

Ibn Mammati: His Life and His Book “Qawanin al-Dawawin”

(Died in 606 AH / 1209 CE)

ابن مماتي: حياته وكتابه «قوانين الدواوين»
(ت 606هـ/1209م)



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Date of receipt: 4/ 2/2025 Date of acceptance: 17/3/2025 Date of publication: 25/3/2025

Abstract

Christian historians in Islamic Egypt were not interested in general history only, as did John al-Naqyusi and Said bin Tariq, or in the history of biographies and biographies, as did Sawiris bin al-Muqaffa in his book "The History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria". However, they excelled in another type of historical writing that is no less important than the previous two types, which is writing in systems, civilization and plans; They wrote about government systems, financial laws, management methods, agricultural affairs, and surveying engineering⁽¹⁾, as did Ibn Mammati in his book "Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn ". As for the plans⁽²⁾ and the history of churches and monasteries, another historian known as Abu al-Makarem bin Gerges bin Masoud took care of them in his book "The History of the Churches and Monasteries of Egypt". These two books have their own importance in the study of Islamic systems and civilization, especially in Egypt during the transition period from Fatimid rule to Ayyubid rule, specifically during the twelfth century AD (sixth AH), as they are indispensable sources for the history of this period. In this study, the book "Laws of Divans" by Ibn Mammati is studied and demonstrated its importance as a source of Islamic history and the history of Egypt in this period. The research included three demands, dealing with the first requirement: his name, lineage and birth. In it, we studied his culture, the most important features of his personality, his writings, and the definition of the book "Laws of Divans". As for the second section, the approach of Ibn Mammati in the book "Laws of Divans" was studied analytically, while the third topic focused on the importance of the book "Laws of Divans" as a source of Islamic civilization and systems.

Keywords: Ibn Mammati , Egypt, ministry, historical method, divans, Islamic systems, ecclesiastical history.

المخلص

يُعدُّ العصر الأيوبي من الفترات التي شهدت تطورات إدارية وتنظيمية كبيرة، وكان لعدد من الكُتَّاب دور بارز في هذه النهضة، ومن بينهم القاضي الأسعد بن ممّاتي، الذي عُرف بكتابه «قوانين الدواوين»، والذي يُعدُّ من أهم المصادر في دراسة الإدارة والمالية في الدولة الأيوبية.

ويعد الأسعد أبو المظفر إبراهيم بن علي بن ممّاتي، وُلد في القرن السادس الهجري ونشأ في بيئة ثقافية وإدارية، حيث كان والده يعمل كاتبًا في الدولة الفاطمية ثم الأيوبية.

وقد شغل ابن ممّاتي مناصب رفيعة في الدولة الأيوبية، حيث تولى إدارة الدواوين المالية، وكان مسؤولاً عن تنظيم الموارد المالية للدولة، الأمر الذي جعله مطلعاً على أوضاع البلاد الإدارية والاقتصادية.

يُعدُّ كتاب «قوانين الدواوين» من أهم مؤلفات ابن ممّاتي، وهو كتاب إداري يُقدم صورة دقيقة عن النظام المالي والإداري في عصر الدولة الأيوبية. ويُعدُّ هذا الكتاب مصدراً مهماً لدراسة تطور الإدارة في مصر. ظل كتاب «قوانين الدواوين» مصدراً أساسياً للمؤرخين والباحثين في مجال الإدارة والاقتصاد في العصور الإسلامية، كما أثر ابن ممّاتي في تطوير نظم الدواوين، حيث استمر تأثيره في العصور اللاحقة، خاصة في الدولة المملوكية.

وتضمن البحث ثلاث مطالب، تناول المطلب الأول: أسمه ونسبه ومولده. ودرسنا فيه ثقافته واهم ملامح شخصيته ومؤلفاته والتعريف بكتاب «قوانين الدواوين». أما المطلب الثاني تناول منهج ابن ممّاتي في كتاب قوانين الدواوين دراسة تحليلية، فيحين ركز المطلب الثالث على أهمية كتاب «قوانين الدواوين» بوصفه مصدراً من مصادر الحضارة والنظم الإسلامية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ابن ممّاتي، مصر، الوزارة، المنهج التاريخي، الدواوين، النظم الإسلامية، التاريخ الكنيسي.

1. The Life of Ibn Mammati and “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “

1.1 The life of Ibn Mammati

He is the judge, Al-Asaad Abu Al-Makarim, Asaad bin Al-Khater, Abi Saeed Muhdhab bin Mina bin Zakariya bin Abi Qudamah bin Abi Malih Matati Al-Masry, the writer and poet⁽³⁾. Banu Mammati is an honorable Coptic family, originally from Asyut in Upper Egypt. She was a Christian. It belongs to Abi Al-Maleeh Mina bin Zakariya, who was called my death, but

rather a title of my death, because – as narrated by Ibn Khalkan – there was a great price in Egypt, and Abu Malih was a lot of charity and feeding, especially for Muslim children, so he was famous for it.⁽⁴⁾ Yaqut mentions in (Mu‘jam al-‘Adabā’) the transfer of Bani Mammati from the city of Assiut to Egypt,⁽⁵⁾ and he says, “They came to Egypt, served, advanced, and took over the states, and he (i.e. Abu al-Malih) with that is from the people of a house in ancient writing, and he is like the ruler of the Egyptian lands without a hand on his hand and to my death many works”⁽⁶⁾.

When the caliph al-Mustansir Billah (427 – 487 AH / 1035 – 1094 AD) summoned Badr al-Jamali from Acre and the governors of the ministry in Egypt (466 – 487 AH / 1074 – 1094 AD), Abu Malih called him, worked at his service and wrote in the Diwan of Egypt⁽⁷⁾. Responsible for the Diwan”, which is one of the higher administrative positions in the Fatimid state, and the owner of this position is one of the books of funds in the diwans, and his work is controlling the Diwan affiliated to him, and he was named because of his importance⁽⁸⁾ as the “Qutb of the Diwan”⁽⁹⁾; because he used to control the daily work of the Diwan and monitor the employees, in addition to informing those in charge of the Diwan of what should be collected from the financial resources on the specified dates⁽¹⁰⁾. Abu Malih became “Mammati” entourage and followers, and the state’s elders sat with him, and he spoke to writers, and poets praised him, and some of them stopped praising him in hope of his giving. And Abu Al-Salt mentions in his book “ Alrisalat Almisria “ that Abu Taher Ismail bin Muhammad Al-Nasha’, known as Ibn Makanseh, stopped praising him:

What can I expect from life?

