TWO AYYUBID DECREES FROM SINAI

by

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It is an unexpected piece of good fortune for the student of Islamic history to recover documents bearing the signatures of Ayyubid rulers such as al-'Adil, al-Afdal, and al-Kamil. Such documents are preserved in the archives of the Monastery of St. Catherine in Mount Sinai and form, together with documents of the Fathimid, Mamluk, and Ottoman periods, a unique and truly splendid series. The form of the signature is, of course, only one of the many details of chancery practice about which these original documents provide important information. Two of them from the reign of al-Kamil, petitions by the monks of Sinai and bearing the sultan's decree on their verso, have been published by me in another place; here I publish the remaining two documents, decrees by al-'Adil and al-Afdal.

In introducing these documents I can be brief, since the procedure which brought about their issue, and most of the features which appear in them, have already been clarified in my previous studies referred to in the footnotes to this page.

Decrees were issued by the rulers in response to petitions from their subjects in which they told of their grievances. Thus the two decrees published here were also presumably granted after the monks had presented petitions asking for the ruler's protection. That in neither of them is there mention of the petition, as there often is in decrees of the Fatimid and Mamluk periods, is presumably due to mere chance. The other two Ayyubid documents from Sinai are in fact petitions endorsed with the sultan's—i.e. in both cases al-Kamil's—decree. (The second of these documents refers also to a petition which had been presented by the monks to al-'Adil some years after the date of the decree published

1 For information about the medieval documents of the Sinai archive see ch. 1 of my book Fatimid Decrees, London 1964 (pp. 5 ff.).
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here.) It is seen, then, that the decrees were sometimes uncERemoniously written on the back of the petitions, whereas at other times they were issued in a much more formal way, written on a long scroll, with large spaces between the lines. It seems natural to suppose that the choice between the two forms depended on the importance of the matter in hand; and in the case of the Ayyuhibid documents such an explanation seems to fit. The decrees endorsed upon the petitions deal with rather trivial subjects, whereas the two decrees written out as independent documents contain general orders concerning the monks' welfare. Against this it may be remarked that some of the formal decrees of the Fatimid and Mamluk periods deal with what to us at least seem unimportant matters, so that we may perhaps conclude that the choice of the form was to some degree arbitrary.

Let us then take the first document. From 591/1194–5 al-'Adil was the effective ruler of Egypt. After the death of his brother Saladin he was at first the sovereign of the eastern part of the Ayyubid territories, while his nephews al-Afdal and al-'Aziz reigned in Damascus and Cairo, respectively. Al-'Adil, however, skillfully managed to intervene in the quarrels between his nephews in such a manner as to emerge the real gainer. In 591 he accompanied al-Afdal on his invasion of Egypt, but then brought about a reconciliation between him and al-'Aziz and remained with al-'Aziz as his mentor and the de facto ruler of the country. So it was to al-'Adil that the Sinai monks presented their petition. After he had pronounced his decision—either orally, or in the form of a short endorsement of the petition—the present decree was drawn up in the Chancery, on 16 Muharram 592/21 December 1195. Comments on some of its features are best given after the reproduction of the text and its translation.

See A. S. Aliya, The Arabic manuscripts of Mount Sinai: a handbook of the Arabic manuscripts and scrolls microfilmed at the library of the Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai, Baltimore 1985, scroll no. 11. Aliya gives the length of the scroll as 57 cm. which is obviously a mistake. A calculation based on the photographs, which shows that the scroll is about 35 times as long as it is wide, gives ca. 5 metres, so that it is possible that 57 is an error for 507.
This is an open decree, the order for the writing of which was given by the Master, the Victorious King [al-Malik al-ʿĀdil], the Most Excellent, Great, Learned, Divinely Assisted, Triumphant, Victorious, Combating, Heroic Lord, Sword of Religion, Helper of Islam, Assistant of the Imam, Succour of Mankind, Majesty of Empire, Crown of the Muslim Denomination, Protector of the Community, Lord of Kings and Sultans, Sultan of the Armies of the Muslims, Subduer of Unbelievers and Polytheists, Abu Bakr, son of Ayyūb, Friend of the Commander of the Faithful, may God make valid his orders and prohibitions, make the tongues of men speak his praise and thanks, illuminate by good deeds the times of his nights and the hours of his dawns, revive hopes through the bounties which his clouds rain and in which his beneficent days are spent; and [he ordered] to include in it as follows: We never cease, thank God, to protect the subjects whose affairs were entrusted by God to us, and whose welfare was put by the pure [religious] Law into our hands; we remove harmful hands from them, and reward those of them who follow the path of benevolence; we forgive their stumbling, and avert their sorrow and misfortune. We double this for their patriarchs and monks, priests and clergymen, their ascetics who inhabit cells, and religious who retreat into monasteries; and we appoint as their superiors those whom they prefer.

We have ordered to treat the monks of the aforementioned monastery according to their old-established custom and to leave them to follow their long-settled and agreed rules, and to accord to them protection, guarding, safe-keeping and defence; to prevent people from doing them harm or from intending damage against them, or from transgressing by changing their current customs, or from proceeding to render unsafe the road which is used for visits to them; and that the Bedouins, or for that matter anyone else, whether of the same religion as they or not, be kept from oppressing them or forcing them to relinquish the rules according to which they have been treated; and that visitors to them from Syria be not interfered with in any manner of harm or damage.

Let all amirs and governors (may God assist them), lieutenants, and officials in general, who become aware of this ordinance, be sure to act according to its order and follow its instruction and to disapprove of those who knowingly contravene it—acting in conformity with it and relying upon the noble signature above it, if God (may He be exalted) wills.

Written this fifteenth of Muḥarram, the year Five-hundred Ninety Two.

Praise be to God alone, and may God bless our lord Muhammad and his pure family and give them much peace.

God is sufficient for us; how good a Keeper is He!
We may begin with pointing out a curious blunder: in lines 23-4 the monastery of Sinai is referred to as "the aforementioned monastery"—though it had not been mentioned at all. The clerk in drawing up the decree was obviously following an earlier document and copied an inappropriate formula.

The document is a manshir, i.e., since the word has obviously to be taken in the same meaning which it had in the Fatimid period—an "open decree"—having no address and delivered to the beneficiaries, instead of being sealed and posted to the authorities whom it concerned. Its external form corresponds to that of the Fatimid decrees: it is written on a long scroll made up of a number of sheets glued together at their shorter side. A long scroll was needed, since, though the text is quite short, the chancery practice demanded that large spaces be left between the lines; such "conspicuous waste" of paper was a royal prerogative. The long upper margin (turra) is another sign of elegant waste of paper: "The upper margin is long in letters written by great men to subordinates, whereas it is medium in letters written by subordi-

*See Fatimid Decrees, diplomatic commentary part 1 (pp. 55 ff.). Ibn Shihh in his treatise for secretaries, which will be often quoted in this study since he wrote in the Ayyubid period (cf. for him my article on the Ayyubid petitions [above, note 2], p. 8) writes (Ma'salim al-Kitaib. ed. Q. al-Bishsh, Beirut 1913, p. 46; summarized by al-Qalqashandi, vii. 21): "It was never known to leave to open the hands of those delivering them, except in cases concerning grants of money—since the nobility of a letter is as its seal, and there are no letters more noble than those of the sultan." These words can hardly be pressed so as to make them include all kinds of documents: Ibn Shihh probably means to say that letters bearing addresses had to be sealed—excluding, however, manshars which had no addresses. Under the Ayyubids we find some diplomas of appointment described in their own text as manshars; see al-Qalqashandi, xi. 51 ff., 83 ff., 89 ff. (these passages are also quoted in the article "manshir" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, by W. Eijerkman). These diplomas turn to the beneficiaries in the second person, so that one should assume that they were not open letters, but were sealed and addressed. If so, one would have to conclude that the term manshir here lost its original significance, and was transferred (presumably from diplomas in the third person and turning to the officials and subjects in general—cf. below, note 47) to all kinds of diplomas of appointment. As I have said in the passage referred to above (in Fatimid Decrees) the history of the word manshir is still rather obscure.

