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it is supposed to follow this letter, as in many broken plurals. We have opted to include the *hamza* systematically. Furthermore, in many instances the *hamza* is employed over a *yā'* with points underneath, a common practice in manuscripts. In these cases only the *hamza* is retained in the edition. In some instances, such simple interventions would not have rectified mistakes but added to them. Here, the peculiarities of writing call for a more invasive approach. The word *shay'an* is rendered شياء several times, e.g. on fol. 7r, and in line with our policy of supplying *hamza*s as well as the *tanwīn* on *alif*s, we have normalized the writing to شيئًا.

No changes have been made, however, to poems by the author. They are often in forms that employ some extent of colloquial language and any intervention was deemed to transgress the authority of the editors.

Another peculiarity of this text impossible to transfer to the printed page of our edition concerns the layout. Kamāl al-Dīn often changed the direction of writing, text was amended or commented on in copious margins, and some of it was put into tables.

The margins also occasionally contain additions meant to be inserted in the main text, with a sign to indicate their correct placement and followed by the word "ṣaḥḥa (صح)". These have been included in the main text within brackets < >.

Square brackets […] signify text that has been lost or erased, while (…) signifies text that was not erased but we were unable to decipher.

This text is not always easy to understand and the order of events in a narrative may be hard to follow. In order to provide more structure and thus clarity we have decided to use a small amount of modern punctuation marks. Direct speech in particular has been highlighted consistently.

However, although we wish to present the original text in the language that its author used, this is nonetheless not a diplomatic edition. While grammatical and lexical peculiarities are preserved, some orthographical usages of often inconsequential but possibly confusing effect have been systematically adjusted. These concern primarily the punctuation and include the writing of *tā' marbūṭa* (ة) instead of the manuscript's *hā'* (ه) as well as *alif maqṣūra* (ى) instead of *yā'* (ي). Both phenomena are ubiquitous in the contemporary manuscript practice and do not reflect any particularity in spelling or meaning, yet they could at times be mistaken for personal pronouns. In other instances a letter like *dhāl* might not have received a point which could possibly suggest colloquial pronunciation, but since points are unsystematically provided it would just as likely suggest an omission. And since large parts of the notebook are not pointed in the first place, specifically in the margins, a systematic approach was chosen over a case-by-case one.

Explanatory footnotes are provided only when our interventions concern the consonant structure or *rasm* of the text. This is mostly the case where a *tā' marbūṭa* needed to be supplied for a *tā'*, two alifs were seen in place of one possibly to denote the *alif madda* (آ), or where we supplied an *alif maqṣūra* for the author's *alif*.

Vowels have generally not been supplied but were retained where Kamāl al-Dīn offered them. The only exception is the *tanwīn* for the accusative on *alif* (اً) to distinguish it from other uses of the *alif* such as in a dual. This has also been maintained where the accusative case is obviously wrong as is not rare in this text.

Hamza, too, is used unsystematically by Kamāl al-Dīn. Both on its carriers (*alif*, *wāw*, or *yā'*) as well as in its isolated forms we do find it, even though not consistently. It is most often found on an *alif* when

	Yeşil kutni [قطنى] ʿinayet 2	Two pieces of green inayat kutni	800	400
	Yeşil ʿinâyet yorgan 2	Two green inayat quilts	400	200
1068/1657	Patlıcanî ʿinâyet kaftan	Eggplant inayat kaftan	450	450
	Köhne sincabî ʿinâyet kaftan	Old grey inayat kaftan	300	300
1068/1658	Şam ʿinâyet, 5 ʿaded	Five pieces of Damascene inayat	2,250	450
	ʿİnâyet kaftan	Inayat kaftan	600	600
	ʿArakıyyeci Mustafa'da, ʿinâyet bahâsından		600	600

Source: Ömer Barkan: "Edirne Askerî Kassamı'na Âit Tereke Defterleri (1545-1659)," *Belgeler* 3/5-6 (1966): 236-7, 270, 291, 326, 368, 370, 395, 406-7, 430.

Editorial approach

This edition aims to be a faithful representation of a text that cannot always claim to be correct. Therefore, not only have obvious mistakes of grammar and style not been corrected by the editors, we have also refrained from pointing them out in every instance. To highlight every deviation from the proper usage in ubiquitous instances of incongruence of gender and number was deemed too burdensome for a body of footnotes that in such a manner would have swollen to enormous proportions, while at the same time too marginal. Furthermore, these grammatical and lexicographical mistakes reflect the voice and abilities of the author and therefore deserve to be retained. Therefore, only where the form of a word represents in itself a mistake and not only a wrong usage (as in احلي instead of أحلى) have we highlighted the correct form in a footnote.

Table 1: ʿInāyāt *in 17th-Century Edirnan Estate Inventories*

Year	Item	Translation	Total value in akçes	Itemized value
1015/1606	ʿInâyet (عنايت) Rüstemî kaftan	Inayat kaftan from Rustem Pasha	300	300
	Yeşil ʿInâyet kaftan	Green inayat kaftan	787	787
1033/1624	Perçemi ʿinâyet پرچمي عنايت	Fringed inayat	1,325	1,325
1047/1637	Neftî ʿinâyet kapama	Dark green inayat gown	726	726
	Darçînî ʿinâyet kapama	Cinnamon inayat gown	791	791
1049/1639	Köhne fınduki ʿinâyet kaftan	Old hazelnut inayat kaftan	1,000	1,000
1050/1640-41	Miskî inayet kaftan 2	Two musk inayat kaftans	600	300[149]
1051-1053/ 1641-1644[150]	İnâyet kaba köhne 1 aded	One old coarse inayat	71	71
	Al inâyet entari 1 aded	Red inayat outer robe	250	250
	İnâyet kaba çuka 1 aded	One coarse inayat cloth	870	870
	Yeşil entari inâyet köhne 1 aded	Old green inayat outer robe	140	140
	İnâyet kaftan	Inayat kaftan	290	290
1065/1655	Sarı ʿinâyet donluk 2	Two lengths of yellow inayat cloth given to soldiers	800	400

[149] This information comes from Levent Kuru: *29 Numaralı Edirne Şerʿiye Sicili*. Master's thesis, Trakya University, Edirne 2006, 114, as cited in Phillips: "Ottoman *Hilʾat*," 120, fn. 38.

[150] *İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri Galata Mahkemesi 65 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1051-1053 / M. 1641-1644)*, eds. Mehmet Âkif Aydın et. al. (Istanbul, 2012), 39, 321.

Damascus who lived for a time in Aleppo and Persia, wove "ʿināyāt cloth, which was silk-based."[145] That both of the biographers for al-ʿInāyātī and al-Ḥarīrī found it necessary to define ʿināyāt suggests its novelty or limited distribution.

Some economic historians have argued that in the late 16th century, with currency devaluation and financial instability, "[m]ixtures of silk and cotton became particularly popular."[146] While some silk blends may have been developed as cost-cutting measures, ʿināyāt was a valuable and enduring product in the Ottoman Empire. We have found reference to a sash made of ʿināyāt cloth (*shāl ʿināyatī*) in an early 19th-century Arab merchant's letter.[147] Closer to the period under study, Amanda Phillips, a specialist in Ottoman textiles, has noticed scattered references to *ʿinayet* kaftans in the estate inventories of male dignitaries who lived in 17th-century Edirne and Istanbul.[148] Examining a collection of Edirnan military officials' estates between 1015/1606 and 1068/1658 reveal descriptions of ʿināyāt specimens and their estimated value in akçes, allowing one to compare their value to that of other household items. It does seem as though ʿināyāt prices peak in the first half of the 17th century, as a kaftan could realize up to 1,325 akçes. By 1050/1640-41, a kaftan was routinely valued between 200 and 600 akçes. Compared to the entries for *alaca*, another cotton-silk mixture that was considered a semi-luxury, one generally finds that they were valued equally throughout the 17th century.

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(145) Muḥibbī: *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. IV, 48-54, no. 989: *al-qumāsh al-ʿināyāt al-muttakhadh min al-ḥarīr*.

(146) Faroqhi: "Crisis and Change, 1590-1699," vol. II, 452.

(147) Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. A 2837, fol. 75, letter by Anṭūn Ḥaddād to his son Yūsuf in Nābulus, dated Ramaḍān 1217 / January 1803.

(148) Phillips: "Ottoman *Hilʾat*," 120.

the pedal, then pound with the *kaftarī* [Persian for 'weaver's comb'], which is the customary sword for that. Some negligent people throw two shuttles, and with these, two pedals, then they pound. Among these differences are the throw, the shuttle, and the numbers [of these]. In this way are the two types differentiated. (fol. 61r)

Kamāl al-Dīn lambasts those weavers who do not produce ʿ*ināyāt* in the manner of ʿInāyat Allāh, because they are ignorant of the thread-count in the first place, not knowing what distinguishes the product they call ʿ*ināyāt* from the cloth invented by the actual ʿInāyat Allāh. In other words, they are not really producing ʿ*ināyāt*. We learn that ʿ*ināyāt* cloth ought to be woven with fine silk threads on a single shuttle, so perhaps the qualifier ʿ*ināyātiyya* refers to both a particular mode of production and the weights of silk and cotton threads.[143] In his frustration, Kāmal al-Dīn reveals interesting details about modes of production, though probably not enough to allow identifications of ʿ*ināyāt* among surviving Ottoman textiles.

We can glean additional information about the defining characteristics of ʿ*ināyāt* from 17ᵗʰ-century Syrian sources. In a biographical entry for the Syrian poet Aḥmad b. Aḥmad al-ʿInāyātī (d. 1013/1605), the biographer saw fit to explain that he was so named because "in his early years, he used to make a cloth known as ʿ*ināyāt*, which is a mixture of silk (*ibrīsam*) and cotton (*quṭn*)."[144] Some decades later, we find that Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Ḥarīrī al-Ḥarfūsh al-ʿĀmilī al-Dimashqī (d. 1059/1649), a poet and silk weaver from

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(143) See fol. 30v for Kamāl al-Dīn's disappointment with a winder of silk threads who sold him poor quality threads.

