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Funduq, Fondaco, and Khān in the Wake of Christian Commerce and Crusade

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The arrival of the Crusaders in the Near East brought warfare to the region, but their coming also encouraged an increased presence of Western merchants in Egypt, Syria, and the Crusader states. To gain access to commercial goods and local markets, these Western traders needed institutional and political support for their activities. In many respects, their needs paralleled those of contemporary Muslim and Jewish traders operating in the same commercial sphere. On the other hand, the presence of Western Crusaders and merchants also put new pressures and demands on the structure of trade in the Near East during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. One of the most critical areas of demand was the need for lodging and security. A chronological analysis of the terminology and function of certain types of merchant hostelry reveals shifts in the commercial infrastructure that shaped long-distance trade in the Near East during and after the era of the Crusades.

Christian, Jewish, and Muslim merchants required short- and long-term lodging for themselves and their animals as well as secure storage for their commercial goods. In the medieval Islamic world, these needs could be accommodated in a number of ways. Among the most common types of merchant hostelry throughout much of the medieval period were the *funduq* (a word adopted from Greek) and the *khān* (adopted from Persian). These terms—*funduq* (pl. *fanādiq*) and *khān* (pl. *khānāt*)—had been introduced into Arabic during the first centuries after the Muslim conquest, and both were well attested by the tenth century. Although sometimes used synonymously by medieval travelers as well as modern scholars, the two terms were not identical, either in origin or purpose. This distinction is made clear by references in which both institutions are mentioned together. The tenth-century Muslim traveler Ibn Ḥawqal, for instance, noted both *fanādiq* and *khānāt* in Nishapur and elsewhere listed “*fanādiq*, houses, baths, and *khānāt*” as different elements in a charitable foundation (*waqf*).¹ Architecturally, buildings for the two institutions were often indistinguishable, a fact that has led scholars to emphasize their similarities in form and function rather than their differences.²

¹ Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb ṣūrat al-'ard*, ed. M. J. de Goeje and J. H. Kramers, *Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum*, 3d ed. (Leiden, 1967), 2:418, 184.

² See, e.g., the remarks of R. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function, and Meaning* (New York, 1994), 331–32, 340.

Indeed, observation of the differences, overlaps, and shifts in the medieval understanding of these two institutions sheds light on the changing climate of trade and travel in the Near East during and after the Crusades. For much of the earlier medieval period, until the twelfth century, there seems to have been considerable functional overlap between the *funduq* and *khān*. Both served as hostelrys providing either free or paid lodging for merchants, pilgrims, and other travelers. There was a degree of geographical distinction between them, however, since the *funduq* was more common in lands bordering the Mediterranean (especially in regions that had been subject to Byzantine influence or control), while the *khān* predominated in the central and eastern Islamic world. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the relationship between the *funduq* and the *khān* began to change. The catalyst for this shift may lie with the arrival of European merchants and Crusaders in Islamic cities along the Mediterranean, together with the subsequent introduction of another cognate hostelry, the *fondaco*. The presence and commercial needs of these Westerners led to a new understanding of the *funduq*, *fondaco*, and *khān* in the minds of both Christians and Muslims.³

The evolution and meaning of each term rested on the shifting roles of these three institutions. The Arabic word *funduq* derives from the Greek *pandocheion*, a word used for an inn, a tavern, or even a brothel.⁴ In the Gospel of Luke (10:35), for example, the good Samaritan brought the man whom he had rescued to a *pandocheion*. The parable makes clear that this *pandocheion*, as in other early Greek citations, was a “for profit” hostelry, since the Samaritan left money with the innkeeper to pay for the care of the invalid guest. Texts and archaeological data suggest that such hostelrys were quite common along roads in the late Roman world. Remains of a somewhat later *pandocheion* lie along the route between Batnae and Edessa, though no record survives of its fees. Greek and Latin inscriptions by its door note that in the late third century “Aurelius Dassium . . . prefect and governor of Osrhoene . . . made in this place a *pandocheion* . . . so that travellers may enjoy refreshment and repose.”⁵

The term *pandocheion* continued to be used later in the Byzantine world, though it appears less frequently than the word *xenodocheion* (or *xenon*), which referred to a charitable hostelry for lodging strangers and the poor. Some of the *xenodocheion*'s association with good works seems to have been incorporated into the understanding of the Byzantine *pandocheion*, since, unlike those from antiquity, later *pandocheia* sometimes provided charitable hospitality. Others, however, continued to function as ordinary inns. Many Byzantine *pandocheia* were privately owned, though some were built in conjunction with churches or monasteries to lodge needy travelers. John Chrysostom, writing in the late

³ Medieval Jewish merchants and travelers also made use of *fanādiq*, as is shown by documents in the Cairo Geniza. See S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society* (Berkeley–Los Angeles, 1967), 1:349–50 ff. See also note 11, and O. R. Constable, “The *Funduq* and *Fondaco* in the Context of Cross-Cultural Relations in the Medieval Mediterranean World,” proceedings of the conference “Muslim Arab Civilization: The Non-Muslim Dimension,” Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies, Amman, Jordan, 16–21 August 1997, forthcoming.

