

Book Reviews

Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-Iʿtibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār li-Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Maqrīzī. Edited by Ayman Fuʿād Sayyid. Vols. 1–2 (London: Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1422/2002).

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In the field of historiography, the Egyptian scholar al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) is one of the most renowned and esteemed representatives together with his master and friend, Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406). Despite the charges of plagiarism often leveled against him and the assertion that he was a mere compiler, his works are considered to be invaluable for the history of Egypt from the beginning of the Islamic conquest until his time. The most frequently advanced reason for this appraisal lies in the numerous sources, most of which are now considered lost, that were summarized and abridged by al-Maqrīzī in his works. His masterpiece *Al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-al-Iʿtibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Athār*, truly original in its conception and plan, the main subject of which is the topographical history of the city of Cairo, remains the unequalled source for historians dealing with Egypt and more particularly Cairo. Acclaimed by his contemporaries, its importance was quickly recognized and it is for this reason that it was among the early texts printed by the nascent Bulāq press. This edition, published in 1853 in 2 volumes, has remained for more than 150 years the standard text, despite its defects and shortcomings. Reprinted several times and the basis of new editions (!)¹ that multiplied its mistakes, the Bulāq version was obviously unsatisfactory and several scholars of the early twentieth century called for a critical edition of this fundamental text. One of them, Gaston Wiet, answered the call and tried to produce a text meeting the standards of critical editing prevailing at that time (i.e., derived from those long established in the field of Classical studies). He produced an edition (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1911–27), praised not only for its scientific method (several manuscripts were collected and collated, the result of which was conscientiously indicated in footnotes) but also as a technical achievement. Five volumes, covering pages 1–322 of the Bulāq edition, were issued. However, this edition, although representing an improvement in comparison to the Bulāq edition, still contained many mistakes (which is confirmed by the numerous *errata* added at the end of each volume) and Wiet decided to put an abrupt end to his

¹See, for the last of these (ed. Muḥammad Zaynuhum and Madiḥah al-Sharqāwī, Cairo, 1998, 3 vols.), my review in *Mamlūk Studies Review* 8, no. 1 (2004): 299.

project once he discovered that more than 170 manuscripts of this work were preserved in libraries around the world. He claimed that it was impossible for a single man to proceed further and that this should be a collective work involving specialists for the various periods covered by the book. This was in 1927 and for the last 75 years nobody has taken up such a project, although similar enterprises were launched (for instance al-Şafadī's *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafāyāt*, now coming to an end after more than 60 years, al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, and Ibn 'Asākir's *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*).

Finally, Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid decided to make that effort alone. Sayyid opines (vol. 1, introduction p. 4) that, although he is aware of the difficulties one would encounter working alone on such a text, projects involving several scholars, all the more so in the Orient, rarely succeed in producing anything good,² and suggests moreover that in his mind this kind of text must be edited by a single individual having a clear and harmonized idea of the whole.³ But if it is true that collective projects require more time than individual ones, they generally produce an excellent result because of the involvement of several specialists with the same text. Furthermore, the second argument could be valid if the edited text would have represented the expression of the author's reflection on a particular subject (philosophical, juridical, or scientific), requiring from the editor an understanding of the author's overall concept. This is not the case with the *Khīṭat*, which has always been defined as an accumulation of facts compiled by the author from various sources and organized in a very lucid way. In some ways, it is comparable to the work required in the edition of a biographical dictionary or a chronicle. Clearly, some collaboration would have benefitted the final result, as we shall see.

Sayyid is probably the best specialist on Muslim Egypt, especially of the Fatimid period. His many studies and critical editions of important historical sources plainly show that his interests focus on this subject. No one in the Orient was better prepared to undertake such a project. During the past twenty years, he has mainly published sources which were used by al-Maqrīzī in his numerous works and this has placed him in a good position to undertake a critical edition of the *Khīṭat*. He planned to publish the whole text in four volumes together with a final volume consisting of various indexes. At the time we are writing this review, volumes 3 (788 pages) and 4 (1,089 pages in two parts) have already been published, which means that in the space of two years 3,263 pages of critical text have been produced. This implies that the text has not only been published,

²“ . . . fa-istaqarra fi yaqīnī anna al-a'māl al-jamā'iyah—wa-'alā al-akhaṣṣ fi al-sharq—nādiran mā yuktab la-hā al-najāh.”