(144) ʿUrḍī: *Maʿādin al-dhahab*, 120: *kāna fī ibtidāʾ ʿumrihī yaṣnaʿu l-qumāsh al-mashhūr bi-l-ʿināyāt al-murakkab min ibrīsam wa-quṭn.*

with each thread averaging a diameter of 3.17 mm. Less skilled weavers threw their shuttles 440 times to get a quarter of a cubit, 1,760 times for one cubit, and 17,600 for ten cubits. The lengthwise weft thread count is correspondingly lower, at 25.89 weft threads per centimeter, with thicker threads that average 3.86 mm in diameter. If these calculations are correct, then ʿInāyat Allāh was weaving a cloth of exceptional, though not unknown, density. We know that *ʿināyat* is a blend of silk and cotton, but we are unable to determine whether silk and/or cotton threads formed the weft. If the weft was pure silk, then *ʿināyat* cloth may have resembled a pair of cotton-lined silk trousers (Topkapı Palace inv. no. 13/559) that date to the second half of the 16th century. The width of the loom was 68 cm, the length of an Aleppine cubit, and it boasts 31 wefts per centimeter, a density that distinguished it even among these imperial treasures. A group of Ottomanists noted that this "sturdily woven fabric … has an unusually high number of wefts."[142]

The difference between the thread counts achieved by ʿInāyat Allāh and the average weaver of *ʿināyat*, in Kamāl al-Dīn's estimation, lay not only in the quality of thread used, but also in the weaver's equipment:

> Many of those who weave and make *ʿināyāt* do not know what is mentioned [as ʿInāyat Allāh's ideal thread counts and techniques for weaving *ʿināyāt*], nor most of what pertains to it. […] The difference between the two comes from the quality of the thread and its lightness. The differences among them are: many people when they throw weaving shuttles, press

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(142) Atasoy et. al.: *İpek*, 323, plate 3.

geometrically printed cloth, it is difficult to reconcile this story with the material evidence. Perhaps the absence of printed silk attests to its having been a short-lived trend.

However, we can say more about the 16ᵗʰ-century invention of a silk-cotton blend known as *quṭnī ʿināyātiyya* or *ʿināyāt* that Kamāl al-Dīn had learned to weave. His teacher Maḥmūd al-Yaḥmūlī "took up reading [the sciences] and read with our late master, the master ʿInāyat Allāh, to whom the invention of *al-quṭnī al-ʿināyātiyya* is attributed. The cloth bears his name."[(139)] The word *quṭnī*, which was also an Ottoman Turkish term, denotes "a striped fabric made of a silk blend, especially in Damascus."[(140)] So, the modifier *ʿināyātiyya* suggests a specific weaving technique or a particular weight of the silk or cotton threads.

In an entry datable to early 998/1590, Kamāl al-Dīn compared ʿInāyat Allāh's specific weaving techniques with those of other *ʿināyāt* weavers. The deceased master, he claimed, needed to throw his shuttle 536 times to achieve a quarter of a cubit ($\cong$17 cm) of *ʿināyāt*, and correspondingly 2,144 throws for one cubit (=67.98 cm), and 21,440 throws for ten cubits of cloth ($\cong$6.8 m).[(141)] Based on these numbers, one can calculate a thread count of 31.54 weft threads per centimeter,

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(139) Gotha orient. A 114, fol. 55v. The phenomenon of silk weaves being named for their male creators or patrons is not unknown, see Victoria and Albert Museum: *Brief Guide*, 12-13: "Among the most delicate of Persian silk fabrics are the shawls known as 'Husain Kuli Khani,' possibly so named after their inventor. … Such a shawl (513-1874), dating from the 19ᵗʰ century, is exhibited in the [Victoria and Albert] Museum."

(140) Atasoy et. al.: *İpek*, 341.

(141) These calculations are based on data about the Aleppine "cloth cubit" obtained in the year 1584 CE, when this unit of measurement equaled 67.98 centimeters. See Hinz: *Measures and Weights*, 83.

also shows in his notebook that a quest for novelty extended beyond raw materials. New tastes were developing that seem to have led to an increased differentiation in the field of fashion.

New Methods

In his notebook Kamāl al-Dīn noted two innovations related to silk textiles. The first one is related as a story heard from his friend Ramaḍān:

> Concerning the production of silk (*ibrīsam*). With much embroidered silk brocade (*al-kamkhā al-manqūsha*), the embroidery is done by the weaver and the apprentice, in such a manner that it can not take place without an apprentice. But Dervish Ramaḍān told us that a Christian monk in Damascus invented something that uses a stamp to produce embroidery/ decoration (*naqsh*), but squares, hexagons, and triangles, not flowers or basil. Noted in [Dhū] l-Qaʿda 997 [September-October 1589]. (fol. 33r)

Kamāl al-Dīn clearly considered "flowers or basil" a more likely motif to adorn silk, an observation borne out by the vast majority of extant Ottoman silks featuring vegetal patterns and decorations. In 18ᵗʰ-century Ottoman inventories from Edirne, one finds frequent mentions of *Haleb çiçeklisi*, a floral-patterned fabric that was an Aleppine specialty.[138] Not only the process of printing patterns on silk, but also the use of geometric designs, would have felt novel to an Ottoman Syrian textile worker. Considering that there are no extant specimens of printed silks or satins from this period, let alone

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(138) Neumann: "How Did a Vizier Dress"; Phillips: "The Historiography of Ottoman Velvets," 18.

reactions to the steep debasement of Ottoman currency during the monetary crisis of 1585-1588, noted fluctuating prices for bread (34v). Materials necessary for the work of a weaver received intense treatment:

> The Crimson called "al-dūda" (the worm) is the crimson imported from the Franks. It helps against colic, protects the back of the throat, and is beneficial for sexual potency and for the dyeing of fabrics and in getting rid of cold. My master Muṣṭafā, who was known as Ibn al-Shāʿir al-Ṭarābulusī, acquired it when he arrived in Aleppo. He stayed in al-Jallūm neighborhood in early Ṣafar 998 [December 1589]. I say: 'Crimson is among the merchandise of recent occurrence in the middle of the 10th century, like the coffee bean, China root and Lahore indigo that also emerged at this date.' (fol. 44r)

Coffee had become widely available in the Middle East in the mid-sixteenth century, and at the time of Kamāl al-Dīn's writing had firmly established itself as the center of a new consumer culture, where coffeehouses offered novel opportunities for leisure and consumption. China root's popularity stems from its use as a treatment for syphilis. The earliest Middle Eastern treatise about the disease was composed in Iran in 1004/1569, so this mysterious, ravaging disease and its treatments held particular fascination and urgency for contemporary observers. The other two raw materials mentioned—crimson lac dye and indigo—have obvious application to our author's livelihood. For a silk weaver the only material more expensive than crimson were gold- and silver-metal threads.[137] Kamāl al-Dīn offers a general overview of the most prized commodities bought and sold on the market, but he

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(137) Mackie: *Symbols of Power*, 282.

meanings attached to it. Before the emergence of the public press about 1850 we are thus limited to official documents on the one hand, and very occasional references in chronicles on the other. … To compound our ignorance those people most interested in clothes and other novelties rarely wrote books.[136]

At last, we have a first-person narrative from an Ottoman author who was trained as a weaver. Kamāl al-Dīn also sold his cloth wares and, as a local merchant, he recorded legal and economic developments that affected the cloth market, such as sumptuary laws that restricted the type of clothing his customers could purchase and wear. On 10 Rajab 997 / 24 May 1589 an order was issued preventing Jews and Christians from wearing dolamas (open robes), *çaġşīr* (a type of large trousers), velvet hats, and sipahi shoes—essentially, nothing resembling the prestigious wardrobe of a soldier (fol. 29v). Ottoman sumptuary laws were a means of controlling widespread access to luxury goods, while also reinforcing social hierarchies. We noted above that Kamāl al-Dīn felt scandalized by Anatolian Jews being granted permission to ride horses. Similar anxieties about Jewish and Christian populations resembling the Muslim ruling classes likely led to the issuance of decrees such as this one. As all of this relates to Kamāl al-Dīn's livelihood, it is clear that a reduced demand for silk to make robes and trousers could harm textile workers through the Ottoman Empire. It was perhaps with some relief that Kamāl al-Dīn noted in the margins that this edict was largely ignored (fol. 29v).

The market was of clear interest for our author who reported on closed sessions between the governor and local notables who were first informed of the minting of new coins (59r), documented local

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(136) Faroqhi: "Introduction," 17.

moments. In the case of Kamāl al-Dīn, it may also have expressed itself in the special *'ināyāt* cloth that he wove. But before zeroing in on this aspect of his life, let us first examine what his notebook tells us about silk workers in 16ᵗʰ-century Syria.

Textiles

"Syrian silk deserves a more detailed study."[135]

The bulk of scholarship on early modern Middle Eastern silks focuses on Ottoman Anatolia and Safavid Persia. Nearly all museum specimens are attributed to Anatolia or Persia, and when provenance cannot be firmly determined, curators and historians tend to attribute their likely provenance to Bursa or Istanbul. A casual visitor of Islamic art collections or reader of art historical literature could be forgiven for assuming that the Ottoman Arab provinces offered nothing for studies of early modern silk, whereas the Syrian province was a center for cloth manufacture, a hub in the transimperial silk trade and even a site of weaving innovations. Late 16th-century fighting between the Ottomans and Safavids made Syria a center for raw silk, especially as the Ottomans never conquered the Safavid silk-producing provinces of Gilan and Mazandaran.

As one may expect, Kamāl al-Dīn had a demonstrable interest in clothing, weaving practices and his comrades in the textile industry. His notebook represents a boon for historians of Ottoman dress and textiles. As Suraiya Faroqhi has noted,

> [s]tudies of Ottoman dress are not exactly facilitated by the fact that at least before about 1900, we have so few personal letters, diaries and other texts available that discuss clothing and the

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(135) Gharaibeh: "Ḥarīr".

and that his name did not need further contextualization beyond the patronymic. The mere "ibn ʿĪsā" immediately connected him to the fuller dated inscriptions of his accomplished father.[134] Linking the two names suggests that the family were probably Armenian Christians from Iran, as were many traders in Aleppo.

