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## Civilian Elite and Metalwork: A View from the Edge

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## Civilian Elite and Metalwork: A View from the Edge

by Carine Juvin

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Amongst her recent publications are:

- *Roads of Arabia/Routes d'Arabie. Archéologie et histoire du royaume d'Arabie Saoudite*, eds. B. André-Salvini, M.Cotty, F. Demange, C. Juvin, Paris: Musée du Louvre/ Somogy 2010.
- “The Louvre Kursi : functions and meanings” (with S. Makariou), in: *The Art of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria – Evolution and Impact*, ed. D. Behrens-Abouseif, Bonn University Press 2012, pp. 37-53.
- “Mamluk Inscriptions”, in: *Ubi Sumus ? Quo Vademus. Mamluk Studies – State of the Art, Mamluk Series 3.*, ed. S. Conermann, Bonn University Press 2013, pp. 211-29.
- “Calligraphy and Writing Activities in Mecca in the Medieval Period”, *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 43, Oxford: Archaeopress 2013, pp. 153-65.

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## **Civilian Elite and Metalwork: A View from the Edge**

### **Abstract**

This paper tackles the issue of the luxury consumption goods made for the civilian elite during the Mamluk period, with a focus on the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, through the specific case of the preserved high quality metal objects, replacing them in the general context of the civilian architectural patronage in the main cities of the sultanate. The metal objects made for more or less outstanding individuals may have embodied their wealth, social status, as well as their interactions with the military elite. Most of the recipients remain anonymous or unknown. The case study of a candlestick in the Louvre Museum whose owner can be better identified provides an interesting glimpse into these social interactions. This new attribution offers a precise dating and new perspectives regarding a specific group of late Mamluk metalworks. It is here studied in connection to other closely related inscribed metal objects showing the same stylistic features, and whose poetic inscriptions reflect the literary culture of the civilian elites.

## Introduction

This paper<sup>1</sup> is derived from my Ph D. research on calligraphy and epigraphy during the late Mamluk period (1468-1517) in Egypt and Syria, for which I gathered in particular late Mamluk inscribed objects, mainly metal objects, and was led to scrutinize some of their recipients with the aim of better dating and understanding them. For this period, as for the whole Mamluk sultanate, the preserved inscribed metal objects are predominantly associated with the military elite: sultans, amirs of different ranks and their relatives. The attribution to their patronage relies on the inscriptions that these objects display, conspicuously mentioning their name and titles. Nevertheless, this does not mean that noninscribed metal objects, or objects decorated with anonymous inscriptions were not also used by this military elite. On the other hand, metal wares, even luxury brass objects with silver and gold inlays, were not the prerogative of the military elite. Though comparatively few, some of them bear inscriptions naming a member of the civilian/ religious elite. These preserved objects deserve special attention, on the edge of the predominantly observed metal ware made for the Mamluk elite.

This paper will briefly survey the general frame of civilian elite's patronage of art and architecture with a focus on the fifteenth century, before turning to a specific object—an inlaid brass candlestick in the Louvre Museum—as a case study that enables to consider this kind of luxury vessels through the prism of social affirmation and social interaction, as well as bringing a new benchmark for a specific type of production.

### 1. The Patronage of the Civilian Elite during the Mamluk Period: A Brief Overview

The issue of architectural and artistic patronage of the civilian elite has never been addressed as a whole so far, even if a general view can be summarized thanks to a few studies. While the domestic architecture is rather difficult to assess, the religious foundations can be better evaluated. Julien Loiseau, in his book *Reconstruire la maison du sultan: 1350-1450*<sup>2</sup> and in a latter article<sup>3</sup>, studied the patronage of Friday mosques in Cairo through the whole Mamluk sultanate. He distinguished three periods: 1300-1379, 1380-1453, 1454-1517, and also different groups of patrons. He observed that the second period, which is the first half of the Circassian sultanate, saw a severe decline (of fifty per cent) of the great amirs' patronage<sup>4</sup>—which was so important in the first chronological sequence—, while the patronage of the sultans, but mainly of the ulamas and civilian administrators considerably increased, from one third up to fifty-six per cent of the patrons<sup>5</sup>. During the last third period (1454-1517), the pattern changed again and the sultans and the great amirs sponsored three-quarters of the foundations<sup>6</sup>. This change was detrimental to the great eunuchs and to the civil administrators or the ulamas, whose global participation in the building activity felt to twenty-one per cent. Nevertheless, it can be observed that even during the last period, lavish mosques-madrasas in particular were sponsored by some members of the civilian elite, who were important actors of euergetism in the cities.

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<sup>1</sup> A shorter version of this paper was presented at the Fourth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, held in Beirut, AUB, on 11th-13th May 2017. It was mainly elaborated during my three months stay at the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg, October-December 2016. I would like to express my gratitude to the ASK team, and first of all to Prof. Stefan Conermann and Prof. Bethany Walker, for this highly enjoyable and fruitful time in Bonn.

<sup>2</sup> Loiseau, *Reconstruire*, II: 386-392.

<sup>3</sup> Loiseau, *The City*, 188-189.

<sup>4</sup> With the exception of the great eunuchs.

<sup>5</sup> Notably through the foundations of zawiyas.

<sup>6</sup> When amirs regained familiarity with the sultan's circle, like Yashbak min Mahdī for instance.

Following Carl F. Petry's groundbreaking study dedicated to the civilian elite in the late Mamluk period<sup>7</sup>, the particular issue of the administrative officers' architectural patronage has been studied in more detail by Bernadette Martel-Thoumian who has gathered the informations regarding their building activity in Egypt and Syria<sup>8</sup>. Through the sources, we can partly reconstruct their patronage of many buildings, both civilian and religious: mosques-madrasas, zawiyas, *kuttāb*, *sabīl*, palaces and houses, *rab'*, suqs, hammams and tombs, that were built thanks to the wealth and generosity of the most important families like the Banū Jī'ān, the al-Bārīzī, the Kātib Jakam or the Banū Saffāh<sup>9</sup>, to mention only some of them. Nevertheless, only a small amount of these buildings have survived.

The powerful judges, who could also occupy bureaucratic functions, were noteworthy patrons of architecture. Some of their foundations are still standing in Cairo and Syria, and, though not as monumental as sultans or great amirs' buildings, they can display refined aesthetics and luxurious materials. One can mention for instance the numerous foundations by the judge 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl (d. 854/1450), of Syrian origin, closely associated with al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, who occupied several official positions as *nāẓir al-khāss*, *nāẓir al-kiswah*, then *nāẓir al-juyūsh* under Barsbāy's rule<sup>10</sup>. He is a rare example of a prominent non-military figure having building activities in the main Mamluk cities: Cairo (madrasa, suq, mausoleum), Jerusalem (madrasa, *sabīl*), Damascus (*khānqāh*, hammam), Mecca (madrasa, *sabīl*) and Medina (madrasa)<sup>11</sup>. Thus, he was competing with a princely patronage pattern investing the most important and symbolic cities in the sultanate. The madrasa in Cairo, known as al-Bāsiṭīyah, was completed in 823/1420 and still stands on al-Hurunfish street. It was seemingly lavishly furnished: a large pyramidal metal lamp removed from this madrasa and bearing the name of the founder is still kept in the Museum of Islamic Art<sup>12</sup>. Another judge, Zayn al-dīn Yaḥyā (d. 874/1469), also occupied some bureaucratic positions and accumulated an enormous wealth. He built many buildings including three still standing mosques in Cairo between 848/1444 and 856/1452 (near al-Azhar, in Bulāq and near Birkat al-Fīl)<sup>13</sup>. A third example is the judge Zayn al-dīn Abū Bakr ibn Muzhir, *kātib al-sirr* under Qāyṭbāy (d. 892/1487), who erected two remarkably ornamented madrasas in Cairo (884/1479-80), and Jerusalem (885/1480-81)<sup>14</sup>. His palace, richly adorned, was spoiled after his death by sultan Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī for the embellishment of the Duhayshah palace at the Citadel in 911/1505<sup>15</sup>. To conclude this brief overview, a rare example of a female civilian patronage should be mentioned: Mughul bint Ibn al-Bārīzī, built a complex including a madrasa, a zawiya and a mausoleum, covered with marble, gold and lapis-lazuli<sup>16</sup>. But she had married the sultan Jaqmaq and her case is symptomatic of the strong links between these important civilian families and the military power. Their high social status and wealth found expression in this building activity, both for communication and prestige purpose and for family's commodity and benefice. One symbolic expression of the proximity between these families and the circle of power can be seen in the location of some of their mausoleums: the Banū

<sup>7</sup> Petry, *The Civilian Elite*.

