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## ***Khubz* as *Iqtāʿ* in Four Authors from the Ayyubid and Early Mamluk Periods**

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Iqtāʿ* is the delegation of “fiscal rights of the state over lands remaining juridically in the hands of their former owners.”<sup>1</sup> *Iqtāʿ* is a major question in studies of medieval Islamic society. In spite of the amount of previous research many points still need to be clarified. To date, the *iqtāʿ* system has been studied mainly from a legal point of view: the assignment of *iqtāʿ*, the duties and rights of the *muqtaʿ*, etc.<sup>2</sup> However, the emotional relations and loyalties underlying it, as well as relationships between levels of power, have been neglected.

While investigating these topics I have frequently come across the use of the term *khubz* in reference to *iqtāʿ* in Ayyubid and early Mamluk chronicles. The question underlying this article is whether a semantic study of the term used to refer to the *iqtāʿ*, above and beyond its intrinsic value, can contribute to a deeper understanding of the *iqtāʿ* system and how it functioned. In spite of its repeated appearance, no comprehensive inquiries exist to date on this particular use of the term *khubz*. Brief notes on the topic can be found in the critical editions and translations of Arabic texts and in research on the *iqtāʿ* system.<sup>3</sup>

The main issues to be considered in this article are, first of all, whether the use of the term changes from one author to another and whether the two terms are used interchangeably by the authors under discussion. Secondly, I will verify to what extent *khubz* was perceived and used as a substitute for *iqtāʿ* and whether the main meaning of *khubz*—bread, subsistence—influences its use in a given context or expression. In order to investigate these issues, after an overview on the authors’ uses of the term, I will concentrate on three particular cases. Although the article focuses on four works from the Ayyubid and early Mamluk periods, I will also give a brief overview of the use of *khubz* in later centuries. Through

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<sup>1</sup>Claude Cahen, “Iktāʿ,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:1088–91.

<sup>2</sup>See for example Sato Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam* (Leiden, 1997).

<sup>3</sup>Abraham N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and the Lebanon, 1250–1900* (Philadelphia, 1977), 18, 32; Sato, *State and Rural Society*, 46, n. 7; Claude Cahen, “L’évolution de l’iqtaʿ du IX au XIII siècle,” *Annales, économies, sociétés, civilisations* 8 (1953): 25–52.



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textual analysis I hope to contribute, first of all, to describing some features of the use of this term in referring to *iqṭāʿ*, not only in writing but also in the spoken language. Secondly, I hope to contribute to the understanding of the *iqṭāʿ* system and how it functioned. My final goal in both cases is not to paint a comprehensive picture, but rather to present some preliminary reflections based on the reading of texts from the period under review.

Before approaching the topic, it is worth considering two preliminary points. As far as the way the terms *iqṭāʿ* and *khubz* have been translated into European languages is concerned, a variety of solutions have been adopted. When translating al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-Sulūk* into French, Quatremère mostly kept the Arabic terms for both *iqṭāʿ* and *khubz*, while in Broadhurst's English translation of the same work *iqṭāʿ* is translated as "fief" and *khubz* sometimes as "emoluments."<sup>4</sup> In the French versions of Ibn Shaddād's *Al-A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah fī Dhikr Umarāʾ al-Shām wa-al-Jazīrah* (by A. Eddé) and al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd's *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak* (by A. Eddé and F. Micheau) *iqṭāʿ* is not translated, while *khubz* has been expressed with the words "allocation" and "concession."<sup>5</sup> Jacqueline Sublet translated *iqṭāʿ* as "fief" in some cases, while in others she kept the Arabic word. The same can be said for *khubz*, which is occasionally translated as "dotation."<sup>6</sup> In this article I have chosen to keep the Arabic words because none of the modern terms fully correspond with what *iqṭāʿ* and *khubz* refer to in all their complexity.

Secondly, when I began analyzing the use of the term *khubz*, I focused on the dichotomy of *khubz*/*iqṭāʿ*. In the course of my inquiry, though, I realized that, particularly in some of the authors under review, the verbal noun—*iqṭāʿ*—is hardly used. In the part of Ibn Shaddād's work which I analyzed it is used only twice, and in Ibn al-ʿAdīm Kamāl al-Dīn's *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīkh Ḥalab* and Ibn Wāṣil's *Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb* it appears more frequently but is still not the most common term. All the authors, including al-Makīn, generally use a verb from the same root, *aqṭaʿa*. Consequently, this discussion will not be limited to the alternation between *khubz* and *iqṭāʿ*, but the use of the term *khubz* will be investigated in the wider context of *iqṭāʿ*-related phraseology.

<sup>4</sup>See Étienne Marc Quatremère, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Égypte*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1837–45), and Ronald J. C. Broadhurst, *A History of the Ayyūbid Sultans of Egypt* (Boston, 1980).

<sup>5</sup>Anne Marie Eddé, *Description de la Syrie du Nord* (Damascus, 1984); Anne Marie Eddé and François Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides (602–658/1205–6–1259–60)*, Documents relatifs à l'histoire des Croisades, no. 16 (Paris, 1994). On *khubz*, see for example *Description*, 55, 271, and *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 121.

<sup>6</sup>Faḍl Allāh ibn Abī al-Fakhr al-Suqāʿī, *Tālī Kitāb Wafayāt al-Aʿyān (un fonctionnaire chrétien dans l'administration Mamelouke)*, ed. Jacqueline Sublet (Damascus, 1974).



## SOURCES

This article focuses on four works dating back to the seventh century. Three of them are historical writings, for example Ibn Wāṣil's *Mufarrij al-Kurūb fī Akhbār Banī Ayyūb*.<sup>7</sup> This is the story of the Ayyubids, covering the period from the rise of the Zangids to the ascension to power of al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars (658). It was composed in Hama around 670. My considerations are mainly based on vols. 3 and 4. Further quotations are also taken from vols. 2 and 5. The second of the works under discussion is al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd's *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*,<sup>8</sup> a universal history from creation to the Mamluks' rise to power. The third piece of historical writing I have considered is a local history, Ibn al-ʿAdīm Kamāl al-Dīn's *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīkh Ḥalab*.<sup>9</sup> This treats the history of Aleppo from its origins to 641. The last work I have analyzed is a historical topography of Syria, *Al-A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah fī Dhikr Umarā' al-Shām wa-al-ʿJazīrah*, composed between 671 and 680 by Ibn Shaddād (vols. 1 and 2).<sup>10</sup>

The authors mentioned share many similarities. First of all they lived in the same period and witnessed the dynastic transition between the Ayyubids and the Mamluks. Their works belong to the so-called "siyāsa oriented historiography."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Arabic text edited by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl (vols. 1–3) and H. Ramīʿ S. Ashūr (vols. 4–5) (Cairo, 1953–1977). Vols. 2 and 3 do not include an analytical index. In the index to volumes 3 and 5 both *khubz* and *iqṭāʿ* are listed, while in the index to vol. 4 only *iqṭāʿ* is mentioned. In the index to vol. 3, a passage containing *khubz* is not mentioned (112–13). Following is a list of passages from the *Mufarrij* containing the terms *khubz* and *iqṭāʿ*, some of which will be mentioned in this article: (*khubz*) 2:265; 3:81, 108, 112–13; 5:69, 206, 337, 277; (*iqṭāʿ*) 3:14, 23, 54, 55, 131, 126, 204, 239, 251, 269; 4:23, 30, 70, 73, 88, 89, 110, 133, 226, 231, 284.

