

Crossing the line: Mamluk response to Qaramanid threat in the fifteenth century according to MS ar. 4440 (BnF, Paris)¹

Malika Dekkiche

University of Antwerp

Malika.Dekkiche@uantwerpen.be

Abstract

The present article investigates the complex dynamics of the relationship between the Mamluk sultans and Qaramanid rulers in the second half of the fifteenth century. Based on the revealing of an unpublished corpus of letters (MS ar. 4440, BnF, Paris), which preserved copies of the correspondence exchanged between sultan Īnāl and Ibrāhīm II after the Qaramanids' Rebellion in 860–862/1456–58 and their capture of the Mamluk fortresses in Tarsus and Gülek. After briefly sketching the history of their contact and alliances, I then concentrate on the Qaramanid Rebellion itself, presenting the new data provided by the corpus and analysing the stakes and extent of the Qaramanids' threat to Mamluk policy in the Anatolian context.

Keywords: Mamluks, Qaramanids, Diplomatic correspondence, Peace agreement, Borders, Buffer-state

The history of relations between the Mamluk sultanate and Turkmen beylik of the Qaramanids still remains an unexplored terrain. Through the efforts of Turkish scholars who first investigated the history of the Qaramanids, more is known about the history of the beylik itself, but this knowledge came within the trend of a nationalist history of Turkey following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1924.² Additional material related to the Qaramanid beylik is also included within studies on early Ottoman history that focus on the

- 1 The first version of this article was completed within the context of the ERC project “The Mamlukisation of the Mamluk Sultanate. Political Traditions and State Formation in 15th-century Egypt and Syria”, headed by Jo Van Steenberghe (Ghent University, 2009–14, ERC StG 240865 MMS).
- 2 The practice of nationalist history in modern Turkey is discussed in S.N. Yıldız, “Karamanoğlu Mehmed Bey: medieval Anatolian warlord or Kemalist language reformer? History, language politics and celebration of the language festival in Karaman, Turkey, 1961–2008”, in J. Nielsen (ed.), *Religion, Ethnicity and Contested Nationhood in the Former Ottoman Space* (Leiden and Boston, 2012), 147–70. As for the rich Turkish literature (primary and secondary sources) on the Qaramanids, see bibliography in S.N. Yıldız, “Reconceptualizing the Seljuk–Cilician frontier: Armenians, Latins, and the Turks in conflict and alliance during the early thirteenth century”, in Fl. Curta (ed.), *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis: Frontiers in Late Antiquity and Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2005), 91–120.

relationship between these two entities.³ Naturally, then, the few studies that do foray into Qaramanid relations with the Mamluk sultans have largely done so within the broader context of Mamluk–Ottoman relations, as exemplified by Shai Har-El's 1995 monograph *Struggle for Domination in the Middle East*, which analysed the origins of the Mamluk–Ottoman war in the fifteenth century and provided insight into the complex dynamic that ruled contacts between the Egyptian sultans and Qaramanids.

According to Har-El's study, this relationship should be understood within the framework of the *intisāb* (lit. relation, connection), that is, the patron–client association:

The essential transaction of this unequal relationship was symbolized by the robe of investiture [*tashrīf* or *khal'ah*] and diploma [*taqlīd*] accorded by the patron, and the inclusion of the patron's name in the Friday sermon [*khutbah*] in the mosques and in the separate coinage [*sikkah*] initiated by the client. The practical relationship between the patron and the client was the extension of protection granted by the patron for the services performed by the client.⁴

Furthermore, this kind of interaction was characterized by the patron's non-occupation of the client-state and by the mutual respect of each party's foreign and domestic policies. At the foundation of such a relationship was the threat of a common enemy, as illustrated by the Mamluk sultanate and Qaramanid dynasty. It is because of a common enemy, i.e. the Ilkhanids (until 736/1335), that contact between the two was first inaugurated and that later on, with the emergence of the Ottoman threat, the Mamluk protectorate over the Qaramanids was renewed.

Yet if protection constituted a crucial role in Mamluk–Qaramanid relations, it was by no means the only one. Indeed, other aspects came to bear on this relationship, and they require evaluation in terms of specific interests. From the Qaramanids' perspective, for example, the Mamluks represented a strong power that could aid in the conquest of the Seljuk heritage and undermine the claims of their many rivals among the Turkmen beyliks. Mamluk recognition of Qaramanid supremacy was, in this context, a major means of legitimation before the Muslim community. As for the Mamluks' interests, the establishment of this clientele link with the Qaramanids helped confirm their role as defenders of the Muslims, a cardinal claim of their legitimacy – and, above all, it allowed them to maintain a forceful position in Anatolia, a region that held great appeal

3 S.N. Yıldız ("Razing Gevele and fortifying Konya: the beginning of the Ottoman conquest of the Karamanid principality in south-central Anatolia, 1468", in A.C.S. Peacock (ed.), *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (Proceedings of the British Academy, 156) (Oxford, 2009), 307–29) also provides an abundant bibliography in Turkish. For more information on the Qaramanids before the rise of the Ottomans, in Western languages, see Cl. Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey. A General Survey of the Material and Spiritual Culture and History, c. 1071–1330* (New York, 1968).

4 Sh. Har-El, *Struggle for Domination in the Middle East. The Ottoman–Mamluk War, 1485–1491* (Leiden and New York, 1995), 13.

to the Mamluk sultans not only for defence policy but also for trade routes to maintain their supply of military slaves.

While Har-El's analysis of relational patterns between the Mamluks and the Qaramanids is certainly relevant in many respects, it tends, at times, to undermine both the Qaramanids' presence as an independent entity, and their claims that were detrimental to those of the Mamluks, especially during the fifteenth century. Although the Qaramanids sometimes relied on Mamluk authority, this recognition was only ephemeral, a means to a definite end, namely, territorial expansion. In the present article, I will explore a specific instance of conflicting interests that emerged between the Mamluks and the Qaramanids that demonstrates a contrast between Qaramanid claims and Mamluk interests: the Qaramanids' rebellion in the second half of the fifteenth century and their violation of the borders of Mamluk territory.

This study originated from the revelation of an unpublished source, the MS ar. 4440 (BnF, Paris), which retains copies of letters sent by the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Īnāl (r. 857–865/1453–60) to the Qaramanid ruler Ibrāhīm II (r. 827–869/1424–64) after the latter's attack on the fortress of Tarsus in 860/1456. The corpus proves particularly interesting since it not only corroborates the data found in contemporary Mamluk chronicles regarding the invasion of Mamluk lands but also preserves new data revealing the extent of the Qaramanid threat – a threat extending to Mamluk sovereignty more broadly. To understand the fate of relations between the Mamluks and the Qaramanids, I will first sketch, briefly, the major events that brought the two entities into contact with each other and examine the way this relationship was presented in Arabic sources. I will then concentrate on the Qaramanid rebellion and present the MS ar. 4440 along with the letters it preserves, further providing an edition of them (in the appendices). Finally, I will analyse the letters' contents and show their significance for evaluating the stakes and extent of the Qaramanids' threat to Mamluk policy.

I. Mamluk–Qaramanid relations

The period of Mamluk rule in Egypt and Syria (1250–1517) is one of the richest in premodern historiographic production. Indeed, we possess abundant chronicles in Arabic that detail, on a daily basis, the major events taking place in the sultanate's domains. These chronicles, however, were mostly produced in Cairo, and to a lesser extent Damascus, and therefore concentrate particularly on the events that occurred in the capital(s). Consequently, they very often neglect the periphery, unless it involves the sultan's actions there (i.e. military intervention, flight of rebelling amirs, incursions of enemies, as well as natural disasters). Regarding the Mamluks' relation with the periphery and its people, we also have for the Mamluk period an important number of sources produced by the administration – i.e. geography, chancery manuals, collections of letters – that provide relevant data somewhat less biased than the information found in the chronicles, since they first aimed at helping secretaries administer the sultans' lands and thus detailed more clearly the peripheral peoples' status.

The Qaramanids appear in such works within their chapters dedicated to the Turks of Anatolia (*fī mamlakat al-Atrāk bil-Rūm*) under the rubric “kingdom of

Ermenek” (*mamlakat Armanāk*), “emirs of the Turks” (*umarā’ al-Atrāk*), or “sons of Qaraman” (*awlād Qaramān*), where they are described as one of the major and most powerful beyliks (after that of Germiyān)⁵ that had occasionally acted as Mamluk governor in the region (through the granting of a diploma-*taqlīd* or *manshūr*) during the early struggles with the Ilkhanids.⁶ Concerning the way the chronicles handle the Qaramanids, they deliver two types of information: direct links with events in Anatolia, and the presence of Qaramanid diplomatic missions in Cairo. Whereas the latter are quite scarce and generally consist of no more than mere mention of the Qaramanid embassies’ arrival in Cairo, the chronicles very often report events concerning Anatolia, some of which involve the Qaramanids.

Indeed, with the progressive advance of the Mamluks in Anatolia and Cilicia (their conquest completed during the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, 709–741/1310–41, with the annexation of Kahta, Gerger, Malatya and Divriği)⁷ and the subsequent capture of Sis from the Armenians (in 776/1375, under sultan al-Ashraf Sha’bān),⁸ the Mamluk sultanate had become increasingly involved in the Anatolian scene. During the period *c.* 675–736/1277–1335, sources tend to present the relationship between Mamluks and Qaramanids as one based on either alliance (against the Mongols) or clientele (the Qaramanids’ recognition of Mamluk authority).⁹ The latter finds confirmation in numismatic evidence, as coins were minted in al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s name in Ermenek and Larendé between 715/1316 and 730/1331.¹⁰ At the end of Mongol rule over Anatolia, however, the Qaramanids soon showed greater

5 Al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār*, III, ed. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Yaḥya al-Sarīhī (Abū Dhabī, 2001), 210–9; Al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi’l-muṣṭalah al-sharīf*, I, ed. S. al-Durūbī (al-Karak, 1992), 51; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-a’shā’ fī ṣinā’at al-inshā’*, V, (Cairo, 1963, 2nd impr. of the 1913–14 edition), 365–6 (quoting and summarizing al-‘Umarī, *Masālik*). These accounts relate to the early stage of Qaramanid history, according to which the Qaramanids ruled for the Mamluks (mulūkunā).

6 Al-‘Umarī, *Masālik*, III, 210; Al-‘Umarī, *Ta’rīf*, I, 51.

7 On the Mamluks’ initial interest and advance into Anatolia during Baybars’ reign: J. Gilet, “Genèse des relations entre Arméniens et Mamelouks. La Bataille de Marrī, première attaque sur le Bilād Sīs (644/1266)”, in D. Aigle (ed.), *Le Bilād al-Šām face aux mondes extérieurs. La perception de l’Autre et la représentation du Souverain* (Damascus and Beirut, 2012), 263–91; Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li ma’rifat duwal al-muluk*, I/2, ed. M.M. Ziyādah (Cairo, 2006–07, 3rd ed.; 1st ed. 1939–58), 616, 618, 620–1. See also R. Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk–Ilkhānid Wars, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995), 157–78; Cl. Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 280–92. For the conquests under Baybars’ successor: A.F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge, 2008), 64–93; Har-El, *Struggle*, 32–5; Stewart, *The Armenian Kingdom and the Mamluks. War and Diplomacy during the Reigns of Het’um II (1289–1307)* (Leiden, 2001), 106–28, 164–71.