So, while it seems that we do not have the signature of a craftsman in the Aleppo Room, the room's artistic idiom shows strong Persian influence. With an influx of Armenian Iranian mercantile families may also have come Iranian artisans, and rather likely, particular ideas about a craftsman's subjecthood and place in society. And there is at least one such craftsman from the Persianate world whom our weaver definitely knew. His name was Ūlū khoja Khwārizmī (fol. 41r) and he was a master painter (*naqqāsh muṣawwir ustādh*). Kamāl al-Dīn quotes a Persian chronogram of his on the death of Shāh Ṭahmāsp in the year 985 that he heard from Ūlū when the latter was in Aleppo in 998. A later marginal note further explains that he died in Rajab 999 / April-May 1591. Therefore, while Ūlū would not have been alive when the Aleppo Room was executed, he would have been one among presumably many artists from the East to have worked in the Syrian Ottoman city to adorn the mansions of the elite.

Taken altogether, the positioning of craftsmen as subjects of poetry, the incorporation of artisanal signatures into their wares, the preponderance of poets who were craftsmen, and the popularity of Persianate albums depicting the daily lives of artisans, and now Kamāl al-Dīn's own work suggests that craftsmen had long understood themselves as producers of culture and knowledge, but that this awareness expressed itself differently at specific historical

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(134) Enderlein: "Die Malereien," 38, fn. 7.

compete in painting a room. A curtain is hung to divide the room in half. The rūmī sets to work, diligently painting all morning, while the Persian spent only one hour polishing a stone wall. When the sultan and his entourage returned to judge their work the curtain was raised. The Persian's polished wall reflected the *rūmī's* work, enhancing its beauty and unifying the work. The Persian was declared victorious, his unique outward expression of his inner talent having made the stronger impression. This tale belongs to an old narrative cycle about painters from rival cultures–usually *rūmī* and Chinese–competing to decorate a room in a palace.[133] In this iteration the Persian's victory may reflect contemporary aesthetic preferences. This idealization of Iranian design is also on brilliant display in the Aleppo Room in Berlin's Museum für Islamische Kunst. Visitors to this institution can behold nine intricately painted wooden walls that originally enclosed the T-shaped reception room of Bayt Wakīl, a grand villa in Aleppo's Judayda neighborhood. If, after entering the room, one turns into the wing on the right side and looks up at the muqarnas decoration on the left wall, one may be able to read a signature in Persianate *nastaʿlīq* script: Ḥalab Shāh ibn ʿĪsā. In the art historical literature, there has been an overwhelming and easy acceptance of this name as that of a craftsman, even though it lacks the characteristic "work of" before the name. As such, it would be unclear to what achievement this person was signing his name. Did he create the entire room or just parts of the room, say, the muqarnas or the paintings? Did he work alone or did he oversee a crew of painters and carpenters? Two other wall inscriptions, dated 1009/1600-1 and 1012/1603, identify the broker ʿĪsā ibn Buṭrus as the owner of the home. We would rather accept Volkmar Enderlein's argument that Ḥalab Shāh was not a craftsman

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(133) Haase: "The Art of the Book," 86-89.

representations of individual craftsmen were widely represented in late 16th-century Safavid portrait albums. The popularity of these new motifs suggests that patronage of the arts may have been moving beyond the royal courts to elite and middle-class subjects.[132] Each folio in a portrait album typically featured a single individual, sometimes a middle-aged male artisan engaged in an everyday activity. One such portrait, drawn by the famous artist and contemporary of Kamāl al-Dīn, Reza Abbasi (d. around 1635 in Iṣfahān), is of particular relevance. This portrait of a cloth merchant who is flanked by both the tools of his artisanal trade (scissors to cut cloth) and writing implements (inkwell, two reed pens, and two sheets of paper), encapsulates Kamāl al-Dīn's self-identification as artisan and author.

All of these examples of the individuation of the artisan date to 16th- and 17th-century Iran. How could these social developments have influenced Kamāl al-Dīn? Aleppo's unique geographic location at the western end of the Silk Roads and along the southwestern border of Ottoman Anatolia, meant that it was open to Turkish influences from the north and was home to many Iranian merchants and artisans. Armenians in Aleppo were especially valuable as brokers between silk providers in Iran and Christian European buyers in Aleppo. Though their numbers were small, they were generally wealthy, elite members of local society. It is difficult to know which one of Kamāl al-Dīn's associates came from Iranian backgrounds. Still, the notebook records an interesting story about Persian artisans (16r). In 997/1589 Kamāl al-Dīn attended a sermon at the Bānqūsā mosque in Aleppo about master painters at the Ottoman court. In this story Sultan Suleiman (r. 926-974/1520-66) invited a Persian and a *rūmī* to

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(132) Farhad: *Safavid Single Page Painting*, 5.

Kāshānī signed and dated the so-called Ardabil carpet in 946/1539-40
(V&A:272-1893). An early 17ᵗʰ-century silk cope (V&A: T.477-1894,
T.30-1926, T.211-1930) bears traces of the Armenian inscription of a
weaver named Yakov.[128] This moment, which coincides with Kamāl
al-Dīn's composition, may represent a critical shift in weavers' and
painters' relationships to their products, presenting their persons
as integral to the creation of and their reputations as central to the
reception of their fabrics or paintings.

In addition to these self-identifying inscriptions on products, we can
also trace developments in representations of craftsmen as subjects
of literary and material art forms. Al-Musawi has highlighted the
development in Arabic literature between 596/1200 and 1215/1800
of "an autobiographical/biographical poetic" centered on crafts,
occupations and professions.[129] Arab poets and prosaists, many of
whom were themselves craftsmen, featured their male and female
colleagues as literary subjects and were inclined to "create a pun or
make a point in a humorous celebration of their calling and craft,
using for that purpose the professional epithet or agnomen."[130] Such
compositions complemented the Turkish, Persian and Urdu genres of
shahrāshūb or *shahrangīz,* which were poems praising male beauties
of various professions.[131]

As in the case with artisanal signatures, representations of artisans
underwent an expansion of form during the Safavid era. Pictorial

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(128) Nersessian: "The Marcy-Indjoudjian Cope".
(129) Al-Musawi: *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters*, 124. See also the fundamental
study of this genre by Sadan: "Kings and craftsmen".
(130) Al-Musawi: *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters*, 124.
(131) Richardson: *Difference*, 53. For a 14ᵗʰ-century literary work devoted only to
craftswomen, see Muḥammad b. Mawlāhum al-Khayālī, *al-Maqāma al-Mukhtaṣara
fī-l-khamsīn marʾa*, BL Add. 19411, fols. 63r-89r.

to perceive how "the subjective 'I' is hidden and camouflages its presence in a genealogy or network of people and books."[121] This slight adjustment in perspective yields particularly rich insights when applied to crafts workers, especially considering that craftsmen produced material objects bearing autobiographical details, ranging from a carpenter's signature on his wooden pulpit to pottery motifs identifying the maker's tribal affiliation, to a relief rosette applied to the underside of metalwork that indicated manufacture in an early 13th-century Mosuli workshop.[122] Whereas the vicissitudes of book history and authorship are comparatively well studied, we have some work to do to piece together formal shifts in artisanal expressions. As scribes and authors had long been doing, medieval artisans signed[123] their glass,[124] metal,[125] ceramic[126] and wooden crafts. Some painters even signed their artworks, though most did not. One of the best known examples due to its wide modern circulation is the 13th-century artist Yaḥyā b. Maḥmūd al-Wāsiṭī who executed the calligraphy and images of a copy of al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt* (Paris, BnF MS arabe 5847).[127] Among textile workers and painters in Islamicate societies, the trend towards signing works only emerges as a *regular* phenomenon much later. In fact, we only find evidence of weavers habitually inscribing their names on carpets and woven fabrics and of painters signing their artworks in 16th- and 17th-century Safavid Iran. Maqṣūd

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(121) Al-Musawi: *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters*, 125.

(122) Blair / Bloom: *The Art and Architecture of Islam*, 110 (on Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā, who signed and dated his minbars in 15th-century Cairo); Frick: "Possible Sources"; Raby, "The Principle of Parsimony".

(123) For a general survey see Blair / Bloom: "Signatures".

(124) Mayer: "Islamic Glassmakers and Their Works".

(125) Rice: "Inlaid Brasses".

(126) Jenkins: "Muslim: An Early Fatimid Ceramicist"; Blair: "A Brief Biography of Abu Zayd".

(127) See Grabar: *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 10-11; O'Kane, "Text and Paintings".

had to navigate with his business. As our text testifies, ten *shāhī* were not necessarily the same as ten *shāhī*! Kamāl al-Dīn's anecdote of the stingy merchant from Diyarbakir illustrates how the marketplace dealt with this existence of different coins under one name. In this anecdote, Kamāl al-Dīn was paid in *shāhī*s, but realized later that one of these coins was heavier than the others. Meanwhile the merchant, upon becoming aware of this fact and regretting it, sends a servant to take back the *shāhī* of good quality and exchange it with a lighter one (fol. 11r). This makes a sultanic edict from Shawwāl 997 / August 1589 ordering that both the new and the old (*ʿatīq*) *shāhī* should exchange for 4 *qiṭaʿ* just the more puzzling (fol. 35r).

All taken together and all inconsistencies aside, the information provided on these few pages shows what a great loss to our understanding of the monetary history of a major Arab province of the Ottoman Empire in a crucial period of its economic, monetary, and fiscal development the disappearance of many of Kamāl al-Dīn's notes constitutes.

Artisans' subjectivity

Historians, searching for expressions of self in premodern Middle Eastern societies, have tended to consider textual evidence as broadly representative of social trends, even though literacy rates must have generally been rather low. Among these texts, first-person narratives are considered the most reliable indicator of self-expressive intent, but this prejudicial view obscures other textual forms of knowledge inscription, to say nothing of non-textual production, like tattoos that conveyed tribal identification or the popularity of oral narratives. Muhsin al-Musawi has recently argued that we need more expansive conceptions of textual autobiography, which would allow historians

price for one *qursh* as 80 *ʿuthmānī* at one point, but in the same breath gives the exchange rate of the gold *sulṭānī* in *qiṭaʿ* (fol. 59r). And how the smaller *ʿuthmānī* relates to the *qiṭʿa* is not entirely clear in another overview when he states that the *ghursh* would exchange for 80 *ʿuthmānī* or 63 *qiṭʿa ḥalabiyya*, while at the same time the gold coin would be valued at 120 *ʿuthmānī* or 93 *qiṭʿa*. Therefore, according to the first equation the *qiṭʿa* was worth 1.27 *ʿuthmānī* while at the same time according to the second it was worth 1.29 (fol. 20v). However, both numbers would actually signify a highly increased value of the *ʿuthmānī* to the *qiṭʿa* as the exchange rate stood at 1.5 before.

