

Christian-Muslim Relations
A Bibliographical History

History of Christian-Muslim Relations

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Volume 20

Christians and Muslims have been involved in exchanges over matters of faith and morality since the founding of Islam. Attitudes between the faiths today are deeply coloured by the legacy of past encounters, and often preserve centuries-old negative views.

The History of Christian-Muslim Relations, Texts and Studies presents the surviving record of past encounters in authoritative, fully introduced text editions and annotated translations, and also monograph and collected studies. It illustrates the development in mutual perceptions as these are contained in surviving Christian and Muslim writings, and makes available the arguments and rhetorical strategies that, for good or for ill, have left their mark on attitudes today. The series casts light on a history marked by intellectual creativity and occasional breakthroughs in communication, although, on the whole beset by misunderstanding and misrepresentation. By making this history better known, the series seeks to contribute to improved recognition between Christians and Muslims in the future.

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Christian-Muslim Relations A Bibliographical History

Volume 5 (1350-1500)

Edited by
David Thomas and Alex Mallett
with Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala,
Johannes Pahlitzsch, Mark Swanson,
Herman Teule, John Tolan



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Cover illustration: This shows part of the interior of Aya Sofia, Istanbul. Built by the Emperor Justinian in his capital Constantinople in the 6th century, the Church of Hagia Sophia remained the most splendid place of Christian worship throughout the Middle Ages. When the Ottomans conquered the city in 1453 and renamed it Istanbul, the church was turned into a mosque. This detail is of the minbar of the mosque to one side of what became the mihrab, and in the background a mosaic of the Virgin and Child in what had been the original central apse of the basilica.

Photo by Kyle K. Tsui.

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Al-Maqrīzī

Taqī l-Dīn Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī
ibn ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Maqrīzī

DATE OF BIRTH Approximately 1364-65
PLACE OF BIRTH Cairo
DATE OF DEATH January-February 1442
PLACE OF DEATH Cairo

BIOGRAPHY

Al-Maqrīzī was born in Cairo in 1364-65 to a family of Syrian origin on his father’s side. The family can only recently have moved, as it was his father who decided to leave his native city of Damascus for Cairo. The quarter where the family chose to live and where al-Maqrīzī spent most of his life, *ḥārat Barjawān*, was situated in the heart of the city, close to the place where the Fatimid palaces had once stood.

Although educated as a Ḥanafī, to which legal school relatives on his mother’s side belonged, he decided to become a Shāfi‘ī at the age of 20, shortly after his father’s death. The reasons for this change remain unknown. It has been suggested that it might have been a strategic change due to the preeminence of the Shāfi‘ī legal school in the intellectual and political milieu, but this does not explain al-Maqrīzī’s lifelong bias against the Ḥanafis, which permeates his works, or his behavior towards some representatives of his former school, such as his contemporary, al-‘Aynī (d. 1451). Being born into a scholarly family, al-Maqrīzī received a classical education, studying Hadith, law, grammar and the various readings of the Qur’an.

In his early twenties, he started his career as a secretary in the chancellery, a position previously held by his father. This was the beginning of his career in a professional world where success was impossible without the patronage of the emirs. His advancement was fast and successful, and he even managed to gain direct access to Sultan Barqūq himself. But anyone accepting to play according to the rules of patronage that applied under the Mamluks could not be unaware that even strong support would not last a lifetime. Al-Maqrīzī started to experience this at the very end of the 14th century (1399), when he was appointed as inspector of markets (*muḥtasib*), an important and prestigious post. Though

it was not a stable position (but what was in those times?), al-Maqrīzī certainly hoped he would remain in it longer than the mere five months that passed before he was replaced by al-ʿAynī. It did not take too long for al-Maqrīzī to regain his position (February 1400), then lose it again (October 1400) in favor of al-ʿAynī, whom he looked on as his opponent for the rest of his life.

In following years, al-Maqrīzī was to enjoy a renewed period of patronage, even succeeding in maintaining a certain degree of intimacy with the new sultan, Barqūq's son Faraj. In 1408, he accompanied the sultan to Damascus, where he was appointed to various positions. His stay there lasted about five years, though he continued to travel between the Syrian and Egyptian capitals. Upon his return to his birthplace, he decided to retire from public life and devote himself entirely to the writing of history. In the meantime, he had already finished the first version of *Al-khiṭaṭ* and two books dealing with the history of Egypt from the Muslim conquest up to the end of the Fatimid period (*ʿIqd jawāhir al-asfāt* and *Ittiʿāz al-hunafāʾ*). At that time, his historical project was clearly outlined: to cover the history of his native country to his own time.