8 Stewart, *The Armenian Kingdom*, 185–8.

9 Baybars is said to have designated the Qaramanid ‘Alī Beg as his governor of Kayseri after his conquest of the city. See F. Sümer, “‘Qarāmām-Oghulları”, *EP*, IV, 644–5. See also an episode of Sulāmish’s rebellion (allied with the Qaramanids): A.D. Stewart, *The Armenian Kingdom*, 128–35; al-‘Umarī, *Masālik*, III, 210–17.

10 C. Ölçer, *Coinage of the Karamanids* (Istanbul, 1982), 120–1.

ambition.¹¹ During the reign of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Beg (r. 762–800/1360–98), the conquests began – Konya in 767–768/1366–67 – and by 781/1380, the Qaramanids not only controlled considerable territory but even established a protectorate over a great number of minor beyliks there.¹² The Ottoman rise in the region would eventually counter Qaramanid projects, resulting in the annihilation of the beylik in 800–801/1397–98 by sultan Bayāzid I (r. 791–804/1389–1402).¹³

A second phase in the history of contacts between the Mamluks and Qaramanids was inaugurated by a strong opposition between the two entities that soon led them to the battlefield. After Tīmūr Barlas’ defeat of the Mamluks (Syria: 803/1400) and Ottomans (Ankara: 804/1402),¹⁴ he re-established the Qaramanid principality in Anatolia. The Qaramanids were then given back their old territory in addition to lands previously belonging to the Mamluks in Cilicia.¹⁵ Consequently, sultan al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh (r. 815–824/1412–21) ordered the Qaramanids to render the city of Tarsus. Upon their refusal, the Mamluk sultan sent his troops to Anatolia to recuperate the lost territory (820/1417, 822/1419).¹⁶ In order to limit Muḥammad Beg’s ambitions (1st reign: 804–822/1402–19), al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh designated the former’s brother, ‘Alī Beg (r. 822–824/1419–21), head of the Qaramanid dynasty – as Mamluk governor – and placed the Dulqadirid Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad in Kayseri (r. 800–846/1398–1442). From the reign of sultan al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh onwards, the period is one of the richest in terms of documentation for Mamluk–Qaramanid relations, one reason being the sultans’ increased involvement in the Qaramanid succession struggle following the Mamluk reconquest of Cilicia.¹⁷ This involvement would ultimately set the Mamluks and Ottomans in opposition for a time.¹⁸

- 11 On the general situation in Anatolia after the end of Mongol rule: S.N. Yıldız, “Post-Mongol pastoral polities in eastern Anatolia during the late middle ages”, in D. Beyazit (ed.), *At the Crossroads of Empires: 14th–15th Century Eastern Anatolia* (Istanbul, 2012), 27–48.
- 12 F. Sümer, “Qarāmān-Oghulları”, *EF²*, IV, 647; Har-El, *Struggle*, 60–1.
- 13 R.P. Lindner, “Anatolia 1300–1451”, in *Cambridge History of Turkey* I (Cambridge, 2009), 129–30. The Qaramanids were annihilated along with another beylik, that of Eretna (with Qāḍī Burhān al-Dīn in Sivas): Broadbridge, *Kingship*, 174–5, 186–7; Har-El, *Struggle*, 62–5.
- 14 Shortly before, Bayāzid had attempted a new alliance with the Mamluks; owing to his attacks in Mamluk lands, however, sultan Faraj withheld his support (Broadbridge, *Kingship*, 192–3).
- 15 Har-El, *Struggle*, 69. The Mamluks’ loss of northern territory is attested in a copy of the truce treaty between Tīmūr and Faraj, preserved in al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, XIV, 102–7.
- 16 The first expedition resulted in a truce between the Mamluks and Qaramanids. Ibn Hījaj, *Qahwat al-inshā’*, ed. R. Vesely (Beirut, 2005), 210–5, kept a copy of an exchange between the two rulers, dated to the end of Muḥarram 820/March 1417 (reached Cairo on 2 Rabī’ II 820/19 May 1417), which demonstrates that Muḥammad Beg minted coins in the Mamluk sultan’s name and also invoked it at the Friday *khuṭbah*; however, as soon as the Mamluk troops departed, Muḥammad Beg broke his oath and seized Tarsus again. The second campaign, led by al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s son, Ibrāhīm, headed to Kayseri, where the Mamluk sultan’s name would be pronounced again at the *khuṭbah* after many years of interruption (Har-El, *Struggle*, 70).
- 17 Har-El, *Struggle*, 71–2.
- 18 Murād II’s cousins, Sulaymān, and his sister Faṭīmah Shaykhzāde, had fled to Cairo. Har-El, *Struggle*, 73–4. A. Darrag, *L’Égypte sous le règne de Barsbāy, 825–841/1422–38* (Damascus, 1961), 388–99.

In addition to the numerous data found in the chronicles, we also possess for this period Ibn Ḥijjah's collection of letters, which preserves letters exchanged between Mu'ayyad Shaykh and Muḥammad Beg (in 820/1417),¹⁹ the *taqālīd* (diplomas) granted to both the Qaramanid 'Alī Beg and the Dulqadirid Muḥammad,²⁰ and a letter from sultan Barsbāy to the Qaramanid Muḥammad Beg (second reign: 824–826/1421–23) after he succeeded sultan Ṭaṭar.²¹

The Qaramanid case would eventually be settled in favour of the Ottomans through the Qaramanids' recognition of Ottoman authority in 848/1444 after the battle of Yenişehir.²² As a result, little is known of their contact with the Mamluks during this period: from 842/1438 (Jaqmaq's accession to the throne; r. 842–857/1438–53) to 859/1454, Mamluk sources mention neither contact nor embassy exchanged between the two realms.

The year 859/1454 thus marked a new phase of interaction between the Mamluks and Qaramanids, though a difficult one. Already in 855/1451, the Qaramanid ruler Ibrāhīm II (r. 827–869/1424–64) began rebelling against his patron, the Ottoman Mehmet II (r. 848–850/1444–46; 855–886/1451–81), and resumed his expansion. Mehmet II, however, was able to control the Qaramanids' aspirations. In the meantime, Ottoman supremacy in the region was reinforced by the conquest of Constantinople in 857/1453, which caused Ibrāhīm to fear for his position and thus send an embassy to sultan Īnāl (r. 857–865/1453–461) to complain about Mehmet's endeavours.²³ The Qaramanid embassy reached Cairo in Muḥarram 859/December 1454,²⁴ but despite Ibrāhīm's expectations, it received a rather unfavourable welcome. Indeed, ever since sultan Jaqmaq's reign, the Mamluks and Ottomans had maintained good relations. Sultan Īnāl hence decided to ignore the complaint, neglected the Qaramanid emissary outright, and sent back a contemptuous response (*bi-jawāb hayyin*).²⁵ This response, as well as the mistreatment of the emissary, must have greatly offended Ibrāhīm II, for he decided to attack Mamluk territory the following year. By the time news of the Qaramanid attack reached Cairo (Rajab 860/June 1456²⁶ or Sha'bān 860/July 1456),²⁷ Mamluk fortresses in Cilicia, Tarsus and Gülek (al-Kūl(a)k) had already fallen. This invasion ostensibly engendered great concern for sultan Īnāl, as the chronicles continually detail the sultan's efforts to quash such rebellion over the next two years.

19 Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwat*, 210–5.

20 Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwat*, 265–7, 267–9.

21 Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwat*, 375–6.

22 Ibrāhīm II had initiated his attacks against the Ottomans in 846/1442, so in 848/1444, after obtaining the Mamluk sultan's consent, Mūrād II responded to the Qaramanids' offensive and defeated them (Har-El, *Struggle*, 74–5).

23 Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-zuhūr fī waqā'i' al-duhūr*, II, ed. M. Muṣṭafā (Cairo, 2008, 2nd ed.; 1st ed. 1982–84), 322.

24 Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Hawādīth al-duhūr fī maḍā al-ayyām wa 'l-shuhūr*, ed. F.M. Shaltūt (Cairo, 1990), 442 (19 Muḥarram); Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' i'*, II, 322 (day not mentioned).

25 Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' i'*, II, 322.

26 Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa 'l-Qāhirah*, XVI (Cairo, 2005–06; 2nd ed.; 1st ed. 1963–71), 97.

27 Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Hawādīth*, 513–4 (5 Sha'bān); 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl al-amal fī dhayl al-duwal*, V, ed. 'U.'A. al-Salām Tadmūrī (Beirut, 2002), 462; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' i'*, II, 334.

II. Crossing the line: diplomatic commentary

Two months after the Qaramanids' first move into Mamluk lands, on 17 Ramaḍān 860/19 August 1456,²⁸ a report arrived in Cairo from Aleppo. Ibrāhīm II, suffering heavy losses, had apparently asked the Aleppan governor to intercede on his behalf with the Mamluk sultan. Īnāl's response, which ordered repairs to Tarsus' wall and the rendering of besieged cities, did not suffice for the Qaramanid rebel, however. In Dhū'l-Qa'dah 860/October 1456, he sent yet another letter directly to the Mamluk sultan.²⁹ With this second attempt, Ibrāhīm II asked sultan Īnāl to appoint him governor of the cities he had seized. When this request, too, was rejected, the Qaramanid attacks resumed.

In Muḥarram 861/December 1456,³⁰ the Mamluk amir, Sunqur al-Zardkāsh,³¹ who had been sent to Anatolia the previous year, entered Tarsus and killed the governor Ibrāhīm II had appointed there. His head was sent to Cairo, where it was hung at Bāb Zuwaylah. Despite the death of his governor, the Qaramanid ruler did not give up, and in addition to taking back Tarsus in Ṣafar 861/January 1457, he also headed to Sis and Adana, two other major Mamluk strongholds in Cilicia.³² Īnāl, therefore, had no choice but to dispatch his army. In Rabī' II 861/March 1457, he gathered his troops in the Citadel for a great reception, during which the soldiers were given bonuses and other incentives.³³ They left the capital the following month³⁴ and entered the Qaramanid lands in Sha'bān 861/June 1457.³⁵

On 20 Sha'bān 861/13 July 1457,³⁶ a letter from the ruler of Alaya (modern Alanya) arrived in Cairo, informing the sultan of Ibrāhīm's regrets for his rebellion and declaration of retreat. Despite the Qaramanid retreat, Mamluk troops went on to defeat the rebels. The news of Mamluk victory reached Īnāl in Ramaḍān 861/July 1457 and gave rise to many festivities in Cairo³⁷ as the troops made their return.

28 Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh al-Biqā'ī*, II, ed. M.S. Ibn Shadīd al-'Awfi (Jizah, 1992), 202.

29 Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādīth*, 517; Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, V, 464.

30 Day not mentioned: Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 11; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i'*, II, 336–7. On 15 Muḥarram: Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 230.

31 Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 230, mentioned another emir: Ibn Ramaḍān al-Turkumānī, who killed the Qaramanid governor of Tarsus.

32 Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 235.

33 Day not mentioned: Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 16. On 6 Rabī' II: Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 260; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 1045. The four emirs leading the troops, Jānibak al-Qaramānī al-Ẓāhirī, Qurqumās al-Ashrafi, Yūnus al-'Alā'ī al-Nāṣirī, and Khushqadam al-Nāṣirī, were given between 3,000 and 4,000 dinars. The emirs of 40 received 500 dinars each, and those of ten, 200 dinars.

34 Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 16–7; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i'*, II, 339; Al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz al-kalām fī l-dhayl 'alā duwal al-islām*, II, ed. B.A. Ma'rūf (Beirut, 1995), 703.

35 Day not mentioned: Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 19–20; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i'*, II, 340. On 4 Sha'bān/27 June: Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 287; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 108–9.

