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## Reassessing the Significance of Archival Material in Mamluk Diplomatic Studies: A Survey of Florentine-Mamluk Relations through the Lens of Chancery Sources (Fifteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)

### Contextualization of the Corpus

Somewhere along miles of documentary material in the State Archives of Florence and the Laurentian Library of Florence lies a set of documents related to the exchanges established between the City of the Lily and the Mamluk Sultanate.<sup>1</sup> This corpus, aside from a few chronicles, constitutes the sole historical testimony available for outlining the framework of the diplomatic and trade relations maintained by these two powers from the third decade of the fifteenth century until the beginning of the sixteenth.<sup>2</sup> The aim of this article is to describe the essential features of such documentary material in order to highlight its diplomatic significance and to offer an overview of the historical development of these relations. Our purpose is also to show on what chancery modalities and strategies the dialogue between Florence and the sultanate could be established and how it developed.

During the first decades of the *Quattrocento*, Florence was pursuing a policy of military expansion that significantly modified the political balances in the center of the Italian peninsula in just a few years.<sup>3</sup> With the conquest of Pisa in 1406 and the acquisition of the harbors of Porto Pisano and Livorno in 1421, Florence definitely defeated its historical rival city and gained direct access to the sea.<sup>4</sup> The republic could now take a new maritime and commercial role, on a Mediterranean scale. The same year that they secured control of those two ports, the Florentine authorities established a system of commercial galleys based on the model of the

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<sup>1</sup> The documents are preserved in the following archival collections: Archivio di Stato di Firenze (ASF), Diplomatico, Varie IV; ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria; ASF, Signori e Relazioni di Oratori Fiorentini; ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici. Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (BML), Orientali, 455 A; BML, Cassetta Cesarini, Documenti Concilio.

<sup>2</sup> The relations between Florence and the Mamluk Sultanate were the subject of my Ph.D. dissertation: Alessandro Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion, Diplomatie et échanges entre Florence et le sultanat mamelouk (début XVe–début XVIe s.)” (University of Liège, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200–1575* (Oxford, 2006), 194.

<sup>4</sup> *Firenze e Pisa dopo il 1406: La creazione di un nuovo spazio regionale*, ed. Sergio Tognetti (Florence, 2010).



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Venetian navy.<sup>5</sup> The building and organization of the fleet was assigned to the *Consoli del Mare*.<sup>6</sup> This initiative responded to a *dirigiste* bent in the city rulers' maritime and commercial policy, and was a clear hint at their intention to exert more direct control over the merchants' activities, in contrast to the relative operative freedom until then enjoyed by Florentine financial companies in the main European and Mediterranean trade centers.<sup>7</sup>

The first destination of the new state fleet was the Mamluk Sultanate. The Florentines had long been aware of the huge profits that could be reaped in the Middle East, since the merchants of the city had for centuries been frequenting the markets of Egypt and Syria. However, until the fifteenth century, lacking institutions of their own in those lands, they had been compelled to seek protection from other European trading communities and to fit into their existing structures. Now, Florence claimed direct business and diplomatic partnership with the sultan of Cairo. To this end, in 1422 the *Signoria* sent two ambassadors to Barsbāy (r. 1422–38), the Florentine citizens Carlo Federighi and Felice Brancacci.<sup>8</sup> This mission was the first step of a diplomatic relationship that was to endure into the last years of the Mamluk regime. Florence was pursuing these exchanges for economic reasons (first among which was the purchase of spices) but also out of political—and symbolic—concerns: these relations would help forge a new image of the city, both within the Italian peninsula and in the Mediterranean world.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Mallett, *The Florentine Galleys in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1967).

<sup>6</sup> Michael Mallett, "The Sea Consuls of Florence in the Fifteenth Century," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 27 (1959): 156–69.

<sup>7</sup> Concerning this phase in the Florentine commercial policy, see Franco Franceschi, "Intervento del potere centrale e ruolo delle Arti nel governo dell'economia fiorentina del Trecento e del primo Quattrocento: Linee generali," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 558 (1993): 863–909; idem, "Istituzioni e attività economica a Firenze: considerazioni sul governo del settore industriale (1350–1450)," in *Istituzioni e società in Toscana nell'Età Moderna*, ed. Claudio Lamioni (Rome, 1994), 76–117.

<sup>8</sup> Several articles have been written about the first Florentine embassy to Cairo. Those works deal with different aspects of the mission: Armando Saporì, "I primi viaggi di Levante e di Ponente delle galee fiorentine," in idem, *Studi di Storia economica* (Florence, 1967), 3:3–21; Claudia Tripodi, "Viaggi di ambasciatori tra Firenze e Il Cairo nel XV secolo," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 122, no. 2 (2010): 411–40; Cristian Caselli, "Strategies for Transcultural Trade Relations: Florentine Attempts to Reproduce the Venetian Commercial System in the Mamluk Empire (First Half of the 15th Century)," in *Union in Separation: Diasporic Groups and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean (1100–1800)*, ed. Georg Christ (Rome, 2015), 267–84; Alessandro Rizzo, "Diplomatie sur le terrain: la première mission diplomatique florentine en territoire mamelouk," in *Culture matérielle et contacts diplomatiques entre l'Occident latin, Byzance et l'Orient islamique (XIe–XVIe siècle)*, ed. Frédéric Bauden (Leiden, 2021); idem "L'ambassade florentine de 1422 et l'établissement des relations commerciales avec les Mamelouks: les premiers documents" in *De la guerre à la paix en Méditerranée médiévale: acteurs, propagande, défense et diplomatie*, ed. Élisabeth Malamut and Mohamed Ouerfelli (Aix-en-Provence, 2021).



Florence could now present itself as the rightful heir to the Pisan maritime tradition and as a direct rival of Venetian trade.

It should first be noted that some of the diplomatic sources bearing testimony to these relationships have been partly studied in the past. More than a century and a half ago, Michele Amari published a large swath of these documents in *I diplomati Arabi del Reale Archivio Fiorentino*, a reference work for all historians who dealt with the relations between the Mamluks and the European powers.<sup>9</sup> However, this publication provides neither a diplomatic analysis nor appropriate historical study of the sources. A century after Amari, in two articles dating to the 1960s, John Wansbrough published and studied two unpublished Mamluk scrolls kept in Florence.<sup>10</sup> While remaining milestones in Mamluk studies, these publications fall short of exploiting the full historical potential of these sources. In fact, Amari's and Wansbrough's editions and analyses contain several errors or inaccuracies that can now be corrected thanks to recent progress in the field of Mamluk diplomatics. Such scientific obsolescence induced us to re-examine those documents.

