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# Curricula and educational process in Mamluk Madrasas

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## Abstract

This study examined and discussed about the process of education in Egypt and Syria during the Mamluk Era (1250 – 1517). It presented the array of learning activities that affected the lives of both the students and teachers; the learning methods and materials utilised; the curricula; the schedules of study days and holidays, etc. The student went through different stages, gradually moving up from the basic elementary (*kuttab*) to the final stage (*muntahun*), at the end of which the student was entitled to receive a graduation certificate (*ijaza*). The study examined also the changes in these activities, in light of the developments occurred in the Mamluk state in general.

**Key Words:** Islamic studies, Mamluk madrasa, *ulama*, *waqf*, educational methods and curricula

## INTRODUCTION

Until current times, Islamic education still continues to take place in specific institutions in different countries in the Muslim world, and has been studied in wide spheres (Anzar, March 2003; Berkey, 2003). During the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods (1171 – 1517), the principal mosques continued to conduct religious studies, despite the proliferation of madrasas and other educational institutions. The use of the madrasa accelerated and fortified the expansion of religious education. The ruling class adopted and supported religious education during the Ayyubid and Mamluk period, which strengthened it, and help it to spread due, in no small measure, to the institution of the madrasa. The madrasas specialised in the study of *fiqh*, as interpreted by the four Sunni schools, although other religious studies were also conducted there (Behrens-Abouseif, 2007; Berkey, 1992). However, even with the specialisation and separation of educational tasks, which was the *raison d'être* for establishing other institutions, such as *dar al-hadith* and *dar al-quran*, khanqah for the Sufis, a great deal of overlap and generalisation occurred during the late Mamluk period. During that period, an institution might have taught any religious subject, even outside its specialty (Ephrat, 2008).

The reinforcement of religious fervour from the time of the Zangid reign also contributed to spreading and disseminating religious knowledge. The political situation in Egypt and Syria, which resulted from the Fatimid Shi'a reign and the subsequent Crusader conquest and invasions of large portions of Syria, helped to breathe new life into the currents of Sunni orthodoxy, by means of religious education and practice. The religious character of the Ayyubid rulers also contributed to reinforcing Sunni education, as manifested not only in the Ayyubid's personal and active participation in religious education, but also in a massive campaign of constructing educational institutions of every type and allocating *waqf* for them (Lev, 2009).

The Mamluks also remain faithful to the Ayyubids in dedicating many educational institutions and *waqf*, and in adopting and encouraging religious educations (Haarmann, 1980; Leiser, 1986; Mahamid, 2006; Frenkel, 2009), such as Sultan Muhammad ibn Qalawun. The presence of rulers or their representatives and other honored invitees at the first lesson in their madrasas was, of course, considered to be strong support and encouragement for the educational activities of both teachers and students. This study focuses on the process

of Islamic education with its curricula and methods, and examines the changes occurred in this process.

### Subjects and Curricula

Since *waqf* owners of educational institutions endowed madrasas from their own money and properties, they determined the conditions and objectives of their institutions. Some of them stipulated the curricula to be used in teaching the *Quran*, *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *hadith* (sayings and traditions of the prophet Muhammad), in accordance with one of the Sunni schools. Others stipulated the type of materials or books to be used in the curricula, both for students and teachers. Sometimes, the teachers themselves were able to choose the materials used. This variety of curricula meant that a broad array of choices in study material and programmes characterised education during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. No official, uniform curriculum or rules covering all the educational institutions existed. The letter of appointment of Taqiyy al-Din al-Subki in *al-Masuriyya* madrasa in Damascus included the conditions established for the madrasa, stipulated that the teachers had to be conversant and knowledgeable in *al-khilaf*, (the comparative study of the different Islamic schools of law) (Al-Qalqashandi, 12: pp. 345-347, 1987). The obvious conclusion is that the *waqf* owner preferred this subject to be taught and studied in his madrasa (Al-Isnawi, 2: pp. 260-261, 1987; Ibn Hajar, 3: p. 300, 1993).

The Ayyubid ruler of Damascus, Al-Ashraf Musa, was an enthusiastic supporter of the study of religion, i.e. *tafsir* (Quran interpretation), *fiqh* and *hadith*. His preference for *hadith* is obvious from the documents for the two *Dar al-Hadith* institutions he established in Damascus, the *al-Ashrafiyya al-Juwwaniyya* and the *al-Barraniyya*. He conditioned acceptance of teachers for positions in both institutions on extensive knowledge of *hadith* (*man fihi al-riwaya wa-man fihi al-diraya*) (Al-Nu'aymi, 1: p. 20, 1981).

Hanbali *waqf* owners usually encouraged students to learn Hanbali *fiqh*. An examination of Hanbali *waqf* documents shows that they strongly supported their school, whether by providing student stipends or via the acceptance requirements they established for both teachers and students in their institutions. According to the *waqf* documents for the *al-Hanbaliyya* madrasa in Damascus, quite logically, teachers had to be knowledgeable in the *fiqh* and its sources according to the Hanbali school (*an yakuna mudarresuha 'aliman bil-mathhabi wal-aslayn*) (Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 3: p. 271, 1977).

In addition, the Hanbalis encouraged their students to study the law books of their school and in fact, dedicated a special *waqf*, the *waqf al-a'rad*, for this purpose, i.e. the study of materials related to the Hanbali school. The *waqf* provided stipends and aid to every student who showed his teacher a book or specific material he had studied

about the Hanbalis (Al-Nu'aymi, 2: p. 126, 1988). The *al-'Umariyya* madrasa in Damascus also originally had a *waqf* only for Hanbalis, for the study of the *Quran* and hanbali *fiqh*. However, in the second half of the ninth/fifteenth century, other courses of study were added, especially the study of the other schools' *fiqh* (Al-Nu'aymi, 2: pp. 109, 111-112, 1988; Ibn Tulun, 1: pp. 259-265, 1981).

The curricula used by some madrasas were based on the writings of distinguished teachers and *ulama*, or those of the teachers at that madrasa. Al-Nu'aymi (1: p. 399, 1981) states that in studies at *al-'Asruniyya* madrasa in Damascus, for example, only the writings of Ibn abi 'Asrun were used. If a situation arose in which it was impossible to study his writings, they would study *al-khilaf*. The writings of the founders of the four orthodox schools, served as the basic books and sources for learning the laws and *hadith* of the four schools of Islam during that period.