36 Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 289–90.

37 On 9 Ramaḍān/31 July: Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 21; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i'*, II, 340–1; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 109–10. On 10 Ramaḍān/1 August: Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 298–9.

Beside the accounts of Qaramanid rebellion found in the chronicles, we now possess an additional source that preserves those letters sent by Īnāl to Ibrāhīm II concerning the Qaramanid rebellion, namely, MS ar. 4440 (BnF, Paris).

Ms ar. 4440: diplomatic exchanges between sultan Īnāl and Ibrāhīm II

MS ar. 4440 is a collection of copies of letters (*munshā'ah*) prepared by an anonymous secretary working at the chancery in Cairo during the second half of the fifteenth century.³⁸ Of the 62 unpublished letters contained in the manuscript, four concern the exchanges between the Mamluks and the Qaramanids. All four letters were sent from Cairo: letters II (fol. 40a: Mamluks to Qaramanids [date unknown]–Appendix I), XV (fols 55a–55b: al-Ashraf Īnāl's response to Ibrāhīm II [in 861/1457]–Appendix II), L (fols. 194b–197b: al-Ashraf Īnāl's response to Ibrāhīm II [in 862/1458]–Appendix III), and LI (fols. 197b–198a: Mamluk sultan's response to Ibrāhīm II [date unknown]–Appendix IV).³⁹

Unfortunately, letters II and LI are too incomplete for use in this study. While letter II constitutes the original missive's introduction and only consists of the invocations devoted to the Qaramanid ruler (unidentified), letter LI mentions the recipient of the letter, Ibrāhīm II, and the reception of two letters in Cairo sent by that ruler. However, the contents of the message have not been copied by the scribe. Letter XV, though partially transcribed, reveals the general theme of the letter (heading added by the secretary) and further provides its *narratio*.⁴⁰ Both this letter and letter L centre on the Qaramanid attack of Tarsus, following Ibrāhīm II's first embassy to Cairo in 859/1454.

Below is a presentation of the four letters, in their supposed chronological order, which provides a summary of their introductory protocols (*iftitāh-taslīm*) – including titles and invocations – as well as their contents (*matn*). The different parts will then be discussed in detail in the diplomatic commentary to follow.

Letter II (fol. 40a)

Incomplete letter mentioning the invocations addressed to the Qaramanid ruler (unidentified).

[Theme: unknown]

38 F. Bauden, “Les relations diplomatiques entre les sultans mamlouks circassiens et les autres pouvoirs du Dār al-Islām. L'apport du ms. ar. 4440 (BNF, Paris)”, *Annales Islamologiques* 41, 2007, 1–29. M. Dekkiche, “Le Caire, Carrefour des ambassades. Étude historique et diplomatique de la correspondance échangée entre les sultans mamlouks circassiens et les souverains timourides et turcomans (Qara Qoyunlu – Qaramanides) au XV^e s. d'après le ms. ar. 4440 (BnF, Paris)”, Université de Liège (Belgium, 2011), 2 vols.

39 The letter numbering follows that of F. Bauden “Les relations diplomatiques”.

40 The *narratio*, also called *expositio*, generally sets the reason for the letter's sending. In the case of a response, this part will also mention the reception of the initial letter and further provide a summary of it. See below.

[*Ifītāh*]*Lā zālat (...) wa lā bariḥa (...)*[*Taslīm*]*sadarat tuhdī salāman (...) wa tanā'an (...) wa tuwadḍīhu*[*Matn*]

Incomplete

Letter XV (fols 55a–55b)

Incomplete response from the Mamluk sultan Īnāl to Ibrāhīm II's letter.

[Theme: acceptance of the Qaramanids' excuses after the Mamluk troops had headed for Kayseri]

[*Ifītāh*]*Ḍā'afa'llāh ta'ālā ni'ma al-janāb al-'alī ilā ākhir alqābihi – lā yazālu*[*Taslīm*]*Sadarat hādhihi'l-mukātabah (...) wa tuwadḍīhu li 'ilmīhi anna (...)*[*Matn*]

Mention of the arrival of Ibrāhīm II's letter through his emissary Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Balkhī.

Summary of its contents: declaration of friendship from the Qaramanids to the Mamluk sultan; promise for obedience to Mamluk authority; desire to win back the sultan's favour.

Acceptance of the oral excuses made by the emissary.

Re-affirmation of the understanding of the message.

According to the heading, added by the scribe in MS ar. 4440, this letter arrived in Cairo soon after the Mamluk troops had started their advance in Cilicia. The *matn* clearly mentions that Ibrāhīm II had sent an emissary to the Mamluk sultan with a letter apologizing for his rebellion and requesting an end to the conflict in exchange for his submission. The oral message delivered by the emissary also followed along these lines. Although Mamluk sources do not mention the arrival of any Qaramanid embassy in this period, the letter's contents suggest that Īnāl's response dates to 861/1457 and serves as the preliminary agreement between the two rulers.

A final agreement between Īnāl and Ibrāhīm II came the following year. In Jumādā I 862/April 1458, another Qaramanid embassy arrived in Cairo, bringing the Mamluk sultan a letter from the rebel.⁴¹ In his letter, Ibrāhīm II, after apologizing again for his rebellion, implores Īnāl for forgiveness and a truce between

41 Day not mentioned: Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 38; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i*, II, 346, Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, II, 356. On 28 Jumādā I/13 April: Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 119.

them. In Jumādā II 862/April 1458,⁴² Īnāl finally dismissed the envoys and designated his amir, Aydakī al-Ashrafī al-Khāṣṣakī,⁴³ to bring them back to their lands. Before they left, the sultan also gave his amir the response to Ibrāhīm II's letter along with a robe of honour.⁴⁴ This letter's contents are now known thanks to its copy preserved in MS ar. 4440.

Letter L (fols 194b–197b)

Sultan Īnāl's response to Ibrāhīm II's letter brought by the emissary 'Alam al-Dīn Sulaymān b. Germiyān. Īnāl's response was given to the Mamluk emissary Sunqūr Aydakī on 20 Jumādā II 862/5 May 1458.

[Theme: acceptance of the Qaramanids' apologies after their rebellion and establishment of the truce conditions]

[*Ifītāh*]

Ḍā'afa 'llāh ta'ālā ni'mata 'l-janābi 'l-ālī' (...)
Lā zāla-lā bariḥa (...)

[*Taslīm*]

Ṣadarat hādhihi'l-mukātabah ilā'l-janābi 'l-ālī' (...) wa tuwaḍḍiḥu li 'ilmihī

[*Matn – narratio*]

Mention of the arrival of Ibrāhīm II's letter and understanding of its amicable contents.

Summary of its contents: Ibrāhīm's expression of his good feelings towards the sultan and his happiness to see them reciprocated. Ibrāhīm's regret regarding his rebellion and his assurance of loyalty to Īnāl.

Acceptance of Ibrāhīm's excuses and reminder of the events that had provoked the Mamluk sultan's discontent: the Qaramanid invasion of his lands and the destruction of Tarsus and the citadel of Gülek (al-Kūl(a)k).

Mention of the nice reception given to the Qaramanid emissary who transmitted Ibrāhīm's excuses and regrets.

Mention of the sultan's forgiveness.

List of the sultan's demands: Ibrāhīm's loyalty and his good behaviour towards his neighbours among the Mamluk governors and the Turkmen living in Mamluk territory.

Last reminder of the sultan's leniency towards the Qaramanid emissary, for whom a safe trip home is desired so he can deliver the sultan's message.

[*Matn – dispositio*]

Statement of Ibrāhīm's expected behaviour: "never enter Mamluk lands or disturb the peace there".

42 Day not mentioned: Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 39; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i*, II, 346–7. On 10 Jumādā II/25 April: Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 119.

43 Al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍaw' al-lāmi' li ahl al-qarn al-tāsi'*, II (Cairo, 1934–36), 325.

44 Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 39; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 119.

Mention of the Mamluk sultan's kindness in preventing his army from heading to Qaramanid lands a second time after the emissary reached him with Ibrāhīm's message of excuses.

Statement of the truce's conditions:

1) Restoration of Tarsus' wall and doors as they were before the attack.
 2) Reconstruction of Gülek (al-Kül(a)k) and delivery of its keys to the sultan so he can possess it again. Request that Ibrāhīm adopt an exemplary behaviour with respect to his neighbours living in Mamluk lands as well as the governors of the citadels in the region and that of the Turkmen. Stipulation for preservation of road security for travellers and merchants. Declaration of Ibrāhīm's freedom to disturb his own lands if he so wishes.

3) Mention of Cyprus, where the sultan's authority is recognized and whose subjects send annually the *jizyah* to Cairo for the holy cities. Ibrāhīm's obligation – given the sultan's responsibility for security of this island – to stay away from it and forbidden to invade it, be it by him or someone he might send, for the Cypriots remain under the Mamluk sultan's protection – even despite their Christian roots – since they send him the *jizyah*.

Mention of the Mamluk emissary charged with bringing the letter to Ibrāhīm and taking back his response and agreement.

Details of the gifts sent with the letter and witness to the sultan's kindness towards the Qaramanid ruler: a robe in golden velvet (*kāmiliyyah*); a sword with golden handle; a velvet blouse; an embroidered velvet armour for horse, red on white colour; a golden saddle decorated with feather; and sugar from Ḥamāh.

Letter LI (fols 197b–198a)

Incomplete letter addressed to Ibrāhīm II mentioning the reception of two letters in Cairo.

[Theme: understanding and agreement on the initial letters' contents]

[*Ḥfītāḥ*]

Lā zālat (...)

[*Taslīm*]

ṣadarat tuḥdī ilayhi salāman (...) wa tuwadḍiḥu li-'ilmihī

[*Matn*]

Confirmation of the reception of the letter. Praise to God for leading the Qaramanids to success and for renewing his good fortune. Agreement on the contents of the second letter and praise of its contents.

Incomplete.

The four samples presented fall under the category of diplomatic letters (*mukātabāt sultāniyyāt*), which were considered the most important type of

production in the Mamluk chancery.⁴⁵ The rules of letter writing, following those of diplomatics, are applied to two types of characteristics or features: external and internal. The external features refer to the physical aspects of the letter, such as paper size, ink, and type of pen used as well as the general layout of the text on the paper (space between the lines). As for the internal features, they can be found throughout the structure of the letter (i.e. the different parts of the letter) and are illustrated by the use of particular phrases and titles. The letter is commonly divided into three parts: the introductory protocol (*iftitāh*), main text (*matn*), and closing protocol (*khawātim*).⁴⁶ Each part is itself subdivided into several sections. The *iftitāh* includes a series of components similar to those found in European diplomatics: *invocatio*, *intitulatio*, *inscriptio*, *salutatio*. The *invocatio* corresponds to religious phrases aimed at placing the document under divine protection and blessing. In Arabic, they are called *fawātih* and include the *basmalah*, *ḥamdalah*, *tashahhud*, *taṣliyah* and *ba'diyyah*.⁴⁷ Save for the *basmalah*, which initiates all letters, the last four, when used to open the letter, are referred to as the *khuṭbah* (sermon). During the Turkish period (1250–1389), the *khuṭbah* was considered the highest means of opening letters to foreign rulers. Beside the *khuṭbah*, however, the Mamluk chancery also employed another type of opening phrase more widely: invocations (*du'ā'*, pl. *ad'iyyah*) aimed at praising the addressee and expressing good wishes. After these invocations came the addressee's titles (*alqāb* and *nu'ūt*). Strictly speaking, however, this element is not the equivalent of the *intitulatio* (refers to the sender)/*inscriptio* (refers to the recipient), since the address (*'unwān: ila fulān*) in the Arabic letter was generally appended separately on the top of the letter. The identity of the sender was also set independently as the signature (*'alāmah*). Finally, the *salutatio*, a phrase to greet the addressee, corresponds in Mamluk letters to a phrase announcing the publication of the letter (*ṣadara*), followed by the *salutatio* more properly (*taslīm*) and a marker – such as “*abda*” (to reveal), “*waddaḥa*” (to clarify) – to introduce the letter's message (*matn*). Unlike its European counterpart, the *matn* is not divided, in Arabic letters, into *narratio* (motives of the letter) and *dispositio* (conclusions or solutions to the matter), though they are apparent. The section corresponding to the *narratio* in Mamluk response generally mentions the reception of the initial letter and provides a summary of its contents, while the closing protocol

45 See al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, VIII, 233 on the *mukātabah sulṭāniyyah*: “wa hiyya al-juz' u al-a'zamu min ṣinā'ati al-tarassuli”.