⁴ See, e.g., Strabo, *Geography*, 5.3.9 and 12.8.17, Loeb (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 410; Polybius, *The Histories*, 2.15.5–6, Loeb (Cambridge, Mass., 1922), 276; Epictetus, *Enchiridion*, ed. H. Schenkl (Leipzig, 1916), 11:11.

⁵ C. Mango, “A Late Roman Inn in Eastern Turkey,” *Oxford Journal of Archeology* 5 (1986): 223–31.

fourth century, reported that *pandocheia* were found everywhere along the roads so that travelers and their animals could stop and rest. He likewise urged that a person should allow his house to be “Christ’s *pandocheion*,” where guests might stay free of charge.⁶ These admonitions apparently carried weight, since according to the later hagiographer Symeon Metaphrastes (fl. ca. 960), as soon as Chrysostom had spoken, a man named Theodorichos collected “all of his wealth, except a remainder from which he and his children might live, and gave it to the *pandocheion* of the church.”⁷

Arabic texts make clear that there were *fanādiq* throughout the Islamic world by the tenth century. Presumably these hostelries also existed earlier, either as new foundations or adaptations of existing *pandocheia*. The Muslim historian al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) wrote that in 900 the caliph al-Muʿtaḍid passed through a place called Funduq al-Ḥusayn, near Alexandria (modern Iskenderun, Turkey), on his way to Aleppo. The exact location is unclear, but this may have been the site of an earlier *pandocheion*, though the second half of its name suggests a Muslim foundation.⁸ Tenth-century geographers, including Ibn Ḥawqal and al-Muqaddasī, likewise mentioned *fanādiq* in Muslim cities from Spain to Khurasan.

Extant documents from *waqf* foundations indicate that the Muslim *funduq* preserved and even augmented the charitable intent of its Byzantine predecessor. A very early *waqf* inscription from Ramlah, dated 913, recorded a “*funduq* with all its boundaries and rights, its land and building, its lower and upper floor . . . [as] a pious foundation.”⁹ Later in the century, Ibn Ḥawqal reported that pious foundations devoted to good works had once been established in all regions of the Islamic world, including Syria, Iran, Yemen, Egypt, and the Maghrib, with their activities supported by *fanādiq*, *khānāt*, and other sources of revenue.¹⁰ According to Ibn Ḥawqal, these foundations had all disappeared by his day, but later records contradict this assertion and show a link between the medieval Muslim *funduq* and good works.

Some *fanādiq* provided free lodging for needy travelers, while others were ordinary “for profit” hostelries dedicated to worthy causes. In Egypt, fragments from the Cairo Geniza from the twelfth century and later mention several *fanādiq* owned by the Jewish community. These buildings were maintained by the community and used to house Jewish refugees or to raise revenues for the community’s coffers (*qōdesh*) through rent.¹¹ The Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442) likewise recorded that in the late twelfth century a servant of Saladin named Masrūr “established a *waqf* [in Cairo] for the benefit of prisoners of war and the poor. . . . [This large *funduq*] had ninety-nine rooms and a mosque for Friday services. . . . Masrūr [also] converted his own house into a school

⁶ PG 56:111.50–53; PG 60:320.22.

⁷ PG 114:1129b. I am grateful to Stamatina McGrath for her help in finding other references to Byzantine hostelries in the Dumbarton Oaks Hagiography Database.

⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk* (Beirut, 1995), 5:635. Hillenbrand (*Islamic Architecture*, 334) notes several buildings in Jordan and Syria that may have been earlier *pandocheia*.

⁹ M. Sharon, “A *Waqf* Inscription from Ramlah,” *Arabica* 13 (1966): 78–79.

¹⁰ Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb ṣūrat al-ʿard*, 184.

¹¹ Many of these texts have been collected and edited by M. Gil, *Documents of the Jewish Pious Foundations from the Cairo Geniza*, (Leiden, 1976), docs. 65, 67–69, 72, 80–81, 83–87, 89, 91, 98–99, 101–3, 106, 131–32, 134, 138, 142.

