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On Conducting the Affairs of the State: a Guideline of the Fourteenth Century.

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# ON CONDUCTING THE AFFAIRS OF THE STATE: A GUIDELINE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Léonor FERNANDES

Historians of the Mamluk period are fortunate to have at their disposal a large number of documents — published or unpublished — which yield very valuable information on the Mamluk regime. Among the documents handed down to us through historical accounts, chancery or court records, are some dealing with diplomatic treaties, trade agreements, appointments of civilians and military officials, transactions, inheritances, endowments and so forth. The content of these documents, as it appears, covers a large array of information which when put together, allows us to reconstruct various aspects of Mamluk rule.

Although the information in any such document studied individually could possibly be used for more than one purpose, it rarely throws light on the general state of affairs of the Mamluk rule as a whole. Occasionally however, one comes across documents which trace a more complete picture of the way the Mamluks administered their empire. Though their content is to be regarded as mostly prescriptive, some of the injunctions they contain were indeed put into actions as can be verified by other documents of the same period.

The present paper proposes to examine the content of such a document in its historical content. The document consists of a *Tadkira* (memorandum or guideline) written on the occasion of the appointment of a *Nā'ib al-Saltana* (viceroy) by Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalā'ūn in 679/1280. The text of the document is reproduced by Ibn al-Furāt and was written by Ibn al-Mukarram <sup>1</sup>.

As soon as the Mongols had threatened the Syrian part of the empire by their incursion into Aleppo, al-Manṣūr Qalā'ūn organized his army and set out for Syria to face an enemy who had, in fact, already withdrawn. Before departing from Cairo, and as it was usually the custom for a sultan leaving the capital of his empire to do, he nominated

1. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'riḥ* (Cairo, 1942) volume 7, p. 196-200; see also Muḥammad Maher Hamada, *al-Mamlūkī* (Beirut, 1980) p. 203-211; however, the edition of 1942 by Zurayq is much clearer.

one of his former Mamluks, Zayn al-dīn Kitbuġa al-Manṣūrī to handle the affairs of the empire in his absence <sup>2</sup>.

According to Mamluk custom, the appointed *Nā'ib al-Salṭana* was left in total control of the affairs of the empire. This can be inferred by a remark of Ibn Ḥaldūn concerning the power of any delegate (*Nā'ib*). For him « the office of *Ḥāġib* (chamberlain) among the Turks is lower than that of the *Nā'ib* which has general jurisdiction over both the ruling class and the common people. The *Nā'ib* has the authority to appoint and remove certain officials at the proper times. He may grant and fix small salaries. His orders and decrees are executed as those of the ruler. He is the ruler's delegate in every respect » <sup>3</sup>.

In Maqrīzī's view the office of *Nā'ib al-Salṭana* is almost equivalent to that of Sultan, for he says : « ... and the truth about the *Nā'ib al-Salṭana* is that he was the second Sultan and all the deputies (*Nā'ibs*) in the Syrian part of the realm and others used to write to him about the same matters they would write the Sultan. They were also consulting him the same way they had to consult the Sultan. He used to employ *ġund* (soldiers) and distribute *Iqtā'* without [seeking] advice, and still appoint the emirs after consultation with the Sultan, and the *Nā'ib* was indeed the governor invested with unrestricted right of disposal in every matter » <sup>4</sup>.

Even though Maqrīzī's remark points out the unlimited power enjoyed by the viceroy, we still wonder about the extent of his daily responsibilities and what they encompass in terms of the daily administration of the affairs of the country. In order to get a clearer picture of what was expected from an individual appointed to the position of *Nā'ib al-Salṭana*, we have to turn to documents such as decrees of appointments, moral injunctions, or other such documents which spell out the duties and responsibilities pertaining to that position.

The document under study represents one such document since it consists of guidelines to the intention of the newly appointed viceroy. As will be seen, they encompass all aspects of his daily responsibilities which cover a wide and very diversified range of activities.