<sup>8</sup> Arabic text edited by Claude Cahen in *Bulletin de études orientales* 15 (1955–57): 109–84, and translated by Eddé and Micheau in *Chronique des Ayyoubides*. On this work see Johannes den Heijer, "Coptic Historiography in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Early Mamluk Period," *Medieval Encounters* 2, no. 1 (1996): 88–94. The passages from the text edited by Cahen containing *khubz* are: 134, 139, 143, 149, 152, 157, 161, 169, 176, and the ones containing *iqṭāʿ*: 133, 155, 159, 164, 176. The edition mentioned includes only an index of names of people and places.

<sup>9</sup> Arabic text edited by Sāmī al-Dahhān, 3 vols. (Damascus, 1951–68). The following passages contain the term *khubz*: 203v; and *iqṭāʿ* (or *aqṭaʿa*): 173v, 177r, 180r–v, 183r, 187r, 189v, 190r, 191r, 194v, 202v, 204v, 205r–v, 208r, 222v, 223r, 225v, 228r, 231r–v, 234r, 237v, 238r, 241v, 251v, 256r, 262r–v, 258v, 263r, 265v. The edition mentioned contains only an index of geographical names and names of people.

<sup>10</sup> Text edited by Anne Marie Eddé in *BEO* 22–23 (1980–81): 265–402, and translated, *Description de la Syrie du Nord*. In the part of the text edited by Eddé, *khubz* is used three times (382, 320, 299). For *iqṭāʿ* see pages: 292, 295, 299, 303, 304, 372, 373, 374, 375, 377–78, 380, 381, 382, 383, 387, 390, 393, 396–99. The edition mentioned contains only an index of people's names. On the *Al-A'lāq* see Zayde Antrim, "Making Syria Mamluk: Ibn Shaddād's *Al-A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah*," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (2007): 1–18.

<sup>11</sup> Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge, 1994), 184. On Ayyubid and Mamluk historiography, see Donald P. Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography*



Developing from the eleventh century, this new type of historiography focused mainly on issues related to governance. Like most of the historians of this period, all of the authors under review held positions in the administration and had close links with the court.<sup>12</sup> Ibn Wāṣil studied in Damascus and Aleppo, and during his life he held official positions in the service of various patrons including the Ayyubid ruler of Hama, Muẓaffar II, and the sultan Baybars. He also held teaching posts and judgeships in different places. He was in close contact with the ruling and administrative elites as well as with scholars. Like Ibn Wāṣil, Ibn al-ʿAdīm<sup>13</sup> also had close links with the leading group of his town, Aleppo. He was born in 588 and, like Ibn Wāṣil, he was given diplomatic missions by the Ayyubid ruler of the town. He served as secretary, judge, and vizier, and held teaching positions as well. In addition to the *Zubdat al-Ḥalab* he also wrote a biographical dictionary called *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab*. ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād served in the bureaucracy, first in Ayyubid Aleppo—as secretary of the chancellery of al-Malik al-Nāsir—and then in Cairo. He wrote a biography of Baybars and the *Al-Aʿlāq al-Khaṭīrah fī Dhikr Umarāʾ al-Shām wa-al-Jazīrah*, a historical topography of Syria. The last of the authors discussed, al-Makīn, was an Egyptian Copt. Like his father he was a high official of the army's *dīwān* in Syria, where al-Makīn moved for unknown reasons.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the works of these authors, I have also considered the last volume of *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*<sup>15</sup> by Ibn al-Athīr ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAlī (d. 630), which was the model for the works of Ibn Wāṣil and al-Makīn. The period dealt with in this volume starts with the rise to power of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and ends in 628. Further examples have been taken from later historians: the *Dhayl Mirʾāt al-Zamān* of al-

(Wiesbaden, 1970); Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, 1952).

<sup>12</sup>On this topic see Donald P. Little, "Historiography of the Ayyubid and Mamluk Epochs," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, ed. M. W. Daly (Cambridge, 1998), 1:412–14; idem, *History and Historiography of the Mamluks* (London, 1986); Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors and Actors* (London and New York, 2006), 14; Yehoshua Frenkel, "Ayyubid and Mamluk Historiography: Eyewitness Accounts by Several Contemporaries," in *Continuity and Change in the Realms of Islam: Studies in Honor of Professor Urbain Vermeulen*, ed. K. D'Hulster and J. van Steenbergen (Leuven, 2008).

<sup>13</sup>On this author, see David Morray, *An Ayyubid Notable and his World* (Leiden, 1994), 1–11.

<sup>14</sup>Claude Cahen, "Al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd," *EI2*, 4:143–44.

<sup>15</sup>Arabic text edited by Carl J. Tornberg (1807–1877) (Beirut, 1965–67), vol. 12, and translated by Donald S. Richards, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī l-Tārīkh*, pt. 3, *The Years 589–629/1193–1231: The Ayyūbids after Saladin and the Mongol Menace* (Ashgate, 2008). The passages containing the term *iqṭāʿ* in this volume—some mentioned in this article—are on pages 125, 136, 137–38, 155, 163, 173, 342, 346, 412, 445, 446 of the Arabic text. This edition contains only an index of geographic and personal names.



Yūnīnī<sup>16</sup> and the biographical dictionary *Tālī Kitāb Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, composed by the Christian Ibn al-Ṣuqā‘ī,<sup>17</sup> both of whom died in 726; al-Nuwayrī’s (d. 732) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*;<sup>18</sup> and al-Maqrīzī’s (d. 845) *Kitāb al-Sulūk*.<sup>19</sup>

### KHUBZ IN SEVENTH-CENTURY WORKS

It has already been pointed out that in this period *khubz* was used with the meaning of *iqṭā‘*, and my research confirms this assumption. Clear evidence of this is that occasionally the two terms are used alternatively to refer to the same object, sometimes both in the same sentence or in different contexts. In the year 637, for example, al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ distributed *iqṭā‘āt* to his mamluks. Both Ibn Wāṣil<sup>20</sup> and al-Makīn<sup>21</sup> report the episode, but the *iqṭā‘āt* are referred to as *akhbāz* by the former and *iqṭā‘āt* by the latter:

*Mufarrij*, 5:277

وكاما قطع خبز أمير أعطاه لمملوك من مماليكه وقدمه

al-Makīn, 152

و أمر مماليكه وأعطاهم الإقطاعات

The choice of the term clearly results from the writers’ phrasing and linguistic choices.

