Bethany J. Walker / Abdelkader Al Ghouz (eds.)

# History and Society during the Mamluk Period (1250–1517)

Studies of the Annemarie Schimmel Institute
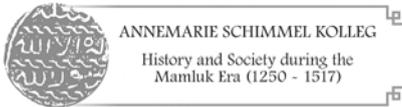for Advanced Study III

**Bonn University Press**

V&R unipress

**V&R** unipress

Mamluk Studies

Volume 24

Edited by Stephan Conermann and Bethany J. Walker

ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL KOLLEG

History and Society during the
Mamluk Era (1250 - 1517)

Editorial Board: Thomas Bauer (Münster, Germany), Albrecht Fuess (Marburg, Germany), Thomas Herzog (Bern, Switzerland), Konrad Hirschler (Berlin, Germany), Anna Paulina Lewicka (Warsaw, Poland), Linda Northrup (Toronto, Canada), Jo Van Steenbergen (Gent, Belgium)

Bethany J. Walker / Abdelkader Al Ghouz (eds.)

# History and Society during the Mamluk Period (1250–1517)

Studies of the Annemarie Schimmel Institute
for Advanced Study III

With 129 figures

V&R unipress

Bonn University Press

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

Cover image: Road cleared through basalt scatter in eastern Badiyya, Jordan (courtesy: Prof Peter
Akkermans, University of Leiden, Jebel Qurma Project). Pilgrims, merchants, Bedouin, and hungry
peasants frequently travelled this route, which connected Egypt with Syria and towns with the
countryside, in the waning years of the Mamluk Sultanate. Knowledge and goods, as well, flowed
along this remote artery of transport. This final volume of the ASK Working Papers is dedicated to
these themes of transmission, migration, change, and renewal.

# Contents

# Editorial Foreword

The following collection of Working Papers includes revised and expanded versions of original research essays submitted by Fellows of the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg (ASK), an Advanced Center of Research in Mamluk Studies, in 2017–2019. This is the final volume of such Papers sponsored by the Kolleg before it closed the fall of 2019, when the eight years of generous funding of the German Research Foundation (DFG) came to an end. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the DFG, the wonderful staff of the ASK, and the continuous administrative support of the University of Bonn during the life of this very special research institute.

The final years of the Kolleg were devoted to three themes: environmental history, material culture studies, and im/mobility. Most, but not all, of the Fellows those years were immersed in research on these topics, though their disciplinary backgrounds were diverse. The Working Papers in this volume represent a collective effort to push the disciplinary boundaries of our field and engage in debates in Ottoman Studies, European history, archaeology and art history, and even the natural sciences.

All of the contributions to this volume were subjected to a thorough vetting process, through external, blind peer review, and revisions. I want to gratefully acknowledge the efforts of my co-editor, Dr. Abdelkader Al Ghouz, for ably shepherding all papers through this lengthy process; the never-failing support of Stephan Conermann, the Speaker of the Kolleg, for all new ideas and experimental projects; the reviewers for their time and careful recommendations; the editorial staff of V&R unipress for taking the manuscript to final publication; and, of course, the Fellows themselves, who were the soul of the Kolleg and whose innovative research has pushed our collective work to new horizons. It has been my real pleasure to work with all of them.

Bethany J. Walker
Co-Speaker/Research Professor, Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg
Director, Research Unit of Islamic Archaeology, University of Bonn

Caterina Bori

# Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Şehid Ali Paşa 1553: A Neglected Version of Ibn Taymīya's *al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿīya* and Its Manuscript[1]

## Introduction

If one had to detect which directions the study of pre-modern history of Muslim societies is currently embracing, it would not be wrong to say that we are witnessing a world-wide growing scholarly interest in archives and archival practices, in documents, inscriptions, manuscripts and materiality as a whole. This interest in material culture is emerging with force not only in the field of Mamluk studies, but also in Ottoman intellectual history, Quranic studies, as well as in scholarship on the middle and early periods of Islamic history where documentary sources and inscriptions now provide fresh ground-breaking materials to grapple with.[2] Accordingly, at the forefront of new research stand papyri, geniza texts, inscriptions, old Quranic fragments, recycled documents and manuscripts, hundreds of manuscripts with their diversified notes, lives and agencies yet to be studied.[3] Manuscripts are not only carriers of literary texts which can be studied for the contents they vehiculate but also objects that can tell

---

1 This is a highly revised and expanded version of parts of my working paper, which was published online as Bori, "One or Two Versions." Different drafts of what is here published were presented at a workshop on manuscript studies at the University of Bologna in May 2018 and at the Fifth Conference of the School of Mamluk Studies, Ghent University (Belgium), July 5–7, 2018. I would like to thank the fellows of the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg (May–July 2016) as well as the conferences' participants for their feedback. I am also grateful to Frank Griffel, Mohamad Merheb, Ahmet Kaylı, Lucia Raggetti, Konrad Hirschler, Élise Franssen and Nasser Rabbat for helping in various ways with this study. An anonymous reviewer provided many sensible suggestions which helped the paper reach a better structure and clearer argument. I alone remain responsible for any infelicity.

2 A sampling: Gardiner, *Esotericism* and the author's related articles; Shafir, *Road From Damascus,* on Ottoman religious pamphleteering culture. For a thoughtful contribution on how to fruitfully study archiving practices, el-Leithy, "Living Documents", "Dying Archives". The works of Petra Sijpesteijn, Ahmad Jallad, Konrad Hirschler focus on the material culture of different periods and are part of an increasing attention towards documentary and material culture.

3 Particularly instructive in this sense is the recent article by Akkerman, "Bohra Treasury."

us a lot about ideas of authorship, transmission practices, regional dissemination, reading circles and reception histories, of a given text or bunch of texts. This study keeps both aspects together.

Accordingly, it enters in conversation with this recent scholarly trend by putting at its center Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Şehid Ali Paşa 1553,[4] which preserves a little known version of a famous treatise commonly known as *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya* (*Governance according to the revealed normativity for promoting the righteousness of the shepherd and its flock*) written by Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymīya (d. 728/1328), the controversial Ḥanbalī jurist, theologian and polemicist who lived between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in the Mamluk lands. The version of the text that Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 carries was edited twelve years ago, in 2008, in isolation from the other two writings hosted by the manuscript. Thus, the manuscript is a miscellany which gathers together three writings of Ibn Taymīya, the first is titled *Jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī salāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya*, the second *Qāʿida fī l-ḥisba* and the third *Qāʿida fī laʿb al-shaṭranj*.

Primarily, the overall purpose of this piece of research is to draw attention to the version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* transmitted by Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 and investigate its meaning in relation to the other version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* with which scholars are already familiar. This second one is a shorter *Siyāsa* introduced by Ibn Taymīya as a *risāla mukhtaṣara.* How does the text of *Siyāsa* in Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 look like? What makes it different when compared with the *risāla mukhtaṣara?* What can we say about the relationship between the two? And what about their function, meaning and authorship? These questions will be at the center of this study which will shed light on Ibn Taymīya's fluid process of writing. As a second step, this essay will also look at the manuscript in which the three writings are embedded as a whole, and will explore what we can learn about the meaning of the version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* transmitted by Şehid Ali Paşa 1553's when we read it intertextually.

A close inspection of the sources will show that the long and short *Siyāsa* are two different and yet the same treatise, probably conceived for different readers, possibly between the years 709 and 712. The paper will also highlight how the most obvious way of looking at the two versions of Ibn Taymīya's political treatise, that is the short one (*risāla mukhtaṣara*) being the later abridgment of an original, earlier, expanded *Siyāsa* (*Jawāmiʿ*), is not to be taken for granted.

