

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF OTTOMAN EGYPT,
1099-1143/1687-1730

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the political system of Egypt during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730. After two centuries of Ottoman rule, the laws of Qanunname of 1525, which created a rather complicated balance of power, became subject to erosion. The Viceroy's power started to decline and the military garrison lost its dominance over the political and administrative affairs of the region. The civil war of 1123/1711 brought with it major developments to the region. It resulted in the gradual disintegration of the Ottoman elements within the political set-up and the rise of the local institutions represented by the beylicate, al-Azhar, and the Bedouin Arab tribes. Egypt gradually shifted towards growing independence. The latter half of the twelfth century AH witnessed the emergence of the secessionist movement of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir (1767-1772) and, following the French occupation, the rise of Muhammed 'Ali Pasha leading Egypt into the modern era.

The Introduction is followed by an analysis of the archival and manuscript sources upon which this study is based. The second chapter relates the history of the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 in the light of previously unexploited sources. The main body of the study discusses the factors which led to the decline of the Ottoman political system in Egypt and the rise of the beylicate and religious institutions. It is followed by a final chapter which refers briefly to the major local groups which exerted an external impact on the system rather than being part of the political set-up.

This study is based on contemporary chronicles and documents in the Egyptian archives, making particular use of vital manuscript sources which have not yet been exploited by modern scholarship. It is hoped that this study will provide answers to several questions relating to the factors which led to the decline of Ottoman authority and the rise of the local institutions represented by the beylicate and the Ulema.

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CHAPTER

1

ANALYSIS OF THE SOURCES

I- INTRODUCTION

It has been a prime concern of many historians and historical institutions during the past few decades to study the history of Ottoman Egypt, in an attempt to illuminate the darkness that has for long surrounded this period. The period of nearly three centuries, from the conquest of Selim I in 1517 to the French invasion in 1798, has been one of the most neglected episodes in the history of Egypt as a whole. Compared to the preceding two and a half centuries of Mamluk rule, Ottoman Egypt possesses a far greater depth of documentation, for which there exist not only extensive archival sources, but also chronicles, numerous manuscripts, and travel accounts describing all aspects of the region in Arabic, Turkish, and many European languages. Nevertheless the Mamluk sultanate has been the subject of more study and research than the period of Ottoman rule in Egypt. Moreover, the majority of recent works on the modern history of Egypt concentrate on the French invasion and the rule of Muhammed 'Ali Pasha as a starting point for the modern part of Egypt's history. This approach has also contributed to the neglect of the history of Egypt under Ottoman rule.

Historians of the Ottoman era had a more realistic approach and did not make such a separation in their works. Ibn Iyas, a historian of the Mamluk period, saw the Ottoman conquest in 1517 as a continuation of events in Egyptian history and al-Jabarti, the leading historian of the later Ottoman period, included in his work, 'Ajā'ib al-Āthār, events of the French invasion in 1798 and the rule of Muhammed 'Ali Pasha, thus making no such separation or periodic divisions as were imposed by later historians. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to appreciate that the central point of all research into and study of the modern or medieval history of Egypt is not the Mamluks, the Ottomans, or the French; it is rather Egypt as a region and a political entity.

There are many reasons for the relative lack of study of and research into the history of Egypt under Ottoman rule. Egypt declined from being a centre of empire under the Mamluks, to the level of an Ottoman province. This waning position, combined with the remarkable weakness of the central government in Istanbul, caused a general political, economic, and cultural decline. These factors may well have been a major obstacle to the continuation of the school of history writing that prevailed in the Mamluk period.¹ They may have affected the quality, language, and style of the historical works written in this period, but they certainly did not have any effect on the quantity of sources on Ottoman Egypt, which is greater than what is extant for the Mamluk era. The problem, therefore, has not been the absence of primary sources, but a lack of exploitation of the available material. Continuing difficulties in using the national archives in Cairo and Istanbul, and the virtual absence in Egypt of Ottomanists capable of reading and exploiting the old Turkish and Arabic material, have contributed to the slow development of research on this period.