By reviewing the biographies of a large portion of the teachers and students who were active in education in the madrasas of Mamluk Egypt and Syria, one can discover selected writings on *hadith* that served as the principal learning materials. Writings on *hadith* by the great *ulama*, Muslim and al-Bukhari were among those used in teaching, and were called *al-Sahihan*. Al-'Urdu (pp. 176-177, 1992), for example, mentions that the *waqf* conditions for the *al-Taghriwarmashiyya* madrasa in Aleppo stipulated that the books on *hadith* by al-Bukhari were to be used in teaching there. The writings of other great *ulama*, like Abu Dawud, al-Nisa'i, Ibn Maja and al-Tirmidhi were also important sources, and were utilised as the texts to study *hadith* during this period. Otherwise, in teaching Arabic, widespread use was made of the writings of al-Zamakhshari and Ibn Malik's composition, *al-Alfiyya*, as well as contemporary Islamic poems.

Ibn Khaldun (d. 1405), in his *al-Muqaddima* (Ibn Khaldun, pp. 434-435, 1993) and other modern historians, such as David Ayalon (pp. 327-328, 1967), emphasise that the Mamluk rulers promoted the study of crafts and artisanship (*al-sana'i*) and building skills, in addition to religious subjects (*ta'lim al-'ilm*). They attribute this to the Mamluk rulers' background as slaves and mamluks and their fear that they would be deposed. The Mamluk rulers attempted to gain legitimacy from the Islamic community by appearing as leaders of Islam and working for it. The Mamluks built many madrasas, mosques and religious educational facilities, and dedicated many endowments, which remained under the management of their progeny and descendants. This contributed to the development of education during that period, and brought about the migration of students from all over, East and West, to study at institutions in the Mamluk state, especially in Egypt (Cairo) (Ibn Khaldun, 1993; Ibn Battuta, 1985; Al-Qalqashandi, 1987). Gary Leiser emphasises in his study that the institution of madrasa had supported the islamization of the Middle East, and gave an example of

Egypt (Leiser, 1985). Mahamid (2006) also, presents several studies showing the high level of developing the Mamluk madrasa in Syria, especially in the first era of the Mamluks.

Before the Mamluks, rational disciplines were studied and superstitions widely held in Syria and in Egypt under the Fatimids, with the establishment of *Dar al-'Ilm* in Cairo, and the establishment in various cities of Syria of other institutions that were somewhat similar to the Abbasid *Bayt al-Hikma*. As a result, the Zangids, Ayyubids and Mamluks were even more acrimonious against the rationalists and the Shi'a, which helped to revitalise orthodox religious studies, both in Syria and in Egypt.

As a result of the conflicts between rationalists and traditionalists (Sunnis), whether in the Muslim East or West, the *ulama* started categorising the subjects taught according to their religious viewpoints. To aid the community in better understanding and distinguishing between what was allowed and what was forbidden, *ulama* and historians of the period sorted the subjects by the advantages and benefits the Muslim community would derive from using them. In essence, disciplines were sorted into legal and illegal according to religious viewpoint (Dodge, p. 31-88, 1962).

Many terms described this division of disciplines into two principal rubrics, i.e. religious subjects vs. secular subjects, were in use. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111) discussed this subject of categorising disciplines in his polemic *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Revitalising Religious Studies). He described religious disciplines as high quality (*mamduha*) and legal/religious (*shariyya*), as preferred over secular subjects, which he described as illegal/secular (*ghayr shariyya*) or abominable (*madhmuma*) (Al-Ghazali, 1: pp. 18-42, undated). It should be noted here that al-Ghazali wrote a critical essay entitled *Tahafut al-Falasifa* (the Fall of Philosophers), in which he attacks philosophers and rationalists (Al-Ghazali, 2004).

The scholar Ibn Jama'a (d. 1332) utilised al-Ghazali's argument and stated his own order of preference. The preferential order that Ibn Jama'a set for acquiring a religious education was from the easy to the difficult: starting with interpretations of the *Quran*; *hadith*; sources on the foundations of the religion (*'usul al-din*); sources on legal interpretations (*'usul al-fiqh*); study of the different schools (*al-madhab*); comparative study of the schools (*al-khilaf*); grammar (*al-nahw*); theological philosophy of Islam (*al-jadal*) (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 35-37, 1994).

Many historical essays dealt with the types of sciences studied during the Middle Ages (Ibn Khaldun, pp. 435-436, 437-478 1993; Al-Qalqashandi, 14: pp. 242-255, 1987; Al-'Urdu, pp. 148-153, 1992). Ibn Khaldun, (1993), for example, divided the disciplines into two types. The first consisted of rational subjects (*al-'aqliyya/al-hikma/al-falsafa*) that relied on rational thinking and philosophical

principles. The second were the traditional subjects, that were passed on from one generation to another (*al-'ulum al-naqliyya/al-wad'iyya*). He draws lines distinguishing between the two groupings according to religious outlook, with the traditional subjects the legal, accepted ones according to the *Quran* and the Sunna, and do not contradict religion.

Religious subjects became more and more prominent in the Mamluk state. Some of the madrasas gave lessons in a range of subjects, while others concentrated on providing their students with knowledge of only the *Quran* or *hadith* (Al-Maqrizi, 2: 1987; Ramadan, 1992). The proliferation of *dar al-hadith* institutions throughout Syria and Egypt testifies to the importance of *hadith* as a subject of study; *hadith* was also taught in madrasas, the principal mosques, and other institutions (al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 19-122, 1981; Ibn Zafar, pp. 14-15, 1947). Ibn Tulun, in his description of *al-Salihyya* neighbourhood near Damascus, says that it served as a focus for study of *hadith* from the time of its founding, and the *ulama* who promulgated *hadith* (*al-musnidun/al-huffaz*) in Syria, whether local or foreign, referred to it as such (Ibn Tulun, 2: pp. 387, 387-457, 1979; Kurd 'Ali, 4: pp. 50-54, 1926). Among the *ulama* famous for *hadith* who took an honoured place in promoting *hadith* study in Ayubbid and Mamluk Syria, were: Ibn 'Asakir, Ibn al-Farkah, al-Birzali, al-Mazzi, Ibn al-Salaih, Abu Shama, al-Nawawi, Ibn Kathir, Ibn Taymiya, and al-Dhahabi, among many others (Al-Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 20-47, 108-109, 112, 1981).