His retirement coincided with his withdrawal from the academic race, and his life is often described as being marked by ascetism (*zuhd*), a quality that characterized him until his death. His burial place, which he himself specifically chose, is in the cemetery of the mystics, outside the gate of Cairo. His negative evaluation of the system of Mamluk patronage led to a political bias against his former masters, whom he depicts in harsh terms in his chronicle of their rule (*Al-sulūk*). He does not refrain from condemning some Mamluk practices that he regarded as anti-Islamic (for instance, the application of Mongol rules presumably preserved in the *Yāsa*).

Al-Maqrīzī performed the pilgrimage to Mecca several times (1388 and 1422) and on four occasions (1382, 1386, 1431, 1436) extended his stay to several months. During the last of these stays, he collected material that he used upon his return to Cairo to compose short treatises dealing with remote places, such as the Ḥaḍramawt and Abyssinia.

His attitudes towards Christians, as expressed in his books, are generally critical. As to converts, he considered that they were problematic in that their offspring later married daughters and sons of traditional Muslim families of Arab origin and occupied religious positions, thus holding power over Muslims without truly knowing their way of life in its real meaning. His works are considered a mine of information on Christians in all periods, and even his biographical dictionaries (*Al-taʾrīkh al-muqaḥḥā*

l-kabīr and *Durar al-ʿuqūd al-farīda fī tarājim al-aʿyān al-mufīda*) provide details about the Copts and converts.

His views on religion and his love of Hadith caused some of his contemporaries to view him as a *Zāhirī* (adept of the legal school of Ibn Ḥazm), i.e. a literalist. It appears that, on theological issues, he was closer to the *Ḥanbalīs*, since he praised one of their greatest representatives in the Mamluk period, Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), with whom he shared a disparaging assessment of Mamluk rule. His profession of faith (*Tajrīd al-tawḥīd al-mufīd*) testifies to his high estimation of *Ḥanbalī* views, since it is full of hidden references to the works of Ibn Taymiyya's disciple, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350).

Al-Maqrīzī died alone in his home in January-February 1442, having outlived his wife and sons. His nephew inherited his belongings, among them his autograph manuscripts.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-abnāʾ al-ʿumr*, ed. Ḥ. Ḥabashī, 4 vols, Cairo, 1969-72, iv, pp. 187-88

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-majmaʿ al-muʿassis li-l-muʿjam al-mufahris*, ed. Y.ʿA. al-R. al-Marʿashlī, 4 vols, Beirut, 1992-94, iii, pp. 58-60

Ibn Fahd, *Muʿjam al-shuyūkh*, ed. M. al-Zāhī and Ḥ. al-Jāsir, Riyadh, 1982, p. 63

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Al-Biqāʿī, *Unwān al-zamān bi-tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-l-aqrān*, ed. Ḥ. Ḥabashī, 5 vols, Cairo, 2001-, i, pp. 109-10

Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-ḍawʿ al-lāmiʿ ʿan ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ*, 12 vols, Cairo, 1934-36, ii, pp. 21-25

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Mamlūk Studies Review 7 (2003) [proceedings of the international conference *The Legacy of al-Maqrīzī (1364-1442)*, University of Notre Dame, 28-29 September 2001]

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- S. 'Āshūr, 'Adwā' jadīda 'alā l-mu'arrikh Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī wa-kitābātihi', *Ālam al-Fīkr* 14 (1983) 165-210
- F. Rosenthal, art. 'al-Maqrīzī', in *EL* 2
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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Al-sulūk li-ma'rīfat al-duwal wa-l-mulūk, 'The path to knowledge about dynasties and kings'

DATE Shortly before 1421

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Arabic

DESCRIPTION

It is not known precisely when al-Maqrīzī started working on this chronicle, though it was after he had finished writing the chronicles dealing with earlier periods (*Iqd jawāhir al-asfāt fī akhbār madīnat al-Fuṣṭāt*, from the Muslim conquest of Egypt to the Ikhshīdīd dynasty, and *Itti'āz al-ḥunafā' bi akhbār al-a'imma al-khulafā'*, covering the Fatimid dynasty), i.e. shortly before 1421. By 1428, the reputation of the book had already crossed the frontiers of the Mamluk realm, as a copy of it was requested by Timur-i Leng's son, Shāh Rukh. Al-Maqrīzī continued working on it until a few months before his death (the chronicle ends with the last month of the year 844 AH/April 1441).