The archival material related to Florentine-Mamluk relations is diverse in nature, but it is possible to group those sources in two major sets according to their place of origin. The first group includes original Mamluk documents in Arabic, released by the chancery in Cairo (*dīwān al-inshā'*). The second includes the documents drafted by the secretaries of the Florentine chancery for the registers of this office, including both Florentine texts and Italian versions of Mamluk documents.

As regards the diplomatic nature of these sources, the first group (i.e., the original Mamluk documents) may be divided into two categories: letters (*mukātabāt*) and decrees (*marāsīm*). In accordance with the canons of the *dīwān al-inshā'*, these documents are in the shape of scrolls (*darj*) of paper made of several sheets pasted together.<sup>11</sup> Each document is different in length (the longest scroll exceeds 20 meters).

These ten scrolls hold a special place in the field of Mamluk diplomatics for being some of the very few original documents from the *dīwān al-inshā'* preserved to this day. The chancery of Cairo based the preparation and drafting of such

<sup>9</sup> Michele Amari, *I diplomati arabi del R. Archivio fiorentino* (Florence, 1863); idem, *I diplomati arabi del R. Archivio fiorentino, Appendice* (Florence, 1867).

<sup>10</sup> John Wansbrough, "A Mamlūk Commercial Treaty Concluded with the Republic of Florence 894/1489," in *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, ed. Sámuel Miklós Stern (Oxford, 1965), 39–79; idem, "Venice and Florence in the Mamluk Commercial Privileges," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 28, no. 3 (1965): 483–523.

<sup>11</sup> Malika Dekkiche, "Le Caire, Carrefour des ambassades" (Ph.D. diss, University of Liège, 2011), 293–316.



documents on strict rules, as shown by the manuals composed by secretaries like al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) and al-Saḥmāwī (d. 868/1464).<sup>12</sup>

When dealing with letters (*mukātabāt*), these manuals distinguish three types: the *khalīfatīyāt*, written in the name of or addressed to the caliph; the *sultānīyāt*, issued or received by the sultan; and the *ikhwānīyāt*, exchanged by members of the administration.<sup>13</sup> All the Mamluk letters kept in Florence fall under the second category—*sultānīyāt*—and were issued by the sovereigns of Cairo in response to requests for commercial rights submitted by Florentine diplomats. Some of them were sent by the sultan to the Florentine government, while others are copies of documents addressed to the local authorities of the sultanate. In both cases, the documents were notifications that the sultan had received the ambassadors from Florence and responded favorably to their demands. The letters to the sultan’s representatives typically list the rights granted to the Florentines, subdivided in different articles or clauses.

The *marāsīm* announce the sultan’s orders.<sup>14</sup> This category includes a very wide range of diplomatic instruments. As in the case of the *mukātabāt*, the Mamluk decrees concerning Florentine trade comprise documents addressed to the Florentines and copies of *marāsīm* sent to local governors.

With regard to the corpus of testimonies produced by the Florentine chancery, these sources are either in Latin or Italian. Such documents are of various kinds: letters to the sultans or to the Mamluk authorities, letters of instructions for the ambassadors, final embassy reports, and translations of Mamluk letters and decrees.

## A Brief Overview of Florentine-Mamluk Relations through the Diplomatic Sources

The first Florentine embassy to Cairo is the richest in terms of preserved documentation. Thanks to such testimonies, it is possible to reconstruct this mission in all its stages.

The earliest preserved document presents the preliminary instructions given by the *Signoria* to the emissaries Federighi and Brancacci and dates back to

<sup>12</sup> Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-a’shā fī ṣinā’at al-inshā’*, ed. M. ‘A. al-R. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1913–19; 2nd ed., 1963); Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Saḥmāwī, *Al-Thaḡhr al-bāsim fī ṣinā’at al-kātib wa-al-kātim*, ed. Ashraf Muḥammad Anas (Cairo, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> Dekkiche, “Le Caire,” 280–81; Frédéric Bauden, “Ikhwāniyyāt Letters in the Mamluk Period: A Document (Muṭāla’a) Issued by al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s Chancery and a Contribution to Mamluk Diplomats,” in *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule: Political, Social and Cultural Aspects*, ed. Amalia Levanon (forthcoming).

<sup>14</sup> Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 11:107–12.



14 June 1422.<sup>15</sup> According to diplomatic usage, members of government would communicate the directives to the ambassadors orally before their recording in writing by the chancery. The document containing the instructions could take different names, such as *memoria* (report), *instructione* (instruction), *sommario* (summary), *nota* (note), *ricordança* (memorandum), *informatione* (information), or *mandato* (mandate), and its function was to specify the purpose of the mission and the means to achieve it.<sup>16</sup> The letter of instructions given to Federighi and Brancacci is named *nota et informatione*. It expresses the *Signoria's* willingness to establish regular commercial relations with the sultanate. The *nota* simultaneously betrays all the authorities' misgivings about the new diplomatic partner.

Brancacci's travel diary provides valuable testimony on the mission's evolution.<sup>17</sup> The *Diario* offers a detailed account of the embassy, from the practical aspects of the journey (means of transportation, accommodation, subsistence) to the description of the diplomats' psychological reactions. It also attests that at the close of complex negotiations the Florentine delegation actually secured the much-coveted commercial rights. This positive outcome is confirmed by three documents issued by the *dīwān al-inshā'* and by the ambassadors' final record. Barsbāy's letter to the Florentine authorities, dated 22 September 1422, represents the only original Mamluk document related to this mission that has been preserved.<sup>18</sup> A contemporary translation into Italian of this *mukātabah* was produced and kept in the Florentine chancery archives.<sup>19</sup> By means of this letter, Barsbāy granted commercial rights to the traders from Florence and informed the *Signoria* that he had ordered the issuing of four documents: two *muṭlaqs* (open orders) that were expressly requested by the members of the Florentine government and two *amthilah* (instructions, orders) for the representatives of his authority in Syria and Alexandria. The *muṭlaq* was a kind of decree containing general orders addressed to all the authorities of the sultanate. The *amthilah* were copies of the sultan's

<sup>15</sup> ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie, reg. 7, fols. 1r–3r.