The subjects forming the principal curricula in the Mamluk madrasas were varied. The *al-Barquqiyya* madrasa in Cairo, for example, had many disciplines; *fiqh* of different schools of law, *hadith*, *quran* recitation (*qira'at*) in addition to Sufism. On the other hand, the khanqah of al-Ashraf Barsbay (*al-Ashrafiyya*) in Cairo included as like *al-Barquqiyya*, but added more for the Hanbali *fiqh* (Al-Sakhawi, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: 1935; Rizq, 2: pp. 483-526, 602-635, 1997). On the other hand, the *al-Sharafiyya* madrasa in Aleppo, for example, incorporated studies in a variety of subjects, including the study of the Arabic language and all its ramified sub-subjects; law and legal theory (*fiqh*), theology (*'ilm al-kalam*), logic, (*al-mantiq*), *hadith*, the study of *Quran* and its interpretations, sources of religion (*'usul al-din*) and the theory of mathematics. By contrast, the *al-'Asruniyya* madrasa in Aleppo taught Arabic, recitation of the *Quran* (*qira'at*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and the sources of *hadith* (Al-'Urdu, pp. 165, 168, 1992). As noted above, Ibn Tulun stated that *al-'Umariyya* madrasa in Damascus was originally founded as an institution for the study of *Quran* and *fiqh* according to the Hanbali school, although in the Mamluk period, primarily in the fifteenth century, additions and changes were introduced into it (Ibn Tulun, 1: pp. 259-265, 1981).

Teachers and *ulama* were at the centre of educational activities, even though each one studied or taught in his own madrasa. Historians and writers of the period who

wrote about the lives of educated people would cite their subjects of expertise, the subjects they taught and the positions they held. For the most part, they wrote about the teachers and different *ulama* without mentioning the educational institutions in which they had acquired their educations. Usually, the students studied more than one subject, studying them either simultaneously or in stages. As garnered from the biographies of the period, most of the *ulama* and learned men of Ayyubid and Mamluk areas were highly educated in more than one subject. *Fiqh* and *hadith* were the most prevalent disciplines; most students studied both subjects together and specialised in them. Some of the students studied rational sciences in addition.

As is obvious, *hadith*, *fiqh*, *hadith* and *fiqh* combined, were far and away the most common subjects studied, as per the sources that provide information on the *ulamas'* encouragement to study these subjects. For example, when the historian Abu Shama was a student, he was encouraged by his teacher, Taqiyy al-Din ibn Khaz'al (d. 1226) to study *hadith*, especially from the writings of Muslim (*Sahih Muslim*), which was easier than studying the books on *fiqh* (Al- Nu'aymi, 2; 398, 1988). Badr al-Din ibn Jama'a, for his part, recommended studying *hadith* at a younger age, concentrating on the fundamental, famous writings on *hadith* entitled *al-Sahihan* by al-Bukhari (d. 870), and Muslim (d. 875), *al-Muwatta'* by Malik ibn Anas (d. 795), *al-Sunan* by Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (d. 888), *al-Sunan* by al-Nisa'i (d. 915), *al-Sunan* by Ibn Maja al-Qazwini (d. 887), *al-Jami'* by al-Tirmidhi (d. 892) and *al-Musnad* by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855) (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 182-186, 1994; Ibn Khaldun, pp. 440-445, 1993). These writings served as the principal texts for study of *hadith* and the traditions of the Prophet during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, due to their reputations as credible and reliable foundations of orthodox interpretation. 'Izz al-Din ibn Jama'a, too, advised his student Zayn al-Din ibn al-'Iraqi (d. 1403) to study *hadith*, instead of learning the types of *Quran* readings (*Qira'at*) (Ibn Tulun, 2: p. 446, 1979).

The other disciplines that were commonly studied during this period relied on the *Quran*, and included interpretation (*tafsir*) and ways of reading (*qira'at*). In his study, Mahamid concluded that the range of religious disciplines taught at the Umayyad mosque in Damascus turned it into the largest and most comprehensive educational institution in Syria during the Mamluk era (Mahamid, pp. 202-204, 2009). The mosque then had accepted a large number of students, teachers and various officials. Some of the lessons of the *Quran* recitation were called *al-suba'* and *al-'ushar* (a circle for reading the *Quran* according to various methods). When Ibn Battuta visited Damascus in 726/1325, he classified the readers in the Umayyad mosque according to the time the reading took place (Ibn Battuta, pp. 1-90, 1985). The study of other religious disciplines was also extensive, and included the principles and sources of religion (*'usul al-din*), Sufism (*tasawwuf*), the sources of *fiqh* and its

ramifications, like *'usul al-fiqh*, *fara'id*, *furu'*, *khilaf*, and others that were added over time.

The study of the Arabic language and its permutations (*al-lugha/al-'ulum al-lisaniyya*) was required, not only as subjects in and of themselves, but as adjuncts to other subjects, especially the study of religion, due to the natural link between them. The strong affinity between religious subjects and study of the Arabic language is displayed by the large number of people who acquired higher education in both subjects. Ibn Khaldun emphasised that the foundations of Arabic language were essential to religious leaders, because of the reliance of the *Quran* and *Sunna* on the Arabic language (Ibn Khaldun, 1993). In fact, to a great extent this importance is reflected in the high percentage of educated men who specialised in Arabic language. The principal subjects of the language studied were: grammar (*nahw*), rhetoric (*bayan*) and literature (*adab*).

