



**Like Father, like Son?  
A glimpse at some cases of parallel diplomacy in 15th  
century Mamluk Cairo**

**Tal pai tal filho?  
Um vislumbre de alguns casos de diplomacia paralela no Cairo  
Mamluk do século XV**

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## ABSTRACT

Against the assumption that premodern diplomacy was mostly taking place among equals, this article aims to investigate several cases of parallel diplomacy during the 15<sup>th</sup> century between the Timurids, the Qara Qoyunlu and the Mamluk sultanate in Cairo. While during the previous period official rulers were indeed dominating the diplomatic stage, it seems that in the fifteenth century, members of their family (sons and even grandson) also took part in the game. The paper aims to present those cases and highlight the importance of diplomatic letter collection for the study of intra-Muslim contacts beyond the sultans.

**Keywords:** Mamluks, Timurids, Qara Qoyunlu, Family, Diplomacy

## RESUMO

Contra a suposição de que a diplomacia pré-moderna ocorria principalmente entre iguais, este artigo pretende investigar vários casos de diplomacia paralela durante o século XV entre os Timurids, os Qara Qoyunlu e o sultanato Mamluk no Cairo. Embora durante o período anterior os governantes oficiais dominassem, efetivamente, a cena diplomática, parece que no século XV, os membros da sua família (filhos e até netos) também participavam nesta dinâmica. O artigo pretende apresentar esses casos e destacar a importância da recolha de cartas diplomáticas para o estudo dos contactos intra-muçulmanos para além dos sultões.

**Palavras chave:** Mamluks, Timurids, Qara Qoyunlu, Família, Diplomacia



## Introduction<sup>1\*</sup>

In recent years, scholars of the Medieval Islamicate world have turned away from the common assumption that Islamic Diplomacy was restricted to Muslim/non-Muslim relations. Doing so, they started investigating the complex dynamic of exchanges within the Islamicate world itself. But even more importantly, they greatly opened the scope of our understanding of Islamic Diplomacy beyond the usual framework of “war-peace” pattern<sup>2</sup>. One aspect however stays unchanged: Islamic diplomacy so far, is to be restricted to the rulers (be they caliphs, sultans or kings), as they are the major actors mentioned in our sources. It seems indeed that the Islamicate world looks at the exchanges of letters and emissaries as the king’s prerogative. Advice literature even sees those as an attribute of kingship. Furthermore, our major source of information, the Arabic chronicles mostly recorded the arrivals of embassies from foreign rulers, and do not mention missions of lower importance or status.

One exception however concerns the period of rule of the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt and Syria (1250-1517), for which we not only possess original diplomatic documents — a rarity in the medieval Islamicate world —, but also many alternative sources that can inform us a great deal about other aspects of the diplomatic practice and other agents not mentioned in the “traditional sources”. One such source is the so-called *inshā’* collections, *munshā’āt*. These consist of collections of letters that were copied by a secretary who has been working in the chancery of Cairo. The reasons for such collection are diverse, but it is usually considered that they had a

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<sup>1\*</sup> I would like to thank Diana Martins and Stéphane Péquignot for their invitation to publish in this special issue, and particularly Stéphane Péquignot for his thorough reading and comments on this article. All remaining imperfections are of course mine.

The system of transliteration used in this paper follows the transliteration system of Arabic in use in English scholarship, such as in the *Mamlūk Studies Review*.

<sup>2</sup> See for exemple BAUDEN, Frédéric; DEKKICHE, Malika (eds.) – *Mamluk Cairo. A Crossroads for Embassies. Studies on diplomacy and diplomatics*. Leiden: Brill, 2021. For the Early modern period, see all the most recent study SOWERBY, Tracey A., MARKIEWICZ, Christopher – *Diplomatic Cultures at the Ottoman Court, c. 1500-1630*. New York: Routledge, 2021.

sort of didactic role. But unlike their European counterparts however, those seem to have been real copies of letters, and not mere templates<sup>3</sup>.

Based on one such collection (the BnF ms. ar. 4440)<sup>4</sup>, I would like to present several cases of parallel diplomacy that involved the Timurids (Iran) and the Qara Qoyunlu (Iraq, Iran), with the Mamluks. Those cases are particularly interesting as they were initiated by family members of the Timurid and Qara Qoyunlu official rulers, and because they were attesting of personal ambitions. Concretely the corpus documents the exchanges that took place between the Mamluk sultans Jaqmaq (r. 842-857/1438-1453) and Īnāl (r. 857-865/1453-1461), and respectively the Timurids Muḥammad Jūkī (d. 848/1444-1445) and ‘Alā’ al-Dawlah (d. 865/1460) [son and grandson of Shāh Rukh, r. 811-50/1409-47], and the Qara Qoyunlu Jahānshāh [governor for the Timurid at the time of the exchange, r. 837-872/1434-1467] and his son Pīr Būdāq [governor of Fars; d. 870/1466]. The corpus is written entirely in Arabic and does not make any mention of translations, which is quite remarkable since both the Timurids and the Qara Qoyunlu’s chancery usually used Persian at that time. This however shows that Arabic was the preferred idiom to communicate with the Mamluk sultanate of Cairo and attests that Turco-Mongol chanceries still mastered that language at the time.

### Mamluk-Timurd Case

The history of diplomatic contacts between the Mamluks and the Timurids was initiated in 787/1386, and characterized by an aggressive foreign policy from the Turco-Mongol Tīmūr Lang, that ended with his conquests of Aleppo and Damascus in 803/1400. While the Mamluks were able to recover their position in Syria and in

<sup>3</sup> On the inshā’ material in general: FAVEREAU, Marie (ed.) – *Annales Islamologiques* 41: *Les conventions diplomatiques dans le monde musulman. L’Umma en partage* (2007); GULLY, Adrian – *The Culture of Letter Writing*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> The Qara Qoyunlu letters have been published in DEKKICHE, Malika – “The Letter and its response: the exchanges between the Qara Qoyunlu and the Mamluk Sultan: MS Arabe 4440 (BnF, Paris)”. *Arabica* 63:6 (2016), pp. 579-626. The Timurids letters have been edited in DEKKICHE, Malika – *Le Caire, carrefour des ambassades. Étude historique et diplomatique de la correspondance échangée entre les sultans mamlouks circassiens et les souverains timourides et turcomans (Qara Qoyunlu – Qaramanides) au XVe s. d’après le ms. Ar. 4440 (BnF, Paris)*. 2 vols. Liège: University of Liège, 2011. PhD. Thesis, yet to be published. Only summaries of the letters will be presented in this article with a focus on: *narratio* and *dispositio*. Though Arabic epistolography obviously does not use this terminology, the Arabic letter nevertheless follows such structure similar to European diplomatics model. Hence the use of the Latin terms as convention in the field.

the region after Tīmūr's death in 807/1405, their relations with the Timurid successor Shāh Rukh (r. 811-50/1409-47) continued to fluctuate between cordial entente (Mu'ayyad Shaykh, r. 815-24/1413-21; Jaqmaq, r. 842-857/1438-1453) and increasing tensions (Barsbāy, r. 825-841/1422-38), as attested through more than twenty-years contacts between the two realms. Most of those contacts (828-48/1421-44, during Barsbāy and Jaqmaq's rules) dealt with the Timurid request to send the inner *kiswah* to the Ka'bah in Mecca [Table 1: contacts during the period covered by the corpus]<sup>5</sup>. Surprisingly, not only Shāh Rukh, but also his son Muḥammad Jūkī (d. 848/1444-1445) and grandson 'Alā' al-Dawlah (d. 865/1460), had taken part to the discussion and negotiation concerning the sending of the inner veil<sup>6</sup>.