³“ . . . amā anna taḥqīq kitāb mithla al-mawā'iz wa-al-i'tibār yajib an yatimma min qibali shakḥ wāḥid ḥattā yasūda ḍabṭihi [sic] wa-ikhrājīhi [sic] fikr muwaḥḥad munsajim dūna tanāquḍāt.”

but also critically edited, as it clearly appears that the editor has been working on each volume in succession, and that while he was preparing the next volume for publication he was reading at the same time the proofs of the preceding one. In conclusion, each volume was produced in six months, probably a world record in the discipline! We could legitimately fear that the editor has botched his work, but this is definitely not the case. However, it is clear that mistakes, omissions, and shortcomings still exist and that a careful proofreading would have avoided⁴ most of them. Nevertheless, the whole is nicely produced and will remain for years the standard edition for this text.

The question that immediately arises in the reader's mind is whether or not this edition may be considered to be a critical and definitive edition of this important work. Before stating our opinion, we would like to describe Sayyid's working method. The editor had at his disposal two volumes of the draft (*musawwadah*)—the second and fourth part of it—covering respectively the contents of volume 2 and the beginning of volume 3, and of the end of volume 3 and volume 4. He had already prepared a critical edition of the second part of the draft, but not of the fourth, which, he says (vol. 1, introduction p. 109), he discovered (*‘athartu ‘alayhā*) during a visit to Istanbul in 2001.⁵ In addition, he collected copies of several manuscripts containing various parts of the text. According to him, the number of these manuscripts exceeds 180. Wiet had already gathered information about 170 manuscripts at the beginning of the twentieth century and the number must have increased since then, with the discovery of new holdings and the publication of catalogues that has known an extraordinary development in the past decades. Unfortunately, the author gives no list of these manuscripts, declaring that this is useless for the reader (*lā yufīd minhā al-qārīʿ*). The reader would probably have preferred to decide whether it was useful or not. That is a pity, since this would have been the very first census of all the manuscripts of the *Khīṭaṭ* in the world! Sayyid surely did not have adequate information about all of them and this is clear in the introduction to volume 2, where new manuscripts are mentioned. In fact, they are all to be found in Brockelmann's *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* and reference is made to old catalogues, so that one wonders why they were not described in the first volume, and why these and not others. During several stays in Istanbul, Paris, and Leiden, Sayyid was able to consult a great number of these manuscripts and was able to identify several copies made

⁴For instance, we could give the following omission: on page 124 of the introduction of volume 1, the number of folios of a manuscript is not given and the space is occupied by several dots, indicating that the editor was supposed to fill this space with the information.

⁵Although this same manuscript, as well as the other part of the draft, is mentioned in F. E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kültüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu* (Istanbul, 1962–69). See 3:588.

from a copy in the author's own handwriting. To these, another one must be added: preserved in the Maktabat al-Asad (MS 3437) in Damascus, it represents a copy of a part of the draft and must be placed together with the two parts of the autograph draft preserved in Istanbul (TK Hazine 1472 and TK Emame 1405). Unfortunately, no stemma, which would have helped the reader to understand the choices made by the editor and the relationships of the different manuscripts, is provided.