46 The scribe who collected the sample of letters presented in this study did not copy the *khawātim*.

47 The *basmalah* designates the phrase “*bi'smi 'llāh al-rahmān al-rahīm*”, which introduces any important action, granting it benediction. The *ḥamdalah* or *tahmūd* follows the *basmalah* and is a phrase in praise to God. Four different forms of *ḥamdalah* are attested: “*yaḥmaduhu*”, “*naḥmaduhu*”, “*aḥmaduhu*”, and the more commonly used “*al-ḥamdu lī'llāh*”. The *tashahhud* is the formula of Muslim profession of faith and conversion “*ashhadu anna lā ilāh illā'llāh wa anna Muḥammad rasūlu'llāh*”. The *tashahhud* follows the *ḥamdalah*, and then the *taṣliyah* (*ṣallā Allāh 'alayhi wa sallama*) can come, which praises the Prophet Muḥammad as well as his family and companions (*wa ṣalawātuḥu 'alā sayyidinā Muḥammad wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi*). Finally, the *ba'diyyah* “*ammā ba'du*” concludes *fawātih*.

(*khawātim*) ends the letter. Like the *iftitāh*, the *khawātim* include a series of religious phrases along with the date and registration notice: “*‘istithnā’/mashī‘ah, al-ta’rīkh, al-mustanadāt, al-ḥamdalah, al-taṣliyah, al-ḥasbalah*”.⁴⁸

Some parts of the letter – such as paper size, signature and introductory protocol – are of particular interest for the study of two correspondents’ relationship, since they were primarily set according to the hierarchical bond between the letter’s addressee and sender. Elsewhere, I have demonstrated how the Mamluk chancery of Cairo established rules for letter-writing that corresponded to the status of eastern foreign sovereigns.⁴⁹ The Mamluk chancery distinguished four main statuses granted to foreign rulers, though only three are attested in the fifteenth century. Table 1 provides a summary of my conclusions and shows the division of rulers during the Circassian period based on paper size,⁵⁰ titles (primary *laqab*),⁵¹ introductory invocation,⁵² *salutatio* formulae,⁵³ and the signature (*‘alāmah*)⁵⁴ added to the letter. At that time,⁵⁵ the first category of rulers related to the Mongols’ successors in Iraq and Iran, the prime position being granted to the Timurids (*al-maqām al-sharīf*). Within the first

- 48 The *khawātim* start with the phrase “*in šā’ Allāh ta’ālā*” (*‘istithnā’/mashī‘ah*) and place the letter’s contents under divine blessing. This formula is generally highlighted on the document through a different layout (in the centre of the sheet of paper, written on two lines), followed by the date of the letter’s composition. The *mustanadāt* are not, strictly speaking, part of the letter but rather relate to the person in charge of recording the document (i.e. *kātib al-sirr*). Finally, concluding the closing protocol is a series of religious phrases such as the *ḥamdalah, taṣliyah* and *ḥasbalah* (*ḥasbunā ‘llāh wa ni‘ma’l-wakīl*). Secretaries also mention a final part of the *khawātim*: the *lawāḥiq* (accessories). It consists first in the act of *tartīb* – to cover the letter with red soil to dry the ink – before the secretary’s careful reading of the letter.
- 49 M. Dekkiche, “The correspondence exchanged between Mamluks and Timurids in the fifteenth century: study of an unpublished source (BnF.ms.ar. 4440)”, *Eurasian Studies* 11, 2013, 131–60; M. Dekkiche, “Diplomatics or another way to see the world”, in F. Bauden and M. Dekkiche (eds), *Mamluk Cairo. A Crossroads for Embassies* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2017).
- 50 The paper size was calculated from the wider sheet (*qaṭ‘ al-baghdādī al-kāmil*), whose width measures 58.15 cm; paper sizes are also measured according to the roll width. All other sizes are designated as a fraction of the full sheet: 1/2 (29.07 cm), 1/3 (19.3 cm). The format *al-‘ādah* corresponds to the fraction 1/4 (14.5 cm).
- 51 The honorific titles correspond to a list of *laqab* (single word, i.e. *al-malik*) and *nu‘ūt* (compound adjectives, i.e. *sayf amīr al-mu‘minīn*). The list of titles being long, only the first two *laqab* are to be taken in consideration: principal *laqab*, secondary *laqab*. There is also a hierarchy among them: *al-maqām* > *al-maqarr* > *al-janāb* > *al-majlis* for the principal *laqab* and *al-ashraf* > *al-sharīf* > *al-karīm* > *al-‘ālī* > *al-sāmī* for the secondary.
- 52 The invocations relate to the existence, benefits, victory and power of the correspondents. They generally hope for longevity, glory, tenfold increase or perpetuity. We also find a hierarchy within the invocations *fī’l-uluww wa’l-hubūt*: *itālat al-baqā’* > *itālat al-‘umr*; *‘izz al-anṣār* > *‘izz al-naṣr* > *‘izz al-naṣr*; *muḍā‘afat al-ni‘ma* > *dawām al-ni‘ma*.
- 53 The hierarchy among the *salutatio*’s phrase is, for the “publication”, *aṣḍarnāh ilā* > *aṣḍarnā hādhīhī’l-mukātaba ilā* > *uṣḍirat ilā* > *ṣadarat ilā*. As for the marker that introduces the *matn*: *nu-/tubdī li-‘ilmīhi [al-sharīf]* > *nu-/tuwaḍḍiḥu li-‘ilmīhi [al-karīm]*.
- 54 The signature in the letters is referred to as *al-‘alāmah*. It is appended atop the letter (generally prepared in advance by a scribe). We have three different *‘alāmah* depending on the addressee’s rank: *akhūhu* (his brother) > *wāliduhu* (his father) > the sultan’s name (*ism*).
- 55 For the details of this period and the previous one, see Dekkiche, “Diplomatics”.

Table 1. Chancery rules in the Circassian period

No.	Paper	Title	Invocation	Salutation	'Alāmah	
I	<i>al-nisf</i>	1	<i>al-maqām al-sharīf</i>	<i>a'azza 'llāh anṣār</i>	<i>aṣḍarnā(hā)</i>	<i>akhūhu</i>
		2	<i>al-maqām al-'ālī</i>			
		3	<i>al-maqarr al-karīm</i>	<i>a'azza 'llāh anṣār</i>	—	
		4	<i>al-maqarr al-'ālī</i>	<i>a'azza 'llāh anṣār</i>	<i>muḥāwadah</i>	
II	<i>al-thulth</i>	1	<i>al-janāb al-karīm</i>	<i>a'azza 'llāh anṣār</i>	<i>ṣadarat hādhihi</i> <i>'l-mukātabah</i>	<i>akhūhu</i>
				<i>adāma 'llāh naṣr/nuṣrat</i>		—
		2	<i>al-janāb al-'ālī</i>	<i>ḍā'afa 'llāh ni'mat</i> <i>ḍā'afa 'llāh ni'mat</i>	—	<i>wāliduhu</i>
III	<i>al-'ādah</i>	1	<i>al-majlis al-'ālī</i>	<i>adāma 'llāh ni'mat</i>	<i>ṣadarat</i>	<i>akhūhu</i> —
		2	<i>al-majlis al-sāmī</i>	<i>adāma 'llāh ni'mat</i>		<i>wāliduhu</i>

category, a lesser rank was attributed to the Turkmen dynasty of the Qara Qoyunlu (*al-maḡarr al-karīm*). After the capture of Constantinople, the Ottoman sultan joined this category as well (*al-maḡarr al-karīm*).⁵⁶ The second category of sovereigns included governors under the authority of the rulers from the previous category (*al-janāb al-karīm*) as well as the Turkmen beyliks of Anatolia (*al-janāb al-‘ālī*), including the Qaramanids. Finally, the last category referred to minor independent rulers (Turkmen and Kurdish tribes) in Eastern Anatolia and Upper Euphrates (*al-majlis al-‘ālī*). Identifying this categorization is essential for understanding the way in which Mamluk sultans perceived their foreign counterparts and, more importantly, whom they recognized as such (that is, not as so-called clients).

Throughout the history of Mamluk–Qaramanid relations, the latter were treated as independent foreign eastern rulers – despite the occasional granting of diploma (*taqlīd*) – as illustrated by both the theory provided in the chancery manuals and the samples of letters kept in collections (Ibn Ḥijjah’s *Qahwat al-inshā’* and MS ar. 4440). As previously mentioned, the Qaramanids were considered one of the major Turkmen beyliks of Anatolia. It seems, however, that they acquired a higher status over the course of al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh’s reign. In the sample preserved in Ibn Ḥijjah’s collection, the Mamluk sultan first addresses Muḥammad Beg with the invocation and title *adāma’llāh ta’ālā ni‘mat al-majlis al-‘ālī*⁵⁷ before shifting to the more important title *al-janāb al-‘ālī* after the nomination of ‘Alī Beg in Konya.⁵⁸ This practice continued during sultan Barsbāy’s reign and afterwards (letter to Muḥammad Beg: *adāma’llāh ta’ālā ni‘mat al-janāb al-‘ālī*).⁵⁹ The chancery manual produced by the secretary al-Saḥmāwī, contemporary with the period under review, confirms the importance of the Qaramanids as one of the ten successors to the Mongols in the territory of Anatolia (*bilād al-Rūm*).⁶⁰

56 It seems, however, that this title had already been granted to Mūrād by sultan Barsbāy in 1433, as shown in MS 4440, 45b–47b.

57 This was the normal way to address the Anatolian Turkmen during the Turkish period of the Mamluk rule. See Al-‘Umarī, *Ta’rīf*, I, 55; Ibn Nāzīr al-Jaysh, *Tathqīf al-ta’rīf bi’l-muṣṭalah al-sharīf*, ed. R. Vesely (Cairo, 1987), 56. But also up to sultan al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh’s reconquest of Tarsus: Ibn Hijjah, *Qahwat*, 213.