Furthermore, the market reality is not as clear as a mere listing of currency names suggests. In reality a number of different coin issues would be in circulation, meaning in these times of fluctuating coinage quality that several coins of the same nominal value and name but with a different precious metal content could be received. The analysis of a particularly large coin hoard (more than 40,000 pieces with a large emphasis on the reign of Murād III, and therefore the years of our notebook), excavated in Beçin in south-western Anatolia, reveals coin issues from several centuries and from mints all over the empire as well as Europe.[120] And a visit by the authors to the American Numismatic Society to study its coins from Ottoman Aleppo revealed a bewildering reality, with coins of the same mint and denomination ranging from small drops of metal to large discs, from paper-thin to rather heavy items. Tracing changes in a mint's output and possible correlations with documentary or literary sources such as our notebook when no more than the name of the ruler and the year of his ascension to the throne is mentioned on a coin proves extremely difficult today. Yet this is the market environment that a craftsman like Kamāl al-Dīn

(120) Ünal / Krinzinger / Alram / Pfeiffer-Taş (eds.): *Der Münzschatz von Beçin*.

II 998 (fol. 59r) and is also expressed in the marginal addition on fol. 11v that refers to a coinage reform in 1041/1638 while the central authorities followed suit only in 1050/1640.[118]

With this text we can see how the local actors on the Aleppo market perceived the monetary crisis and the reaction of the Ottoman authorities to it from the perspective of a local concerned artisan. Moreover, we also obtain secure data on exchange rates that are otherwise hard to come by for Syria in these years. Before now, similar information closest to the date of this notebook was to be had from the Ottoman historian Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī who wrote about the exchange rates in 989/1581 while working at the finance department in Aleppo, some scattered orders from the center to the local governors,[119] but most importantly from the letters of foreign merchants only.

In analyzing these exchange rates there are several problems compounding a clear understanding of the details. These begin with terminology: Kamāl al-Dīn names his coins differently from both the contemporary European travelers and Ottoman authorities, but also from the relevant modern scholarly literature. The coins mentioned in the text are the *qursh / ghurush*, the *dhahab sulṭānī aḥmar*, the *shāhī*, the *ʿuthmānī*, and the *qiṭʿa ḥalabiyya*. Throughout the text the generic term *dirham* is also used to denote the general idea of small silver coins or silver by weight (fol. 30v, 34v). What we do not find are the *pāra* and the *akçe*, standard terms used by modern historians for the two Ottoman silver coins in circulation in Aleppo.

Kamāl al-Dīn adds to the confusion by not giving the exchange rates among the different coins in a uniform manner. Thus, he indicates the

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(118) See a list of reform operations in Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 140.
(119) These are referred to in Pfeiffer-Taş: "Zur Geldgeschichte," 95.

mention of the governor Aḥmad Bāshā al-Akmakjī's (d. 1020/1611) efforts that provided a vague picture. According to this report, the governor "reformed (aṣlaḥa)" the coinage by minting "clean coins of good weight (al-naqiyya al-wāzina)", 70 of which would change for an *asadī* and 80 for one *real*.[116] The year of his efforts, however, is not specified. But its afterlife and development can be grasped by Kamāl al-Dīn's much later marginal addition on fol. 11v that the *asadī* was officially set at 90 of the newly minted *ʿuthmānīs* and the *real* at 100, marking an ongoing steep devaluation of the Ottoman silver coinage despite all efforts to reform it.

This apparently did not happen in sync with coinage policies in the center where the large accumulation of specie did not result in a general reform of the fineness of coins. Thus, the reform operations referred to in Kamāl al-Dīn's notes confirm the existence of an independent local dynamism that would try to reform the local monetary system even before the central authorities did.[117] This was the case in Rabīʿ

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(116) ʿUrḍī: *Maʿādin al-dhahab*, 198-199: *wa-aṣlaḥa al-muʿāmala fa-anzala min al-qalʿa al-ʿathāmina al-naqiyya al-wāzina bi-ḥaythu jaʿala al-asadī bi-sabʿīna wa-l-riyāl bi-thamānīna lam yataghayyar hādhā l-niẓām. wa-lā tūjadu al-ʿathāmina li-qillatihā wa-li-qubūlihā.*

(117) Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 143: "Very little information is available about the activities of the provincial mints during this period. (…), the archival evidence points to limited activity in a small number of mints (…). (…) the quantity and quality of provincial coinage also began to decline, but neither the local authorities nor the central government were able to uphold the existing standards due to the low volumes of silver arriving at the mints." Pamuk bases his assertions on evidence of provincial mints collected by Sahillioğlu in an unpublished Turkish dissertation. One traveler, passing through Aleppo in 1605, reports the following on the activities of the mint, Teixeira: *The Travels*, 70: "Within the Castle they coin Gold and Silver; the Silver Money call'd *Xays*, ten whereof make a Piece of 8, and *Madines*, 5 of which go to a *Xay*. This Mint, and the Customs where then farm'd by the *Jews*, and the Customs alone, by reason of the late War, yielded that Monarch 200000 *Chequines* clear yearly, and every *Chequine* is worth about 13 *Royals*." The "*Xay*" is the *shāhī*.

implemented on the provincial level in Aleppo. The first step consisted of collecting the means for the issuance of new clean coins through extraordinary taxes (*ʿawāriḍ*) that channeled large revenues to the central treasury.[112] A large levy was thus carried out in Rabīʿ I 998 / January 1590 by the new governor ʿAlī b. Alwand Bek right after his entry into the city. He collected the equivalent of 37,000 (presumably *akçe* in the official exchange rate) of "*al-amwāl al-dīwāniyya*" in only 15 days after entering the city, something that had not happened in ten years according to Kamāl al-Dīn (fol. 48v). Apart from that we also hear of the levying of extraordinary taxes (*ʿawāriḍ*)[113] of one *qirsh* per household (*khāna*, *dār*) collected hastily in a cloak-and-dagger operation.[114] At least some of this money must have stayed in the provincial coffers because in addition to the collection of specie, the mint of Aleppo also put out new clean coins, a reaction presumably to both the deteriorating precious metal content of the recent coinages and the large-scale appearance of forgeries.[115] Concerning local Arabic sources on coinage reforms, it was hitherto al-ʿUrḍī's sole

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(112) Kafadar: "Les troubles monetaires," 386.

(113) For the nature of *ʿawāriḍ* and their growing importance in the seventeenth century leading to a regular annual imposition just shortly after the events covered by Kamāl al-Dīn see Darling: *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 27, 83-100. Information by the historian Selaniki that no *ʿawāriḍ* were levied under sultan Murad III (reigned 1574-1595) are clearly misleading, see Darling: *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 93, but no specific information on the Syrian provinces was heretofore available.

(114) Fol. 49r; the plea to wait with the levy and give the operation at least three or four days nearly landed one district responsible (*mutakallim maḥalla*) in jail were it not for the clemency pleas of others. On the nature of a *khāna*, which could consist of several individual family households, see Darling: *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 105-107.

(115) Forgeries are probably alluded to on fol. 11r when iron tools to coin dirhams are found with a man. For many references in the imperial orders to forgeries throughout the Ottoman realm see Pfeiffer-Taş: "Zur Geldgeschichte," 102-103; on a court case about a dyer, who was accused in 1008/1599 of counterfeiting coins, see Faroqhi: "Counterfeiting in Ankara".

extraordinary tax.[107] This is exactly what Kamāl al-Dīn describes. But before the whole of this plan could be implemented, the ever deteriorating quality of the coins and their decreasing market value led, in April 997/1589, to a revolt of soldiers in Istanbul, some of whom were paid with too debased coins and whose salaries were accordingly worth less.[108] The disgruntled soldiers stormed the palace and the sultan had to appease them with the execution of the reform's mastermind, his personal favorite the beylerbey of Rumelia Doğancı Meḥmed Pasha,[109] a fact noted by Kamāl al-Dīn in Aleppo already in the same month, on 12 Jumādā II 997 / 28 April 1589,[110] followed by more information and a chronogram shortly afterwards.[111] It is hardly a coincidence that the first announcement on the exchange rates was proclaimed in Aleppo only a few days after news of the incidents in the capital reached the city, on 18 Jumādā II 997 / 4 May 1589. The events forced authorities to act fast, to try and both stabilize the *akçe*'s official exchange rate and introduce better coins.

What our text adds to the overall picture are details from the provincial scene. According to Kamāl al-Dīn, it would seem that both phases of the envisaged coin reforms of Doğancı Meḥmed Pasha were

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(107) Pfeiffer-Taş: "Zur Geldgeschichte," 79.

(108) The bad coins (called *kızıl akçe* in the sources) were the source of the rebellion, yet their nature has recently been contested. While all previous literature had assumed that they were the newly minted coins, therefore postulating that a harsh debasement in fineness actually took place, Pfeiffer-Taş clarifies that, on the contrary, the rebellious soldiers were furious not to have been paid with the promised new and better coins; see Pfeiffer-Taş: "Zur Geldgeschichte," 79.

(109) On him see Börekçi: *Factions and Favorites*, 175-183, 186-92; Fleischer: *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 118, 125-127, 133, 184, 295.

(110) Kafadar: "Les troubles monetaires," 386. Kamāl al-Dīn, who does not know the vizier's name but erroneously refers to the executed as "Anāṭūlī beylerbey," treats these events on fol. 19v.

(111) Fol. 22v. Kamāl al-Dīn, however, never draws a connection between monetary policies and the execution. To him, it was an impious way of life that led to the favorite's fall.

they are hardly mentioned by any chronicler of the period and Kamāl al-Dīn is no exception. Copper coins never play a tangible role in any economic transaction he mentions.