With this world’s constant change and strife?

The Christians’ disbelief after

My beloved father’s death is a bitter aftertaste.

Neither the generous nor the miser Betrayed their faith.

Yaqt al-Hamawi deduces from the previous verses of Ibn Maknisah that it is possible that the Christians assassinated or killed Abu Malih ⁽¹³⁾.

It is narrated that when al-Afdal ibn Amir al-Juyush (487 – 515 AH / 1094 – 1121 AD) took over after his father, Ibn Mekneseh entered upon him praising him, and said to him “Your hope is gone with the death of Abi al-Malih, so what brought you to us, forbade him and did not accept his praise” ⁽¹⁴⁾. As for al-Muhadhdhab, the historian’s father, and he was called al-Khateer, he took over after the death of his father (Abi al-Malih Matati) the army office in Egypt in the late days of the Fatimids and the first Ayyubid state. And the owner of the “Mu‘jam al-‘Adabā’” mentions that he found a book from the works of Al-Asaad bin Mammati (606 AH/1209 AD) written on the back was Al-Muhadhdhab, his father, known as Al-Khatir, was appointed to the Diwan Al-Iqat’a, and he is on the religion of Christianity ⁽¹⁵⁾.

When Emir Asad al-Din Shirkuh became vizier to the Caliph al-‘Adid in 564 AH/1169 CE, he imposed strict measures on the Christians, ordering them to tighten their belts and raise their head coverings. The Patriarch wrote to him,⁽¹⁶⁾ requesting that he either cancel this order or alleviate its severity, saying:

O Lion of Faith, and those who follow your path,

Why this cruelty, this violent wrath?

Preserve the Prophet’s teachings, pure and true,

Why subject us to such pain and woe^{(17)?}

Among them and removing the tyranny, Al-Khatir wrote to him asking him to cancel this matter or mitigate it, but Shirkuh did not respond to him, rather when he learned that Al-Khatir was carrying out his job and

sitting in the court without change, he forbade him from that, and obligated him to be the Christians.⁽¹⁸⁾ In order to preserve his position and avoid the restrictions placed upon non-Muslims, and to prevent his rivals from taking advantage of him under Shirkuh and Saladin, the Patriarch and his sons converted to Islam at the hands of Saladin himself. Shirkuh initially accepted their conversion but eventually dismissed him from his position.⁽¹⁹⁾ The Patriarch passed away on Wednesday, the sixth of Ramadan, 577 AH/1182 CE.⁽²⁰⁾ His son, al-As'ad Abu al-Makarim, a scribe, poet, and historian, succeeded him as the head of the military diwan.⁽²¹⁾

C. His Birth:

Most historians who documented the life of As'ad ibn al-Muhadhdhab agree that he was born in Egypt in the year 544 AH / 1149 CE⁽²²⁾. This means that he spent the early part of his life during the transitional period from the Fatimid Caliphate to the Ayyubid dynasty. He witnessed the sweeping changes that took place in the government bureaus and observed the new rulers' perspectives on the identity of those who would lead the administrative offices of their state. This prompted him, along with his father, to adapt to the unfolding events. Together with his family, he publicly embraced Islam under the guidance of Saladin, enabling them to retain their positions in the government bureaus.⁽²³⁾

D. His Works:

As'ad was renowned for his literary talent and his numerous works, most of which fall within the realm of literature ⁽²⁴⁾. Al-Imād al-Iṣfahānī described him as “a man of virtue, a man of letters, a poet, and a prose writer... who cultivated literature and authored works in various fields” ⁽²⁵⁾. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī noted, “He produced many works aimed at imparting moral lessons, often presenting them through anecdotes and narratives directed at the elite. While these works were not scientifically profound,

they resembled the writings of al-Tha‘ālibī and his contemporaries” (26).

We now turn to the works of Ibn Mammātī that are relevant to history, the most important of which include:

Kitāb al-Fāshūsh fī Aḥkām Qarāqūsh (The Book of Nonsense on the Judgments of Qarāqūsh):

This work is a sharp literary portrayal of the administration of Qarāqūsh, one of Saladin’s ministers. ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Ḥamzah published this book as a standalone volume within the series “Kitāb al-Yawm” (Book of the Day) and later included it as part of his book Thalāth Shakhṣiyyāt fī al-Tārīkh (Three Personalities in History). This book features the biographies of three historical figures: ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Muqaffa’, the author of Kalīlah wa-Dimnah; Saladin; and Bahā’ al-Dīn Qarāqūsh.⁽²⁷⁾

Kitāb Sīrat Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb (The Biography of Saladin) (28):

According to accounts by Ibn Khallikān (29), Ibn Kathīr (30), and al-Maqrīzī (31), this work was composed in poetic form but has since been lost.

Kitāb Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn (The Laws of the Administrative Bureaus).

1.2 “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “

1.2.1 Introducing “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “

Al-Maqrīzī states in his *Khiṭaṭ*: “The book *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn* (The Laws of the Administrative Bureaus) was authored by him (referring to Ibn Mammātī) for King al-‘Azīz⁽³²⁾ (589–595 AH / 1193–1198 CE). It concerns the administrative bureaus of Egypt, their regulations, foundations, conditions, and the operations conducted within them. The work originally consisted of four substantial volumes, but only one volume, which was abridged by someone other than the author, has reached the hands of readers. In this volume, Ibn Mammātī listed four thousand estates in the regions of Egypt, detailing the area of each estate, its irrigation system,

and its revenue from both cash and crops”⁽³³⁾. Al-Maqrīzī’s account in this regard is of great significance and reveals two key points:

The first point is that Ibn Mammāṭī authored the book *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn* (The Laws of the Administrative Bureaus) for King al-‘Azīz ‘Imād al-Dīn.

