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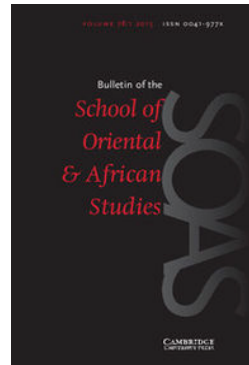
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Jean-Michel Mouton, Dominique Sourdel and Janine Sourdel-Thomine: *Mariage et séparation à Damas au Moyen Âge: un corpus de 62 documents juridiques inédits entre 337/948 et 698/1299.* (Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades, XXI.) 326 pp. Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2013. €40. ISBN 978 2 87754 296 8.

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Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies / Volume 78 / Issue 01 / February 2015, pp 182 - 184

DOI: 10.1017/S0041977X1400113X, Published online: 17 March 2015

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0041977X1400113X

How to cite this article:

Frédéric Bauden (2015). Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 78, pp 182-184 doi:10.1017/S0041977X1400113X

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their role as defenders of the caliph, whoever he may be, turning against their Yamani kinsman Ibn al-Muhallab and, more surprisingly, serving both Khālid al-Qasrī and his nemesis Yūsuf b. ʿUmar. Their role in the final days of the Umayyads, like the events and their descriptions in the sources, is quite confusing. Ultimately, they remained loyal to Marwān b. Muḥammad, despite his Qaysi tendencies. The Umayyads' collapse inspired some ʿĀmilīs to migrate westwards, while others retreated into obscurity. Rihan does not offer a clear explanation for the tribe's inability or unwillingness to pursue the adaptive policies that allowed them to weather previous regime changes.

Rihan's portrayal of ʿĀmila during the Umayyad period is consistent. They were loyal supporters of the regime regardless of tribal or religious factors. His analysis of the sources is sometimes a little too convenient – he finds ʿĀmila where he wants to find them. When the sources do not mention them, he sometimes assumes that they are subsumed under the label *ahl al-Urdunn*, or *ahl al-Shām*, or even subordinate to the Kalbis. Usually he treats the words of the ʿĀmilī poet ʿAdī b. al-Riqāʾ (the only ʿĀmilī source) as the voice of the tribe, accurately recording ʿĀmila's exploits, but when ʿAdī supported Ibn al-Muhallab, Rihan dismisses him as being out of sync with his tribe. Rihan does acknowledge occasional speculation about events where the sources are silent. One wonders, though, whether he is speculating too far.

After presenting his new narrative, in which the ʿĀmila are Umayyad loyalists, only vaguely religious, and consistent in supporting their powerful patrons, Rihan returns to the traditional story of how ʿĀmila landed in Jabal ʿĀmil. He finds no evidence for their presence there until the third century AH. Rihan dismisses later Shiite historiography, which asserts that ʿĀmila came to the mountain during the Rashidun era and were among the earliest Shiites, as polemic “based on little more than fantasy” (p. 136). He then rebuts the Shiite legend that Abū Dharr converted the ʿĀmila to Shiism, arguing that Abū Dharr never entered ʿĀmila territory and was not actually a Shiite. Instead, Rihan suggests that Shiism could not have taken hold in Jabal ʿĀmil until the third or fourth century AH. He does not offer evidence to support this speculation.

Rihan's work offers an interesting illustration of how, through careful use of sources, one can begin to reconstruct histories of individual Arab tribes and move beyond the simplistic Qays–Yaman dichotomy. At the same time, it serves as a reminder of the dangers of reading more into the sources than they actually say, as well as the continuing influence of modern historiographical and political disputes on scholarship, both traditional and revisionist.

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JEAN-MICHEL MOUTON, DOMINIQUE SOURDEL and JANINE SOURDEL-THOMINE: *Mariage et séparation à Damas au Moyen Âge: un corpus de 62 documents juridiques inédits entre 337/948 et 698/1299.*

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doi:10.1017/S0041977X1400113X

In 1900, the German theologian Bruno Violet (1871–1945) was authorized to open the *qubbat al-ḥazna* (Dome of the Treasure) located in the courtyard of the Great Mosque of Damascus to search for ancient Christian manuscripts, presumably of the Bible. The small building revealed itself to be a treasure trove in which 150 sacks of handwritten material on parchment and paper were found. Among these Violet discovered the famous bilingual Greek–Arabic Psalter in Greek script. The most important fragments for the study of the Bible were dispatched to Berlin to be photographed (the photographs were considered lost until their recent discovery in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: MS simulata orient. 6; see the digitized version: <http://tinyurl.com/nae7mrv>). A few years later, the remainder of the collection, composed mainly of Quranic fragments and Arabic documents and identified as some kind of *Genizah*, were transferred to Istanbul where they are still preserved at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art (Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi) under the appellation of *Şamdan gelek evrâk* (Papers from Damascus). It is there that, in the early 1960s, Dominique Sourdel († 4 March 2014) and Janine Sourdel-Thomine had the opportunity to study and photograph them. They both began to make known the results of their research a few years later, through articles devoted to one or two documents, sharing their discovery with some of their students (François Déroche and Solange Ory), but it was almost fifty years before they were able to publish the main core of the collection: the pilgrimage certificates from the Ayyubid period (Paris, 2006) and the present volume consisting of sixty-two documents related to marriage and divorce matters to which their former student, Jean-Michel Mouton, also contributed.