According to the analysis undertaken, all of the authors under review use *khubz* to refer to *iqṭā‘* at least once. The use of the term, however, changes from one author to another. Ibn Shaddād, Ibn Wāṣil, and Ibn al-‘Adīm do not use the word *khubz* often. In their works this term appears only in a small percentage of the sentences referring to the *iqṭā‘* system. In Ibn Shaddād, for example, *khubz* is

<sup>16</sup> Quṭb al-Dīn Mūsā al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir‘āt al-Zamān*, 4 vols. (Hyderabad, 1954–61).

<sup>17</sup> Text edited and translated by Sublet, *Tālī Kitāb*. The passages containing the term *khubz* and *iqṭā‘* in this text are the following: paragraphs: 2, 16, 43, 108, 127, 129, 130, 141, 167, 187, 253, 323 (*khubz*) and paragraphs: 82, 84, 128, 162, 138, 326 (*iqṭā‘* and *aqṭa‘a*). In the index both the passages containing “*iqṭā‘*” and the ones containing “*khubz*” are mentioned.

<sup>18</sup> Claude Cahen and Ibrahim Chabbouh, “Le Testament d’al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb,” *BEO* 29 (1977): 97–144.

<sup>19</sup> Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma‘rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Ziyādah (Cairo, 1956).

<sup>20</sup> Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 5:277.

<sup>21</sup> Al-Makīn, *Al-Majmū‘ al-Mubārak*, 152; from now on the page numbers given for al-Makīn’s work refer to the Arabic text edited by Cahen (see above).





used three times<sup>22</sup> while the verb *aqṭaʿa* is used forty-one times and *iqṭāʿ* twice. In the third volume of the *Mufarrij*, *khubz* is used only three times<sup>23</sup> while terms coming from the root *q-t-ʿ* are used fifteen times. In the *Zubdat al-Ḥalab*, *khubz* is used even less. At first glance it seems that *khubz* and *iqṭāʿ* are used interchangeably. In Ibn Wāṣil, for example, *khubz* and *iqṭāʿ* are used in the same narrative contexts and in almost identical sentences. See, for example, *khubz* in these passages: 2:265; 5:206, 269, 277; 3:112–13; and *iqṭāʿ* in these (verb and noun): 4:73, 89, 110. On pages 3:112–13 and 2:265, *khubz* refers to the *iqṭāʿ* given in a certain place, Aleppo in one case (2:265)<sup>24</sup> and the Orient in the other (3:112–13).<sup>25</sup> The term *iqṭāʿ* is used in a similar context in two passages: رجع الى مصر فأقطعه... بها إقطاعا and وأقطعه إقطاعاً ببلاده.<sup>26</sup>

An exception is al-Makīn, who, unlike the other authors, uses the term *khubz* copiously (*khubz* twelve times and *iqṭāʿ* seventeen times, both verb and verbal noun). The use of the term *khubz* by this author is complex, as in some cases he uses phrases related to the *iqṭāʿ* theme interchangeably, while in others the appearance of a given term depends on the narrative context. *Khubz* is usually used when the *iqṭāʿ* is taken from the enemy and given to the supporters of the prince. One example can be seen on page 162:

واعتقل جماعة من الأمراء المماليك الصالحية ثم سيّرهم إلى الحصون واعتقلهم بها وأعطى أخبازهم للأمراء القيميرية زيادة على ما بأيديهم

Il [al-Malik al-Nāṣir] fit arrêter un certain nombre des émirs mamlouks Ṣāliḥiyya qu'il envoya dans différentes forteresses où ils furent incarcérés; il donna leur concessions (*ahbāz*) aux émirs Qaymarīya.<sup>27</sup>

In the same narrative context the term *khubz* is also used on page 149 [Al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ] وأعطى أقبازهم للخوارزمية (“Il donna leurs concessions (*aḥbāz*) aux émirs khwārizimiens”), 134 [al-Malik al-Kāmil] وأعطوا مصر وديار مصر وأعطوا أقبازهم لمماليكه (“Le sultan leur ordonna [aux émirs qui l’avait trahi] de quitter l’Egypte; il donna leurs concessions (*aḥbāz*) à ses mamlouks”),<sup>28</sup> and on page 176:

<sup>22</sup>Ibn Shaddād, *Al-Aʿlāq*, 382, 320, 299.

<sup>23</sup>Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarrij*, 3:81, 112–13.

وأقطعهم أخبازا كثيرة بحلب<sup>24</sup>

ولما استقر المُلكُ بمصر للملك العادل استدعى أبنه الملك الكامل ناصر الدين محمداً من الشرق، وجعله<sup>25</sup> نائباً عنه بالديار المصرية، وجعل خبزه الأعمال الشرقية، وهي التي كانت خبز الملك العادل لما كان نائباً عن أخيه السلطان الملك الناصر بمصر

<sup>26</sup>Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarrij*, 4:89, 110.

<sup>27</sup>The French translation is taken from Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 91.

<sup>28</sup> A variety of phrases are used by the authors to say “to take away” or “confiscate” the *iqṭāʿ*, such as أخذ إقطاع See, for example, Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubdat al-Halab*, 173v, where Nūr al-Dīn writes to the

[al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Ṣayf al-Dīn Quṭuz]

وَاسْتَمَرَّ بِحِمَاةٍ مَمَّنْ كَانَ فِي خِدْمَتِهِ مِنْ عَسْكَرِ الشَّامِ عَلَى أَخْبَازِهِمْ  
وَأَقْطَعَ أَخْبَازَ الْقَيْمَرِيَّةِ وَابْنِ يَغْمُورٍ وَمَنْ انْفَصَلَ عَنِ الْخِدْمَةِ أَجْمَاعَةً  
مَمَّنْ وَصَلَ صَدَبَتَهُ مِنَ الْأُمَرَاءِ الصَّالِحِيَّةِ وَالْمُعَزِّيَّةِ وَغَيْرِهِمْ

Il [al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Ṣayf al-Dīn Quṭuz] confirma leurs concessions (*aḥbāz*) à un certain nombre (d'émirs) de l'armée syrienne passés à son service; quant aux concessions (*aḥbāz*) de Qaymariya,<sup>29</sup> d'Ibn Yağmūr, et de ceux qui avaient abandonné son service il les donna en *iqṭāʿ* à des émirs Ṣāliḥiyya, Muʿizziyya ou autres.<sup>30</sup>

In the expression “to give an *iqṭāʿ*” al-Makīn uses both *khubz* and either the verb *aqṭaʿa* or the noun *iqṭāʿ*. The latter is always followed by the phrase “through diploma” *بِمَنَاشِير*.<sup>31</sup> As *khubz*, on the other hand, is never followed by such an expression, it is possible that a more technical term like *iqṭāʿ* was perceived by the author as more appropriate for the sentence. In two of the examples quoted, moreover, the author is talking about the administration of the kingdom. For example on page 159: “وتولى فخر الدين ابن الشيخ تدبير المملكة وأقطع البلاد بمناشير” (Fahṛ al-Dīn Ibn al-Ṣayḥ assumed the administration of the kingdom and conceded to him the same *iqṭāʿ* par diplôme”),<sup>32</sup> and on page 155:

وَاسْتَوْلَى مَعِينُ الدِّينِ عَلَى دِمَشْقَ وَأَعْمَالِهَا وَحَصُونِهَا وَبِلَادِهَا وَدَبَّرَهَا  
تَدْبِيرًا جَيِّدًا وَأَقْطَعَ مَلُوكَ الْخَوَارِزْمِيَّةِ وَأُمَرَاءَهُمْ أَكْثَرَ بِلَادِ الشَّامِ وَالسَّاحِلِ  
بِمَنَاشِير

Il [Muʿīn al-Dīn] les [Damas et sa province] administra d'excellente façon et concéda en *iqṭāʿ* par diplôme aux princes Khwārizmiens et à leurs émirs la plus grande partie de la Syrie et du littoral.”<sup>33</sup>

As will be shown in the following paragraphs, *khubz* is also used by al-Makīn in the context of requests and complaints. The way al-Makīn uses the term *khubz* makes his work particularly interesting and suitable for an investigation into the use of the term. But what is the reason underlying the difference between

prince of Damascus, accusing his amirs:

فَكَانَ يَقُولُ لَهُ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَوْقَاتِ: “إِنَّ فَلَانًا قَدْ كَاتَبَنِي فِي تَسْلِيمِ دِمَشْقَ—يَعْنِي بَعْضَ  
أُمَرَاءِ مَجِيرِ الدِّينِ—فَكَانَ يَبْعُدُ ذَلِكَ عَنْهُ وَيَأْخُذُ أَقْطَاعَهُ”

<sup>29</sup>Troops settled in Syria where they had *iqṭāʿāt*.

<sup>30</sup>Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 121.

<sup>31</sup>Al-Makīn, *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*, 155, 159, 176; see also 164.

<sup>32</sup>Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 86.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 78.



al-Makīn and the other authors? A biographical explanation may seem the most obvious one, though no certainty can be attributed to it. Looking at the biographies of the four authors under discussion, al-Makīn's is clearly the most unusual one. He was an Egyptian Copt, a high official of the army's *dīwān* in Syria. Moreover, as he was a Christian, unlike the others, he never held teaching positions or judgeships. However, the simpler explanation may be that the particularities in al-Makīn's use of *khubz* are merely due to the fact that his phrasing and semantic choices are different.

### **KHUBZ AND TROOPS**

In addition to the differences between the authors, there is one expression containing the term *khubz* that is used by three of them. This is *khubz* followed by the number of horseman that could be fed with it, to indicate the value of the *iqṭāʿ*.

In al-Makīn's work, for example, similar expressions are quite common. On the other hand, *iqṭāʿ* is never followed by words relating to value:

و في سنة سبع وعشرين وستمئة رتب السلطان الطواشي شمس الدين  
العادلي نائبه في بلاد الشرق وأعطاه الموزر خبز بمائة فارس مضافا  
إلى إقطاعه بالديار المصرية وهي الأعمال الإخميمية وما معها فتكمل  
حبزه ثلثمائة وخمسين فارس<sup>34</sup>

En 627, le sultan désigna l'eunuque (*ṭawāṣī*) Šams al-Dīn al-ʿĀdili comme lieutenant dans les territoires d'Orient et lui donna al-Muwazzar, concessions (*ḥubz*) correspondent à cent cavaliers; ceci s'ajoutait à ses *iqṭāʿ* d'Égypte, à savoir la province d'Iḥmīm et ses dépendances, ce qui au total représentait une concession (*ḥubz*) de trois cent cinquante (?) cavaliers.<sup>35</sup>

وفيهما بعث السلطان الملك الصالح صاحب مصر صاحب جمال  
الدين يحيى بن مطروح إلى دمشق وزيرا أميرا وأنعم عليه بخبز سبعين  
فارس ببلاد الشام<sup>36</sup>

Cette même année là il [al-Šāliḥ, souverain du Caire] envoya al-Šāḥib Ḡamāl al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Matrūḥ à Damas avec les fonctions de vizir et d'émir, lui accorda une concession (*ḥubz*) de soixante-dix cavaliers en Syrie.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Al-Makīn, *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*, 139.

<sup>35</sup> Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 44.

<sup>36</sup> Al-Makīn, *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*, 157.

<sup>37</sup> Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 81–82.





This expression is also used by Ibn Shaddād:<sup>38</sup> وقصد عزاز فأخذها من مظفر الدين وعوضه عنها خبز مائة فارس (‘‘Il la [‘Azāz] prit à Muẓaffar al-Dīn et lui donna en échange une allocation (*hubz*) de cent cavaliers’’); and further:

وهي في عصرنا كورة تحتوي على ضياع يعمل خراجها خبز أربعين طواشياً

[Qūrūs] À notre époque c’est un district qui comprend des domaines (*diyāʿ*) dont l’impôt foncier (*ḥarāğ*) représente une allocation (*hubz*) de 40 cavaliers.<sup>39</sup>

Similar expressions can be found in Ibn Wāṣil’s work as well. Sometimes *khubz* is followed by the number of horsemen that could be fed with its income: ‘‘[The sultan] gives a *khubz* of two hundred horsemen in Egypt’’ (5:69). In other cases the value of the *iqṭāʿ* is counted in dinars: ‘‘Al-Zāhir [decided] to give [to Sayf al-Dīn] a *khubz* of 50,000 dinars’’ (3:81).

From the frequency of this use of *khubz*, mainly followed by the number of horsemen, it is reasonable to assume that it was a widespread expression in the period under discussion, especially in the bureaucracy and the administration.<sup>40</sup> This hypothesis is also corroborated by the fact that even in the works of Ibn Wāṣil and Ibn Shaddād, who do not use *khubz* very often, in a high percentage of cases the term is used in this expression. In the part of the *Al-Aʿlāq* I analyzed, for example, although there are fifty passages in which things related to the *iqṭāʿ* system are mentioned, *khubz* appears only three times. In two of those cases the term is followed by a sentence indicating its value. This is the only situation, moreover, where there is a clear correspondence between the use of the term by both al-Makīn and the two other authors.

As in al-Makīn, in the two volumes of the *Mufarrij* under review the passages containing the term *khubz* are the only ones that account for the value of an *iqṭāʿ*. On the other hand, Ibn Shaddād also uses other expressions for the same purpose; for example:<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Ibn Shaddād, *Al-Aʿlāq*, 382.

<sup>39</sup> Eddé, *Description*, 55, 279–280.

<sup>40</sup> Another common expression in that period must have been ‘‘possessions and *iqṭāʿāt*’’ الاموال. See al-Makīn, *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*, 145, 168; in both cases the verb used is أعطى; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij*, 3:251; Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubdat al-Ḥalab*, 238r.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Shaddād, *Al-Aʿlāq*, 396. See also 377 (twice on the same page), 380 ب كان مقطعه + ب. The abundance of expressions indicating the value of the *iqṭāʿāt* in Ibn Shaddād might be related to the nature of his work. In fact, the author paid special attention to the economic details related to the places described.