Among these manuscripts, Sayyid decided to use a group of five manuscripts based on al-Maqrīzī's copy, preferring Aya Sofya MS 3475 (referred to as *al-aṣl*) for volume 1 and another group of five manuscripts, with a preference for Aya Sofya MS 3483 (referred to as *al-aṣl*) for volume 2, together with part 2 of the draft (TK Hazine 1472) and Maktabat al-Asad MS 3437 copied on the draft. As he acknowledges himself (vol. 1, introduction p. 8), the only acceptable way to prepare a critical edition of the *Khiṭaṭ* presupposes publication of the draft, a task he himself performed. But why then did he not follow the same method with the fourth part of the draft he consulted in 2001? We know that al-Maqrīzī's preserved drafts represent an early stage of his writing, that he modified the plan, and that at that time he recorded a lot of data which do not appear in the final version. Due to the subsequent disappearance of most of his sources, these are the only accounts we have of these lost texts and the data, in many cases, cannot be found elsewhere. The best way would have been to publish first this new part of the draft, completing the edition he gave of the second part. One must keep in mind, however, that this version does not really reflect the image of the author's conception of the book. It can help in reading some words difficult to identify in copies of the final version, but parts of the drafts can surely not be integrated into the edition of the final version, because the author chose not to include them after careful consideration. At least, discrepancies, additions, or corrections offered by the draft can be added in footnotes to enlighten the reader. Nevertheless, Sayyid sometimes adds sentences, words taken from the draft (e.g., vol. 2, p. 245) not appearing in the manuscripts of the final version. More serious is the following dealing with al-Maqrīzī's notebook which the present writer discovered and identified among the holdings of the University of Liège (Belgium).⁶ We responded to Sayyid's request for a copy of some folios which allowed him to ascertain exactly the contents of some of the abstracts it contains. One can see that he decided to add, from these fragmentary folios, passages not found in the final version of the *Khiṭaṭ* just on the basis that it was the source of al-Maqrīzī for

⁶A critical edition of this notebook is in preparation by the present writer. See Frédéric Bauden, "Maqriziana I: Discovery of an Autograph Manuscript of al-Maqrīzī: Towards a Better Understanding of his Working Method—Description: Section 1," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, no. 2 (2003): 21-68.

that given passage.⁷ Here and there, he also refers to the Liège manuscript, saying that a summary of al-Maqrīzī's source for a given passage is to be found in it, without referring to the folio numbers. The question is why Sayyid decided to refer to this particular manuscript and to use some fragmentary parts without having a complete knowledge of its contents and a precise description of it.

The *apparatus criticus* is limited to the discrepancies noticed between the Bulāq edition and the manuscript used as a basis. The editor explains this decision by the fact that given the existence of two parts of the draft and several manuscripts copied on the basis of al-Maqrīzī's manuscript of the final version in his own handwriting, it is useless to indicate the various readings offered by these manuscripts. If there are discrepancies, they are due to the copyists. Once again, this is a strange bias that deprives the reader of the possibility to freely choose what he might consider a better reading. The result is that we only have in the footnotes the result of the collation with the Bulāq printed text, although this collation is not always properly done. A comparison of the first pages of volume 1 has produced the following results: p. 7, l. 8 (*mimmā allafahu wa-jama'ahu*. Bulāq: the two verbs are inverted, not indicated); l. 10 (*anbiyā' Allāh wa-rusulihi*. According to Sayyid, the word *Allāh* does not appear in Bulāq. Bulāq reads: *anbiyā'ihī wa-rusulihi*); *ibid.* (*Allāh ta'alā*. The second word appears in Bulāq); l. 15 (*akhbār ma'rūfah 'indahum*. Bulāq has: *akhbār 'indahum ma'rūfah*. Not indicated); l. 18 (*al-qudrah al-bashariyah*. The last word is in Bulāq contrary to what Sayyid says); p. 8, l. 10 (*mashyakhah*. Bulāq has *shaykhah* [sic]. Not indicated); l. 22 (*maqna'*. According to Sayyid, Bulāq has *matā'*, but one reads *qana'*). Of course, these mistakes have no importance for the edited text, since they refer to the Bulāq edition, but since the editor went to great pains to collate both and to indicate in the footnotes the result of this, one should expect it to be accurate.

Sometimes, he also indicates in the footnotes the different readings of the Maktabat al-Asad manuscript and the draft. Notes that were found in the margin in the author's hand by the copyists who used al-Maqrīzī's manuscript of the final version were copied in the same way (i.e., in the margin with the letter *ḥā'* used as a symbol over the note to indicate *ḥāshiyah* [commentary], sometimes with the words *bi-khattihī* [in his handwriting]). The editor decided to place them in the critical apparatus. We know that al-Maqrīzī added notes to his works almost until the last days of his life. Therefore, the marginal notes that were found by the copyists in his final version were meant to be placed in the text itself. Al-Maqrīzī did not do it because it was too difficult to make a new clean copy (*mubayyaḍah*) just for small additions. Thus Sayyid should have integrated them where indicated