Not a great deal of information is available concerning the study of history with the sheikhs or in madrasas. However, knowledge of history was related to religious and political occurrences; outstanding religious and political leaders were knowledgeable in history. Thus, historical writings were common during the Middle Ages, as reflected in chronicles and biographies of religious leaders, rulers, and experts in a variety of subjects. Such writings were known by various names, including *al-tabaqat* (classes) *al-tarajim* (biographies), and more. During the late Middle Ages, and particularly in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, historical writings germane to specific subjects began appearing, although the influence of the chronicles and biographies on them was obvious. The writings of Ibn 'Asakir, Abu Shama, Ibn Wasil, Ibn Shaddad, Ibn al-'Adim, al-Isnawi, al-Sakhawi. Ibn al-Shahna, al-Nu'aymi, Ibn Tulun, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani and others, reflect this. The discipline of history was known by various names during this period, primarily *al-akhbar*, *ma'rifat al-rijal* and other titles related to historical topics.

The wide range of subjects and specialties that were studied at advanced levels indicates the broad horizons of the educated in various fields. Wide-ranging, extensive studies and profound knowledge usually reinforced the status of the learned individual, and enabled him to obtain teaching, religious and/or administrative positions. Sometimes, students studied specific disciplines in depth, in order to specialise in them, and studied other subjects, related to their field or not, for general knowledge and education. The historian Shihab al-Din abu Shama (d. 1266) represents an example of specialised in those subjects (Ibn Kathir, 13: pp. 225-226, undated; Al-Isnawi, 2: p. 31, 1987; Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 23-24, 1981; Ibn al-'Imad, 5: p. 318, 1979).

During this period of the Mamluks, the combination of deep religious educations and knowledge of rational disciplines afforded the *ulama* the capabilities necessary to provide deep religious educations to their students, and remain steadfast in the face of various innovations

(*bida'*) and movements that challenged the religion. Some students of religious subjects added the study of rational disciplines, so as to understand the foundations of such subjects, with the aim of defending religion from foreign influences.

In Mamluk Egypt, several rational sciences were taught in addition to the religious sciences. Some of the Mamluk madrasas and mosques in Cairo, such as *al-Mansuriyya* madrasa, Mosque of *al-Mu'ayyad Shikh*, *al-Azhar* and *Ibn Tulun* Mosque (al-Maqrizi, 2: 1987: 2; Ramadan, 1992). 'Ala' al-Din al-Qunawi (d. 1328), for example, was highly educated in both religious and rational disciplines when he arrived in Syria from Egypt. He was appointed to lofty teaching and judicial positions in Egypt and then in Syria (Ibn Kathir, 14: p. 167, undated; Al-Isnawi, 2: pp. 170-172, 1987; Ibn Hajar, 3: pp. 24-28, 1993; Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 161-162, 1981; Ibn al-'Imad, 6: p. 91, 1979).

From the biographies mentioned by al-Nu'aymi (1-2: 1981, 1988), a long list of other *'ulama* in this period can be grouped with al-Qunawi: Muwaffaq al-Din al-Baghdadi (d. 1231), Ibn Khallikan (d. 1282), Ibn al Nafis (d. 1288), Sadr al-Din ibn al-Wakil (d. 1316), Takiyy al-Din ibn Taymiya (d. 1328), Jalal al-Din al-Qazwini (d. 1338), Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350), Taqiyy al-Din al-Subki (d. 1355), Sharaf al-Din ibn Qudama (d. 1369), Ibn Kathir (d. 1372), and many others.

A review of the *ulama* who had educations in the rational disciplines in Syria finds that most of them came from other regions. Most of them, in fact, came from Anatolia and the East, primarily Baghdad, Mosul, Tabriz, Maragha, Qunya and Bursa. This phenomenon testifies that Syrian regions were specialised in religious disciplines rather than rational ones in late medieval times. Egypt, too, was a centre for the study of rational disciplines before the Ayyubid period. Despite the strengthening of religion during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, Egypt continued to maintain its leading position in these subjects, e.g. medicine and *al-miqat*. Ibn abi 'Usaybi'a, in his essay about the famous people of medicine, gave many examples such as Muwaffaq al-Din al-Baghdadi (d. 1231) who went to Egypt and acquired a large number of old books that dealt with rational subjects (*ulum al-awa'il/al-'ulum al-qadima*). Furthermore, his main aim in going to Egypt was to meet with *ulama* who were famous chemists and physicians. When al-Baghdadi went to Syria in 1228, he started to teach medicine in Aleppo, in addition to teaching *hadith* and the Arabic language in the Great Mosque ('Umayyad) (Ibn abi 'Usaybi'a, pp. 683-691, 1965).

### Stages of Study

During the Middle Ages, there were two principal stages of study: elementary and higher education. Elementary education focused primarily on studying the *Quran*; writing Arabic; reading and arithmetic; although historians

like Ibn Khaldun and other Muslim traveler state that differences in teaching methods existed in the Islamic countries of the East and West (Ibn Khaldun, pp. 537-540, 1993; Ibn Jubayr, pp. 244-245, 1984; Ibn Battuta, pp. 93-94, 1985). In Mamluk Egypt and Syria, this education was conducted for the most part in an institution named *kuttab*, or *maktab* built adjacent to a mosque or madrasa. A large number of madrasa owners dedicated *kuttab* next to the madrasa, to serve its orphans.

Sometimes, elementary education was acquired from a teacher who taught his students privately, either in his home or theirs. Such teachers had different titles, depending on their field of expertise. Although the general title for such teachers was *al-mu'addib* (the educator), some of them were nicknamed *al-mukattib*, (the writing teacher) because they taught the rudiments of Arabic writing. Another nickname for elementary level teachers was *al-muqri*, (the reading teacher) since they taught *Quran* and its reading, and some were called *al-hasib*, (the mathematician) because they taught arithmetic. Jamal al-Din Yusuf al-Bisani (d. 1393), for example, was called *al-mu'addib al-muqri*; he specialised in teaching *Quran* to the sons of the leading families of Damascus (Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 3: p. 537, 1977).

After elementary education, specialisation at the level of higher education usually took between five and ten years. The differences in students' abilities, their families' economic situations and other variables, affected the length of time it took them to obtain the necessary certificates (*ijaza*). Some students had the internal love of learning, motivation and drive to continue their studies at the higher level, and they delved deeply in their study of various subjects.