The second point is that the version of the book currently in circulation is an abridged copy of the original work, which consisted of four large volumes. Unfortunately, this extensive original has been lost to time.

Now, we must ask: How accurate is al-Maqrīzī’s account? Is the version of *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn* available today truly an abridged copy of a much larger original, as al-Maqrīzī claims?

Some modern scholars have attempted to address this question, including Aziz Suryal Atiya in the introduction to his critical edition of the book. He presented several pieces of evidence supporting the validity of al-Maqrīzī’s theory, such as:

The significant variations among the numerous manuscripts of *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn* (The Laws of the Administrative Bureaus), as well as a comparison between the table of contents listed at the end of its introduction—which outlines fifteen chapters—and the ten chapters found in the main text, clearly indicate the omission of the final five chapters. This suggests that these five chapters were present in the original, more extensive version.⁽³⁴⁾

However, we believe that the most plausible explanation is that Ibn Mammāṭī authored two versions of *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn*: a lengthy, comprehensive version written for King al-‘Azīz, and an abridged version that is the one currently in circulation. This hypothesis can be supported by the following evidence:

1. This procedure or system was widely followed in this period (the medieval period). Historians often write a huge book consisting of several volumes, and then write a summary of it, and sometimes several abbreviations⁽³⁵⁾.)

2. Ibn Mammati may have written the lengthy version of the Dear King. Still, he found in it some valuable information that the author saw as one of the secrets of the Diwan that should not be made available to the general public, so he omitted it from the abbreviated version circulating among the people.
3. What also indicates the validity of this possibility is that the third chapter is concerned with the affairs of the state and its regions, cities and villages, which were financial units in the Ayyubid era and which appeared in the circulating copies, but it also included the country's cross-country and its area.⁽³⁶⁾ However, dropping this information and being satisfied with the names of the different financial units only; was a must, in the words of the author himself; because it is one of the secrets of the Court that may not be disclosed to the general public⁽³⁷⁾.)

In any case, the book, despite its brevity and its lack of detail in reviewing the issues in every detail, bears many of the characteristics that characterize the type of diwan and compositional writings that appeared in the Islamic Middle Ages.⁽³⁸⁾

1.2.2 Subjects of “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “

Ibn Mammati organized the material of his book in an introduction and fifteen chapters, of which the first ten chapters reached us. He made the introduction to clarify his purpose in writing the book and to review the topics that he will address in it⁽³⁹⁾. In the first chapter,⁽⁴⁰⁾ he talked about the virtue of writing and the book, and what came in that of the Qur'anic verses, the hadiths of the Prophet, and the narrated news, then he mentioned who was writing for the prophets, peace be upon them, then he mentioned some of the writers of the caliphs and scholars of Islam, and at the end of the chapter Ibn Matati spoke about the duties of the book and their rights, so he mentioned the most important moral and ethical

characteristics and the technical skills that the writer must possess, then he mentioned the most important rights and privileges that they deserve to have from honoring and respecting them and not accepting slander about them and expanding their livelihoods, accepting their testimony, and other things.

In the second chapter,⁽⁴¹⁾ he talked about the geography of Egypt, and in which region it is from the globe, its length, width, borders, and characteristics, and the reason for calling it Egypt, and what was mentioned in the mention of its virtues in the dear book and the noble hadith, then he mentioned its Nile, its beginning, its end and its length, and what is unique to it about the earth's rivers, and the beginning of its increase And the time of its lack, and what the prophetic reports testified to from his bounty, and the first one who measured it, and what the situation settled on in its criterion, then he mentioned the conquest of Egypt, and who conquered it, and how it was conquered: by peace or force, and the reason for the difference of historians in that, and finally he mentioned the news of Egypt and its wonders and what is unique. It distinguishes it from other cities and monuments such as the city of Alexandria, Fayoum, Al-Manara, Jabal Al-Tur, and Jabal Al-Maqtaa.

In the third chapter,⁽⁴²⁾ he mentioned the totality of the works of Egypt, the details of its aspects, and the investigation of the names of its villages, deserts, and islands. As for the fourth chapter,⁽⁴³⁾ Ibn Mattati made it to mention the provisions of the land, the disparity in its value, the disparity of the issues of its conditions, and what has been agreed upon of its names, and the identification of its good from its dryness. In the fifth chapter,⁽⁴⁴⁾ in which Ibn Mamatti returns to the mention of Egypt, mentioning its gulfs, canals, bridges, the times of their dam, the times of their opening, the difference between the municipal and sultanate bridges, and the estimate of what is spent on them. In the sixth chapter,⁽⁴⁵⁾ he talks about Egypt's

agricultural affairs. He mentions the Coptic months and what corresponds to them in terms of Syriac, the types of crops that are sown each month, the times of planting and harvesting them, the amount needed by an acre of these crops, and the amount of tax per acre. The seventh chapter⁽⁴⁶⁾ is devoted to talking about the origins of land area and some related engineering issues.

He talks about space and its provisions, and establishes evidence of the corruption of the term on it, and mentions the just space and the way to know it, then he talks about some geometric shapes such as: squares, triangles, rounds, and arcs, and how to extract the area of these shapes, as he talks about the area of the sphere, cone and other geometric shapes in a scientific way that indicates that Ibn Matati was master of this science, and also indicates that this science was very advanced among the Arabs at that time.

In the eighth chapter⁽⁴⁷⁾, the author addresses numerous issues related to the governance systems during the Ayyubid era. He examines the key functions of the state and explains the responsibilities of each, particularly focusing on the administrative officials, known as the “holders of the pens.” These include: the overseer (al-nāzīr), the head of the bureau (mutawallī al-dīwān), the auditor (al-mustawfī), the appointee (al-mu‘ayyan), the copyist (al-nāsikh), the supervisor (al-mushārif), the agent (al-‘āmil), the scribe (al-kātib), the treasurer (al-jahbadh), the witness (al-shāhid), the deputy (al-nā’ib), the trustee (al-amīn), the surveyor (al-masāḥ), the guide (al-dalīl), the storekeeper (al-khāzin), and the collector (al-ḥāshir). Ibn Mammātī meticulously clarifies the duties required for each of these roles.