The chronicle starts with the year 1171, when the Ayyubids seized power in Egypt, and then proceeds with their successors, the Mamluks. As the author explains in the introduction, the work is devoted to the Kurds and the Turks, who controlled Egypt until his own time. Before starting the chronicle, he sets the origins of these groups in a general framework, starting from the pre-Islamic period. He then speaks of the Buyids and Seljuks, which brings him to Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn), who took control of Egypt and started the dynasty of the Ayyubids.

Being annalistic in character, the chronicle is organized in sections, each corresponding to one year. Each section reports events in monthly chronological order and ends by referring to the most prominent persons who died in the course of the year. The author informs his reader that these obituaries are not intended to be comprehensive, as he is at the same time composing a biographical dictionary (not named in the introduction but to be identified as *Al-ta'riḫ al-muqaffā l-kabīr*, an unfinished project that extended to 16 volumes at al-Maqrīzī's death, and of which several autograph volumes have been preserved). The focus is obviously on the events that took place in Egypt and Syria, but data are also provided about surrounding realms and not infrequently about countries even further away, such as al-Andalus and India.

Christian-Muslim relations are mostly treated in the period concerning the crusades, but there is also information about diplomatic relations with the Latin states and Ethiopia, and about the *Reconquista* in the Iberian Peninsula.

Locally, al-Maqrīzī reports on all sorts of problems related to the Copts, documenting the destruction of churches and monasteries resulting from riots between Copts and Muslims, and the consequences of the harsh policy towards Christians, including the edicts banning the employment of Christians in the government administration and the various exactions, vexations and humiliations regarding dress codes, access to public buildings (such as baths) and means of travel (Christians had to ride asses rather than horses).

Conversion of Copts to Islam (and in some very rare cases the conversion of Muslims to Christianity) are also reported. Al-Maqrīzī generally expresses his feeling towards conversions to Islam in positive terms, but he sometimes stresses that converts could behave brutally towards their former coreligionists. Some of them are also described as taking their revenge on Muslims.

The book also details the problems caused by the presence of Latin merchants, mainly in Alexandria, Cairo and Damascus.

SIGNIFICANCE

The importance of this chronicle for the study of Christian-Muslim relations was recognized very early by various Orientalists, who edited and translated pertinent passages. Several of the sources used by al-Maqrīzī (though not named) have now been identified, published and studied, which somewhat detracts from the value of *Al-sulūk* as evidence for events that al-Maqrīzī did not witness himself. However, the work

remains one of the best sources for the Mamluk period, and al-Maqrīzī's interest in the fate of the Jewish and Christian communities makes this text an essential reference.

MANUSCRIPTS

1. Autograph:

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Yeni Cami 887 (vol. 1)

2. Copies:

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Aya Sofya 3369, 3374 (1429; vols 1-2)

MS London, BL – OR 2902 (1444; vol. 2)

MS Vat – Ar. 725 (1450; vol. 2)

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Fatih 4381-4390 (1474-76; 11 vols out of 13 – vols 1 and 13 lacking)

MS Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek – 1620 (1487; vol. 4)

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Aya Sofya 3372 (1489; vol. 4)

MS Cambridge, University Library – Qq.41 (15th century; covers the years 831-44 AH)

MS Cambridge, University Library – Qq.276 (15th century?; vol. 1)

MS Paris, BNF – Ar. 1728 (15th century; years 801-822 AH)

MS Dublin, Chester Beatty Library – 4102 (15th century?; vol. 8)

MS Istanbul, Köprülü Library – Fazıl Ahmad Pasha 1137 (15th century?; vol. 2 out of 8)

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Aya Sofya 3373, Fatih 4378, Aya Sofya 3371, 3376 (15th century?; complete set)

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Ashir Efendi 247, Aya Sofya 3370, 3375, Fatih 4380 (15th century?; complete set)

MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library – Fatih 4377, 4379 (15th century; vols 1 and 3)

MS Istanbul, Topkapı Saray – 2928 (15th century; complete set in 4 vols)

MS Damascus, National Library – 7304 (16th century?; vol. 1)

MS London, BL – Or. 9542 (16th century?; vol. 4)

MS Suhag, Rifā'ā Rāfi' al-Ṭaḥṭāwī Library – 6 *Ta'rikh* (16th century?)