According to Ibn Jama'a, the student should begin his studies in higher education as early as possible during adolescence, because at that age, one has the energy and seriousness, and is in the best position to acquire an education. He added that the student has to study the more important subjects at the beginning, and later go on to other subjects and disciplines (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 35-37, 70-71, 1994). Al- Nu'aymi gave an example of Taqiyy al-Din ibn Taymiya, who is apparently the exception that proves the rule, in that he completed his higher education at a young age [*faqad ta'ahhala lil-fatwa wal-tadrisi walahu duna al-'ishrina sanatan*]. He started his higher education when he was very young, and received his certification (*ijaza*) in religious jurisprudence, as well as a license to teach, before he was 20 years old. He studied various subjects, including *fiqh*, the sources of religion (*'usul*), Arabic language, *Quran* interpretation (*tafsir*), arithmetic, algebra, and other subjects (Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 76-77, 1981). Such examples can be stated related to Shams al-Din Muhammad al-Adhru'i (d. 1312), Fakhr al-Din al-Misri (d. 1350), Salah al-Din Khalil ibn Kikaldi al-'Ala'i (d. 1360) and many others (Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 247-248, 1981; Ibn Hajar, 2: pp. 90-92, 1993).

Economic, familial and geographic factors, as well as the students' abilities to travel, all had their effect on the ability of the student to participate in the different levels of education. Some students continued their educations after a hiatus of several years, while others, supported by their parents, received all the monetary backing necessary for their studies, and were able to complete them uninterrupted in relatively short periods. On one hand, Taj al-Din al-Subki (d. 1369) is a representative example of the group of students who received support and assistance from his parents. He and his father traveled from Egypt to Damascus in 1338, when he was 12 years old. He studied under his father and various other *ulama* in Damascus and received his certification in teaching and religious jurisprudence (*al-ifta' wal-tadris*) before he was 18 (Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 37-38, 1981; Ibn Tulun, 2: pp. 501-502, 1979). By contrast, difficult conditions forced other students to delay their studies to later in life, as the case of Sadr al-Din Sulayman, son of Darya's preacher, (d. 1325). He studied *Quran* at *al-'Umariyya* madrasa in Damascus, and returned to his village, Darya. In 1268, when he was 25 years old, he returned to Damascus and studied under Muhyi al-Din al-Nawawi (Ibn Hajar, 2: p. : 165, 1993; Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 24-25, 1981).

Although there was no limit to the age of a student at the higher level of education, various sources note that differences in levels and academic achievement were taken into account. Usually, the students studying at the level of higher education in Mamluk madrasas were divided into two groups: a beginners group (*mubtadi'un*) and a more advanced group which included those completing their studies (*muntahun*). This division was made so as to create a homogeneous group of students with the same level of abilities, who could thus study the same type of material, rather than a group of the same age (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 47-57, 1994; Ibn Khaldun, pp. 533-534, 1993). According to the endowment of the *al-Zahiriyya* madrasa in Damascus, the students there had 30 *fiqh* students. They were divided into two groups: the more advanced or higher group (*al-a'la'*) and the lower (*al-adna'*). These groups were differentiated not only by their level of studies, but by the stipends they received from the madrasa *waqf*. Each student in the more advanced group received 20 dirhams a month, while each student in the lower group received ten (Dahman, pp. 119, 126, 1982; Leiser, pp. 44-46, 1984).

By contrast, as stipulated in the *waqf* deed of Emir Tankiz, Mamluk governor of Damascus (d. 1340), the students at the *al-Tankiziyya* madrasa in Jerusalem were divided into three groups: beginners (*mubtadi'un*), intermediate (*mutawassitun*) and advanced group, or those completing their studies (*muntahun*). Students studying *fiqh* at the madrasa were allowed four years in which to complete their course (Al-'Asali, 1: p. 113, 1983). George Makdisi states that dividing higher education into three levels had also been done in

Baghdad prior to that (Makdisi, pp. 171-180, 1981).

Ibn Khaldun presents a picture of differences in the amount of time that students studied at madrasas in the various Islamic regions (Ibn Khaldun, p. 432, 1993). One can also understand from the *waqf* deed of Emir Tankiz that *fiqh* students were divided into two levels: beginners and advanced (*al-mutafaqqiha* and *al-fuqaha'*). This nomenclature reflects the level of *fiqh* studies in which the students were engaged, i.e. the first were beginning their studies of *fiqh*, while the second group was in advanced stages of study (Al-'Asali, 1: p. 113, 1983; Al-Qalqashandi, 6: p. 22, 1987).

### Conduct of Lessons

Muhammad Amin, in his study about the *waqf* and the social life in Egypt, depended on many *waqf* deeds of religious institutions of the Mamluks. He concluded that the schedule of lessons in Mamluk madrasas, including study days and times, was usually determined by the *waqf* conditions, and the materials studied were thus defined. Lessons were given on almost every day of the week, with various differences in the different madrasas, with the exception of Tuesdays and Fridays, which were almost universally days off from lessons. Holidays and vacations from studies were usually determined by established procedures, for the most part set to coincide with religious holidays, an element that was consistent throughout the region ruled by the Mamluks (Amin, 1980). In Mamluk Syria too, al-Nu'aymi states the same phenomena of study days and vacations. In certain specific cases, differences and scheduling changes did exist, dictated by local circumstances, e.g. war, political and economic reasons, natural disasters and severe weather, epidemics, and agricultural seasons (Al-Nu'aymi, 1-2: 1981, 1988).

The method of sitting in a circle to learn was widespread, in which the students organise themselves in a circle around their teacher. The concept *halaqa* (circle) was common from the beginning of Islam, when the mosques provided educations in addition to their other functions (Mahamid, pp. 188 – 212, 2009). The *halaqa* was known as an educational institution and the method by which the classes in the original mosques were organised, before the advent of the madrasas. These circles were usually known either by the name of the teacher who taught them, or by the subject or discipline studied in them, e.g.: *halaqat al-hadith*, *halaqat al-fiqh*, *halaqat 'ifta'*, *halaqat al-nahw*, *halaqat wa'z*, etc (Makdisi, pp. 17-19, 1981; Serjeant, pp. 81-82, 1980).