† Cf. Fatimid Decrees, diplomatic commentary part 3 (pp. 193 ff.).

‡ Cf. Ibn Shihh, p. 40 (the first sentence quoted by al-Qalqashandi, viii. 20-1): "In letters emanating from the sultan one leaves space between the lines, so that there are about three or four fingers between two lines. This is not done in letters addressed to the sultan, in which there are no more than two fingers between two lines [read al-sultan instead of al-sulṭān]."

The slight upward slant of the lines is another peculiarity of chancery practice; this is further accentuated by the frequent writing of the last words above the lines (see lines 4, 6, 7-10, 21-2, 25, 30-2, 34—three tiers—36, 42). As I have explained in connection with the Fatimid documents, it is not advisable—at least not yet advisable—to attempt to identify the name of the script used in the decrees. At any rate the writing of this decree is a splendid example of chancery script, superior not only to the next piece, but possibly also to all the Fatimid documents from Sinai.

In its structure our decree closely follows the documents from the last years of the Fatimid period which have been preserved in Sinai and are published as nos. 8-10 in my Fatimid Decrees. The framework of the opening part is identical with the corresponding formula of the Fatimid documents: "This is an open decree, the order for the writing of which was given by so-and-so; and [he ordered] to include in it as follows." The last words introduce, in the Fatimid decrees and in ours, the expression of the general principles which motivate the ruler's decision—what is called in the medieval diplomatic of Europe the avenal. There is no reference to any particular grievance on the part of the monks; the text directly continues with the sultan's order to protect them from all annoyance in general and to ensure the safety of the pilgrims visiting the monastery in particular. There follow, as in the Fatimid decrees, final injunctions to the local authorities to obey the sultan's order; the formula used here is discussed below, pp. 34-5.

A feature unknown in the Fatimid decrees is the reference to the ruler's alāma authenticating the decree (mu'tamadin 'alāl-'alama al-shar'īja fi alākū "relying upon the noble signature above it,"). A similar formula of corroboratio also occurs in al-Kamil's decree on the back of a petition, and there is ample evidence in the documents preserved in evidence in literature to show that the formula was indeed a customary element in

* See Fatimid Decrees, (pp. 79 ff.). As I have pointed out there, p. 79 note 1, a document reproduced by al-Qalqashandi, Sūūd al-'Uqāši, x. 406, opens in the same manner.

† See Fatimid Decrees, diplomatic commentary (pp. 107-8).

‡ See Fatimid Decrees, diplomatic commentary, part 7 (pp. 113 ff.).

§ For the 'alāma, i.e. the ruler's signature, see below, pp. 24-5.

II Published as no. 2 of the "Petitions of the Ayyubid Period." [above, note 6].
Ayyūbid documents. Its lack in al-Afdal's decree published below is perhaps due to no more than a vagary of the clerk. The absence of the formula in the Fātimid period immediately prompted the hypothesis that it was the legacy of Seljūq chancery practice, from which the Ayyūbid derived it through the intermediary of the Zengids, and indeed a cursory examination shows that it was used in the Seljūq period. At the end of a letter in a formula of the Seljūq period we find wa-l-tīmād bā tawqīfī humand, and let them rely upon the signature; I assume—until I am proved wrong by earlier occurrences of the formula—that it was introduced by the Seljūqs who were also the authors of that new method of signature, the fuṣūrā. The formula was then adopted by the Seljūqs of Rūm, in whose documents we find it tīmād ba-tawqīfī humayyīn saṣand, let them rely upon the majestic signature, or words to this effect. In the Mamlik decrees the formula is somewhat different: the noble handwriting (al-khāḥīf al-sharīf) is evidence for its contents, or similar phrases—though we also find a phrase which comes nearer to the Seljūq and Ayyūbid pattern: Let one rely in this matter (wa-l-tīmād fī dhāliḵā) upon the noble handwriting at the top, which serves as evidence. From the Rūm Seljūqs the formula passed to the Ottomans, in whose fermons we find it in forms such as alāmāt-i sharīf tāṣrīf (later alāmāt-i sharīf) tīmād gīlṣa (or gīlān), “Relax” (or: Let them relax) upon the noble signature. Similar formulae of corroboration are found in certain types of documents of the Ṣafavid chancery, e.g. wa-chūm ba-tawqīfī asharaf-i ālā mawṣūdshāb wa-mawṣūdshāh gāštād tīmād mawṣūyān, “when it is adorned by the most noble and most excellent signature, let them rely upon it.” The preceding rapid sketch ought to suffice here, since my aim was not to pursue the formula through the whole of its course in space and time, or to track down all its minute changes, but to trace back the Ayyūbid formula to its Seljūq origin, and incidentally to draw attention, by a brief excursion, of the radiation of yet another Seljūq chancery convention.

The final formulae resemble those of the Fātimid documents and consist of the date and of conventional religious phrases natural at the end of documents: praise of God (ḥamādāl), blessings upon the Prophet, and the ḥabala, i.e. the sentence Ḥamīd is God sufficient for us; how good a Keeper is He!’ The following is the translation of the paragraph by Ibn Sīthī referring to these final formulae: “The ḥamādāl is not put at the end in the cases of documents containing decisions [read tawqīfī] about grievances, though it is sometimes put in the case of decisions about grants, written at the verse of the petitions.” We may interrupt here and note that the decree on the verso of petition no. ii, being a “decision about a grievance”, does not have the ḥamādāl at the end; the decree at the verso of no. iii, however, also a “decision about a grievance” has the ḥamādala as well as the ḥabala. Here, as in other cases too, the chancery practice has achieved no perfect consistency. At the end of the document one stops at that part of the line where the in sabā’īhā ta’ṣīla happens to end, and does not go on in that line, but writes the ḥamādala in a...
AL-‘ADIL’S TITLES

Having described the structure of the decree and discussed the main features of its text, a few words may be said about al-‘Adil’s titles which figure at the beginning. Since it would lead us too far to write a systematic study, which, to be of full utility, would involve the investigation of the titles of the Ayyūbids in general, I confine myself to quoting al-‘Adil’s titles as they appear in other archival documents, in order to illustrate our document and provide material for future studies. I then compare these titles with the titles which appear in al-‘Adil’s inscriptions and comment on their main points, without in the least aiming at completeness.