58 Ibn Hijjah, *Qahwat*, 265–6.

59 Ibn Hijjah, *Qahwat*, 375.

60 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Al-Thaḡhr al-bāsim fī šinā’at al-kātib wa’l-kātim*, ed. A.M. Anas Mursī, 2 vols (Cairo, 2009). This author, like his famous predecessor al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), worked as secretary in the Chancery of Cairo during the period from Barsbāy’s sultanate (r. 825–841/1422–37) to that of sultan Ināl (r. 857–865/1453–60). Preserved in a unicum until 2009 (BnF, MS ar. 4439), this manual was long attributed to another author, al-Khālīdī, under the title *al-Maqṣid al-rafi’ al-munsha’ al-hādī li dīwān al-inshā’*. The academic literature long referred to the manuscript by the title *Dīwān al-inshā’*. This work follows al-Qalqashandī’s manual, from which it even took many examples. While al-Qalqashandī largely relied on the work of al-‘Umarī (d. 749/1349) and Ibn Nāzīr al-Jaysh (d. 786/1384), adding changes of his own at times (especially for the early fifteenth century), al-Saḥmāwī provided concrete examples from his own time much more often (mid-fifteenth century) *Ibid.*, II, 763. In another part of his work devoted to Anatolia, al-Saḥmāwī confirms that the Qaramanids were the only representative of the beylik left in the region that has not come yet under Ottoman rule (Al-Saḥmāwī, *Al-Thaḡhr* II, 783–7).

Moreover, the samples of MS ar. 4440 attest to such practice as well. A comparison of the letters presented (summary provided) with the chancery rules of the Circassian period (Table 1) shows the Qaramanid rulers were addressed according to the second layer of the second category of foreign rulers: “*Ḍā’afa ’llāh ta’ālā ni’ mata ’l-janābi ’l-ālī*” – “*Ṣadarat hādhihi’l-mukātabah (...) wa tuwadḏihu li ’ilmihī anna (...)*” (Letter XV) and “*Ḍā’afa ’llāh ta’ālā ni’ mata’l-janābi ’l-ālī*” – “*Ṣadarat hādhihi’l-mukātabah ilā’l-janābi ’l-ālī (...) wa tuwadḏihu li ’ilmihī*” (Letter L). On the basis of Table 1, one might also assume the paper size would have been *al-thulth*⁶¹ and the sultan’s signature appended to the letters “*wāliduhu*” (“*akhūhu*” being generally reserved for the first layer of sovereigns belonging to the second category).

III. Mamluk response to Qaramanid threat: historical commentary

The samples of letters presented above, as well as the reports found in the chronicles, show that the Qaramanids constituted a major threat to Mamluk power, especially in the Anatolian region. Letter L, which mentions the truce conditions set by the Mamluk sultan, illustrates that fact clearly. Indeed, two out of the three conditions concerned the Anatolian region (i.e. Tarsus, safety of the roads). It is now time to analyse in detail each of the above-mentioned conditions, and their stakes for Mamluk policies.

Tarsus and Mamluk border

Situated in classical times (...) in the rich agricultural plain of Cilicia (...), [Tarsus] owed its florescence firstly, to this same fertility of the local soil; secondly, to its strategic position commanding the southern end of the Cilician Gates across the Taurus Mountains into central Anatolia (...); and thirdly, to its possessing a fine sheltered harbour (...), opening the city to the maritime influences of the eastern Mediterranean (...).⁶²

Already renowned in antiquity, the city of Tarsus enjoyed great success early on in the Islamic period, when it became a major – albeit disputed – stronghold in the border zone separating the Islamic empire and Byzantine territory. This zone, commonly known as the *thughūr* (sing. *thaghr*), constituted the external frontier of the Islamic land, or, more precisely, the line between the *dār al-Islām* and the *dār al-Ḥarb*. Concretely, it represented “a no-man’s land studded with smaller fortresses that served as the first line of defence for the adjacent regions of Muslim states as well as staging points and places of refuge for raids into

61 The paper size refers to the roll’s width, expressed in Egyptian cubits of cloth (*bi dhirā’i ’l-qumāsh al-miṣrī*), that is, 58.15 cm; at times, however, it was measured by finger, span or carat. The size *al-thulth* (the third) consequently measures 19.383 cm. W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1955), 56; W. Hinz, “*Dhirā’*”, in *EP*², II, 238–9. This measurement modifies the one established by Karabacek, which was 48.8 cm.

62 C.E. Bosworth, “The City of Tarsus and the Arab–Byzantine frontiers in early and mid-18th century ‘Abbāsīd times’”, *Oriens* 33, 1992, 268.

kāfir territory”.⁶³ The first establishment of the *thughūr* arose in the region of Cilicia-Armenia, with the *thughūr al-shāmiyyah* (capital: Tarsus) and the *thughūr al-jazīriyyah* (capital: Malatya).⁶⁴ Alongside the *thughūr* lay yet another zone situated inside the Islamic land itself: the *‘awāsim* (sing. *‘āsimah*). The *‘awāsim* constituted an additional protection, in practice serving like the *thughūr* but as a second line of defence. This second sphere was considered a buffer zone between Northern Syria and the Syrian *thughūr*.⁶⁵

The system of the *‘awāsim* and *thughūr* has its origin in the late Umayyad period, when the Arabs began to settle in lands conquered from the Byzantines.⁶⁶ Only during the Abbasid period, starting with the reign of the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170–193/786–809), did it become a distinctive part of the empire, however. During the two centuries of Abbasid rule in the region (c. 133–351/750–962), the *thughūr* developed even further, no longer a mere strategic stronghold for offence against and defence from the Byzantines but an almost independently ruled region that provided substantial sources of revenues for the caliphs through the fiscal system and commercial activity.⁶⁷ With Christian reoccupation of the *thughūr* in the fourth/tenth century, the system would lose all such significance and function.

Mamluk advance into Anatolia has a long history, beginning in 675/1277 during sultan Baybars’ reign (658–676/1260–77). Yet it was not until the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (723/1321: truce with the Ilkhanid Abū Sa’īd) and, even more, after the capture of Sis by al-Ashraf Sha’bān (776/1375), that the Mamluks established themselves firmly in the region. Although the Mamluk sultans took advantage of the defence infrastructure already in place there (i.e. ancient fortresses), they were also forced to establish their own system of defence at the border. It was thus during this period that they started to develop a more effective means of protecting their borders, installing two Turkmen principalities directly dependent on their authority through a link of clientele. These entities were in charge not only of protecting the region previously known as the *thughūr* – the Dulqadirids (in Elbistan, “Jaziran *thughūr*”; 735/1335) and the Ramadanids (in Adana, “Syrian *thughūr*”; 735–748/1334–48)⁶⁸ – but also counterbalancing the growing importance of Turkmen beyliks. Indeed, whereas this zone once functioned primarily as a defence for the *dār al-islām* against attacks from the *dār al-ḥarb*, it now became an internal frontier within the *dār al-islām* itself, aimed at protecting Mamluk territory from potential Muslim attacks. What had become of the *thughūr*–*‘awāsim* system?

To understand concretely the system of defence in the northern border area of Mamluk territory, one must examine the organization of Aleppo province as

63 R.W. Brauer, “Boundaries and frontiers in medieval Muslim geography”, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Societies* [New Series] 85/6, 1995, 15.

64 The term also designates the border zone in al-Andalus (Brauer, “Boundaries and frontiers”, 21–5.

65 M. Bonner, “The naming of the frontier: *‘Awāsim*, *Thughūr*, and the Arab geographers”, *BSOAS* [in Honour of J.E. Wansbrough] 57/1, 1994, 17.

66 Bonner, “The naming of the frontier”, 18–9.

67 P. von Sivers, “Taxes and trade in the ‘Abbāsīd *Thughūr*, 750–962/133–351”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 25/1, 1982, 71–99.

68 Har-El, *Struggle*, 39–41, 45.

depicted in the administrative literature (section of the *masālik wa'l-mamālik*). This region was divided into three main sectors: (1) the Syrian lands (Sector A); (2) Armenia (Sector B); and (3) Upper Mesopotamia (Sector C). Within this division, al-Qalqashandī – based on the administrative works of his predecessors, namely, al-'Umarī (d. 749/1349)⁶⁹ and Ibn Nāzīr al-Jaysh (d. 786/1384)⁷⁰ – lists a total of 50 districts: 26 for Sector A,⁷¹ 21 for Sector B, sub-divided into eight main districts (three in the mountains, five on the coasts) and 13 minor ones;⁷² and finally three for Sector C.⁷³ Following al-Qalqashandī's manual, Har-El formulated a table presenting the 23 districts included in these sectors, which represents the main posts of defence for Mamluk territory (Table 2).⁷⁴

According to Har-El, Sector A constituted the 'awāšim zone, while Sector B (and to a lesser extent Sector C) represented the *thughūr*.⁷⁵ Closer inspection of al-Qalqashandī's famous manual *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā*, however, presents another view of the *thughūr* and 'awāšim. Indeed, al-Qalqashandī attaches this denomination to Sector B alone, the sector he refers to as "*al-ma'rūf bi-bilād al-Arman*" (known as the country of the Armenians). Quoting al-'Umarī's *Ta'rīf* on the description of the city of Sis, he goes on to write, "part of this region is called *al-'awāšim*, and part of it was called in the past *al-thughūr*" (*wa hādhihi al-bilād minhā bilādun tusammā al-'awāšim, wa minhā bilādun kānat tusammā qadīman bi-thughūr*).⁷⁶ Having described the two terms both etymologically and historically, al-Qalqashandī then argues that the *thughūr wa'l-awāšim* were, in fact, two names representing a single region running south–north from Gharās to the lands of the Qaramanids and east–west from the mountains of al-Darbandāt to the coast with Alaya and Antakiya,⁷⁷ that is, Sector B.⁷⁸

Al-Qalqashandī's description, based largely on that of al-'Umarī, seems to reflect the reality of a border zone in the fourteenth century, not that of his own time. For the following century, another work proves more useful: *al-Thaghr al-bāsim fī šinā'at al-kātib wa'l-kātim* by al-Saḥmāwī (d. 868/1463). Following the tripartite division of sectors, he lists 49 districts: 27 for Sector A,⁷⁹ 19 for Sector B (11 districts and 8 citadels),⁸⁰ and three main districts for Sector C.⁸¹ While the descriptions of each city also stems from previous works (i.e. al-'Umarī, Ibn Nāzīr al-Jaysh), al-Saḥmāwī adds contemporary

69 Al-'Umarī, *Ta'rīf*.

70 Ibn Nāzīr al-Jaysh, *Tathqīf al-ta'rīf bi'l-muṣṭalah al-sharīf*, ed. R. Vesely (Cairo, 1987).

71 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 119–30.

72 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 130–7.

73 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 137–9.

74 Har-El, *Struggle*, 44.

75 Har-El, *Struggle*, 43–5.

76 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 130.

77 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 131.

78 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 228.

79 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaghr*, I, 299–303. These are approximately the same as those described by al-Qalqashandī.

80 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaghr*, I, 303–7; II, 706–7.

81 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaghr*, I, 307–8.

Table 2. Division of the Aleppo Province in the fourteenth century; cf. al-Qalqashandī

Sector A	Sector B	Sector C
Qal'at al-Muslimīn (Qal'at al-Rūm)	Dabraki (Divriği)	Ruhā (Edessa/Urfa)
Bahasna (Besni)	Malatya	Qal'at Ja'bar
Qusayr	Darende	Bīra (Birecik)
'Ayntāb (Gaziantep)	Elbistan	
Rāwandān	Sis	
Karkar (Gerger)	Sirfandikār (Servendikar)	
Shayzar	Adana	
Kakhta (Kahta)	Tarsus	
Baghrās (Bagras)	Ayas	
Al-Shughr wa-Bakās		
Darbasāk		

updates as well (introduced by “*qultu*”). We learn, for instance, that at the time he was composing his work at least one district was no longer under Mamluk authority: Ruhā/Edessa (then under Aq Qoyunlu authority).⁸² As for Kayseri, it was under the supervision of the Dulqadirid client Nāṣir al-Dīn (r. 800–846/1398–1442). Although al-Saḥmawī does not state it clearly, the Dulqadirids also ruled in Elbistan as a Mamluk client, as the Ramadanids did in Adana. Table 3 presents a reconstitution of the main districts included in these sectors.