<sup>8</sup> Martel-Thoumian, *Les civils*, 391-432.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 415-422, gives a list of the religious and civilian buildings erected by bureaucrats according to the sources.

<sup>10</sup> Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo*, 247-249.

<sup>11</sup> Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, II: 318 Nr 29/13, 326 Nr 29/43, 335-336 Nr 33/4-5, 348 Nr 33/61, 349-350 Nr 33/69-70, 371 Nr 35/63.

<sup>12</sup> Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art (n° 382): Wiet, *Cuivres*, 32-33, n° 382, pl. XIV.

<sup>13</sup> Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo*, 262-265; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, II: 364-65 Nr 35/27, 368-69 Nr 35/48, 373 Nr 35/71, 374 Nr 35/75.

<sup>14</sup> Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo*, 284-286; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, II: 417 Nr 42/112, 420 Nr 42/122.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., II: 432 Nr 42/178; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i*, 4:80; transl. Wiet, 1: 76.

<sup>16</sup> Marthel-Thoumian, *Les civils*, 402.

Jī'ān had their family mausoleum next to sultan Barsbāy's tomb in the desert, while the Kātib Jakam had theirs next to the funerary complex of Sultān Īnāl in the desert as well<sup>17</sup>.

As for the material environment and the living standards of these civilian elites, only few evidences remain. Apart from the large lamps associated with religious monuments, only a few metal objects survive that display a dedication to a member of the civilian elite<sup>18</sup>. According to Gaston Wiet's chronological list of metal wares<sup>19</sup> and from personal survey, forty pieces out of hundreds have this specific dedication to bureaucrats, judges, wealthy merchants (*khawājā*) or shaykhs<sup>20</sup>. Particularly, more than two-thirds belong to the second half of the fifteenth century or the early sixteenth century. Amongst the few examples from the Bahri Mamluk period can be mentioned two notable objects: the base of a candlestick, made for a *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā'* (the *kātib al-sirr*, head secretary of the chancery), who is still to be identified. It bears a coat of arm in the shape of a pen box, and can be dated around the mid-fourteenth century according to the style of its decoration<sup>21</sup>. The second object is a pen box made for a *qāḍī* Burhān al-dīn, unidentified so far, seemingly dating from the end of the thirteenth century, again on stylistic ground<sup>22</sup> [Fig. 1]. Both are of high quality standard with a wide use of silver inlays. The pen box is highly emblematic of someone holding a high bureaucratic or judicial position. Its schematic shape was used as the emblem (*rank*) of the military position of *dawādār*, but as shown on the later candlestick it could also be used by the close related and non-military *kātib al-sirr* as soon as the mid-fourteenth century. Later on, in the fifteenth century, it seems that it was even more broadly used by various civilians. These two outstanding objects are of high quality, quite comparable to many pieces made for Mamluk amirs or even sultans. In this regard, meaningful examples are a large tray [Fig. 2] and a candlestick made for the *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā'* 'Alā al-dīn al-Karakī (prior to 793/1391)<sup>23</sup>. Added small inscriptions in *rank*-like medallions in the name of sultan Faraj b. Barqūq attest to their subsequent integration into this sultan's *khizānah*.

Analyzing the dedications of these metal objects made for non-military elites, it appears that the vast majority of the recipients remain anonymous or unidentified. Besides, relatively few positions or qualifications are represented: six were made for heads of the chancery, six for judges (who could probably occupy other specific positions), three for merchants (*khawājā*), four for a *mu'allim/ mu'addib*, one for a *muwaqqit*, one for a *sammān* (butter seller), two were dedicated to shaykhs, and three to sayyids. Lastly, two metal objects bear dedication to Syrian women, daughters of a judge and of a chief builder. If a pen-box made for a bureaucrat or a small box made for a *muwaqqit* may have embodied the occupation of their owner and were conceived as major investments with a symbolic meaning, other more generic shapes like cups, dishes or candlesticks can less easily be identified as emblematic of a special social position. Their various degrees of lavishness may nevertheless be indicative. Unfortunately, many of the mentioned recipients remain to be identified for a better understanding of their role and meanings. In this regard, an interesting case study can be

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 403.

<sup>18</sup> To which can be added seven lamps of enameled glass: Wiet, *Lampes*, 157 n° 21, 158 n° 22, 164 n° 50-52-53, 180 n° 167, 181 n° D (this last one is now in the Louvre Museum, n° MAO 487).

<sup>19</sup> Wiet, *Cuivres*, 163-276.

<sup>20</sup> See the Appendix to this article for a comprehensive list.

<sup>21</sup> Palermo, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia (n° 7252), see the Appendix, n°6. It has been published in: Staacke, *Metalli*, 67-71, where the reading of the inscription, especially the title of the recipient, was faulty. I corrected it from the published picture, but unfortunately the final part of the inscription is not reproduced.

<sup>22</sup> Previously in the Harari collection (n° 176); Wiet, *Cuivres*, 225, n° 299; a photography and epigraphic notes are in the G. Wiet's archives in the Louvre Museum. Apparently, most of the metal works in the Harari collection subsequently entered into the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo.

<sup>23</sup> See the Appendix, n° 9-10.

provided by an unusual candlestick kept in the Louvre Museum, whose hitherto mysterious patron deserved more investigation.

## 2. A Case Study: Taqī al-dīn Abū Bakr's Candlestick in the Louvre Museum

This candlestick is a late example of a type of luxurious lighting device that was produced on a large scale during the Mamluk period [Fig. 3]. These were notably used for the lighting of religious monuments: they are depicted by pair, framing a mihrab, on several tombstones, minbar chairs or on pilgrimage certificates as early as the late twelfth century, and gained therefore the label of “mihrab candlesticks”; moreover, several of them bear engraved marks of deposit in mausoleums or funerary madrasas<sup>24</sup>. But it is likely that they were also included among the furnishing of wealthy houses. Of note, their inscriptions are never religious, but only dedicatory to a named or anonymous patron. One rare example bears a poetical inscription<sup>25</sup>.

Many outstanding candlesticks with silver and gold inlays have survived from the fourteenth century, displaying large inscriptions in the name of sultans or great amirs. But, for the fifteenth century, we only have few examples, dating from the second half of the fifteenth century. Most of them are linked to sultan Qāyṭbāy (six) or his wife Fāṭima (two), amongst which five similar candlesticks are dedicated—as their inscription mentioned—to *al-hujrah al-nabawīyah* (the Prophet Muḥammad's tomb) in Medina and dated 887/1481-1482<sup>26</sup>. If we exclude these later ones, very few other large candlesticks of this kind are preserved, besides numerous much smaller candlesticks mainly produced for export which do not display any inscriptions<sup>27</sup>. As for the large candlesticks, only three are known, made for several amirs of the period:

- a candlestick in the name of al-Sayfī Jānī Bak, *amīr akhūr* of Tanim al-Mu'ayyadī, governor of Damascus (865-68/ 1460-64)<sup>28</sup>,
- a candlestick in the name of Shadbak al-ashrafi (al-Julbānī), *dawādār* in Damascus, (d. in 887/1482)<sup>29</sup>,
- a candlestick made for Azbak, *atābak al-'asākīr* (873-900/1468-95)<sup>30</sup>.

The first candlestick is of poor quality, with its roughly engraved dedication and otherwise non-decorated, but the two others show a more refined decoration, though apparently without precious inlays<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> One example has been recently purchased by the Louvre Museum, made for the Rasulid sultan al-Mujāhid 'Alī (n° MAO 2285) ; an engraved mark on the inner side of the base stipulates that it was deposited as a waqf for the tomb of a princess Jihat Fahīm in the madrasa al-Mu'ayyadīya (in Ta'izz).