Taxes and coin reforms

The dates covered by the main text of this notebook, Rabīʿ I 997 / 1589 to Shaʿbān 998 / 1590, put it squarely in the middle of one of the most important developments in Ottoman economic history, one that has generated an equally important debate among historians. Besides sitting at the end of a long and devastating Ottoman-Safavid war (986/1578-998/1590), these years also follow on the heels of one of the most severe devaluations of the Ottomans' small silver coin, the *akçe*, in 1585, eventually reducing its official value by half.[104] The following years are marked by a steady deterioration of the coins' metal content, and a resulting "price revolution" that since Barkan's influential study "The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century" was seen as a turning point leading to long-term economic decline of the Empire.[105] Pamuk has demonstrated that Barkan made serious errors and overstated the actual price increases dramatically,[106] but the general trend of rising prices and an increasingly fluctuating value of the several silver coins issued by the Ottomans among themselves as well as towards imported European money remains unchallenged.

Ultimately, the Ottoman authorities reacted with a plan to mint new coins of a higher precious metal content that was to be financed through an Empire-wide collection of large sums of money with an

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(104) Pfeiffer-Taş: "Zur Geldgeschichte," 77-78, argues that the actual implementation of the devaluation, that is the minting of coins with a lighter weight equivalent to the new orders, was only begun in 1586 at the earliest.

(105) Barkan: "The Price Revolution". For a general survey of the decline paradigm, see Darling: *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 2-21.

(106) Pamuk: "The Price Revolution," 79-80.

and then paying only part of those to cover the duty of one such *qursh* owed towards the state. This would explain the shortage of *'uthmānī* coins on the market. But if this was indeed the case, why would the treasury accept such unfavorable terms? Was it because they wanted to take the debased coin off the market before issuing a more stable one? Was it because they would use the *'uthmānī* to mint the bigger *shāhīs* without loss because these latter were so greatly overvalued on the market with regard to its silver content?[100] Another possibility is, of course, that the treasury would not accept the *'uthmānī* but insist on being paid the taxes due in that unit with grossly undervalued *qurūsh*.

The *dhahab sulṭānī aḥmar* is the Ottoman gold coin minted in several provinces with Aleppo among them, and kept remarkably stable on the same foot as the Venetian ducat or *zecchino*.[101] Nonetheless, a traveler who visited Aleppo in 1004/1596, close to our source, still comments that the foreign gold coins were more accepted than the local ones.[102]

Lastly, copper coins probably played a pivotal role in the everyday economy. Kamāl al-Dīn mentions how the governor brought in the coppersmiths (fol. 59r: *wa-jāba l-naḥḥāsīn li-ajl nuḥās al-fulūs*) during his efforts for a coinage reform in Rabīʿ II 998/1590, and specimens of the coins that have been produced as a result of these actions are attested.[103] But as a means for the smallest exchanges of petty items

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(100) Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 101-105.

(101) Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 59-62. On p. 62 we read: "The standards of the sultani remained fixed and it exchanged at par against the ducat for most of the sixteenth century. The exchange rate between the two coins began to change in favor of the ducat early in the seventeenth century, however."

(102) Moryson: *An Itinerary*, vol. II, 125: "In Turkey the gold zechines of Venice are most currant, and preferred even before their owne Sultanones of gold."

(103) See the coin 12-Hlb-19, minted in Ḥalab in 998, in Kabaklarlı: *"Mangır"*, 418. We are grateful to Stefan Heidemann for providing us with this reference.

Pamuk and Venzke it can now be asserted that the *qiṭʿa ḥalabiyya* was not only a unit of account but actually a minted coin until the end of the 10th / 16th century.[98]

The *ʿuthmānī* (usually referenced in the literature by the Turkish name *akçe*) is the contented silver piece that was so severely devalued in 993/1585. Why, then, was it not found on the market according to Kamāl al-Dīn? A later anecdote from the historian al-ʿUrḍī teaches us that the disappearance of coins was not necessarily due to their low esteem and lack of acceptance on the market, but rather to widespread acceptance (*qubūl*) and a large demand.[99] Additionally, Kamāl al-Dīn's report on the gathering of taxes in Rabīʿ I 998/1590 may help to answer this question (fol. 49r). Here Kamāl al-Dīn hints to the existence of a large gap between the current market rate (*ʿalā ḥisāb al-jārī*) of the *ʿuthmānī* and its official evaluation (*ʿalā ḥisāb al-dīwān*). A *qursh* on the market would be exchanged at 105 *ʿuthmānī*. The dīwān clearly overvalued the smaller coin by setting the exchange rate at 80 *ʿuthmānī* for the *qursh* plus a fee of 5 *ʿuthmānī* for the official charged with taking the taxes. Thus, if the officials indeed accepted the local coins, it would have been favorable to pay any official duties with the *ʿuthmānī*, exchanging a *qursh* coming into the country with the European merchants into local coins on the market

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(98) Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 99-100 calls the *qiṭʿa ḥalabiyya* "most likely a former coin" and discusses the district of Jerusalem, where "the para began to establish itself and the halabiyya was replaced completely by the 1560s." Specifically about Aleppo he relates: "The halabiyya or the akçe of Aleppo was also mentioned in the court records and tax registers of the *sanjak* (district) of Aleppo during the first half of the sixteenth century. Its exchange rate was usually given at two-and-a-half Ottoman akçes." His source is Margaret Leigh Venzke: *The Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Sanjak of Aleppo: A Study of Provincial Taxation*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, New York 1981.

(99) ʿUrḍī: *Maʿādin al-dhahab*, 198-199: "*wa-lam tūjad al-ʿathāmina li-qillatihā wa-li-qubūlihā*".

constantly overvalued their exchange rate in relation to their silver content.

The *qiṭ'a ḥalabiyya* was a smaller silver piece obviously minted locally. According to Tezcan, the *qiṭ'a* is generally a term used for Mamluk silver coins called *mu'ayyadī* (still reminiscent in the *maydin/médin* of European writers much later) and superseded in 1518 by the local coins newly minted after the Ottoman conquest, called *para*.[94] Kamāl al-Dīn never uses either term, but his *qiṭ'a ḥalabiyya* constantly has the same nominal value as Tezcan's *para*, which in turn is of the same value as the *medin* or *maidin* of the contemporary European travelers.[95] It must have already been a very light silver coin at this point since it was expressly not touched by the changes of Jumādā II 997/May 1589 because, as Kamāl al-Dīn puts it, "had he changed them for defective coins (*mu'āmala khurda*),[96] nobody would have touched them for their low silver content (*li-safālat 'iyārihā*)" (fol. 20v). Besides the *qiṭ'a ḥalabiyya* there was also a *qiṭ'a* of account, the *qiṭ'a 'adadiyya*, nominally worth twice as much.[97] But against

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(94) Tezcan: "The Ottoman Monetary Crisis," 466.

(95) The very stable relation of these coins to the *shāhī* will demonstrate the proximity of their value in different sources. Exchange of *pāra* to *shāhī*: 4 in 1572 (Tezcan, 481, source is official order), 4,5 in 1574 (Tezcan, 481, source is a traveler), 5 in 1577 (Tezcan, 481, source is a traveler), 5 in 1579 (Tezcan, p. 481, source is a traveler), 5 in 1582 (Tezcan, 482, source is official letter). Exchange of *maidin* to *shāhī*: 5 in 1583 (Tezcan, 485), 5 in 1584 (Barret, "The Money and Measures," 10, 12; also Tezcan, 482 who calls the original source's *medin* a *para*), 5 in 1609 (Teixeira: *The travels*, 70). *Qiṭ'a ḥalabiyya* to *shāhī*: 4 in 1589 (MS Gotha orient. A 114, fol. 20v).

(96) On the term see Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 140.

(97) This *qiṭ'a 'adadiyya* might be what the biographer Amīn al-Muḥibbī refers to when he reports of the governor of Aleppo, Aḥmad b. Maṭāf (d. 1008/1599-1600), that in building his famous mosque he stipulated 10 *qiṭa'* per day for the professor (*mudarris*) which would mean 20 "real (*ṣaḥīḥ*)" *'uthmānī*. The 10 *qiṭa'* in this case would be the *qiṭ'a* of account while the value in real coins would be 20; Muḥibbī: *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. I, 406-407, no. 243: في اليوم عشر قطع فضية، وفي قول عشرين عثمانياً صحيحا.

little space in Ibn al-Ḥanbalī's biographies when compared to what we know of Kamāl al-Dīn's text.[91]

Coinage and taxation

One of the most interesting aspects of this text is the information it provides about economic realities in the province of Aleppo, especially the turbulent developments of the coinage and exchange rates. The relative density of information is even more astounding considering the short timeframe our fragment covers and only underscores how much information we may have been deprived of due to the apparent loss of large portions of it.

Overview of the coins mentioned in the text

The *qursh* or *ghurush*, at this point before the minting of indigenous pieces of that name, was a large European silver coin–either the Spanish eight real piece (*riyāl*) or the Dutch Leeuwendaalder (*asadī*), though more likely the former. One of the instances in Kamāl al-Dīn's text does not specify which was meant, but both coins were not dramatically far apart in value from each other.

The *shāhī*[92] was a somewhat larger silver piece minted mainly in the eastern Arabic provinces of the Ottoman Empire that was stable throughout the 16th century but shared the devaluation of the *'uthmānī /akçe* after 1585. While they used to weigh around four grams, they deteriorated to between 2.2 and 3.1 grams.[93] Most importantly, despite this deterioration the coin was widely accepted and the market

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(91) See for the narrow, elite-centered focus of the sources Meier: "Den 'Pfad des Wissens' verlassen," 264.

(92) Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 101-105.

(93) Pamuk: *A Monetary History*, 104.

determine what had actually happened. Kamāl al-Dīn, again unlike Ibn Ṭawq, often wants to explain rather than only record what was going on.

