

Chalmeta explains that in Medina at that time the men were mostly engaged in agriculture and left commerce up to the women, and there were some open-air marketplaces (Sp. *rastras*) organized by women.

During the eighth century C.E. the supervision of the marketplace (*wilāyat al-sūq*) evolved from a repressive, non-Islamic, and never perfectly assimilated police and economic office into a purely Islamic religious institution derived from the Quranic principle of *ḥisba*: to command the good and forbid the evil. The title of *muḥtasib* is first mentioned for a marketplace inspector between 752–3 and 758–60 during the caliphate of the ‘Abbāsī al-Mansūr; this title, which originally meant an administrative-economic responsibility, marks an Islamization of the office. Because this title was identified with the ‘Abbāsīs in the East and the Andalusīs were cultural and political Umawīs, the title was not used for a marketplace inspector in al-Andalus until the Taifa period, after the fall of the Umawī caliphate in the eleventh century. It is also the case that there was no local precedent for a marketplace inspector resembling the Roman *aedile* in the Iberian peninsula in the late Visigothic period. This position does not appear in al-Andalus until the Muslim-Arab settlement there after 711, so it is reasonable to conclude that they brought it with them. The term *ṣāḥib al-sūq* may be mentioned in al-Andalus by 748–9, but *wilāyat al-sūq* is not mentioned in al-Andalus before 788 C.E. *Zabazoque* (spelled *zavazoque* = *ṣāḥib al-sūq*) appears in the Iberian Christian sources before 1020, but *almotaçen* (spelled *almutaçen* = *muḥtasib*) does not appear in them until 1076.

In many ways the function of marketplace inspector survived in the Christian kingdoms of Iberia after the reconquista, and the similarities lead Chalmeta to argue for the possibility of “institutional osmosis.” Chalmeta also explains the survival of this institution after the Christian conquest of Granada by a combination of conservatism and the continuation of “sus buenos usos é costumbres.” Although *zabazoque* and *almotaçen* were equivalent in daily usage in the Christian sources, in theory they did not coincide perfectly.

This is a massive, erudite, analytic, and monumental contribution to the study of marketplace institutions and their historical development in the Muslim world. Unfortunately this revised edition has no index, and not all of the references in the footnotes are listed in the bibliography.

MICHAEL MORONY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

The Criminal Underworld in a Medieval Islamic Society: Narratives from Cairo and Damascus under the Mamluks. By CARL F. PETRY. Chicago Studies on the Middle East, vol. 9. Chicago: MIDDLE EAST DOCUMENTATION CENTER, 2012. Pp. viii + 365. \$70.

The study of criminality and its punishment offers insights into the established social and political order of every society. In this volume Carl Petry collected more than a thousand narratives of crime from the Mamluk chronicles, with the aims of exploring attitudes to crime, identifying patterns of criminal activities, and assessing the response of the authorities.

As source, the rich Mamluk chronicles have obvious limitations. The chroniclers report only a minuscule fraction of all the criminal cases, and the literary aspects of the manner in which the authors construct the narrative of the crime cannot be ignored. Petry is right, however, to say that the narrative sources also offer advantages for the social historian. They are not formulaic, and they provide extensive commentary on the background of perpetrators, victims, and law enforcement personnel.

The chapters are organized according to the type of criminal activity reported by the chroniclers. Petry makes groupings according to the following categories: rioting, theft, fraud, vice, religious dissidence, homicide, and treason and espionage. Some of these categories are more coherent than others: the cases discussed in the chapter on homicide fit together very well.

Some interesting patterns emerge from the dense mass of cases collected. One is the power of urban gangs, especially in late Mamluk Damascus and Cairo. These appear to be heavily armed and sophisticated groups that targeted commercial markets; they deserve further study (pp. 63–70, 217–20). The section on slave revolts (pp. 37–42) is the first attempt known to me to bring together narratives of

resistance by domestic, mainly black slaves, in this period. Frequent references to theft and murder by slaves against their masters also point to the agency of domestic slaves (pp. 224–31). Similarly, several rich narratives of resistance of individual peasants and Bedouin groups, labeled as criminal at the time, are also indicative of the complexities of power relationships in the countryside.

Another interesting pattern is the association of Mamluk soldiers with addiction to alcohol: the number of references to drunken soldiers suggests this was a social reality, not a literary trope (p. 129). The stereotypical association of Persians with heresy and unorthodoxy is also intriguing (p. 179). In terms of law enforcement, the cases of consensual and non-consensual homosexuality show a pattern of leniency with regard to attacks on male youth; similarly, the dress code for women seems to have been rarely enforced (pp. 153–63).

An important observation regards the paucity of references to blood-money (pp. 207–11, 249). Only three of the one hundred and fifty cases of homicide reported in the chronicles refer to this major principle of Islamic criminal law. Petry posits that this is primarily due to the thoroughly urban settings of Mamluk Cairo, a real metropolis in medieval terms, where lineages and tribes mattered less than they did in the countryside.

On the issue of the relationship between the Islamic legal system and non-Shari'a justice, it is interesting to note the dominance of the *wālī*, or prefect of the police, as the officer responsible for investigating crime, overshadowing the ineffectual *muhtasib*. His authority also seems to have expanded with time (p. 282). After the culprit was found, cases could go either to Shari'a magistrates or to regime officials; as would be expected, qadis were more involved in cases of heresy and breach of public morality, but the regime officials often had the final word in civil and matrimonial cases (p. 291).

Petry includes cases reported by the chroniclers as a crime, but this is fuzzier than it first appears and makes it difficult to get beyond the bias of the sources. In particular, cases that deal with embezzlement of *waqf* monies or political infighting—which take up a significant chunk of the book—do not belong to a book on the “underworld.” For Petry, casting the net so wide is justified by the frequent collusion of the Mamluk military elites with criminal activity. He makes an interesting comparison with late medieval European cities, where aristocratic and military elites were often involved in extortion and banditry. But he also notes that unlike medieval Europe, there were no legitimate grounds for a Mamluk to assault women below their rank (p. 150). The argument that members of the Mamluk military elite were given immunity from criminal prosecution, which the author himself espouses, is undermined by the more or less equal patterns of prosecution for civilians and militarists (p. 304).

In some ways, this book belongs to an earlier generation of scholarship. It is based almost entirely on a commonsensical reading of the primary sources. Very little trace of the recent scholarship on Mamluk social and legal history is found here, which makes the analysis rather superficial compared to what has already been achieved in the field.

However, Petry has done a huge service to social historians by combing the Mamluk chronicles thoroughly and by providing translations and summaries, either in the body of the text or in the extensive footnotes. The title of the book refers to a criminal underworld; indeed, the book is at its best when the cases come from the lower strata of society, whether domestic slaves, Bedouin, or urban gangs. Primarily because it directs the limelight to the underclass, this book is likely to be a reference point for the study of everyday life in medieval Islamic societies.

YOSSEF RAPOPORT
QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Society and Politics in an Ottoman Town: 'Ayntāb in the 17th Century. By HÜLYA CANBAKAL. The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, vol. 36. Leiden: BRILL, 2007. Pp. xvi + 216. \$137, €103.

Among historians, a prevailing assumption about Anatolian towns under Ottoman rule is that they lacked “civic pride, autonomy, and collective identity.” The assumption rests largely on the dearth of local sources, especially biographical dictionaries and chronicles. In this concise and well-argued

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.