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## Review of *Al-Ḥayāh al-Iqtiṣādīyah fī Miṣr fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* by 'Āmir Najīb Mūsá Nāṣir

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of the work into ten chapters is not found in the Arabic and sometimes obscures the flow of Ibn al-Qayyim's argument.

To conclude, substantial effort has been given over the last several decades to making Ibn al-Qayyim's *Al-Ṭuruq al-Ḥukmīyah* readily accessible. From a scholarly point of view, however, the situation is chaotic. Pagination varies widely from printing to printing. Very little progress has been made toward a critical edition, and no one available version is of such distinguished quality that it might serve as the reference standard until such time as there is a proper critical edition. The time is thus ripe for a disciplined attempt at a critical text.

‘ĀMIR NAJĪB MŪSĀ NĀṢIR, *Al-Ḥayāh al-Iqtisādīyah fī Miṣr fī al-‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī‘, 2003). Pp. 390.

REVIEWED BY STUART BORSCH, Assumption College

For any scholar in search of an up-to-date survey of the Mamluk economy, this book serves as a valuable resource. Its scale and scope cover a wide panorama of factors that drove and influenced the Mamluk economy. The title is slightly misleading, as the book is really a study of the agrarian, not urban side of the economy. However, this misnomer is a pleasant surprise for scholars, as the rural facets of Egypt's economy still remain neglected compared to the urban ones.

The first chapter is devoted to geography and offers fresh material for those interested in the subdivisions and routes of major canals in Egypt's agrarian system. It also provides a detailed survey of population levels during the Mamluk period. It also provides a very well-documented examination of plague deaths in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The second chapter explores the variations in landholding. It extensively details the function and operation of that enigmatic and elusively complicated structure: the *iqṭā‘* system. Although not the last word in exploring this subject, the book is very helpful in outlining and clarifying areas of this method of tax farming. The book then describes the agrarian side of pious endowments (*waqf*), relating the ways in which funds were channeled from donor to tax farmer and tax farmer to the endowment. The nature of *rizq* as well as *milk* lands are also discussed here.

The third chapter is devoted to the organization of agrarian life, a subject that has been relatively ignored in previous studies. The use of specific agricultural tools is described here, as well as the way in which labor was applied to different applications. The all-important irrigation system is studied in careful detail, a

systematic if not novel approach to the structure of wet-farming in the delta and valley of the Nile. This chapter also includes a very engaging exploration of the social conflicts and problems associated with the systems of *iqṭā'* and *waqf*.

Chapter four serves as an encyclopedia of the different plants and animals raised in the agrarian economy of Egypt. The author provides a separate description and series of tables on the various kinds of crops grown for proto-industry and urban consumption. It also covers, in some depth, the use of animals for traction and pasture in the rural life of Egypt.

Chapter five examines, minutely, the kinds of rents or taxes imposed on peasants. Some of this is a repeat of details that can be found in other sources, but it serves well as a general outline of the organization of *kharāj*, *'ushr*, *jizyah*, and *mukūs*. For a reader approaching these subjects for the first time, this is a valuable source of reference information.

The final chapter is perhaps the best and most original in the book. The author takes on the difficult task of describing peasant life in Mamluk Egypt. This is a very difficult area due to a paucity of sources but the author is able to extract enough information to provide a fresh and cogent look at this too-often ignored arena of life in the Mamluk Sultanate.

This book provides a valuable reference for scholars, as well as keen insight into otherwise obscure areas of Egyptian life.

ḤASAN AḤMAD JAGHĀM, *Al-Jins fī A'māl al-Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī* (Sūsah: Dār al-Ma'ārif lil-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr, 2001). Pp. 395.

REVIEWED BY SYRINX VON HEES, Universität Bonn

The work under review claims to present examples of al-Suyūṭī's writings on matters of sexual life. In the introduction the author states his aim in writing this book: "I consider it our obligation—we, the people of this age—to re-establish connection to and better understanding of what our grandfathers left us in the form of literary and scientific heritage. We did not comprehend all the dimensions of this legacy. In many cases we did not even look at it. I hope, that (through this book) we will undermine the wall of indifference which separates the cultivated among us from the pioneers of Arab civilization, who were more tenacious than ourselves" (pp. 18–19). The author attributes special tenacity to Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, especially in his writings on sexuality. Jaghām claims that al-Suyūṭī's books on erotica, characterized by the usage of explicit sexual diction, were until