As for the fifteenth-century organization of the *thughūr* and *'awāṣim*, al-Saḥmawī no longer seems to recognize the system. In his description of

Table 3. Division of the Aleppo Province in the fifteenth century; cf. al-Saḥmawī

Sector A	Sector B	Sector C
Qal'at al-Muslimīn (Qal'at al-Rūm)	Malatya	Bīra (Birecik)
Bahasna (Besni)	Tarsus	Qal'at Ja'bar
'Ayntāb (Gaziantep)	Adana*	[Ruhā/Edessa]
Rāwandān	Elbistan*	
Shayzar	Ayas	
Karkar (Gerger)	Darende	
Kakhta (Kahta)	Sirfandikār (Servendikar)	
Baghrās (Bagras)	Dabraki (Divriği)	
Al-Shughr wa-Bakās	Qal'at Kūmī	
Darbasāk	Sis	
	Kayseri*	
	Mar'ash (*)	

82 Al-Saḥmawī, *Thaghr*, I, 308.

Sector B – which he, like al-Qalqashandī, refers to as Bilād al-Arman – he only mentions its ancient designation as *al-thughūr*, thus ignoring the denomination of *al-‘awāšim* altogether.⁸³ If the Mamluks no longer maintained the defence system of the *‘awāšim-thughūr* as such (neither its terminology nor its localization), the establishment of a tripartite sector of defence at the border, stretching from the internal part of the territory (Syria) to the external part (Armenia and Upper Euphrates), seems to have functioned in a similar way nonetheless. The organization of Sector B and, within it, the city of Tarsus demonstrates this state of affairs quite clearly.

Sector B represents the finest example of Mamluk defence. Two different plans of action emerge from this zone. The first, the system Har-El terms the “buffer”,⁸⁴ since the end of al-Nāšir Muḥammad’s reign the Mamluks had established two Turkmen tribes as their governors (*nā’ib/šāhib*) in Cilicia in order to form a zone of protection that would prevent entrance into their territory: the Dulqadirids in Elbistan (735/1335) and the Ramadanids in Adana (735–748/1334–48). By the fifteenth century, the Dulqadirids also controlled Mar’ash and Kayseri. With respect to the second means of protection, the Mamluks maintained a total of eight other fortified cities⁸⁵ on both sides of the two buffers under the direct command of a Mamluk governor appointed by the sultan: Malatya, Tarsus, Ayas, Darende, Sirfandikār, Divriği, Qal’at Kūmī, Sis. According to Har-El, “these Mamluk-controlled towns, together with the natural barrier of the Taurus and Amanus mountains, therefore served not only as external security vis-à-vis foreign adversaries but also as internal security to keep the buffer principalities of Dulkadir and Ramadan enclosed within their territorial enclaves”.⁸⁶

As part of this line of defence, the city of Tarsus represented the predominant Mamluk garrison in the region given its strategic position facing the Cilician Gates, thus constituting the path of entrance to Syria.⁸⁷ The city was integrated into Mamluk territory during the reign of sultan al-Nāšir Ḥasan (r. 748–752/1347–51; 755–762/1354–61),⁸⁸ when it became, among other things, a point of Ramadanid control in Adana. The loss of this region following Tīmūr’s victory against the Mamluks in 806/1403⁸⁹ represented a major amputation to the Syrian defence system. It is not surprising, then, that al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s first action after assessing his rule was to call on the Qaramanids to turn over Tarsus (820/1417).⁹⁰ Save for the brief Qaramanid occupation of the city, Tarsus would remain under Mamluk control until Selim I’s conquest in 922/1516.

83 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaḡhr*, I, 303.

84 Har-El, *Struggle*, 39–42.

85 Har-El, *Struggle*, 45–7, only lists seven cities, based on al-Qalqashandī’s description.

86 Har-El, *Struggle*, 47.

87 Har-El, *Struggle*, 48.

88 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaḡhr*, I, 304.

89 The truce treaty between Tīmūr and sultan Faraj is kept in al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, VII, 325–31. Faraj had to abandon the fortresses of Elbistan, Malatya, Gerger, Kakhta, Qal’at al-Rūm and al-Bīrah.

90 See Ibn Ḥijjah, *Qahwat*, 214–5. In his letter to Muḥammad Beg in 820/1417, sultan al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh already insisted on the importance of Tarsus.

Table 4. Mamluk citadels in the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries

Al-Qalqashandī	Al-Saḥmāwī
Qal'at Bārī Karūk	Qal'at Bārī Karūk
Kāwarra	Kāwarra
Kūlak	Kūlak
Kirzāl	Kirzāl
Kūmī	Tall Jabrūr
Tall Ḥamdūn	Qal'at al-Hārūniyyah
al-Hārūwiyyatayn	Qal'at al-Nijmah
Qal'at al-Nijmah	Qal'at Lu'lu'ah
Qal'at Humaynīn	Kūmī
Qal'at Lu'lu'ah	
Qal'at Tāmrūn	
Saniyāt Kalā	
Bilislūš	

Gülek, Turkmen, safety of the roads

Beside these main garrisons held by Mamluk governors, another defence system was also founded: minor citadels. While each of them was attached to and dependent upon the main Mamluk garrisons in Cilicia, these citadels were placed under the command of either soldiers sent by the governor of Aleppo or Turkmen attached to Mamluk rule. Table 4 lists these citadels according to both al-Qalqashandī and al-Saḥmāwī.⁹¹ As Har-El's analysis has shown, these establishments were dispatched according to five main salients: Tarsus, Adana, Sis, Ayas, and the Syrian Gates.⁹² Situated to the north of Tarsus, the citadel of Gülek (al-Kūlk or al-Kūlak) is one of them. It belonged to the salient of Tarsus and stood as the most important fort. According to al-Saḥmāwī, a tribe of Turkmen inhabited the citadel, though he provides no further detail.⁹³ It was probably for this reason that the second condition of truce set by sultan Īnāl in letter L linked the citadel of Gülek with the troubles afflicting the Turkmen.

Many Turkmen are listed throughout the administrative literature, all acting as Mamluk amirs (either amirs of 40, 20, or 10).⁹⁴ While al-Qalqashandī lists a total of eleven Turkmen tribes in this region,⁹⁵ al-Saḥmāwī only mentions seven: Dulqadir, al-Aḥqīyyah, al-Awzariyyah, al-Awshariyyah, al-Dhakariyyah, al-Warsaq and al-Sābi'ah.⁹⁶

In Letter L, a final clause appears in the second condition of truce and concerns the safety of roads for both travellers and merchants. Not surprisingly, the Qaramanid rebellion (as well as the Mamluk military response soon after) might have disturbed mobility, transaction and exchange in the region to a significant

91 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 135–7; al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaḡhr*, I, 306–7; II, 706.

92 Har-El, *Struggle*, 48–54.

93 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaḡhr*, I, 306.

94 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaḡhr*, II, 707–8.

95 Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, VII, 282.

96 Al-Saḥmāwī, *Thaḡhr*, II, 707–8.

extent. While I have thus far concentrated on this region's military importance for Mamluk defence policy, I will now turn to its strategic position for trade.

The importance of Anatolia in Mediterranean trade has undergone frequent and substantial analysis, especially in relation to European merchants (i.e. Genoese and Venetians) who established trading posts all along its coasts.⁹⁷ Such studies emphasize the region's great resources (fine products, horses, slaves, grain, textile, alum, etc.) and extensive markets. Before the Ottomans' emergence as a great power, the many beyliks in Anatolia were already deeply involved in trade transactions. Some beyliks held major coastal points, like those of Kasarı, Saruhan, Aydın, Mentеше, and Teke,⁹⁸ and earned their wealth not only from their strategic position (ports controlling sea routes to the Aegean) but also, and more importantly, from their numerous markets. By contrast, the hinterland beyliks like those of the Germiyan, Hamid and Qaramanid, also enjoyed an abundance of resources, which provided the markets with textiles, horses and raw materials (i.e. alum).⁹⁹ Furthermore, they controlled the major trade routes over land, a situation particularly significant for the Qaramanids, who, in addition to controlling a long coastline in south-eastern Cilicia (with many ports granting direct access to the Mediterranean), also managed to extend their lands through the passes of the Taurus, a major route for merchants.

As for Mamluk interests in the region, of all the commodities circulating in these markets one was particularly prized by the sultans: slaves. The importance of the slave trade in the first century of Mamluk rule has already undergone analysis, especially through the study of their treaties with the Genoese and Byzantines in order to counter the Mongolian threat and maintain a steady supply.¹⁰⁰ This link to the Genoese merchants persisted until the later period (first half of the fifteenth century), since Genoa was particularly active in the conveyance of slaves from the Black Sea region – the primary location of slave markets – to the lands of the sultans.¹⁰¹ While the transport of slaves since the time of Mongol rule in Anatolia was mostly conducted through the maritime route, i.e. the Bosphorus,¹⁰² the collapse of this dynasty progressively led to the reopening of overland roads between Mesopotamia and Syria in the fourteenth century,¹⁰³ a transition reinforced by the Mamluk seizure in Cilicia

97 K. Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge, 1999); E.A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade. Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Mentеше and Yadin (1300–1415)* (Venice, 1983).

98 Lindner, "Anatolia", 110–3.

99 Lindner, "Anatolia", 113–6.

100 Ehrenkreutz, "Strategic implications of the slave trade between Genoa and Mamluk Egypt in the second half of the thirteenth century", *The Islamic Middle East 700–1990* (Studies in Economic and Social History) (Princeton, 1981), 333–45; R. Amitai, "Diplomacy and slave trade in the eastern Mediterranean: a re-examination of the Mamluk–Byzantine–Genoese triangle in the late thirteenth century in light of the existing early correspondence", *Oriente Moderno* 88/2, 2008, 349–68.

101 Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, 37; A. Stello, "La Traité d'esclaves en Mer Noire (première moitié du xve siècle)", *Les Esclaves en Méditerranée. Espaces et dynamiques économiques* (Madrid, 2012), 171–80.