2. Zayn al-dīn Kitbuġa al-Manṣūrī, a mamluk of Qalā'ūn had been freed by his master and been promoted gradually to reach the position of viceroy. At the death of Qalā'ūn and after intrigues, he was put on the throne in 694/1294 to replace the son of Qalā'ūn who was still too young to rule effectively. Zayn al-dīn ruled by

the name of al-'Ādil Kitbuġa. His rule was ended by the intervention of his *Nā'ib*, Ḥusām al-dīn Laġīn in 696/1296. (al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, [Bulaq reprint, 1977] v. II, p. 239).

3. Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, éd. N.J. Dawood, (Princeton 1967), p. 197.

4. Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 215.

Although the guidelines are not presented to us in any particular order, we can still distinguish sections which deal with internal affairs of the country, such as internal security, public works, financial administration, justice, social behaviour. Other sections deal with relations involving neighbouring states or trade relations.

The following text represents an annotated translation of the *Taḍkira*, whose purpose is to place the document in its historical context <sup>5</sup>.

Memorandum beneficial to the welfare [of the country] all inclusive, to be relied upon by Amir Zayn al-dīn Kitbuġa al-Manṣūrī, the *Nā'ib al-Salṭana*, when handling all matters concerning the Egyptian territory, its state of affairs, commonweal, its regulations, decisions [concerning it] judgements [to be rendered] and all matters which concern al-Qāhira, Miṣr and all the districts of the Egyptian Land. [Memo to be relied upon] in the issuance of royal decrees in the name of al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ 'Alā' al-dīn 'Alī, may God help him implement them <sup>6</sup>.

[Decrees] concerning its (*al-Diyār al-Miṣriyya*) affairs, problems, provinces, governors, payloads [to the *Bayt al-Māl*] protection and safe keeping, reforms pertaining thereof;

(Section) The task of interpreting and implementing the Ṣarī'a, lies with judges and qadis upon whom rests the responsibilities to see that its dictates are observed and its commands enforced; to prevent its [the Ṣarī'a] violation and confirm its rules.

(Section) Justice, Equity and Truth should be the order of the day in all of the country, its cities and villages, its administrative districts and provinces, so as to cover all of the subjects, public [officials] and private [individuals], far or close, absent or present, incoming or outgoing, and thus attract the favorable invocations of all people, praising these glorious days and [so that] tongues utter them in testimonial of that [justice, equity and truth]. For indeed justice is the plea of God, the object of Good, for it opposes all harm and removes inequities.

(Section) Blood money [sanctions] are to be rendered according to the Ṣarī'a and whoever is to be subject to chastisement should be delivered to his opponent so that he may be punished according to the dictates of the law. And he who has to suffer a cutting sentence has to endure it according to the dictates of the Law <sup>7</sup>.

5. The translation of the document is to be considered as a loose rather than textual translation. No editing of the text of Zurayq is involved. The format of the document is retained so as to give the reader an idea about the format of chancery documents.

6. Al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ 'Alā' al-dīn 'Alī, son of Qalā'ūn, had been proclaimed heir to the throne, and had received the oath of allegiance from his father's emirs in 679/1280 and Ibn Ḥabīb says

(*Taḍkirat al-Nabih*, Cairo, 1976, v. 1, p. 59) : « He rode through al-Qāhira with the insignia of the sultanate ». See also Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk* (Cairo, 1970), v. 1/1, p. 682.

7. For some detailed information about punishment for serious crimes, see al-Mawardī, *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭaniyya* (Cairo, 1973), p. 217-239; al-Ṭarābulṣī, *Lisān al-Ḥukkām fī Ma'rifat al-Aḥkām* (Cairo, 1973), p. 389-403.

(Section) Matters concerning al-Qāhira and Miṣr. Nobody should be allowed to patronize or oppress an individual, use his power over weak persons or commit any aggression against anyone.

(Section) It must be proclaimed that no one is to circulate in the city or its outskirts (*Ḍawāḥi al-Qāhira*)<sup>8</sup>, in the quarter of al-Ḥusayniyya<sup>9</sup>, or the various *Aḥkār*<sup>10</sup>, during the night unless it is an emergency. No one is to go out of his home unless it is absolutely urgent. Women must not be allowed to circulate nor must they be allowed to go out [of their house] or walk during the night.