In a letter by al-‘Adil to the Pisans, of which the heading only is known, this ruler bears the following titles: al-malik al-sultan al-malik

In our decree this prescription is compiled with: in al-‘Adil’s decree the in šak’ū‘alāk is indented at the beginning and is written in a line of its own, with the end of the line left blank. The šīb seems to have in mind documents where there is no date at the end, but the šamāla follows immediately after the last line of the text ending with in šak’ū‘alāk. Al-Qalqashandī (vi, 234) quotes this passage from Ibn Shihh, but in a different form: “... it the formula in šak’ū‘alāk, not the šamāla] is, however, written separately in one line.” Indeed, al-Qalqashandī himself prescribes (p. 233) “blank space to its [i.e. the in šak’ū‘alāk formula’s] right and left.”

These two sentences refer to the arrangement of the document as a whole. There should be no difference in the width of the lines — this seems to mean that the spacing between the lines (see above, p. 14 and note 7) should be uniform. The “height” may refer to the height of the lines themselves, i.e. of the letters. The second sentence prescribes that the beginning of the lines (on the right side) should be in a straight line, though an occasional indentation is permissible — such indenting as can be observed in our document in lines 23, 44, and 45 (the line of the bashalā). and in al-‘Adil’s decree in lines 41 (in šak’ū‘alāk), 43, 44, and 46 (the bashalā).

Our documents make no use of this feature.

In fact, all the extant documents have ṣib-bashalā, against Ibn Shihh’s rule. The Koranic verse whence the bashalā is derived is iii, 173. The indenting prescribed by Ibn Shihh for the bashalā is observed in our documents.

Amari, Diplomi, no. 22.

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al-‘Adil al-sayyid al-ajall al-kabīr al-‘ālim 99 al-mujaddid al-muzzaffar al-humām ghyāth al-anām sayf al-dunya wa-l-dīn sulṭān al-islām wa-l-muslimin sayyid al-malik wa-l-salāfān bahlāl amīr al-mu’minin. In a letter from 1215 addressed to him by the Pisans 100 the sultan is called al-sayyid al-ajall al-sulṭān al-kabīr al-Malik al-‘Adil al-‘ālim al-mujaddid al-muzzaffar al-mansūr mu’īn [read so for sayf] al-anām ghyāth [read so] al-anām sayf al-dunya wa-l-dīn sayyid al-malik wa-l-salāfān nāsīr al-islām wa-l-muslimin Abū Bakr b. Ayyūb bahlal amīr al-mu’minin. It will be noticed that though the titles correspond in general, the order is not quite the same in the different documents, and that each document shows various additions and omissions as against the others.

It is also instructive to compare the titles which figure in documents sent to Pisa and Venice, the originals of which are lost, but of which there are extant Latin or Italian translations. The dragomanid did on the whole good work and rendered the titles in a recognizably form. In a letter of 574/1179 (Amari, 2nd series, no. 11): Dallo re giusto et vitorioso, 31 victorioso dell’abitanti fedeli, 32 spada della fede del mondo, 33 soldano di tutti gli eserciti della stessa; 34 in another from 575/1180 (Amari, 2nd series, no. 12): Rex iustus et victorius, conservator et spada legis Saracenorum, 35 princes militie Saracenorum, 36 Bucahecce Macumata, filius Iobb, feidelis elmiire Elmomin. These documents (like the inscription of A.H. 579 mentioned below) belong to the period of Saladin, when al-‘Adil acted as his brother’s lieutenant in Egypt; the following documents were issued during his reign. At the beginning of no. 22 in Amari’s second series (perhaps from 1208), we have a considerably abbreviated titulature, since the passage in question evidently renders the text of the

99 Amari has queried this word, but it can be seen in the original and is confirmed by the parallel texts.
100 See Amari’s notes to Diplomi, no. 27 (p. 412). Incidentally, in line 3 of no. 27 read d’assunzioni anghiarati (instead of anghiarati).
101 The first victorioso may render al-muzzaffar or al-mansūr. It seems that the translators did not meticulously render all the different titles which are in fact not easily differentiated.
102 This probably translates (though in a rather queer fashion) nāsīr al-‘ālim; I cannot tell why the translator chose the word cittadini.
103 Sayf al-dunya wa-l-dīn: perhaps we have to read della fede <et> del mondo.
104 Sulṭān ghyāth al-muslimin. The name and the title bahlāl amīr al-mu’mīnīn are missing.
105 This seems to be a contracted rendering of nāsīr al-islām wa-l-muslimin sayf al-dunya wa-l-dīn.
106 Sulṭān ghyāth al-muslimin.
In our decree and in the letter to the Pisans the titles begin with al-mamlūk al-malik al-ʿĀdil al-sayyid al-ajall. Al-mamlūk in the chancery documents corresponds to māslūnā in epigraphy and the difference of usage in the two kinds of documents seems to be consistent. There is nothing to say about the "personal" title al-Malik al-ʿĀdil. Al-sayyid al-ajall, "the most excellent lord", is, as he has been pointed out by van Berchem,44 a legacy of the Fātimid period when it was borne by the viziers. In inscriptions it appears, curiously enough, very rarely: there is one known example for Saladin, and one for al-ʿĀdil.45

A significant feature is the presence of the title sultan before the name al-Malik al-ʿĀdil in the letters to and from the Pisans: in the first it is inserted between al-mamlūk and al-Malik al-ʿĀdil in a formula which is otherwise identical with that of the decree, whereas in the second the formula is differently arranged.46 It has been shown that Saladin has never officially assumed the title of sultan, and al-ʿĀdil himself only adopted it late in his career.47 The lack of the word sultan in our decree is therefore in order; it first occurs in an inscription of 605/1208-9.48 The composite title "Sultan of the Armies of the Muslims" which occurs among the other composite titles is a different matter, since in that position and in such a compound it does not have the full force of a sovereign title which it bears if standing at the beginning of the series.49

44 For māslūnā al-sulṭa see Rép. nos. 3639, 3650-1, 3669 (al-ṣ. al-ṣamīʿ), 3679, 3682, (cf. 3685-8), 3727, 3807, 3815, 3847, 3867.

45 In CIA, i, 107.

46 See Saladin’s inscription of 483 (Rép. no. 3420; no. xii in Wiet, “Inscr. Saladin”) and al-ʿĀdil’s inscription no. 3800/A (Rép. x, 276), undated.

47 Al-mamlūk is missing and the titles begin with al-sayyid al-ajall al-sulṭa al-kabir al-malik al-ʿĀdil. Cf. the inscriptions of Saladin and al-ʿĀdil quoted in the preceding note, which also begin with al-sayyid al-ajall and are lacking māslūnā.


49 See Wiet, “Inscr. Gūz”, loc. cit., where the assumption of the title by the various Ayyūbid princes is described. Van Berchem (see preceding note) states that “in his later inscriptions al-ʿĀdil does not bear the title of sultan.” It is true that this title is omitted before his name in some inscriptions: some inscriptions from Būrāq (Rép. no. 3724, 3618) and Damascenus (nos. 3728-9, 3006), and some others in which he is named as the father of the ruler who is the author of the inscription (nos. 3629, 3661, 3721-2, 3753-3, 3779, 3780, 3891-2). In most of the inscriptions the title of sultan is inserted; see nos. 3628-8, 3650-1, 3690, 3697-80, 3882, 3727, 3807, 3815.