⁷For instance, vol. 1, p. 756, where he relies on the beginning of a resumé dealing with Ibn al-Ma'mūn's history. No reference to the folio in the Liège manuscript is given. A copy of only the recto of this folio was communicated to Sayyid, who thus did not see the end of this resumé.

by al-Maqrīzī. However, the editor must be commended for having collated, when it was possible, the text with the sources al-Maqrīzī exploited. He indicates in the footnotes where a passage is to be found if the original text has been preserved and printed and he gives the result of the collation in the critical apparatus. Here again, unfortunately, he could not refrain from adding or correcting words on the basis of what is to be found in the original source (e.g., vol. 2. p. 151, from Ibn Ḥawqal). It would be strange that all the five different manuscripts based on the author's final copy would have discrepancies of this sort. Moreover it is not even certain that the edition of the source used by al-Maqrīzī is to be trusted. For instance, in vol. 1, p. 179 (l. 4), the text reads: *naḥa'a min waja' al-qalb wa-al-kulyatayn*, while the manuscript of reference (*aṣl*) and the Bulāq text give *al-ṣulb* instead of *al-qalb*. The correction is made on the basis of the source, Ibn al-Bayṭār, and in spite of the manuscripts used. The reading they provide, however, is confirmed by Ibn Abī al-Ḥawāfir, “Badā'i' al-Akwān fī Manāfi' al-Ḥayawān” (Dublin, Chester Beatty MS 4352, fol. 38r): *fa-yanḥa'u min waja' al-kulá wa-al-ṣulb!* It is clear that it designates the region situated between the kidneys (*kulyah*) and the spinal column (*ṣulb*).

The text is also abundantly vocalized, which helps in the reading of some difficult words. Nevertheless, the vocalization is sometimes not strictly necessary (*faṭḥah* over the letter preceding a *tā'* *marbūṭah*, for instance), or superfluous (words easy to read are fully provided with vowels while other more difficult ones are not), or even inaccurate (p. 7, l. 9: *'urifata*; p. 8, l. 1: *jumalin akhbār*; p. 8, l. 5: *adraktu*, read *adrakat*, . . .).

A positive point regards the annotation, profusely provided and always accurate with its context, which enlightens the reader on the subject touched upon in the text. A clear identification of most of the individuals, place names, technical words, etc., appearing in the text is supplied and is very helpful. It is a pity that the references to publications in Latin characters are often misspelled. Both volumes contain several plates illustrating the manuscripts used, buildings preserved in Cairo, or plans proposing a reconstruction of lost structures on the basis of the description given by al-Maqrīzī, the quality of which is unfortunately not always of the required standard.

The first volume is preceded by a long introduction, most of it taken, almost word for word, from the introduction published with the edition of the draft in 1995. In it, Sayyid comments on the book itself and its subject with a detailed survey of the books written on the same theme by previous and subsequent authors up until the nineteenth century (introduction pp. 8–30). He then places al-Maqrīzī in the historical context in which he lived, providing a detailed biography (pp. 30–39, entitled *tarjamah jadidah lil-Maqrīzī* as in the 1995 edition of the draft) and bibliography (pp. 40–53). This latter is, however, incomplete and sometimes

inaccurate.⁸ Undoubtedly, we are still lacking a thorough analysis of al-Maqrīzī's life and a detailed enumeration of all his works citing the manuscripts and the editions.

Sayyid proceeds on pages 53–68 with an analysis of the writing process of the *Khīṭaṭ*. Many interesting conclusions may be drawn from this part of the introduction. The editor clarifies the problem of the charge of plagiarism made by al-Sakhāwī against al-Maqrīzī. According to al-Sakhāwī's master, Ibn Ḥajar, al-Maqrīzī plagiarized al-Awḥadī's book on the *Khīṭaṭ* of Cairo in a major way. This al-Awḥadī, who died in 811/1408, was al-Maqrīzī's neighbor and colleague and he used to allow him to consult his library as well as his own writings. At his death, al-Maqrīzī inherited his book on the *Khīṭaṭ*, which was not finished and was mostly still in draft form. Although he made great use of this draft, al-Maqrīzī never mentions al-Awḥadī in his own book, but he acknowledges him in his biographical dictionary of his contemporaries (*Durar al-ʿUqūd al-Farīdah*). For Sayyid (p. 64), this suffices to exonerate al-Maqrīzī from the charge of plagiarism. The present writer has recently identified part of al-Awḥadī's draft and will be able to prove that al-Maqrīzī was not so innocent. The most useful part of this introduction (pp. 69–98) deals with the sources of al-Maqrīzī in the first volume. Since R. Guest, no attempt has been made to study this aspect of the book, which is not unimportant as we have already noted. Not only based on the authors and titles given by al-Maqrīzī, the study also supplies a list of sources identified thanks to the original texts through which it can be deduced what part was taken from it by the author. We now have a detailed account for almost every passage of the text which will open possibilities for further research in this field. This introduction concludes with a description of the most important editions of the book, the most useful studies of it, and finally of the manuscripts (unfortunately not complete) and the technique used to critically edit this text.