Date	Purpose
Ramaḍān 842/February 1439	Letter V (ff. 44a-45b): Announcement of Jaqmaq's accession to the throne and expression of desire to maintain good relationships between the two states (arrival to Herat in 843/1439).
Jumādā I 843/October 1439 <sup>7</sup> or beginning of Jumādā II 843/November 1439 <sup>8</sup>	Timurid embassy to Cairo to congratulate the new sultan Jaqmaq.

<sup>5</sup> DEKKICHE, Malika – "New source, new debate: re-evaluation of the Mamluk-Timurid struggle for religious supremacy in the Hijaz (Paris, BnF MS ar. 4440)". *Mamlūk Studies Review* 18 (2014-2015), pp. 247-271, already dealt in length with the *kiswah* issue, its negotiation and reception in Cairo and Mecca. I will thus here only focus on the role of Muḥammad Jūkī and 'Alā' al-Dawlah in the process.

<sup>6</sup> In two other articles, I have also discussed the modes and terms of those exchanges as for the drafting of the documents and the reception of the embassies in Cairo: DEKKICHE, Malika – "The Correspondence Exchanged Between Mamluks and Timurids in the Fifteenth Century: Study of an Unpublished Source (BnF.ms.ar. 4440)". *Eurasian Studies* 11 (2013), pp. 131-160; DEKKICHE, Malika – "Diplomacy at its Zenith. A Case of Study: Agreement between the Mamluks and the Timurids on the Sending of the Kiswah". In BAUDEN, Frédéric (ed.) – *Material Culture and diplomatic contacts between the Latin West, Byzance and the Islamic East (11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries)*. Leiden: Brill, 2021, pp. 115-142.

<sup>7</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ – *Al-Nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhirah*. vol. 15. Cairo: Dār al-kutūb, 2005-2006, p. 33; IBN IYĀS – *Badā'i' al-zuhūr fī waqā'i' al-duhūr*. vol. 2. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 2008, p. 221.

<sup>8</sup> AL-MAQRĪZĪ – *Kitāb al-Sulūk li ma'rifat duwal al-muluk*. Ed. S.'A.-F. 'Āšūr. vol. 4:3. 2nd ed. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 2007, pp. 1175-1176; AL-'AYNĪ – *'Iqd al-jumān fī tāriḥ ahl al-zamān*. Cairo: al-Zahrā' li-l-ī'lām al-'arabī, 1989, p. 549; AL-'ASQALĀNĪ, Ibn Ḥajar – *Inbā' al-ghumr bi-abnā' al-'umr fī 'l-ta'rikh*. vol. 4. Cairo: Lajnat iḥiyā' al-turāt al-islāmī, 1998, p. 132; AL-ṢAYRAFĪ – *Nuzhat al-nufūs wa 'l-abdān fī tawāriḥ al-zamān*. vol. 4. Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah li 'l-Kitāb, 1994, p. 164; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT' B. KHALĪL – *Nayl al-amal fī ḍayl al-duwal*. Ed. 'U. 'A. al-Salām Tadmurī. vol. 5. Beyrouth: al-Maktabah al-'Aṣriyyah, 2002, p. 106.

27 Rabī <sup>c</sup> I 844/ 26 August 1440 <sup>9</sup> or 26 Rabī <sup>c</sup> II 844/24 September 1440 <sup>10</sup>	Return of the first Mamluk embassy (842/1439) accompanied by Timurid emissaries; congratulations to the sultan Jaqmaq and expression of the good wishes and intentions of Shāh Rukh.
28 Rabī <sup>c</sup> II 844/ 26 September 1440 <sup>11</sup>	Presence of an embassy from Muḥammad Jūkī at the same time as Shāh Rukh's.
[844/1440?]	Letter XXIV (ff. 65a-66b): Jaqmaq's response to Muḥammad Jūkī's letter concerning his nomination as heir apparent, and the troubles caused by the Aq Qoyunlu emir Ḥamzah.
Sha'bān-Ramaḍān 845/ December 1441-February 1442 <sup>12</sup>	Arrival in Cairo of a Timurid Shaykh, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ḥāfi al-Ḥanafī, <sup>13</sup> who wanted to make the pilgrimage.
[846/1442-3?]	Jaqmaq's response to ['Alā' al-Dawlah?'] concerning his joy for the Shaykh's return from his pilgrimage.
	A Timurid embassy arrived in Cairo
Sha'bān 846/December 1442 <sup>14</sup>	Letter XLI (ff. 171b-172b) arrived on 14 Sha'bān 846/18 December 1442; written on 2 Rabī <sup>c</sup> I 846/11 July 1442): Reminder to Jaqmaq of Shāh Rukh's past desire to send the inner <i>kiswah</i> for the Ka'bah.
[846/1442-3?]	Letter LXII (ff. 210a-210b): Jaqmaq's answer to Muḥammad Jūkī's letter. Confirmation that the Mamluk sultan accepted Shāh Rukh's request concerning the inner <i>kiswah</i> and that Shāh Rukh's emissary had already returned with this message.

<sup>9</sup> AL-'AYNĪ - *ʿIqd*, pp. 559-60.

<sup>10</sup> AL-'ASQALĀNĪ - *Inbā'*, vol. 4, p. 157. This author states that news of the embassy's arrival was known earlier. AL-MAQRĪZĪ - *Al-Sulūk*, vol. 4/3, p. 1208; AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol.4, pp. 198-199; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Al-Nujūm*, vol. 15, pp. 342-343; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, p. 122: this author doesn't state the day.

<sup>11</sup> AL-MAQRĪZĪ - *Al-Sulūk*, vol. 4/3, p. 1209; AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, pp. 199-200.

<sup>12</sup> AL-'AYNĪ - *ʿIqd*, p. 572; AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, pp. 239-240; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Al-Nujūm*, vol. 15, p. 350; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith al-duhūr fī maḍā' l-ayyām wa 'l-shuhūr*. Ed. F.M. Shaltūt. Cairo: Lajnat iḥyā' al-turāth al-islāmī, 1990, p. 35; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Al-Tibr al-masbūk fī dhayl al-Sulūk*. Ed. S. 'A.-F. 'Ashūr. vol. 1. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 2002-2007, pp. 62-63.

<sup>13</sup> He belonged to Ulugh Beg's court in Samarqand. He was also a well-estimated jurist for Shāh Rukh. AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, pp. 239-40; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Al-Nujūm*, vol. 15, p. 350; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 35; AL-SAKHĀWĪ, *Al-Tibr*, vol. 1, pp. 62-63.