(Section) Prisons should be guarded and protected during the day and at night. The beards of all prisoners of war — Franks and Antiochans, or others — must be shaved, and make sure they do so whenever their beard grows back<sup>11</sup>. Vigilance is necessary in keeping an eye on the individuals entering or exiting the prison; and surveillance must be used to watch prisoners of war who are employed [in public works] and those men exiting the prison with them. They should be entrusted to guards accompanying them and upon whom liability of trust rests<sup>12</sup>. And no stranger should be hired [for this job] nor should any relative be hired. Prisoners of war who are employed [in public works] must not spend the night outside the jail. None of them is to be allowed to go to the bath-house or to any church or any attraction. Their [prisoners'] chains must be checked and be secured at all times and security in and around *Ḥizānat al-Bunūd* and *Ḥizānat Šamā'il* and other prisons must be doubled during the night<sup>13</sup>.

(Section) A number of soldiers must be appointed with patrol guards of the city, to patrol the alleys and close the quarter gates<sup>14</sup>; to pay visits to the owners of Rab<sup>°</sup> (apartment buildings), discipline those tenants who cause disorderly conduct and interrogate the owners [of the Rab<sup>°</sup>] about their behaviour. Gates [to quarters] must be closed and a group [of soldiers] must also be sent to al-Ḥusayniyya and the *Aḥkār* and all other [urban] centers, and

8. For information on *Ḍawāḥi al-Qāhira*, see Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 129.

9. For information about al-Ḥusayniyya, see Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 20-22; also al-Qalqashandī, *Šubḥ al-A'ša* (Cairo, 1964), III, p. 355-356.

10. For the *Aḥkār* of al-Qāhira see Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 114-120.

11. This measure should be construed as a precautionary measure since it would help distinguish the Muslims from the non-Muslim prisoners.

12. For some information about the *Ḍamān* (liabilities) according to Šāfi'i law, see al-Ṭarābulsi, *Lisān al-Ḥukkām*, p. 289.

13. The Fatimid *Ḥizānat al-Bunūd* had been transformed into a prison after it had caught

fire in 461/1068. It was then reserved for distinguished prisoners such as emirs and high officials. It remained so through the Ayyubid period. During the Mamluk period and more specifically during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalā'ūn, it underwent changes and was transformed into a residency for the Frankish princes and their families. It was subsequently destroyed in 744/1343, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 187-188. See also al-Qalqashandī, *Šubḥ III*, p. 354. For information on *Ḥizānat Šamā'il* and other prisons, see *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 188-189.

14. For a list of some famous *Zuqāqs* (alleys), see *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 44. For other information on quarters, see *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 37-44.

the same measures should be applied to them [the owners of the Rab<sup>6</sup>]. Whoever disobeys the decree and walks [during the night] without a serious excuse must be arrested and punished.

(Section) Security at the gates [of the city] must be very tight. They must be thoroughly patrolled on the inside and outside during the night and at their opening and closing [time].

(Section) Places where youth gather, ill-reputed places where debauchery and prostitution take place must not remain open. No individual should be permitted to meet in such places during the day or the night. They must be definitely prevented [from operating] so that respect and deference are at their highest, and the supporters of prostitution, debauchery and havoc are eradicated.

(Section) Sentinel must be stationed around the two cities of al-Qāhira and Miṣr as it is the custom. It must also be posted in the Qarāfa, behind the Citadel, by the riverside and outside al-Ḥusayniyya. This measure must not be neglected any night, and the assigned sentinel must not abandon their positions until the appearance of dawn and daylight is complete.

(Section) It must be proclaimed that men and women are not to hold gatherings in the two Qarāfas (cemeteries) during Friday vigils; and women must be prevented from doing so<sup>15</sup>.

(Section) The affairs of the absentees [in the campaign] must be thoroughly examined and their interests duly pursued by those left in charge of them. Their dues must be remitted to their agents, slaves or deputies. Whoever of them has rights [to revenues] from a district, they must be collected [in their name] and no one should interfere with their established rights. Written statements must be obtained from their agents specifying what they have collected [in the name of the absentees] lest any [of the absentees] complain that they have been notified by their agent of the contrary, in which case these statements would refute the [agents'] complaints.