102 Ehrenkreutz, "Strategic implications", 341.

103 Ehrenkreutz, "Strategic implications", 343.

that allowed the sultans to control three of the major trade routes linking Anatolia to Persia, Iraq, Syria and Egypt.¹⁰⁴

Although the situation in Anatolia notably changed after the Ottomans' capture of Constantinople, trade in the region never ceased; on the contrary, with the disturbances caused by Ottoman troops along the northern land routes (i.e. Trebizond–Tabriz), activity over the southern courses actually increased.¹⁰⁵ Regarding these routes linking Mamluk Syria to Cilicia, there were seven major courses along with their post stations: Aleppo–Ayas/Tarsus; Aleppo–Antakiya; Aleppo–‘Ayntāb/Bahasna/Kayseri; Aleppo–Kahta; Aleppo–Sivas/Erzincan via Malatya; Aleppo–Sivas via Mar‘ash; and Aleppo–Sis via Mar‘ash.¹⁰⁶ Of greatest interest to this study is the first, since it includes most of the cities or post stations disturbed by Qaramanid rebels in Cilicia in 860–862/1456–58: Aleppo–Arḥab–Tīzīn–Yaghrā–Baghrās–Ayas–Kūlak–¹⁰⁷ Mašīsā–Adana–Tarsus. This region proved all the more important given the two rivers running through it: the Saihan and Jaihan. Even further, Tarsus boasted a long-standing and important grain market.¹⁰⁸

Cyprus

Finally, after dealing with the events implicated in the rebellion in Cilicia, sultan Īnāl went on to handle yet another matter involving Qaramanid raids in Cyprus. Surprisingly, Mamluk chronicles do not mention any trouble associated with Turkmen on the island at this time, but letter L does indicate that Mamluk sovereignty had been challenged on several occasions. Having submitted to Mamluk authority after sultan Barsbāy's third campaign in 829/1426, Cyprus was obligated, inter alia, to send tribute to Cairo each year.¹⁰⁹

As for the Qaramanids' relationship to the island, no problems arose in the first part of the ninth/fifteenth century. On the contrary, Qaramanid troops find mention alongside the Cypriots during the Mamluks' invasion of the island.¹¹⁰ In 835–836/1432, when John II succeeded his father, he even sent an embassy to the Qaramanid ruler Ibrāhīm II to maintain their good relationship.¹¹¹ This association did not last long, however. When Ibrāhīm II turned

104 A.H. Lybyer, "The Ottoman Turks and the routes of Oriental trade", *The English Historical Review* 30/120, 1915, 580.

105 Lybyer, "The Ottoman Turks", 583.

106 W. Popper, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans 1382–1468 A.D.: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghrī Birdī's Chronicles of Egypt* (University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, 15) (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955), 51–3.

107 Popper, *Egypt and Syria*, map 18 (Aleppo Province). Popper distinguishes Kūlak from Gülek; while Har-El, *Struggle*, 49 clearly shows that Kūlak is Gülek.

108 Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, 64.

109 The Cypriot rulers would fulfil this duty during the whole period of their submission. After the Venetian Republic had taken over in 1489, it would continue to send tribute to Cairo. M.M. Ziada, "The Mamlūk conquest of Cyprus in the 15th century", *Bulletin of the Faculty of Art* 2 (Cairo University, 1934), 42.

110 Ziada, "The Mamlūk conquest", 45–6; Darrag, *L'Égypte*, 256.

111 M.L. de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des Princes de la Maison de Lusignan, III* (Paris, 1855), 3–10. B. de La Brocquière, who was travelling with the Cypriot emissaries, transmitted the account of their reception by Ibrāhīm II.

his back on John II in 852/1448 and seized the city of Corycos,¹¹² it was the last possession of Cyprus on the coast.¹¹³

According to letter L, relations between the Qaramanids and John II did not improve during the period between 852/1448 and 862/1458. In 860/1456, the ruler of Cyprus sent, along with tribute, a letter of complaint to sultan Īnāl.¹¹⁴ In his response, preserved in its Italian translation, the Mamluk sultan informed John II he would write the Ottoman Mehmet II to request that he stop the activity of corsairs and his own men against Cyprus.¹¹⁵ Still under Ottoman authority at that time, the Qaramanids might have been acting against Cyprus with Ottoman permission. Conclusions from this study, however, would grant greater plausibility to Qaramanid raids being an independent action directed against Mamluk sovereignty.

IV. Conclusion

While sources remain silent on the Qaramanids' response to the Mamluk embassy in 862/1458 as well as Ibrāhīm's agreement to the conditions of the proposed truce (Letter L), Ibrāhīm II apparently maintained good relations with the Mamluks thereafter. Such tranquillity obtained, for example, in the case of sultan Īnāl's successor, Khushqadam. In Sha'bān 865/May 1461, Ibrāhīm II sent an embassy to congratulate him on his accession to the throne and express his desire to maintain peace between them.¹¹⁶ The rapprochement of the two rules would derive all its significance from this period. Indeed, in 865/1461, the Ottomans resumed their offensive against Qaramanid territory,¹¹⁷ thereby compromising Mamluk authority and, consequently, increasing tension between the Ottomans and Mamluks. Soon afterwards, the death of Ibrāhīm II (868/1464) and succession difficulties within the Qaramanid dynasty would once more set Mamluks and Ottomans in opposition, further exacerbating their once stabilized interactions.

Before his father's death, Iṣḥāq had been designated his successor. Ibrāhīm II had, in fact, long made clear his preference for this son, whom he had from a marriage with a slave (whereas all other sons of his came through an Ottoman princess).¹¹⁸ This designation, however, would provoke a strong reaction from his brother Pīr Aḥmad, who left for the Ottoman court to win the sultan's support. Aided by Ottoman troops, he soon seized the city of Konya. At the same time, relations between the Mamluk sultan and the Ottomans had already been

112 In the previous century, the two dynasties had already opposed each other when the Cypriots conquered Corycos. E.A. Zachariadou, "The early years of Ibrāhīm I Karamanoğlu", *The Sweet Land of Cyprus* (Nicosia, 1993), 149.

113 M.L. de Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, III, 48–56: it preserves copies of the exchanges between the great master of Rhodes and John II, as well as the letter of the latter to the sultan of Egypt in request for help.

114 Ziada, "The Mamlūk conquest", 46.

115 De Mas Latrie, *Histoire*, III, 73–5.

116 Day not mentioned: 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 108. On 7 Sha'bān/18 May: Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, XVI, 228. On 12 Sha'bān/23 May: Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, III, 257.

117 Al-Biqā'ī, *Tārīkh*, III, 356–7.

118 S.N. Yıldız, "Razing Gevele", 316–9; Har-El, *Struggle*, 81.

greatly deteriorating, especially after the Ottoman emissary's disrespectful behaviour in Cairo in 868/1464. Yet despite Khushqadam's support of Iṣḥāq, the latter was forced to flee to the Aq Qoyunlu lands after his defeat in 869/1465.¹¹⁹ Pīr Aḥmad did not stay long under Ottoman authority, and as soon as his rule was well established (871/1467), he contacted the Mamluk sultan, which caused a resumption in hostility with the Ottomans. The conflict between the Ottomans and Qaramanids finally ended in 880/1475 with the end of the Qaramanid dynasty.

The study of Mamluk–Qaramanid relations has often focused on their “alliance” – i.e. recognition of Mamluk authority – forged to counter the threat of a common enemy and has thus restricted the Qaramanids' role to a buffer entity between the Mamluks and Ilkhanids, followed by the Ottomans. While such a role is undeniable, the present article has aimed to depict the Qaramanids as an independent and ambitious actor within Anatolian policy with one particular event as a case study: the Qaramanid Rebellion and their threat to Mamluk territory and sovereignty in 860–862/1456–58. This event, already well documented by numerous Mamluk chronicles covering the period, was furnished greater detail thanks to a new source preserving copies of letters sent from Cairo in response to Ibrāhīm II's attack (MS ar. 4440). The corpus reveals that the Qaramanid threat extended beyond the concrete attack of Mamluk lands to Mamluk sovereignty more widely: the Qaramanids not only destroyed one of the major forts along the border defence of Mamluk territory but also threatened the safety of roads, peace among Turkmen tribes, and Mamluk protection of Cyprus. Furthermore, diplomatic analysis of the corpus has also confirmed the independent position of the Qaramanids as a major actor in Anatolia along with the Ottomans.

The Mamluks' vigorous response to these threats revealed the sultan's need to secure his holdings in this strategic region, especially given the increasing power of the Ottomans and Aq Qoyunlu there. Just as important, too, was the re-establishment of a cordial relationship with the Qaramanids thereafter. After the Mamluks' progressive loss of Dulqadirid and Ramadanid loyalties (to the Ottomans), supporting the Qaramanids became a greater necessity than ever before to establish additional protection for their territory. As history shows, the annihilation of the Qaramanid dynasty in 880/1475 would put the Mamluks and Ottomans in direct confrontation and open a path for the Ottomans to Syria and Egypt.

119 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ b. Khalīl, *Nayl*, VI, 217; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i'*, II, 430.

Appendix I: Letter II (fols 40a)

[40a] صدر مكاتبة مما كتب لابن قرمان. ولا زالت محامده بالسنه الأقالم والأنام متلوّة ومحاسنه على وجوه الأيام مجلوّة وكتبه البليغة تتلى على المنابر مفتره بلمی حبرها عن ثغور معان كالجواهر ولا برح جنباه لدينا على المكانة متمكنا من خواطرننا الشريفة قدرة الذي لم نزل¹ نرفعه ونعلی شأنه صدرت تهدي سلاما صفت مواردہ ومشارعہ وأخصبت مسارحه ومرابعه وثناء تطيب به الثغور وتتعطر به الزهور ويتعطل له المسك والكافور وتوضح [...]. ومنه² ورفعنا شكره على الابتداء وخصصناه من أركان دولتنا بمزيد التعظيم خصوص الترخيم.

Appendix II: Letter XV (fols 55a–55b)

[55a] وكتب في جواب ابن قرمان عند سؤاله في العفو عنه بعد توجه العساكر إلى مدينة قيسارية. ضاعف الله تعالى نعم الجناب العالي إلى آخر ألقابه وأعاد إليه الإقبال الذي ألفه من مقامنا الشريف وجدد له ما تعوده من التقبيل بظلمنا³ الوريث وشمله بحلمنا الذي لا يزال محببا لمن أخلص في دعواه ونوى بدخوله في الطاعة استمراره عليها ولكل امرئ ما نوى⁴ صدرت هذه المكاتبة تعرفه بسلامنا على من أخلص النية وعاد إلى إصفاء الطوية وتوضح لعلمه أن مكاتبتة وردت إلينا على يد قاصده الشيخ جمال الدين البلخي فوقفنا عليها وعلمنا ما تضمنته من إدعائه المحبة لنا والتمسك بطاعتنا وتراميه على مراحمننا الشريفة في شموله بالعفو والرضا وعدم مؤاخذته⁵ بما مضى وأن نجزيه على ما ألفه من عواطفنا الشاملة وسحاب مواهبنا الهائلة وما أورده من الاعتذارات التي نص عليها وما حمله لقاصده من المشافهة التي تنال في قبولها والإصغاء إليها فقد علمنا ذلك كله. وكتب إليه أيضا

وجدد إن شاء الله تعالى بامثاله أوامرنا الشريفة جميل مسرته وأيقظه من سنة غفلته ونبه قلبه بما وقع من هفوته وألهمه في إصداره وإبراده طرق الرشاد حتى يعود لما يعود من صافي منهل الوداد وأراه من خواطرننا الشريفة وجوه الرضا والعفو عما صدر منه فيما سلف [55b] ومضى صدرت هذه المكاتبة تخاطبه بلسان ملوكي ما زال يصدر عنا بفصل الخطاب وخطاب ما ترسل لملك عزيز إلا خضع وأناب وتوضح لعلمه [...].

أدعية مكاتبات
لا زال فضله الطاهر لقاصدي أبوابه الشريفة شاملا وسحاب كرمه السائر بجوده لوفد بيت الله الحرام هاملا
غيره.

لا زالت⁶ أوقاته المباركة مجتمع العبادات وصحايه مملوّة باكتساب الأجور والمثوبات ومكاتبتة السنية من خواطرننا الشريفة لا تتغير بل هي عندنا في أرفع الدرجات تهدي إليه سلاما مصحوبا بأزكى التحيات وثناء على شيمه التي نعيدها من أعين الحاسدين بكلمات الله التامات.
غيره.