Both versions of the treatise are internally consistent, but the *risāla mukhtaṣara* is shorter, denser and embraces a more prescriptive tone, whereas *Jawāmiʿ* is a richer and more articulate treatise more explicitly concerned with the ethics of government; that is, the ethical principles that should inspire the conduct and

---

4 Abbreviated as Şehid Ali Paşa 1553.

decisions of men in authority. In my ASK Working Paper, I called this thematic preoccupation "ethical leadership," by which I meant the inclination in governing to go beyond personal interests in order to embrace and promote the public good.[5] This powerful ethical dimension emerges more forcefully in the long *Siyāsa* and it is reinforced when reading it together with the other two texts of Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, which, on the whole, functions as a coherent unity of meaning. More generally, the paper also shows that the long *Siyāsa* transmitted by Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 is an important document because it helps us gain fuller view of Ibn Taymīya's vision of *al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya*.

This study is organized in three parts. The first traces the printing history of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* in brief, it presents Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, and on the basis of further manuscript materials as well as external evidence it figures out a working hypothesis regarding the relationship between the long and short *Siyāsa*, their authorship and dating. The second part describes in detail the differences between the two versions of the treatise, whereas the third one discusses why the *Qāʿida fī l-ḥisba* and the *Qāʿida fī laʿb al-shaṭranj* were copied side by side with *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* in the same codex.

Not all the extant catalogued manuscripts of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* could be consulted for this study.[6] A work of this sort requires more space, time and financial support. Hence, the results presented here are liable to further refinement in the future Yet, in presenting a reliable collection of evidence, some of which so far unexplored, this piece of research wants to inaugurate a line of enquiry connecting Taymīyan and manuscript studies, a line of research that will clearly show how much scholars can gain from pursuing the study of a scholar's manuscript tradition together with its transmission.[7] In this case, Ibn Taymīya's fluid process of writing comes to the surface with all its compelling complexity.

## Part I: On the Printing History of *al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿīya*

Recent scholarly publications on Ibn Taymīya's famous treatise or his political project as a whole have not recognized that there have been two different versions of the treatise in circulation.[8] Possibly written at the beginning of the third reign

---

5  See Bori, "One or two versions", 6.

6  See p. 18, fn. 32.

7  The painstaking work of Frederic Bauden on al-Maqrīzī and that of Thomas Bauer on Ibn Nubātah are exemplary. Both scholars worked with autographs. See in particular, Bauden, "Maqriziana II" and Bauer, "Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (686–768/1287–1366): Life and Works Part II".

8  See Anjum, *Politics*; Johansen, "Perfect Law"; Belhaj, "Law and Order." Belhaj worked with the long text of *al-Siyāsa* edited in 2008 but does not seem to be aware of the *risāla mukhtaṣara*.

of Muḥammad al-Nāṣir ibn Qalāwūn (1310–1341), *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya* is a complex literary piece, the texture of which engages a longstanding and multifarious tradition of Islamic political literature. While belonging to this tradition, *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* is a text whose threads are interwoven in a style that belongs to its author alone, dictated by his own agenda as well as by the specific historical circumstances of his time.[9] Thanks to the translation into French by Henri Laoust, which was published in 1948, *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* enjoyed a wide circulation in Western scholarly circles.[10] Brief summaries of it can be found in any standard textbook on medieval Islamic political thought, often relying on both Laoust's classic study on Ibn Taymīya's social and political doctrines and on his translation of and introduction to *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*[11] Henri Laoust's translation contributed to the diffusion, in the West, of a work whose title has produced the nowadays popular "tag" of *siyāsa sharʿīya*, commonly, and narrowly, understood as "politics according to the *sharīʿa.*"[12] Working in the first half of the twentieth century, Laoust based his translation on two early printed editions of the text, 1888 Bombay and 1905 Cairo,[13] and collated them against two manuscripts, Damascus MS Ẓāhiriyya, *Adab al-manthūr* 76 (dated 734 AH according to Laoust),[14] and Paris BnF MS Ar. 2443. Although Laoust did not provide the date of the latter copy, the Paris manuscript is dated to 876 AH (1471 CE).[15] Laoust also promised to publish his own edition of the text, but unfortunately, he never did.[16]

Accordingly, the first printing of the book took place in Bombay. It bore the title of *Kitāb al-jawāmiʿ fī l-siyāsa al-ilāhīya wa-l-āyāt al-nabawīya* and presents the text as a "short" or "abridged treatise" (*risāla mukhtaṣara*) like all the other printings and manuscripts of Ibn Taymīya's political treatise I have been working with, except the manuscript and edition of *al-Siyāsa* under consideration in this study. The printing of this work in Bombay was not accidental. In the course of

---

9    This is not the place to discuss the complex issue of where to locate *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* as far as its literary genre is concerned. Modern scholars express a variety of opinions in this regard. See Mona Hassan, "Modern Interpretations", 346–349; Belhaj, "Law and Order," 403; Anjum, *Politics*, 28–31; Rosenthal, *Political Thought*, 51–59.

10   Laoust, *Traité.*

11   A good example is Black, *History*, 158–163 on Ibn Taymīya which mainly relies on Laoust, *Essai.* Johansen's influential study on Ibn Taymīya's *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* also relies on Laoust's translation of the treatise: Johansen, "Perfect Law," 259–294.

12   For an instructive dicussion see Belhaj, "Law and Order," 404–408, particularly, 404–405.

13   Ibn Taymīya, *Kitāb al-jawāmiʿ fī l-siyāsa al-ilāhīya wa-l-āyāt al-nabawīya* (Bombay: Maḍaʿat nukhbat al-akhbār, 1306/1888) and Ibn Taymīya, *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya*, ([al-Qāhira]: al-Maṭbaʿat al-Khayriyya, 1322/1904–05).

14   It proved impossible to find a Damascus Ẓāhirīya copy dated to 734 AH. Equally, I was not able to find and inspect the 1905 Cairo edition mentioned by Laoust.

15   Paris BnF MS Ar. 2443, fol 57v.

16   Laoust, *Traité*, xlvii.

the nineteenth century, Northern India was the place which hosted the formation of a Muslim reformist movement commonly known as the *Ahl-i al-Hadith* (lit. *The Followers of Prophetic Tradition*). The *Ahl-i al-Hadith* put at its center a series of typically Taymīyan preoccupations and had in the figure of the controversial thinker Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān (d. 1307/1890) one of its main proponents. Claudia Preckel has studied this in depth.[17] Yet, what is interesting to recall is that in a long work dedicated to the classification of knowledge, *Abjad al-ʿulūm*, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān writes that during his stay in Mecca (1285–1286/1868–1869) he ran across a *mukhtaṣar* of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, which he copied for himself, and that – at the time of penning his *Abjad al-ʿulūm* – that copy of the book was in his personal library in Bhopal (*wa-huwa mawjūd fī dār al-kutub līya*).[18] It is likely that the first Indian printing of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* is to be related to that hand copy which Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān brought to Bhophal when returning from Mecca.[19] This printing is, in any case, a *risāla mukhtaṣara* without substantial variations when compared to the other later printings and editions of the texts.