<sup>16</sup> Ilaria Taddei, "La dynamique de l'échange diplomatique à partir de la lettre d'instruction (Florence, XIVe–XVe siècle)," in *La politique par correspondance: Usages politiques de la lettre en Italie, XIV–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Jean Boutier, Sandro Landi, and Olivier Rouchon (Rennes, 2009), 81–108; Isabella Lazzarini, "The Preparatory Work: From Choice to Instructions," in *Italian Renaissance Diplomacy: A Sourcebook*, ed. Monica Azzolini and Isabella Lazzarini (Toronto, 2017), 11–16.

<sup>17</sup> Felice Brancacci, "Diario di Felice Brancacci ambasciatore con Carlo Federighi al Cairo per il Comune di Firenze," ed. Dante Catellacci, *Archivio storico italiano* 8, no. 126 (1881): 157–88, 326–34; Mahnaz Yousefzadeh, *Florence's Embassy to the Sultan of Egypt: An English Translation of Felice Brancacci's Diary* (New York, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll A.

<sup>19</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1422/09/22, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 3r–4r.



orders sent to the local officers.<sup>20</sup> The original specimens of these four documents have not been preserved. However, the Florentine Archives hold the translations of the two open orders that were given to Brancacci and Federighi: a *muṭlaq* probably based on the instructions sent to the governor of Syria (22 September 1422)<sup>21</sup> and a *muṭlaq* explicitly addressed by the sultan to the governors and the officers of Alexandria (25 September 1422).<sup>22</sup> These two sources mention all the rights related to Florentine trade in Syria and Egypt. The text kept in the Florentine registers specifies that these translations were made by Abraham, the Florentines' translator in Alexandria, and by Tommaso Cardo from Nicosia, probably in the port city or in Cyprus.<sup>23</sup>

The final report submitted by Brancacci and Federighi dates to 17 February 1423.<sup>24</sup> In accordance with diplomatic custom, this instrument had the function of informing the authorities about the outcome of the mission.<sup>25</sup> On the basis of the contents of the *memoria*, Florentine merchants were finally recognized as an autonomous community and were granted a *funduq* and a consul in Alexandria.

In the following decades—until the 1480s—the diplomatic contacts between the two powers are attested by documents in Italian or Latin held in the registers of the Florentine chancery. No original Mamluk documents are preserved for these fifty years.

Coming back to the first part of the century, in 1435 the Florentine authorities sent a letter to Barsbāy. The Latin version is dated 15 January 1435.<sup>26</sup> In this document, the members of the government apologize for a previous interruption of galley travels and introduce the new consul of the Florentine *natione*, Arnaldo Manelli, to the sultan.

Ten years later (11 May 1445), the *Signoria* addressed a letter of credential to Sultan Jaqmaq (r. 1438–53), introducing galley captain and emissary Giovenco della Stufa.<sup>27</sup> The Florentine citizen sailed along the North African coast to Egypt,

<sup>20</sup> Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 7:219–23; Donald S. Richards, *Mamluk Administrative Documents from St. Catherine's Monastery* (Louvain-Paris-Walpole, 2011), 18–19; idem, "A Mamlūk Emir's 'Square' Decree," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 54 (1991): 63.

<sup>21</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1422/09/22, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1r–2v.

<sup>22</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, 25/9/1422, fols. 1r–2v.

<sup>23</sup> Rizzo, "Le Lys et le Lion," 2:275, 279, 281.

<sup>24</sup> ASF, Signori e Relazioni di Oratori Fiorentini, n. 2, fol. 109r–v.

<sup>25</sup> Isabella Lazzarini, "The Final Report," in *Italian Renaissance Diplomacy*, ed. Azzolini and Lazzarini, 57–60.

<sup>26</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 33, fols. 179r–180r. From now on, when we deal with a letter sent from Florence to the sultanate, we refer to copies in Italian or in Latin that are kept in the registers of the archives. These documents most likely were translated into Arabic in the Mamluk territory.

<sup>27</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 36, fols. 102v–103r.



where he renewed commercial agreements with the sultan. On that same occasion, the authorities of the Republic wrote two more letters introducing Giovenco to the *nāzir al-khāṣṣ* and to the governor (*nāʿib*) of Alexandria.<sup>28</sup>

In 1465, the government of Florence sent a *credenziale* to Sultan Khushqadam (r. 1460–67) and another one to the *nāʿib* of Alexandria offering Mariotto Squarcialupi as the new consul of the Florentine community.<sup>29</sup> These documents were also a means to reaffirm the agreements between the republic and the sultanate. Very likely, it was Squarcialupi who brought the letters to the two recipients, acting as a direct intermediary between the two governments.

In those years, thanks to the commercial stipulations concluded with the Egyptian court, Florentine tradesmen could increase their commercial activities in market towns such as Alexandria and Damascus.

On 28 February 1476, with trade access once more in view, the Florentine authorities sent a letter to Sultan Qāyṭbāy (r. 1468–96) introducing their citizen Zanobio Carnesecchi, who travelled to Egypt to recover the goods of a Florentine merchant, Rinaldo Altovita.<sup>30</sup> These goods had been brought to Alexandria by Louis Aimé, a citizen of Marseille, who died in Egypt.

A few years later, on 5 December 1484, Qāyṭbāy sent a letter to Lorenzo de' Medici (r. 1469–92) to inform him that after a diplomatic mission in Florence, the Mamluk ambassador, Muḥammad ibn Maḥfūz, was back in Egypt.<sup>31</sup> On that occasion, Lorenzo had solicited a renewal of commercial agreements and offered precious gifts to the sultan's emissary. The letter, preserved only in its Italian translation, attests to Qāyṭbāy's favorable response to the Florentine requests.

In the following years, diplomatic activity between Cairo and Florence became particularly intense. Indeed, aside from the traditional commercial relations, the two states were involved in a sensitive political situation in which Lorenzo de' Medici was to play an important role. In those years, the Mamluk Sultanate and many European states were engaged in disputes over the Ottoman prince Cem. After the death of Mehmed II (r. 1444–81), his son Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), feeling threatened by the power of his brother Cem, had forced him to leave Ottoman

<sup>28</sup> ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, reg. 36, fol. 103r–v.

<sup>29</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 45, fols. 25v–26v.

<sup>30</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 47, fol. 34r–v.