<sup>25</sup> Louvre Museum (n° MAO 693), datable to the first half of the fourteenth century.

<sup>26</sup> Wiet, *Cuivres*, 232-233 n° 338 to 342.

<sup>27</sup> Many of them belong or have belonged to Italian collections and can bear the coat of arms of Italian families. For a review of these pieces: Auld, *Renaissance Venice*, 249-64. These small candlesticks, usually inlaid with silver, do not exceed fifteen centimeters high. Another interesting and connected candlestick—not included in Auld's catalogue—is kept in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (n° EA1985. 18, unpublished). It is larger (24,4 cm high), in a different technique (a heavy quaternary alloy, with open-work), with an engraved and gold inlaid (now almost disappeared) decoration. It shows some decorative patterns closely related to this group, as does another medium sized brass candlestick (H. 22,2 cm), similarly non inscribed, sold recently on the art market (*Arts of Islam*, Christie's, London - South Kensington, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013, lot 659).

<sup>28</sup> Damascus, National Museum (registration number unknown), published in: Sauvaget, *citadelle*, 239-241, fig. 28, and more recently in: *Calligraphy*, 59.

<sup>29</sup> London, Khalili Collection (n° MTW 495); published in: Rogers, *Arts de l'islam*, 188-189, n° 223.

<sup>30</sup> Wiet, *Inscriptions*, p. 265, n° 7, pl. VII; *TEI*, n° 21518; its past and present locations are unknown.

<sup>31</sup> It is not always easy to determine if a metalwork was originally inlaid or not, and further technical investigations need to be carried out regarding this issue.



None from the last twenty years of the Mamluk sultanate seems to have survived so far. Generally speaking, luxurious metal objects—apart from arms and armour—made for Qānisawh al-Ghawrī or his amirs are very rare, the main one being a large lamp coming from his mosque-mausoleum complex in Cairo<sup>32</sup>.

The Louvre candlestick<sup>33</sup> belongs to the “large” category, measuring around forty-four centimeters high. It has a much refined decoration of stylized vegetal patterns, and several inscriptions in cartouches: large ones on the basis and smaller ones on the flat shoulder as well as on the upper part of the stick [Fig. 4 to 7]. It also displays several pen box *ranks* on its different parts. Moreover, it had extensive and large silver inlays that are only partly preserved today. It is therefore obvious that the Louvre candlestick is not at all a secondary piece of work. It is actually the only one of its kind and must have been made for a wealthy patron. Nevertheless, it has not much retained the attention of scholars so far, probably because it was not associated with the military elite and because the individual mentioned in its inscription remained mysterious.

It has been published for the first time in the early twentieth century. Its inscriptions were fully edited by Gaston Wiet in 1932 and then by L.A. Mayer in 1933<sup>34</sup>:

مما عمل برسم المقرّ الأشراف الكريم العالي المولوي / السيدي المالكي المخدومي العضدي الذخري  
/ التقوي أبو بكر نجل المرحوم القاضي عبد البارّ عظم شأنه

*mimmā 'umila bi-rasmi l-maqarri l-ashrafi l-karīmi l-'ālī l-mawlawī / l-sayyidī l-mālikī l-makhdūmī l-'aḍadī l-ḍukhrī / l-taqwī Abū Bakr najli l-marḥūmī l-qāḍī 'Abd al-Bārr 'aẓẓama sha'nuhu*

“This is one of the objects made for his most noble and honourable, high excellency, our lord, the master, the royal, the well-served, the supporter, the treasure, Taqī al-dīn Abū Bakr, son of the late judge 'Abd al-Bārr<sup>35</sup>, may his dignity increase.”

Interestingly, because the silver inlays have disappeared on some part of the inscription [Fig. 6], we can note some mistakes made by the engraver, who reworked over some letters that had been delineated on the smooth surface during a first step, and thus integrated them into the tooled background. It could be interpreted whether as the result of a distraction by the engraver, or a misunderstanding due to his illiteracy.

At first, these inscriptions allow to ascribe this lavish candlestick to the patronage of a member of civilian elite, the son of a judge. This individual was first identified as the judge Abū Bakr ibn Muzhir by R. L. Devonshire<sup>36</sup>. But this important personality, *kātib al-sirr* from 867/1463 until his death in 893/1488, bears the *laqab* “Zayn al-dīn” and his father was not a 'Abd al-Barr.

<sup>32</sup> Now in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (n° 239): Wiet, *Cuivres*, 6, n°30, p. 28-29, 242 n° 390, pl. XX-XXI; Behrens-Abouseif, *Metal Lamps*, 13, pl. 7. A pyramidal lamp is now in Istanbul, Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi (n° 154): Wiet, *Cuivres*, 6 n° 31, 242 n° 395; Behrens-Abouseif, *Metal Lamps*, pl. 44. Recently, a large basin in his name appeared on the art market but its authenticity is more than dubious (*Art of the Islamic and Indian worlds*, Christie's London, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2012, lot 131).

<sup>33</sup> Louvre Museum (n° OA 6317), Bequest Charles Piet-Lataudrie, 1909.

<sup>34</sup> Migeon, *Exposition*, pl. 24 ; Migeon, *La collection*, 25 ; Migeon, *L'Orient musulman*, 27, pl. 31, n° 111 ; Devonshire, *Mihraḥ Candlesticks*, 270, 274-276, fig. D (with corresponding legend under pl. B) ; Wiet, *Cuivres*, 222-223, n°290 ; Mayer, *Saracenic*, 45-46, pl. XXXIII, 5,6 ; Makariou, *Memorias*, 135, 137, n° 140 ; *TEI*, n° 7130.

<sup>35</sup> For this part of the name “Bārr”, we follow the reading of L.A. Mayer; not convincingly, G. Wiet read it as “*al-bāqī*”. The spelling “Bārr” is problematic since 'Abd al-Barr is not found with an *alif* in the sources. It could be considered as a mistake made by the engraver, which is not rare in the Mamluk epigraphy, or a possible alternative spelling.

<sup>36</sup> Devonshire, *Mihraḥ Candlesticks*, 270, 274-6, pl. D.

Later on, L.A. Mayer proposed to identify this Taqī al-dīn Abū Bakr, son of the judge ‘Abd al-Barr as one individual who lived in the late fourteenth century, mentioned by Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī<sup>37</sup>. It appears that this individual proposed by L.A. Mayer is actually named Sayf al-dīn Abū Bakr b. Ṣaḍr al-dīn b. Taqī al-dīn: this attribution is therefore incorrect and was not anyway consistent with the style of our candlestick, rather stylistically connected to the fifteenth century.

Taqī al-dīn, Abū Bakr, ‘Abd al-Barr are real common *laqab* and names that somehow discourage any research. It is therefore interesting to note the use of the word *najl* instead of the usual *ibn* before “*qāḍī ‘Abd al-Barr*”. This is not very usual, but it occurs from time to time in some Mamluk and early Ottoman inscriptions<sup>38</sup>. In almost all instances, it was used when the father was deceased and was an outstanding figure to whom the son would be proud or feel the need to refer to<sup>39</sup>. Usually, *najl* had the meaning of “heir” in a laudatory sense, as in the honorific *alqāb*: *najl al-khilāfah*, *najl al-sultānah*, *najl al-akābir*<sup>40</sup>, and was used in laudatory poetry. Hence its presence in some Nasrid inscriptions, like in the tombstone of the Nasrid caliph Yūsuf III (d. 820/1417-18): “*Yūsuf najlu l-khalīfati Yūsuf*”<sup>41</sup>.