In the ninth chapter⁽⁴⁸⁾, Ibn Mammātī continues his discussion on the governance systems of the Ayyubid period. He elaborates on some of the administrative bureaus, government institutions, and the state’s financial resources, such as zakat (almsgiving), jizya (poll tax), inheritance, khums

(one-fifth tax),⁽⁴⁹⁾ and trade revenues (mutajar)⁽⁵⁰⁾. As for government institutions, Ibn Mammātī mentions several, including: the Dār al-Ṭirāz (the textile workshop), Dār al-Ḍarb (the mint), Dār al-‘Iyār (the assay office), and the Ḥabs al-Juyūshī (the military prison)⁽⁵¹⁾.

In the tenth and final chapter⁽⁵²⁾, Ibn Mammātī discusses “the solar year and the lunar year, related matters, conventional practices, and what has been determined by weight and measure according to customary practices”⁽⁵³⁾.

2. “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “ as a Source of Islamic Civilization and Systems

The value of the book “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “ is not limited to the author’s erudition, abundance of knowledge and sharpness of mind, but also due to his special position in Egyptian society and his lofty position in the government of the country. What he writes has a special character that makes it an official document issued by the pen of one of the state ministers and officials. Aziz Sorial Attia says in the introduction to his review of the book “the book, despite its relatively small size is full of various researches and topics, and since it was written of Coptic origin, it was able to gather, in addition to Muslim jurisprudence, the knowledge of the Copts in the various issues that they specialized in and no other sects of the nation”. Egyptian and its layers, for example what came in Chapter VII on the origins of land area and some engineering issues that we can prove today with the latest scientific methods⁽⁵⁴⁾.

Ibn Mammati was able to give us important information about most of the country’s agricultural affairs in the Ayyubid era. It is worth noting – and before we go into the details of this point – what we notice of the lack of what was included in the various historical sources about the activity of agriculture and irrigation systems and those in charge of them. In fact, this is a phenomenon that we often find in our study of Islamic history. This is because the historical sources are often concerned with

the political aspects, and ignore many of the cultural aspects, but often do not refer to them except for small references, hence the importance of the book “ Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn “ lies in the fact that his author was able to describe to us most of what is related to agriculture and irrigation systems in Ayyubid Egypt, as well as he was able to explain to us many features of the financial system, and the most important financial resources of Egypt in that era, in addition to clarifying the standards and criteria for assuming office positions, those standards and criteria that are considered One of the important cultural aspects in the book. When someone reads Ibn Mattati finds important information about the different types of lands, and that the agricultural lands of Egypt were of different types and multi-varieties.

Some of which were distinguished by quality, and some of them had weak productive capacity, and some of them were suitable for growing one crop without another, and some of them needed the least effort in plowing and watering it. Some of them require the greatest possible effort for cultivation and irrigation⁽⁵⁵⁾. Our historian also elaborated on the types of agricultural crops that were grown in Egypt during this period, explaining the difference between their winter and summer seasons, the time of their cultivation, the amount needed for each acre of them, the time of their harvest, an estimate of what is usually obtained, and the amount of their tax. If we review, for example, the agricultural crops mentioned by Ibn Mammati , we find that among the most important crops that were grown in Egypt during this period were: wheat, barley, cotton, flax, beans, chickpeas, lentils, garlic, lupine, sesame, sugar cane, taro, lettuce, and onions, and eggplant⁽⁵⁶⁾. Other crops are less important. Ibn Mammati also throws light on the types of orchards, the times of their cultivation, the times of pruning their trees, the times of their irrigation, the time of harvesting each type of fruit, the needs of each acre of workers, horses, cows (for plowing), fodder, and other subtle and important details about the orchards that were grown in

that. Time such as daffodils, roses, jasmine, and basil, as well as the most important fruits that were included in these orchards: berries, apples, figs, almonds, peaches, apricots, and bananas⁽⁵⁷⁾. Ibn Mammati also gives us a clear picture of the irrigation network in Egypt at that time, including canals, bays, and bridges, and the times of their dams and the times of their opening.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Ibn Mammati distinguishes between two types of bridges: the main or governmental bridges. Ibn Mammati calls them: “Sultan Bridges”, which are bridges of general benefit in preserving the waters of the Nile over the whole country. It is decided against them in exchange for what they have from the lands⁽⁵⁹⁾.

Ibn Mammati indicates that these bridges are more like the city wall, which the government must take care of its architecture, and the sufficiency of the parish. As for the second type of bridges, they are the local bridges that are specific to one district and not the other, and the recipients of the lands and the farmers undertake their work out of the money of this district and its place is the place of the houses inside the wall, and then the owner of each house is obligated to repair it and remove its damage.

Given the importance of the Nile for the cultivation of Egyptian lands, the Arabs, from their early years in Egypt, paid close attention to the Nile gauges to determine the increase and decrease in its water levels. This was crucial due to its significant impact on irrigation and agriculture, as well as its connection to the collection of taxes such as the kharaj and other levies. Ibn Mammati provides us with important information about the Nile gauges, noting that Egypt had known them since ancient times, and that the various governments that ruled Egypt over the centuries showed great care for these gauges. The Arabs did not merely rely on the existing Nile gauges they found upon their conquest of Egypt but sought to establish new ones. The first governor of Egypt, Amr ibn al-As, built a gauge in Aswan and another in Helwan.⁽⁶⁰⁾ During the caliphate of Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan,

another gauge was erected in Ansina,⁽⁶¹⁾ and measurements continued to be taken there until the governorship of Abdul Aziz ibn Marwan, who built the suburb of Helwan and established a new gauge there. During the reign of Caliph Sulaiman ibn Abdul Malik, Usama ibn Zaid, the tax governor, constructed a gauge on the island of Roda in the year 97 AH/716 AD. The Egyptians relied on this last gauge to measure the Nile's rise until the time of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mutawakkil, who built a new gauge on the island in the year 247 AH/861 AD. When it was completed, Christians were initially responsible for its operation, but Caliph Al-Mutawakkil sent a decree to the governor of Egypt to replace the Copts with Muslims in managing the Nile gauges.⁽⁶²⁾