<sup>31</sup> Rizzo, "Le Lys et le Lion," 1:113–14.



territory.<sup>32</sup> The prince had initially taken refuge in the Mamluk Sultanate (1481).<sup>33</sup> Subsequently, he reached an agreement with the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitallers, Pierre d'Aubusson, who provided him hospitality in Rhodes (1482) and then transferred him to France (1483).<sup>34</sup> The French kings Louis XI (r. 1461–83) and Charles VIII (r. 1483–98) were among the sovereigns who, concerned with the Ottomans' increasing military power, attempted to hold Cem prisoner as a means of retaliation against the Turkish sultan.<sup>35</sup> Among these rulers were also Mathias I, king of Hungary (r. 1458–90), and Pope Innocent VIII (r. 1484–92). It was, in fact, the pontiff who called on Lorenzo de' Medici (to whom he was bound by family ties) for help and intermediation.<sup>36</sup> Lorenzo had good relations with the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitallers and the French court. At the same time, the Republic of Florence had for several years maintained commercial and diplomatic exchanges with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup> In 1483, the Turkish ambassador Ismā'īl went to Florence to renew trade relations before continuing on to Savoy, where Cem was detained at that time,<sup>38</sup> and Lorenzo instructed the Florentine merchant and diplomat Paolo da Colle to accompany Ismā'īl to Savoy. The present study does not purport to examine all the diplomatic negotiations relating to Bayezid's brother. What is relevant here is the fact that Da Colle would be, a few years later, sent to Egypt to meet Qāyrbāy, who, given the increasing threat posed by the Ottomans, was particularly interested in Cem's fate. On 3 June 1486, the Florentine authorities sent a letter to the Mamluk ruler commending the ambassador to him.<sup>39</sup> A note in the *Protocolli* of Lorenzo's letters provides evidence that on 6 June 1486 he wrote a letter to Qāyrbāy and to *Malfora* (i.e., the aforementioned

<sup>32</sup> George Viviliers Jourdan, "The Case of Prince Djem: A Curious Episode in European History," *The Irish Church Quarterly* 8, no. 32 (1915): 298–312; Ahmad Darrāj, "Jam Sulṭān wa-al-diblūmāsiyah al-duwalīyah," *Al-Majallah al-tārīkhīyah al-Miṣrīyah* 8 (1959): 201–42; Halil Inalcik, "A Case Study in Renaissance Diplomacy: The Agreement between Innocent VIII and Bayezid II Regarding Djem Sultan," in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Halil Inalcik (Bloomington, 1993), 345; Nicolas Vatin, *Sultan Djem* (Ankara, 1997).

<sup>33</sup> Viviliers Jourdan, *The Case of Prince Djem*, 298; Carl F. Petry, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamlūk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāyrbāy and Qānsūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* (Seattle, 1993), 91.

<sup>34</sup> Viviliers Jourdan, *The Case of Prince Djem*, 299. See also: Nicolas Vatin, *Rhodes et l'ordre de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem* (Paris, 2000), 17–40.

<sup>35</sup> Viviliers Jourdan, *The Case of Prince Djem*, 299–300.

<sup>36</sup> Lorenzo de' Medici, *Lettere (1486–1487)*, vol. 10, ed. Melissa Meriam Bullard (Florence, 2003), 287.

<sup>37</sup> Lorenzo Tanzini, "Il Magnifico e il Turco: Elementi politici, economici e culturali nelle relazioni fra Firenze e Impero Ottomano al tempo di Lorenzo de Medici," *Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea* 4 (2010): 271–89.

<sup>38</sup> Franz Babinger, "Lorenzo de' Medici e la corte ottomana," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 121, no. 3 (1963): 305–61.

<sup>39</sup> Wansbrough, "A Mamlūk Commercial Treaty," 42.





diplomat, Ibn Maḥfūz) together with another letter addressed to the “great Drago-man of Cairo,” containing instructions for Da Colle.<sup>40</sup> These letters have not been preserved.

Thanks to a letter addressed by the authorities of the republic to the Florentine consul in Pera on 20 December 1487, we learn that Paolo da Colle had been sent to Cairo to negotiate the affair of Cem’s detention as well as commercial issues.<sup>41</sup> This document informed the representative of the Florentine trading community in Pera that Qāyṭbāy had responded positively to Florence’s requests. Da Colle’s diplomatic mission did not lead to a definitive settlement, because the ambassador died in Egypt. However, the Florentine Archives contain an undated document that is probably—as Wansbrough suggested—a draft of the agreements between the Florentine ambassador and the sultan.<sup>42</sup> In order to reach a definitive accord on the Ottoman prince and on trade matters, Qāyṭbāy decided to again send his emissary, Ibn Maḥfūz, to Florence.

According to the Florentine chronicles of the time, the Mamluk ambassador arrived in Florence in November 1487, bringing rich gifts for Lorenzo and the members of the *Signoria*.<sup>43</sup> In that circumstance, a group of influential tradesmen of the city drafted a document, dated 27 November 1487, in which they presented a number of commercial requests in addition to those already granted to the Florentines in previous years.<sup>44</sup> This document refers explicitly to two types of rights: those originally conceded to the merchants of Venice and then extended to the Florentines, and those directly granted to the citizens of Florence. In particular, the first series of *capitoli* lists—in the same order—the clauses contained in a decree issued to the authorities of Alexandria concerning Venetian trade in October 1442 by Sultan Jaqmaq.<sup>45</sup> The fact that a copy of this *marsūm* is held in the Florentine Archives demonstrates that the Venetian model remained the yardstick for Florentine merchants active in the Middle East.<sup>46</sup> The specific rights

<sup>40</sup> Babinger, “Lorenzo de’ Medici,” 350.

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Müller, *Documenti sulle relazioni delle città toscane coll’Oriente cristiano e coi Turchi fino all’anno 1531* (Florence, 1879), 237.

<sup>42</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1488 B, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fol. 6; Wansbrough, “A Mamlūk Commercial Treaty,” 45.

<sup>43</sup> Luca Landucci, *Diario Fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516*, ed. Iodoco Del Badia (Florence, 1883), 52; Lorenzo Montemagno Ciseri, “Camelopardalis: storia naturale e straordinaria della giraffa di Lorenzo il Magnifico,” *Interpres: rivista di studi quattrocenteschi* 31 (2012/2013): 354–55; Alamanno Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini, dal 1282 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli fino al 1506*, ed. Giuseppe Aiazzi (Florence, 1840), 143.

<sup>44</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1487/11/27, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, cc. 1r–2r.