With the advent and spread of the madrasa, the method of sitting in a circle continued, in madrasas as well as in other religious and educational institutions, including the principal mosques, throughout the period. Various historians state descriptions regarding the arrangement of circles in the mosques of Syria and Egypt

during the period under discussion (Ibn Jubayr, pp. 244-245, 1984; Ibn Battuta, pp. 90-91, 93-94, 1985; Al-Nu'aymi, 2: pp. 410-412, 1988). A difference can be discerned in the number of students present at lessons in the madrasa and the mosque. The number of students in the madrasa was limited by the conditions stipulated in the *waqf*, while for the most part no similar limitations prevailed in the mosques. At the lessons given by Taqiyy al-Din ibn Taymiya on interpretations of the *Quran* at the 'Umayyad mosque in Damascus, for example, many students were present (Al-Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 203, 490, 1981).

Courtesy, good manners and agreed-upon discipline prevailed in the circles. The teacher's place before his students stood out; he sat on a high chair or a stage before those present. Ibn Taymiya, who sat on a special stage placed in the 'Umayyad mosque for him to teach his students, can serve as an example of this type of seating for teachers during this period. By contrast, Shams al-Din ibn Bardas (d. 1344) gave his *hadith* lessons in the Ba'albek mosque while seated on a regular chair (Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 2: p. 436, 1994). The seating of the students and those present was also arranged according to rules and procedures, dictated by ethics and precedence. Those with high status and exceptional students sat up front, closer to the teacher. This advantage of being seated close to the teacher would be granted by taking into account a number of variables, including age, level of education, religious status, honesty, etc (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 33, 146-147, 1994).

The students and those present would feel affronted if one of the participants passed everyone else to sit close to the teacher, especially if he was not entitled to that status. Ibn Qadi Shuhba described a case like that, which occurred in one of the classes in which Sadr al-Din al-Kufayri participated, at the *al-Samisatiyya* khanqah in Damascus, during the month of Shawwal, 796/1393-1394. Al-Kufayri passed Shihab al-Din al-Malkawi, who was then the Sheikh of the Shafi'is in Damascus and sat down in front of him. Al-Malkawi was so insulted that he got up and left the lesson. The incident sparked a great deal of anger among the students, guests and onlookers who were present at the lesson; they knew that al-Kufayri had not achieved the same high academic level that al-Malkawi had (Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 2: pp. 520-521, 1994).

For the opening lessons of the study year, or the first lessons of new teachers or madrasas, it was customary for many invited guests to be present, including judges, *waqf* owners or representatives of the rulers, and other respected people. Many examples of this custom can be gleaned from the writings of al-Nu'aymi (1-2: 1981, 1988) and Ibn Kathir (13-14: undated). Guests and honoured visitors usually sat to the right or left of the teacher, who sat in the middle, at the front of the hall. Sometimes, exceptional students or guests would be seated in the front seats facing the teacher (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 147-151, 1994).

High-status visitors and guests participated in one of the lessons which Judge Najm al-Din ibn Hajji gave at the *al-Shamiyya al-Barraniyya* madrasa in Damascus, on the 29th of Safar 824/1421. The Mamluk governor of Damascus sat on his left side, and the other three judges of Damascus, i.e. the Hanafi, the Maliki and the Hanbali sat on his right side (Al-Nu'aymi, 1: p. 288, 1981).

From the two general descriptions given by al-Nu'aymi, one from the Ayyubid period and the other at the end of the Mamluk period, one can conclude that these rules were well-maintained throughout the both periods. Guests and honoured visitors were present at the lessons al-Nu'aymi described; the first one was the lesson that began studies at the *al-Adiliyya al-Kubra* madrasa in 1222. The teacher (judge) Jamal al-Din al-Misri sat in the centre, and Sultan al-Mu'azzam 'Isa sat to his right. The rest of the judges and respected guests sat on both sides, to the right and left of them, in the front of the hall, in accordance with their status. However, Taqiyy al-Din ibn al-Salah, who enjoyed tremendous status due to his erudition and religion, sat opposite the sultan at the centre of the circle. The second such lesson that al-Nu'aymi described took place at the late Mamluk period, in the month of Jumadi al-Thani, 905/October, 1499, when Judge Shihab al-Din ibn al-Farfur gave a lesson at the *al-Nasiriyya al-Juwwanyya* madrasa in Damascus. The judges and other honoured guests sat to the right and left of the teacher, according to their status, while opposite him, at the centre of the circle, sat the respected sheikhs Badr al-Din ibn al-Yasufi and Shams al-Din al-Kafirsusi, along with other highly respected individuals (Al-Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 362, 465, 1981; Ibn Kathir, 13: p. 89, undated).

The presence of judges and various other respected personages in the teacher's lesson was a reflection of his competency and qualifications for the position, in addition to being part of the celebratory ceremony at the beginning of the study year. Sometimes, the presence of judges served as a type of supervision of the teacher; the judges examined his competency and success in teaching. In such cases, they usually expressed their impressions of his teaching to him, at the end of the lesson. During the first lesson that the teacher Najm al-Din al-Tarsusi (d. 1357) taught at the *al-Iqbaliyya* madrasa in Damascus in 1333, the judges and guests complimented him at the end of the lesson, even though he was a young teacher, only 15 years old (Al-Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 476, 534, 1981; Ibn Kathir, 14: p. 199, undated).

Furthermore, sometimes the judges and other certified office holders who were present at the lesson would write reports about the teacher, for good or bad; the good reports served as recommendations for the teacher. When the competition for the teaching position at the *al-Khatuniyya* madrasa between Najm al-Din al-Tarsusi and 'Ala' al-Din ibn Atrush began, the *ulama* and judges supported al-Tarsusi, and wrote a report in which they complimented his teaching (Ibn Hajar, 1: p. 43, 1993).

To oversee the work of the teachers, judges often initiated visits to the lessons. The Shafi'i judge of Damascus initiated such visits to the first lessons of the year, in order to supervise the programmes and lessons, oversee the teachers and inspect their competency. Ibn Qadi Shuhba mentions many examples about those visits. In the month of Safar, 797/December 1394, the Shafi'i judge made several visits to various madrasas in the city, among them *al-Ghazaliyya*, and *al-Rawahiyya*, to supervise the lessons of Zayn al-Din 'Umar al-Kafri, who had just been appointed as an assistant (*mu'id*) to review and repeat exercises with the students. Otherwise, some of the judges wrote negative reports about the teachers whose lessons they visited. In such cases, the judges recommended that the teacher be removed from his position, whether because they proved his unsuitability and incompetence, or because they were jealous and competed for his position. In 1397 for example, the Hanafi judge of Damascus wrote a negative report about the son of Sharaf al-Din al-Ghazzi and recommended that he be removed from his position in teaching at *al-Masruriyya* madrasa, because he was unqualified for it (Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 3: pp. 540, 619–620, 1977).