50 Cf. Eisiffte, p. 180: “Or le sens de ce terme est différent selon la place qu’il occupe dans le protocole. Il n’est souverain que lorsqu’il vient en tête des titres.”
The title in mālik is followed, as usual, by a number of adjectives: al-kabīr, "the great" (decrees, Pisan letters); al-‘ālim, "the learned" (idem); al-amīl, "the worker of deeds" (only in letter from Pisans); al-mu‘ayyad al-muṣafār al-muṣārīr, "divinely assisted, triumphant, victorious" (decrees, letter from Pisans; al-muṣafār alone in letter to Pisans); al-muṣaffal, "campaigning" (decrees); al-muṣākhab, "fighting the holy war" (letter to Pisans; both: al-muṣaffāl al-muṣākhab in letter from Pisans); al-humām, "heroic" (decrees, letter to Pisans).

Of the compound titles, which, as usual, follow upon the simple ones, the first place is taken, according to the general rule, by those with dīn and ḥalām, in our case sayf al-dīn and nāṣir al-ḥalām, which appear regularly in the documents, diplomatic and epigraphical. There is, however, one detail which deserves to be noted. In the decree we have the shorter form, whereas in other documents there is found the fuller form sayf al-dunya wa'l-dīn. As is well known, this latter is the proper "sovereign" form; yet in this case it is not sure whether we ought to attribute any significance to the difference, since already in his inscription of 585/1193 (Rep. no. 3463) al-‘Adil bears the full title sayf al-dunya wa'l-dīn; it is possible, however, that he denied himself the "sovereign" title in chancery documents during his regency.86

The titles composed with ‘imām ("Helper of the Imam") and anām ("Succour of Mankind") are a legacy of the Fātimid period in which they were attributed to the viziers.87 They do not occur in the extant inscriptions of Saladin, though they were no doubt used by the chancery. How capricious diplomatic usage was and how cautious we must be in drawing conclusions from our lacunary evidence, is shown by the fact that whereas the title compound with ‘imām does not appear in al-‘Adil’s inscriptions at all, ghiyāb al-anām, "succour of mankind" appears in one inscription only published from the notes of van Berchem in the appendix of vol. X of the Répertoire (no. 3800/A). The series in dawla, milla, umma, which have a long tradition behind them, appear in Nūr al-Dīn’s inscriptions,88 but not in those of Saladin or al-‘Adil. The proud titles "Lord of Kings and Sultans" and "Sultan of the Armies of the Muslims" or "Sultan of Islam and the Muslims" call for no special remarks.89

The Ayyūbids, for obvious reasons, used a great variety of titles which recall the defence of Islam.

In our decree al-‘Adil uses gumi’ al-hafara wa’l-muṣaffal. Several titles composed with al-hafara wa’l-muṣaffal: qūṭīl, "killer", or qūṭir, "conqueror", or gumi’, "subduer", "of the unbelievers and polytheists", occur in the sixth/seventh century.89 The same title occurs in the solemn inscription dated from 605/1208-9 (Rep. no. 3629)—the same in which al-‘Adil is given the title of sultan in the first time; but here further phrases of similar character are added: gumi’ al-hafara wa’l-muṣaffal, jumī’ kalimat al-imām, gumi’ abadati’-arṣūn, "subduer of the unbelievers and polytheists", the unifier of the word of belief, the subduer of the adorers of the idols.89 In Rep. no. 3652 we have qūṭīl al-hafara wa’l-muṣaffal qubr al-ḥalawārīj wa’l-muṭamarradīn, "killer of the unbelievers and polytheists, conqueror of the rebels and the insurgents."89 A new combination of familiar titles occurs in Rep. no. 3679: gumi’ al-ḥalawārīj wa’l-muṭamarradīn qubr al-hafara wa’l-muṣaffal.

86 Elliesseff, pp. 182-5.
88 See Elliesseff, loc. cit.
89 For the phrase gumi’ kalimat al-imām, which occurs among the titles of Saladin and is frequent at later times, see Wiet, "Inscr. Saladin." p. 314. For gumi’ abadati’-arṣūn, cf. the similar gumi’ abadat al-sulṭān, "the subduer of the adorers of the crosses", borne by Saladin (ibid., p. 315).
Qāmi‘ al-hafara wa‘l-mushrikīn is the formula in Rīp. nos. 3724, 3727, and 3808/1.  

We have seen that in the Italian translation of a document by al-‘Adil he bears the title “soldano del Turco et del Turco Persi”, which does not recur elsewhere but cannot be condemned for this reason alone. The restoration of the original text is somewhat problematic. In the first instance one would take the original to be sūlān al-Turk wa‘l-Ajam, and since the title is unique, there is no decisive argument against such a re-translation. On the other hand we find that such later Ayyūbid rulers as al-Ashraf, al-‘Adil II and al-Salih did bear the title of malik, or sūlān, al-‘Arab wa‘l-Ajam, so that it is possible that al-‘Adil’s title was also sūlān al-‘Arab wa‘l-Ajam and the translator, by a double substitution, used the word “Turk” in a vague meaning of “Saracene, Muslim”, and rendered it al-‘Arab, which he also took to mean the same.

There are a few further titles which occur sporadically, but require no further comments in the present context. Finally, the title khallī amīr al-mul‘iminin, “friend of the Commander of the Faithful”, figures, in its ordinary position at the very end, in almost all documents and inscriptions. It occurs already in the inscription of 579/1183.

After the decree had been drawn up by the Chancery it was presented to the ruler for signature; he signed with his motto: al-hamdu li‘l-hamī wa-bihi la‘dī bi‘l qayf, “Praise be to God, who is the cause of my success.” The signature was appended between the second and third lines, i.e. the first and second lines of the text, excluding the very first line occupied by the basmala, the opening formula “In the name of God, the Merciful, the

45 For al-Ashraf see his inscription Rīp. no. 3968; for al-‘Adil II no. 4146; for al-Salih no. 4308. Baybars bears the title s. al-‘Arab wa‘l-Ajam wa‘l-Turk, Rīp. no. 4554.
46 Nāhir al-‘adl al-farādī, “Propagator of justice and bounty,” Rīp. no. 3639: kāmil (in no. 3724 malik) al-basmala al-‘ashāfī, “Protector (or: Possessor) of the two noble sanctuaries (of Jerusalem and Hebron)”; nos. 3639, 3969, 3727; in no. 3651 he is described as possessor of Egypt, Syria and Akhāt; in 3724 there is even a longer list of his possessions.
48 For al-‘Adil’s see his inscription Rīp. no. 3968, 3608/1. For al-Ashraf see his inscription Rīp. no. 3968, 3608/1. Baybars bears the title s. al-‘Arab wa‘l-Ajam wa‘l-Turk, Rīp. no. 4554.
49 Nāhir al-‘adl al-farādī, “Propagator of justice and bounty,” Rīp. no. 3639: kāmil (in no. 3724 malik) al-basmala al-‘ashāfī, “Protector (or: Possessor) of the two noble sanctuaries (of Jerusalem and Hebron)”; nos. 3639, 3969, 3727; in no. 3651 he is described as possessor of Egypt, Syria and Akhāt; in 3724 there is even a longer list of his possessions.
51 Compassionate.” This was obviously done because it was convenient not to leave any space between the ritual phrase and the beginning of the text; in contrast an extra large space was left between the next two lines in order to accommodate the signature. The signature itself consisted, in accordance with classical Islamic usage, of a motto, which was the same in the case of all the Ayyūbid rulers. There is no need to give here the evidence, since the subject has been fully treated in the book on the Fātimid decrees.

When finished, the decrees were usually circulated among the relevant offices of the central government in order to be registered; our document, however, bears no registration marks like many of those of the Fātimid and Mamlūk periods and also the second Ayyūbid document published here.