<sup>45</sup> *Diplomatarium veneto-levantinum sive acta et diplomata res venetas graecas atque levantis*, ed. Georg Martin Thomas and Riccardo Predelli (Venice, 1880–99), 2:353–64.

<sup>46</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Atti Pubblici, Spoglio 3, num. 4.



accorded to the citizens of Florence, for their part, are listed in an undated document in Italian.<sup>47</sup>

As regards the political reasons for Ibn Maḥfūz's journey to Florence, Qāyṭbāy wished to negotiate prince Cem's transfer from France to a place where he could become a greater threat to Bayezid. More specifically, as Lorenzo explained on 9 December 1487 in a letter addressed to the Florentine *oratore* in Rome, Giovanni Lanfredini, the Mamluk ruler hoped that, through Lorenzo's mediation, the Ottoman prince would be transferred to Rome.<sup>48</sup> From there, the pope could launch a crusade against the Ottoman Empire in order to replace Bayezid with his brother. These negotiations succeeded, and Cem finally arrived in Rome in March 1489.<sup>49</sup>

In the meantime, the authorities of Florence were preparing a new embassy to the Mamluk Sultanate with a view to obtain from the Mamluk chancery an official document defining the conditions of Florentine trade in Egypt and Syria. The government designated Luigi della Stufa as ambassador to fulfill this mission. He would accompany Ibn Maḥfūz on his return journey to Cairo, where he would meet Qāyṭbāy.

On 15 November 1488, the representatives of the Florentine government imparted the official instructions to Della Stufa. The document containing these directives is preserved in the registers of the chancery.<sup>50</sup> The Florentine Archives also keep a copy of all the commercial clauses that Della Stufa was supposed to negotiate in Egypt.<sup>51</sup> The Florentine diplomat must have brought the original document with him as a draft for the final agreement.

Della Stufa's diplomatic journey in Egypt and the different phases of the negotiation process are substantiated by two kinds of sources: letters from the ambassador to the members of the republic government or to Lorenzo de' Medici,<sup>52</sup> and journals penned by two eyewitnesses. The first diary, held in the Florentine Archives Corsi Salviati and published in 1958 by G. Corti, contains the travel report of the priest Zanobi del Lavacchio, who went with Della Stufa to Egypt.<sup>53</sup> The sec-

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Lorenzo De' Medici, *Lettere (1487–1488)*, vol. 11, ed. Melissa Meriam Bullard (Florence, 2004), 487–92.

<sup>49</sup> Louis Thuasne, *Djem-sultan, fils de Mohammed II, frère de Bayezid II (1459–1495), d'après les documents originaux en grande partie inédits, étude sur la question d'Orient à la fin du XVe siècle* (Paris, 1892), 227.

<sup>50</sup> ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie, 21, fols. 79v.–80r.

<sup>51</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1488, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1r–5r.

<sup>52</sup> These letters are published in the article: Patrizia Meli, "Firenze di fronte al mondo islamico: Documenti su due ambasciate (1487–1489)," *Annali di Storia di Firenze* 4 (2009): 243–73.

<sup>53</sup> Zanobi Del Lavacchio, *Relazione di un viaggio al Soldano d'Egitto e in Terra Santa*, ed. Gino Corti, *Archivio storico italiano* 116 (1958): 247–66.



ond one, held in the Ricciardiana Library and published in 2010 by Marina Montesano, is the work of Michele da Figline, who, in the course of his pilgrimage to the Holy Places, mentions his meeting with the Florentine delegation in Cairo.<sup>54</sup>

Della Stufa's mission was successful: on 31 October 1489, the Florentine diplomat obtained from the sultan an official document listing all the rights conceded to the citizens of Florence (and those renewed). This decree, containing 32 clauses, is addressed to all the authorities of the sultanate.<sup>55</sup> On 18 November 1489, a letter from Qāyṭbāy informs Lorenzo that all the rights requested by his emissary have been granted.<sup>56</sup> As had been the case with the 1422 mission, the letter to the diplomatic interlocutors together with the copy of the document addressed to the representatives of the sultan's authority in the sultanate formally possess certification status for the decisions of the Mamluk ruler.

A few years after Della Stufa's journey, the Florentine government sent a new diplomatic mission to the Egyptian capital. The only available sources documenting this embassy are three letters issued by the *dīwān al-inshā'* and held in Florence,<sup>57</sup> concerning the renewal of trade agreements between that city and the sultanate. The *mukātabāt* are respectively addressed to the governor of Syria (25 Jumādā I 902/29 January 1497),<sup>58</sup> to the governor of Alexandria (7 Jumādā II 902/10 February 1497),<sup>59</sup> and to the representatives of political power in Florence (10 Jumādā II 902/13 February 1497).<sup>60</sup> They do not specify the names of the diplomats who carried out the negotiations. The diplomatic talks likely began under Qāyṭbāy and were successfully concluded under his son al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 1496–98).

Nine years later, a new document testifies to the resumption of relations between Florence and Cairo. The decree, dating to 18 Dhū al-Qa'dah 911/12 April 1506, is the first of a series of diplomatic sources attesting the continuation of exchanges between the two powers into the last years of the Mamluk regime.<sup>61</sup> This document, addressed by Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–16) to all the authorities of his domain, bears all the features of a renewal of the rights granted

<sup>54</sup> Marina Montesano, *Da Figline a Gerusalemme: Viaggio del prete Michele in Egitto e in Terrasanta (1489–1490), Con il testo originale di ser Michele* (Rome, 2010).

<sup>55</sup> BML, Orientali 455 A, scroll A.

<sup>56</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll D.

<sup>57</sup> Concerning this embassy and the three letters see: A. Rizzo, "Three Mamluk Letters Concerning the Florentine Trade in Egypt and Syria: A New Interpretation," in *Mamluk Cairo: A Crossroads for Embassies*, ed. Frédéric Bauden and Malika Dekkiche (Leiden, 2019), 782–97.

<sup>58</sup> BML, Orientali 455 A, scroll B; Cassetta Cesarini, Doc. Conc. 20.

<sup>59</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll C; BML, Cassetta Cesarini, Doc. Conc. 21.

<sup>60</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll I.