### Teaching Methods

The teaching methods that were common during this period varied widely, and depended on the teachers, the subjects and the material under study. By examining the biographies of the *ulama* from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods in Egypt and Syria, a number of teaching methods can be discerned. These methods were primarily: hearing and listening (*sama'*), reading (*qira'a*), dictating (*imla'*), comparing (*muqabala*), reading out orally and loudly (*istihdar/hifz ghayban*), and research (*bahth/tahqiq*), argumentation and discussion (*munaqasha*).

The lesson was usually taught in three steps: opening statements, the body of the lesson, and a summary. Although the teachers themselves determined the teaching methods they would use, appropriate for the subject matter and the required material, sometimes *waqf* owners were the ones who set the internal conditions of the teachers' lessons or the material to be studied. The letters of appointments for teachers included a lot of information about teaching and the conditions set for the teachers during the lessons, e.g. teaching methods, type of materials to be used, the teacher's expertise and specialty, his competence and qualifications, and his religious views. The appointments also included orders concerning training that the teachers had to fulfil, particularly orders concerning teaching methods, type of material studied and relationship with students. Thus, judging from the recommendations that al-Qalqashandi set for teachers, different teaching methods were used, depending on the subject matter and study material utilized (Al-Qalqashandi, 11: 225-246, 1987).

The lesson began with passages from the *Quran* read out loud by a special reader, along with complimentary

words and prayers for the teacher, everyone present, and the entire Muslim community, ending with blessings for the *waqf* owner. This custom was widespread in *waqf* madrasas, wherein the teachers followed the conditions established by the *waqf* owners (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 34-35, 1994).

Al-Sam'ani stated that it was preferable for a teacher of *hadith* to pray before he sat down in front of his students and began his lesson, and chapters of the *Quran* should be read. (Al-Sam'ani, pp. 35, 94, 1981). As it seems from the *waqf* deed of the *al-Tankiziyya* madrasa in Jerusalem, *fiqh* and *hadith* lessons began with the reading of passages from the *Quran* and prayers and compliments. Each student would read one portion of the thirty chapters of the *Quran*, then bless the teacher and the Mamluk Sultan, Muhammad ibn Qalawun, the reigning sultan at the time, as well as the *waqf* owner, Sayf al-Din Tankiz, the governor of Damascus. Only after that did the teacher begin the regular lesson (Al-'Asali, 1: pp. 113-114, 1983).

Sometimes, teachers chose to begin their lessons with a religious sermon, or prayers and compliments for leading teachers and *ulama* from whom the teacher had learned. In a few cases, the teachers began their lessons with interpretations of selected verses from the *Quran*, which served as a type of sermon; the subjects and messages with ramifications for contemporary events were explicated. Such a method was used by the teacher of the lessons in which al-Busrawi participated at the 'Umayyad mosque in Damascus during Ramadan 902/April 1497. The teacher began his lesson with interpretation of verses from the *Quran*, as was customary in *fiqh* and other lessons (Al-Busrawi, p. 213, 1988). On the other hand, some teachers opened their lessons with sermons, as did the teacher Ibn Qadi 'Ajlun (d. 1486) at the beginning of his class at the *al-Amjadiyya* madrasa in Damascus. In his opening remarks, Ibn Qadi 'Ajlun complimented his teachers and those present, and quoted from his own teacher, Sheikh al-Nazili, who was present (Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 175-176, 1981).

The body of the lesson included the principal subject, whether it was *fiqh* or *hadith*, or another religious discipline. The class usually was taught by reading from a book, reading out loud or dictating, according to the subject or the teacher's expertise and competency in the subject being taught. *Fiqh* lessons were usually conducted by discussing and analysing a specific verse from the *Quran* that dealt with a subject under study. The teacher quoted the verse and started by discussing interpretations of it. Al- Nu'aymi mentions many examples of lessons in Mamluk Damascus in which the teachers utilised this method, of presenting a verse from the *Quran* and discussing it. Of course, many teachers used passages from the *Quran* that represented their approach and served their interests as Sheikh al-Ramthawi did for instance, when he was involved in conflict and competition for teaching positions at the *al-Shamiyya al-*



*Barraniyya* madrasa in Damascus. He criticised and condemned his competitors for the position, so, that brought about al-Ramthawi's removal from the position in the end (Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 255-256, 1981).

*Hadith* study methods were called by various names, among them *sama'* (listening), *imla'* (dictation), and *qira'a* (reading) in some cases. In his writings, al-Sam'ani (d. 1166) presented a combination of the different methods used to study *hadith*. He stated that the teachers in his period used dictation (*imla'*) more, but that teachers of a previous era used more reading than dictation, dedicating one day a week to dictation and the rest to reading. For his part, al-Sam'ani preferred to hear the *hadith* first, and then write it down (Al-Sam'ani, 1981). The stages that abu al-Qasim 'Ali ibn 'Asakir (d. 1175) went through in his *hadith* studies serve as a good example of a student who reached high academic levels in this subject, and came to be known as *al-hafiz* (Al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 100-101, 1981; Ibn Kathir, 12: p. 317, undated).

Ibn Jama'a (d. 1332) combined methods for studying *hadith*. He even criticised *hadith* students of the Mamluk period because they relied on the listening method exclusively. He also recommended learning *hadith* by the method transferring information and understanding (*al-riwaya wal-diraya*). Ibn Jama'a also recommended to his beginning students, that they learn the material by heart. The students read and repeated the material until they memorised it, in addition to writing down the material that the teacher dictated. By contrast, Ibn Jama'a recommended that his more advanced students write down what they heard, copy material or collect and correct it. Such students, he said, have to rely more heavily on hearing the material (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 204-208, 1994).