<sup>14</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 49 (*quṣṣād min 'indi Shāh Rukh*); 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, pp. 164-165 (*qāṣid awlād Shāh Rukh*); AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Al-Tibr*, vol. 1, p. 118 (*quṣṣād min 'indi awlād Shāh Rukh*); IBN IYĀS - *Badā'ī'*, vol. 2, p. 236 (*qāṣid awlād Shāh Rukh*). On 6 Sha'bān/10 December: AL-'AYNĪ - *ʿIqd*, p. 584 (*quṣṣād min 'indi awlād Shāh Rukh*); AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 256 (*quṣṣād Ibn Shāh Rukh*).

27 Jumādā II 847/22 October 1443 <sup>15</sup>	A Timurid embassy arrived in Cairo to discuss the <i>kiswah</i> matter with the Sultan. <sup>16</sup>
[847/1443?]	Letter XLII (ff. 172b-175a): Jaqmaq's response to Shāh Rukh's two letters concerning the sending of the inner <i>kiswah</i> and the money issued from the <i>awqāf</i> of his realm; approval of the Mamluk sultan of both requests.
Sha'bān 848/November 1444 <sup>17</sup>	Arrival of a huge Timurid delegation bringing the inner <i>kiswah</i> to Cairo.
	Letter XLIV (ff. 177a-178b): Jaqmaq's answer to 'Alā' al-Dawlah given to those Timurid shaykhs bringing the inner <i>kiswah</i> before they left for Mecca; proof of the Mamluk sultan's fulfillment of Shāh Rukh's wish; description of the Shaykhs' process to the Holy Cities.

**Table 1. Timurid embassies in Cairo**

(**Table 2**) Out of the ten letters in MS 4440 involving the Timurids, four actually concern Muḥammad Jūkī and 'Alā' al-Dawlah. Due to a possible incorrect attribution of the copyist however, I will here exclude letter XLIII<sup>18</sup>. All three letters are Mamluk responses to Timurid letters: XXIV; LXII; and XLIV. It is of course unfortunate that the initial Timurid letters didn't reach us, but however, the way Mamluk responses are drafted allow us to reconstitute the initial message.

<sup>15</sup> AL-'AYNĪ - *'Iqd*, p. 600; AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 277; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 64; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Al-Tibr*, vol. 1, p. 164.

<sup>16</sup> We learn about the purpose of the present mission in the description of the reception of another embassy which arrived in the following year (848/1444): IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 76; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Al-Nujūm*, vol. 15, p. 364; AL-'AYNĪ - *'Iqd*, p. 627.

<sup>17</sup> In Sha'bān/November (day not specified): IBN IYĀS - *Badā'i*, vol. 2, pp. 244-245. On 14 Sha'bān/26 November: AL-'AYNĪ - *'Iqd*, p. 627. On 15 Sha'bān/27 November: IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 76; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Al-Nujūm*, vol. 15, p. 364. AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Wajīz al-kalām fī 'l-dhayl 'alā duwal al-islām*. Ed. B. 'A. Ma'rūf, Gh.F. al-Ḥarastānī, A. al-Khaṭīmī. vol. 2. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1995, pp. 594-595; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Al-Tibr*, vol. 1, pp. 215-217: 14 Ramaḍān/25 December; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, pp. 194-195: Ramaḍān/December.

<sup>18</sup> As far as 'Alā' al-Dawlah is concerned, an anomaly arises. Whereas letter XLIII designates him as al-Shaykh al-imām, the letter's actual contents seem to refer to the Samarqandī shaykh who came to Cairo in the year 845/1442. 'Alā' al-Dawlah was not a Shaykh himself. A couple possibilities might account for this title. Either the secretary who wrote the letter wrongly attributed this title to 'Alā' al-Dawlah, which could reflect a certain ignorance concerning the Timurid dynasty, or the letter was not addressed to 'Alā' al-Dawlah at all, and the scribe who copied the letter into MS. ar. 4440 simply transcribed it incorrectly. Since no evidence suggests that 'Alā' al-Dawlah had been in Samarqand, he would presumably not have corresponded with the Mamluks on the matter, unless the Shaykh first stopped in Herat on his way back home. Given the lack of information, I am forced to leave this question open.

Letter number <sup>19</sup>	Foliation	Sender > Addressee	Date <sup>20</sup>	Nature
V	ff. 44a-45b	Jaqmaq > Shāh Rukh	842/1439	initial letter
XXIV	ff. 65a-66b	Jaqmaq > Muḥammad Jūkī	[844/1440?]	response
XXXIX	ff. 167a-169b	Sulṭān-Abū Saʿīd > Khushqadam	867/1462	initial letter
XLI	ff. 171b-172b	Shāh Rukh > Jaqmaq	846/1442	initial letter
XLII	ff. 172b-175a	Jaqmaq > Shāh Ruḥ	[847/1443?]	response
XLIII	ff. 175a-177a	Jaqmaq > ‘Alā’ al-Dawlah	[846/1442-3?]	response
XLIV	ff. 177a-178b	Jaqmaq > ‘Alā’ al-Dawlah	[848/1444]	response
XLVII	ff. 184b-187a	Sulṭān-Abū Saʿīd > Khushqadam	[865-872/ 1461-1467?]	initial letter
XLVIII	ff. 187a- 191a	Sulṭān-Abū Saʿīd > Khushqadam	868/1464: written 870/1465: received	initial letter
LXII	ff. 210a-210b	Jaqmaq > Muḥammad Jūkī	[846/1442?]	response

Table 2. List of letters (ms. ar. 4440)

### Letter XXIV

Jaqmaq's response to Muḥammad Jūkī's letter consists of congratulations for Jūkī's nomination as heir-apparent and it discusses the troubles caused by the Aq Qoyunlu amir Ḥamzah. Though the full context of that embassy is not known to us in details, chronicles however inform us of the presence of an emissary (not mentioned by name) of Muḥammad Jūkī during (26) Rabīʿ II 844/24 September 1440<sup>21</sup>. This embassy was there at the same time than another Timurid embassy sent by Shāh Rūkh, and therefore attracted less attention, except that chronicles felt the need to

<sup>19</sup>These numbers follow the system established by BAUDEN, Frédéric – "Les Relations diplomatiques entre les sultans mamlouks circassiens et les autres pouvoirs du Dār al-Islām. L'apport du ms. ar. 4440 (BNF, Paris)". *Annales Islamologiques* 41 (2007), pp. 15-23.

<sup>20</sup>The dates written between [ ] are the dates I attributed to the letters in my own study. However, some of them (indicated with a question mark) still require comparison with analysis of the Persian sources.

<sup>21</sup>AL-‘ASAQALĀNĪ - *Inbāʿ*, vol. 4, p. 157; AL-MAQRĪZĪ - *Sulūk* vol. 4/3, p. 1208; ṢAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, pp. 198-199; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Nujūm*, vol. 15, pp. 342-343; ‘ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, p. 122 (he does not mention the day).



mention that the rules of precedence were respected: Muḥammad Jūkī's gifts were given to the sultan only after that of his father<sup>22</sup>.