M. Anis, in his 1962 Cairo University lectures on the Egyptian school of history in the Ottoman period, supported al-Jabarti's explanations for the lack of development in the historiography of Egypt. Al-Jabarti asserted that much of the material existing at that time was taken out of Egypt, mainly by the French and other Westerners.² In the long term, however, this proved to be an advantage. The national museums and libraries of Paris, London, Berlin, and other European capitals have conserved a large amount of material, that has been catalogued and thus made generally available to scholarship much earlier than has been the case with comparable material existing in Turkey and Egypt. This may partly explain why the first serious works of scholarship on the history of Ottoman Egypt appeared in Europe rather than Egypt itself. On the

¹The most notable historians of this period are al-Suyūti, al-Shawkāni, Ibn Taghri Birdi, and Ibn Iyās.

²Al-Jabarti, *'Ajā'ib al-Āthār* 1/6.

other hand, the material that remained in Egypt is much more extensive and varied than al-Jabarti and M. Anis have suggested. Manuscript collections in various libraries in Egypt, especially Dār al-Kutub, contain very rich historical materials and numerous chronicles including, for example, the highly important Awdah al-isharāt, which al-Jabarti in his day claimed had been lost.¹

Under the aegis of the Royal Geographic Society in Egypt, a generation of historians in the 1920s and 30s, funded by the Egyptian court, were directed to concentrate their research on the history of Muhammed ‘Ali Pasha and his descendants, in order to publicize their westernization policies and reforms in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Examples of these historians’ works are the Histoire du Règne du Khèdive Ismail, by Douin, and the Précis de l’Histoire d’Egypte, of which A. Sammarco wrote the fourth volume, covering the period 1848-1879. There were also the writings of Dodwell, Crabitès, and Hanotau.² This political initiative was a major cause in diverting the attention of historical research and developing a vaguely negative view of the period 1517-1798 in the history of Egypt. It was not until the sixties of this century that a new generation of Egyptian Ottomanists began to explore the neglected material in the national archives in Cairo, and to direct their attention to the history of Ottoman Egypt.

This neglect of the history of Ottoman Egypt, in addition to the continuing reliance on a very limited number of sources for that period, helped to foster many unfounded ideas about the period. Perhaps the most serious of these was the prevailing view that history writing in Egypt ceased to develop after Ibn Iyas, until it was redeemed by al-Jabarti two and a half centuries later. This idea, which had been put forward by al-Jabarti himself in the introduction to his

¹ibid.,

²A. al-Jumayyī, Ittijāhāt al-kitābah al-tārīkhiyah fī tarīkh Misr (Cairo, 1990).

‘Ajā’ib al-Āthār, and was supported by many modern historians, impeded further research into works which al-Jabarti attempted to discredit, and discouraged researchers from inquiring into what appeared to be an unrewarding and profitless field.

THE PERIOD 1099-1143/1687-1730:

Thanks to Ibn Iyās’s Badā’i’ al-Zuhūr, we know with a good degree of accuracy the details of Selim I’s invasion of Egypt in 1517 and the establishment of an Ottoman administration led by Khair Bey. In al-Jabarti’s ‘Ajā’ib al-Āthār, the end of the Ottoman rule over Egypt and the French invasion in 1798 are discussed, with a degree of fidelity similar to that shown by Ibn Iyās, in reporting the events that took place at that time. But the two and a half centuries in between the two works present a problem for historical enquiry. The period of Ottoman rule over Egypt is not equally chronicled. For the second half of the sixteenth century we have very little material, and the same is generally true for the end of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In fact, very little of the available material has been fully exploited. With regard to the eleventh century AH (AD 1591-1688), upon which all historians focused in their chronicles, it may be noticed that there was a generation of historians who covered most of this century, beginning with al-Ishaqi and ending with Ibn Abī al-Sūrūr, who died in 1087/1676. Professor Holt, in his article on the Arabic manuscript sources, has indicated the main outline of eleventh/seventeenth-century works. The following are the significant eleventh-century works, that are prior to the period of study:¹

¹P.M. Holt, Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt (London, 1968) 3-12.