And since the farmers in Egypt, since the era of the Pharaohs, have been cultivating the land and harvesting the crops on the basis of the ancient Egyptian months, which is what was known as the "Coptic famous"; Ibn Mammati was keen to mention these months and compare them with the Syriac and Persian months, not only that, but he was interested in mentioning the number of hours of day and night in each month and the most important crops that are cultivated in it, in addition to the important holidays and social events that are associated with each day in it, and finally he was keen to mention some information astronomical associated with each of the months; For example, we find him saying about the first of these months, which is the month of "Tut".⁽⁶³⁾

It is the first of the Coptic months, and it is September in the Rumi language, and in the Persian Khordadamah, its number of days is thirty days, its day is twelve hours, and its end is twelve hours and a third, and its night is twelve hours in its beginning, and its end is eleven hours." an hour and a half."⁽⁶⁴⁾ As for the most important crops that are grown in it, Ibn Mammati mentions: "On the thirteenth of it, the grape cluster is softened and left until it becomes raisins, and on the fifteenth of it, peaches, pomegranates,

olives, quince, and dates are seasoned. As for the social events and holidays associated with this month, he mentions “On the fourth day of it, Moses, peace be upon him, fasted, on the fifth was the birth of Mary, peace be upon her, and on the fourteenth of it was the Feast of the Cross”.⁽⁶⁵⁾ This is how Ibn Mammati was able to describe to us almost everything related to the agricultural affairs of the country. He mentioned the different types of land, agricultural seasons, irrigation systems, types of crops, times of planting and harvesting, orchards and times of pruning trees, the basics of surveying, the injustice and oppression of surveyors, and other information in various chapters whose contents guide us to the state of agriculture and its organization at that time with an accuracy that calls for Admiration for the author’s abundant knowledge, as it shows us the progress of agriculture in that era to an extent beyond what many imagine.

One of the researchers says: “We have presented some parts of the text (meaning Ibn Mammati ‘s book) to a number of senior specialists in the art of agriculture, so we understood from their observations that many of the foundations of agriculture in that era agree with what modern research has reached in this aspect in which we lack historical material”.⁽⁶⁶⁾ The book “Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn” is also considered among the important and basic sources for the researcher in the features of the financial system in the Ayyubid era. Among the most important of these features that Ibn Mammati was interested in clarifying: What he mentioned about how the Divan is to spend money on the Divan to compensate for what was spent on projects for building agricultural bridges.⁽⁶⁷⁾ The book also gives us important information about Egypt’s financial resources, and among the most important resources mentioned by Ibn Mammati : Zakat, inheritances, guarded frontiers, Jawali,⁽⁶⁸⁾ and army confinement, and others. Zakat is obligatory on him, and it is not valid until he intends it to be the zakat of

his money.

If it is obligatory upon him and he is able to take it out, it is not permissible for him to delay it. I took from his estate, and if he had a debt, then there are three sayings: he presents the zakat, or presents the debt, or divides them between them.⁽⁶⁹⁾ The historian also elaborates on the types of zakat, where he divided it into three types: money, livestock, and plants. He divided the zakat of money into three parts: gold, paper, and merchandise. He divided the zakat of livestock into three categories – also camels, cows, and sheep. He divided the zakat of plants into two parts: the zakat of what is eaten (meaning what is eaten from grains) such as barley, rice, wheat, corn, chickpeas, beans, lentils, and the like; and zakat on fruits, such as: palm trees and vineyards⁽⁷⁰⁾. Ibn Matati was also concerned with clarifying the eight zakat expenditures. They are: the poor, the needy, those who work on it, those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and in the necks, and debtors, and for the sake of God, and the wayfarer⁽⁷¹⁾.) Among the mechanistic resources in which Ibn Matati was keen to elaborate on the issue of inheritance; He mentioned who inherits from men, and who inherits from women, and who does not inherit and who does not inherit, and those with impositions, and agnates, and other matters related to this science⁽⁷²⁾.)

The book “Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn” is also considered among the important and basic sources for the researcher on the topic of hisba⁽⁷³⁾ in Islamic Egypt, especially in the Ayyubid era. Ibn Mammati talked about some topics related to the hisba, such as Dar al-Darb, Dar al-Ayyar, its specializations, resources, and its relationship to the work of the muhtasib. For example, he talks about the specializations of Dar Al-Ayyar and its relationship to the work of the Hisbah at that time, and he says “This house takes care of the subjects in their scales, their weights, and their measures. And whoever came to them and wanted to buy something from them, they sold it to him

and the current custom was that he would lend it to the owners of the scales, so whoever found an extra or incomplete tongue, they consumed it and sold him something else, so that was invalidated and whoever needed to fix his tongue became brought and freed... and changed it and added to it What he needed, and he renewed its seal without a fine on it, except for the rent, nothing else and they could not weigh anyone with stones or stones...".⁽⁷⁴⁾

Thus, Ibn Mammati , through the aforementioned text, illustrates to us that during the Ayyubid era, the Muhtasib (market inspector) and the institution of Hisba (public accountability) had a dedicated facility known as the Dar al-'lyar (House of Calibration). One of the primary functions of this facility was to calibrate scales and all types of weights. The Muhtasib or his deputy would attend this facility to oversee the calibration process in their presence. If the calibration was accurate, it was approved; otherwise, the work was ordered to be redone until it met the required standards. This facility housed reference models used for calibration, ensuring that no weights, scales, or measuring containers could be sold without being verified there. All merchants were summoned by the Muhtasib to bring their scales, weights, and measuring containers to this facility for calibration. If any deficiencies were found, the faulty items were confiscated, and the merchant was required to purchase a replacement from the approved stock available at the facility and pay its price. Additionally, the historian explains that the expenses of this facility, including the necessary materials such as copper, iron, wood, glass, and other tools, as well as the wages of craftsmen and workers, were covered by the royal treasury (Diwan Sultanic).