(Section) Works on the Ḥaliğ al-Qāhira<sup>16</sup> should be properly carried on. Its dredging and maintenance must receive due attention and work must be done on time. Work must be properly executed yet without imposing on any individual, and everyone is expected to undertake what is required from him in a satisfactory way.

(Section) Work on dams located in the outskirts of al-Qāhira must be properly executed. They must be widened, special care must be given to their [hydraulic] rams; their drain openings and their protection from unexpected disaster. They should remain closed until the Nile Flood.

As it is the custom, they [the dams] must fall under our control. No one should seek to escape working on them or try to forego the work which has been assigned to him. In matters which concern plows and rakes, royal decrees must be referred to. Decrees pertaining to dams close or remote<sup>17</sup>.

15. Reference is made here to the Qarāfa al-Ṣuğrā and the Qarāfa al-Kubrā. For more information on the cemeteries see Maqrizī, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 442-445.

16. For more information on the Ḥaliğ al-Qāhira, see *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 139-144.

17. Qalqashandi writes : « There were two types of dams (*ğusūr*) : *al-ğusūr al-Sultāniyya* and *al-ğusūr al-Baladiyya*. The first ones consisted of public dams scattered around the country in both Upper and Lower Egypt. Such dams were the responsibility of the 'state'. They were

(Section) Implementation of the orders contained in the royal decrees issued in the name of al-Şāliḥ 'Alā' al-dīn 'Alī, pertaining to the work on dams, their maintenance and widening, must be immediate. Also inspection of the dikes and irrigation canals must take place regularly, their restoration, reconstruction and repair of their openings, preparation and gathering of the needed equipment during the Nile Flood period must also take place on time. The royal decrees must be ratified and dispatched [to designated individuals] without delays and with no exceptions. Implementation of the works must be carried out according to the High order, requiring that no one be exempt from work and no coercion be necessary for the execution of what the order carries. Whomever the responsibility to undertake the works befalls, must carry it out as it is customary to do during our time [al-Şāliḥ's time]. It is imperative that governors supervise by themselves the implementation of the orders pertaining to the dikes and let them not rely on the overseers. Should any shortage or damage occur, they [governors] are to be held liable, and as a result, a governor from whom it suffers [damage], must be dismissed from his office and his money confiscated. The matter must be clearly emphasized to them and they must be given strong warnings. Written statements must be obtained from each of them confirming that the work has been properly carried out according to the royal orders and that they are aware of no damage or any other matter which would entail punishment.

(Section) Royal decrees must be issued at the intention of the governors ordering them to appoint surveillance guards as it had been customary to do during the time of al-Malik al-Zāhir [Baybars al-Bunduqdārī] when guards were posted between towns in surveillance posts placed on the road having the task of protecting incoming and outgoing individuals and whoever was carrying something which required protection. It must be proclaimed in all towns that no one is to travel during the night or wander too far, and that people should travel only between sunrise and sunset. And this order must be implemented very strictly.

(Section) The administration of the ports must be attended to. Royal decrees must be issued regulating the conduct of their affairs, their condition, the protection and security of their prisoners. Regarding the latter, great care must be displayed in their protection. The royal decrees must incite [the governors of the ports] to be alert in the administration of the port and strive to win the heart of merchants and put them in a good disposition. And they [merchants] should be treated with kindness and justice so that they continue to frequent the ports and thus bring prosperity to them. Special care must be used in the collection of taxes in species, and in kind from incoming ships. Tithe must be imposed on shiploads : taxes collected in kind, species, on ammunitions, dues to the treasuries and dues to the royal supplies warehouse <sup>18</sup>.

maintained and restored every year with money coming from the sultan's diwān. Such dams had their own equipment and cows. These were assigned to the various villages in every district according to royal decrees. The second set of dikes consisted of dams which were attached to specific villages and were the responsibility of

private individuals. Indeed their maintenance and restoration befell the Muqta's, be they emirs soldiers or other » (*Şubḥ al-A'şā III*, p. 445).