- Muhammed al-Ishāqi, Akhbār al-'uwāl, up to 1032/1623.
- Mār'ī Ibn Yūsuf, Nuzhat al-nāzirīn, up to 1035/1626.
- Al-Ghamri, Dhākirat al-i'lām, up to 1040/1630.
- Muhammed Ibn Abī al-Sūrūr, al-Kawākib al-sā'irah, up to 1062/1651-2.
- Anonymous, Qahr al-wujūh, up to 1066/1656.
- Al-Sālihi, Wāqi'at al-sanājiq, up to 1071/1660.
- Anonymous, a continuation of al-Ishāqi, ending in 1084/1673.

Al-Ishāqi and Ibn Abī al-Sūrūr left rich material of a high quality and degree of accuracy. Also relevant are many other works by Ibn Abī al-Surur, including al-Minah al-rahmānīyah, al-Rāwdah al-zāhiyah, Allatā'if al-rabbānīyah, and Kashf al-kurbah fī raf' al-tulbah.

The first fifty years of the twelfth century AH have not been well studied in comparison with the previous century, or with the following period when al-Jabarti, al-Sharqāwi, al-Khashshāb, and French scholars embarked on writing the history of Egypt. The early twelfth century (late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries AD) did not witness the emergence of great scholars concerned to write the history of Egypt at that time, but there still survives an amount of material which covers this period, and which proves on examination to be very fruitful and rewarding for the purpose of study and research.

The years 1099-1143/1687-1730 were among the most critical in the history of the Ottoman Empire as a whole. This period of forty-four years witnessed the reigns of four Sultans - Suleiman II (1099-1102/1687-1691), Ahmed II (1102-1106/1691-1695), Mustafa II (1106-1115/1695-1703), and Ahmed III (1115-1143/1703-1730) - whereas the previous forty-one years witnessed the reign of only one Sultan, Mehmet IV (1058-1099/1648-1687). This period begins with a Janissary revolt, that resulted in the removal of Sultan Mehmet IV and the death of his Grand Wazir, and ends in 1143/1730 with another Janissary revolt after the execution of the Grand Wazir and the removal of Sultan Ahmed III. The Ottoman Empire suffered heavy losses on the European front during that period, including most of Hungary together with the territory of Peloponnesus, and the Ottomans were forced to sign the humiliating treaty of Karlowitz in 1110/1699. Several attempts by the Köprülü Grand Wazirs to reform the structure of the state ended in complete failure, while economic crisis caused by inflation and devaluation of the currency continued to destabilize the whole structure of the empire. The control of Istanbul over the Arab provinces was waning, and relations between the periphery and the central government continued to deteriorate.

Events in Istanbul, in Persia, and on the European front had an enormous impact on Egypt as the largest and the richest province of the Ottoman Empire. The history of Egypt cannot be studied in isolation in this period despite the weak control over its affairs by the Porte. The policies of each Sultan and the many attempts at reform during the period of study are reflected and well documented in the chronicles of Egypt's history at that time. Instability at the centre of the Empire caused further instability in its various provinces. This influence and the troubled relationship between Cairo and Istanbul justify taking the reigns of the four Ottoman Sultans mentioned as a meaningful period of Egypt's history for study. As an Ottoman province, the sovereign authority

in Egypt was the Ottoman Sultan, not the Pashas of Egypt, so that in studying the history of Ottoman Egypt in this period, we must start from the basic fact of Ottoman domination.