Ibn Mammati also provides us in his book with significant information about Islamic-Arabic coinage and the study of numismatics during the Ayyubid era. For instance, he discusses dinars, their minting process, weights, and

the operational system of the mint (Dar al-Darb). He states: “The process there is uniform. The gold brought to the mint, which varies in quality, is melted until it becomes a flowing liquid and is then cast into ingots. The edges of these ingots are trimmed, all under the direct supervision of the deputy. From the total amount, four mithqals are taken, and to this, four mithqals of freshly melted gold from the mint are added. Each of these is then crafted into four coins. The eight coins are placed in a ceramic vessel after their weight is verified, and the furnace is heated for the duration of a night. The coins are then removed, polished, and calibrated against the standard. If they match the standard weight, the deputy approves them, and dinars are minted. If they fall short, the process is repeated until the weight matches the standard.”⁽⁷⁵⁾

Ibn Mammati does not overlook mentioning the wages of the workers in the mint. He notes: “The fee for minting every thousand dinars at the Cairo mint is thirty dinars. From this amount, three dinars are allocated as wages for the mint workers. Up until the end of the year 586 AH (1190 CE), the fee was thirty-four and two-thirds dinars.”⁽⁷⁶⁾

He also speaks about the importance of this mint (al-Darb), stating: “Some critics may suspect that the prominence of this institution is questionable, but this is not the case. Given the urgent need to regulate the currency used by the people to safeguard their wealth and to ensure their interests, it became essential that this matter remain under the Sultan’s oversight. Without such supervision, issues could arise whose dangers would be irreparable and whose harm would be irreversible. This necessity compelled the appointment of officials dedicated to this task and the summoning of skilled craftsmen to carry out the work.”⁽⁷⁷⁾

He also discusses silver dirhams, their minting process, the wages of the workers involved, and their weights, stating: “For silver, three hundred dirhams are taken and added to seven hundred dirhams of copper. This

mixture is melted until it becomes a single liquid, which is then cast into ingots. The edges of these ingots are trimmed, and fifteen dirhams are melted. If four and a half dirhams are obtained from every ten dirhams, the process is complete; otherwise, it is repeated until the correct standard is achieved, after which the coins are stamped. The fee for minting every thousand dirhams is fourteen and a half dirhams, and all fees and expenses are covered by the funds provided by the suppliers.”⁽⁷⁸⁾

One of the significant aspects that sets Ibn Mammati apart in his book is his detailed depiction of the hierarchical structure of the administrative officials (Diwan) in the Ayyubid state. At the top of this hierarchy sits the Nazir (i.e., the overseer of the Diwan),⁽⁷⁹⁾ followed by the Mutawalli al-Diwan (the administrator of the Diwan),⁽⁸⁰⁾ then the Mustawfi (accountant), the Mu’ayyin (appointee),⁽⁸¹⁾ the Nassakh (scribe),⁽⁸²⁾ and the Musharif (supervisor).⁽⁸³⁾

In the latter parts of his book, Ibn Mammati also delves into numerous fascinating topics concerning various government departments (Diwanat), the roles of different state institutions, the financial resources of the state,⁽⁸⁴⁾ and other matters that shed light on many aspects of governance during the Ayyubid era. These discussions provide valuable insights into the administrative and fiscal systems of the time, illustrating how the Ayyubid state was organized and managed.

3. Conclusion

Despite the criticism directed at some of Ibn Mammati ‘s narrations, and despite the fact that the book consists of brief tables and very short and focused news; The history of Ibn Mammati remains important among the sources of Islamic history, and this importance is summarized in the following aspects:

1. That the book showed the extent of Ibn Mammati's ability, ingenuity, and wide knowledge of the sequence of events of his era and the mention of the Ayyubid caliphs. The importance of the history of Ibn Mammati appears in the comparisons he made between the different histories, where he showed great ingenuity and accuracy in mentioning the different dates for each news or incident of the history he mentioned and comparing them with other histories.
2. Ibn Mammati mentioned the phrase (laws of divans) without specifying what is meant by it, and what do these laws mean? It is known that the Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn mean: everything related to the systems of these divans, their fees, conditions, origins, and what is going on in them.
3. Whoever reviews the motives and purposes for which the historian classified the book finds them insufficient. The historian did not mention the extent of the benefit that will accrue to the general public from reading the book, especially if we know that among its topics are more specific to the general public than the Book of Divans, such as: topics that talk about the country's agricultural affairs, the different types of lands, and the agricultural seasons.
4. Ibn Mammati showed that he had the ability to make a comparison between some disparate matters to clarify the difference between them, such as: his comparison between the royal bridges and the municipal bridges, as he mentions that the royal bridges are of general benefit in preserving the Nile water over the whole country.
5. Ibn Mammati also demonstrated his superior ability to explain and clarify the various terms, especially those related to lands. We find it, for example, explaining the provisions of these lands and showing the variation in their value and the variation in the issues of their conditions, and the conventions of their names.

6. Ibn Mammati proved his ability to give good reasoning, express his opinion, and give preference to one opinion over another, especially in issues and historical events related to the news of Egypt and the events of its conquest. His monetary path has diversified.
7. The importance of Ibn Mammati 's history appears in clarifying the social, religious and political conditions of the dhimmis under Islamic rule and the policy of the Muslim caliphs towards them, and the extent to which they enjoyed religious freedom and social equality under the Islamic state.