When all this was done, the decree was delivered to the monks, who had to submit it themselves to the provincial authorities concerned with their affairs; finally it was deposited in their archive, where it is preserved to this day.

II

The second decree was issued by al-Afḍal “outside Damascus” on 5 Dhul-Qa‘da 595/29 August 1190. In Muharram 595/November-December 1198, al-‘Adiz, ruler of Egypt, died. After a long dispute the amirs agreed to seat his infant son al-Manṣūr on the throne, but invited his uncle, al-Afḍal, to act for him as regent. Al-Afḍal willingly undertook this task and came to Egypt. On 3 Rajab/1 May, however, he left for Syria in order to take possession of Damascus, but al-‘Adil, who had
previously retired to the eastern provinces of the Ayyubid realm, antici-
pated him and occupied the city. Al-Afdal encamped at the pass of al-
Kiswa, south of Damascus, but when he was joined by his brother and
ally al-Zahir, king of Aleppo, they advanced as far as the Mosque of the
Foot, between al-Kiswa and Damascus.10 For the rest of the year they
remained in camp there, and, as Ibn Waṣṣāf (p. 101) puts it, “the year
came to an end while the city of Damascus was being closely besieged.”
It was obviously in the camp near the Mosque of the Foot “outside
Damascus” that the decree discussed by us was issued.

Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, scroll no. 12. Dimensions: 287 x 13-3 cm. (accord-
ing to Atiya). Plates XIII–XIX.
Al-Afdal orders to treat the monks of Mt. Sinai according to their old customs and
protect their property. The amir Shams al-Din Abu Sa'id Aslan is instructed to observe
the order.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
خرج الأمر العالي المؤلّل
[الحمد لله وبه توفيق]
السلطان المليك الأفغلي لا زال
على المائة، نادي الناس، منصور الأنصار,
5 مسعود الإبراهيم، والإصرار، نافذ في
الأطراف والأقطار، بإرادة جامع
الرمان يطور سيا من البدر، سلهم الله
على عادتهم في حفظهم ووعائاتهم، وصيانة
أحوالهم وحاشاتهم، وتفسير مفاهمهم، وتسيل
10 موارهم، وإن لا يعرضوا بأيّة ظاهرة
ولا باتية، وإن ترف خواطرهم لتكين
المرفعة الساكنة، وإن لا يعرضوا في
كرهم وتعليمهم ورؤيتهم ومثير:
ولا مقاسة ولا استجرار ولا اقتطاع

10 The sources are the same as those enumerated above, note 3: Ibn Waṣṣāf, iii, 87 ff., 96 ff., 98 ff.; Ibn al-Aṯir, xili, 91 ff.; Ibn al-Adim, pp. 216-9; Aba Shama Kishā al-
Rausbatayn, ii, 214 ff.; Sibā b. al-Jawari, pp. 286 ff.; al-Maqrizi, i, 148 ff.; Ibn Taghibīrī,
v, 149 ff. For al-Kiswa see R. Dussaud, Topographie historique de la Syrie, p. 331; for the
Mosque of the Foot, Dussaud, pp. 308-4 and J. Sourdel-Thomine, in Bulletin d’Études
Documents from Islamic Chanceries

الحمد لله وحده وحده وحده
وحده وحده وحده
وتحية لله ونعم الوكيل

[Between lines 5 and 6 a signature in cipher :]

الملك لله

[Registration marks :]

[Between lines 6 and 7, right side :]

[1a] ليسين في ديوان النظر الخا знач المصوران
إن شاء الله تعالى

[1b] نسخ والحمد لله عليه توجيه

[On the left side :]

[2a] ليسين في الديران أن شاء الله

[2b] نسخ والحمد لله الواحد المعدل

[Between lines 7 and 8 :]

[3] نسخ الحمد لله على نعائنه

TRANSLATION

[The signature :]

Praise be to God, who is the cause of my success.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The exalted order of the master, the sultan al-Malik al-Afdal—may its light continue to be exalted, its charities to increase, its victories to prevail, whatever it begins and end to be fortunate, and to be executed in all lands and regions—was issued to treat the community of monks in the blessed Mount Sinai (may God give them peace) according to their custom, by guarding and protecting them, defending their affairs, facilitating their business and making easy their occupations. They should not be interfered with through open or concealed harm, their minds be reassured so as to make them confident and quiet. Their vineyards, palm-trees, and fields should not be interfered with by damage, sharing, enclosing, enfeoffment, or in any way of constraint; they should not be forced to live together with people not belonging to them, and no grain, or other goods, should be stored in their monastery, and all evil actions causing them harm should be prevented.

Stern, Two Ayyubid Decrees from Sinaí

Let the amir, the great general, our intimate courtier, the one assisted by God, the trustworthy one, Sun of Religion (Shams al-Din), Armament of the Fighters for the Faith, Support of Kings and Sultans, the Intimate Friend of the Commander of the Faithful, Abü Sa‘īd Āshām (may God prolong his help, welfare, support, and greatness, and may He give him ample share of all benefits) obey this order and not transgress it, and beware from passing it by in order to do something else. Let him encompass them by all protection, since they are our and his subjects, and let him deal with them with a light touch on account of their having retired to that noble place, and let him allow no one to harm them, since all of them are poor and weak. Let him treat them according to their customs and the rulings contained in the decrees which are in their hands. This order of ours confirms this and renews the garments of benefaction towards them.

Let fief-holders, governors, and the governor of the fortress of Aylah (may God guard it), who have cognizance of this order, obey its commands and follow its instructions, and avoid actions smacking of oppression; and let it be acted upon to-day and to-morrow, and let this be deposited in their hands after it had been read, as a proof in the future, if God (may He be exalted) wills.

Written this fifth day of Dhu‘l-Qa‘da, the year Five-hundred Ninety Five, outside Damascus.

Praise be to God alone, and His blessings and peace upon our lord Muhammad His prophet, his family and his companions.

God is sufficient for us; how excellent a Keeper is He!

[Between lines 5 and 6 a signature in cipher :]

Kingdom belongs to God.

[Registration marks :]

[Between lines 6 and 7, right side :]

[1a] Let it be copied in the Office of the Private Superintendence for Egypt (may it flourish), if God wills.

[1b] It has been copied; praise be to God, in Him I trust.

[on the left side :]

[2a] Let it be copied in the Office, if God wills.

[2b] It has been copied; praise be to God, the one, the just.

[Between lines 7 and 8 :]

[3] It has been copied; praise be to God for His bounty.

This decree follows a different pattern from the preceding. Its exordium : “The exalted order... was issued “ is a formula which is often used to introduce the main part of a decree containing the disposizio
and coming after preliminary matter such as the arogna (if there is one) and the expositio. Here, however, this formula is used to open the decree and the dispositio is preceded by no preliminaries. As we shall see presently, ours is not an isolated example of this form. It may also be pointed out that the titles of the ruler are given in an extremely abbreviated form. All this seems to suggest that the pattern adopted here is lower in the hierarchy of forms than the fuller pattern represented by al-ʿĀdil’s decree. It is, however, wise to reserve judgement, especially as there is hardly a difference to be discovered in the subject matter which should have brought about the use of a more formal pattern in the one, a less formal pattern in the other document.