[*madrassa*], and the revenues of a small *funduq* went to support this school.”¹² In the 1180s, the Andalusian geographer and traveler Ibn Jubair observed a similar situation in Syria, where a vizier to the ruler of Mosul had “built *fanādiq* in the cities between Iraq and Syria in order to lodge poor travelers who could not pay the fees.”¹³

Architecturally, *fanādiq* were usually built around a square central courtyard, sometimes with one or two stories. Goods and animals were accommodated on the ground floor, while merchants and other inhabitants lodged in the rooms around the courtyard or on the upper floors. Some buildings were fortified, especially in rural areas.¹⁴

During the twelfth century, changing conditions of trade, travel, and warfare in the Near East began to alter the institution of the *funduq*. While Muslim and Jewish travelers continued to patronize *fanādiq*, new cognate forms of the institution evolved to meet the needs of recently arrived European Christian merchants in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine during the era of the Crusades. By the middle of the twelfth century, three versions of the institution flourished in the southeastern Mediterranean: first, an older Judaeo-Muslim version (the *funduq*); second, a new Christian version in Muslim-ruled Egypt and Syria (called *fondaco* in Italian);¹⁵ and third, another new Christian version (also *fondaco*) in the Crusader states.¹⁶

The first version, the *funduq*, primarily served as an urban hostelry for Muslim and Jewish traders and as a storage facility. The *funduq* was often still linked to charitable intent and could be founded as a good end in itself, providing free or inexpensive lodging for merchants and other travelers. More frequently, however, it charged fees for lodging and storage, and these revenues were dedicated to worthy causes, such as mosques, synagogues, schools, or poor relief.

The second version was the *fondaco* as it took root in Muslim cities, especially Alexandria, where it became a specialized enclave for the lodging and business of foreign Christian merchants. Although closely related to the *funduq* (and still called by that name in Arabic), the *fondaco* was quite different in its administration and purpose. In general terms, a *fondaco* housed foreign travelers and provided a safe place for the storage of their goods. Venetian or Genoese merchants doing business in Muslim Alexandria, for example, were expected to reside in the Venetian or Genoese *fondaco*. From their point of view, the institution provided a familiar haven in a foreign city, where they could feel safe among their own countrymen. From the perspective of Muslim urban authorities,

¹² Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭāṭ* (Bulaq, 1853), 2:92. See also al-Maqrīzī, *Les marchés du Caire: Traduction annotée du texte de Maqrīzī*, ed. A. Raymond and G. Wiet in *Textes arabes et études islamiques* 14 (1979): 133–35.

¹³ Ibn Jubair, *Riḥla*, ed. W. Wright and M. J. de Goeje (London, 1907), 126.

¹⁴ There are a number of architectural studies of the *funduq* and other related hostelries, and it is clear that building types could vary by region, period, and urban or rural setting. See Hillenbrand, “The Caravansarai,” *Islamic Architecture*, 331–76, and bibliography, 606; also N. Elisséeff, “Khān,” in *EP* (Leiden, 1990), 4:1010–17; J. Sauvaget, “Caravansérails syriens du moyen-âge,” *AI* 6 (1939): 48–55, and *ibid.*, 7 (1940): 1–19; K. Erdmann, *Das anatolische Karavansaray des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1961); and M. Kiāni and W. Kleiss, *Kārvānsarāhā-ye Irān* (Iranian Caravansarais) (Tehran, 1995).

¹⁵ Although many different cognate forms appear in the documents (*fundico*, *fontico*, etc.), this study uses the Italian version *fondaco* throughout.

¹⁶ This does not take into account contemporary versions of the *pandocheion* and cognates in Byzantium.

the institution provided a place in which strangers to the city could be contained and monitored, and where their goods could be assessed for taxation. Local Muslim governments often granted special privileges to the Western *fondaci*, whose inhabitants were usually allowed to live according to their own religion, law, and customs. By the early thirteenth century, each of the important Western trading cities had acquired the right to a *fondaco* in Egypt for its merchants.

This version of the *fondaco* has received considerable scholarly attention, with questions generally focusing on the commercial privileges granted to the Venetian, Genoese, Pisan, and other national *fondaci* and their internal administrative structure.¹⁷ Less attention has been paid to the origins of this form of the institution, since it is assumed that Western merchants arriving in the Near East simply adapted the local institution of the *funduq* to suit their needs. This is a reasonable supposition, particularly given the fact that Muslim writers continued to refer to these specialized Western enclaves by the Arabic word. On the other hand, we should also consider the possibility that the idea of the *fondaco* as a building dedicated to lodging a particular community of foreign merchants and their goods, with certain negotiated rights and restrictions (including ovens, churches, the use of bathhouses on designated days, permission to consume wine, tax privileges, and a nocturnal curfew), arrived with the European merchants from the western Mediterranean. Certainly the conception of the *fondaco* as a restricted residential and commercial enclave appears more akin to earlier institutions documented in Muslim and Christian Spain than to the version of the *funduq* that Westerners would have encountered in Egypt.

Italian merchants traded in Egypt as early as the tenth century, but the earliest surviving reference to a *fondaco* appears in an 1154 treaty between Pisa and the Fatimid caliph al-Zāfir.¹⁸ Although this *fondaco* may have had earlier roots in Egypt (a possibility that is suggested in the 1154 treaty), there are better-documented prior examples from the western Mediterranean. Four years previously, in 1150, Pisa had already drawn up a similar treaty at the other end of the Mediterranean, arranging for a Pisan *funduq* in Muslim Valencia.¹⁹ In 1146, both the king of Castile and the count of Barcelona had promised the Genoese a *fondaco*, bath, oven, and garden in Almería in return for their naval help in capturing that city.²⁰ Earlier in the twelfth century, Ibn ‘Abdūn, a Muslim market inspector in Seville, had instructed that foreign merchants be confined within a “*funduq* where they will be under the care of their fellow residents until morning.”²¹ Nocturnal confinement would become standard practice in the *fondaci* in Egypt, where it was noted and resented by many later residents.