وكانت القصبة وهذه القرى مقطعة لثمانين طواشيًا

In later centuries, *iqṭāʿ* followed by the number of horsemen became more common.<sup>42</sup> This evolution must have been a consequence of the change in the organization of the army in the fourteenth century, when a well-defined military organization was established in which the *iqṭāʿ* of hundreds, forties, and tens came to be connected with the ranks of the officer corps.<sup>43</sup> *Khubz* plus a number of horsemen, however, can still be found in the work of authors living in subsequent decades, such as Ibn al-Ṣuqāṭi:<sup>44</sup>

ولما فتح الملك المظفر قطز الشام أعطى الأمير فارس الدين المذكور  
خبز ناصر الدين القيمري، وهو مائتي وخمسون فارساً فأعطى منها  
لبدر الدين بكتوت المذكور خبز مائة فارس بمنشور سلطاني، وسلم إليه  
باقي الاقطاع يحكم فيه

[al- Malik al- Muẓaffar] octroya à l'émir Fāris al-Dīn la dotation de Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Qaymurī, qui était de 250 cavaliers. Il obtint par un édit sultanien. L'autorisation de concéder à Badr al-Dīn Baktūt ses droits sur une partie de sa dotation, soit 100 cavalier. Il garda le reste pour lui.<sup>45</sup>

The expression under discussion is also interesting because of the combination of the term *khubz* and the number of horsemen to be fed from it. The use of *khubz* in this expression seems to be connected to its meaning of bread. Although it refers to *iqṭāʿ*, a shadow of its principal meaning—bread subsistence—is highlighted in this context and might have made the use of the term particularly appropriate in a sentence referring to the number of troops that could be sustained by the

<sup>42</sup>See, for example, al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:509: an *iqṭāʿ* of one hundred horsemen is inherited by the son of a Kurdish amir; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 3:85: Baybars gave to al-Qaymarī—another Kurdish amir—an *iqṭāʿ* of forty horsemen.

<sup>43</sup>See R. Stephen Humphreys, "The Emergence of the Mamluk Army, II," *Studia Islamica* 46 (1977): 147–82; Amalia Levanoni, "The Mamluks' Ascent to Power in Egypt," *SI* 72 (1990): 121–44. On the Mamluks' amirs and their ranks, see David Ayalon, "Studies in the Structure of the Mamluk Army II," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 15 (1953): 203–28, 449–76; Reuven Amitai, "The Remaking of the Military Elite of Mamluk Egypt," *SI* 72 (1990): 145–63; idem, "The Mamluk Officer Class during the Reign of Baybars," in *War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean, 7th–15th Centuries*, ed. Yaacov Lev (Leiden, 1996).

<sup>44</sup>See also paragraph 141, "Il leur conceda des dotations allant de 10 à 40 cavaliers"; paragraph 127 "khubz of 300"; paragraph 127 "[al-Malik al-Zāhir] gave him a *khubz* of 100 horsemen" (خبز مائي) (فارس).

<sup>45</sup>The same episode is reported in paragraph 16. The passage also describes the further division of an *iqṭāʿ*.



*iqṭāʿ*. The way *khubz* is used is also related to the idea of feeding in another case, albeit to a lesser extent.

### **KHUBZ: COMPLAINTS AND REQUESTS**

Let us have a look at a couple of passages from al-Makīn:

فخافت القيمريّة على أنفسهم فكاتبوا الناصر صاحب حلب بأن  
يحضر ليأخذ دمشق واشترطوا الزيادات في أخبازهم

Les Qaymariya prirent peur et écrivirent à al-Nāṣir, souverain d'Alep, de venir prendre Damas à condition qu'il leur augmentât leurs concessions (*akhbāz*)<sup>46</sup>

فسير إليهم وطيب قلوبهم وحمل إليهم الأموال وزاد في إقطاعاتهم

[al-Malik al-Kāmil appris qu'un group d'émirs convinrent de le déposer]

Il leur envoya un messenger pour les apaiser, leur fit porter des présents et augmenta leurs *iqṭāʿ*<sup>47</sup>

In both cases the issue at stake is the increase of the *khubz/iqṭāʿ* of an amir. The two sentences are similar to each other and the same verb is used in both of them (زاد) but on page 133 we find the word *iqṭāʿ*, while on page 161, *khubz*. In my opinion, in this case *khubz* is used because of the context of request. Although the episode is not reported in direct speech, by using the word *khubz* the author seems to be sympathetic to the amirs. *Khubz* is used in a request once again, by al-Makīn, on page 143:

فبعث الملك الصالح إلى أخيه الملك الكامل يسأله أن يُنعم عليه  
ببعلبك وأعمالها مع خبزه المتقرر له من أيام أبيه

Al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ fit demander a son frère al-Malik al-Kāmil de lui accorder Balbek et sa province en plus de la concession (*hubz*) qui lui avait été attribuée au temps de leur père.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Al-Makīn, *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*, 161. The French translation is taken from Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 90.

<sup>47</sup> Al-Makīn, *Al-Majmūʿ al-Mubārak*, 133. French translation from Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 32.

<sup>48</sup> Eddé and Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides*, 53.



I think that the use of the term *khubz* in a context of request is not fortuitous. The word *khubz*, with its implicit meaning of bread and subsistence, was probably perceived by the author as the most appropriate for a request. In the amir's speech the term *khubz* is meant to move the prince. In other words, I think that the choice of the word *khubz* in this case is a stylistic one. The same stylistic reason could lie behind the use of *khubz* in the context of a complaint on page 169: "les amirs se plaignent (شكوا) de leurs concessions, *aḥbāz*."<sup>49</sup> In this case it is also reasonable to assume that the use of the term *khubz* represents a stylistic choice aimed at emphasizing the moment. This use is also linked to the meaning of subsistence and bread, which is connected to the term, making it particularly suitable in the context of complaints. The fact that *iqtāʿ* is never employed by al-Makīn in similar contexts corroborates this hypothesis. Even more interesting is the fact that in the historical writing of another author *khubz* is used in a similar way. In the *Zubdat al-Ḥalab*, the only passage in which the term *khubz* is used is on 203v: "The Yārūqīy are concerned (خاف) for their *akhbāz*." In this case the use of the word *khubz* could be a result of the author's desire to show his sympathy for the defeated amirs. It is a stylistic device, to emphasize the moment and to increase the intensity of the scene. Although *khubz* and *iqtāʿ* are synonyms in al-Makīn's century, the former might have preserved a shadow of its original meaning, bread subsistence, which would make it suitable for putting emphasis on an episode, or in the context of a request.

It is not surprising that al-Makīn is the only one who uses *khubz* in this way. Using the term as a stylistic device is a choice which depends on the style and the language of each author. Obviously, these choices may be influenced by the author's life experience and cultural background. Ibn Wāṣil might have preferred to use different, rhetorical meanings, or he might have had a different perception of the term *khubz* itself.<sup>50</sup> In the case of Ibn Shaddād, his style might have been shaped by the nature of his work, which was a historical topography.