18. According to Qalqashandi (*Şubḥ al-A'şā III*, p. 459) the amount of tax imposed on the Franks and Byzantine ships had been increased a Fifth each time they anchored on the Egyptian

It must be stressed to them that these are times of openness (*infitāh*), of the sea and for the coming of merchants, the welcoming of fortunes and improvement of situations. [Merchants must be convinced] to increase the volume of trade and persist in their efforts to do so, so that trade should become prosperous. The dues of incoming ships must not be squandered nor must their load be itemized or diminished, but rather they must be forwarded to the *Bayt al-Māl* in their entirety as it is the custom to do. Merchants must be given reassurances as to the handling of their deals regarding textiles and goods of all kinds. Excuses or defects pertaining to the latter must be waved away so that the handling of the deals is not unnecessarily delayed. Whatever arrives [to the port] be it Mamluks, female slaves, silk, brocades, satin, silver stone, or gold thread textiles, must be taxed as usual.

(Section) Attention of the governors of the provinces must be focused on the collection of the taxes due to the various Diwāns from their districts; these must be forwarded on time<sup>19</sup>. [Their] attention must also be drawn on the supervision of the sugar plantations and sugar presses in due time. Also [they should] work to forward the interest of each district according to what is proper to it and what is called for. With regards to taxes [in kind and species] on produce, loads, rents, expenditures, and proceeds, they should be warned against any irregularities or deficit. They should also be warned against any weakness in their decision making, inadequacy, poor judgement or any such matter which would call for criticism and require apologies. But firmness must be shown in these matters as well as in other matters which will be called to their attention<sup>20</sup>.

(Section) The Ḥarāğ<sup>21</sup> of the Diwāns must be controlled, preserved and no amount should be released except by a royal decree from us. The order is to be read and acknowledgment of its reception and the implementation of the order should follow.

territories. For further discussion on the taxes paid by the merchants see Ibn Mammatī, *Kitāb Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn*. See also, Claude Cahen, « Douanes et Commerce dans les Ports méditerranéens de l'Égypte médiévale d'après le Minhāğ d'al-Maḥzūmī », *JESHO VII*, 1964.

19. According to Qalqashandī the money of the various Diwāns fell under two categories : Šar'ī and non-Šar'ī. The Šar'ī included seven sources of revenue : the Ḥarāj, Zaqāt, taxes on ores, *ğawālī*, taxes on non-Muslim merchants, *mawārīf*, and the mint. The non-Šar'ī consisted of *Muqūs* (taxes) imposed by the *Diwān al-Sultānī* or others imposed by the other Diwāns such as the *Diwān al-Iqtā'* for instance. For further information about some taxes, cf. al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab*, VIII, p. 228-255.

20. On some information on the way revenues and books were balance, cf. al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab VIII*, p. 275-303.

21. The Ḥarāğ represented one of the seven sources of revenues for the state falling under the category Šar'ī. The Ḥarāğ itself represented taxes levied on land and was perceived in kind and species depending on the district or province. Qalqashandī tells us that the Wağh al-Qibli or Ša'īd was paying most of the Ḥarāğ in kind while most of the northern regions and the Delta was paying in species. For further information on the Ḥarāğ, see *Šubḥ al-A'šā III*, p. 448-451; al-Mawardī, *al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyya*, p. 142-156; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab VIII*, p. 196-199, p. 245-255; also C. Cahen, « Contribution à l'étude des impôts dans l'Égypte médiévale », *JESHO V*, 1962, p. 244-278.

(Section) The dues of Amirs, Baḥrī Mamluks, and *Ḥalqa al-Manṣūra*, and *ḡund* must be collected in their names and remitted to their agents or deputies<sup>22</sup>. Receipts bearing their signatures must be obtained from the agents confirming the amounts cashed in dirhams or the produce delivered to them. They [the agents or deputies] need not complain to their absentee clients about delays in remittance of the dues, and this matter must be settled without procrastination.