[Narratio]: Mention of Jūkī's initial letter and confirmation that it was welcomed by the sultan. Compliment on its style and summary of the message:

- Annonce of Jūkī's nomination as Shāh Rukh's successor (*akhadhanā ḥazzunā mina 'l-bushrā bimā manaḥakum al-maqām al-sharīf al-mu'īnī (...) min takhṣīkum bi iṭlāqi 'smi 'l-sulṭān*) and expression of the sultan's congratulations and good wishes towards him.

- Concerning the amir Ḥamzah: Jūkī vowed in favor of an union with Ḥamzah rather than opposition, this for the sake of Muslim unity and in order to avoid conflict. On this Jaqmaq reminds of Ḥamzah's actions and disapproves them: Ḥamzah wandered from justice and took the path of tyranny and brigandage: cutting the roads to traders and travelers, stealing from traders traveling between the two (Mamluk and Timurid) realms. Furthermore, Ḥamzah's true faith is to be questioned as he had a church in Amid renovated while it was collapsing, while he acts badly against Muslims.

[Dispositio]: Jūkī asked for pardon and respect for the amir Ḥamzah, which the sultan cannot understand, given his lack of esteem to this rebel, unlike that he has for other Turkmen who follow the right path, and who, if asked, could put an end to Ḥamzah. The sultan admits that he was planning to send troops against the rebel (despite the fact that he does not like to fight his neighbours), after the latter had missed to apologize for the troubles he caused. However, at Jūkī's request, Jaqmaq agrees to hold on, and asks therefore to Jūkī to communicate the truce conditions to Hamza: return to the right path of justice, expression of regrets before God for his bad actions. On those two conditions, the sultan will give his pardon and send him a robe.

In conclusion: Jaqmaq reassure of the good reception given to the emissary (*qāṣid*) and mention that gifts (to be found in the list folded in the letter) were given to him. [the copyist has copied down some of those gifts: hunting tank, net and bonds.

<sup>22</sup> AL-MAQRĪZĪ - *Sulūk*, vol. 4/3, p. 1209; AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, pp. 199-200.

This letter is quite exceptional as for the information it reveals concerning Timurid internal politics, as well as for the capacity in which Muḥammad Jūkī dealt with the Mamluks. Concerning Timurid politics, Muḥammad Jūkī was the youngest of Shāh Rukh's sons (born on 24 Ramaḍān 804/27 April 1402). He started his political career around 823-4/1420-1, during the first military campaign that opposed the Timurids with the Qara Qoyunlu Iskandar in Azerbaijan<sup>23</sup>. Ten years later (833-1429-30), Shāh Rukh nominated him governor of the Khuttalan province (which was seen by his contemporary as rather late, compared to his siblings)<sup>24</sup>. Nevertheless, from then on, he appears in most military campaigns of his father. He also then acted regularly as mediator and negotiator in the conflicts and tensions that were taking place between local rulers within the realm or at its frontiers (Transoxiana)<sup>25</sup>. According to Persian sources, it seems that Jūkī never in fact left his father's court at Herat<sup>26</sup>. And al-Samarqandī, Shāh Rukh's court historian, even reports, that despite his mother (Jawharshād)'s attempts to keep him away from the rule<sup>27</sup>, Jūkī in fact had his father's favor<sup>28</sup>. Was Jūkī's nomination official or not within the Timurid court itself, it seems nevertheless that he had made quite an impression at the Mamluk courts, since he is the only member of Shāh Rukh's family who actually made it to the Mamluk chronicles during that period. Furthermore, as shown through the corpus, he was definitely recognized as a diplomatic participant.

The context of the second letter involving Muḥammad Jūkī is unfortunately unclear. Al-ʿAynī, al-Ṣayrafī and Ibn Iyās and others, report the arrival of an embassy from a son of Shāh Rukh<sup>29</sup>, in Shaʿbān 846/December 1442<sup>30</sup>, while Ibn Taghrībirdī, refers to an embassy from Shāh Rukh himself. Having in our corpus a letter from Shāh Rukh dating from the same time, we can assume that both embassies may have been

<sup>23</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 40.

<sup>24</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, pp. 246-247.

<sup>25</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, pp. 40; 47; 92-93; 247.

<sup>26</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, p. 247: according to Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Zubdat al-tawārīḥ* and Samarqandī, *Maṭlaʿ al-saʿdayn*.

<sup>27</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, p. 45.

<sup>28</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, p. 247: according to Samarqandī, *Maṭlaʿ al-saʿdayn*.

<sup>29</sup> AL-ʿAYNĪ – *ʿIqd*, p. 584; AL-ṢAYRAFĪ – *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 256; IBN IYĀS – *Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 2, p. 236.

<sup>30</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ – *Ḥawādith*, p. 49; ʿABD AL-BĀSĪṬ B. KHALĪL – *Nayl*, vol. 5, pp. 164-165; AL-SAHĀWĪ – *al-Tibr*, vol. 1, p. 118; IBN IYĀS – *Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 2, p. 236.

present in Cairo at the same moment<sup>31</sup>. Or according to the contents of Jaqmaq's response, that the one sent by Jūkī slightly followed the embassy of his father.

## Letter LXII

Jaqmaq's response to Muḥammad Jūkī's letter, confirming that the promise made to Shāh Rukh concerning the *kiswah*, was already accepted and made know to him [Sh.R.] through his emissary.

[Narratio]: Mention of the good reception of the letter followed by the customary courtesy (regarding style). Summary of the initial message:

- Jūkī's father, Shāh Rukh, wishes to provide the Ka'bah with its inner veil (*kiswah*). The sultan informs Jūkī that a letter on the similar topic reached him from Shāh Rukh himself, and that the request has already been accepted.

[Dispositio]: Mention of the reception of Shāh Rukh's letter and confirmation of the agreements concluded between the two sultans. Shāh Rukh's emissary, al-Majdī, left already to transmit him the sultan's good intention and the agreements.

Mention that Jūkī's gift has been accepted.

Whereas Muḥammad Jūkī appears to have been actively involved in the negotiation concerning the Timurid sending of the inner *kiswah* (for and in parallel to his father), it seems that there was yet another actor that was to finalize the process. Indeed, while chronicles all report at length the arrival of the Timurid delegation bringing the *kiswah* in Sha'bān 848/November 1444<sup>32</sup>, they kept silent about the identity of

<sup>31</sup> Early Sha'bān 846/December 1442: IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 49; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl* vol. 5, pp. 164-165; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *al-Tibr*, vol. 1, p. 118; IBN IYĀS - *Badā'i'*, vol. 2, p. 236. Mamluk sources mentions a Timurid embassy: either a son of Shāh Rukh (AL-'AYNĪ - *'Iqd*, p. 584; AL-ṢAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 256; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, pp. 164-165; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *al-Tibr*, vol. 1, p. 118; IBN IYĀS - *Badā'i'*, vol. 2, p. 236) or from Shāh Rukh himself (IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 49).