Considering this, one outstanding ‘Abd al-Barr comes in the foreground in the late Mamluk period, namely: Ṣarī al-dīn ‘Abd al-Barr ibn al-Shiḥnah, hanafī *qāḍī l-quḍāt* (chief judge) under the sultanate of Qānīṣawh al-Ghawrī<sup>42</sup>, and a member of an important family in Aleppo<sup>43</sup>. He is regularly mentioned by Ibn Iyās in his chronicle of al-Ghawrī’s reign. As such, the chief judge ‘Abd al-Barr was the most important religious figure, equal in rank to the civil position of *kātib al-sirr*<sup>44</sup>. Though royal favor was always fluctuant, ‘Abd al-Barr seems to have been rather close to the sultan; he probably amassed an important fortune and occasionally displayed his wealth<sup>45</sup>. His older son Ḥusām al-dīn Maḥmūd was appointed intendant of the Manṣūrī hospital in ṣafar 916/ June 1510. Previously, he had been briefly appointed as hanafī *qāḍī l-quḍāt* in Aleppo but was rapidly dismissed<sup>46</sup>. In 28 rajab 921/9 September 1515, Ṣarī al-dīn ‘Abd al-Barr ibn Shiḥnah died and his son Ḥusām al-dīn Maḥmūd took over his father’s position<sup>47</sup>.

It appears that Maḥmūd had a—certainly younger—brother, named Abū Bakr. Ibn Iyās mentions him only once, reporting his death together with his brother Maḥmūd in rabī‘ I 923 /March-April 1517, just after the Ottoman conquest of Cairo, when they were killed in Bahnasā by Ṭūmānbāy’s mamluks<sup>48</sup>. The two brothers had been sent in embassy by the Ottomans to the last Mamluk sultan who had flown to Baḥnassa. Abū Bakr is described by Ibn Iyās as a man with a chaotic and agitated mind. He also describes him as a big man with a

<sup>37</sup> Mayer, *Saracenic*, 45-46; Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar*, 1: 445, n°1187.

<sup>38</sup> I found seven occurrences in epigraphy registered in the *TEI* (n° 22118, 9643, 10626, 10697, 12536, 10430, 32233) ; another occurrence is in the colophon of a copy of Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh’s *Kitāb Tathqīf al-Ta’rīf bi-l-Muṣṭalah al-Sharīf*, dated 884/1479 in Damascus, where the author is named “‘*Abd al-Raḥmān najl al-maqarr al-‘alī...*” (Ibn Nāẓir al-Jaysh, *Tathqīf*, XX-XXI, ill. 5-6).

<sup>39</sup> Though this specific use of *najl* for *ibn* in a posthumous circumstance is not mentioned in the dictionaries.

<sup>40</sup> See al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 6: 73.

<sup>41</sup> Granada, Archaeological Museum (n° R.E. 239): *TEI* n°8922.

<sup>42</sup> He was appointed at the very beginning of his reign on 22 shawwāl 906/1501 (Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 4: 7; transl. Wiet, 1: 5).

<sup>43</sup> His father Muḥibb al-dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad (d. 890/1485) was also a ḥanafī chief judge and is the author of the famous description of Aleppo, *al-Durr al-muntakhab li-Ta’rīkh Ḥalab* (Dominique Sourdel, “Ibn al-Shiḥna”, *Encyclopédie de l’Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 3: 962).

<sup>44</sup> Ibn Iyās mentions a quarrel between ‘Abd al-Barr and the then *kātib al-sirr* Badr al-dīn Maḥmūd ibn Ajā in rabī‘ II 915/1509, regarding a waqf in Aleppo that they were jointly administrating: Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 4: 158 ; transl. Wiet, 1: 155.

<sup>45</sup> Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 4: 334, 470; transl. Wiet, 1: 312, 434.

<sup>46</sup> Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 4: 183; transl. Wiet, 1: 177.

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 4: 470; transl. Wiet, 1: 434.

<sup>48</sup> Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i*, 5: 173 ; transl. Wiet, 2: 167-68.

strong neckline, and was therefore called “the strong one”. He was accused of having betrayed a mamluk who was hiding from the Ottomans in Cairo and who was consequently captured and killed. During the embassy to Ṭumānbāy, Abū Bakr was denounced as the betrayer and this mamluk’s brother jumped onto Abū Bakr and beheaded him. Trying to stand up for his brother, Ḥusām al-dīn Maḥmūd was also killed.

Abū Bakr is fortunately better known through a biographical entry in Ibn al-Ḥanbalī’s *Durr al-Ḥabab fī ta’rīkh a’yān Ḥalab*<sup>49</sup>. He was born in Cairo, and apparently he never occupied any official position. According to Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, he went to Aleppo along with al-Ghawrī’s retinue in 922/1516 during his deadly campaign against the Ottomans. But apparently, he returned to Egypt after the defeat of the Mamluk army and al-Ghawrī’s death. Quite interestingly, he is reported as behaving very much like a Circassian amir, because he was purchasing race horses, and due to his mastery of hunting and throwing of spears. He also spoke Circassian language like one of them, and “on his horse back, Ibn al-Ḥanbalī says, he was looking like an amir of thousand, with his magnificence, his large and impressive stature and all together wearing the costume and turban he retained from his ancestors”.

و كانت تغلب عليه طريقة أمراء الجراكسة في إقتناء جياذ الخيل و الإلمام بالصيد و اللعب بالرمح و نوحه  
بل كان يتكلم باللسان الجركسي كواحد منهم و تراه على ظهر فرسه كأنه الألف مع ما عنده من الشهامة و  
أبهة طول القامة و البقاء على أسلوب سلفه في الملبس و العمامة

*Wa kānat taghlibu ‘alayhi ṭarīqatu umarā’i l-jarākisati fī iqtinā’i jiyādi al-khayli wa-l-ilmāmi bi-l-ṣaydi wa-l-la’bi bi-l-rumḥi wa nawḥuhu bal kāna yatakallamu bi-l-lisāni al-jarkasī ka-wāḥidi minhum wa tarāhu ‘alā zahri farasihi ka’annahu l-alfu ma’a mā ‘indahū mina-l-shahāmati wa ubbahatu ṭūli l-qāmāti, wa-l-baqā’u ‘alā uslūbi salafīhi fī l-malbasi wa-l-‘imāmah.*

Thus, we have here an interesting glimpse into the ever growing intertwined connections between prominent civilian families and the military elite.

This new identification for the recipient of the candlestick as Abū Bakr, son of the chief judge ‘Abd al-Barr Ibn al-Shiḥnah fits better with the inscription and stylistic features of this candlestick. The fact that Abū Bakr had no official position matches also the fact that none is indeed mentioned in the inscription. The quality of the work also reflects the high status of his wealthy and powerful family. The presence of a pen box *rank* on the candlestick also exemplifies its broadened use in the late Mamluk period by different kinds of members of the civilian elite. In some way, this lavish candlestick actually embodies this infatuated character, aiming at challenging the Mamluk codes.

Nevertheless, we have no clue regarding the destination of this candlestick: was it intended for the family’s house in Cairo, or for some religious monument in this city or in the family’s homeland, Aleppo? Nothing is known from the architectural patronage of the Ibn al-Shiḥnah family, except that the grand-father Muḥibb al-dīn had constituted a waqf for the benefit of the oratory in the Aleppo citadel<sup>50</sup>. Together with the previous mention of the administration of a waqf in Aleppo by the judge ‘Abd al-Barr<sup>51</sup>, this testifies to the ongoing links of the family with their homeland.

This new attribution also provides a firm and precise dating frame for the making of the candlestick: it must have been made before the death of Abū Bakr in spring 923/1517 and after the death of his father, whose name is preceded by *al-marḥūm* in the inscription,

<sup>49</sup> Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 1/1: 386-87, n°111.

<sup>50</sup> D. Sourdél, “Ibn al-Shiḥna”, *EF*<sup>2</sup>, 3: 962. No building connected to the family has been listed in Michael Meinecke’s comprehensive survey (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*).

<sup>51</sup> See note 44.

meaning after rajab 921/ September 1515. Hence, it can also be used as a new benchmark for this type of inlaid metal works displaying similar stylistic features.

### 3. A New Benchmark for a Group of Late Mamluk Metalwork

This candlestick shows indeed strong similarities and connections with other metal objects attributed to the late Mamluk period.