<sup>61</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll F.



by Qāyṭbāy to Luigi della Stufa. Some months later, when Qānṣūh sent his ambassador Taghrībirdī to Venice, a Florentine delegation met the Mamluk emissary.<sup>62</sup> Two documents inform us about the results of this meeting: a letter sent by Florence to the sultan (13 April 1507)<sup>63</sup> and a decree issued by Qānṣūh and aimed at the community of Florence (12 Jumādā II 913/19 October 1507).<sup>64</sup> By means of the letter of 13 April, the members of the Florentine government informed the ruler of Cairo that the citizens of Florence had been guaranteed freedom of circulation and trade on Mamluk territory by Taghrībirdī. The *marsūm* notified the Florentines that the diplomat had reported to his sovereign the outcomes of his mission.

The following year (November 1508), Qānṣūh issued a safe-conduct to the benefit of the Florentines. This document is preserved in its Italian copy.<sup>65</sup>

The last diplomatic documents concerning relations between Florence and Cairo are a letter and a decree from 14 Rabīʿ I 916/21 June 1510.<sup>66</sup> The Florentine Archives also contain their Italian translations, erroneously dated 1509.<sup>67</sup> The *mukātabah* and *marsūm* represent the last documented agreements between the two powers. Seven years later, the Ottoman army would conquer Egypt, putting an end to the Mamluk Sultanate and causing significant damage to the central archives of Cairo.

## Validity and Functioning of the Documentation

The corpus of documents kept in Florence makes it possible to sketch the history of Florentine-Mamluk exchanges over a period of approximately ninety years. These documents highlight a varied array of rights, the practical effects of which can be found in other kinds of sources, such as the deeds drafted by Venetian notaries in cities like Alexandria or Damascus.<sup>68</sup> The notarial documents shed light on the commercial and legal transactions conducted by the Florentine citizens involved in trading in Egypt and Syria. Among the most significant rights granted by the sultan was the possibility to be represented by consuls, who are often the main actors of the deeds.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>62</sup> John Wansbrough, "A Mamluk ambassador to Venice," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26, no. 3 (1963): 503–30.

<sup>63</sup> ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, n. 55, fol. 202r–v.

<sup>64</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll H.

<sup>65</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1508/11/00, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fol. 1.

<sup>66</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll E.

<sup>67</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1509/07/02, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1v–2v; 1509/07/02 (B), Riformagioni Atti pubblici, fols. 3, 1v–2v

<sup>68</sup> Rizzo, "Le Lys et le Lion," 1:20–21.

<sup>69</sup> We know the names of five Florentine consuls in Alexandria: Ugolino di Vieri Rondinelli (August 1422–October 1422), Antonio Minerbetti (November 1422), Francesco Manelli (1425–34), Mar-



Despite the relative abundance of such testimonies, the bulk of business handled by the Florentines never matched that of other trading communities operating on Mamluk territory. Florence, for instance, was never on equal footing with Venice in terms of the profits made by their respective merchants, especially since the volume of its trading activities—for reasons that we cannot analyze here—was limited.<sup>70</sup> However, it should be stressed that unlike other communities, Florence, by virtue of its diplomacy, always succeeded in maintaining peaceful relations with the Mamluks. Sources show that Florence's exchanges with the sultanate were never tainted by periods of conflicts as occurred with other powers, such as the Crown of Aragon or the Venetian Republic, for reasons ranging from piracy to non-payment for their cargos of spices.<sup>71</sup>

The letters and decrees preserved in Florence never specify how long the rights granted by the sultans were meant to remain in force. However, if attention is paid to the dates on those documents, it will be noticed that the agreements were renewed at a frequency of roughly ten years. This period matches that of the pact sealed between the Prophet Muḥammad and the Quraysh in Ḥudaybiyah (628), which traditionally constitutes the legal basis for the agreements negotiated between Muslim authorities and non-Muslims.<sup>72</sup> This treaty secured a ten-year moratorium between the Prophet and his enemies in their armed conflict, and jurists later emphasized that this instituted a precise deadline for the validity of this type of agreement. For the same reason, the armistices between the Mamluks and the Crusader states in the second half of the thirteenth century usually specify a ten-year term.<sup>73</sup> In the following period, after the fall of Acre (1291), when *hudan* (truces) were no longer regulating relations between the Mamluks and the Christian powers, the diplomatic documents tended not to specify the period of validity of the stipulations. However, based on the dates of the decrees and letters preserved in Florence it appears that a period of ten years was also maintained for diplomatic negotiations concluded in peaceful conditions.

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iotto Squarcialupi (1434–56; 1465), Baldo di Ridolfi (1444–45). Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 1:374–77.

<sup>70</sup> Eliyahu Ashtor, “The Venetian Supremacy in Levantine Trade: Monopoly or Pre-Colonialism?” *Journal of European Economic History* 3 (1974): 5–53; Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 1:336–42.

<sup>71</sup> Damien Coulon, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d’Orient au Moyen Âge: Un siècle de relations avec l’Égypte et la Syrie-Palestine (ca. 1330–ca. 1430)* (Madrid-Barcelona, 2004), 42–51; Francisco Apellániz, *Pouvoir et finance en Méditerranée pré-moderne: le deuxième État Mamelouk et le commerce de épices (1382–1517)* (Barcelona, 2009).

<sup>72</sup> Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, 1955), 210–13; Maria Pia Pedani, “La dimora della pace: Considerazioni sulle capitolazioni tra i Paesi Islamici e l’Europa,” *Quaderni di Studi Arabi: Studi e testi* 2 (1996): 15.

<sup>73</sup> Peter Malcom Holt, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy (1260–1290): Treaties of Baybars and Qalāwūn with Christian Rulers* (Leiden-New York, 1995), 4, 17, 33, 41, 48, 56, 72, 108.



Equally notable is the mode chosen by the Mamluks to grant and guarantee commercial rights to European merchants during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The diplomatic procedures and the instruments validating the decisions of the sultans have seldom been studied with due attention.<sup>74</sup> However, analysis of the Mamluk documents preserved in Florence allows us to form a precise idea of Cairo's strategy for the regulation of its relations with the Florentine and other trading communities until the fall of the sultanate.<sup>75</sup>

When a foreign diplomatic delegation arrived in Cairo with specific commercial requests, the sultan's first response was a letter to the government represented by the ambassadors, accepting their requests and granting them the solicited rights. This *mukātabah*—usually rather brief—referred to the stipulations in general terms, without ever specifying all the commercial rights. In contrast, in the letters or decrees that the secretaries of the *dīwān al-inshā'* were instructed to draft for the representatives of the sultan's authority in the cities and provinces of Egypt and Syria, the trade conditions were listed in detail. Such documents, with all the rights divided into different chapters or clauses, were intended to inform local governors and officers of the sultan's decisions that they were expected to enforce. On the sultan's order, these *mukātabāt* and *marāsīm* were then copied by the scribes of the chancery. Once these copies had been completed, they were signed by the Mamluk ruler and handed to the foreign ambassadors. In addition to informing the diplomatic interlocutors about the commercial rules applied to their merchants, such diplomatic tools performed the function of certifying the decisions of the sultans from a legal point of view. In turn, reply letters guaranteed the validity of these copies. The whole set of documents—i.e., the letter sent to the foreign government, and the decrees and letters addressed to the local authorities as well as their copies—made the sultan's orders effective and certificated their legitimacy. All these written instruments formed a kind of “documentary network,” within which no one piece was completely valid without the others.