Since this first Indian print of the book, various others have been put into circulation; they are pretty much the same and generally without references to the manuscripts they are based on.[20] One notable exception is the recent edition by ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-ʿImrān published in Mecca by Dār ʿālam al-fawāʾid in 2008 whose version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* together with the manuscript this writing is embedded into is at the center of this study.[21]

## Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Şehid Ali Paşa 1553: Some Codicological Insights

The 2008 edition by ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-ʿImrān is based on a unique manuscript preserved at the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul – Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Şehid Ali Paşa 1553. The codex is a *majmūʿ*, that is a multiple-

---

17  Preckel, "Screening Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's Library".

18  Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, *Abjad al-ʿulūm*, 2: 330: … *mukhtaṣar wajadtuhu fī makka al-mukarramma wa-stansakhtuhā bi-yadī li-nafsihi* … The relevant passage is also mentioned by al-ʿImrān, *Muqaddima*, 43. Preckel, Screening Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's Library, 181. On his stay in Mecca, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, *Riḥlat al-Ṣiddīq ilā bayt allāh al-ʿatīq*, 165–168.

19  As also noted by al-ʿImrān, the text printed in the Bombay edition is very close to Leiden MS Or. 2884 which is not dated. According to al-ʿImrān, Leiden MS Or. 2884 is a twelfth hijrī century manuscript, cf. ʿImrān, *Muqaddima*, 41. Petrus Voorhoeve, *Handlist*, VII, 343, says "modern."

20  Among the available prints I checked are: *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya,* 1955; *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya,* [ca. 1386/ca. 1966]; *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya,* 1983; *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya,* in: *Majmūʿ fatāwà*; *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya,* 1993. For a list of extant printed editions, see al-ʿImrān, *Muqaddima*, 34–35.

21  *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, ed. al-ʿImrān.

text, non-composite manuscript which consists of 122 folios gathering three texts that also circulated independently one from the other, two of them being rather well-known.[22] Thus, these writings were copied by the same hand and are titled: *Jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī ṣalāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya*,[23] which was copied on 8 Rabīʿ I 780 (4 July 1378; fols. 1a–77r); a *Qāʿida fī l-ḥisba* (*General rule on ḥisba*), copied on 16 Rabīʿ I 780 (12 July 1378; fols. 78r–103v) and finally a *Qāʿida fī laʿb al-shaṭranj* [*General Rule on the Game of Chess*], copied on 19 Rabīʿ I 780 (19 July 1378; fols. 104r–117r). Each writing has its title page (fols. 1r, 78r, 104r) and in the digitized copy at my disposal, the manuscript does not show any significant material discontinuities.

The codex conforms to the definition of a multiple-text manuscript as that fruitfully formulated by the editors of a recent volume on the topic: "A codicological unit 'worked in a single operation,' with two or more texts as a 'production unit' resulting from one production process delimited in time and space."[24] Whether Şehid Ali Paşa Ms 1553 was in turn copied from a previous composite manuscript, that is a codicological unit made up of formerly independent units,[25] we are not given to know. In other words, the manuscript does not surrender any clue about its *Vorlage*.

If we try to imagine for a while the title page as it originally appeared, without the seals and the notes which were added later, centrally located, and in bigger script, one finds the title: *Jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī ṣalāḥ* (and not *islāḥ*) *al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya* and right underneath in slighter smaller and spear-shaped script the name of author: *taʾlīf al-shaykh al-imām al-ʿālim al-ʿallāma Taqī al-Dīn Abī l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad bin ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm bin ʿAbd al-Salām bin Taymīya raḍiya*

---

22  I was unable to physically see the manuscript nor its description in the catalogue. Therefore, I do not have measures. The digitized version at my disposal does not have an image of the front cover. The back cover looks like a consumed brown and black leather cover with a flap.

23  A fluid translation of the treatise title in English is somewhat insidious. *Siyāsa* refers here to ways of governing, rather than forms of government (see Johansen, "Perfect Law", 290, fn. 54). Therefore, I translate it as governance. *Ṣalāḥ* refers to a state of moral integrity, or righteousness, as opposed to *fasād*, corruption. The ideal of governance articulated by Ibn Taymīya in his treatise is supposed to protect society as a whole from *fasād* (as highlighted by Belhaj, "Law and Order", 409–412). In many manuscript titles of the treatise and on its many prints, *islāḥ* appears in place of *ṣalāḥ*. *Iṣlāḥ* points to restoring such moral integrity back or, more plainly, causing it to be. Depending on how one reads the particle *fī*, the title of the long version can be translated either as *Basic principles of governance according to the revealed normativity regarding the righteousness of the shepherd and his flock*, or *Basic principles of governance according to the revealed normativity for the righteousness of the shepherd and his flock.* This second reading of the particle *fī* is the one most commonly adopted in Western translations. Ibn Rushayyiq al-Maghribī (d. 749/1348), the Mālikī follower of Ibn Taymīya who authored a list of his works, reports the title of the work with a *li-* in place of *fī*: *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya li li-iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya*. Cf. Ibn Rushayyiq, *Asmāʾ muʾallafāt*, 306.

24  Friedrich and Schwarke, *One-Volume Libraries*, 15–16.

25  Friedrich and Schwarke, *One-Volume Libraries*, 16.

Figure 1. Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fol. 1r, title page.

*llāhu ʿanhu wa arḍāhu wa-jaʿala abwāb al-janna fī wajhihi maftūḥa.*[26] This title
(*Jawāmiʿ min …*) recalls the very beginning of the treatise (folio 1v, ll. 13–14), and
is penned by the same hand who copied the three writings. On the same folio 1r,
the titles of the other two shorter works (*al-Ḥisba* and *Shaṭranj*) were added
below the main one by another hand in what looks like a more cursive writing.

Thus, the manuscript hosts three independent textual units all by Ibn Taymīya
arranged in decreasing length; an arrangement reflecting the relevance of each
writing in regard to the core subject of the manuscript, i. e., "the fundamental
principles of *siyāsa* as oriented by the revealed normativity for the integrity of
both subjects and ruler." These three units were gathered in a single non-com-
posite codex, copied by the same hand closely in time – in the of same month of
the same year (Rabīʿ I 780/July 1378) – one after the other, on the same paper,
with the same ink and *mise en page.* The ink is black except for the chapter
headings (*faṣl*) of *Jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya* which are in red but only
until fol. 12r. The layout is regular and tidy throughout the manuscript, the lines
being perfectly justified within an untraced rectangular frame. Every page has
nineteen lines, which means that the space between them is rather compressed.

The three texts are often corrected at the margins in forms of integrations of
words or group of words which were dropped when copying, then reinserted.

---

26  Despite this, Muḥammad al-ʿImrān, who based his edition on Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, chose the
most widespread version of the title, that is *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya.*

Apart from these integrations and corrections, there are no glosses commenting or explaining the contents of the texts. The corrections are highlighted by the common *ṣad* letter standing for *ṣaḥḥa* ("corrected") or *ṣaḥīḥ* ("correct"); they also are by the copyist except at fol. 54v where a different hand, from one reader, added a *kathīr min* which was dropped from the Quranic verse reported in the text. There are no collation marks nor a collation statement, but on the whole these annotations tell us that the copying was accurate and probably the copyist checked it against another manuscript.