On one hand, it employs a type of arabesque pattern, in the central registers framing the inscriptions, on the base and the top part: on a smooth and initially silver-inlaid ground stands out a highly stylized and symmetrical vegetal design, engraved with a vermiculated pattern, and enhanced by the use of a black paste filling the hollow ground. This kind of decorative design can be seen on several metal works, ascribed to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. Among them feature a small and fine lunch box inscribed with poetic verses<sup>52</sup>, a bowl made for an amir *khāzindār* Sayf al-dīn Barqūq<sup>53</sup>, a lunch box in the name of Ibrāhīm b. Bayghūt al-Mu'ayyadī, governor of the Damascus citadel (d. 873/1469)<sup>54</sup>, and a tray bearing Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī's name on its reverse<sup>55</sup>. The same kind of patterns and vegetal scrolls can be seen on the architectural decoration of the same period in Cairo, for example on the *sabīl-maktab* of Qāyrbāy on the Saliba street, in the decoration of the mosque of Qijmās al-Ishāqī, or the *wikāla* of Qāyrbāy near al-Azhar [Fig. 8].

On the other hand, the candlestick also share commonalities with objects belonging to the previously so-called “Veneto-saracenic” group, thus labelled because many pieces were preserved in Italy and occasionally display the coat of arms of some Venetian families, and because a workshop of Near Eastern craftsmen settled in Venice had been tentatively put forward<sup>56</sup>. Since then, a large part of these objects has been considered of Mamluk provenance<sup>57</sup>, while others are rather attributed to the territories of Turkmen dynasties (East Anatolia, Iraq, Iran) and some imitations to Italy. Sylvia Auld has dedicated an important study on this issue, for which she surveyed a large amount of related pieces<sup>58</sup>. For the objects of Mamluk provenance, in order to break with this confusing “Veneto-saracenic” label, I will use here instead the term “late Mamluk minor style”, opposite to a more “monumental style”, favouring large inscriptions and larger floral designs, predominantly associated with the military elite.

The objects belonging to this particular group all share dense and highly compartmented compositions as well as several specific patterns, besides an extensive use of inlays (though most of them disappeared through the time). Several of these decorative patterns are found on the Louvre candlestick:

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<sup>52</sup> London, British Museum (n° OA 1908.3-28.2) : Barrett, *Islamic Metalwork*, XXIV, pl. 31 ; Ward, *Islamic Metalwork*, 118-119, fig. 95;

website: [http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database\\_item.php?id=object:ISL;uk:Mus01;32;fr](http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database_item.php?id=object:ISL;uk:Mus01;32;fr) [accessed 10/06/2017]

*TEI*, n° 26737.

<sup>53</sup> Edinburgh, Royal Museum (n° A 1885.194), this Barqūq has not been identified so far : Wiet, *Cuivres*, 244-45 n°415; website: [http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database\\_item.php?id=object:ISL;uk:Mus03;20;fr](http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database_item.php?id=object:ISL;uk:Mus03;20;fr) [accessed 10/06/2017]; *TEI*, n°42979.

<sup>54</sup> Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art (n° 8999): Wiet, *Cuivres*, 142-43, pl. LXX.

<sup>55</sup> London, Victoria and Albert Museum (n° M.92-1909), unpublished, photographs available on the museum website: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O380968/dish/> [accessed 17/07/2017]

<sup>56</sup> See: Melikian-Chirvani, *Venise*, who took over an assertion first made by the French orientalist Henri Lavoix (1820-1892). For a historical review of this thesis, see: Auld, *Renaissance Venice*, 36-43.

<sup>57</sup> For discussions on these objects and their attribution, see also: Allan, *Veneto-Saracenic* ; Ward, *Metallarbeiten* ; Behrens-Abouseif, *Veneto-Saracenic* ; Auld, *Renaissance Venice*.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. Her “group A” refers the objects of Mamluk provenance.

- the guilloche or pearled band<sup>59</sup>, that can be seen at the base of the neck [fig. 7],
- a typical border scroll made of a running stem with three whirling trefoils<sup>60</sup>, like the ones framing horizontally the large inscribed cartouches [fig. 4 to 6],
- another border scroll with alternating digitate half-leaves<sup>61</sup>, used on the upper candle fitting [fig. 3],
- borders based on a quatrefoil pattern<sup>62</sup>, found at the top and bottom of the base of the candlestick, here containing stylised lotus flowers,
- a type of four-links knot, found in one of the large inscribed cartouches on the basis [fig. 5].

Another shared characteristic amongst the objects connected to the so-called “Veneto-saracenic” group, even for the numerous ones in the “late Mamluk minor style”, is that they do not contain any inscriptions, apart from a few much discussed signatures. So far only four inscribed objects can be traced, solely one inscription being dedicatory—on the Louvre candlestick—, the three others containing arabic poetic verses. These inscriptions have a common epigraphic style, characterised by thin strokes with a homegenic boldness, elongated *alif* and *lām* with almost missing serif, and a similar design of the letters. Interestingly, Sylvia Auld did not include any of them in her catalogue of the “Veneto-saracenic” metal objects, though she mentioned two of them in her discussion<sup>63</sup>. It seems that she considered them as too obviously Mamluk because of their inscriptions, neglecting their strong connections with other uninscribed objects of this group. I will present here these three other inscribed objects, of which only one has been studied so far.

The first one is a cylindrical pen case (or document case) in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris<sup>64</sup> [Fig. 9 to 11]. It has four large inscribed bands containing several rearranged poetical fragments. These are commonly found on Mamluk metalworks that have been notably published by James Allan, Assadullah S. Melikian-Chirvani, Giovanni Curatola and Doris Behrens-Abouseif<sup>65</sup>. From top to bottom, one can read:

ا - بلغت من العلياء اعلا المراتب و قارنك التوفيق من كل جانب و لا زلت مرغوباً إليك و  
 ب - باسطاً يمينك في الد [كذا] الدنيا بنيل المطالب / لا زلت يا مالكي ما دمت في دعة و  
 ت - من تمنعنا في جمالي نزهة العين يراني لي طرز من الخير قد حوا كل المعاني كيف لا يسمو جمالي  
 ث - يا صاحبي ان رمت تبلغ ما تشا و ترقى الى العليا غير مزاحمي عليك بحسن الصبر في كل شدة فما  
 صابر [فيما يروم بنادمي]

A - *balaghta mina l-uliya' i a 'la l-marātibī wa qārnaḳ l-tawfīqu min kullī jānibī wa lā zilta marghūbān ilayka wa*

B - *bāsiṭān yamīnuka fī-l-dunyā bi-nayli l-maṭālibi / Lā zilta yā mālikī mā dumta fī da 'ati wa*

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 76, fig. 13 a.A.1.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 77, fig. 17 b.F1A.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 77, fig. 17 d. F2A.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 103, Appendix fig. T9 – TH1.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 65, pl. 24 (for the jug discussed below) and 42 (for the Priuli cup also mentioned below).

<sup>64</sup> Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs (n° AD 5598/1; L. 25,8 cm; Diam. 4,6 cm), on deposit at the Louvre Museum. It was summarily published (inscription unread) with a photography in: Bresc-Gautier and Ouellet, *Les arts*, 171, n° 200. It was not included in the catalogue of Sylvia Auld (Auld, *Renaissance Venice*), which registered only one similar cylindrical box, uninscribed, in the Museo Civico Correr, in Venice (Ibid., 304, cat. 9.1). The shape is already attested in the mid-fourteenth century by a similar object in the David collection, Copenhagen (Von Folsach, *Art*, 324 n° 517).

<sup>65</sup> Allan, *Later Mamluk Metalwork*; Melikian-Chirvani, *Venise*; Curatola, *Eredità*; Behrens-Abouseif, *Veneto-saracenic*; idem, *A Late Mamluk Oil Lamp*.

C – *man tama 'nā fī jamālī nuzhatu l- 'ayni yarānī liyya ṭarzu mina l-khayri qad ḥawā kulla al-ma 'ānī kayfa lā yasmū jamālī*  
D – *yā ṣāhibī in rimta tabluḡhu mā tashā wa tarqā ilā l- 'uliyā' ghayru mazaḥimī 'alayka bi-ḥusni l-ṣabri fī kulli shaddatin famā ṣābir [fīmā yarūmu bi-nādimī].*

A – You have reached the highest rank as regards greatness and good fortune have associated with you on every side. May you not cease to be in demand and

B – to stretch forth your right hand in the world by obtaining your wishes. O my owner! May you ever remain in comfort.

C – Who examines my beauty will find me a delight to the eye. My form is of the finest and is full of meaning. How would my beauty not be outstanding?