I am unable to identify the amir ʿAbd Saʿīd Aslam to whom the sultan’s order is more especially addressed. Since the provincial governors are separately referred to, he must have been a high official of the central government, or perhaps the governor of the Sharqiyya province, in which case the word “governors” may refer to the governor of al-Tūr, possibly subordinate to him. The governor of Ayla is separately mentioned. This exhortation to obey the sultan’s order addressed to the officials particularly concerned is customary (the phraseology is studied below), as is also the instruction that at the use of the document be kept by the beneficiaries as evidence for the sultan’s order.

THE EXORDIUM

We have seen that the exordium of the present document is different from that of al-ʿĀdil. We shall discuss some parallels to the type used in our document and then identify a third type.

The exordium used in our document recurs in some documents of the Ayyūbīd period the originals of which are not known, but which are preserved in translations. A safe-conduct by al-ʿĀdil, perhaps from the year 1208, begins: [Hec est] securitas omnium mercatorum pisannorum.

Stern, Two Ayyūbīd Decrees from Sinai

Emelcəd Adel, ensis totius mundi, rex super omnes reges, Abuheere filius Ilob, consanguineus chalif obedientis. In nomine Domini. Exiit magnum preceptum altissimi regis Melc Aдель sultani, Deus custodiat eum et augest ei honoros, et sit firmum preceptum etc. The Arabic original of the formula no doubt read: Kharajal-usumrillāh-i-mulqauiyya-i-sulāfayiya-i-Malakhayyula-i-Adibiyu (then some eulogies). Another safe-conduct of which we possess a fifteenth century Italian translation began obviously with the same words, which were rendered rather awkwardly by the translator. Here too we first find the sultan’s titles, obviously representing the tughrā: Lo re giustissimo, spada della fede et del mondo, soldan delli Turchi et delli Persi, e Balacchera filho di Aliup, Kalil Emir Elmonniin. Then follows the translation of the exordium: Aveno facto lo comanda mento granda colla victoria, comandante soldano Emelci giustissimo, Dio gli dia gratia, et gratia, che scrive questo scripto de salvocostoc. A decree ordering the restoration of the fundae of the Pisani in Alexandria begins: In nomine Dei, qui est pius et pietas. Exiit equitas preceptum, cuius Deus augest honorum [gratias agimus solo Deo] et in designatione restaurations fundaci, donus sciello, in qua Pisani stare consuevere, in terra Alexandria et ceteri.

We have translations of similar documents concerning the Venetians. A letter addressed to the provincial governors and granting privileges to

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11 This is the translation of the sultan’s tughrā. The tughrā consists, as is well known, of the ruler’s name and some of his titles, written in the form of a cipher. The Ayyūbīs used the tughrā alongside the motto (see Fīṭqūmān Decrees, pp. 154–6), though it is impossible to recognize the principle which regulated this or the other form of signature. The translation shows that the tughrā was placed above the formāla, in contrast to the motto, cf. above, pp. 24–5. For the titles contained in this and the following documents see pp. 19–20.
12 Amari, Diplomi, no. 26 (p. 288), dated 612/1215–6. Grande is probably al-ʿĀdil, though the addition of colla victoria is puzzling. Comandante could be for al-mulqauiyya.
13 Amari, no. 26 (p. 290). If our explanation in note 81 is correct, this document can also be attributed to al-ʿĀdil.
14 “Plus et pietas” is the awkward attempt to translate the synonymous al-sulāfayiya al-sulāfayiya.
15 It seems to me obvious that this is a mistranslation of kharajal-usumrillāh-i-mulqauiyya-i-sulāfayiya-i-Malakhayyu-l-i-Adibiyu, where al-Adibiyu, “of al-ʿĀdil,” was wrongly rendered as “equitas.” It is more difficult to account for the absence of equivalents for the other titles (set above in square brackets).
16 This seems to be a somewhat inaccurate translation of the signature al-fumd l’ilmah ma-bisti taufiqi, which occurred, as usual, between the first and second lines of the text, and was therefore incorporated by the translators into the context.
17 The words donus sciello are probably added by the translator in order to gloss the term fundaci.
the Venetian merchants begins 84: 'Exivit altum mandatum maioris dominii, Imperatoris fidelis—cui Deus det victoriam et altitudinem et magnitudinem etc. At the same date there was issued to the Venetians a document permitting them to have a fundus in Alexandria 85: 'Exivit altum preceptum domini et senioris Soldani, fideli Imperatoris—quem Deus honoravit et manefeste magnificavit 86 etc.

Finally, we have a similar document from a somewhat later date, a safe-conduct granted by al-Álid II to the Venetians in 636/1238. 87 It begins as follows: In nomine Domini. Exivit altum preceptum [He 88 est signum soldani quod interpreteratur: 'Gratia Deo de mea fortuna] Dominus soldanus Molech Aladel, spatia legis, Dominus det ei vitam! fecit preceptum ut scribere tur caritalem fidantiam etc. The words in brackets refer to the sultan’s signature, and “Gratia Deo de mea fortuna,” 89 is, not a bad translation of the Arabic formula al-ḥamdiBILLĀH wa-bihi  ta'zīfī. Altogether, the translator was a painstaking and fairly competent man, 90 and the exordium is also very well rendered. 91 We shall not deal with the body of the document, but take the opportunity to show that the final formulae as they appear in Latin garb are those known from original documents. The end of the translation reads: Scripta fuit per legationem de mirum Gemonelcid faciam Soldanum. Et necesse est ut cognoscatis istas causas et sciatis; et erit lo ben cum gratia Dei. Et ista fidantia scripta fuit

85 Ibid, no. 240 (ii, 189). Also here the titles are well translated.
86 The Arabic perfects—standing for the optative—are translated literally.
88 The text is preserved in two copies, one of which reads hic: “here”, the other huc: “this [in the signature of the sultan]”. Further variants are domini soldane, Molechilado, etc. certula.
89 It is a sign of the conscientious work of these interpreters, both Florentine and Venetian, that mostly they do not fail to indicate such diplomatic details as the signatures.
90 The original read: Khawāja’l-Anwar’s-šīlī-mašarawiyiyyu’s-sulṭāniyyu’s-Malākiyyu’s-Adīziyyu sayyī’dīnī anḍamun abūl ḥālik bī-habī ḥāliku’l-umāni. Since this phrase was interrupted by the motto, there is a slight confusion in the syntax of the translation (khawāja’l-anwar is rendered doubtly by ‘exivit altum preceptum’ and ‘... fecit preceptum’).

Stern, Two Ayyūbīd Decrees from Sinai

a die decima tertia intrante mensে Novembri anno Machometi sexcente-

simo trigesimo sexto. Gratia Deo soli, et adorator Domini supra Machu-

meto. Deus predicat nos et justus est. I have explained in another place what it means that the document was written “through the message” of the amir Jamāl al-Dīn: i.e. the sultan’s order was transmitted through him to the Checony. 91 Unfortunately the meaning of fāciun dominus, presumably the title of the amir, still eludes us. The next phrase obviously corresponds to the conventional phrase: wa’lāmun  ḥālik mina’l-anwari wa’būl bī hiṃ in shà’ālikh, “Take cognizance of this order and act accordingly, if God wills.” The translator misread, however, the word wa’būl, “and act,” and thought it was a repetition of wa’lāmun, “take cognizance”; thus he mistranslated it as “et scientia.” The whole passage can be restored as follows: Kutbā bi-risālik-l-umri Jamālī’l-Dīn... Wa’lāmun ḥālik mina’l-anwari wa’būl bī hiṃ in shà’ālikh, Kutbā ṣāliḥu’l-ashara... sanāta sittin wa-wahliḥni ina-wa-sitta mi’ta. Al-bandu ḥālik wa-šahālikhu wa-salāmītuhu aḥā sagyīdiru Muḥammadin  wa-ṭāhil al-wa-ṣabīhi  wa-salāmū. Ḥusnabā’l-hū ḥū ṭ-น’a-ma’s-ṣaikīlī.