During the period 1099-1143/1687-1730, Egypt was in an almost continuous state of civil war. There were confrontations which involved the seven regiments, the Pasha, the Mamluk beys, the Bedouin, and even the religious institutions and ethnic minorities. There were popular revolts and public demonstrations caused by hunger, high prices, corruption, and devaluation of the currency. Battles took place on the streets of Cairo, around and inside the citadel, and in almost all the major provinces north and south of the capital. This period is unique in that all the political institutions in Egypt were engaged in an overall test of their power and abilities. In these conflicts the Porte also had a role to play. Egyptian politics ran parallel to the affairs at the centre of the Empire. Removals of the Sultan by the military in this period coincided with the deposition of a number of Pashas in Cairo. Religious institutions had a big role to play in both capitals and both sides shared the consequences of economic crisis. Thus the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 was an important one for the centre of the Empire and its province Egypt, and both areas shared many similarities in internal and external affairs.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF OTTOMAN EGYPT

The political system of Ottoman Egypt was a unique one. The governing council, the Dīwān of Egypt, which was headed by the Pasha, incorporated Mamluk beys, the qadiasker, and military chiefs. This meant that the Ottoman system had accepted the continuity of the Mamluk system under its supremacy and recognized religious authority as part of the system. The rather complicated structure of government caused a three-way struggle between the following groups:

- The Mamluk ascendancy, which began to challenge Ottoman authority over the region. Earlier in its existence, the Mamluk institution appeared more local and accessible to the public than Ottoman representatives of the Porte did.

- The Ottoman system, which had been established by Sultan Suleiman and ran in accordance with the famous Qanunname, mainly aimed at securing Ottoman dominance over the province with strict control over appointments and dismissals and a large share of the annual tax revenues of the province. The Ottoman system was headed by the Pasha and protected by the Seven Regiments.

- The orthodox Islamic establishment, represented by the Ulema. The oldest and most influential Islamic institution, al-Azhar, mainly derived its power from the public. Its Ulema joined actively in the political affairs of the region and were a balancing factor as they enjoyed relative independence and always stressed their neutrality.

It seems that contemporary Egyptian society adapted itself to this system. To survive in this rather complicated conflict of institutions, further groupings and pressure groups were formed on ethnic, economic, religious, and geographical lines. Egyptian society was divided into politically influential

interest groups, such as Moroccans, Syrians, merchants, artisans, Jews, Christians, Sufis, Bedouin, peasants, and even the beggars of Cairo whose party was led by the Sheikh al-Shahhāfīn. The population of Cairo itself was divided into guilds, representing these divisions. An examination of this unique system gives the opportunity to study not only the political but also the economic, social, and cultural aspects of Egypt under Ottoman rule. The various institutions and parties in Ottoman Egypt were involved in major conflicts. The Porte interfered to support one side against the other, in order to fuel the differences rather than to act as an arbiter.

Conflicts during this period did not aim at destroying an institution or a certain group, but rather at weakening its role and capabilities. Thus the political system was not affected. In Istanbul, Sultans, Grand Wazirs, Chief Qadis, and holders of various senior military posts were frequently removed, but the offices remained and were allocated to successors. Similarly in Egypt, Pashas, Mamluk beys, Qadis, and various other significant individuals were removed, but their posts survived.

Much recent research, which has greatly helped in presenting a clearer view of Ottoman Egypt, has divided the three-century period into centuries and half centuries, arbitrary periods which may not necessarily denote an end to a chain of events or a remarkable breakthrough in change or reform. Other studies have tended to take the whole period of Ottoman rule over Egypt for a single study, which has led to many generalizations, and a neglect of many important developments. This study aims at investigating an important and neglected period in the history of Ottoman Egypt, using new and unexploited contemporary material for this purpose.

II RECENT SCHOLARSHIP ON THE HISTORY OF OTTOMAN EGYPT

The serious study of the history of Egypt under Ottoman rule is a relatively new field of study. General interest in this nearly three-century period started to be shown in the early sixties. The primary material and archival documents for this period are still very much underused by those engaged in the recent upsurge in this field of study, and the full exploitation of these sources is far from being achieved. However, as more research and study are being dedicated towards this purpose in more recent years, the history of Ottoman Egypt is becoming clearer and thus further research is also facilitated.