D – O my owner! If you persevere you will achieve what you wish and rise to glory unrivalled. You should be patient in all hardships. No one with patience [in his aspirations is regretful].<sup>66</sup>

Of note, in each of the epigraphic bands, a four-links knot, exactly similar to the one on the Louvre candlestick, was used to indicate the starting point of the line [Fig. 10]. Otherwise, its decorative patterns: trefoils, stylised lotus blossom, intersecting circles and quatrelobes are typical of the “late Mamluk minor style”.

The same initial poetic excerpt (those on line A and the beginning of line B), which is the most commonly found on Mamluk metalware, is reproduced on the second inscribed object: the so-called Priuli wine cup, in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London<sup>67</sup>, that was later incised with the coat of arms of the Priuli family of Venice [Fig. 12]. The large cartouches and the style of the script, on a vermiculated ground, as well as the border scrolls with alternating digitate half-leaves and the quatrefoil patterns are also closely related to the Louvre candlestick.

Finally, the third inscribed object is a jug in the Berlin Kunstgewerbemuseum<sup>68</sup> [Fig. 13 to 16] which has a unique shape within this group of late Mamluk metalwork, though this type of small rounded drinking jug was known in the Middle-East since the thirteenth century. Yet its very squat form and its sinuous dragon-shaped handle more closely connect it with a well-known timurid prototype that illustrate the cultural and material links with the Turkmen dynasties in the late Mamluk period. The jug is also remarkable because of its unusual inscriptions, hitherto unread, that seem to have no parallel among the late Mamluk metal objects.

The largest inscription on the globular body of the jug, parted in two oval cartouches, can be read as follows<sup>69</sup>:

يا شارب الماء الزلال الصافي  
إشرب هنيئاً صحة و عوافي الد؟

*yā shāriba l-mā'i l-zulālī l-ṣāfī*  
*ishrab hanī'an siḥḥatan wa 'awāfī l-d?*

“O you who drink the cool, pure water  
Drink cheerfully and be in good health.”

<sup>66</sup> I follow here the translations published in: Behrens-Abouseif, *Veneto-Saracenic*, 159 and idem, *A Late Mamluk Oil Lamp*, 157.

<sup>67</sup> London, Victoria and Albert Museum (n° 311-1854), published and studied in: Melikian-Chirvani, *Venise*, 111-114, pl. II.

<sup>68</sup> Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum (1911.53). A black and white photograph was published in: Auld *Renaissance Venice*, 65, pl. 24. I thank Lothar Lambacher in the Kunstgewerbemuseum for providing me with high quality pictures of this jug.

<sup>69</sup> I would like to thank Prof. Syrinx von Hees for her precious help in completing the deciphering of these difficult inscriptions. The tentative translation is mine.

On the four small cartouches of the neck:

قد صفا يا نعم مشربها  
فلهذا رفعت فوق أيادي  
كل خليل وكاتب ونديم  
إناء بشرية تنصب وجع قلبي

*qad ṣafā yā ni 'ma mashrabihā  
fa-li-hadhā ruḥi 'at fawqa ayādī  
kulli khalīlin wa kātibin wa nadīmin  
inā 'un bi-shurbatin tanṣibu waj 'a qalbī*

“O excellent beverage which has been purified  
Hence was raised over the hands  
Of each close friend, scribe and companion,  
A vessel with a potion that traps the pain of my heart.”

While a few poetical verses, like the ones on the previously mentioned pen case or on the Priuli cup, were reputedly used on Mamluk metal vessels in the second half of the fourteenth and in the fifteenth century, those on this jug are quite unusual. It is nevertheless intriguing to compare the content of the first large cartouche on the body of the jug with an inscription found on three inlaid metal objects belonging to the Bahri Mamluk period, first published and commented by D.S. Rice<sup>70</sup>: a jug (actually with a similar shape to the one in Berlin) attributable to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century<sup>71</sup> and two drinking bowls datable to the fourteenth century<sup>72</sup>. Their identical poetic inscriptions begin with the same words as on the Berlin jug: “*yā shāriba l-mā'i l-zulālī*”, but then go on differently with an allusion to the martyrdom of Ḥusayn in Karbala, when he was refused some water, and to 'Alī welcoming him in Paradise with a crystal cup of cool water. This clearly shii inscription led D.S. Rice to attribute these pieces to a Syrian production, possibly in Aleppo<sup>73</sup>. On the Berlin jug, this shii connotation has disappeared, but the similar introducing words suggest that its maker could have taken inspiration from such a shii-connoted drinking vase. Another possibility is that this first poetic excerpt on the large cartouches was actually widespread at that time, especially in the context of convivial gatherings or as a greeting formula. This would explain why it was again used, with a slight variation<sup>74</sup>, at the front of two eighteenth-century Ottoman *sabīls* in Cairo<sup>75</sup>. As for the other poetic verses inscribed on the neck of the jug, they seem to be unique, but clearly allude again to a convivial gathering and to the literary culture which befitted the educated civilian milieu.

Nevertheless this literary culture was shared by at least a small part of the military elite. Especially for the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, evidences abound to the interest of sultans and amirs in the literary culture, besides the religious sciences. Some poetic verses like the ones beginning with “*balaghta mina l-uliya'i*” were widespread on metalworks. They were integrated among the available decorative patterns in the context of a

<sup>70</sup> Rice, *Two Unusual*.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 495-500. Unfortunately, the jug is only known through a detailed nineteenth century engraving; its location is unknown.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 490-494 ; also published in: Curatola, *Eredità*, 309-310, n° 176-177; one is in Torino, Museo Civico (n° 159) and one in Milano, Museo Poldi-Pezzoli (n° 761).

<sup>73</sup> Rice, *Two Unusual*, 495-97, especially 497, note 1.

<sup>74</sup> With “*yā wārīda*” instead of “*yā shāriba*”.

<sup>75</sup> On the *sabīl* of Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Maḥāsibī, 1129/1716 (*MIHC*, n° 329,1) and on the *sabīl* of Nafīṣah al-Bayḍā, 1211/1796-97 (*MIHC*, n° 358,2). I thank Prof. Syrinx von Hees for drawing my attention to the first one.

standardized production ; they could be used as such next to official titles on several metal objects made for amirs<sup>76</sup>.

These intertwined social networks can also be read through the inherently ostentatious metal objects. Many metal wares made for civilians were obviously challenging the amirs' codes in terms of quality and style. They could use precious inlays and large inscriptions extolling their titles and lineages, and sometimes a *dawādār*/ secretary coat of arm, even in the case of individuals without any official position like Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Barr Ibn al-Shiḥnah. It is indeed difficult to identify a specific type of production developed for the civilians. To a certain extent, the distinctive criterion seemed to be more related to one's wealth than to one's social milieu. On the other hand, no metal object of the "late Mamluk minor style" made for the military elite is known so far. On the contrary, the Louvre candlestick brings evidence for Egyptian/Syrian civilian recipients, a fact which might be corroborated by the other inscribed objects presented above. Hitherto this "late Mamluk minor style" group appeared rather exclusively turned towards the European, especially Italian, market, due to the present location of the preserved objects and to the lack of arabic inscriptions on them. The four inscribed objects gathered here suggest a more diverse pattern of distribution, originating from the same workshops which could produced standard models as well as more specific orders. The Louvre candlestick certainly pertains to the latter case, and, thanks to the identification of its patron, it is now the sole firm chronological and social benchmark at our disposal for this group of "late Mamluk minor style". Unfortunately, it does not provide any new evidence for a place of production, the Ibn al-Shiḥnah family being both settled in Cairo and Aleppo. Nevertheless, Aleppo should definitely be regarded as a quite plausible avenue, as a city of growing strategic and economic significance at the end of the Mamluk period, where Europeans came and go<sup>77</sup>.