Here, Kamāl al-Dīn's background comes through unabated. He reports on the actions of the ruling class and the *'ulamā'*, but mostly when they have a direct bearing on his life. We hear of venerated scholars and Sufis because he has visited them, we hear about the *dizdār* of the citadel because he made a garment for and had conversations with him. Very often he turns his attention to the market, to fellow artisans, minor and now forgotten scholars, in short decidedly not the notables of his community. In this he is even more radical than Ibn Budayr nearly two centuries later, who certainly was an artisan as well, but was more interested in what happened in the governor's palace than in his own shop. Turning one's attention towards the commoners was a decision at odds with the tastes of some scholars who simply did not allow commoners to be a worthy subject of history-writing. It was nonetheless precisely in Aleppo where Kamāl al-Dīn could find some measure of contemporary inspiration in the historian Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (d. 971/1563). This scholar was reportedly criticized by his Damascene biographer Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī for devoting too much space in his biographical collection *Durr al-ḥabab* to non-elites. Ghazzī, according to this, ironically speculated that Ibn al-Ḥanbalī might have run out of biographees for some letters and filled their ranks with sculptors, merchants, singers, or builders.[90] Even so, it must be stressed that these non-elites take up relatively

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(90) The quote by al-Ghazzī goes as follows: *wa-rubbamā akmala al-asmāʾ li-ʾallā yakhlū al-ḥarf min al-tarājim bi-naqqāsh ʾaw tājir ʾaw mughannin ʾaw muṭanbir ʾaw ʿāshiq ʾaw miʿmār ʾaw ghayrahum min al-ʿawāmm.* It needs to be stressed that we could not verify this independently! This quote is taken from the editors in Ghazzī: *Luṭf al-samar*, vol. I, 133 with reference to al-Ghazzī's *al-Kawākib al-sāʾira*, yet it is not found in any of the text's editions within the biography of Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥanbalī.

hopefully unearth more details.[89] Indeed, Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook may be more easily compared to one of the few catalogued specimens. An unknown Damascene writer has recorded the events of his city at least during the years 1137/1725 and 1138/1726 in a similar mixture of history writing and recipes, but we are left with no more than five folios of what might have been a much larger text (Wetzstein II 1748, fol. 55r-60r and back doublure).

Audience

Despite its unusual and incoherent form, the text in its present state was meant to be more than an *aide-mémoire* for its author's eyes only, serving as a reference for conversations or later works. It was meant to be read and it was definitely shown around already by the author as several signed interventions from other writers attest, namely the poems by Aḥmad al-Rammāl (fol. 43v) and Muḥammad al-Nāyirān (fol. 46v), as well as the *ijāza* by Fatḥ Allāh al-Baylūnī (fol. 60r). Later traces are unfortunately limited to the single ownership note by Ḥusayn al-Wafā' in 1151/1738-39 discussed above.

Besides formal traces of an actual audience, speculations on the intended readers may be based on content and historiographical perspective. Here it is worth noting that our text was clearly written with posterity in mind! It is mindful of those who would not anymore understand how the Aleppo of the author's lifetime functioned and, luckily for its modern readers, explains the obvious. Again, this is in stark contrast to the journal of Ibn Ṭawq whose laconic reference to the relations around him often leave the reader with much work to

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(89) For hints to other such texts worthy of exploration see Meier: "Dimensionen und Krisen des Selbst," 7. For the late Mamluk *ʿālim* Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480) keeping several "large notebooks" to collect dreams, see Guo: "Tales of a Medieval Cairene Harem," 112.

Indeed, although they have largely not been recovered and much less studied yet, other commonplace books were known in Kamāl al-Dīn's place and time and might have looked similar to his own. Thus, the biography of Kamāl al-Dīn's friend Fatḥ Allāh b. Maḥmūd al-Baylūnī notes that he kept collections of strange information (*majāmīʿ ishtamalat ʿalā taʿālīq gharība*).[86] This might refer to texts like the title-less fragment of an autograph notebook preserved today in Damascus (Maktabat al-Asad, MS 4325).[87] Here we find, besides some of the author's own works, dated accounts of meetings with and biographies of his students, occasionally accompanied by small biographies and routinely commented on and augmented later in the margins. While this is not quite the same range of subjects as found in Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook, the general practice and structure of both texts are strikingly similar. Contemporaneous to these two, but outside of their social and scholarly orbits, was the Damascene judge Akmal al-Dīn b. Mufliḥ (d. 1011/1603), who composed at least 15 volumes of notebooks, of which three have so far been identified.[88]

It can be argued that Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook is a valuable new mosaic piece in this tradition, and that, when compared to the examples cited above, it has its peculiarities. It does not focus as heavily on poetry, includes more chronistic material, more references to crafts and market realities, and its author was not a career scholar. The archaeology of this genre still needs to be continued and will

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(86) Ṭabbākh, *Iʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, vol. VI, 225.

(87) See for an analysis of its content Schwarz: "Ich erzähle nichts als die Wahrheit!" 84-89. Schwarz, on 88, identifies the father Maḥmūd as a possible inspiration for Fatḥ Allāh's notes. If true, this would be just the more remarkable as Kamāl al-Dīn was a recurrent guest in Maḥmūd's circle.

(88) Oxford, Bodleian MS Pococke 26; Berlin, Staatsbibliothek MS We II 408; Beirut, American University of Beirut MS 892.708:M23maA:c.1. Richardson: "The Holograph Notebooks".

plays. Another thing routinely found on these flyleaves are dates of births and deaths, either of famous contemporaries or continuing within one family and sometimes covering several generations.[85]

Certainly, there is a long way from these haphazard notes, even if an editor can collect and arrange them in chronological order as happened with Munajjid's edition of Ismāʿīl al-Maḥāsinī's *Kunnāsh*, and the 63 folios that remain of Kamāl al-Dīn's systematic collection. Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook can partly be seen as an extrapolation from these practices, as the will to put the margins central and to do it with some of the discipline that marks the chronicler of daily events. The writing down of the different texts presented here must, therefore, be considered a routine for many. But doing it continuously over decades in one specifically dedicated notebook is what makes Kamāl al-Dīn's writing an exception.

Commonplace books

This practice of putting together disparate thoughts, excerpts, proverbial and useful notes without chronological or narrative order and without the turn to individual introspection of a modern diary is called a commonplace-book. This format saw its early flowering as early as the 14ᵗʰ century in another part of the Mediterranean with the *Zibaldone* of Italian scholars and merchants. Are there, then, also examples in Arabic that come closer in form to what we see in our text?

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(85) The longest such line of genealogical information that Boris Liebrenz has located so far through his collection of manuscript notes is found in Ann Arbor, MS University of Michigan Isl. Ms. 626, pp. 3-13, 186: the notes of births and deaths stretch from the late 9ᵗʰ/15ᵗʰ to the early 12ᵗʰ/18ᵗʰ century when the last entry by Taqī al-Dīn al-Ḥiṣnī (1053/1643-1129/1717) identifies a woman whose birth is recorded in 1029/1620 as his mother.

medicinal and culinary recipes; notes of births and deaths of one's own children, relatives, and acquaintances; shopping lists and contracts; useful knowledge (*fā'ida*, pl. *fawā'id*) of any sort. Those are truly ubiquitous, but catalogues rarely even mention them. An illustrative case in point, pertinent due to its proximity to our author, is a manuscript (Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, majmūʿ 769) once in the hands of both Kamāl al-Dīn's teacher, Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Yaḥmūlī (d. 6 Rabīʿ II 998/1590),[83] and his close friend Aḥmad al-Baylūnī (d. 1022/1613-14).[84] Most of the leaves contain an as yet unidentified legal treatise, but starting from the last page and right after the colophon all the blank space of the following pages is filled with poems by various authors, verses to enhance one's memory, and a *fā'ida* of a grammatical nature. Furthermore, the layout turns with additions growing into the margins, different styles and boldness of script, different writing directions, and comments on the main texts in a vastly more cursive hand. Many pages of Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook look decidedly like these and other flyleaves.

We do not know whether Kamāl al-Dīn ever gave a title to his collection of notes, thereby choosing to identify with one of the established forms of literary production. This notebook is at the intersection of several textual genres that all have their individual history as marginal additions to manuscripts but can rarely if ever be seen combined between two covers. A considerable portion of Kamāl al-Dīn's collection indeed consists of the marginal genre par excellence, the *fā'ida*. Many flyleaves of manuscripts are literally covered by those recipes, sayings, anecdotes, prayers, jokes, or word

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(83) See fn. 36 above.

(84) He leaves a largely defaced but signed comment to a verse on the last page of the manuscript.

And Gotha orient. A 1290/1873 was filled, right in the middle of this old copy of a text on ruler's ethics and in a mixture very reminiscent of Kamāl al-Dīn's interests, with: news of several earthquakes (dated 13 Dhū l-Ḥijja 1003/19th August 1595), an exercise in writing a court document, a riddle, and the report of one Muḥammad al-Muwaqqiʿ al-Manūfī al-Ḥanafī al-Wafāʾī al-Hilālī on how he succeeded, on 5 Ramaḍān 1005/22 April 1597, to purchase a grey horse for the price of 900 *niṣf fiḍḍa*.[80] There are examples from Aleppo in Kamāl al-Dīn's lifetime: in MS Paris, BnF Arabe 1652 we find obituaries and natural events from Aleppo 991 and 995AH (fol. 207v) while BnF Arabe 1668 includes several notes on obituaries, political events in the city, and news from the broader empire that arrived there between 1005AH and 1027AH (fol. 223v). On a rural scale we find a villager called ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAbd al-Waḥad noting events in his village Barliyās[81] and on the harvest in the 1160s/1740s and 1170s/1750s in the margins of MS Berlin Wetzstein II 1636.[82] These notes on historical events become more numerous in the 19th century. They are surely not on the same level of note-collecting that Kamāl al-Dīn and later Ismāʿīl al-Maḥāsinī both portray, but show the same willingness to note memorable events down and keep them accessible for posterity even if writing a real chronicle was never the intention.

Other text genres present in Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook can be found in even higher frequency in the manuscripts of the region:

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(80) Gotha orient. A 1873, fol. 33r. The note on the earthquake is in a different hand, and the others might be that of Muḥammad who is otherwise unknown to us except for one ownership note he left in MS London BL Add MS 14055 in 1039/1629-30, where he calls himself Muḥammad b. Nūr al-Dīn al-Manūfī al-Ḥanafī al-Muwaqqiʿ.

(81) Probably Bar Eliyas in Lebanon's Biqāʿ valley.