MS Paris, BNF – Ar. 1726, 1727 (1631 and 1532; complete set)

MS Oxford, Bodleian Library – Poc. 293 (date unknown; vol. 1)

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MS Oxford, Bodleian Library – Marsh 260 (date unknown; years 760-810 AH)

MS Oxford, Bodleian Library – Bodl. 458 (date unknown; years 807-830 AH)

MS Oxford, Bodleian Library – Marsh 121 (date unknown; years 831-844 AH)

MS Vat – Ar. 759 (date unknown; vol. 2)

MS Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek – 1621 (date unknown; fragment of 20 fols for the years 584-92 and 644-48 AH)

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Ed. M.‘A. al-Q. ‘Aṭā, 8 vols, Beirut, 1997 (commercial edition)

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É. Quatremère, ‘Mémoire historique sur l’état du christianisme sous les deux dynasties des princes Mamlouks’, in É. Quatremère, *Mémoires géographiques et historiques sur l’Égypte et sur quelques contrées voisines*, 2 vols, Paris, 1811, ii, 220-66 (French trans. of passages related to the Christians under Mamluk rule)

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S.G. Massoud, *The chronicles and annalistic sources of the early Mam-luk Circassian period*, Leiden, 2007

*Al-mawā‘iẓ wa-l-i‘tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār;
Al-mawā‘iẓ wa-l-i‘tibār; Al-khiṭaṭ*, ‘Admonitions and reflections on the quarters and monuments’

DATE The first version was started around 1408 and completed around 1413; the second version was completed shortly after 1428.

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Arabic

DESCRIPTION

This work may be described as a topographical and archaeological description of Egypt in general and of Cairo in particular. Though the way was paved by authors who preceded al-Maqrīzī, and particularly by two of his contemporaries at the very beginning of the 15th century, *Al-khiṭaṭ* is generally recognized as a milestone in the writing of the history of Egypt from the point of view of its buildings. No other book ever reached the same level of comprehensiveness. However, it has now been demonstrated that the work of al-Maqrīzī's predecessors was instrumental in making it possible for him to achieve this result. It is also worth mentioning that he omitted, whether deliberately or not, to record hundreds of monuments, even including some built during his own lifetime.

The book is divided into two main parts, the first tracing the history of Egypt and its capital from the pre-Islamic period up to the Mamluks, and the second devoted to the capital's various quarters and the main buildings in them.

As part of his plan to retrace the monumental history of the country and its capital, the end of the book is dedicated to Egypt's other two religious communities: the Jews and the Copts. The latter are dealt with in great detail. The main sections of this part are: 1. the origin of the Copts; 2. their beliefs prior to their conversion to Christianity; 3. their conversion to Christianity; 4. their history under Islam, including two subsections where al-Maqrīzī describes the various heterodoxies and the question of the nature of God and Christ as held by each of these, and the festivals of the Copts; 5. their monasteries; 6. their churches.

Other references to events that concerned the Copts (such as the massive conversions to Islam as a consequence of persecutions) are scattered through the first part of the book and are in need of being reassessed.

SIGNIFICANCE

The importance of the part dealing with the Copts was soon recognized in the West, and it was not long before it was published and translated into various languages. Al-Maqrīzī drew on a myriad of sources, some of which are now considered lost, and these give his work its significance. For the Copts, he did not refrain from using Christian sources such as the works of al-Makīn ibn al-ʿAmīd (q.v.) and Saʿīd ibn al-Baṭrīq (q.v.). Since some of his sources, such as al-Shābushtī (d. 988; q.v.) on monasteries, have now been identified and published, this part has clearly lost some of its attractiveness for scholars interested in the history of Christianity in Egypt during the Islamic period. Nonetheless, *Al-khiṭaṭ* remains a first-hand source for descriptions of Christian buildings and for conversion to Islam during

the author's lifetime. Recent research has shown that his statements regarding the waves of conversion had been misinterpreted by modern scholarship.

MANUSCRIPTS

More than 200 copies are known to date, though no exhaustive list of MSS has been made since Wiet published his list in the introduction to his uncompleted critical edition started 100 years ago. Only autograph copies that have been identified in recent years are listed below.

First version:

MS Istanbul, Topkapı Saray – 1472 (covers material found in vol. 2 of the final version)

MS Istanbul, Topkapı Saray – 1405 (covers material found in vols 3-4 of the final version)

Final version:

MS Ann Arbor, Michigan University Library – Isl. 605 (vol. 3)

A preliminary redaction of the part regarding Coptic festivals is also found in al-Maqrīzī's notebook: MS Liège, University Library – 2232, fols 186-185v. (Although the source is not mentioned, it appears that al-Maqrīzī relied on al-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*, which is dependent on al-Waṭwāṭ's *Manāhij al-fikar wa-mabāhij al-ʿibar*.)