The works of P.M. Holt are amongst the most significant pioneer studies on the history of Ottoman Egypt. Holt has based his studies on unexploited manuscripts in the British Library, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Österreichische National-Bibliothek in Vienna, and other university libraries. His efforts were most rewarding in unearthing relevant Arabic manuscripts in European national libraries and museums. In several conferences, articles, and other publications Holt has emphasized the necessity of studying the available manuscripts in the various libraries and archives. He has provided articles that are still regarded as a major guide to many important manuscripts, of which the most significant are ‘Ottoman Egypt: an Account of Arabic Historical Sources’ and a further article ‘The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt during the Seventeenth Century’, in which he has provided an important bibliographical introduction to the subject.

In the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (BSOAS), Holt published a series of articles on the political history of Ottoman Egypt, of which we may note especially the following:

- ‘The Exalted Lineage of Ridwān Bey.’¹

¹In BSOAS, 13/2 (1959) 222-30.

- ‘The Career of Küçük Muhammed 1676-94.’¹
- ‘Al-Jabarti's introduction to the History of Ottoman Egypt.’²

Holt's book, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516-1922 (1966), is a vital reference for the political history of this region and as editor of Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt (1968), Holt had assisted in providing an essential basis for future writings on the history of Ottoman Egypt.

The contributions of S. Shaw to the history of Ottoman Egypt are likewise of vital importance. The most remarkable of his works is The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt 1517-1798 (1962), a pioneer work based on the archives of Cairo and Istanbul, as is reflected in his contributions on the economic aspects of Ottoman Egypt. Shaw has also produced a number of valuable articles on the Ottoman Archives, of which the most significant are the following:

- ‘Cairo Archives and the History of Ottoman Egypt.’³
- ‘The Ottoman Archives as a Source for Egyptian History.’⁴
- ‘Turkish Source Material for Egyptian History.’⁵

He has also worked on the translation and publication of some primary sources. His book Ottoman Egypt in the Age of the French Revolution, published in 1964, is based on the writings of Husni Efendi Ruznameji in 1798, explaining the various economic and administrative aspects of Egypt under Ottoman rule. He has also published Ottoman Egypt in the Eighteenth Century (1962), which is a translation of a Turkish document by Ahmed Pasha Jazzar.

¹In BSOAS, 26/2 (1963) 21-8.

²In BSOAS, 25/1 (1962) 38-51.

³In Journal of the Middle East Institute (Spring, 1956).

⁴In JAOS, 33 (1963)447-52.

⁵In P.M. Holt (ed.), Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt (London, 1968) 28-48.

Andre Raymond has also made some important contributions to the study of Ottoman Egypt and Cairo in particular. In the years 1962-1969 he published a series of articles in the Bulletin of the Institut d'Archéologie du Caire, which were later gathered in a book and translated into Arabic. Two other books by Raymond written originally in French were also translated into Arabic: Le Caire (1993) and Grandes Villes Arabes à l'Epoque Ottomane (1985). He also published several articles on the history of Ottoman Cairo, including: 'The Ottoman Conquest and the Development of Great Arab Towns',¹ and 'The Opuscul of Sheikh 'Ali Al-Shadhili: a Source for the History of the 1711 Crisis in Cairo.'² Raymond saw in Cairo a centre of a civilization and the capital of an important Ottoman province. He emphasized the significance of this city in the history of Egypt as a whole, noting particularly the fact that Cairo was known by historians of that time as Misr (Egypt). Raymond based his studies on important chronicles and unexploited manuscripts, and made extensive use of the archives of Cairo.

A more recent worker in the field of study and research in the history of Ottoman Egypt is M. Winter, who published some articles in the 1980s, concentrating on the religious and social aspects of Ottoman Egypt. His articles include the following: 'The Islamic Profile and Religious Policy of the Ruling Class in Ottoman Egypt',³ and 'The Ashrāf and Niqabat al-Ashrāf in Egypt in Ottoman and Modern Times.'⁴

A notable addition to these articles is his book Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt (1982), and his most recent monograph Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule 1517-1798, published in 1992.