(82) The margins have unfortunately been cut and the notes, written in a very clumsy hand, are severely damaged.

curiosities they witnessed or heard about, but were overlooked by
the catalogues that are supposed to guide us to them? The following
examples are likely to be no more than a fraction of what once was
but will hopefully serve to illustrate the broader context.

Besides the so-called *Kunnāsh* of Ismāʿīl al-Maḥāsinī, there was
even another such instance in which members of the Maḥāsinī family
had their hands. A copy of ʿAlī b. ʿUthmān al-Awshī's *Sirājiyya* on
inheritance law was covered at its beginning and end with historical
notes from Damascus in the 1070s/1660s and 1080s/1670s (American
University of Beirut, MS 349.1767 U85fA). Although Ismāʿīl al-
Maḥāsinī's name is not found, at least two members of the family
possessed and read the volume, respectively: ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-
Maḥāsinī left an ownership note in 1113/1701-2 and Aḥmad b.
Sulaymān (1095/1683 – 1146/1734) inscribed himself as a reader in
1115/1703-4. Earlier examples contemporary to our text exist, such as
the notes on several murder cases that had occurred in Baʿlabakk in
974/1566-67 and which have been recorded in MS Berlin Wetzstein
II 407, fol. 175v. A similar account of the murder of ʿAlī al-ʿAṣrānī
al-Maydānī by robbers and their fate in Damascus in 1009/1600
was recorded on the flyleaf of MS Berlin Wetzstein II 1383 by one
Taqī al-Dīn al-Ḥiṣnī.[78] Some reader regarded a medical manuscript
as the appropriate place to note an order from Constantinople on
12 Ramaḍān 988 / 21 October 1580 that prescribed new headgear
for Jews and Christians which resulted in many of them forcefully
uncovering their heads and falling ill (MS Oxford Huntington 596).[79]

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(78) Unless this note was copied a long time after the event, this man is not to be confused
      with the homonymous scholar and avid book-collector who lived 1053/1643-1129/1717;
      see on him Ibn Kannān: *Yawmiyyāt*, 277; Murādī: *Silk al-durar*, vol. II, 6-7. The name
      Taqī al-Dīn was recurrent in the al-Ḥiṣnī family.

(79) See Savage-Smith: *A New Catalogue*, Plate XXVIII.

Specifically, both are describing a palpable embrace of colloquialism.[76] On this level of language, again, Kamāl al-Dīn does not fit in. His orthography and syntax may not be flawless, but besides evidence of vernacular Arabic in his *zajal* compositions there is no clear embrace of his colloquial Aleppine Arabic.

This newly emerging chronology with an artisan writer in 10ᵗʰ/16ᵗʰ-century Aleppo need not be a verdict against the *nouveaux literates* of the eighteenth century as a distinct phenomenon since nothing suggests that any of the identified authors had knowledge of the others. But it should caution against models of a linear evolution from Ibn al-Bannā' to Ibn Budayr. Individual achievements and short-lived local traditions might still rest obscured and their identification could yet again alter our understanding of the literary landscape.

Manuscript practices

In its chronistic content, the notes of Kamāl al-Dīn are as impressionistic as those of Ismāʿīl al-Maḥāsinī a century later in Damascus that have been ordered chronologically and edited under the title *Kunnāsh* by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid.[77] The latter, however, had not dedicated a whole book of blank pages to receive his reflections, but literally relegated his note-keeping activities to the margins and blank spaces in the manuscript of a poetry collection he owned. On a smaller and less ordered scale this was a practice probably more common than is generally acknowledged, the traces of which still need collecting and cataloguing. How many readers felt inclined to entrust the flyleaves and margins of their books with the events and

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(76) Hanna: "The Chronicles of Ottoman Egypt," 248-249; Hanna: *In Praise of Books*, 4; Sajdi: *The Barber of Damascus*, 108-112.

(77) Maḥāsinī: "Ṣafaḥāt min tārīkh Dimashq".

cook, ʿAbdallāh b. Maḥmūd al-Irbilī al-Buwayḍātī (d. 923/1517), to whose shop the common people (*ʿawāmm*) would flock in order to hear his stories and jokes (*nawādir*, *ḥikāyāt*, *hazaliyāt*).[72] A contemporary to our text, al-Ḥasan al-Būrīnī, regularly met with the literate among the *ʿawāmm* and enjoyed their production of vernacular poetry, something his biographer clearly perceived as an oddity.[73] And al-Būrīnī himself professes his profound astonishment and disapproval of the life choices of a promising poet, Abū Bakr b. Manṣūr al-ʿUmarī (d. 1048/1638), who chose the life of an artisan in the market over the career of a scholar.[74] The threshold of writing is what bars our knowledge of these phenomena in most cases. Other early Ottoman examples of artisan authorship contemporary to our text could nonetheless be identified.[75] The underlying question to understand their production is one of agency and modes of transmission. Exactly when and under which circumstances did artisans feel empowered to enter into the world of authorship? Our text would suggest that a silk weaver of late 10th/16th-century Aleppo felt comfortable not only as a poet, not a rare thing in fact, but even as a chronicler.

The shift in the social background of the authors is described by Sajdi and Hanna as concomitant with the spread of substandard writing.

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(72) Ibn al-Ḥanbalī: *Durr al-ḥabab*, vol. I, 724-725, no. 228: *mā ʿindahū min al-nawādir wa-l-ḥikāyāt wa-l-hazalīyāt al-muḍḥika wa-l-maqāṭīʿ al-mūrida bi-ḥasab ikhtilāf mashārib al-wāridīn ilayhī*.

(73) Ghazzī: *Luṭf al-samar*, vol. I, 355-390, no. 141: *wa-kāna maqbūlan ʿinda l-ʿawāmm li-ʾannahū kāna yatanazzalu ilā ziyāratihim wa-kāna yukhāliṭu ahl al-adab minhum wa-yaḥḍuru jumūʿahum wa-yaʿruḍūna ʿalayhī azjālahum fa-yuḥassinuhā wa-yubayyinu maḥāsinahā wa-nikātahā*.

(74) Būrīnī: *Tarājim al-aʿyān*, vol. I, 288-291; Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. I, 121-133; Liebrenz: *Die Rifāʿīya*, 257-258, 294; for an analysis of Būrīnī's attitude see Meier: "Den 'Pfad des Wissens' verlassen".

(75) Behrens-Abouseif: "Une polémique anti-ottomane".

And although he might be the first weaver historian on the record so far, he was not the only artisan who entered the world of literature as an author. The exact chronology of this artisan entry into the written world is still debated in scholarship. Recent contributions have pointed to a new flourishing of literacy and related occupations in the administration among craftsmen and artisans in the Mamluk period.[67] Poetic production in particular may have been much older and continuous, although it would not always have led to a written record.[68] Thus, the production of a certain Aḥmad al-ʿAqāʾidī who, while being illiterate, had the confidence to demand from the learned master poet Abū l-Fatḥ al-Mālikī (901/1495-975/1567) a certificate to state that he was the *qayyim* (i.e. foremost) *zajal* poet in Syria, is cited by Ibn Ayyūb as a mere curiosity and setup for Abū l-Fatḥ's verses mocking the request.[69] A productive poet who also worked in Aleppo for a time, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥarfūshī al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1059/1649), makes his money as an artisan working with the *ʿināyāt* cloth which so prominently figures in Kamāl al-Dīn's account.[70] And another silk weaver poet, Rajab b. Ḥijāzī al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1091/1680), is recorded in Aleppo in the period, judged by his biographer to lack the necessary skills of *ʿarabiyya* but to have possessed an astounding poetical productivity.[71] Besides poetry, there are faint traces of a rich and vital literary production of the sort that appears in Kamāl al-Dīn's notebook as *ʿajība* or *ḥikāya*. Ibn al-Ḥanbalī records the popularity of a street

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(67) Hirschler: *The Written Word*; Behrens-Abouseif: "Craftsmen, Upstarts and Sufis"; Sabra: "Illiterate Sufis and Learned Artisans".

(68) Bauer: "Ibrāhīm al-Miʿmār".

(69) Ibn Ayyūb: *al-Rawḍ al-ʿāṭir* (ed. Güneş), 78.

(70) Muḥibbī: *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. IV, 49-54, no. 989; Muḥibbī: *Nafḥat al-rayḥāna*, vol. I, 189-201, no. 11.

(71) Muḥibbī: *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. II, 156-157, no. 421; Muḥibbī: *Nafḥat al-rayḥāna*, vol. II, 409- 416, no. 107.

Artisan writing

Over the course of a millennium, the extraordinarily rich tradition of Arabic chronicle writing and biographical collection was mainly produced by scholars and administrators (secretaries), even if sometimes minor ones. The first significant departure from this pattern has been located in 18th-century Syria and Egypt. Dana Sajdi called a number of Syrian texts whose authors came from heretofore unusual backgrounds "commoner chronicles"[65] and concludes "it took a thousand years for the writing of contemporary history to metamorphose to the point where the fully developed genre of the contemporary chronicle readily lent itself to being appropriated by a quite different cast of historians: the barber, the farmers, the court clerk, the Samaritan scribe, the soldiers, and the priest."[66] So, is this a "commoner chronicle" and is Kamāl al-Dīn a "nouveau literate" avant Sajdi?

Can Kamāl al-Dīn be considered a "normal" artisan or was he specifically suited to take up the reed? It needs to be acknowledged that Kamāl al-Dīn was not completely detached from the *'ulamā'* class. It can even be assumed that the Damsacene journal-writer Ibn Ṭawq and Kamāl al-Dīn shared much in their education: both would have studied fundamental Islamic sciences like *fiqh*, *ḥadīth*, and Arabic language, as they both mention studying or (in Ibn Ṭawq's case) even teaching them, and vestiges of these studies appear in their texts. But their career paths diverged, the Damascene notary staying in the field of professional learning, albeit as a minor figure, the Aleppine weaver becoming an artisan.

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(65) Sajdi: *Peripheral Visions*.
(66) Sajdi: *The Barber of Damascus*, 115.