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Ed. Būlāq, 1853 (1270 A.H.), 2 vols

Part dealing with the Copts:

R. Griveau, 'Les fêtes des coptes', *Patrologia Orientalis* 10 (1915) 313-43 (French trans. of the section dealing with Coptic festivals in *Al-khiṭaṭ*, Būlāq ed., ii, p. 501; London ed., iv/2, pp. 1023-24)

L. Leroy, 'Les couvents des chrétiens', *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 13 (1908) 33-46, 192-204 (French trans. of the section dealing with Coptic monasteries in *Al-khiṭaṭ*, Būlāq ed., ii, pp. 501-10; London ed., iv/2, pp. 1025-59)

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- S.C. Malan, *A short history of the Copts and of their church translated from the Arabic of Tāqi-ed-Dīn El-Maqrizī*, London, 1873 (English trans. of part of the chapter dealing with Copts in *Al-khiṭaṭ*, Būlāq ed., ii, pp. 480-500; London ed., iv/2, pp. 968-1021)
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- H.J. Wetzer, *Taki-eddini Makrizii Historia Coptorum Christianorum in Aegypto Arabice, edita et in linguam latinam translata*, Solisbaci: In Libraria J.E. de Seideliana, 1828 (edition and Latin trans. of the chapter dealing with the conversion of the Copts to Christianity and the section regarding the Zuhra church in *Al-khiṭaṭ*, Būlāq ed., ii, pp. 482-501, 512-17; London ed., iv/2, pp. 968-1024, 1066-76)

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- N. Gardiner and F. Bauden, 'A recently discovered holograph fair copy of al-Maqrizī's *al-Mawā'iz wa-al-i'tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-al-āthār* (Michigan Islamic MS 605)', *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 2 (2011) 123-31
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Al-ilmām bi-akhbār man bi-arḍ al-Ḥubsh min mulūk al-Islām, 'The knowledge of the history of the Muslim kings in Abyssinia'

DATE April-May 1438

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Arabic

DESCRIPTION

This is one of the small treatises composed by al-Maqrīzī at the very end of his life. In the introduction, he specifies that it is based on oral testimonies he received while in Mecca in the year 839 AH (1436). He states that his informants were Muslims living in Abyssinia who had come to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage. The opuscle mainly deals with the description of the various kingdoms of which Abyssinia was composed, as al-Maqrīzī's aim was to detail the various states in that part of the world that were ruled by Muslims. However, he could not refrain from speaking of the conflicts that brought the Muslim leaders into opposition with the Hati, the Christian king of Amhara. Most of the information included concerns the first half of the 15th century.

SIGNIFICANCE

The treatise is regarded by the historians of Ethiopia as one of the earliest and most detailed accounts of the area at the end of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century. Al-Maqrīzī did not rely on written sources for this, but rather on oral testimonies from indigenous people, which makes his treatise a source of first-hand information.

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EDITIONS & TRANSLATIONS

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F.T. Rinck, *Macrizi Historia Regum Islamiticorum in Abyssinia. Interpretatus est et una cum Abulfedae Descriptione regionum nigritarum e codd. Biblioth. Leidensis Arabice edidit*, Leiden: Apud Sam. et Joh. Luchtmans, 1790 (edition and Latin trans.)

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Al-khabar 'an al-bashar, 'The history of humankind'

DATE Started shortly after 1433, completed in 1442

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Arabic

DESCRIPTION

Al-khabar 'an al-bashar is the last major work al-Maqrîzî compiled. He devoted the last years of his life to it after he had completed another major work, his biography of the Prophet (*Imtâ' al-asmâ'*). Conceived as an introduction (*madkhal*) to this latter work, *Al-khabar* consists of a history of mankind. It starts with the creation of the world, a geographical account of the earth divided into seven zones, and remarks about chronology. It continues with the appearance of the first human, Adam, and his offspring, and this leads al-Maqrîzî on to the ancestors of the Arabs and the several tribes to which they gave rise. This is all covered in volume 1. Volumes 2, 3 and 4 are devoted to the Arabs before Islam, tackling issues such as their genealogy, customs, religion and institutions. Al-Maqrîzî then concentrates on other peoples, focusing on the Persians, the Jews, the Greeks, the Byzantines and the Latins (vol. 5). The last volume deals with the prophets in general, and those mentioned in the Qur'an and in the Bible.