The introduction in volume 2 is almost as long as the one in the first volume. Here again, the most interesting part of it deals with the sources used by the author in this second volume (pp. 19–49). The remaining part is filled with a description of al-Maqrīzī's autographs of his other works. We learn that the editor, during a stay in Paris, had the opportunity to visit Leiden where he was able to consult al-Maqrīzī's autographs. On this basis, he provides us with a complete and accurate description of them, even if the link with the *Khīṭaṭ* is not immediately

⁸For example, the short treatise entitled *Al-Bayān al-Mufīd fī al-Farq bayna al-Tawḥīd wa-al-Talḥīd* is not a work composed by al-Maqrīzī. It was copied by him from a manuscript he found in Damascus in 813. This false attribution goes back to G. C. Anawati, who published it in 1969. See G. C. Anawati, "Un aspect de la lutte contre l'hérésie au XV^{ème} siècle d'après un inédit attribué à Maqrīzī (le *Kitāb al-bayān al-mufīd fī al-farq bayn al-tawḥīd wa-al-talḥīd*)," in *Colloque international sur l'histoire du Caire (27 mars-5 avril 1969)* (Cairo, n.d.), 23–36.

obvious. In any case, the Leiden MS Or. 14533 (part of *al-Muqaffá*) had already been described by J. J. Witkam and the same can also be said of MS Or. 560 which, as early as 1851, was very precisely analyzed by de Goeje (the latter not cited).

To conclude, Sayyid must be commended for having undertaken the task of editing the *Khīṭaṭ*, a task that nobody else felt up to until now. In achieving it, he managed to collect the best manuscripts, and to produce a readable text, full of scientific annotations and illustrations which help the reader to better understand al-Maqrīzī's text, probably better than ever. However, for the reasons I have given, we clearly cannot consider his work a critical edition, as it is defined nowadays, or a definitive one. It is to be hoped that in the near future he will be able to produce a second edition closer to the version of the *Khīṭaṭ* as al-Maqrīzī wrote it and giving full satisfaction to the reader from a critical point of view.

‘ALĪ IBN DĀWŪD AL-JAWHARĪ AL-ŞAYRAFĪ, *Inbā’ al-Ḥasr bi-Abnā’ al-‘Aşr*, 2nd ed. Edited by Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo: al-Ḥay’ah al-Mişriyah al-‘Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 2002). Pp. 22, 562.

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This printed version of the *Inbā’ al-Ḥasr bi-Abnā’ al-‘Aşr* is a so-called second edition of a text which was first published in 1970. In fact, it is simply a reprint of the first edition. The chronicle was written by a certain Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Dāwūd al-Jawharī al-Şayrafī (819–900/1416–95). This man was the son of a money-changer in the *dīwān* of the sultan in Cairo, who supplemented his meagre income by trading in the jewellers’ market. Although al-Şayrafī enjoyed quite a good education, he could never get rid of a strong awareness of his father’s low social standing.

After a while al-Şayrafī attracted the attention of Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449). This eminent and influential scholar encouraged his promising disciple to try his luck as an historian. At the same time, al-Şayrafī applied for a position as a Hanafi qadi in the capital. But all his endeavours to find good employment failed. Only once, in 871/1466, was he granted the opportunity to stand in for the Hanafi *qāḍī al-quḍāh* Ibn al-Shihnah (d. 890/1485). For some time, al-Şayrafī worked as imam at the Zāhirīyah mosque. To earn his living, he