Another recent attempt to make sense of the phenomenon of texts of contemporary historiography has been Dana Sajdi's exploration of what she has called both "commoner chronicles" and "nouveau literacy".[63]   Although she explores the roots of this phenomenon with Makdisi back to the earliest stages of Arabic historiography, she clearly sees the culmination and blossoming of earlier tendencies only in the eighteenth century. The key aspects for her are the emergence of a new class of local history writers from among those outside the circles of learning and power, who for the first time felt empowered to bring their own words to paper, together with an increase in the use of vernacular language. Our text can be compared with those 18ᵗʰ-century specimens Sajdi focuses on especially with respect to the first of these two key aspects, the occupational nature of its author. Writing a century earlier than Kamāl al-Dīn, Ibn Ṭawq was just as unknown to scholars of late Mamluk Damascus before the edition of his journal as our weaver is to those of Ottoman Aleppo prior to the present edition. But he was an *ʿālim* by all means: he alludes to many minor posts he had held in learned institutions[64] and worked mainly as a notary in the scribal environment of the legal system of educated jurists. Kamāl al-Dīn, on the other hand, clearly was an artisan. The most prominent chronicler to compare him with on the level of occupation lived nearly two centuries later, the Damascene barber Ibn Budayr, hero of Sajdi's monograph.

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(63) The former term is employed in Sajdi: *Peripheral Visions*; the latter term is found in Sajdi: *The Barber of Damascus*.

(64) E.g. Ibn Ṭawq: *Taʿlīq* I, 204, 350, 427; the frequent trading of posts he was involved in is treated in El-Leithy: "Living Documents, Dying Archives," 413; Wollina: *Zwanzig Jahre Alltag*, 49 erroneously states that Ibn Ṭawq did not hold any posts other than that of a reciter.

to our author in space and time, has triggered new discussions about the nature of diary-writing, namely Aḥmad Ibn Ṭawq's so-called *Ta'līq*,[60] covering the years 885/1480 to 906/1500.[61] In trying to avoid confusion of the chronicling of daily events with the modern understanding of the chronicling of one's emotions, Wollina has opted to use the term journal instead. Within this practice lies one of the greatest differences between the Damascene and the Aleppine writer. While Kamāl al-Dīn writes pretty regularly, he only takes up the pen when there is something worth telling. Ibn Ṭawq, on the other hand, is very disciplined in writing something for the sake of writing every single day, in fact he might simply note down that there was nothing to record on a specific date.

More texts like those two can be imagined to have existed. Furthermore, many examples of autobiographies and journals have been recorded contemporary to Kamāl al-Dīn in Ottoman Turkish, a language with which he demonstrates familiarity.[62] Their authors were usually lower ranking scholars or Sufis. However, there is no indication that Kamāl al-Dīn wanted to write a diary in any way like these examples cited above, that is, a daily account and reflection of what happened to him.

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(60) In light of an apparent confusion in this matter on the part of several authors, it is probably not inappropriate to stress that *al-Ta'līq* is unlikely to have been the actual title of the book. This assumption rests on several instances within the text in which Ibn Ṭawq refers to it as "*hādhā l-ta'līq*". Yet many authors of the time, most famously Ibn Ṭūlūn in his autobiographical *al-Fulk al-mashḥūn*, refer to their texts as "*hādhā l-ta'līq*" even though they gave them a distinct title in which this word does not feature. The *ta'līq* does not appear as a distinct genre and it is at this point unclear how precisely it can be understood.

(61) See Conermann / Seidensticker: "Some Remarks"; Wollina: *Zwanzig Jahre Alltag*.

(62) Kafadar: "Self and Others"; Zilfi: "The Diary of a Müderris". For general and meticulous overviews on autobiographical texts in Arabic see Reynolds (ed.): *Interpreting the Self*; Meier: "Dimensionen und Krisen des Selbst," 1-11.

conversations with oneself, is not relevant for the use of the term which is instead based on the formal and structural aspects of ordering its content by days. It has much in common with our text: Like Kamāl al-Dīn's text, Ibn al-Bannā''s has reached us as a title-less fragment in the unique autograph of its author and was probably never distributed through copying.

So, is Kamāl al-Dīn's text a "*ta'rīkh*-diary"? The similarities do not extend to all aspects of its content. As Ibn al-Bannā' shows no interest in anything but obituaries and events of a political and scholarly nature, he does not record poetry, sayings, useful anecdotes (*fawā'id*), or other supposedly interesting trivia that form such an important part of Kamāl al-Dīn's writing. Furthermore, Makdisi ties his definition of the diary specifically to the practical needs of *ḥadīth* transmission, where knowledge of the biographical dates and character of scholars was essential to evaluate their trustworthiness as transmitters. This kind of diary, of course, has been argued to have a very long, though somewhat discontinuous history in Arabic, one that can hardly be called a continuous tradition reaching into Kamāl al-Dīn's days at this point of our knowledge. Makdisi has claimed that texts like Ibn al-Bannā''s were frequently produced. His evidence, on closer inspection, seems not entirely convincing and rests on his mere assumption that references in biographical collections to autograph sources ("in the handwriting of so-and-so") rather than to specific work titles would necessarily have to be understood as references to "diaries".[59] But to this day, Ibn al-Bannā''s specimen remains the only one of its kind uncovered. It rested as a donation (*waqf*) in the Damascene Madrasa al-Ḍiyā'iyya and was therefore certainly unknown to our author.

Another much more voluminous text, more recently edited and closer

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(59) Makdisi: "The Diary in Islamic Historiography," 176.

stands. A good portion of the text edited here is history writing in its two most prominent forms within the tradition of Arabic literature, namely biographies (*tarājim*) and events (*ḥawādith*). In each instance it is one precise date, a day, that structures the historical or biographical narration. This day may not necessarily be the day on which an event occurred or a person died, but could be the date that knowledge of it reached the author.

The material evolves not around a city, a dynasty, or a defined professional group like jurisconsults or physicians, but one otherwise unknown man who calls himself simply Kamāl al-Dīn. While the notes are not particularly vocal about him and his life, he clearly emerges as the *raison d'être* behind every one of them: he was the author of many of the poems contained in this book, he knew the people whose biographies he presents, whose death he laments, who are praised in poems or compose them, he chose the anecdotes and sayings he found most interesting to commemorate and was an occasional eyewitness to the events chronicled. In short, Kamāl al-Dīn gives this otherwise disparate collection of texts coherence.

As much as it is, thus, a personal book, it is also not an intimate one and not one about its author. Chronicling the world around one's own relatively limited social sphere in notes that are not a retrospective gathering of material but a relatively ad hoc putting to paper of information as it becomes available has been labelled "*ta'rīkh*-diary" since George Makdisi's edition of Ibn al-Bannā''s (396/1005-471/1079) title-less narrative of events in his hometown Baghdad in the years 460/1068 and 461/1069.[58] The modern acquired meaning of the term diary as a vehicle for self-reflection, a partner for intimate

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(58) Makdisi: "Autograph diary (…), I-V".

over this fact with a uniform layout, this manuscript visually admits to its compartmentalized nature and production process by clearly setting every new note apart through spaces, the use of different reeds, scripts, and even writing directions. Unlike the polished form in which many chronicles have come down to us,[56] this is also a living text that the author returns to even many years after the events he described happened to update his notes in marginal comments and additions.

Two features above all single this text out among the Arabic literature of the early Ottoman period: the nature of its content and the profession of its author. Both are likely to signify phenomena of a wider occurrence, the chronology of which is, however, still not fully explored in current scholarship. The practices and forms exhibited by this text find their place both in literary developments in history writing and in general practices of manuscript usage.

Chronicling the world around

The reason for putting his experiences, observations, memorable readings, and guidelines to paper are not spelled out by our weaver in a programmatic preface, but a saying he transcribes at one point may be considered as much (fol. 11v): طرس شرح وصدق // وبالحق نطق [57]. Apart from this wish to preserve a truthful account on paper and in light of the many historical works Kamāl al-Dīn had documented knowledge of and the traces of which can be found in many quotations throughout the text, it is worth asking in which historiographical tradition our text

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(56) Noteworthy exceptions with regard to the polished appearance are, of course, the holograph copies of al-Maqrīzī (see among the many contributions by Bauden: "Maqriziana I"), al-Ṣafadī (Paul: "A Study of Manuscripts"), or Ḥājjī Khalīfa (Birnbaum: "Kātib Chelebi (1609-1657) and Alphabetization") besides other examples.

(57) "A sheet of paper explains and is sincere // and it speaks the truth."

al-Dīn and the important decisions carried out under him. Ṭabbākh, in his chronological account of the city's history, does not lose a single word on the events of the 990s while Ghazzī excuses his sole reliance on a 19th-century Ottoman source. In fact, for many of the people mentioned in our text, from the governor, judges, commander of the citadel, and finance director, to the most celebrated poets of the city, our author is the only extant literary source. Therefore, Jean Sauvaget's verdict is only mildly exaggerated : "Du XVIᵉ siècle à nos jours les sources orientales se dérobent : il faut leur substituer l'abondant littérature que constituent les récits des voyageurs européens."[55] Against the background of this dearth of native sources, our text fills an important if tiny hole.

The notebook may be most interesting to many researchers because of its chronistic material, but it is characterized by a wide range of content: *ʿajība*; *mathal* and *ḥikma*; *taʾrīkh*; vernacular poetry; laudatory poems; memorable events the writer witnessed himself or that were related to him; and any kind of useful knowledge Kamāl al-Dīn deemed worthy of preservation. As an historian of his city, Kamāl al-Dīn does not only rely on literary works. In one instance he also uses a court document as source for the history of a market (32r) while he cites other documents as noteworthy specimens (e.g. 20v; 21r; 46v, 54r). While other Arabic chronicles of the Ottoman era may also contain some diverse material unrelated to actual events but gloss

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=   door of the Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo. This might be a misreading, but it is not unlikely that ʿAlī b. Alwand had several tenures in the city since al-ʿUrḍī: *Maʿādin al-dhahab*, 51 relates a confrontation between him and the Sufi Abū Bakr al-Wafāʾī which, if accurate, must have occurred sometime before the latter's death in 991, while Süreyya: *Sicill-i osmanî*, vol. I, 284 gives only the end of ʿAlī's term – or, rather, one of them – in Aleppo in the year 1001.

(55) Sauvaget: *Alep*, x.