A third type of exordium is used on the decrees written on the back of petitions. Al-Álid’s decree of 598/1202, which is not extant, but is quoted in al-Kāmil’s decree on the back of petition ii published by me, 92 begins: Rusīna al-‘lālikh al-maṣrinīn al-sharīfa... bi-an etc., “It has been decreed [may God exalt the noble decrees]... that etc.” Al-Kāmil’s two decrees (on the back of petitions nos. ii and iii) begin: Rusīna bi-l-umri al-‘lāli... an (or infinitive) etc., “It has been decreed by the exalted order... that etc.” In the Mamlūk period this exordium was obviously used for documents of minor importance. From al-Qalqashandi (xi, 47 ff.) we see that the diplomas of minor appointments were introduced by it, and were called marūnīs from the verb in question. Administrative decrees in minor affairs follow closely the pattern of this type of diploma, 92 so that most of Mamlūk decrees from Sinai also show this kind of exordium. It is hardly a coincidence that in the Ayyūbīd period we find the formula in decrees written on the back of petitions: the exordium was evidently reserved in that period too for documents of small importance.

91 “Petitions of the Ayyūbīd Period”, p. 17. There I have also suggested that Jamāl al-Dīn may be identical with the amir Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yaḥyānīn.
92 In the article referred to in the preceding note.

93 I deal with this subject in the article “Petitions from the Mamlūk Period”, to be published in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
I still owe some remarks about the final injunctions to "take cognizance" of the sultans' order, and act accordingly. This simple form, as it is found in the decree by al-Āḍīl of 558/1262 quoted on the back of petition 31 (al-ya'lam hādīh ṣulṭān al-‘ālim bih, "Let cognition be taken of this and be acted accordingly"), and in the Latin translation of al-Āḍīl II's document, has a long history, since it is attested for the Abbāsiyya chancery of the tenth century and occurs frequently in the Fāṭimid period. That it was common in the Ayyūbiyya period can be seen from a passage by Ibn Sīthē, who, in his paragraph on final formulae, writes as follows: "The sultan writes to officials of his kingdoms: 'Take cognizance of this and act accordingly (faslam hādīh - read so for bi-hādīh - usūl bih), if God (may He be exalted) wills.' 'It will be well, if God (may He be exalted) wills is written by the highest dignitaries of their subordinates; the words 'Take cognizance of this and act accordingly' at the end of a letter can only be used by the sultan.' Yet already in the Fāṭimid period we have various enlarged forms: a frequent one says that all officials concerned, when they read the decree, or if it is read out to them, should obey it—or words to this effect.

The extant original Ayyūbiyya decrees follow this type, but show the particular feature of expressing the injunction by the phrase wa-sabil hulil wāsīf aša' al-hādīh al-mutakallim. Let all who become aware of this order (thus both decrees) obey it 'acting in conformity with it' (thus al-Āḍīl's decree), or— and let it be acted upon (al-Āḍīl's decree).

The Kāmil's decree on the back of petition no. ii has in a similar manner wa-sabil hulil wāsīf aša'ih, 'Let all who become aware of it... act according to its contents.' Some of the numerous Ayyūbiyya diplomas of appointments quoted by al-Qalqashandi also have similar formulas and al-Qalqashandi expressly states that this is the regular way of ending such diplomas: 'Then it is said: 'Let all lieutenants who become aware of it act accordingly,' or words to this effect.' There are many examples for this usage of the phrase wa-sabil from various chanceries of

(3) See Fāṭimid Decrees, pp. 113-4.
(4) al-Sulṭān al-Kūḥābī, p. 80.
(5) Under sabil Diyar in his Swajldānīt quotes from the late dictionary Muṣṭaf the phrase sabilun an naf'ala hādīh, "it is said d'ajis al-sāma'; we have now for this usage the early examples provided by the documents. I translated "let... obey it" rather than "it befits them to obey it", since the phrase sabil corresponds to the jussive prefix wa- in the phrase wa-ṣulṭān etc.; in reality it all comes to the same.

The rule is found in al-Qalqashandi, 93. 32. The documents in which the formula appear are reproduced on pp. 33-7, 45-48. These diplomas speak of the dignitary whom they concern in the third person, so that they are, I think, open letters. Those addressed

the sixth/seventh century. Among the documents written for the Seljuq chancery in the first half of the century by Muʾayyad al-Dawla al-Juwayni the injunction is often introduced by the sabil formula: e.g. no. 1 sabil-i maslahāri wa-sānīn usūlāhā etc. in aslāhā etc. 'Let the nobles, imams, great men etc., do so and so...'. Similarly in many of the documents composed by Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-Baghdādi for the chancery of the Khwārizmshāhs in the second half of the century. I also happen to have had an example from the 'Abbāsiyya chancery from the early years of the century. It looks therefore as if this formula were also derived from the Seljuq chancery.

Al-Āḍīl's signature calls for no comment: his motto is the same as that of Al-Āḍīl, since, as we have explained, all the Ayyūbiyya sultans shared the same motto for their alīm. There is, however, an additional signature nothing like which appears in al-Āḍīl's decree: the curious cipher between lines 5 and 6 reading al-mulk li-lāhī, 'Kingdom belongs

(3) See al-Āḍīl's Decrees, pp. 63 ff., 61 ff. [the documents on pp. 56 ff., 61 ff., are from the Fāṭimid period, and are put here erroneously by al-Qalqashandi, who did not seem to have recognized their correct origin] or fa-talāsīs wa-m qulīūt, 'take up the dignity to which you have been appointed' (pp. 84 f.).
(4) Atbaqal al-Nabha, ed. Muhammad Qasim al-Abbāsīqāhī; see in addition to no. 1 also nos. 6, 13, 19, 21, 24, 34. The other documents have different formulas of injunction, such as fa-muḥādāt aslāhā etc. 'the order is that...'. (nos. 2, 4, 7, 18, 17-18, 20, 22-3, 26, 29, (read so p. 73, 1, 7, for wa-ajīb) 30-2, 33; in miḥāl farwašdāt fā ... (for sākār gāzī), 'we have issued this ordinance in order that...'. (nos. 13, 11, 16, 33); or still other formulas. All the preceding numbers refer to the first part of the book, containing documents of a public nature; the second part contains private letters which are no concern of ours here.

Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-Baghdādi, al-Tawāṣul al-fuṣūl, ed. Ahmad Baynahmân; see pp. 29, 37, 42, 45, 55, 73, 89, 99, 109, 117, 121, 124. This list comprises almost all the diplomas of appointment. One (see no. 94) has miḥāl farwašdāt aslāhā... 'The order is that...', another (see no. 114) fameh-ī al-class al-Dīn al-Baghdādi has an ifāmāl aslāhā... 'the highest order (may God exalt it) is to the effect that...'. The remaining three documents have no such formulas. It is clear that the practice of the Khwārizmshāh chancery follows in this particular, as in many others, the Seljuq example.