لا زالت محاسن أدوائه الزكية ممدوحة بجميل الصفات وآراؤه السديدة مشكورة في سائر الحركات ومقاصدها الجميلة ممنوحة من إقبالنا الشامل ببلوغ الإرادات صدرت هذه المكاتبة تبليغه سلاما محفوقا بالزكاة وثناء معطرا بأزكى النفحات الطيبات.

1 Note in the margin.

2 added above the line. لانق الاستعارة

3 بظلمنا.

4 Extract from a Prophetic *hadīth*:

عن عمر بن الخطاب -رضي الله تعالى عنه- قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إنما الأعمال بالنيات، وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى، فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله ورسوله فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله، ومن كانت هجرته إلى دنيا يصيبها أو امرأة يزوجها فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه منفق عليه.

5 مؤاخذته.

6 زال.

Appendix III: Letter L (fols 194a–197b)

[194a] نسخة جواب الجناب الصارمي بن قرمان عن مكاتبة الوزارة على يد قاصده علم الدين سليمان بن كرميان والمجهز على يد سنفور إيدكي الخاصكي الأشرفي في العشرين من جمادى الآخرة سنة اثنين وستين وثمانمائة.

ضاعف الله تعالى نعمة الجناب العالي الأميري الكبير العادلي المؤيدي العوني الغياثي الممهدي المشيدي الظهيري الصارمي عز الإسلام والمسلمين سيد الأمراء في العالمين نصره الغزاة والمجاهدين زعيم الجيوش مقدم العساكر مههد الدول مشيد الممالك عون الأمة عماد الملة ظهر الملوك والسلطين سيف أمير المؤمنين لا زال حلمنا [195a] المنيف يخصه بالسلام وصفحنا الشريف يتحفه بالتحية والإكرام وعفونا الشامل يوافيه بجميل المصافاة ولسان الصلح يتلو 7 (فمن عفا 8 وأصلح فأجره على الله) 9 ولا برح ثغر الصفاء يتبسم له عن شنب الرضا ولسان التجاوز يقول 10 عفا الله عما سلف صدرت هذه المكاتبة إلى الجناب العالي معربة عن قبول طواعيته التي أقامت صلوات مودته في أوقاتها وأعلنت عن أغصان 11 الأقاليم بمن يد الاستغفار فجنى قطوف ثمراتها ويوضح لعلمه ورود مودته التي توصلنا بها من فاتحة كتابه إلى سورة الإخلاص وقد اتضحت كالفلق فصار له منا بحمد الله تعالى مزيد الاختصاص على يد رسوله المجلس السامي الأميري الكبير المؤيدي العوني المقربي العلمي سليمان بن كرميان كتب الله تعالى سلامته ويسر بالسرور إعادته تتضمن مبالغته في الدعاء لمقامنا وقدم هجرته في المحبة لدولتنا وأنه كان مستظلا بظلال 12 رافة سلطنتنا ومفتخرا بين ملوك تلك الممالك برواية أحاديث مودتنا إلى أن قدر ما اتفق من غير اختياره وكان ذلك في الكتاب مسطورا وبحكم الله عز وجل مقدورا وأن الجناب حصل له غاية الندم فاستغفر الله مما صدر منه [195b] وترامى على مرحامنا الشريفة في التجاوز عنه وختم على نفسه أن يكون من الآن مخلصا في مودتنا مالكا مسالك رضا خواطرننا مبادرا للعمل بأوامرنا وما شرحه من أمر قلعة الكوك وأنه أزالها لما غلب على ظنه 13 عدم الالتفات إليها وأنه مهما برزت به مراسيمنا الشريفة في أمرها كان اعتماده عليها فقد علمنا ذلك كله وقبلنا عذره 14 وقوله والذي نعرفه به أنه حصل التعجب من الجناب العالي كونه تعرض إلى مملكتنا وهدم من أسوار طرسوس وأبوابها وتعرض إلى قلعة الكوك وهدمها وكانت خواطرننا الشريفة أنكرت ذلك فإن طرسوس من بلادنا والكوك من قلاع مملكتنا 15 وحصرن وعاملناه بما يليق بشيئنا لما أعرب عن مزيد الأسف وتلا لساننا الشريف (عفا الله عما سلف) 16 وقد نال الجناب العالي من مقامنا باستغفاره وإنابته ما أمله فقد قال صلى الله عليه وسلم التائب من الذنب كمن لا ذنب له 17 والمقصود المبادرة إلى ما رسمنا به من ذلك وأن يسلك من الإخلاص في موالاتنا أجمل المسالك ويكن طيب خاطر قرير الناظر 18 ويحسن 19 الجوار مع نواب سلطنتنا وتركمان طاعتنا وقد أبدى الأمير علم الدين سليمان قاصده [196a] المشار إليه ما تحمله عن الجناب من المشافهة 20 في معنى اعتذاراته المقبولة السارة وأداها لدينا بأحسن لفظ 21 وأبلغ عبارة فرسمنا بمعاملته بمزيد الإكرام وجزيل الإحسان الوافر الأقسام وأعدناه إلى خدمته بعد أن حملناه من السلام أتمه ومن

7 يتلوا.
8 عفى.

9 Quran XLII: 40.
10 deleted. فمن
11 fols 195a: اعصان.

12 بطلال.
13 طنه.
14 عذره.
15 مملكتنا.

16 Quran V: 95.
17 Prophetic *ḥadīth*.

18 الناظر.
19 بحسن.
20 المشافهة.
21 لفظ.

الثناء أعمه وجهنا صحبة قاصده المشار إليه على يده إنعام شريف بالسعة بالرضا والمحبة ويؤدب بالمصافاة التي تقر عينه وتسر قلبه وهو [...] 22

فالجانب يتسلم ذلك ويقابله بالدعاء لنا ومزيد الاخلاص لمقامنا ويواصل بمكاتباته التي تحقق لنا جميل إخلاصه ومصافاته والله تعالى يؤيده في أرضه بملائكة²³ سمواته بسلطنتنا وكان المتعين عليه أنه لو كانت أبواب مدننا وقلاعها مفتوحة لا يدخل إليها ولا يمر عليها ولا يتعرض لها ولا إلى رعاياها وكنا قصدنا تجهيز عساكرنا المنصورة [196b] إلى بلاده مرة ثانية²⁴ فإنه هو الذي أخرج بلاده بيده كونه تعرض إلى مملكتنا ونحن لم يصدر منا في حقه شيء ابتداء بل هو الجاني على نفسه وبلاده ونعرفه أيضا أن عساكرنا المنصورة لم تزل على أكمل أهبة واستعداد وبرق بحيث إذا طرأ مهم شريف برسم تجهيز ذلك إلى من يصدر منه أمر وعساكرنا المنصورة مرصدة لذلك ليس لها عاقبة ولكن لما حضر قاصده الآن بما على يده من مكاتباته ومكاتبات نواب سلطنتنا بالترامي على مراحمنا وسؤال صدقاتنا الشريفة في العفو عنه وبالغ المقاصد في تكرير الترامي على مراحمنا والتزم أن جميع ما يرسم به الجانب العالي يعتمده ولا يخرج عنه سكن خاطرنا الشريف إلى ذلك وها نحن نقصد²⁵ من الجانب العالي أمورا ثلاثة لا بد منها الأول أن يعمر ما هدمه من أسوار طرسوس وأبوابها عمارة جيدة كما كانت عليه والثاني يعمر ما هدمه من قلعة الكوك ويعيدها إلى ما كانت عليه أولا عامرة ويسلمها لنا بيتا لندخلها ونقيم بها فإن مقامه الشريف لم ينله²⁶ من القلعة المذكورة سوى إقامة حرمة الناموس الشريف وحفظ الممالك الشريفة ومع ذلك يحسن الجوار مع ممالكنا وقلاعنا ولا يتعرض لتركمان طاعتنا ورعايانا بحيث يحصل الطمأنينة والأمن لجميع الناس وتتردد القبول والمسافرون من كل جانب [197a] وأما الجانب فإنه يتصرف في مملكته وبلاده كيف يختار فإنه ليس لنا التفات إلى ما يتعلق به والثالث أنه ليس خاف عن علمه أمر جزيرة قبرص وأنها من جملة بلادنا وتحمل الجزية في كل سنة إلينا لأجل مصالح الحرمين الشريفين مكة المشرفة والمدينة الشريفة على ساكنها أفضل الصلاة والسلام ورعايتها من جملة رعايا سلطنتنا وتحت زمامنا²⁷ فالجانب العالي يرضى أمر الجزيرة المذكورة ولا يتعرض إليها ولا يشوش على من بها بضرر ولا سوء ولا كلفة ولا يمكن أحد من جماعته من التعرض إليها بوجه من الوجوه فإنهم وإن كانوا كفارا فإنهم تحت زمامنا²⁸ وقائمون بالجزية الشرعية لنا فهذه الأمور المقصودة منه المشروحة أعلاه لا بد منها والعمل بها أمر محتوم وإن أراد رضا خواطرنا الشريفة فإنه إذا فعل ذلك زاد قربه من خواطرنا الشريفة وتناكد محبته عندنا وتستمر المودة بيننا وإن اتصل بمسامعنا الشريفة ما ينافي ذلك فربما تتأثر خواطرنا فيكون ذلك في علمه الكريم ويعيد إلينا الجواب عن ذلك على يد أبي صلي الواصل إليه بهذه المكاتبه وهو الأمير المخدومي الأجل سيف الدين [197b] ايدي الأشرفي أعزه الله تعالى وقد عاملنا الجانب بما يليق بشيئنا لما أعرب عن مزيد الأسف وتلا لساننا (عفا الله عما سلف).²⁹

وكمل الباقي على ما في باطنه والإنعام هو ما يذكر: كالملة مخمل بذهب [...] سيف الحوري بسقط ذهب قرقل مخمل مسماري خاص بركصطواني مخمل أحمر وأبيض منقوش سرج ذهب وعرقية ريش مركوب خاص سكر نبات حموي مجامع ثلاث.

22 List of gifts at the end of the letter.

23 بمليكة.
24 تانية.
25 نقصد.
26 يناله.
27 ذمامنا.
28 دمامنا.

29 Quran V: 95.

Appendix IV: Letter LI (fols 197b–198a)

[197b] صدر مكاتبة لإبراهيم بن قرمان.

ولا زالت محاسن الأيام بصارم عزمه تجلى³⁰ ومعاهد الكفر برباطه تجلى³¹ والأرض [بفيض]³² إنعامه لا تشتكي من الجدب³³ ثقلا والسماء بطيب تضرعائه تروي حفظتها محاسنه نقلا صدرت تهدي إليه سلاما لا برحت جباد³⁴ المحامد تحمل طيب ذكره الجميل ونسيم القبول يهب نشره على روض بره الجزيل والأيام تسالمة بأحكامها العادلة إذا حاربت ضده بصارمة الصقيل وآيات سوّده إذا تليت يغني إجمالها عن التفصيل ويوضح لعلمه أن مكاتبته وردت على يد [...] أنجح الله له سعيًا ومقصدا وجدد له سعادا [198a] وسوّدا فليتناه³⁵ بالإجلال وقابلنا متحملها بمزيد التبجيل والإقبال ووقفنا أيضا على المكاتبة الثانية³⁶ شاكرين ولمناقب الجناب وجميل إخلاصه³⁷ ومناصحته ذاكرين وأحاطت علونا الشريفة بمضمونها وما أعربتنا عنه من يمن احتفاله وسداد أحواله في أقواله وأفعاله.

- 30 تجلا.
31 تجلا.
32 بفيض.
33 الحدب.
34 جباد.
35 فاليتناه.
36 الثانية.
37 احلاص.