The identity of the copyist is unknown since the three colophons are not signed. Also, the place of copying is not specified, but the writing conforms to that of a scribe of professional Mamluk culture. It is a clear, regular, careful handwriting. Diacritical points are methodically used, whereas vowels are irregular. No serifs are observable, the number of ligatures between letters is limited and there are no unconventional joinings. The *lām alif* employed is *warrāqīya*, that it is a triangular based *lām alif* typical of professional scribes.[27] The final *nūn* is usually very opened and with the dot above its right upstroke, the *kāf* is always *mashkūla* (i. e., with two strokes), whereas the *lām* is greatly flattened on the baseline when joined, while descendant below the line when isolated. The hand is *mashriqī*, accurate and highly readable. As a whole, this writing complies to what has been generally described as Mamluk *naskh*.[28]

In conclusion, the manuscript looks like a well-accomplished and thought-out collection of texts, written by a professional scribe, most probably from Syria or Egypt. As noted above, the folios are densely written which might indicate that the scribe did not have much paper at his disposal. The manuscript is neither decorated nor illuminated. In short, the codex does not appear as a costly production. There is no commission statement, and although it cannot be ruled out that somebody copied it for himself, its neat layout, tidy organization and consistent handwriting give the impression that the codex originated as a production for somebody. There are no reading notes nor commentary glosses at the margin, contrary to what happens with some copies of the *risāla mukhtaṣara*.[29] This suggests that the codex did not enjoy a wide readership, an aspect which is corroborated by the fact that the version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* that Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 records is so far the only known surviving copy.

---

27  See Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts*, 139–140.

28  Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts*, 162–165, particularly 163 and 123. Franssen, "What was There," 322–323.

29  For instance, Leiden MS Or. 2590 and Leiden MS Or. 2884.

Brief Remarks on the History of the Manuscript

As it often happens in manuscripts, the title page (here the first title page, fol. 1r) was densely annotated. It bears a seal which signals that at some point the manuscript became part of the library of Şehid Ali Paşa, the grand vizir and libraries founder of the Ottoman Empire between the years 1125–1128 (1713–1716).[30] There is also another unreadable smaller seal which is very likely related to the personal ownership note and signature right above it. In fact, the title page hosts two ownership notes. They indicate that the manuscript went into the hands of a certain Aḥmad ibn al-Baṣrī in the month of Rajab 1005 (1597), and then into those of his son fifty years later, in 1057 (1647).



*Sāqahu sāʾiq al-taqdīr ḥattā intaẓama fī silk milk al-faqīr / Aḥmad bin al-Baṣrī … al-faqīr/*
*al faqīr al-ḥaqīr*
*fī yawm al-jumuʿa shahr rajab 1005*
*thumma intaqala ilā milk waladihi ʿUmar al-faqīr [?] fī Shaʿbān 1057*

Figure 2. Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fol. 1r., ownership statement with seal in the middle.

The title page also acts as a register for the birth and death records of Aḥmad's children, who signed the notes. From his signature we learn that he was a Ḥanafī. All notes date to the beginning of the eleventh Hijrī century (end of sixteenth/ beginning seventeenth Gregorian century).

Densely scribbled are also the last four folios of the manuscript which are abundantly inscribed by poetry, invocations and maxims (fols. 117v–121v) not directly related to the contents of the manuscript.[31] The handwritings are similar

---

30  See Mantran, "Ali Paşa, Damat Şehit." The seal inscription reads: *mimmā waqafa al-wazīr al-shahīd ʿAlī Pāshā raḥimahu llāhu bi-sharṭ ʿan la yakhruja min khizānātihi 1130* (1717 CE). The seal also appears in the folio bearing the title of the second treatise, *al-Ḥisba* (fol. 78r) and at the end of the manuscript (fol. 121r).

31  Fol. 117v: a *qaṣīda* of the poet Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʿAwwās (d. 723/1323) which is described by other sources as *al-qaṣīdat al-sāʾira dhāt al-awzān*. See Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 2:118 and overall al-Ṣafadī who reports the *qaṣīda* in full in *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr*, 2: 540– 544. On fol. 118r one finds some devotional poetry attributed to al-Shāfiʿī, to an unknown

to that of the first folio notes, so one assumes that they were penned by the owners of the manuscript, Aḥmad and his son. A third hasty and thicker handwriting also appears (fol. 118v, in the margin, and 119r–v, 120r, 121v). It is the same cursive hand which added the titles of *al-Ḥisba* and *Shaṭranj* below the main title in the first page. We may think of him as a later third owner, or reader.


The Importance of Şehid Ali Paşa 1553


In the previous pages, I have qualified Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 as "unique," by which I mean that this codex is rather special in more than one way. First, the majority of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* manuscripts I was able to check so far show that in the course of time the treatise was normally copied and transmitted as a single-text material unit.[32] But not in this case, where Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 is a multiple-text manuscript exhibiting a coherent thematic core. As pointed out above, the texts gathered in this codex relate to and explain the "basic principles" ( *jawāmiʿ* ) of a model of "public administration" (*siyāsa*) to be oriented by the revealed normativity (*sharʿīya*).

---

author (*wa-li-ghayrihi*) and the historian and literate Zayn al-Dīn ʿUmar ibn al-Wardī (d. 1348/1349). Two supplications (*duʿāʾ*) to be recited on the day of ʿArafa were added later in smaller script on the top margin of folio 118r. An exchange of poetry lines between the judges Tāj al-Dīn bin al-Shahīd and Badr al-Dīn bin al-Riḍā al-Ḥanafī is recorded on fol. 118v. A tradition from Ibn al-Mubārak appears at the top on the last folio (122v), more poetry and some maxims are inscribed on fols. 120r–v.

32  These are the manuscripts I inspected for this study, ordered by date:
   – Berlin Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190 (dated 716/1316–1317).
   – Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Ayasofya 2889 (dated Rajab 744/November 1343);
   – Damascus al-Asad National Library MS Ẓāhirīya 3246 (dated 14 Muḥarram 756 / 29 January 1355);
   – Leiden MS Or. 2590 (dated second half of Dhū l-Ḥijja 782/April 1381, Dhammār, Yemen);
   – Paris BnF MS 2443 (dated 22 Jumāda I 876/5 november 1471);
   – Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Ayasofya 2886 (dated 15 Ramaḍān 893 / 23 August1488). This is a multiple-text manuscript preserving the *Kitāb qāʿidat al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī iṣlāḥ al-rāʿī wa-l-raʿīya* (fols. 1–147v) and a response of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal on the permissibility of killing groups of robbers (*ḥarrāmīya*) who go around the country depriving Muslims of their possessions and killing those who fight them (fols. 148v–159r).
   – Paris BnF MS 2444 (incipit unreadable, date of copy not mentioned, sixteenth century according to Gallica. See https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc30361f [accessed 16/4/2019]);
   – Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi MS Reisülküttāb Mustafa Efendi 528, fol. 1v (undated, according to catalogue sixteenth-century copy);
   – Leiden MS Or. 2884 (date of copy not mentioned, according to al-ʿImrān, 12th hijrī century, cf. ʿImrān, *Muqaddima*, 41; P. Voorhoeve, *Handlist*, VII, 343, has "modern");
   – Berlin Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 2553, (dated 1303/1885–1886).

Miscellanies collecting texts that in some way associated with one another were a very common phenomenon and MS Istanbul Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 fully conforms to this mode.[33] In this specific case, the convergence of the three textual units into a single material support signals an act of reception and interpretation of what revelation-oriented *siyāsa* was from the part of the person who planned the manuscript. At the same time, the long *Siyāsa* transmitted by MS Istanbul Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 provides important clues for understanding Ibn Taymīya's complex project of *al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, as it will become clear in due course.

The other distinctive aspects of MS Istanbul Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 consists, first, in the colophon of *Jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya* which states that the text was copied from an autograph:

*naqaltu min nuskhat nuqilat julluhā bi-khaṭṭ al-muṣannif*
I transmitted from a copy the great majority of which was transmitted
by the hand of the author

and second in the fact that the version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* hosted by Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 displays significant portions of text which are missing from other manuscripts and printings of the text nowadays in circulation. This extended version of the treatise is important because it helps gain a fuller view of Ibn Taymīya's vision of *al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, especially when the treatise on *Siyāsa* is read intertextually with the other writings witnessed by the manuscript.