(Section) It is incumbent upon governors, administrators and clerical employees to record what is held as *Iqtā'* by the *Muqṭā's*<sup>23</sup>, the number of villages or *Iqtā'* in an administrative district. A list must also be made with holdings of the various individuals on whom land has been imposed [for cultivation] or granted by royal decree<sup>24</sup>, so that the state of the *Muqṭā'* holding is known in terms of Djayṣī year and the Ḥarāḡī year as well<sup>25</sup>, and thus know how much each of them collects. There should be no intervention from the part of the governors nor must they show greed in the face of the agents; greed caused by the absence of the absentee amir or *Muqṭā'*. And none of the latter [*Muqṭā's* or Amirs] should be pushed to complain about delays or injustice and wrongdoing.

(Section) Acquisitions of the 'Urbān in towns should be terminated and their prisoners taken from them and be protected<sup>26</sup>. Word must be sent to the *Nā'ibs*, governors in provinces, that none of them ('Urbāns) must be permitted to bear a sword, spear or weapon. [None of them] should be allowed to buy them from al-Qāhira. Whoever disobeys [this order] and bears any [sword or weapon] during a journey from a village to the other, should have his weapon destroyed and be punished.

(Section) Word has come to us that the agents, traffic with their clients' fortunes and that they dispose of them as with their own. So a list including the names of agents engaging in such traffic or disposing of their clients' fortunes must be forwarded to the Sublime Porte.

(Section) The taxes due to the *Diwān* from each locality, town or village must be reviewed. Their shaykhs (leaders) must be summoned and questioned [about the taxes]. They must be required to confirm in writing that such or such amount of dirhams or so many *Irdabbs* are due to the *Diwān*. That they will remit themselves the amounts due on time and according to the installments agreed upon. That there is no need to send them messengers nor will there be a need for the administrators to take up measures to collect their taxes. This [the

22. For more information on each of these groups, see Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ IV*, p. 14-16.

23. For information about recording *Iqtā's*, see *Nihāyat al-'Arab VIII*, p. 200-213; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'ṣā III*, p. 453-457.

24. This type of land is probably the Faddān Rusūm and Awāsi referred to by al-Maḥzūmī in his *Minhāḡ*; cf. Claude Cahen, « Contribution à l'étude des impôts dans l'Égypte médiévale », *JESHO V*, 1962, p. 265-266.

25. The revenues of the *Iqtā'*, called 'Ibra, were calculated according to a fictitious currency called *ḡayṣī* (*Ṣubḥ III*, p. 438). For a better understanding of the whole process of reckoning the *Iqtā'* during the Mamluk period, see al-Nuwayri, *Nihāyat al-'Arab, VIII*, p. 200-208; *Ṣubḥ al-A'ṣā III*, p. 454.

26. 'Urbāns were amirs holding land as *Iqtā'* in Buhayra or Ṣarqiyya. See Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'ṣā III*, p. 454; *IV*, p. 67-72.

voluntary remittance of taxes] should be perceived as a measure of compassion towards the subjects who would otherwise have to bear the price of double expense cost and what cost one dirham would then cost twice as much. And this behaviour would help expedite tax collection and revenues of the *Diwāns* would be received without harm caused [to the subjects].

(Section) When a tax collector is sent from Miṣr to any administrative district (*ʿAmal*)<sup>27</sup>, he must not be given more than two dirhams nuqra for each district he visits, and he must forward the dues collected to their beneficiaries. Should his behaviour generate a lot of controversial talking or disturbance or if he causes distress he should be reported and the matter should be taken up with his employer. The latter should be told the story in details so that the misunderstanding is resolved and the incident over.

(Section) If a governor sends a messenger in order to collect the taxes from villages in his own district, the collector should receive half a dirham nuqra if the journey takes one day; but he should receive one dirham if the journey takes two days. Should a collector violate this by granting himself a different amount he should be punished and banished from this district.

(Section) Written statements should be obtained from each agent collecting dues in the name of his client, be it for services rendered, from his shares from the *Diwān* or from peasants. Nothing should be delivered to him without receipts confirming it and signed by him. A copy of the receipts indicating what has been collected by him from a district or from an *Iqtāʿ* must remain in the *Diwān*. All documents should be saved so that they may be used as proof in case of complaint about arrears [from the part of the absentees]. In the event of an investigation of the complaint, the agent should be confronted with the receipt. The receipt should be read then concealed again. The content of all such receipts must be recorded so that we can reckon the exact amounts collected in the name of each *Muqtāʿ* in kind or species, and the arrears due to each of them. We would thus be informed of the state of affairs of all the villages and about *Muqtāʿ*, and be able to solve the problems caused by complaints and be informed about their states in the best possible way.