## Conclusion

During the whole Mamluk sultanate, the civilian elite took part in the building activity, all over the territory, and notably with outstanding religious foundations. They could rely on important wealth, gained through property incomes or through important and lucrative official positions. Logically, they were also consumers of luxurious and costful consumption goods, the main preserved testimonies of which are metal objects. Thus, their study can provide a glimpse into their taste and material environment, as well as into their relations with the military elite, that has so far received more attention. The hitherto much neglected Abū Bakr b. 'Abd al-Barr's candlestick embodies and symbolizes the complexity of social interplay in the late Mamluk period, and how members of the civilian elite could order lavishly inlaid metalwares as tools for social prestige and thus challenge the military elite's codes. The paradox is that we do not know of any similar luxurious piece connected with prominent amirs for the same period, under Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī's reign. This candlestick also provides an important reference for the "late Mamluk minor style" group, and suggests, together with other related inscribed metal objects, a common production made both for a broad market and exportation, and for a more specific and local patronage. As new tools of research now allow broader connections between different sources of information, this case study aimed at showing how a careful reexamination of these objects and especially of their inscriptions, and

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<sup>76</sup> Like, for instance, on a basin for an anonymous amir now in Palermo, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia, n° 7280 (Curatola, *Eredità*, 320-322, n° 187), on a tray for amir Sayf al-dīn Īnāl Ashqar (d. 897/1492) in Edinburgh, National Museums of Scotland, n° A. 1923.700 (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 234-35 n°348 ; Allan, *Later Mamluk Metalwork*, 39, fig. 5-6), or on a lunchbox made for amir Zayn al-dīn Ṣandal al-Sāqī al-Ashrafi, Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, n° 3368 (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 86-87, 243 n°398, pl. LXIX).

<sup>77</sup> On Aleppo in the late Mamluk period, see : Evrard, *Zur Geschichte Aleppos*.



an effort towards new identifications through the sources, can still bring new lights on the patterns of patronage, production and social interaction.

## Appendix: a Preliminary List of Metal Objects Made for non-Mamluk Individuals

1. Pen box made for the judge Burhān al-dīn, late thirteenth century. Former Harari collection, n°176 (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 225, n° 299).
2. Pen box made for the sayyid Sharaf al-dīn Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, mid-fourteenth century. Cairo, Ali Pasha Ibrahim collection (Ibid., 214, n° 238).
3. Cup made for 'Alī al-Mizzī, mid-fourteenth century? Owner unknown (Ibid., 216, n° 248).
4. Vase made for the judge Mu'īn al-dīn, mid-fourteenth century? Owner unknown (Ibid., 216, n° 249).
5. Candlestick made for the shaykh 'Izz al-dīn 'Alī b. Mas'ūd, rasulid Yemen?, mid-fourteenth century. Niort, Musée Bernard d'Agesci, n° 914.1.440 (Ibid., 217, n° 258).
6. Candlestick made for a *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā'*, mid-fourteenth century. Palermo, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia, n° 7252 (Staacke, *Metalli*, 67-71).
7. Lamp made for a *kātib dīwān al-inshā'*, mid-fourteenth century. Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, n° 2737 (Curatola, *Eredità*, 317-18 n°183).
8. Dish made for the *mu'allim Ibrāhīm al-mu'addib b. al-mu'addib bi-qal'at Dimashq*, mid-fourteenth century. Palermo, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia, n° 7346 (Staacke, *Metalli*, 132-133).
9. Tray made for 'Alā al-dīn al-Karakī, *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā'*, before 793/ 1391. Former Harari collection n° 207 (unpublished, Gaston Wiet's archives, Louvre Museum).
10. Candlestick made for 'Alā al-dīn al-Karakī, *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā'*, before 793/ 1391. Former Harari collection n° 337 (unpublished, Gaston Wiet's archives, Louvre Museum).
11. Lid of a box made for Shihāb al-dīn Aḥmad b. al-Ṭaylūnī, late fourteenth century ? Former Harari collection, n° 231 (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 225, n° 297).
12. Tray made for Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūnī, late fourteenth century? Former Sivadjian collection (Ibid., 225, n° 298).
13. Box made for Mīkhāyīl b. Ḥasan al-Mulāṭif, fifteenth century? Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art, n° 7598 (Ibid., 133, pl. LXV).
14. Box made for the *mu'allim Muḥammad Abū'l-Najā*, fifteenth century? Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art, n° 9010 (Ibid., 146).
15. Box made for al-Wāthiq bi-l-mulk al-Walī Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ḥamawī *al-muwaqqit bi-l-jāmi' al-umawī*, fifteenth century. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, n° 91.1. 538 (Atil, *Renaissance*, 104, n°36).
16. Lamp made for the madrasa of the judge 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ, c. 823/1420, Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art, n°382 (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 32-33, pl. XIV).
17. Lamp made for the madrasa of Abū Bakr Ibn Muzhir, *kātib al-sirr*, c. 885/1480. Former Schefer collection (Ibid., 231 n°333).
18. Basin made for the *khawājā* Abū 'Abdallāh ibn al-Wafā'ī, late fifteenth century. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, n° 538-50 (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 245 n° 416 ; Melikian-Chirvani, *Cuivres inédits*, 109-116, n°3, fig. 8-15 ; Hellal and Labrusse, *Islamophilies*, 354, cat. n°258).
19. Basin made for an anonymous shaykh, late fifteenth century. Owner unknown (sold at Sotheby's, London, *Art of the Islamic World*, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015, lot 18).
20. Basin made for Zayn al-dīn 'Abd al-Qādir b. Kātib Tarjumān, late fifteenth century? Former Harari collection, n° 5 (Ibid., 250 n° 431).
21. Tray made for Badr al-dīn Abū'l-Baqā' Ibn al-Jī'ān, late fifteenth century. Former Innès collection (Ibid., 241 n° 380).
22. Tray made for the *khawājā* Badr al-Malakī al-ashrafī, late fifteenth century? Former Ali Pasha Ibrahim collection (Ibid., 246 n° 418).
23. Tray made for Shihāb al-dīn Aḥmad ibn al-Maghribī, late fifteenth century. Former Massignon collection (Massignon, *Six plats*, 87, pl. IV ; Wiet, *Cuivres*, 255 n°459).

24. Lunch box made for the *khawājā* Jamāl al-dīn Yūsuf al-Ḥalabī, late fifteenth century. Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art, n° 8453 (Ibid., 138-39, pl. LXVIII).
25. Lunch box made for the *sayyid* Shihāb al-dīn Aḥmad b. ‘awnah (?) al-Ḥusaynī al-mālikī, late fifteenth century. Jedda, Ra’uf collection (unpublished).
26. Lunch box made for Shihāb al-dīn b. Sha‘bān, late fifteenth century. Former Gennaoui collection (Ibid., 249 n°429).
27. Lunch box made for the *sayyid* Shams al-dīn Anad b. Sa‘īd, late fifteenth century. Jerusalem, Israel Museum, n° 84.70.13, former Gennaoui and Paul Balog collection (Ibid., 249-250, n°430 ; Brosh *et al.* 1988, n°14).
28. Cup made for ‘Alā al-dīn Ḥusayn b. *mu‘allim malik al-umarā’* Qāniṣawh al-Yaḥyāwī, late fifteenth century. Athens, Benaki Museum, n° 13118 (Mayer, Huit objets, 102, n° 7 ; Sardi *Late Mamluk Metalwork*, 166-9, fig. 15-16).
29. Cup made for the judge Zayn al-dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-nadīm, late fifteenth century? Owner unknown (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 256, n° 462).
30. Stemmed cup made for the judge Zayn al-dīn *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā’ bi-l-Shām*, late fifteenth century? Cairo, Museum of Islamic Art, n° 9502 (Ibid., 152).
31. Cup made for the judge Muḥibb al-dīn *kātib khizānat malik al-umarā’* Qāniṣawh al-Yaḥyāwī, late fifteenth century (sold at Sotheby’s, London, *Islamic Works of Art, Carpets and Textiles*, 12<sup>th</sup> October 1982, lot 169).
32. Cup made for an anonymous *ṣāhib diwān al-inshā’*, late fifteenth century (sold at Christie’s, London, *Islamic Art, Indian Miniatures, Rugs and Carpets*, 20th-22nd October 1992, lot 58 ; again sold at Drouot, Paris, *Arts d’Orient*, 7th June 1999, lot 248).
33. Cauldron made for Shihāb al-dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Malaṭī, late fifteenth century? Former Cuny collection (Wiet, *Cuivres*, 248 n° 424).
34. Cauldron made for Shihāb al-dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Malaṭī, late fifteenth century? Former Garnier de Heldévir collection (Ibid., 248 n° 426).
35. Vase/ pot made for Qāsim b. al-Ḥāj Yūsuf *al-sammān*, late fifteenth century? Former Harari collection n° 46 (unpublished, Gaston Wiet’s archives, Louvre Museum).
36. Candlestick made for Taqī al-dīn Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd al-Barr, early sixteenth century. Paris, Louvre Museum, n° OA 6317 (see note 34 for bibliography).
37. Tray made for Saniyya b. Aḥmad Shihāb al-dīn b. al-‘Atṭār, *mu‘allim al-sulṭān bi-l-qal‘ah al-manṣūrah bi-l-Shām*, early sixteenth century. Damascus, National Museum, n° A. 6715 (Cluzan *et al.*, *Syrie*, 470, n°374).
38. Basin made for a woman al-safandārī Kutbughā b. Badr al-dīn, judge of Sarmīn. Damascus, National Museum, n° A. 6970 (Ibid., 472 n°376).
39. Drum made for Nūḥ b. Khālīd al-Qayrawānī b. al-shaykh Muḥammad Khalīl al-Ṣamādī, early sixteenth century. Paris, Louvre Museum, MAO 94 (inscription read by Jean David-Weill, unpublished).
40. Drum made for Wafā’ b. al-shaykh Abū Bakr al-‘Abbādī, early sixteenth century? Israel Antiquities Authority, n° 95-3549 (Amitai-Preiss, *A Note*).