¹⁷ For an excellent recent discussion, see articles by D. Jacoby, “Les Italiens en Egypte aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles: Du comptoir à la colonie?” and M. T. Mansouri, “Les communautés marchandes occidentales dans l’espace mamlouk (XIIIe–XVe siècle),” in *Coloniser au moyen âge*, ed. M. Balard and A. Ducellier (Paris, 1995), 76–111. Also, P. Racine, “Les débuts des consulats italiens outre-mer,” in *Etat et colonisation au moyen âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. M. Balard (Lyons, 1989), 267–76.

¹⁸ M. Amari, *I diplomi arabi del R. Archivio fiorentino* (Florence, 1863), 243.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 240.

²⁰ C. Imperiale, *Codice diplomatico della Repubblica di Genova*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1936–42), 1: docs. 167, 169.

²¹ Ibn ‘Abdūn, *Risāla*, ed. E. Lévi-Provençal, in *Documents arabes inédits sur la vie sociale et économique en occident musulman au moyen âge: Trois traités hispaniques de Ḥisba* (Cairo, 1955), 18.

Whether or not the European *fondaci* in Egypt were based on an Eastern or Western prototype, they were clearly distinct from local Muslim *fanādiq*. In contrast to the older Eastern *funduq*, the new Christian *fondaco* evinced no hint of charitable purpose. The latter appears to have been a purely “for profit” venture, benefitting both the Italian communes and the Egyptian administration through commercial taxes and revenues. Both parties received security and financial advantages. The Europeans were assured a safe place where they could live among their compatriots, enjoy certain privileges, store their goods, and transact business. At the same time, the Egyptian government had the assurance that Christian merchants would remain segregated from the local population and closely supervised by urban authorities. The *fondaco* buildings were owned and maintained by the Muslim government, and their doors were locked from the outside at night and during times of Muslim prayer. This emphasis on regulation and segregation set the *fondaco* apart from the average Egyptian *funduq*. Earlier *fanādiq* were patronized by particular groups of Muslim or Jewish merchants, who perhaps shared a geographical origin or branch of trade, but this division seems to have been based on personal preference and commercial convenience rather than on governmental requirement.²²

The institution of the *fondaco* appears to have grown rapidly in Egypt in the second half of the twelfth century. A treaty of 1173 between Saladin and Pisa reconfirmed Pisan access to a *funduq*, and in 1182 Saladin wrote to Baghdad justifying his support of Italian merchants as suppliers of arms and other critical goods to Egypt.²³ It is noteworthy that he felt the need to explain and justify the situation, a circumstance that further suggests that the *fondaci* represented a new venture in Muslim-Christian economic relations, even in the midst of military and political tensions. In fact, the warfare of the Crusades may have been a catalyst to the desire, common to both Muslims and Christians, to regularize and institutionalize their commercial affairs. The *fondaco* provided both parties with security and segregation in a time of ongoing hostilities.²⁴ Venice obtained a *fondaco* in Alexandria by 1184, and Genoa certainly claimed one by the turn of the thirteenth century.²⁵ Other Western cities, including Barcelona, Florence, and Marseille, later obtained *fondaci* in Alexandria. Several less important Western *fondaci* also existed in Muslim Syrian cities.²⁶ This system, established during the early crusading period, survived through the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in the early sixteenth century.

Differences between the *fondaci* in Egypt and those in the Crusader Levant suggest that the institutions may have developed independently. The *fondaci* in Crusader cities

²² It has been noted that the segregation of the Christian *fondaci* in Egypt was not unlike the regulation of the Byzantine *mitata*, but I know of no documentation for a direct link between the two.

²³ Amari, *Diplomi arabi*, 258. Saladin’s letter is reproduced by both Ibn Wāṣil and al-Qalqashandī; cf. Mansouri, “Les communautés marchandes occidentales,” 90.

²⁴ In this regard, the *fondaco* fits into a much broader spectrum of institutions promoting and protecting cross-cultural trade. These have been noted by P. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge, 1984), 78.

²⁵ R. Morozzo della Rocca and A. Lombardo, *Documenti del commercio veneziano nei secoli XI–XIII* (Rome, 1940), 1:341; Jacoby, “Les Italiens en Egypte,” 81.