The book under review is divided into two parts. The first consists of a presentation of the origin and classification of the documents followed by a study of the material on which the texts were written and of the significant elements of the formularies the authors identified in the documents according to the classification they adopted: marriage contracts, deeds of divorce, receipts in full discharge for the payment of any remaining part of the dowry, and a few other documents connected to matrimonial relations: a contract for the appointment of a husband as manager of his wife's property, two legal consultations dealing with questions of inheritance, two requests presented to a judge and a private letter addressed by a husband to his wife. The historical, economic and social data are analysed at the end of the first part, bearing in mind that we are speaking of a small body of evidence (roughly fifty women and as many men) spanning around 350 years. Here, the authors address various issues linked to the legal frame in which the matrimonial unions were contracted (the relatively high number of divorces, as half of the documents concern separation issues, corroborates what we already know of the situation in the region thanks to Y. Rapoport's studies). They also survey the price of the dowry as well as the conditions of its payment, and how it evolves through the period covered by the documents, without forgetting the variety of currencies (and sometimes goods) used in such cases. Finally, they scrutinize the social categories represented in the edited texts, noting that, after the Seljukid conquest of Damascus in 1076, the rich families, sometimes with genealogical links to a famous ancestor, disappear from their documentation, leaving the space to some kind of *bourgeoisie* made up of craftsmen and merchants.

The second part is devoted to the edition, translation and commentary on the sixty-two documents written on fifty-one pieces of parchment and paper. It was decided to order them chronologically: twenty-eight of the sixty-two texts are clearly dated, while the rest are dateable thanks to the mention of the name of a person who could be identified in the sources or on palaeographical grounds. It must be

noted that the authors have not applied the rules generally prevailing for that kind of work, be it in the frame of papyrology or diplomatics. Superscripts, insertions, corrections and the like are not specifically identified in the text. On the other hand, they are accounted for in the numbering of the lines while they should be placed in the text according to their location on the document (or at the end of the text if this is impossible for technical reasons), with a distinct numbering. Most of the texts being fragmentary, and at times difficult to decipher, the authors must be commended for the results they have achieved. However, there remain mistakes which cannot be detailed here (e.g. doc. 1, line 15: read *Badr ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb* instead of *Badr ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Naṣr ibn*). A general index providing the names of the people and places appearing in the documents and black-and-white plates close the volume.

All in all, the texts made available to researchers in this volume offer a fresh insight into the social life of a city (and an area) for which very little documentary evidence has reached us for the centuries it covers. The imbalance noted between the situation prevailing in Egypt in all periods, and Greater Syria (with the exception of Jerusalem since the discovery of the Mamlūk documents from the Islamic Museum at al-Ḥaram al-Šarīf in 1976) now needs to be reassessed. Nevertheless, the documents edited by the Sourdels with the assistance of Mouton are mere glimpses into Damascene society: their relatively small number and state of conservation (most of them are fragmentary) is counterbalanced by the long period they cover (more than three centuries). This small sample is far from representative and any conclusions drawn from these pieces of evidence must be taken for what they are: partial.

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SEAN W. ANTHONY:

Crucifixion and Death as Spectacle: Umayyad Crucifixion in Its Late Antique Context.

(American Oriental Series, 96.) x, 99 pp. New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 2014. \$39.50. ISBN 978 0 940490 37 6.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X14001141

The inclusion of nascent Islam into a Late Antique framework has become common practice among historians of Late Antiquity, but still remains unusual among Islamicists themselves (see, however, the important discussion of C.F. Robinson, “Reconstructing early Islam: truth and consequences”, in H. Berg (ed.), *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (Leiden, 2003), 101–34). Anthony’s attempt at framing Umayyad crucifixion in its Late Antique context should thus be praised as an original contribution situating this institution in the *longue durée*.

Anthony opens his study with a bold statement claiming that “the Umayyad dynasty and its political fate were closely bound to the institution of crucifixion” (p. 1). The fact that such an important topic has not attracted much scholarly attention is explained by three main factors: 1) the false assumption that the practice was first and foremost a pre-Christian Roman punishment; 2) the wrong notion that the Islamic practice was a radical departure from previous centuries; and that, overall, 3) crucifixion was narrowly understood on the sole basis of Jesus of Nazareth’s