr al-Islamiyya wa masadir al-tarikh al-Misri*. Cairo: Mu'assasat Mukhtar lil Nashr wa al-Tawzi'.
- al-Jalili, Mahmud. 1966. Tarjamat Ibn Khaldun lil Maqrizi. *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmi al-'Iraqi* 13: 215-246.
- al-Maqrizi. 1995. *al-Mawa'iz wa al-i'tibar fi dhikr al-khitat wa al-athar*, ed. Ayman Fu'ad Sayyid. London: Mu'assasat al-Furqan lil Turath al-Islami.
- Idem. 1956. *Kitab al-Sulik li Ma'rifat Duwal al-Muluk*, ed. Muhammad Mustafa Ziyada. Vol.1. Cairo: Matba'at Lujnat al-Ta'lif wa al-Tarjama wa al-Nashr.
- Pedersen, J. 1971. "Ibn Dukmak." In *The encyclopaedia of Islam (New edition)*, ed. B. Lewis et al., vol.3, 756. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Popper, William. 1956. Sakhawi's criticism of Ibn Taghri Birdi. *Studi Orientalistici in onore die Giorgio Levi Della Vida* 2: 371-89.
- Idem. 1960. "Abu 'l-Mahasin Djamal Al-Din Yusuf b. Taghribirdi." In *The encyclopaedia of Islam (New edition)*, ed. H.A.R. Gibb et al., vol.1, 138. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

- al-Sakhawi, Shams al-Din Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman. 1935. *al-Daw' al-lami' li ahl al-qarn al-tasi'*. Vols.1,3-5,10. Cairo: Maktabat al-Quds.
- Idem. N.d. *al-Tibr al-masbuq fi dhayl al-suluk*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyat al-Azhariyya.
- al-Sayrafi. 1970. *Inba' al-hasr bi abna' al-'asr*, ed. Hasan Habashi. Cairo: Matba'at al-Madani.
- Idem. 1970. *Nuzhat al-nufus wa al-abdan fi tawarikh al-zaman*, ed. Hasan Habashi. Vol.1. Cairo: Matba'at Dar al-Kutub.
- al-Sayyad, Muhammad Mahmud. 1971. "Ahwal Misr al-iqtisadiyya wa al-ijtima'iyya kama sawwaraha al-Maqrizi." In *Dirasat 'an al-Maqrizi*, 95-110. Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-'Amma lil Ta'lif wa al-Nashr.
- Darraj, Ahmad. 1974. "Nash'at Abi al-Mahasin wa atharuha fi kitabatih lil tarikh." In *al-Mu'arrikh Ibn Taghri Birdi*, 59-85. Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-'Amma lil Kitab.
- Rosenthal, F. 1971. "Ibn Hadjar al-'Asqalani." In *The encyclopaedia of Islam* (New edition), ed. B. Lewis et al., vol.3, 776-778. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Vida, Giorgio Levi Della. 1935. *Elenco dei manoscritti Arabi Islamici della bibliotheca Vaticana*. Roma: Tipografia del Senato del dott. G Bardi.
- Wiet, Gaston. 1929-1930. L'Historien, Abul Mahasin. *Bulletin de l'Institute d'Egypt* 12: 89-105.
- Ziyada, Muhammad Mustafa. 1954. *al-Mu'arrikhun fi Misr fi al-qarn al-khamis 'ashar al-miladi, al-qarn al-tasi' al-hijri*. Cairo: n.p.