The probability of Seljuq influence is confirmed by this consideration: we have a great number of documents belonging to the same genre—diplomas of appointments; and whereas those of the Fāṭimid period follow a different pattern, those of the Ayyūbiyya period introduce a formula which is found in exactly the same position in documents of the Seljuq chancery and a chancery such as the Khwārizmshāh which demonstrably depends on the Seljuq one.
to God." It is no doubt a countersign of some high dignitary, to whose identity I have, however, no clue.

Our decree has a few registration marks. The procedure of registration has also been explained in connection with the Fātimid decrees, but there are some points which require discussion. Al-'Adīl's decree has, as has been pointed out above, no registration marks. Our decree, which has some, is lacking a feature which appears in many Fātimid documents: the order in the body of the decree prescribing registration in the appropriate offices. This does not mean, however, that the formula was in abeyance in the Ayyūbid period: al-Kāmil's decree on the back of petition no. 31 has it (wa-shubhūth bi-haythā yuḥbat miḥlathā, "and after registration where its like are registered") and there is a reference to the formula in a literary source. In the registration marks the verb nasakhba, "to copy," is used. In the Fātimid documents the ordinary verb is athabata, "to register," but occasionally we also have nasakhba: the two verbs seems to stand for the same thing. A third verb, nasazala, which can be translated as "to register" also occurs, without our being able to discern any difference in the meaning. Just as in the Fātimid period, the registration marks consist of two parts. First there is the order to register the decree in a given office, then the remark that the order of registration has been carried out. Passages in literary texts indicate that the orders of registration were given by

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108 See Fātimid Decrees, pp. 167 ff.

109 I think at least that this formula is meant in a passage by Ibn Shihb (p. 23), which it will be convenient—in account of the obscurity of part of it—to reproduce in the original: "I do not think that this is a counter-sign of some high dignitary, to whose identity I have, however, no clue."

110 See Fātimid Decrees, p. 168.

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certain high officials. Ibn Shihb attests that in some cases it was the head of the Office of the Army who wrote in the orders of payment: "Let it be registered (li-yawḥād) in the Office of Supervision for the Armies (may they be victorious), if God (may He be exalted) wills." 110 Certain kinds of document drawn up in the Finance Office were endorsed by the head of the Office of Supervision with the order: "Let it be registered (li-yawḥād), if God wills." 111 In another context Ibn Shihb writes: "And he (the head of the Office of Supervision) writes on decisions (al-lawḏār) and grants: 'Let it be registered in the Office of Supervision of such-and-such a subject, if God (may He be exalted) wills.'" 112 The Office of Supervision was central financial organ of the Ayyūbid administration, so that its working was of special importance. This is brought out well by a passage in another treatise on Ayyūbid bureaucracy, which states: "al-Nābulusī's al-Lama' al-Mudāwā, one of the aims of which was to influence the sultan against parvenu officials. He speaks of a certain al-Zahir al-Tumbudhāwī, who from humble origins rose to high office: 'He allows his son to write on documents entries only appropriate for the vizier, namely: 'Let it be registered (li-yawḥād) in the Office of the Supervision of the Officers (may they prosper). By God, only those ought to make such an entry who have risen to a rank which is not reached by the scholars and excellent men of the country. This empire is too noble for such rabble to write entries which only noble lords used to write.' It is seen what importance was attached to the note ordering registration in the Office of Supervision (even if al-Nābulusī, pursuing his own bias, may be guilty of some exaggeration)—the reason being that the office, the divān al-nasār, was the supreme financial authority of the administration, and in matters involving financial responsibility was assumed by this signature for the transaction in question.

The first entry in our document refers to the divān al-nasār, and the order for registration was probably made by the head of the office. The name of the office is followed by two adjectives: al-khaṣṣ, "private," and another, the reading of which is doubtful—the suggestion to read al-misqīr, "the Egyptian," is offered with due reserve. I have no other evidence for the use of these adjectives in respect of the divān al-nasār.

108 Mu'allim al-Rūdah, p. 28 (read ra-ṣibāh <divān> al-jawāf yakhtul).

109 Ibid., p. 27.

110 Ibid., p. 28: fi divān al-nasār al-fuṣūl—the officials often bear in their name the name of the ruler, added in the form of a niṣba: al-'Adīlī, al-Abāṣ, etc.


112 P. 62.
The first seems to suggest that the office concerned was not the Office of Supervision of the state finances, but that of the private purse of the sultan. The addition of “Egyptian” may be explained by al-Afdal uniting (or pretending to unite) the sovereignty of Egypt and Syria, so that a separate administration would have been needed for each of the two countries. The clerk who carried out the registration added to his mark his motto, in the manner well known from the Fatimid period. In mark no. 2 the name of the office seems to have been omitted by an error, since al-disan, “the office,” can hardly mean a particular office. No. 3 is a registration mark which is preceded by no order, so that it does not reveal the identity of the office. Registration brought to an end the process of the issue of the decree, which was then, as we have explained in connection with al-Afdal’s decree, delivered to the beneficiaries, the monks of Sinai, for presentation to the provincial authorities and safe keeping in their archive.

The commentary provided in the preceding pages for the two Ayyubid decrees does not aim at the exhaustive treatment of any one of the problems of Ayyubid diplomatic, but mainly attempts to illustrate the documents themselves by discussing various points in them needing comment. If any generalization is to be deduced from the particulars which had been touched upon, it is this: the practice of the Ayyubid chancery was in many respects a continuation of that of the Fatimid period, which underwent, however, important changes, many of them due to the impact of Seljuk practice.

A MAHMUK COMMERCIAL TREATY
CONCLUDED WITH THE REPUBLIC OF FLORENCE
894/1489

by
John Wansbrough

The commercial treaties concluded between the Mamluk Sultans and the maritime republics of southern Europe often involved long and complex negotiations. The purpose of this study is to describe the steps in the conclusion of one such treaty between Sultan Qal'itbay and the Republic of Florence in 894/1489. The first part will be a relation of the embassies which led to the formulation of the treaty, and the second part an analysis of the documents upon which negotiations were based.

I

In one of the most elegant chambers of the Palazzo Vecchio Giorgio Vasari painted the ceiling with a scene of Lorenzo the Magnificent surrounded by the gifts of a foreign ambassador (see Frontispiece). The picture is somewhat idealized and perhaps only a symbol of the many times in which the Medici prince was so honoured. In his memoirs, however, the painter recalls having begun the work in February 1559 and declares that it was meant to represent a particular embassy from the Sultan of Egypt (“Ricordo come questo anno [1559] al principio del febbraio si cominciò a dipingere a olio la camera di Lorenzo vecchio nella quale vi si fe’ decorato a olio con una storia grande quanto gli è presentato dal Soldano molte sorte d’animali . . .”). It is not difficult to

1 G. Vasari, Il libro della ricordanza, ed. A. S. del Vitt., Firenze 1927, p. 81. See also N.N., Le fitture del quartiere di Papa Leone in Palazzo Vecchio, Firenze 1961, pp. 12-13; and A. Landi, Palazzo Vecchio, Milan-Rome 1929, pp. 161-5 and plates, pp. 181, 182, 183, which show the interior of the chamber but not this painting. The picture is in the ceiling of the Salone di Lorenzo Magnifico in the Quarto di Leone X, at present occupied by the