Al-Maqrîzî's aim in writing this history of mankind is explicitly stated in the introduction (MS Aya Sofya 3362, fols 4v-5): to distinguish the Arabs from other peoples. Given that the Prophet Muḥammad was a Hashimite, a Qurayshite and an Arab, and that God singled out the Banū Hāshim through the birth of the Prophet into their clan, it is essential to have a fair knowledge of the Arabs in order to show how the Hashimites should be appreciated and respected.

Still unpublished, *Al-khabar* is a source of exceptional quality due to the numerous sources used, many of which are now considered lost. However, as with many of his other works, al-Maqrīzī does not systematically reference his sources, which sometimes prevents identification with certainty. With the subjects it covers, it is also a further example of al-Maqrīzī's interest in other religions and the history of other peoples who were not necessarily part of *Dār al-Islām*, including in the pre-Islamic period. As demonstrated by M. Lecker ('Idol worship'), the section dealing with the idols worshipped by the Arabs represents one of the best sources on the subject. This may also be said of the book as a whole.

Aspects of Christian-Muslim relations appear in the last two volumes (5-6). In the penultimate volume (MS Fatih 4340), there is a chapter devoted to the Greeks and the Byzantines (fols 233-264v) where al-Maqrīzī relates the history of the Greek people from Antiquity to his own time, thus including the Byzantines. He then proceeds with the Franks, whose conquest of the territories under Byzantine rule is also recounted. One of the most interesting parts of this section (fols 259-263v) is al-Maqrīzī's contemporary account of the Latin states surrounding the Mediterranean, including the Italian and Iberian peninsulas, France and the islands (Sicily, Sardinia). The most compelling feature of this section is al-Maqrīzī's focus on the political systems current in the various states, demonstrating that he was concerned with other forms of power different from that found in Muslim lands. Though no source is quoted in this section, it may be deduced that he was informed orally and that his informant must have come from the Italian peninsula. Their meeting must have taken place shortly after 1414, because that is the last date referred to in this section concerning political events in the various states mentioned.

The information in the last volume (MS Fatih 4341) is of a different nature but also refers to Christians. Here, al-Maqrīzī relates the stories of the prophets, among them John the Baptist, the Virgin Mary, Joseph and Jesus. For Jesus, the data are organized in various sections whose titles appear in the margin: the annunciation and the pregnancy (fol. 202), the duration of the pregnancy (fol. 202v), the date of the delivery (fol. 202v), the birth (fol. 203), the meaning of the word 'Christ' (fol. 203v), the words Jesus spoke as a child (fol. 203v), a physical description of him (fol. 204), the flight to Egypt (fol. 204v), his miracles (205), his prophecies (fol. 206v), the Apostles (fol. 209v), his homilies (fol. 211), his resurrection (fol. 216v), Pentecost (fol. 219v), the meaning of Jesus' name (fol. 220), the meaning of the word 'God' (fol. 220), the meaning of

the Holy Spirit (fol. 220v). Al-Maqrīzī then proceeds with the question of the nature of Christ and the dissensions it created among Christians (fol. 221). Two final sections describe the apostolic mission and the spread of Christianity (fol. 233), and the fate of the Apostles after the resurrection (fol. 237). He concludes this chapter with matters pertaining to anti-Christian polemic, essentially the question of the nature of Christ (fols 240-244). It is in these parts that his discourse is the harshest, explaining that Christian teachings are pure blasphemy and that the only thing that is true and acceptable to sane minds (*al-'uqūl al-salīma*) is what is said in the Qur'an.

Al-Maqrīzī does not always cite sources openly, but it can be seen that he mainly refers to Islamic authorities, such as al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Ṭabarī and Ibn 'Asākir. He also mentions that he had access to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke as well as the pseudepigraphical Gospel of James and a Synaxarion (*Siniksār*). Sometimes, he also cites the Christian author al-Makīn ibn al-'Amīd (q.v.).

SIGNIFICANCE

Volumes 5 and 6 certainly deserve to be edited, translated and studied in fuller detail. It is rare for 15th-century authors to show such interest in Christians and the Bible (see e.g. the entry on al-Biqā'ī), and there can be no doubt that al-Maqrīzī's contribution to the debate is quite stimulating, given his stature as a historian better known for his works on the history of Egypt.

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EDITIONS & TRANSLATIONS

The work is unpublished, though it is part of a publication project (several chapters are being edited for the *Bibliotheca Maqriziana*).

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Frédéric Bauden