<sup>74</sup> Among the few studies that have examined the diplomatic characteristics of the Mamluk documents to European powers, see: Gladys Frantz-Murphy, “Identity and Security in the Mediterranean World ca. AD 640–ca. 1517,” in *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth International Congress of Papyrology*, ed. Traianos Gagos and Adam Hyatt (Ann Arbor, 2010), 253–64; idem, “Negotiating the Last Mamluk-Venetian Commercial Decree (922–3/1516–7): Commercial Liability from the 6th/12th to the Early 10th/16th Century,” in *Mamluk Cairo*, ed. Bauden and Dekkiche, 749.

<sup>75</sup> Concerning this diplomatic practice, see Alessandro Rizzo, “L'ambassade florentine de 1422 et l'établissement des relations commerciales avec les Mamelouks : les premiers documents” in *De la guerre à la paix en Méditerranée médiévale*, ed. Malamut and Ouerfelli; idem, “Travelling and Trading Through Mamluk Territory: Chancery Documents Guaranteeing Mobility to Christian Merchants,” in *History and Society during the Mamluk Period (1250–1517)*, Mamluk Studies 3, ed. Bethany Walker and Abdelkader Al-Ghouz (Göttingen, 2021), 493–97.



The diplomatic practice just described, developed by the Mamluk administration in the fourteenth century for exchanges with other European powers (especially the Republics of Venice and Ragusa), was used repeatedly to manage relations with Florence (in the embassies dated 1422–23, 1489, 1497, and 1510).<sup>76</sup> The continuity and profit of Florentine trade in Mamluk Egypt and Syria demonstrate the effectiveness of this strategy.<sup>77</sup> Thanks to the documents and the documentary practices examined, together with all the other symbolic and practical modalities of diplomatic dialogue (exchange of gifts, oral messages, ceremonial, etc.), the Florentine merchant community was able to buy and sell merchandise in the main Mamluk trading centers until the collapse of the sultanate.

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<sup>76</sup> See Frédéric Bauden's study on the state of research on Mamluk diplomatic studies; this work includes also a survey of the documents related to the diplomatic relations by and with the Mamluk Sultanate: Frédéric Bauden, "Mamluk Diplomats: The Present State of Research," in *Mamluk Cairo*, ed. Bauden and Dekkiche, 1–104.

<sup>77</sup> Rizzo, "Le Lys et le Lion," 1:331–52.



## APPENDIX

Survey of the preserved chancery documents related to the exchanges between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Republic of Florence. The documents—originals (o) or copies (c)<sup>78</sup>—are listed by embassies.

1422–23

### Florentine embassy to Cairo

Ambassadors: Carlo Federighi and Felice Brancacci.

- Letter of instructions given by the *Signoria* to the emissaries dated 14 June 1422<sup>79</sup> (c).
- Letter from al-Ashraf Barsbāy to the Florentine authorities dated 5 Shawwāl 825/22 September 1422<sup>80</sup> (o–c).
- Decree (open orders) issued by al-Ashraf Barsbāy and addressed to the authorities of the sultanate (probably in Syria) dated 5 Shawwāl 825/22 September 1422<sup>81</sup> (c).
- Decree (open orders) issued by al-Ashraf Barsbāy and addressed to the authorities of Alexandria dated 8 Shawwāl 825/25 September 1422<sup>82</sup> (c).
- Final report of the ambassadors to the *Signoria* dated 17 February 1423<sup>83</sup> (c).

1435

### Florentine embassy to Cairo

- Letter from the Florentine authorities to al-Ashraf Barsbāy dated 15 January 1435<sup>84</sup> (c).

<sup>78</sup> By the term “copy” we refer both to the Florentine documents (letters sent to the sultans, instructions given to the ambassadors, reports of the emissaries) and the translations of the Mamluk documents copied in the registers of the Florentine chancery.

<sup>79</sup> ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie, reg. 7, fols. 1r–3r; Amari, *I diplomati*, 331–35 (no. XXXVII of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:269–73.

<sup>80</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll A; Amari, *I diplomati*, 165–68 (no. XXXVII of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:19–39. Translation: ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1422/09/22, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 3r–4r; Amari, *I diplomati*, 336–37 (no. XXXVIII of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:275–76.

<sup>81</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1422/09/22, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1r–2v; Amari, *I diplomati*, 338–40 (no. XXXIX of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:277–79.

<sup>82</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, 25/9/1422, fols. 1r–2v; Amari, *I diplomati*, 341–43 (no. XL of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:281–84.

<sup>83</sup> ASF, Signori e Relazioni di Oratori Fiorentini, n. 2, fol. 109r–v; Amari, *I diplomati*, 344–46 (no. XLI of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” vol. 2, 285–87.

<sup>84</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 33, fols. 179r–180r; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 15–16 (no. V); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:289–90.





1445

## Florentine embassy to Cairo

Ambassador: Giovenco della Stufa

- Letter from the Florentine authorities to al-Zāhir Jaqmaq dated 11 May 1445<sup>85</sup> (c).
- Letter from the Florentine authorities to the *nāzir al-khāṣṣ* dated 11 May 1445<sup>86</sup> (c).
- Letter from the Florentine authorities to the governor of Alexandria dated 11 May 1445<sup>87</sup> (c).

1465

## Travel of the Florentine consul Mariotto Squarcialupi to Egypt

- Letter from the Florentine authorities to al-Zāhir Khushqadam dated 14 August 1465<sup>88</sup> (c).
- Letter from the Florentine authorities to the governor of Alexandria dated 14 August 1465<sup>89</sup> (c).