*Hadith* lessons were called *majalis* of *sama'* or *amali* because of the method of listening or dictation that was commonly used in them. The *hadith* teacher would divide up the material to be learned into different sections, and each section would be taught in a different lesson (Ibn 'Asakir, 1983; Al-Asbahani, 1989; Al-Khallal, 1990). Ibn 'Asakir, for example, taught a different section on the *hadith* in each of the 408 lessons he gave at the 'Umayyad mosque and at the *Dar al-Hadith al-Nuriyya* in Damascus, using the dictation method (Ibn 'Asakir, p. 17, 1983).

The example of Baha' al-Din al-Dhahabi reflects the differences in the amount of study time devoted to the same material at different periods of time. In 1386, he gave 40 lessons on *hadith* from the book *Sahih al-Bukhari* at the al-Muzaffari mosque, beginning in the middle of the month of Sha'ban and ending on the 17th of Ramadan. When he was a student in 1322, he had studied the same material in the same place in only 11 lessons (*majalis*) (Al-Najdi, p. 306, 1989). These differences in the number of lessons devoted to the same material apparently depended on the teaching methods utilised by the individual teacher. When Zayn al-Din 'Abd

al-Rahim al-'Iraqi (d. 1403) moved from Egypt to Syria, he learned the book *Sahih Muslim* of *hadith* in six lessons in Damascus in 1353. Other leading *ulama* also participated in those lessons: Zayn al-Din ibn Rajab and Ahmad al-Mardawi (Ibn Tulun, 2: p. 446, 1979).

The method of reading (*qira'a*) was utilised in most studies of holy subjects, Arabic language studies, and study of the rational sciences. The teachers usually availed themselves of a certified reader, who assisted them by reading the material out loud to the students. This was done by Baha' al-Din al-Dhahabi, mentioned above, in his lessons at the al-Muzaffari mosque in 1386, when a reader named Ahmad bin Ma'tuq read the material to al-Dhahabi's students. Even the method of reading was not uniform: sometimes the teacher or reader read to the students, and at other times the students themselves read from the book, and the teacher would correct their reading and explain the difficult parts of the material.

The method of reading out loud, whether by students or the teacher, was one of the most successful and popular methods of learning traditional subjects (*al-'ulum al-naqliyya*). This method had an impact on rational disciplines as well. This emphasises the then customary study methods, which relied first on knowing and repeating the material until it was memorised, and then teaching others. The book *al-Hawi*, for example, was memorised by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 1448), by learning each page of the book and reading it three times. The first time, it was read out loud for correction, the second, he read it himself, and the third time he read it out loud to others (Ibn Tulun, 2: 454, 1979).

Muslim learned men, both teachers and students, used the method of memorising and reciting out loud (*al-hifz ghayban/al-istihdar*), to learn not only religious subjects but rational sciences as well. These methods helped the students to learn passages from the famous early philosophers, like Galen, Hippocrates, al-Razi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and others. In addition to this method, teachers of the rational sciences utilised a number of other methods, including discussion and research (*al-bahth wal-tahqiq*), explanation and explication (*al-sharh*), comparison (*al-muqabala*) and others. Ibn abi 'Usaybi'a stated in his book that he studied medicine with Muwaffaq al-Din ibn Saqlab, who used various teaching methods during his lessons, primarily: reading, explaining, reading out loud orally (*istihdar*), contrast and comparison, discussion and drawing conclusions, and summarising the material at the end of the lesson (Ibn abi 'Usaybi'a, pp. 697-698, 1965).

Although the discussion and research method (*al-bahth wal-tahqiq*) was primarily used in teaching rational sciences, like medicine, it was also sometimes utilised in teaching religious subjects. Apparently this method was relatively rare in religious and traditional subjects. Nevertheless, there is evidence that during the late Mamluk period, some of the *ulama* used this method in

their lessons, such as Shams al-Din al-Safadi (d. 1388), Shams al-Din al-Asbahani, 'Ala' al-Din ibn Sallam (d. 1425), and others (al- Nu'aymi, 1: pp. 261, 272, 1981; Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 3: pp. 257-258, 1977). As a result of mixing unsuitable methods in religious educational systems during that period, some of the *ulama* saw it as inherently flawed, and declared that it should not be used in teaching religion and traditions. Kamal al-Din al-Idfuwi (d. 1347) saw use of this method as a symbol of the deterioration occurring in studying religion and a factor in lower levels of achievement. He strongly criticised its use in Egypt during this period (the eighth/fourteenth century). His criticism spotlights the deterioration in separate disciplines of study and the mixing of teaching and study methods used during the Mamluk period, whether in religious subjects or rational sciences (Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 2: p. 519, 1994; Ibn Hajar, 1: pp. 535-536, 1993).

The ending part of the lesson was so short in general. It usually concluded with a summary and certain statements or sayings that the teachers used to signal the end of the lesson, e.g. 'God knows, this is the end, and will be continued by the will of God' (Ibn Jama'a, pp. 44-45, 1994).

Generally, the student was examined by the teacher, to test the student's level of proficiency and knowledge of the material, when the required material or book was learned. The student received a certificate (*ijaza*) when he passed, certifying that he had completed his studies, or that phase of it. It is obvious from examining biographies of the *ulama* that the *ijaza* was conferred by the teacher rather than the educational institution.

### Summary

Educational activities in Mamluk madrasas were noteworthy for their purely religious nature during the period examined. A number of circumstances contributed to the outstanding state of religious education then, among them the rulers' policies, their conflict with the Shi'a and the Crusaders, and the spread of various religious educational institutions of different types to serve the Sunna. This brought about the dissemination of religious disciplines (*al-'ulum al-diniyya/al-shar'iyya/al-naqliyya*), and related subjects derived from them, in addition to the Arabic language.

Curricula and teaching methods in the educational institutions were varied and not uniform. On the one hand, curricula had to rely on the conditions of the *waqf* dedicated to the institution, and on the other, they were influenced by the outlooks and backgrounds of their teachers, the schools (*madhahib*) to which they belonged. The schedule of lessons in Mamluk madrasas, including study days and times, was usually determined by the *waqf* conditions, and the materials studied were thus defined. Holidays and vacations from studies were usually determined by established procedures, for the most part set to coincide with religious holidays. During the last Mamluk period, disruptions occurred in the process of teaching methods and systems between

religious studies and between rational sciences and other aspects of education.

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