Footnotes

1. This type of historical composition emerged relatively late. It seems that after the Fatimid dynasty weakened and eventually collapsed in the mid-sixth century AH, followed by the European era and its rulers who were new to governance, there arose a need for experts in financial laws and administrative guidance to assist the new rulers. As a result, two sets of works emerged: one dealing with financial matters, such as *Al-Minhaj fi Ahkam al-Kharaj* (The Method in the Rulings of Kharaj) and *Risalah fi Mal Misr* (Treatise on the Finances of Egypt), both by al-Makhzumi; and another set dealing with geographical descriptions, such as *Izhhar Sana'at al-Hayy al-Qayyum fi Wasf al-Ghayum* (Manifestation of the Craft of the Ever-Living in the Description of Clouds) and *Hasan al-Sirah fi Wasf al-Jazirah* (The Noble Biography in the Description of the Island), both by al-Nabulusi, who died in 660 AH/1262 CE. See: Shaker Mustafa, *Al-Tarikh al-Arabi wa al-Mu'arkhun* (Arabic History and Historians), 2/176.
2. Khatt refers to the plans, maps, and descriptions of the urban layout of Egypt, particularly Cairo, tracing its development from the initial establishment of Al-Fustat and Al-Askar, through the Tulunid qata'a, and culminating in the Fatimid-era Cairo. These texts documented the city's evolution, including its construction, destruction, and reconstruction. This genre of historical writing, which reached its zenith with al-Maqrizi's *Al-Mawā'iz*

- wa al-l‘tibar fī dīkr al-khiṭaṭ wa al-āṭār (The Lessons and Considerations Regarding the Mention of Plans and Monuments), began in earnest with al-Kindi in 350 AH/961 CE, followed by al-Qudda’i in 455 AH/1063 CE. See: Muhammad ‘Abd Allah ‘Anan, *Misr al-Islamiyya wa Tarikh al-Khitat al-Misriyya (Islamic Egypt and the History of Egyptian Plans)*, Al-Khanji Bookstore, Cairo, 1969, p. 38 and following; Shaker Mustafa, *ibid.*, 2/173.
3. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-A‘yan wa Anba’ al-Abna’ al-Zaman*, edited by Ihsan Abbas, Dar al-Thaqafa Press, Beirut, 1968, 1/210.
 4. Ibn Khallikan, *ibid.*, 1/213.
 5. By “Egypt” here, we mean “Old Cairo” or “al-Fustat,” the original capital.
 6. Yaqt al-Hamawi, *Mu’jam al-Udaba’*, Dar al-Mushriq Press, Beirut (n.d.), 6/103–104.
 7. Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Mawā‘iz wa al-l‘tibar bī dīkr al-khiṭaṭ wa al-āṭār*, vol. 2, p. 160.
 8. Yaqt al-Hamawi, *op. cit.*, 6/104.
 9. Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Khitat*, vol. 2, p. 160; Ibn al-Sa’i al-Baghdadi, *Al-Jami’ al-Mukhtasar fi ‘Unwan al-Tawarikh wa ‘Uyun al-Sir*, edited by Mustafa Jawad, Baghdad, 1934, vol. 6, p. 302.
 10. Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A’sha*, vol. 5, p. 466.
 11. Ibn Manzur, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, root “n-k-s”, section on the letter sīn under the bāb of nūn, vol. 6, p. 242.
 12. Abu al-Salt, *Al-Risalah al-Misriyya*, in *Nawadir al-Makhṭūṭāt*, edited by ‘Abd al-Salām Hārūn, 2nd ed., Cairo, 1972, p. 43.
 13. Yaqt al-Hamawi, *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 6, p. 108.
 14. Yaqt al-Hamawi, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, pp. 108.
 15. Yaqt al-Hamawi, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, pp. 108–109.
 16. Al-Dhawāba: al-dā’ira, or what they call “al-‘adhba”.

17. Al-Maqrizi, Al-Khitat, vol. 2, p. 161.
18. Yaqūt, Mu'jam al-Udabā', vol. 6, p. 109.
19. Yaqūt, Mu'jam al-Udabā', vol. 6, p. 108. Although al-Maqrizi mentions that Shirkuh approved al-Muhdhib's diwan until his death. See: al-Maqrizi, Al-Khitat, vol. 2, p. 161.
20. Ibn Khallikan, Wafayat al-A'yan, vol. 1, p. 113.
21. Yaqūt, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 109.
22. Al-Maqrizi, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 160; Yaqūt, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 109.
23. 'Aziz Sūrīyal 'Aṭīyya, Introduction to the edition of Ibn Mammati 's Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, photographic reprint of the Royal Agricultural Society edition, Cairo, 1991, p. 27.
24. See: Louis Cheikho, Shu'arā' al-Nasrānīya ba'd al-Islām, 4th ed., Dar al-Mashriq, Beirut, 1991, translation no. (35), p. 351.
25. Al-'Imād al-Aṣbahānī, Khrīdat al-Qaṣr wa Jarīdat al-'Aṣr, edited by Ahmad Amin and Shuqri Ḍīf, section on Egypt, Cairo, 1951, p. 52.
26. Yaqūt, Mu'jam al-Udabā', vol. 6, p. 117.
27. See: 'Abd al-Latif Ḥamza, Thalāth shakhṣīyāt fī al-tārīkh, p. 372 and following.
28. Yaqūt, Mu'jam al-Udabā', vol. 6, p. 117.
29. Ibn Khallikan, Wafayat al-A'yan, vol. 1, p. 210.
30. Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya, vol. 13, p. 53.
31. Al-Maqrizi, Al-Khitat, vol. 2, pp. 160-161.
32. He is al-'Aziz 'Imād al-Dīn 'Uthmān, son of the Sultan al-Nāsir Salah al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb. See: Ibn Athīr, Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh, Dār Sādir, Beirut, 1982, vol. 12, pp. 140-142.
33. Al-Maqrizi, Al-Khitat, vol. 2, p. 160.
34. 'Aziz Sūrīyal 'Aṭīyya, Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn by Ibn Mammati (Introduction

- to the edition), pp. 28–29.
35. Shākir Mustafā, *Al-Tārīkh al-‘Arabī wa al-Mūrikhūn*, vol. 2, pp. 189–190.
36. That is, its *kharāj*. It is said, “‘*abir*” through goods and dirhams by means of it: organize how much is its weight and what it is, and your consideration of the dirhams is your extraction of them. *Lisān al-‘Arab*, root “‘*abr*”.
37. Ibn Mammātī , *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn*, p. 55.
38. ‘Aziz Sūrīyal ‘Aṭīyya, *Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn* by Ibn Mammātī (Introduction to the edition), p. 7.
39. This introduction spans ten pages of the book (from page 51 to page 60).
40. This chapter extends over nine pages of the book “*Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn*” (from page 61 to page 69).
41. This chapter occupies fourteen pages of the book (from page 70 to page 83).
42. “This chapter is the largest in the book, spanning 116 pages (from page 84 to page 200).
43. It is the smallest chapter in the book, comprising only four pages (from page 201 to page 204).
44. This chapter extends over twenty–nine pages (from page 205 to page 233).
45. This chapter occupies forty–three pages (from page 234 to page 278).
46. This chapter spans eighteen pages (from page 279 to page 296).
47. This chapter extends over ten pages of the book “*Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn*” (from page 297 to page 306).
48. This chapter occupies forty–nine pages (from page 307 to page 357).
49. These are taxes paid by Roman merchants entering Egyptian ports – such as Alexandria, Damietta, Tinnis, ‘Ayḍāb, and Rashid – in accordance