<sup>32</sup> In Sha'bān/November (day unknown): IBN IYĀS - *Badā'i'*, vol. 2, pp. 244-245. On 14 Sha'bān/26 November: AL-'AYNĪ - *'Iqd*, p. 627. On 15 Sha'bān/27 November: IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 76 IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Al-Nujūm*, vol. 15, p. 364. AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Wajīz*, vol. 2, pp. 594-595; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *al-Tibr*, vol. 1, pp. 215-217: 14 Ramaḍān/25 December; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, pp. 194-195: Ramaḍān/December. See also TADAYOSHI, Kikuchi - "An Analysis of 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Ḥanafī al-Malaṭī's Description of the Year 848: On the Process of Writing History in the Late Fifteenth Century". *Mamlūk Studies Review* 10:1 (2006), pp. 29-54. In my article, DEKKICHE - "New source, new debate" I have provided the details of the events in Cairo at the time of the *kiswah*'s arrival, as it provoked many problems in the capital.

the initiator of the mission. That we now know thanks to a letter kept in the MS 4440: Jaqmaq's response to Shāh Rukh's grandson 'Alā' al-Dawlah.

### Letter XLIV

Jaqmaq's response to 'Alā' al-Dawlah's letter, declaring the fulfillment of the promise made concerning the sending of the *kiswah* to the pilgrimage. The letter was given to the two shaykhs in charge of bringing the *kiswah* to Mecca.

[Narratio]: Mention of the good reception of the letter followed by the customary courtesy (regarding style). Summary of the initial message:

- Mention of the two shaykhs (Abū Ishāq al-Kāzarūnī and Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Abharī) who had been dispatched to bring the inner *kiswah* to Cairo, so that they could benefit from the sultan's help in their mission. Confirmation of their arrival and the reception of the letter they brought, as well as confirmation of the good reception offered to them.

[Dispositio]: Mention of the sequence of events peculiar to the conveyance of the to Mecca:

- The shaykhs will be transferred to Mecca with the amir of the pilgrimage [along with the caravan];
- The Sharīfs in Mecca will make sure that the veil will be hung in the presence of the shaykhs, as well as all Timurid pilgrims, so that they will be able to witness what they saw back at home;
- Reminder of the exceptional character of this favor made to the Timurid sovereign [Shāh Rukh], in the name of the sultan's friendship. This won't occur for anyone else in the future.
- Mention of the good reception offered to the shaykhs before their departure.
- Mention that the letter is sealed.

Surprisingly, after twenty years of negotiation, the last Mamluk-Timurid exchanges concerning the sending of the inner *kiswah*, did not involve Shāh Rukh, but his grandson. Again, Timurid internal politics help us here further understanding this. At the end of 847/1443, Shāh Rukh had fallen badly ill, an illness that lasted until 848/March-June 1444. If his powerful wife Jawharshād was no fervent supporter of her son Jūkī, she was quite fond of her grandson 'Alā' al-Dawlah, which she

encouraged to proclaim sultan. Self-proclamation for which he received the allegiance of several important emirs (among which Fīrūzshāh)<sup>33</sup>. It seems therefore that it is in the capacity of Timurid sultan that ‘Alā’ al-Dawlah was able to enter in the sphere of diplomatic game with the Mamluks.

Muḥammad Jūkī, though apparently nominated by Shāh Rukh, did not reach Herat in time to contain ‘Alā’ al-Dawlah's ambitions, and he also died unexpectedly in that year. On the other hand, Shāh Rukh would soon recover. He however did not seem to have entered in contact with the Mamluks after that date.

### **Mamluk-Qara Qoyunlu Case**

Mamluk-Qara Qoyunlu contacts were initiated from the late 14th century by the founder of the dynasty Qarā Muḥammad (r. 782-792/1380-1390) and ended in the late 15th century (in 872/1467-8) with the reception in Cairo of Jahānshāh's head, sanctioning the end of the confederation by Uzun Hasan. Contacts between the two powers, however, seem to have ended a bit earlier since Mamluk chronicles do not record any more exchanges of embassies after 861/1457. During that century however contacts were not continuous, but instead there were many interruptions — or rather blanks — in the data available. Two periods are particularly well documented however: First, the beginning of the exchanges that took place in the context of Tīmūr's invasions in Iraq (that period sees the rapprochement of both powers, with Mamluk protection of Qarā Muḥammad, and for a while of his successor Qarā Yūsuf; r. 792-823/1390-1411). Soon however the latter's ambitions will oppose Mamluks' pretensions, and we witness then a second phase in the contacts between the two powers (first quite hostile and challenging — with Qarā Yūsuf/al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh —; then tending towards rapprochement between Iskandar and Barsbāy — this by opposition to the Timurids).<sup>34</sup> A third set of contacts is also attested at a later period (847/1443; 850-861/1447-1457), which is recorded in the letters kept in the MS ar. 4440 (BnF). Those contacts involved on

<sup>33</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, p. 247.

<sup>34</sup> We have quite a good knowledge of the exchanges that took place at the time, not only because of the chronicles, but also because many letters have been kept in copies in *munshā’āt*. For the early period (that is mostly the second phase just mentioned 815-839/1412-1436), see IBN ḤIJJAH – *Qahwat al-inshā’*. Ed. R. Veselý. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2005.

the one hand the Qara Qoyunlu ruler Jahānshāh (r. 843-872/1443-1467) and the Mamluk sultans Jaqmaq (r. 842-857/1438-1453) and Īnāl (r. 857-865/1453-1461); and on the other hand, Jahānshāh's son Pīr Būdāq (governor of Fars; d. 870/1466) and sultan Īnāl.

Letter number <sup>35</sup>	Foliation	Sender > Addressee	Date <sup>36</sup>	Nature
lxi	ff. 208a-210a	Jaqmaq > Jahānshāh	[847/144]	response
xxxvi	ff. 161b-163a	Pīr Būdāq > Īnāl	859/1455	initial letter
xxxvii	ff. 163a-164b	Īnāl > Pīr Būdāq	[860/1456]	response
xxxviii	ff. 164b-167a	Pīr Būdāq > Īnāl	861/1457	initial letter
xl	ff. 169b-171b	Īnāl > Pīr Būdāq	861/1457	response

**Table 3. List of letters (ms. ar. 4440)**

Jahānshāh had officially succeeded his brother Iskandar as head of the Qara Qoyunlu confederation in 841/1438 (after Iskandar's death). It must be reminded however that he was already governor in Eastern Anatolia (under Timurid authority) from 837/1434. And it is still as Timurid client that he ruled until Shāh Rukh's death in 850/1447. He seems to have stayed quite loyal to Shāh Rukh during most of the period in fact, and we have therefore barely no record of contacts between him and the Mamluks during that time. This of course does not mean that Mamluk historians ignored the events taking place in the Qara Qoyunlu domains. They have recorded for example the internal troubles peculiar to Iskandar's succession (in 842/1432)<sup>37</sup> or to Iraq (843/1439)<sup>38</sup>. The first mention of the arrival of a Qara Qoyunlu mission in Cairo dates from 847/1443. Though chronicles do not describe its motives, nor provide any details as for its reception, it seems nevertheless that this embassy

<sup>35</sup> These numbers follow the system established by BAUDEN – "Les Relations", pp. 15-23.

<sup>36</sup> The dates written between [ ] are the dates I attributed to the letters in my own study. However, some of them (indicated with a question mark) still require comparison with analysis of the Persian sources.