All these reasons make of this codex a precious key able to reveal fragments of a story so far untold about the textual history Ibn Taymīya's famous political treatise as well as the meaning and early reception of this writing. In the next pages I will attempt to shed light on parts of this story.

---

33  See, for instance, Endress, *One-Volume Libraries*, on philosophical multi-text and composite manuscripts; Schmidke, "From 'One-Volume Libraries,'" in the same volume. Gratien, Polczyński and Shafir, "Digital Frontiers," especially 39–40. For one such example from the Mamluk period, see Franssen, "What was There."
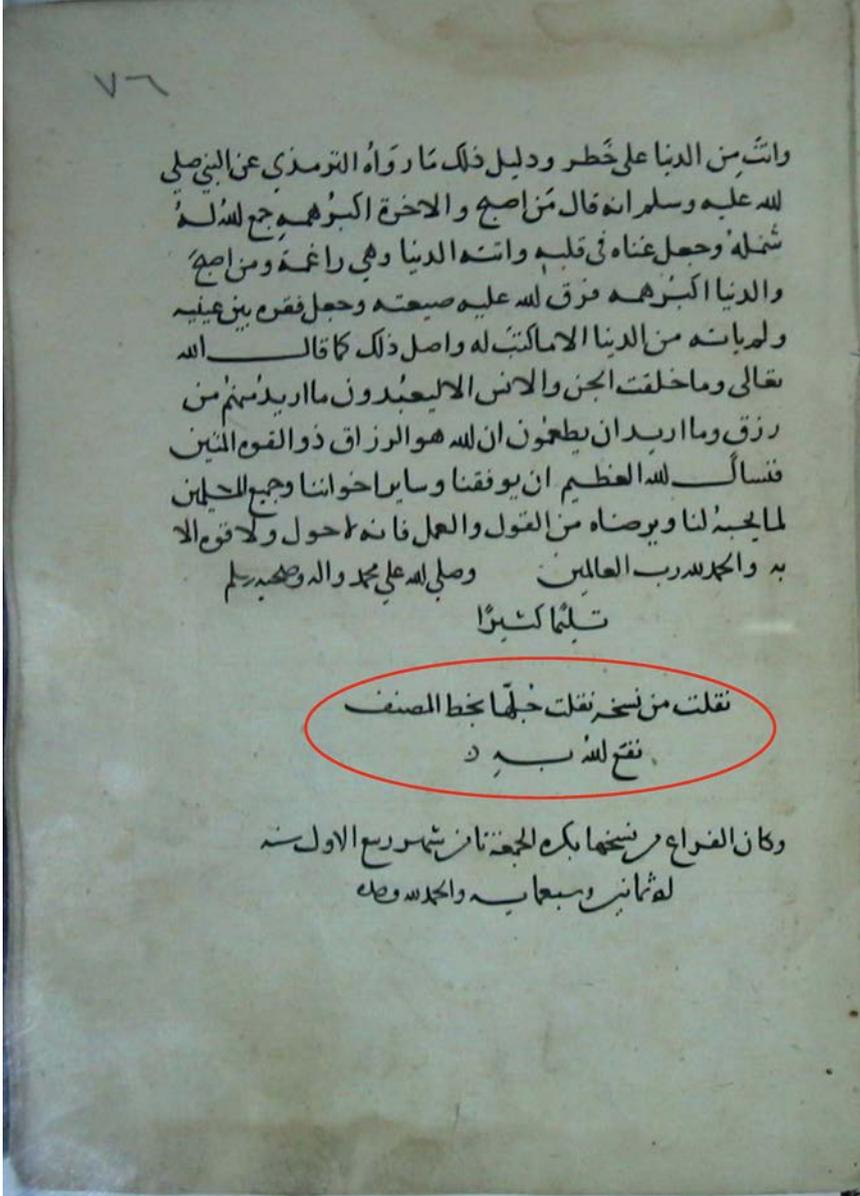
Figure 3. Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fol. 77r, colophon.

A Risāla Mukhtaṣara and a long version of al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿīya

The version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* scholars are familiar with is the same as that translated by Henri Laoust, which is also the one that we find in its many extant printings and in the manuscripts inspected for this study. This version invariably presents the text as an abridged or short *risāla*. That is, the *risāla* is introduced as *mukhtaṣara* "shortened or abridged" or "short, concise." It reads:

> This is a short or abridged treatise which comprises the concise and substantial principles of divinely-oriented governance … / *hādhihi risāla mukhtaṣara fīhā jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-ilāhīya*[34]

On the contrary, the text of Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 begins as follows:

> This is a treatise that comprises the concise and substantial principles of divinely-oriented governance … / *hādhihi risāla tataḍammanu jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-ilāhīya*[35]

We have thus two different incipits of the text, introducing two versions of the same writing. One is shorter and judging from the number of manuscripts it is the one which imposed itself as the *vulgata*, the other one is longer and was less read, since so far Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 is its only witness. The exact relationship between the two versions is complex to clarify.

*Mukhtaṣar* is a term that indicates either a concise composition usually conceived as complementary to an expanded one (*mabsūṭ*), or an abridgement or epitome of a given work.[36] In the first case, *mukhtaṣarāt* and their expansums were common literary structures in the field of substantive law (*furūʿ al-fiqh*) where *mukhtaṣar* and *mabsūṭ* acted as genres that differed not only in the number of pages but also in their function, language and literary features. Most importantly, the concise version of the work (*mukhtaṣar*) was not necessarily written after the expanded one. It could also be the opposite, the *mabsūṭ* being an expansion of an initial "structured skeleton of the law" (*mukhtaṣar*), to put it in Norman Calder's words.[37] Differently, the second case, where the word *mukhtaṣar* points to an abridgment, normally assumes a vertical diachronical relationship between the two texts: a base-copy of a given work which served as the basis for a subsequent epitome. Both kinds of *mukhtaṣarāt* attest to the vitality

---

34  Ayasofya 2889, fol. 1r; Ẓāhirīya 3246, fol. 1v; Leiden Or. 2590, fol. 1v; Paris BnF 2443, fol. 1v; Ayasofya 2886, fol. 2r; Reisülküttāb Mustafa Efendi 528, fol. 1v; Leiden Or. 2884, fol. 2r; Staatsbibliothek Or. oct. 2553, fol. 1v.

35  Şehid ʿAlī Paşa 1553, fol. 1v.

36  See the definitions provided by Adam Gacek, *Arabic Manuscript*, 41.

37  See Calder, *Islamic Jurisprudence*, 22–115, quotation from 22. Also, Ingall, *Šarḥ, Iḫtiṣār*, and "Late-Medieval Legal Change", where the complex dynamics of the *sharḥ-mukhtaṣar* relationship are highlighted and Arazi-Ben Chamaï, "Mukhtaṣar", in *EI².*

and continuation of a certain writing of which they were not merely skeletons/
abridgements, but also interpretations.[38]

The question is then: to which pattern of *ikhtiṣār* do the *risāla mukhtaṣara* of
*al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* and the version of Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 belong? Was the
treatise on *siyāsa* originally a condensed work which Ibn Taymīya at some point
expanded? Or vice-versa, did the long *Siyāsa*, or *Jawāmiʿ*, (Şehid Ali Paşa 1553)
precede the *risāla mukhtaṣara*? As a third possible way, in his edition of the long
version, Muḥammad al-ʿImrān claims that *Jawāmiʿ* in Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 rep-
resents a pristine version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* which then served as the basis
for an abridgement that was carried out later on by some unknown hand, and not
by Ibn Taymīya. This is certainly possible, yet al-ʿImrān does not ground his
claim on any strong piece of evidence.