²⁶ There were also similar *fondaci* in cities in North Africa and Spain.

appeared somewhat earlier than their Egyptian counterparts and had a different administrative structure and residential function.²⁷

Unlike the Egyptian *fondaci*, which represented, in their very walls, the physical and legal boundaries of the Christian merchant communities in Muslim cities, the *fondaci* in Christian Acre, Tyre, and Antioch were merely buildings within larger urban quarters acquired by the Venetians, Genoese, and other foreign communities. It is striking that while Western commercial treaties with Egypt almost invariably mentioned arrangements for a *fondaco*, treaties with Christian rulers in Crusader cities only occasionally granted *fondaci*, more often simply citing houses, streets, and squares. Owing to differences in the religious and political situation, the Crusader *fondaci* were not regulated to the same degree as those in Egypt. They merely provided rented lodging for merchants during the sailing season, and a place to store, assess, and even trade goods. In contrast to the restricted living situation in Egypt, most longer-term foreign residents in Crusader cities owned or rented lodgings outside of their national *fondaco*. Although some Crusader *fondaci* may have taken over established hostelries, any charitable heritage seems to have disappeared with the transfer. Instead, as with Western *fondaci* elsewhere, the institution was devoted to mercantile convenience, residential needs, and commercial profit.²⁸

Fondaci appeared in Crusader cities immediately in the wake of military conquest. Already in 1098, Bohemond, the prince of Antioch, granted a *fondaco* to the Genoese, together with a church, a well, and thirty neighboring houses. This grant was reconfirmed by Bohemond II in 1127, and again by Bohemond III in 1169.²⁹ Later Venetian treaties with the same city in 1140, 1153, 1167, and 1183 regularly renewed their rights to a Venetian *fondaco*.³⁰ The *Pactum Warmundi* in 1123 referred to a Venetian *funda* in Tyre and its revenues.³¹ Pisa also had *fondaci* in both Tyre and Acre by the late twelfth century, as documented by references to a *fundacum Pisanorum* (granted together with

²⁷ The foreign colonies in crusader cities have been discussed in a number of works. See especially J. Prawer, "I Veneziani e le colonie veneziane nel regno latino di Gerusalemme," in *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, ed. A. Pertusi, *Atti del I convegno internazionale di storia della civiltà veneziana (Venezia, 1-5 giugno 1968)* (Florence, 1973), 1.2:625-56; D. Jacoby, "L'expansion occidentale dans le Levant: Les Vénétiens à Acre dans la seconde moitié du treizième siècle," *Journal of Medieval History* 3 (1977): 225-64; and V. Slessarev, "Ecclesiae Mercatorum and the Rise of Merchant Colonies," *Business History Review* 41 (1967): 177-97.

²⁸ The combination here of *fondaci* with houses suggests that *fondaci* often came to serve nonresidential functions in the crusader cities. This may be the origin of the usage of *fondaco* to mean "warehouse" in late medieval Italy.

²⁹ Imperiale, *Codice diplomatico della repubblica di Genova*, 1: docs. 7, 47; 2: doc. 49. It is not clear whether the first *fundaco* was a preexisting hostelry or an imported institution, but its link with a church raises the possibility that the latter was an established religious house that already had a hostelry annexed to it. Unlike Muslim Egypt, where it would become common to grant rights to a church in connection with a *fondaco*, there was no necessity for this privilege in crusader cities under Christian rule.

³⁰ G. L. F. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig mit besonderer Beziehung auf Byzanz und die Levante*, 3 vols. (Vienna, 1856-57), 1:102, 134, 149, 176 (hereafter Tafel and Thomas).

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1:86. *Funda* and *fondaco* were cognates; the former held more the sense of a market, while the latter signified a residence (though trade might be conducted within its walls). This distinction is discussed at length by J. Riley-Smith, "Government in Latin Syria and the Commercial Privileges of Foreign Merchants," in *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. Baker (Edinburgh, 1973), 109-32.

ovens, baths, mills, and houses) in privileges from 1187 and 1189.³² A long list of rent revenues from the Venetian *fondaco* in Acre in 1244 makes clear the continuing residential nature of the institution.³³

The Crusader *fondaci* were a less long lasting phenomenon than their counterparts in Egypt, and none survived the final conquest of Acre in 1291 in their original form. Several, however, continued to have a residential and commercial function under Muslim rule, though they were later called *khānāt*. The Khān al-Ifranj in Acre, for example, seems to have occupied the same spot as the earlier Venetian *fondaco*, and part of the building's structure dates to the Crusader period. Its Arabic name also suggests a Frankish heritage.³⁴ Likewise, the Pisan *fondaco* in Acre probably stood at the same location as the existing Khān al-Shūna.³⁵

This name change signified more than just a switch from Christian to Muslim rule. Instead, the change from *fondaco* to *khān* was part of a much broader contemporary shift in the terminology of trade and travel in the Near East. By the late twelfth century, a mixture of names and types of hostelries already existed in Crusader cities. In the 1180s, for example, when Ibn Jubair arrived in Acre, he was “taken to the custom-house, which is a *khān* prepared to accommodate the caravan. . . . The merchants deposited their baggage there and lodged in the upper story.”³⁶ His description points to an evolving distinction between the *fondaci*, which housed Christian merchants from specific national communities, and the *khān*, an all-purpose hostelry for merchants and other travelers, including Muslims. These changes and overlaps in word usage and institutional function make it difficult, even impossible, to lay out definitive rules to differentiate among the *funduq*, the *fondaco*, and the *khān*. Nevertheless, certain trends distinguish the development of the *khān*.