(Section) This *Tadkīra* should be read on all minbars, section by section, so that it is heard by everyone, closeby or far away, and its message conveyed to the present and the absent and its content implemented. Whoever disobeys its commands or acts otherwise is aware of what punishment awaits him from our part and the great wrath he will have to endure.

The preceding document gives us an overview of the matters which are deemed important for the country and thus require close supervision from the part of the ruler. Interestingly, most of them focus on two main issues; firstly, the security of the country — internally and externally — but mostly internally so as to avoid creating a climate of unrest favourable to an uprising. Secondly, the proper administration of the finances

27. According to Qalqashandī, the Waḡh al-Qibli or Ṣaʿīd consisted of nine *ʿAmal*, the Waḡh al-Baḡari of seven *ʿAmal* (*Ṣubḥ al-Aʿšā IV*, p. 392-406).

of the country. This entailed the replenishing of the public treasury — *Bayt al-Māl* — as well as all the other *Diwāns*.

One observation can be made here as far as the eagerness to collect the taxes in the name of absentee emirs and other military is concerned. It is clear that the collection of their dues on time had one major aim besides profiting the *Bayt al-Māl* and that is to avoid the upsetting of their emirs, a matter which could lead to the mutiny of a disgruntled army. Furthermore, it would assure the ruler of the satisfactory move of his campaign, since as we know the revenues from any *Iqtā'* (i.e. 'Ibra) had to be divided between the beneficiary of that *Iqtā'* (i.e. *Muqṭa'*) who was entitled to one-third of its revenues and a number of soldiers under his command benefitting from the remaining two-thirds. Thus, if the emir or *Muqṭa'* did not receive his share than the soldiers would not receive theirs too, a situation which could be dangerous especially in times of war<sup>28</sup>.

Measures entailing public works are definitely attached to the interest of the public treasury since as can be noted they concern the irrigation of the land on which the *Ḥarāğ* or other taxes are going to be based.

The most important recommendation, however, one which has a modern tone (think of Egypt's *infitāḥ*) is the one addressing the trade relation with the Mediterranean states. In the terms of the document this is a time of *Infitāḥ* (openness) of the sea and the volume of trade coming through it should increase. The proposed way to reach this goal is twofold : to treat the merchants with kindness and to influence them psychologically by pointing out the better times lying ahead of them and the golden opportunity of profits to befall them from this policy of « openness ».

Finally, one should point out the fact that problems dealing with the daily interaction of the subjects, regulations of local markets or other problems which touch on religious issues or which have no impact on the state finances are left unmentioned, since they are presumably the responsibility of the Qadis. Justice is certainly alluded to at the beginning of the document and so is the *Šarī'a* which is to guide any sanction and judgement whether their object of concern is religious or pertaining to worldly matters.

Yet in view of the content of the *Tadkira* and in the light of Maqrīzī's remarks in his discussion of the *Siyāsa* (rules and regulations according to which the Alien military group actions were judged)<sup>29</sup>, where he points out the increase in the power of the *Hāğib* who is often ruling on matters concerning the *Šarī'a* i.e., outside his capacities,

28. For further information on *Iqtā'* see Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 210.

29. See Maqrīzī's *Ḥiṭaṭ II*, p. 219-222.

a question has to be asked : How was the law of God as represented by the Šarī'a balanced against the law of man as understood by an alien military elite<sup>30</sup>? True, as Sultan, the ruler was the upholder of the Šarī'a having as his task to confirm and enforce it, yet one might ask where does the law of God stand when man's interest is at stake!

30. For more information on the justice, see Jorgen S. Nielsen, *Secular Justice in an Islamic State : Maḏālim under the Bahri Mamluks 662/1264 - 789/1387*, Leiden, Netherlands, 1985.