There is something that must be added on the use of *khubz* in the context of a request. It appears that *khubz*, with its implicit meaning of feeding, stresses the idea of mutual relations and dependence between the prince and the amir. Humphreys states that "The institution of the *iqtāʿ* did not establish a tie of personal fealty between man and man. There is no evidence of any kind to suggest that the sovereign and his *muqtāʿ* formally undertook a body of mutual obligations to each other...An *iqtāʿ* was conceded through a decree (*manshūr*) issued by the

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 106.

<sup>50</sup>On the rhetorical devices used by Ibn Wāṣil, see Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography*, 91–93.



prince, in the same manner as any other office of state would be conceded.”<sup>51</sup> I think that this assumption takes into account only the contractual point of view, which does not exclude the existence of bonds of loyalty and dependence between the *muqṭāʿ* and the prince. With regard to this, the use of the term *khubz* referring to *iqṭāʿ*, and especially its use in the context of request, is significant. It suggests, in fact, the existence of a moral relationship of rights and duties, which in this context is evoked on purpose. The term chosen in the amir’s speech is intended to emphasize this relationship and the legitimacy of the request. This hypothesis would also fit with what Mottahedeh says about acquired loyalties in the Buyid period: “these acquired loyalties are best seen in times of stress, when men were trying to make effective their demands on others by explicitly referring to the validity of such loyalties.”<sup>52</sup>

The question is whether the term *khubz* is used by the protagonists, or if it is just a stylistic device used by the author. In fact, one assumption does not exclude the other. Since the authors wrote *khubz*, the term must have been in use during that period so it is reasonable to assume that the protagonists used it as well.

### ***IQṬĀʿ/KHUBZ AS AN ESTATE***

There is one more use of *khubz* that is worth analyzing: the use of the word to refer to estates. This use of the term is relevant from two points of view. First of all, it shows to what extent the word *khubz* was used with the same meaning as *iqṭāʿ*.

According to some scholars, *iqṭāʿ* is a polysemantic word. Both Humphreys<sup>53</sup> and Irwin argued convincingly that the term—in addition to its main administrative meaning—can refer to a large number of related institutions. Irwin mentions it “as a means of maintaining a garrison, as a mark of status, as a formal approval of a local notability, as recognition of *de facto* political authority, as a loose equivalent of the term *wilaya*, and very likely even to designate Frankish fief tenure under Muslim suzerainty.”<sup>54</sup> What about *khubz*? Does it substitute for *iqṭāʿ* exclusively as a term for tax allocation, or is it also used in other cases? It is difficult to answer this question. Further research is needed. In the texts I examined there is one case in particular which is remarkable. It is a sentence taken

<sup>51</sup>R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260* (New York, 1977), 375.

<sup>52</sup>Roy P. Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton, 1980), 41.

<sup>53</sup>Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 371–75.

<sup>54</sup>Robert Irwin, “Iqṭāʿ and the End of the Crusader States,” in *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades*, ed. Peter M. Holt (Warminster, 1977), 72; Linda Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan* (Stuttgart, 1998), 276, n.130; Ulrich Haarmann, “The Sons of Mamluks as Fief-holders in Late Medieval Egypt,” in *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East*, ed. Tarif Khalidi (Beirut, 1984), 141–68.





from Ibn Wāṣil's *Mufarrij* (5:206): "The Khwarizmi amirs headed towards the east and settled in their *akhbāz*."

ثم رحلت الخوارزمية عن حمص وعادوا إلى الشرق فأقاموا به في  
أخبازهم

This sentence is very interesting, and not only because it shows to what extent—at least by this author—*khubz* was perceived as a synonym of *iqṭāʿ*. In this case the use of *iqṭāʿ* and its meaning are also relevant for an understanding of the *iqṭāʿ* system as a whole.

In the line by Ibn Wāṣil quoted above *khubz* clearly refers to a place, to a piece of land. In the passages I examined, *khubz* is used with this meaning only once, while *iqṭāʿ* recurs frequently with this meaning, generally combined with verbs of movement or state of being verbs, such as "to stay." Let me quote some examples from Ibn al-Athīr's *Al-Kāmil*:

وكان عسكره بمصر قد تفرّق عن الأفضل من الخشبيّ، فسار كلّ  
منهم إلى إقطاعه ليربعوا دوابّهم

Al-Afḍal's army in Egypt had already parted from him...and every man had gone to his fief to put his horses on the spring grass.<sup>55</sup>

and

فهرب فخر الدين جركس وزين الدين قراجه الذي أعطاه الأفضل  
صرخد، فمنهم من دخل دمشق ومنهم من عاد إلى إقطاعه

Fakhr al-Dīn Jahārkas and Zayn al-Dīn Qarāja, to whom al-Afḍal had given Ṣarkhad, fled and some there were who entered Damascus and others who returned to their fiefs.<sup>56</sup>

The term is used in the same sense in Ibn Wāṣil's *Mufarrij*, 4:70: نازل...في 3:126: إقطاعاته and 3:126: إقطاعاته ("the ones who went to their *iqṭāʿ*"), and in Ibn al-ʿAdīm's *Zubdat al-Ḥalab*, المشطوب ("al-Malik al-Ashraf was in Ḥarrān and Ibn al-Mashṭūb in his *iqṭāʿ*, Rās ʿAyn").<sup>57</sup>

A further example is taken from the biographical dictionary *Tālī Kitāb Wafayāt al-Aʿyān*, by Ibn al-Suqāʿī. "He [al-Amīr Ḥusām al-Dīn Banjār] settled in Egypt in

<sup>55</sup>Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, 155.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 163. The English translation of the two passages is taken from Richards, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr*, 50, 56.

<sup>57</sup>Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubdat al-Ḥalab*, 241v.



the *iqṭāʿ* given to him and to his father” (واقام بمصر باقطاع له ولولده).<sup>58</sup> Jacqueline Sublet translated the sentence in a different way: “il demeura en Egypte (vivant) d’un fief qu’on lui avait donné, a lui et a son fils.” However, some doubts about this translation arise from the structure of the sentence: the parallel between the two objects of ب makes it clear that both “*iqṭāʿ*” and “Miṣr” refer to a locality. The IV form of the verb قام followed by the preposition ب moreover, usually means to settle down. Sublet’s reluctance to translate *iqṭāʿ* as a locality is understandable, as it implies an important deviation from its principal meaning. As I said above, *iqṭāʿ* is an allocation of taxes, mainly land taxes, that does not imply any change of ownership of the land. In consequence the use of the term to refer to an estate involves a deviation from its proper meaning and use. The same shift in meaning described for *iqṭāʿ* underlies the use of *khubz* in the passage of Ibn Wāṣil mentioned above (5:206). From the grammatical point of view this shift is not negligible, either. *Iqṭāʿ* is a verbal noun. Verbal nouns usually refer to the act of doing something; the term *iqṭāʿ* refers to a process. Its usage to indicate an estate implies the loss of its aspect of transitivity.