The Persian institution of the *khān* had always been present in the Islamic world, though *fanādiq* were more common around the Mediterranean until the thirteenth century. From early on, *khānāt*, like *fanādiq*, had been founded by rulers and local officials, often for the public good. Al-Ṭabarī recorded that in 720 the caliph ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz wrote to the governor of Samarqand instructing him to “establish *khānāt* in your lands so that whenever a Muslim passes by, you will put him up for a day and a night and take care of his animals; if he is sick, provide him with hospitality for two days and two nights; and if he has used up all of his provisions and is unable to continue, supply him with whatever he needs to reach his hometown.”³⁷ Other *khānāt* were more obviously commercial, including one in Wāsīt described by the eleventh-century writer al-Harīrī al-Basrī.³⁸

³² G. Müller, *Documenti sulle relazioni delle città toscane coll’Oriente cristiano e coi Turchi fino all’anno MDXXXI* (Florence, 1879), docs. 23, 31.

³³ Tafel and Thomas, 2:393–96.

³⁴ D. Jacoby, “Crusader Acre in the Thirteenth Century: Urban Layout and Topography,” in idem, *Studies on the Crusader States and on Venetian Expansion* (Northampton, 1989), 32.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

³⁶ Ibn Jubair, *Rihla*, 317–18.

³⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, 4:69 (D. S. Powers, trans., *The History of al-Tabarī* [Albany, 1989], 24:94).

³⁸ Al-Harīrī, *Maqāmāt* (Beirut, 1958), 228. This text provides a base for S. Guthrie’s discussion of the *khān* in her *Arab Social Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1995), 94–100.

According to Ibn Ḥawqal, *khānāt* were connected with *waqf* foundations before the tenth century.³⁹ Nevertheless, they began to appear in large numbers of *waqf* grants only in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and they became even more numerous in later centuries. Some *khānāt* were the objects of endowments, as in the case of a *waqf* inscription dating from 1115 referring to a pious foundation created to support a *khān* in Kazwin.⁴⁰ More often, however, the revenues of a *khān* were devoted to a mosque, school, or other worthy purpose. Al-Maqrīzī reported that the Khān Mankūrush in Cairo had been founded by a Mamluk of Saladin who died in 1182, and its revenues were dedicated to good works.⁴¹ The same author likewise noted another late twelfth-century hostelry with a charitable purpose, a public *khān* founded in Cairo to lodge “sons of the road and [other] travellers [who were] received without charge.”⁴²

These foundations date from the period in which the *khān* was beginning to replace the *funduq*, and to take over a more exclusive role in lodging travelers on the road. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the institution of the *khān* gradually took over the essential function of the earlier *funduq* as it evolved to meet new needs of Muslim travelers. This shift is demonstrated in the example of a hostelry near Damascus that bears an inscription recording that the “building of this blessed *funduq* [had] been ordered by . . . [Saladin], Sultan of Islam and the Muslims” in 1181.⁴³ Despite this official designation as a *funduq*, the hostelry soon became known as Khān al-‘Arūs. Only a couple of years after its dedication, Ibn Jubair described it as “the Khān of the Sultan, which was built by Saladin, the lord of Syria. It is the zenith of strength and handsomeness, with iron doors after the fashion in the building of *khānāt*. . . . The road from Homs to Damascus is little populated, except for three or four places where there are these *khānāt*.”⁴⁴

Beginning in the later twelfth century, a network of new *khānāt* were established by Ayyubid, Seljuq, Mamluk, and Ottoman rulers along the caravan routes of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and southern Anatolia. Contemporary inscriptions on surviving buildings confirm the proliferation of new *khānāt*, usually at the behest of the sultan, government officials, and other wealthy individuals. Ibn Jubair also noted many recently built *khānāt* on his travels, such as the “large new *khān*” he encountered in a village after leaving Mosul, further adding that “in all the stages of the road there are *khānāt*.”⁴⁵ He passed another night in a “large new *khān*” near Harran, and a few days later, leaving Qinnasrin, he “halted to rest . . . in a large *khān*, strongly fortified, called the Khān of the Turkomans. The *khānāt* on this road are like fortresses. . . . Their doors are of iron, and they present the utmost strength.”⁴⁶

Data on *khānāt* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries show not only the rapid growth of the institution at this time, but also the ways in which late medieval *khānāt* had begun

³⁹ Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb ṣūrat al-‘ard*, 184.

⁴⁰ *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe*, ed. E. Combe, J. Sauvaget, and G. Wiet, Publications de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 18 vols. (Cairo, 1937), 8: no. 2967, 108–12.

⁴¹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭāṭ*, 2:93.