As a matter of fact, the evidence is partial, fragmented and extremely complex
and none of the options mentioned above is self-evident. Let us try and make
sense of it. Whereas it proved impossible to chronologically reconstruct in detail
the relationship between the *risāla mukhtaṣara* of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* and its
long version, some tentative thoughts can be formulated.

## Chronology: Dating *al-Siyāsa*

The manuscripts *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* I worked with are ten, of two I only have
incomplete digital copies.[39] As mentioned, I did not have the opportunity to
examine all extant catalogued manuscripts, however those seen so far transmit
the short text of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* (*risāla mukhtaṣara*). Some of these copies
predate the long treatise, that is the version of text carried by Şehid Ali Paşa
1553 which is at the center of this study.[40] This situation as such does not imply
any given chronology in the composition of the text. In what comes next, some
dating will be attempted on the ground of the available evidence.

The long version of *al-Siyāsa* (Şehid Ali Paşa 1553) is dated to 780 and claims
to rely mostly on an autograph (*naqaltu min nuskhat nuqilat julluhā bi-khaṭṭ al-
muṣannif*, fol. 77r). If reliable, this statement brings the text back to Ibn Tay-
mīya's hand, although the words: *julluhā bi-khaṭṭ al-muṣannif* – "[I transmitted
from a copy] *the great majority of which* was by the hand of the author" – are a

---

38  See Kilpatrick, "Abridgement," 1: 23–24.

39  Ayasofya 2886, fols. 1r–5r, 143v–150r, 158v–159r. Reisülküttāb Mustafa Efendi 528, fols. 1r–
2v, plus explicit and colophon (no number on the images at my disposal). More manuscripts
are listed in: Brockelmann, *GAL*, S, ii, 124–125 e *GAL*, ii, 127 n. 114 and Gregor Schöler,
*Arabische Handschriften. Teil II*, 161.

40  Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190 (dated 716); Ayasofya 2889 (dated 744); Ẓāhirīya 3246
(dated 756).

clue suggesting that the copyist did not work with an holograph. As it stands, the autograph is unknown, either lost or not yet identified by scholars. As for the short *Siyāsa*, its manuscripts suggest that the *risāla mukhtaṣara* was the version of the treatise that gained wider dissemination. Apart from lexical variants due to the process of copying, and ensuing strands of different transmissions, and apart from some variations in the chapter division (*faṣl: fuṣūl*), the *risāla mukhtaṣara* with its subsequent prints looks like a rather stable text. For this reason, I refer to it as one.[41] The earliest complete extant copies of the *risāla mukhtaṣara* I am aware of date to 744 and 756, respectively (Ayasofya 2889 and Ẓāhirīya 3246). Yet, a manuscript preserved in Berlin – Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190 – transmits a partial copy of it. To my knowledge, this manuscript has not been previously used in studies on the subject and it is an important witness because it may provide evidence that the *risāla mukhtaṣara* was in circulation by 716.[42] In his catalogue description, Gregor Schöler remarks that the manuscript's title, authorship and introduction (fols. 1r–2v) are false attributions elegantly written in black ink with red punctuation, but clumsily attached to an original copy of *al-Siyāsa* which lacks its first third.[43] The remaining two-thirds transmitted by the manuscript are the sections of the treatise focusing on *ḥudud*, discretional punishment, jihad and men's claims.[44] All is from the *risāla mukhtaṣara*. The title of the "new book" is *Kitāb al-maqṣūd fī iqāmat al-ḥudūd* (fol. 1r) and the name of its purported author the Ḥanbalī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin Zakariyāʾ, better known as al-Alwāḥī (d. 8th/14th century).[45] Not much is known about Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Alwāḥī, save that he was active in the first half of the fourteenth century as he copied Ibn Qudāma's (d. 620/1223) *Kitāb rawḍat al-nāẓir* in 733 and al-ʿAnbarī's (d. 577/1181) *al-Dāʿī ilā al-islām* in 744.[46]

In point of fact, the colophon clarifies that Zakariyāʾ al-Alwāḥī was the actual Ḥanbalī copyist of the truncated manuscript of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* which was

---

41  Looking closely at lexical variants and variations in the division into chapters will help establish further lines of transmissions and rcensions of the *risāla mukhtaṣara* itself. For instance, differences in chapter division appear between the *risāla mukhtaṣara* as edited by al-Ḥarastānī and the earliest complete copy of it at my disposal which is Aya Sofya 2889, dated 744. I did not venture into this sort of detailed examination here. I used the text of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* in the edition of ʿIṣām Fāris al-Ḥarastānī, Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1993, as a representative of the *risāla mukhtaṣara*, or short *siyāsa*. For a chart of differences in the chapter division between long and short *Siyāsa*, see Table 1, pp. 30–32.

42  Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190 described by Schöler in *Arabische Handschriften*, 160–161.

43  See Schöler, *Arabische Handschriften*, 161. Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190, fol. 2v: … ṣannaftu hādhā l-kitāb murattab[an] ʿalà l-fuṣūl wa-l-ādāb la ghaniya walī l-amr ʿanhā wa-sammaytuhu al-maqṣūd fī iqāmat al-ḥudūd …

44  Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190, fols. 3a–48r.

45  Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190, fol. 1r and 48v.

46  Ibn Qudāma, *Kitāb rawḍat al-nāẓir*, 1:31 and Arberry, *Handlist*, 24–25 (Chester Beatty MS Ar. 3822).

later turned into the *Kitāb al-maqṣūd fī iqāmat al-ḥudūd.* As observed by Schöler, the colophon bears the word *muʾallifihi* ("its author") in a slightly darker black ink next to the word *kātibihi* ("its copyist"). Thus, it seems that *muʾallifihi* was added later in order to make al-Alwāḥī appear as the author too.[47] The improper attribution did not escape the attentive eyes of a later reader who noted down on the inside of the front cover: "It clearly appears that what comes after the first two pages, which are in a different (*jadīd*) handwriting, is from of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya li-iṣlāh al-raʾī wa-l-raʿīya* of the Shaykh al-islām al-Taqī bin Taymīya."[48] From its reading and possession notes, we learn that the manuscript was owned and read by various members of the Ḥanbalī Damascene family al-Shaṭṭī in the 80s of the thirteenth hijrī century (second half of nineteenth century).[49] It is likely that the original *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* manuscript copied by al-Alwāḥī was initially produced in Damascus where it was preserved.[50]

The colophon of Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190 bears the date "year 716," in numbers. If the date is authentic, this is the earliest – albeit partial – copy of the *risāla mukhtaṣara* that has come down to us. According to Schöler, the year 716 was written in the same ink as that of *muʾallifihi* next to *kātibihi*, hence it was also added later,[51] and yet this date may be not incidental. In his famous *Essai* on the political and social doctrines of Ibn Taymīya (1939) and in a slightly later (1942) article on Ibn Taymīya's biography based on reports by Ibn Kathīr (d. 773/1374), Laoust dated the text between 1315 and 1318. This dating was based on content considerations and some passages from Ibn Kathīr's chronicle in which the Syrian historian mentions a series of sultanic decisions which were inspired by Ibn Taymīya.[52]

It is important to clarify that, in *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, Ibn Kathīr never mentions explicitly that *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya* was written for the Sultan Muḥammad al-Nāṣir ibn Qalāwūn, but he does mention, though, two sultanic decrees dispatched and read aloud in Damascus in the year 712 that were, according to Ibn Kathīr, prompted by Ibn Taymīya (*wa-kāna sabab li-dhālika shaykh al-islām …*).[53] In the first edict, the Sultan recommended that public offices should be appointed only to those deserving them, and not be purchased or obtained