## Illustrations :

Fig. 1: Pen box made for a *qāḍī* Burhān al-dīn, end of the thirteenth century, former Harari collection. Gaston Wiet's archives, Paris, Louvre Museum (© Musée du Louvre).



Fig. 2: Tray made for ‘Alā al-dīn al-Karakī, *ṣāhib dawāwīn al-inshā*’, before 793/ 1391, former Harari collection n° 207 (Gaston Wiet’s archives, Paris, Louvre Museum (© Musée du Louvre)).





Fig. 3 to 7: Candlestick made for Abū Bakr, son of the judge ‘Abd al-Barr Ibn al-Shihnah, Paris, Musée du Louvre, OA 6317 (© 2017 Musée du Louvre, dist RMN-Grand Palais / Raphaël Chipault / Benjamin Soligny).



Fig. 3





Fig. 4





Fig. 5





Fig. 6

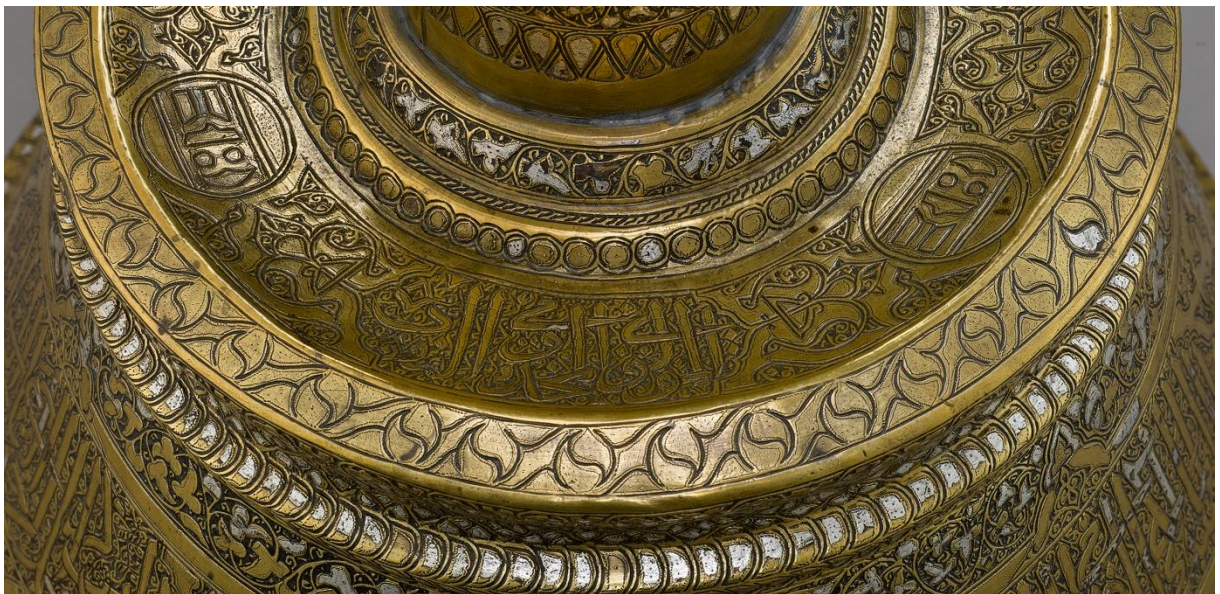


Fig. 7



Fig. 8: Inlaid marble decoration of the mihrab in the mosque of Qajmās al-Ishāqī, Cairo (© Carine Juvin, 2010)



Fig. 9 to 11: Pen case, Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, AD 5598/1 (© 2016 Réunion des musées nationaux / Mathieu Rabeau).



Fig. 9

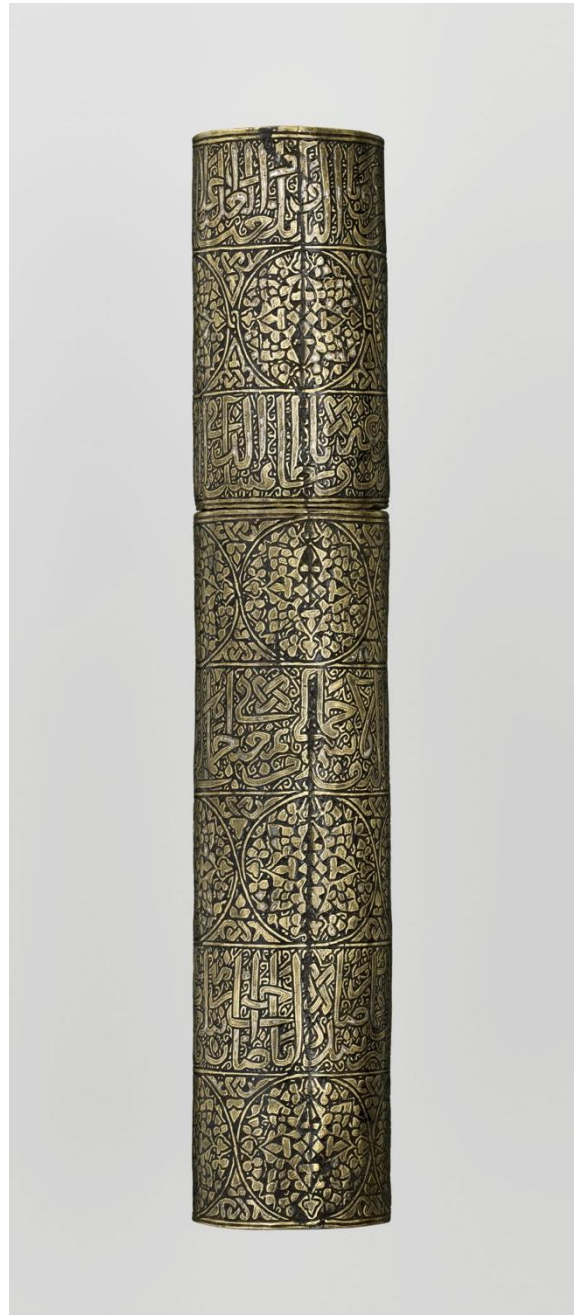


Fig. 10





Fig. 11

Fig. 12: The Priuli cup, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 311.1854, (© Victoria and Albert Museum, London).



Fig. 13 to 16: Jug, Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum, 1911,53 (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum - Foto: Satoria Linke).



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Fig. 13





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Fig. 14



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Fig. 15





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Fig. 16

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### **Abbreviations**

*TEI: Thesaurus d'Epigraphie Islamique*

*MIHC: The Monumental Inscriptions of Historic Cairo*

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