⁴² *Ibid.* For a list of *waqf* endowments mentioning *khānāt* in Mamluk cities, see I. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), app. A, 195–98.

⁴³ *Répertoire*, 9: no. 3368, 115.

⁴⁴ Ibn Jubair, *Riḥla*, 269; and Sauvaget, “Caravansérails syriens du moyen-âge,” *AI 6* (1939): 50–52.

⁴⁵ Ibn Jubair, *Riḥla*, 247.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 257, 264.

to differ from contemporary *fanādiq* and *fondaci*. Descriptions by Ibn Jubair and other travelers indicate that *khānāt* were strongly built, even fortified, but many maintained only a minimal staff or none at all. This lack of close supervision contrasts with the strict regulation of the *fondaci* for Christian merchants in cities such as Alexandria and Damascus. Likewise, it is clear that numerous *khānāt* were founded systematically along well-traveled inland rural routes, especially in Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Anatolia, for the benefit of Muslim merchants, state employees, post riders, and other travelers. There were also *khānāt* in many late medieval Muslim cities, including Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Mosul, Bursa, and Isfahan. Unlike the urban *fanādiq* and *fondaci*, however, which were usually located near the heart of a city's commercial district, *khānāt* were more often found on the outskirts of the city center.

Meanwhile, Muslim *fanādiq* were losing their primary character as hostels for travelers. Increasingly devoted to urban commerce and manufacture, they often contained shops, warehouses, and workshops as well as living space for long-term residents. By the fifteenth century, al-Maqrīzī described how the *khānāt* of Cairo were filled with travelers passing through, while the *fanādiq* were crammed with residents.⁴⁷ At the same time, the European *fondaci* in Egypt continued to function as strictly regulated enclaves for Christian merchants and other Western travelers.

The appearance of the *fondaco* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in the wake of the Crusades, was in part responsible for this shift, as the new demands of Christian traffic influenced the patterns of Muslim trade and travel. The rapid evolution of the *fondaco*, and its success as an enclave for Christian traders, may have blurred the identity of the *funduq* and encouraged the growth of other types of lodging for Muslims.

Unlike the *fanādiq* and other hostels, most late medieval *khānāt* were not individual establishments but part of larger regional networks. The building of *khānāt* coincided with a revival of Muslim overland travel, commerce, and communications beginning in the twelfth century, as well as a new institutional emphasis. The revival of the *barīd*, or postal system, by Sultan Baybars after 1260 was part of the same phenomenon, and later Mamluk and Seljuq rulers continued to augment the infrastructure for overland communications through the foundation of *khānāt* and other facilities.

The *khān* became the dominant institution for lodging travelers throughout Syria and the Eastern Islamic world in the wake of the Crusades. In Egypt, *fanādiq* were converted into *khānāt*, yet *fanādiq* still remained common in Cairo. Because of this, the terms are often more confused with regard to Egypt than Syria, although the two institutions were generally distinct. In the late fourteenth century, Ibn Duqmāq (d. 1406) listed forty-three *fanādiq* and one *khān* in his description of Cairo; in the first half of the next century, al-Maqrīzī noted nineteen *fanādiq* and eleven *khānāt* in the same city.⁴⁸ One of these was Khān al-Masrūr, which had been founded as Funduq al-Masrūr in the late twelfth century.⁴⁹ Although these tallies indicate the continued fluidity of the terms and the transfer

⁴⁷ Al-Maqrīzī, *Les marchés*, 2.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 23–24.

⁴⁹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khūṭāt*, 2:92.

of certain buildings from one designation to another, both authors considered the institutions sufficiently distinct to count them separately.⁵⁰

Contemporary travelers' reports likewise support the impression of hostelries with overlapping but not identical functions. For example, the fourteenth-century Maghribi traveler Ibn Baṭṭūta drew attention to the distinction between urban and rural hostelries in Egypt. He described a roadside hostelry near Cairo as a "*funduq*, which they call a *khān*, where travelers alight with their beasts." His comment makes clear that this non-urban facility for passing travelers went by the title *khān* in Egypt, although it was similar to what he would have recognized as a *funduq* in the Western Islamic world.⁵¹

Christian travelers in Egypt also commented on the terms *fondaco* and *khān*, which were made even more confusing by the translation of Arabic words into Western languages. Although Europeans called the *fondaci* in Egypt by that name, the term, like *funduq*, was often blurred with *khān* in Arabic. A linguistically muddled description of the *fondaci* in Alexandria by the traveler Lionardo di Niccolò Frescobaldi in 1384 testifies to this confusion: "All the Christian Franks are locked in a building called a *cane* [*khān*], and the keeper of the *cane* locks them in, and this name comes from the fact that we are [considered to be] *cani* [dogs]" by the Muslims.⁵² A century later, however, the Flemish traveler Joos van Ghistele drew attention to clear distinctions between the *fondaci* and *khānāt*, noting architectural and administrative differences, including nocturnal curfews imposed on the Christian inhabitants of the *fondaci*.⁵³