---

47  Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190, fol. 48v: *ʿalà yad al-ʿabd al-faqīr al-dhalīl al-ḥaqīr kātibihi wa-muʾallifihi Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin Zakariyāʾ ʿurifa bi-l-Alwāḥī ʿafā llāhu ʿanhu wa-ʿalà l-jamī al-muslimīn sana 716.*

48  Front inner cover: *qad tabayyana anna mā baʿd al-waraqatayni al-ūlayayni allatayni humā bi-khaṭṭ jadīd huwa min kitāb al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya li-iṣlāh al-raʾī wa-l-raʿīya li-shayykh al-islām al-taqī bin taymīya.*

49  The notes are on the title page (fol. 1r) and on the front and back cover.

50  Schöler, *Arabische Handschriften*, 161.

51  Ibid.

52  Laoust, *Essai,* 98, fn. 2 and idem, "Biographie", 115–163, 150–51.

53  Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, 1998, 18: 123–124.

through bribery, in the second that killing should be prosecuted with retaliation as according to the religious law. Both decrees well tune with some of the recommendations voiced in *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, long and short, and suggest that the treatise may have been conceived between the years 709 and 712 when Ibn Taymīya resided in Cairo and was close to the Sultan Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn. This is also the conclusion Laoust reaches a few years later in his introduction to the translation of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, which was published in 1948.[54]

In sum, the year 716 recorded as the copy date of Staatsbibliothek MS Or. oct. 3190 even if added later sounds realistic. If so, it confirms that the treatise in its short version circulated, was read and copied as early as 716 and fixes a *termine ante quem* for the composition of the *risāla mukhtaṣara.*

Another indication about the date of the *risāla mukhtaṣara* comes from another manuscript preserved in Leiden (Leiden MS Or. 2884) which transmits the short *Siyāsa.* The manuscript is densely annotated and corrected in the margins; it lacks the copyist's name and the date. According to Muḥammad al-ʿImrān, the manuscript is late, perhaps a twelfth century hijri copy.[55] A note on its title page states that the treatise was written at the request of the amir Jamāl al-Dīn Qays [?] al-Manṣūrī.[56] al-ʿImrān suggests that this person is to be identified with Jamāl al-Dīn Aqqūsh al-Manṣūrī (d. 719/1319–20), who had been *mutawallī* (prefect) of Damascus for eleven years between 709 and 719 (1309/10–1319/20) and is described in biographical dictionaries and chronicles as an important amir, much loved by people.[57] Precisely, the note on the title folio of Leiden MS Or. 2884 states that the work was composed in one night when the above mentioned amir interrogated Ibn Taymīya; the object of the question is not specified. Al-ʿImrān proposes that Jamāl al-Dīn Aqqūsh al-Manṣūrī advanced his request to Ibn Taymīya at the time of his appointment or soon after that, hence around 709. At that time Ibn Taymīya was in Cairo, just out of prison, and would not be back in Damascus until three years later. It is an interesting piece of evidence, although late and isolated.

Finally, the treatise was probably written in a moment free from war danger since the pages on *jihād* do not exhibit the highly charged and vehement tone Ibn

---

54  Laoust, *Traité*, xii, xxvi–xxvix where he speaks of four decrees, two issued in 712, one in 711 and the other in 714. I did not find the name of Ibn Taymīya associated with the 711 and 714 decrees. See Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, 18: 113, 135.

55  al-ʿImrān, *Muqaddima*, 41 and 62.

56  Leiden MS Or. 2884, fol. 1r : *Kitāb al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya fī ṣalāḥ al-raʿī wa-l-raʿīya ʿallaqahā … ḥīna saʾalahu al-amīr al-kabīr qays al-manṣūrī fa-ajāba ilā dhālika wa-ʿallaqahā fī layla wāḥida.*

57  See al-ʿImrān, *Muqaddima,* 21–23, 41. On Jamāl al-Dīn Aqqūsh al-Manṣūrī, Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 1: 576–77. Birzālī, *Muqtafà,* 3: 437–38, 4: 370–71. Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, 18: 113, 190, 196.

Taymīya adopts on the subject in other writings written when the Mamluk lands, Syria in particuar, was under threat.[58]

All things considered, the evidence makes it plausible that *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, either long or short, was conceived at the very beginning of the third reign of Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, and that the *risāla mukhtaṣara* had been penned by 716.


Authorship: Making Sense of Textual Fluidity

There are no compelling reasons to question the authorship of *Jawāmiʿ*. As seen, the copyist's statement that he transmitted *Jawāmiʿ min al-siyāsa al-sharʿīya* from the author's hand plays in favor of the Taymīyan authorship of the long version. Were this statement untrue, the language, style, and thematic concerns of the long treatise are recognizably Taymīyan. Furthermore, several of the passages which are not in the *risāla mukhtaṣara* but in *Jawāmiʿ*, have their counterparts in other writings of Ibn Taymīya, as will be duly pointed out further down in this study.

The situation is less clear with the *risāla mukhtaṣara.* In the absence of sources clearly proving the contrary, it seems fair to say that it is not evident that the author of the *risāla mukhtaṣara* was not Ibn Taymīya, as claimed by Muḥammad al-ʿImrān.[59] All the manuscripts so far seen, attribute it to Ibn Taymīya. It could be argued that Ibn Taymīya was a hectic, swift, chaotic, circumstantial writer who wrote a lot from memory and whose writings, especially his answers and short rules (*ajwāb* and *qawāʿid*) were not systematically copied and transmitted. He is described as such by his biographers who also tell us that: "He would write an answer and if somebody producing a fair copy was there [the answer would be transmitted], otherwise the questioner would take his piece and go."[60] Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī (d. 744/1343), Ibn Taymīya's main biographer, also informs us that Ibn Taymīya's short and circumstantial writings were often taken away by his students or petitioners without been brought back even when Ibn Taymīya himself asked for them. His followers repeatedly lament that it was impossible to have a precise idea of the number of his works, the dispersal of which they also feared.[61] Accordingly, one hardly figures Ibn Taymīya out sitting down in the process of cutting, or eventually expanding on something previously written. Yet, it cannot

---

58  Typically, the fatwas against the Mongols (*Majmūʿ fatāwà,* 28: 501–552) which are studied in depth by Denise Aigle, "The Mongol Invasions".

59  al-ʿImrān, *Muqaddima*, 32–33.