1476

## Zanobio Carnesecchi's travel to Cairo

- Letter from the Florentine authorities to Qāytbāy dated 28 February 1476<sup>90</sup> (c).

1484

## Mamluk embassy to Florence

Ambassador: Muḥammad ibn Maḥfūz

- Letter from al-Ashraf Qāytbāy to Lorenzo de' Medici dated 16 Dhū al-Qa'dah 889/5 December 1484<sup>91</sup> (c).

<sup>85</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 36, fols. 102v–103r; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 17–18 (no. VI); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:291–92.

<sup>86</sup> ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, reg. 36, fol. 103r–v; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 18 (no. VI).

<sup>87</sup> ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, reg. 36, fol. 103r–v; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 18 (no. VI). The same letter is addressed both to the *nāzir al-khāṣṣ* and to the governor of Alexandria.

<sup>88</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 45, fols. 25v–26r; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 38–39 (no. XXII); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:293–94.

<sup>89</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 45, fol. 26v; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 39–40 (no. XXII).

<sup>90</sup> ASF, Signori, Carteggio, Missive, I Cancelleria, vol. 47, fol. 34r–v; Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 43 (no. XXVIII); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:295.

<sup>91</sup> Amari, *I diplomati: Appendice*, 46 (no. XXXI of the seconda serie).



1487–88

## Florentine embassy to Cairo

Ambassador: Paolo da Colle

- Draft of a decree to be issued by Qāyṭbāy to the authorities of Florence datable to 893/1488<sup>92</sup> (c).

1487–89

## Mamluk embassy to Florence and Florentine reply embassy to Cairo

Ambassadors: Muḥammad ibn Maḥfūz and Luigi della Stufa

- Emendations proposed by Florentine merchants dated 27 November 1487<sup>93</sup> (c).
- Instructions of the Florentine authorities to Luigi della Stufa dated 15 November 1488<sup>94</sup> (c).
- Petitions presented by Luigi della Stufa to Qāyṭbāy dated to 1488<sup>95</sup> (c).
- Decree issued by Qāyṭbāy and addressed to the authorities of the sultanate dated 6 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 894/31 October 1489<sup>96</sup> (o and c).
- Letter from Qāyṭbāy to Lorenzo de' Medici dated 24 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 894/18 November 1489<sup>97</sup> (o).

<sup>92</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1488 B, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 6; Amari, *I diplomati*, 363–71 (no. XLV of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:299–307.

<sup>93</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1487/11/27, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1r–2r; Amari, *I diplomati*, 361–62 (no. XLIV of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:297–98.

<sup>94</sup> ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie, 21, fols. 79v.–80r; Amari, *I diplomati*, 372–73 (no. XLVI of the seconda serie); Meli, “Firenze,” 260–61 (no. 2); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:309–10.

<sup>95</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1488, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1r–5r; Amari, *I diplomati*, 374–81 (no. XLVII of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:311–18.

<sup>96</sup> BML, Orientali 455 A, scroll A; Wansbrough, “A Mamlūk Commercial Treaty”; Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:51–95. Translation: Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze, Fondo Del Furia, cod. 50.

<sup>97</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll D; Amari, *I diplomati*, 181–83 (no. XXXIX of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:41–50.



1497

## Florentine embassy to Cairo

Ambassador(s): unknown

- Letter from al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qāyṭbāy to the governor of Damascus dated 25 Jumādā I 902/29 January 1497<sup>98</sup> (o).
- Letter from al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qāyṭbāy to the governor of Alexandria dated 7 Jumādā II 902/10 February 1497<sup>99</sup> (o).
- Letter from al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qāyṭbāy to the authorities of Florence dated 10 Jumādā II 902/13 February 1497<sup>100</sup> (o).

1506

## (Probable) Florentine embassy to Cairo

Ambassador(s): unknown

- Decree issued by Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī and addressed to the authorities of the sultanate dated 18 Dhū al-Qa‘dah 911/12 April 1506<sup>101</sup> (o).

1507–8

## Mamluk embassy to Venice (the ambassador also met Florentine diplomats)

Ambassador: Taghrībirdī

- Letter from the Florentine authorities to Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī dated 13 April 1507<sup>102</sup> (c).
- Decree issued by Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī and addressed to the authorities of Florence dated 12 Jumādā II 913/19 October 1507<sup>103</sup> (o).
- Decree with safe conduct issued by Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī regarding the Florentines dated Rajab–Sha‘bān 914/November 1508<sup>104</sup> (c).

<sup>98</sup> BML, Orientali 455 A, scroll B; Cassetta Cesarini, Doc. Conc. 20; Wansbrough, “Venice and Florence”; Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:97–153.

<sup>99</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll C; BML, Cassetta Cesarini, Doc. Conc. 21; Amari, *I diplomati*, 184–209 (no. XL of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:155–208.

<sup>100</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll I; Amari, *I diplomati*, 210–13 (no. XLI of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:209–18.

<sup>101</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll F; Amari, *I diplomati*, 214–17 (no. XLII of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:219–29.

<sup>102</sup> ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, n. 55, fol. 202r–v; Amari, *I diplomati*, 387 (no. XLIX of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:319.

<sup>103</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll H; Amari, *I diplomati*, 218–20 (no. XLIII of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:231–39.

<sup>104</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1508/11/00, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fol. 1; Amari, *I diplomati*, 388 (no. L of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:321–22.



1510

## Florentine embassy to Cairo

- Ambassador: Bernardino Peruzzi
- Decree issued by Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī and addressed to the authorities of Alexandria dated 14 Rabī<sup>c</sup> I 916/21 June 1510<sup>105</sup> (o and c).
- Letter from Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī to the authorities of Florence dated 14 Rabī<sup>c</sup> I 916/21 June 1510<sup>106</sup> (o and c).

<sup>105</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll E; Amari, *I diplomati*, 226–29 (no. XLV of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:241–50. Translation: ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1509/07/02 (B), Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1v–2v; Amari, *I diplomati*, 389–90 (no. LI of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:323–24.

<sup>106</sup> ASF, Diplomatico, Varie IV, scroll G; Amari, *I diplomati*, 221–25 (no. XLIV of the prima serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:251–63. Translation: ASF, Diplomatico, Cartaceo, 1509/07/02, Riformagioni Atti Pubblici, fols. 1v–2v; Amari, *I diplomati*, 391–92 (no. LII of the seconda serie); Rizzo, “Le Lys et le Lion,” 2:325–26.