- with the agreements they have made. See: Ibn Mammāṭi , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, p. 326.
50. It refers to goods purchased for the treasury from these incoming merchants. See: Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., p. 327.
51. This refers to certain properties that were confiscated by the military commander Badr al-Jamālī (466–487 H./1074–1094 CE) from ‘Aqaba when he was the vizier of Egypt. However, jurists later ruled that the confiscation was invalid, and so the proceeds were transferred to the public treasury and spent on the interests of Muslims. See: Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., pp. 336–339.
52. This chapter spans approximately ten pages of the book (from page 358 to page 370).
53. Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., p. 358.
54. Aziz Sūrīyal ‘Aṭīyya, Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn by Ibn Mammāṭi (Introduction to the edition), pp. 6–7.
55. Ibn Mammāṭi , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, pp. 201–204.
56. Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., pp. 258–270.
57. Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., pp. 271–278.
58. Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., pp. 201–231.
59. Ibn Mammāṭi , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, pp. 232–233.
60. Al-Suyūṭī, Ḥasan al-Muḥāḍara, vol. 2, p. 375.
61. It is an ancient town that has disappeared, and its location today is the ruins situated in the basin of the city of Nalsha (a corruption of Ansna) in the lands of the district of Sheikh ‘Abbāda, located east of the Nile in the city of Asyūṭ. See: Ibn Mammāṭi , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, p. 232.
62. Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., pp. 74–76.
63. Ibn Mammāṭi , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, p. 235, footnote 1.
64. Ibn Mammāṭi , op. cit., same page.

65. Ibn Mammati , op. cit., same page.
66. ‘Aziz Sūrīyal ‘Aḥīyya, Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn by Ibn Mammati (Introduction to the edition), p. 6.
67. Ibn Mammati , op. cit., p. 233.
68. Jāwālī: This refers to the poll tax collected from the People of the Book (adult free men, excluding women, children, monks, slaves, the insane, and the infirm) annually as a fixed amount on their heads. This tax is divided into two categories: that collected in the Egyptian capital, such as al-Qusṭāṭ and Cairo, and that collected outside the capital. As for the capital, there is an overseer appointed by the sultan to manage it. As for the rest of Egypt, the poll tax collected from the People of the Book in each city is given to the governor or other official in charge of that region, and it is treated as revenue of that fief. If, however, that city is registered in one of the sultan’s official registries, then the poll tax collected from the People of the Book in that city is recorded in that registry. The term “jāwālī” can also refer to the People of the Book themselves. It is said that this term was applied to them because ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb expelled them from the Arabian Peninsula. However, this term was then applied to any People of the Book who were subject to the poll tax, even if they were not expelled from their homelands. See: al-Qalqashandī, Subḥ al-a‘shā, vol. 3, pp. 462–463; Ibn Mammati , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, pp. 317–319.
69. Ibn Mammati , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, pp. 308–309.
70. Ibn Mammati , op. cit., pp. 310–313.
71. Ibn Mammati , op. cit., pp. 314–315.
72. Ibn Mammati , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, pp. 319–325.
73. In Arabic, hisba is derived from the root ḥasaba, meaning to calculate or reckon. It is said of someone, “He acted with hisba in the matter,” meaning he acted with good judgment and consideration. See: Ibn Manzūr, Lisān al-‘Arab, root ḥasaba. In Islamic law, hisba is a religious

duty based on enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. For more on hisba and its nature, see: al-Māwardī, al-Aḥkām al-sultāniyya, p. 207 and following.

74. Ibn Mammātī , op. cit., pp. 333–334.

75. Ibn Mammātī , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, pp. 331–337.

76. Ibn Mammātī , op. cit., p. 332.

77. Ibn Mammātī , op. cit., p. 332.

78. Ibn Mammātī , op. cit., p. 333.

79. The nāzīr al-dīwān is the individual who oversees the finances, executes financial transactions, and to whom financial accounts are submitted for review and consideration. He approves or rejects expenditures. The term is derived either from the word naẓar meaning ‘sight’ or ‘vision’, as he directs his attention to the matters under his purview, or from naẓar meaning ‘consideration’ or ‘thought’, as he contemplates the best course of action. The specific duties of the nāzīr vary depending on the context. However, as the name implies, he is the primary and responsible official for all matters pertaining to the diwan. See: Ibn Mammātī , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, p. 298; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyat al-‘arb fī funūn al-adab, Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya (n.d.), 3/299.

80. The mutwallī al-dīwān is a diwan official whose duty is to ensure that the original copies of all transactions conducted in the diwan are authenticated by his signature. See: Ibn Mammātī , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, p. 298.

81. The mu’ayn is a scribe who works under the mustawfī to assist him in the aforementioned tasks. He is responsible for drafting the diwan’s records and is the primary authority for these records without the need for any other official’s attestation. See: Ibn Mammātī , Qawānīn al-Dawāwīn, p. 301.

82. The nāsikh assists the mu’ayn. He is a lower-ranking official and is responsible for copying official documents before they are issued from the diwan, as well as copying incoming correspondence. See: Ibn Mammātī

, op. cit., p. 302.

83. The mushārif is tasked with requesting detailed information about any tax-collecting entity within his jurisdiction. He is responsible for all financial receipts after they have been stamped. Ibn Mammati , op. cit., pp. 302–303.
84. Ibn Mammati , op. cit., pp. 307–357.

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