<sup>37</sup> 842/1438: Jahānshāh was able to repel Iskandar's son outside of Azerbaijan, and had placed him in Avnik (Erzurum). That news reached Cairo on 17 Jumādā II 842/ 5 December 1438: AL-MAQRĪZĪ - *al-Sulūk*, vol. 4/3, pp. 1102-1103; AL-ŞAYRĀFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 53.

<sup>38</sup> Işfahān b. Qarā Yūsuf was forced to flee Baghdād because of Bedouin attacks (Yūsuf b. 'Aliyyān)/ Probably related to the Musha'sha': Jumādā II 843/ Nov-Dec 1439: AL-MAQRĪZĪ - *al-Sulūk*, vol. 4/3, p. 1176; AL-ŞAYRĀFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 165; 'ABD AL-BĀSIT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5, p. 106.

attracted quite a lot of attention and curiosity. Indeed, it was received before the Timurid embassy that had arrived at the same time; which truly defies the rule of precedence as set by Cairo:<sup>39</sup> If the reasons for this situation are probably due to the Timurid context in fact (e.g., the inner *kiswah* negotiation), we can however not deny other factors inherent to Jahānshāh's "awakening" and first claim towards independence. This comes even more clear when looking at the letter LXI kept in MS ar. 4440 (fols. 208a-210a).

### Letter LXI (fols. 208a-210a)

Jaqmaq's response to Jahānshāh's letter: reciprocity of the friendship and congratulations of the recent victory against the enemy.

[Narratio]: Mention of the reception of Jahānshāh's letter through the intermediary of his emissary, Aḥmad, and of the good reception he was granted. Follows the customary courtesy (regarding style). Confirmation that the link of friendship that had existed in the past between the two rules are still shared.

- Joy of the sultan for the victory against the enemy and the news of Jahānshāh's safe return.

[Dispositio]: Mention of the presence of the Mamluk emissary Jijukbughā at Shāh Rukh's court during the announcement of Jahānshāh's victory, and the joy that the Timurid sultan has expressed (when the emissary was back home).

- Mention that the emissary Aḥmad was given a letter of response that should confirm the sultan's good feeling towards Jahānshāh, as well as his wish to see the exchanges being continued.

- Sultan's request that Jahānshāh facilitates the roads for pilgrims and traders.

From the Mamluk response above, we can easily reconstitute the original message of Jahānshāh's initial letter (which was twofold). Firstly, it announced a resumption of contacts (since Iskandar) calling/asking for love and friendship between both realms— this on the memory of the past relation and link that had existed between

<sup>39</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Hawādith*, p. 64; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *al-Tibr*, vol. 1, p. 164; AL-‘AYNĪ - *‘Iqd*, pp. 584, 600; AL-ŞAYRAFĪ - *Nuzhat*, vol. 4, p. 256 (who wrongly attributed the embassy to the Aq Qoyunlu ruler Jahāngīr).

the Mamluks and the Qara Qoyunlu. Secondly, the letter was the occasion for Jahānshāh to announce his victory against the enemy (unfortunately not identified). It must be said that Jahānshāh's double message in fact mirrors quite well Qarā Yūsuf and Iskandar's previous correspondences with the Mamluks at time of their aggressive independent policy: calling for friendship, but in the meantime reminding of their military power. This double message was, it seems, quite clear to the Mamluk as well, as illustrated in Jaqmaq's response. The first part of this response (*narratio*), which usually summarizes the initial letter, confirms the good reception of the letter and of the emissary (Aḥmad), as well as the reciprocity of friendship (similarly referring to the past relations). Furthermore, Jaqmaq congratulates Jahānshāh on his victory and shares his joy that he came back home safely. In a regular response to a letter of conquest (*fathnamah*), the second part of letter (*dispositio*) usually just keeps on with congratulation and words of friendship. Our letter is however quite different, since the *dispositio* has no other aim than reminding Jahānshāh of his position as Timurid client: Jaqmaq indeed makes a point to mention his emissary at the court of Shāh Rukh (therefore insisting on his good relation with the Timurid ruler), and the latter's joy on the announcement of this victory. The end of the message consists of another reminder to Jahānshāh to respect the peace and order in place: with a special request to facilitate the roads to travelers and pilgrims.

Whereas this first attempt from Jahānshāh towards the Mamluks can somehow be seen as a failure, it has in the practice no effect on him as far as his ambitions and pretensions are concerned. Indeed, if Jahānshāh stayed quiet for a little longer, Shāh Rukh's death in 850/1447 truly allow him to break his link to the Timurid dynasty, with his progressive taking over Timurid territory (850/1447: Baghdad; 851-852/1448-9: Sulṭāniyyah, Saveh, Hamadan, Qazvin)<sup>40</sup>, but even more with the resuming of hostilities (starting 851/1448) with the Aq Qoyunlu Jahāngīr (r. 848-861/1444-1457)<sup>41</sup>, due to the latter's protection/asylum given to Jahānshāh's rebellious nephew Alvand. The 20 years long conflict that opposed the two

<sup>40</sup> MANZ, Beatrice F. – *Power, Politics*, p.262. Truce-treaty signed with Sulṭān-Muḥammad abandoning those territory to Jahānshāh.

<sup>41</sup> WOODS, John E. – *The Aq Qoyunlu. Clan, Confederation, Empire*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1999, p. 74.



confederations also involved the Mamluk sultanate in many ways,<sup>42</sup> which of course produce many occasion for diplomatic contacts (both informal and formal)<sup>43</sup>. Be that as it may, by 855/1451 (some 12 years after Jahānshāh's first letter to the Mamluks), Jahānshāh has truly emerged as an independent, recognized, and much welcomed diplomatic actor. This is well illustrated for example by the report of the reception of the embassy he dispatched that year to Cairo to discuss the future of Diyār Bakr<sup>44</sup>. The good relations between the two rulers would, however, soon deteriorate due to the treaty of Āmid signed with Jahāngīr<sup>45</sup>. Interestingly enough, the news of this treaty reached Cairo in Muḥarram 856/February 1452, through a Qara Qoyunlu embassy sent by Jahānshāh's son Pīr Būdāq, governor of Fars<sup>46</sup>. Along with the letter, the emissary also presented the sultan the gifts he brought: a splendid mule, weapons, and silk fabrics<sup>47</sup>. This represents the first embassy from Pīr Būdāq, that once more announces quite strong ambitions this governor had (to speak against his father and to set himself apart). If we do not know Jaqmaq's response to Pīr Būdāq's embassy, it is clear during this period that the Mamluks turned away from Jahānshāh and instead gave his attention to another rising figure: the Aq Qoyunlu

<sup>42</sup> For more detail on this see WOODS, John E. – *The Aq Qoyunlu*, p. 74 and DEKKICHE, Malika - *Le Caire, carrefour des ambassades*, vol. 1, pp. 161-167.

<sup>43</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ – *Ḥawādith*, p. 247; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Nujūm*, vol. 15, pp. 431-432.