The frequency of this particular use of the term *iqṭāʿ* deserves some consideration, as it implies that it was common in the spoken language. Although its formal meaning was the allocation of taxes, mainly land taxes, *iqṭāʿ* must have come to be associated with land ownership and in some cases even with properties.<sup>59</sup> Beyond the semantic point of view, the use of the term *iqṭāʿ* as a locality is interesting for an understanding of how the *iqṭāʿ* system worked in reality, and how it was perceived by people at that time. This use of the term may lead to the conjecture that, although it was formally a temporary allocation of fiscal rights, *iqṭāʿ* must have been, at least in part, perceived as an estate. With regard to this, it is worth mentioning a lease concerning a portion of an *iqṭāʿ*, even though it comes from a later period. The contract is a document from al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf, Jerusalem.<sup>60</sup>

All this shows that the functioning reality of the *iqṭāʿ* system is not only far from being understood, but also too complex to be contained within the traditional definition of *iqṭāʿ*. It must have represented a variety of developments on the ground, according to different historical periods and places. In some cases

<sup>58</sup> Al-Suqāʿī, *Tālī Kitāb*, paragraph 82.

<sup>59</sup> “L’assimilation entre muqṭāʿ et propriétaire devenait facile en cas d’*iqṭāʿ*at héréditaires et de longue durée. L’impôt foncier (ḥaraḡ) en effet était souvent payée, en partie du moins, en nature, comme la redevance du métayer et a peu près dans le même proportions.” Anne Marie Eddé, *La Principauté Ayyubide d’Alep* (Stuttgart, 1999), 502.

<sup>60</sup> Donald P. Little, *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-Haram aš-Šarīf in Jerusalem* (Beirut, 1984), 298. Most of the documents date to the period between 793 and 797.



these local developments may not have been too far from Western feudalism.<sup>61</sup> Evidence from the Ayyubid period, for example, shows that at that time *iqtāʿāt* were often inherited, and that the *muqtāʿ*s used to live in their *iqtāʿāt* and enrich them with architectural works as a symbol of their power.<sup>62</sup>

Is it possible to say when this shift in the meaning of the term *iqtāʿ* in the language occurs? Further research is needed on this topic. It is clear, however, that *iqtāʿ* must already have been used in this sense before the time of Ibn al-Athīr, as testified by his use of the term as a locality.

### ***KHUBZ* IN LATER CENTURIES: AN OVERVIEW**

What about later centuries? Is *khubz* still in use? Do the meaning and the use of the term change? Although this article focuses mainly on sources from the thirteenth century C.E., I will now put forward a few considerations based on some quotations from authors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The use of the term *khubz* as *iqtāʿ* also continued in later centuries, but it came to be used with different meanings as well.

As in previous centuries, in this period the use of the term *khubz* changes from author to author. Some of them use the term both to indicate the *iqtāʿ* of amirs, and with a new meaning, usually related to non-Mamluk soldiers. Gibb, for example, notes that “When al-Maqrīzī (d. 845) says (*Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:65) that Saladin after the battle at Mont Giscard, *qataa akhbaza jamaatin minal-akrad*, it is probable that *khubz* means here ‘allowance of pay’ rather than *iqtāʿ*, as in later Mamluk usage.”<sup>63</sup> The same author nevertheless uses *khubz* when referring to *iqtāʿ*, as in the following passage:

وسبب ذلك أن السلطان استكثر أخباز المماليك أصحاب بيبرس  
الجاهشكير وسلاّر النائب وبقية البرجية، وكان الخبز الواحد ما بين  
ألف مثقال في السنة إلى ثمانمائة مثقال وخشى (السلطان) من وقوع  
الفتنة بأخذ أخبازهم

The reason for this survey was as follows. The sultan regarded the *ahkbāz* (that is, the *iqtāʿ*s) of the *mamlūks* who were the retainers

<sup>61</sup>On the difference between the Muslim *iqtāʿ* and the Western fief see Cahen, “L’évolution de l’iqtaʿ du IX au XIII siècle”; idem, “Iḳṭāʿ”; idem, “Réflexions sur l’usage de mot ‘Féodalité,’” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 3 (1960): 2–20. A different opinion is expressed by Irwin, “Iqtaʿ and the End of the Crusader States,” 77.

<sup>62</sup>Eddé, *La Principauté Ayyubide d’Alep*; Benjamin Michaudel, “The Use of Fortification as a Political Instrument by the Ayyubids and the Mamluks in Bilād al-Shām and in Egypt (Twelfth–Thirteenth Centuries),” *MSR* 11, no. 1 (2007): 55–67.

<sup>63</sup>H. A. R. Gibb, “The Armies of Saladin,” in *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (London, 1962), 86, n.16.



of Baybars al-Jāshankīr and *al-nāʿib* Salār, and of the surviving *al-Mamālīk al-Burjīya* to be excessive. That is to say, this was because one *iqṭāʿ* was between an annual revenue of 1000 mithqāls (1,000 dīnārs) and 800 mithqāls, but the sultan was afraid of provoking riots by confiscating their *khubz*.<sup>64</sup>

Also al-Yūnīnī, who lived before al-Maqrīzī, uses *khubz* with different meanings. In some passages of his *Dhayl Mirʾāt al-Zamān* the word *khubz* refers to *iqṭāʿ*. On 2:242, for example, when he accounts for the *iqṭāʿ* given to Baybars in 659, the author refers to the *iqṭāʿ* with the term *khubz*.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand, the same author uses the term with a different meaning in another passage:

وفيهما في يوم السبت سادس عشر جمادى الأول كان ابتداء الروك  
والشروع في إقطاعات الأمراء وفي اخباز الحلقة والأجناد وجميع  
عساكر الديار المصرية

In this year [697], on Saturday, Jumādā I 16 (March 1, 1298), the land redistribution (*al-rawk*) came into effect. Amīrs began to be granted fief lands (*iqṭāʿ*), while the non-Mamluk *ḥalqa* troopers and all Egyptian soldiers received their fief-related allowance (*akhbāz*).<sup>66</sup>

Al-Yūnīnī distinguished between the two terms; while *iqṭāʿāt* was given to the amirs, *khubz* is what non-Mamluk soldiers received. This is not the only case where *khubz* is related to soldiers rather than to amirs' *iqṭāʿāt*. In the work of a contemporary of al-Yūnīnī, al-Nuwayrī, *khubz* seems to be used in the same sense. In "Le Testament d'al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb"<sup>67</sup>:

إذا كتب منشور لأمير ياخذوا منه المائتي واكثر ومن الجندي من  
المائة ونازل ويكون الجندي خبزه الف دينار يفرقوا خبزه في خمس  
ست مواضع في قوص وفي الشرقية وفي الغربية فيزيد الجندي اربع  
وكلا تروح الخبز للوكلا وما يحصل للجندي من خبزه شي

Si un diplôme était écrit pour un émir, ils lui prenaient 200 dinars et même plus, s'il l'était pour un soldat 100 et moins (?); le soldat dont l'allocation *khubz* est de 1000 dinars ils la dispersent entre

<sup>64</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 2:146. The translation is taken from Sato, *State and Rural Society*, 147. See also the following passages: 2:386 and 3:407; in the former the term *khubz* refers to the *iqṭāʿāt* of the Khāṣṣakīyah, and in the latter it refers to the *iqṭāʿ* of an amir.