60  Ibn ʿIbn al-Hādī, *ʿUqūd*, 64.

61  See Bori, "Collection and Edition," 47–67, especially 54–57; the main source lamenting this bibliographical mess is Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī, *ʿUqūd*, 26–28, 64–65.

be ruled out for Ibn Taymīya did recycle previous works of his into new ones, he does often refer to already written works within new writings, and resorts to similar phrasing and passages in works dealing with similar subjects.[62] Of his famous Ḥamawīya creed (al-ʿAqīda al-ḥamawīya) we are told that there was a big and a small one (wa-la-hu al-Ḥamawīya al-kubrā wa-l-Ḥamawīya al-ṣughrā) perhaps suggesting a mechanic similar to that we see on stage here.[63]

Moreover, elsewhere Ibn Taymīya uses the word mukhtaṣar/a to point, simply, to a short writing, not necessarily an abridgement. The incipit of the *Precept on the Duty to Obey God and His Messenger* runs like that of the short *Siyāsa*: "As for what comes afterwards (ammā baʿd): this is a short general rule on the duty to obey God and His Messenger" (fa-hādhihi risāla mukhtaṣara fī wujūb …).[64] In addition, the very *General rule on ḥisba* transmitted by Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 is defined by Ibn Taymiya at some point as "this short rule (hādhihi al-qāʿida al-mukhtṣara)."[65]

An interesting case of Taymīyan textual fluidity is the *General Rule on the Game of Chess* copied in Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 after *al-Siyāsa* and *al-Ḥisba*. In fact, the text of the *Rule on the Game of Chess* in the manuscript is very similar to that on chess published in the thirty-second volume of *Majmūʿ fatāwà*, but it is not exactly the same. The one in *Majmūʿ fatāwà* appears as a fatwa opening with a battery of questions on the prohibition of the game. The text presents itself as the answer to such questions,[66] whereas in Şehid Ali Paşa 1553 the text is introduced as a qāʿida in which the questions are removed (fol. 104v) in order to deal straight with the legal argumentation. The *Rule on the Game of Chess* is also slightly longer and detailed than the fatwa, and exhibits some passages missing from it.[67] Moreover, another much shorter text on chess was recently published. Its opening makes clear that it was an answer to a question that was posited to Ibn

---

62  See Hoover, "Theology as Translation," 40–86, especially 40–55; the text of *Majmūʿ fatāwà*, 12: 235–245 is copied into *al-Tisʿinīya*, 529–547. In *al-Tisʿinīya* this text is called by Ibn Taymīya *Jawāb al-futyā al-miṣrīya*. The faṣl on amr bi-l-maʿrūf appears both as a section of *al-Ḥisba* and *al-Istiqāma*, see Cook, *Commanding Right*, 151, fn. 48. I thank Jon Hoover for pointing these references to me.

63  Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī, *ʿUqūd*, 67. Also Hoover, *Ibn Taymīya's Theodicy*, 240 notes an unnamed fatwa in *Majmūʿ fatāwà*, 8: 204–234 that abridges the text of *al-Ḥasana wa-l-sayyʾa* (see *Majmūʿ fatāwà*, 14: 294–361). We do not know whether this abridgement was by Ibn Taymīya or a later hand.

64  Ibn Taymīya, *Majmūʿ fatāwà*, 18: 5.

65  Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fol. 99r: wa-laysat hādhihi al-qāʿida al-mukhtṣara mawḍiʿ dhālika …/ "This short rule is not the right place for dealing with this issue…".

66  Ibn Taymīya, *Majmūʿ fatāwà*, 32: 216–239: "As for the game of chess: is it prohibited or reprehensible? Or is it indifferent? And if you say that it is prohibited, what is the proof of its prohibition? And if you say that it is reprehensible, what is the proof of its reprehensibility? Or [if you say that it is] indifferent, what is the proof of its indifference?" (p. 216).

67  For instance, Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fols. 106r, 106v, 109r–109v, 11v–112r, 115r.

---

Taymīya; it exhibits the gist of the other two writings but argues for chess prohibition in a simpler and straighter manner.[68] Clearly, these texts on chess are closely related to each other, but are moulded in different formats according to their purpose and receivers. Could have not something similar happened with the long and short *Siyāsa?* What I am trying to suggest is that what we may have here are authorial variations of the same writing penned in different moments and for different receivers, and not necessarily two writings whose correlation was dictated by a somehow defined vertical relationship, i.e., one being the successive epitome of a pristine *Urtext.*

In conclusion, the authorship of the long *Siyāsa* can be reconduced to Ibn Taymīya, whereas the short *Siyāsa* does not necessarily have to be thought of as the later product of somebody other than Ibn Taymīya as suggested by Muḥammad al-ʿImrān. It could be, but also could be not. In the absence of further evidence, it is hard to reconstruct in detail the circumstances of composition of the long and short *Siyāsa* and their chronological exact relationship, but a content examination of the differences between the *risāla mukhtaṣara* and the long version can add useful insights on the configuration of the two texts.

## Part II: Structure and Contents

To all effects the *risāla mukhtaṣara* and *Jawāmiʿ* are closely related: the overall structure and content-organization of the two texts are the same. Some variations occur in the chapter division, as the *risāla mukhtaṣara* tends to merge small sections that on the contrary are organized as separate *fuṣūl* in *Jawāmiʿ*. Some fluctuation within copies of the *risāla mukhtaṣara* itself are observable, but not in the overall arrangement and sequence of the contents.

As for its wording, the text is rather stable in both versions. The major differences between the *risāla mukhtaṣara* and *Jawāmiʿ* are omissions or additions. Depending on the perspective one adopts, entire chapters, final sections of chapters, and to a minor extent short sentences and passages from within chapters – often consisting in the citation of Quranic verses or Hadith to clarify the point in question – are absent from the "short" text when compared to the long one.[69] However, some degree of different phrasing occurs especially towards

---

68 Ibn Taymīya, *Jāmiʿ al-masāʾil*, 9: 291–295.
69 Major passages missing from the *risāla mukhtaṣara* are: Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fols. 10r–12r; 56v–57r; 59r–61r; 66r; 68v–69r; 70r–72r.

the end, in the chapters dedicated to fair judgement in the domain of men's claims which are highly compressed in the *risāla al-mukhtaṣara*.[70]

In what comes next, I describe and review the most relevant passages which distinguish the long version of *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿīya*, or *Jawāmiʿ*, from the *risāla mukhtaṣara,* or "short version." By "relevant" I mean the longest and most substantial passages. On the whole, these materials approximately amount to the 13 % of the treatise (which in its entirety consists in 77 folios, if we include the title page), or – again approximately – to 10 folios.

For those unfamiliar with the treatise, the overall structure of the text unfolds as follows. Both the *risāla mukhtaṣara* and *Jawāmiʿ* (the long *Siyāsa*) are organized around Quran 4:58. The first part of this verse exhorts to render trusts (*amānāt*) back to their owners, while the second commands to rule or judge with fairness. Ibn Taymīya explains that the recipients of Q. 4:58 are "men in authority" and, accordingly, that this verse refers to their principal duties: first and foremost, giving deposits back and, secondly, ruling or judging with fairness. These two obligations – writes Ibn Taymīya – are "the essence of just *siyāsa* and sound authority" (*jimāʿ al-siyāsa al-ʿādila wa-l-wilāya al-ṣāliḥa).*[71] Thus, the book grows as an illustration of the two duties. Its first section develops around the quranic injunction to give deposits back to their owners by focusing respectively on the qualities of public offices (*wilāyat*) and on "public wealth," both conceived as two different types of trusts. The second part revolves around the importance of judging or ruling with equity, or fairness, which is the second part of Q. 4:58. Here, the *ḥudūd* and *ḥuqūq* of God and those of men are separately dealt with. It is especially within the second part of the book that the short and long *Siyāsa* depart. Table 1 outlines the book contents and it signals where *Jawāmiʿ* and *risāla mukhtaṣara* significantly differ.

---

70 See the two chapters on offences to the honour and dignity of single individuals: Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fols. 66v–67r to compare with *Siyāsa*, ed. Ḥarastānī pp. 179–182; or the first part of the chapter regarding judging in money matters (*al-ḥukm fī l-amwāl*): Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fols. 69v–70r and *Siyāsa* (*risāla mukhtaṣara*), ed. Ḥarastānī, 185–186.

71 Şehid Ali Paşa 1553, fol. 2r.; *Siyāsa*, ed. al-ʿImrān; *Siyāsa* (*risāla mukhtaṣara*), ed. Ḥarastānī, 12. More on the structure and contents of the treatise in Bori, "One or Two Versions."