<sup>44</sup> At its arrival, the Qara Qoyunlu embassy, accompanied by Jahānshāh's nephew Fūlād, was given residency on the Maydān below the Citadel; see AL-BIQĀ'Ī – *Tā'rikh al-Biqā'ī*. Ed. M.S. Ibn Shadīd al-'Awfī. vol. 1. Jīzah: Hajar li 'l-ṭibā'a wa 'l-nashr wa 'l-tawzī' wa 'l-i'lān, 1992, p. 80. Two days later, they were received by the sultan in the private sphere of the Citadel, in the *ḥawsh* (IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, pp. 260-261). The emissaries had brought gifts to the sultan, including helmets, coats of mail, and 14 Bactrian camels. Finally Jahānshāh's letter (originally in Persian) was translated and its contents explained to Jaqmaq. In the long history of Mamluk-Qara Qoyunlu contacts, this is in fact the first mention of the use of Persian in the Qara Qoyunlu's correspondence, which in my sense is quite telling about Jahānshāh's ambition and pretension (even the Timurids had not done so). For more detail on this embassy, see DEKKICHE - *Le Caire*, pp. 161-167.

<sup>45</sup> Later that same year Jahānshāh came back to Eastern Anatolia and signed with Jahāngīr the Treaty of Āmid, sanctioning the Aq Qoyunlu's recognition of Jahānshāh's authority for the region of Diyār Bakr. In Dhū'l-Ḥijjah 855/January 1452: AL-BIQĀ'Ī - *Tā'rikh*, vol.1, p. 165. Previously in Sha'bān 855/September 1451, Jaqmaq, reassured by Jahānshāh's letter, had dismissed his troops from Syria: AL-BIQĀ'Ī - *Tā'rikh*, vol.1, p. 133.

<sup>46</sup> No mention of the day: AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Wajīz*, vol.2, p. 665. On 29 Muḥarram/20 February 1456: IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, pp. 295-296. In Šafar/March: 'ABD AL-BĀSĪT B. KHALĪL - *Nayl*, vol. 5; pp. 354-355. AL-BIQĀ'Ī - *Tā'rikh*, vol. 1, p. 80, on the other hand, mentioned the arrival, at the end of Muḥarram, of an embassy from Jahānshāh that denied the truce concluded with the Aq Qoyunlu Jahāngīr and informed the sultan of the future sending of the emir Rustam to seize Diyār Bakr.

<sup>47</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, pp. 295-296: the embassy was received at the Citadel on 2 Šafar/23 February.

Uzun Ḥasan (r. 861-882/1457-1478), who succeeded in seizing Āmid and returned it to Mamluk authority<sup>48</sup>.

The deterioration in the Mamluk relation with Jahānshāh and the parallel rapprochement with his son Pīr Budāq can well be seen under Jaqmaq's successor, Īnāl (r. 857-865/1453-1461), especially through the account of Jahānshāh's embassy to Cairo in Dhū l-Ḥijja 860/November 1456 (rather negative)<sup>49</sup>, and that of Pīr Būdāq on 20 Shaʿbān 860/24 July 1456 (positive)<sup>50</sup>. While sources do not detail the ceremonies peculiar to the reception of this embassy, the initial letter sent by Pīr Būdāq and Īnāl's response to it, both kept in MS ar. 4440, attest of a good state of relationship between the two<sup>51</sup>.

### Letter XXXVI

Initial letter from Qara Qoyunlu Pīr Būdāq b. Jahānshāh to al-Ashraf Īnāl to open the correspondences and expression of the wish to maintain good relationships. Declaration of the forthcoming attack on the Timurid realm. Letter written at the end of Dhū 'l-Qaʿdah 859/early November 1455.

[Narratio]: Introduction praising the Mamluk sultan and his qualities of kindness and justice towards Muslims, that encourage Pīr Būdāq to write to him

<sup>48</sup> After Jahānshāh's departure to the East (against the Timurid Abū'l-Qāsim Bābūr: news of Jahānshāh's victory reached Cairo in Dhū'l-Hijjah 856/December 1452), Uzun Ḥasan had indeed started the counter-attack against both the Qara Qoyunlu ruler and his own brother, Jahāngīr. After he managed to control his adversaries among his clan, he progressed to Āmid, which he seized in Shaʿbān-Ramaḍān 856/September 1452. He sent the keys of the city to Cairo as sign of recognition of Jaqmaq's authority, who in counterpart designated him as governor of Āmid. During the period from 857/1453 to 861/1457, Uzun Ḥasan entirely devoted himself to the struggle against Jahāngīr, the conquest of Ḥiṣn Kayfā, and the abolishment of Qara Qoyunlu's rule over Armenia. Jaqmaq's successor, sultan Īnāl (r. 857-865/1453-1461), continued the latter's friendly relationship with the Aq Qoyunlu ruler, Uzun Ḥasan, while the tensions with Jahānshāh kept increasing. WOODS, John E. - *The Aq-Qoyunlu*, pp. 78-80; AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Wajiz*, vol.2, p. 665.

<sup>49</sup> Day not mentioned: AL-BIQĀʿĪ - *Tāʾrikh*, vol.2, p. 226; IBN IYĀS - *Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 2, pp. 335-336. On 19 Dhū'l-Ḥijjah/18 November 1456: IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, pp. 519-520.

<sup>50</sup> Date mentioned in MS ar. 4440, fol. 161b. On 29 Shaʿbān/2 August: IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Ḥawādith*, p. 514, only refers to a declaration of friendship. On Shawwāl 860/September 1456: AL-BIQĀʿĪ - *Tāʾrikh*, vol. 2, p. 200, reports Pīr Budāq's future campaign against the Timurids in Persia and beyond Iṣfahān as well as his request to obtain Mamluk's (moral) support. Al-Biqāʿī also seems to confuse with some of Jahānshāh's above-mentioned letter, since he referred here to the request for the sending of al-Dūkārī.

<sup>51</sup> Those 4 letters are also published elsewhere: DEKKICHE, Malika - "The Letter and its response: the exchanges between the Qara Qoyunlu and the Mamluk Sultan : MS Arabe 4440 (BnF, Paris)". *Arabica* 63:6 (2016), pp. 579-626.

and send him an emissary. The latter is in charge of transmitting these feelings of friendship, and it is hoped to see those feelings reciprocated.

[Dispositio]: Pīr Būdāq has heard of the conflict that had in the past opposed Mamluks and Timurids. He has therefore decided to undertake a campaign against them to submit them.

- Mention of the upcoming departure of the troops to Khorasan.

- Invocation to God, so He would support the campaign. Request that the sultan support it as well, morally.

[No mention of gifts in the letter]

### Letter XXXVII

Sultan Īnāl's response to Pīr Būdāq's letter, confirming the reciprocity of friendship and wishing the best regarding the future combats. [860/1456]

[Narratio]: Mention of the reception of the letter through Pīr Būdāq emissary, Yūsuf, who is now in charge of transmitting the sultan's response. Customary courtesy regarding the style of the letter. Confirmation of the reciprocity of the friendship.

- Summary of the letter: combat against the enemies and the submission of the tyrants. Expression of support and good wish, and invocation to God for His support.

[Dispositio]: Mention again of the emissary and his oral message, and of the reciprocity of the friendship.

- Mention of the good reception granted to the emissary as proof are the gifts that he is bringing back.