<sup>65</sup> The term *khubz* has the same meaning also in 2:92. See also al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 3:85.

<sup>66</sup> Li Guo, *Early Mamluk Syrian Historiography: Al-Yūnīnī's Dhayl Mirʾāt al-Zamān* (Leiden, 1998), 1:106 (English translation), 2:11 (Arabic text).

<sup>67</sup> Cahen and Chabbouh, "Le Testament," 102 (Arabic text), 110 (French translation).



cinq et six endroits à Qus et dans la Sharqiya et la Gharbiya il est obligé de nommer 4 gérants, auxquels va tout le *khubz*, et il ne lui revient rien à lui même...

يا ولدي اكثر الاجناد اليوم عامة وباعة وقزازين كل من لبس قبا وركب  
فرس وجا الى امير من هاولاء الترك وقدم له قوس وبرطل واستاذداره  
على خبز جندي من جندي معروف بالشجاعة والحرب، طرده اميره  
واعطا خبزه لذلك العامي الذي لا ينفع، واكثرهم على هذه الحالة، فاذا  
عابنوا العدو وقت الحاجة هربوا وينكسروا العسكر لانهم ما يعرفوا ولا  
هو شغلهم فينبغي ان لا تستخدم

O mon fils, la plupart des soldats de l'armée sont des gens du peuple, des boutiquiers et des tisserands (?). Quiconque revêt un *qabā*, monte un cheval et vient trouver un de ces Emirs turcs, on lui amène un cheval on corrompt le....et l'*ustādhār*, pour avoir le *khubz* d'un soldat connu par sa vaillance et ses qualités de guerre, l'émir l'abandonne et donne le *khubz* à ce soldat commun, qui n'est d'aucune utilité (pour l'armée).<sup>68</sup>

According to Claude Cahen, who edited the text, *khubz* is “un des termes courants pour designer les *iqtāʿāt* de dimensions modestes.”<sup>69</sup> *Khubz* has also been used to refer to the *iqtāʿāt* of the sons of Mamluk amirs in the *ḥalqah*. These *iqtāʿāt* were usually inferior compared with those granted to the Royal Mamluks.<sup>70</sup>

I will conclude with a contemporary of al-Yūnīnī and al-Nuwayrī, who shares many similarities with al-Makīn, both in his biography and in his use of term *khubz*: Ibn al-Suqāʿī. Like al-Makīn, he was an Egyptian Copt. He worked in the Mamluk administration. He wrote a biographical dictionary, *Tālī Kitāb Wafayāt al-Aʿyān*. In this work the term *khubz* is used more than any other expression related to the concept of *iqtāʿ* (fourteen times out of twenty). I have already quoted some passages of his work, talking about the use of *khubz* followed by the number of horsemen to be maintained by it. The copious use of the term by this author confirms its bureaucratic usage. Apparently, *khubz* and *iqtāʿ* are used interchangeably in his writing. Although in the *Tālī Kitāb* *khubz* refers mainly to *iqtāʿ*, in one

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 102 (Arabic text), 111 (French translation).

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 110.

<sup>70</sup>This passage is quoted in Amalia Levanoni, “Awlad al-Nas in the Mamluk Army during the Bahri period,” in *Mamluks and Ottomans: Studies in Honor of Michael Winter*, ed. Ami Ayalon and David J. Wasserstein (London, 2006), 97.





case it is related to soldiers' wages: "[He promised] that he would appoint him as (give him the office of) soldier with a *khubz*: يجعله جندي بخبز"<sup>71</sup>

### SOME FINAL REMARKS

The presence of the term *khubz* in the work of all the authors under review confirms its usage. The point now is to understand to which linguistic register the term *khubz* belonged. The frequent use of this term, in fact, could be related to a wider use of colloquialisms or bureaucratic terms, or to the author's familiarity with the latter. My opinion is that, although *iqṭāʿ* was the administrative term, *khubz* must have been widespread, especially in bureaucracy and administration and in certain expressions like "*khubz* of 100 horsemen." A very interesting point is that in Ibn al-Athīr the term *khubz* never appears. The fact that this term is not used cannot, in my opinion, be solely attributed to the chronological gap between him and the authors under review. Ibn al-Athīr was a professor who devoted most of his life to his literary work. His *Al-Kāmil*, moreover, is partly assembled from his students' notes.<sup>72</sup> If the language used in *Al-Kāmil* is the same language the author used for his lessons, the absence of the term *khubz* is not surprising; on the contrary, it would fit perfectly with the use of the term mainly in the spoken language and the vernacular of the administration. As *iqṭāʿ* was a technical term, the most correct one, in fact, it is not surprising that it was commonly used by teachers during their lectures. The absence of the term in Ibn al-Athīr does not prove that the term *khubz* was not in use at that time; it is rather a result of the author's linguistic and stylistic choices. It is true, however, that the decades between Ibn al-Athīr and the writers discussed in this article are not insignificant. The use of *khubz* might have become more common in the period that followed.

The use of the term in the narratives I have analyzed is not in conflict with the hypothesis that it was used particularly frequently in administration. It is well known that in the period under review the authors already enjoyed a certain independence from tradition and that their language contains colloquialisms.<sup>73</sup> What is more, all of the authors mentioned in this article held positions in the administration or had close ties with the courts and administrative and political groups, which may have shaped the language of their works.

The textual analysis of the works under discussion confirms that *khubz* was mainly used with the meaning of *iqṭāʿ*, even when the latter came to refer to lo-

<sup>71</sup> Al-Suqāʿī, *Tālī Kitāb*, paragraph 187. *Jundī* means private soldier; see Ayalon, "Studies in the Structure," 473, n. 5.

<sup>72</sup> Chase Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge, 2002), 175.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 97. On this subject see Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg, 1969), 159.



cality. Nevertheless there are specific uses of *khubz* which might be connected to its meaning of bread: firstly al-Makīn's use of the term in the context of complaints and requests; secondly its use followed by the number of horsemen to be sustained by the *iqṭāʿ*.

The analysis of these particular cases also highlights the relevance of a semantic analysis for an understanding of the functioning of the *iqṭāʿ* system and of the way the latter was perceived in the period under discussion. Although further research is needed, I think that the use of the word *khubz* to indicate *iqṭāʿ* and its usage in contexts of complaint is relevant to the social and emotional relations that underlie the contractual aspect. Even more relevant for an understanding of both the local perception of the *iqṭāʿ* system and of its functioning on the ground is the use of both *iqṭāʿ* and *khubz* to mean an estate. Both these points, moreover, show that the local developments of the *iqṭāʿ* system might present particular features that are not congruent with the traditional definition of *iqṭāʿ* as a tax allocation and nothing more. In fact, these local developments might in some cases bring into question—at least in part—the assumptions about the differences between the Muslim *iqṭāʿ* and the Western fief.

To conclude, I would say that a semantic study can, to some extent, help us to go beyond a purely legal perspective, and can contribute to a better understanding of the features of the *iqṭāʿ* system and especially of its local developments.