By the fourteenth century, the *funduq* had become rare in Syria and Iraq, where its decline may have been connected with the rise of the *khān* and the increasing focus of Syrian traffic on long-distance interurban overland routes traveled by Muslims. Meanwhile, the *funduq* continued to flourish in the Western Islamic world and to a lesser degree in Egypt, though in both regions it had become more of an urban entrepôt, warehouse, or atelier than a hostelry for travelers. Many of the *fanādiq* in Mamluk Cairo mentioned by Ibn Duqmāq and al-Maqrīzī were associated with particular trades or types of commercial goods. For example, Funduq Dār al-Tuffāḥ, near Bāb al-Zuwayla, handled fruit arriving from the Egyptian countryside, and the Funduq of Ṭurunṭāy served as a depot for olive oil coming from Syria.⁵⁴ To further complicate the situation, another similar institution, the *wakāla*, also began to develop in this period. Al-Maqrīzī thought it necessary to explain that a *wakāla* was similar to a *funduq* or *khān*, noting that merchants from Syria arrived at the Wakāla Qawṣūn with olive and sesame oil, soap, walnuts, and other goods.⁵⁵ Some late medieval Egyptian *waqf* endowments continued

⁵⁰ N. D. MacKenzie discusses the overlap of the two terms in his *Ayyubid Cairo: A Topographical Study* (Cairo, 1992), 165–77.

⁵¹ Ibn Baṭṭūta, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūta, A.D. 1325–1354*, ed. C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (Cambridge, 1958), 1:110, 71–72 (Arabic text, 111–12).

⁵² L. Frescobaldi, *Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria in 1384*, trans. T. Bellorini and E. Hoade, Publications of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 6 (Jerusalem, 1948), 42.

⁵³ Joos van Ghistele, *Le Voyage en Egypte de Joos van Ghistele, 1482–1483*, trans. R. Bauwens-Préaux (Cairo, 1976), 113–14.

⁵⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭāt*, 2:93–94.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 93. On the *wakāla*, see also A. Raymond, *The Great Arab Cities in the 16th–18th Centuries* (New York, 1984), 44–54; and N. Hanna, *An Urban History of Būlāq in the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (Cairo, 1983).

to mention *fanādiq*, but their sponsorship only remained common in the Maghrib. Elsewhere, new endowments rarely noted *fanādiq*, although earlier foundations may have continued to contribute funds to good causes.

After the fall of Acre in 1291, the *fondaco*, like the *funduq*, became a phenomenon limited almost exclusively to Egyptian and Maghribi port cities. Following the Crusades, Muslim rulers attempted to limit Western merchant activity and funnel their business toward certain markets. Thus the *fondaci* survived in Mamluk Egypt because the structure of Egyptian trade concentrated traffic through Alexandria and Cairo and because the Mamluk administration closely monitored and taxed this traffic. By the fourteenth century, Western merchants no longer enjoyed a free choice of ports or style of residence as they had in Crusader cities. Instead, the concentration of *fondaci* in Alexandria channeled most Christian traffic in the eastern Mediterranean through that port, where Western traders could be closely supervised from Cairo and where profits could be more efficiently directed to the sultan's treasury. Although *fondaci* survived in a few Syrian cities, most notably Damascus, they never ranked with their Egyptian counterparts in terms of volume of trade. The highly regulated nature of the institution also increased over time, strictly controlled by the edicts of custom and diplomacy. By the fifteenth century, many of the European consuls in charge of the *fondaci* actually received a stipend from the Egyptian government for their services.⁵⁶

The continued presence of European traders and the institutionalization of the *fondaco* also stimulated the evolution of the *khān* in a new and distinctly Muslim form. The development of a system of *khānāt* in Syria, Iraq, Anatolia, and elsewhere demonstrates the pattern of center and periphery in Near Eastern trade in the later Middle Ages. Within their lands, the Mamluk government sought to channel commerce through Egyptian markets, routing communications and revenues toward Cairo, its political and economic center. The long-distance caravan routes through Syria that connected with routes to Egypt became critical to this mission, as did the *khānāt* established at regular intervals along these routes to facilitate travel by government officials and private merchants.

This system of inland routes was differentiated by language, religion, and function from the maritime trading system of the eastern Mediterranean, which was now dominated by Western Christian merchants. By means of the strictly regulated urban *fondaci*, these Christian traders had access to certain Muslim markets but not, generally, to the Muslim inland network that gained renewed importance during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This vital network of Muslim communication and trade depended on the caravan routes and *khānāt* linking Syria and Egypt, the Red Sea, the Hijaz, the Persian Gulf, and points east. Differences in the terminology and function of institutions for trade and travel in the Near East—including the shifting usage of *funduq*, *fondaco*, and *khān*—reflected these new Christian and Muslim commercial interests and routes in the wake of the Crusades.

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⁵⁶ Amari, *Diplomi arabi*, 339.