### Letter XXXVIII

Initial letter of Pīr Būdāq to announce his victories in Khorasan, Sistan and against the Musha‘sha‘, and affirmation of his friendship towards the Mamluk sultan Īnāl.

[Narratio]: Introduction on the theme of the victory. Mention of the date of the drafting of the letter: early Jumāda II 861/end of April 1457.

Detailed account of the events. [N.B.: the victory was given by God in benediction of his father Jahānshāh]

[Dispositio] : Praise to God for the victory, and wish that its news would be spread to the world.

- Mention of the emissary (emir Ulū) and his mission: report to the sultan the event of the battle/victory and request to him that correspondences keep being exchanged between them and that their friendship gets stronger.

### **Letter XL**

Mamluk sultan's response to Pīr Būdāq to congratulate him on his victory in the Khorasan and Sistan. The response was given to the emir Ulū in Dhū'l-Qa'dah 861/October 1457.

[Narratio]: Mention of the reception of the letter through Pīr Būdāq emissary, emir Ulū. Customary courtesy concerning the letter's style and reminder of its theme (victory and declaration of friendship).

- Detailed summary of the letter's contents (quasi-verbatim from the initial letter)

[Dispositio]: Expression of joy regarding Pīr Būdāq's victory (no reference to Jahānshāh), with the help of God. Assurance that the news of the victory will be spread, so that the enemies will fear him and the others will be pleased.

- Mention of the emissary and the gifts he brought (all accepted)
- Mention of the good reception granted to the emissary and mention of the gifts offered.

We are quite lucky in this case to have both Pīr Būdāq's initial letters and Mamluk responses. The way Pīr Būdāq presents his project of war is quite interestingly framed: on the memory of the previous opposition between Mamluks and Timurids (which obviously was quite an outdated reference). He thus set himself as Mamluk defender and supporter, to which he asks for moral support. Unlike Īnāl's letter to Jahānshāh in 860/1456, his response to Pīr Būdāq is rather full of praise, friendship declaration and support. A year later, another letter — this time a victory letter — reached Cairo, describing in detail the battles and great accomplishment of Pīr Būdāq's troops. These were welcome in Cairo with great joy.

This corpus of letters represents the last testimonial we have of diplomatic contacts between the Mamluk sultans and the Qara Qoyunlu rulers. Indeed, Mamluk sources do not report any more reception of Turkmen embassies in Cairo after this date. As already mentioned, the contacts between Jahānshāh and Īnāl had already greatly deteriorated starting 860-861/1456-1457. Moreover, this ruler was afterwards

kept busy in the eastern part of his realm against the Timurids and his own family. Contact with the distant Mamluks might not have been a priority then. On the other hand, Pīr Būdāq's attempt for rapprochement with the sultan seems to announce this emir's ambitions to the detriment of his father. Indeed, in the years following his victory in Khorasan and Sistan, Pīr Būdāq broke his link to his father (864/1458). In 865/1460-1461, Jahānshāh was able to dismiss him from the region of Fars and send him to Iraq instead<sup>52</sup>. This attempt to move Pīr Būdāq away from Iran would fail since the latter would, in fact, continue raiding in the region until 870/1466<sup>53</sup> when, after the three-years' siege of Baghdad<sup>54</sup>, his brother Muḥammad, who has been dispatched by their father, finally entered the city and murdered Pīr Būdāq.

After he managed the internal struggle caused by his sons, Jahānshāh was finally able to turn against his longstanding enemy Uzun Ḥasan and, breaking the truce concluded in 865/1461, to lead his troops to Diyār Bakr (871/1467)<sup>55</sup>. The conflict turned to his disadvantage, however, and the Qara Qoyunlu ruler was killed in his sleep and decapitated by Uzun Ḥasan on Rabīʿ I 872/October 1467<sup>56</sup>. The head was sent first to the Timurids and then to Cairo, where it was hung at Bāb Zuwayla<sup>57</sup> on Jumādā I 872/December 1467<sup>58</sup> or Jumādā II 872/January 1468<sup>59</sup>. The Qara Qoyunlu dynasty would never rise again<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> ROEMER, H. R. – “The Successors of Tīmūr”. In JACKSON, Peter; LOCKHART, Lawrence (eds.) – *The Cambridge History of Iran: The Timurids and Safavids Periods*. Vol. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 114.

<sup>53</sup> On 2 Dhū l-Qaʿda 870/16 June 1466: AL-SAKHĀWĪ - *Wajīz*, vol. 2, p. 780. In Dhū'l-Ḥijjah 870/July 1466: ʿABD AL-BĀSĪT B. KHALĪL, *Nayl*, vol. 6, p. 245.

<sup>54</sup> ROEMER, H. R. – “The Türkmen Dynasties”. In JACKSON, Peter; LOCKHART, Lawrence (eds.) – *The Cambridge History of Iran: The Timurids and Safavids Periods*. Vol. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 164; IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ - *Nujūm*, vol. 16, p. 350, however reports that Pīr Būdāq was killed by Jahānshāh himself.

<sup>55</sup> WOODS, John E. – *The Aqquyunlu*, p. 96.

<sup>56</sup> ʿABD AL-BĀSĪT B. KHALĪL – *Nayl*, vol. 6, pp. 289-290.

<sup>57</sup> AL-SAKHĀWĪ – *Wajīz*, vol. 2, p. 797.

<sup>58</sup> ʿABD AL-BĀSĪT B. KHALĪL – *Nayl*, vol. 6, p. 303; IBN IYĀS - *Badāʿi*, vol. 2, p. 471.

<sup>59</sup> IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ – *Nujūm*, vol. 16, p. 384.

<sup>60</sup> In Dhū l-Ḥijjah 872/July 1468, Uzun Ḥasan also killed Abū l-Qāsim b. Jahāshāh who was still ruling in Kerman.

## Conclusion

The two cases presented are quite interesting for several reasons. First of all, they inform us a great deal about the Timurid and Qara Qoyunlu politics (which are unfortunately not that well documented). But for the topic that interests us here, those cases attest to much more complex relations between powers within the Islamicate world than the classical pictures of relations between sultans. They further indicate that diplomacy not only was a family business, but more importantly a way for ambitious family members to gain support from foreign courts in their race to succession. While some of those cases have been recorded by the Mamluk chronicles, others, more "delicate", have not, which pointed at their more informal character. Because of their informality, they represent a unique witness of the greatly intertwined or entangled history of the region.

While the Timurids and Turkmens are well known to function on the basis of corporate sovereignty<sup>61</sup>, the letters kept in the MS ar. 4440 (BnF, Paris) show a more complex picture of that practice, especially regarding its implication on the "international" sphere. The ambitions of Muḥammad Jūkī, 'Alā' al-Dawlah and Pīr Būdāq have them indeed entering in contact with the Mamluk sultans already during the reign of their (grand-)father to gain support. In the Timurid case, sultan Jaqmaq was cautious to remind Muḥammad Jūkī that he was still in contact with Shāh Rukh — without however ignoring Jūkī's claims. The Qara Qoyunlu case, on the other hand, represents a more telling example of the Mamluk sultanate supporting a son over the father, as Jahānshāh's ambitions were seen as disproportionated and more importantly, as disadvantageous for the Mamluk sultan.

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