¹In International Journal of Turkish Studies, 1/1 (1979-80) 84-101.

²In D. Crecelius (ed.), Eighteenth Century Egypt (Los Angeles, 1990) 25-38.

³In Israel Oriental Studies, 10 (1980) 132-45.

⁴In Asian and African Studies, 19 (1985) 17-41.

D. Crecelius of California State University, Los Angeles, has published many studies in the form of books, articles, and conference papers, which taken together form a major contribution to the history of Ottoman Egypt. His works on Waqf documents in Cairo are of great importance, most notably the following:

- Index of Waqfyat from the Ottoman period (1992).
- ‘The Organization of Waqf Documents in Cairo.’¹
- ‘The Waqf of Muhammed Bey Abu Al-Dahab in Historical Respective.’²
- ‘Archival Sources for Demographic Studies of the Middle East.’³

He achieved scholarly recognition for the publication in 1981 of his monograph The Roots of Modern Egypt, and, in 1991, for his translation, in collaboration with A. Bakr, of al-Damurdashi’s Chronicle of Egypt. He is also the editor of Eighteenth Century Egypt (1990) a very useful collection of studies in Arabic manuscript sources for the history of Egypt in the eighteenth century.

Another significant recent researcher is Jane Hathaway who also contributed to the study of Ottoman Egypt. Amongst her important articles are, ‘The Role of the Kizlar Ağasi in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Ottoman Egypt’,⁴ and ‘Sultans, Pashas, Taqwims and Muhimmes: a reconsideration of chronicle writing in eighteenth century Ottoman Egypt’⁵. Her latest publication is, The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis (Cambridge, CUP, 1997).

¹In International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 2 (1971) 266-277.

²In International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 23 (1991) 57-81.

³In A.L. Udovitch (ed.), The Islamic Middle East 700-1900 (Princeton, 1981) 349-374.

⁴ In Studa Islamica, Ex fasciculo, 125 (Paris) 141-158.

⁵ In D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt (Los Angeles, 1990) 51-78.

Alongside the developing school of Ottoman Egypt historians in the West, a new generation of Egyptian historians began to emerge from the universities of Cairo, Ain Shams, al-Azhar, Alexandria, and elsewhere. These historians benefited from the fact that Middle Eastern governments had at last begun to reorganize and open up for use their extensive archival materials. During the 1930s archive staff in Istanbul began the work of housing, organizing, and cataloguing the records that had accumulated there, with the result that after a considerable time, scholars and research students were able to make use of these records in Istanbul. Several studies were made, describing the Ottoman Central Archives as a source for Egyptian history under Ottoman rule, of which the most remarkable were those by Bernard Lewis, in the University of Ain Shams, May 1977, and articles published by S. Shaw that have been mentioned above.

The same process took a little longer in the case of Egyptian archives. After the revolution of July 1952 and the fall of King Faruq, the archives were closed for two years. Then a law was decreed with regard to forming a Central Archive to contain all records of previous governments in Egypt. The law of 1954 indicated that the Central Archives Dār al-Wathā'iq should be opened to the public for the purpose of study, research, and publication of the available documents.¹ Despite the many restrictions placed on the use of these archives, Egyptian and foreign scholars were able to make use of first-class material that became the basis for studies on Ottoman Egypt.

As early as May 1936, a prominent Egyptian historian of Cairo University, M.S. Ghorbal, published an article in the Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts which was the first study of the manuscript of Hussein Efendi, reproduced

¹M.A. Hammūdah, al-Madkhal ilā dirāsāt al-wathā'iq al-‘Arabyyah (Cairo, 1984) 119-142.

by S. Shaw in 1964. H. ‘Uthmān and M. Tawfīq published one of the earliest works on the history of Ottoman Egypt. It was based on Turkish defters kept in the Dār al-Mahfūzāt and was entitled ‘Egypt in the Ottoman Era 1517-1798’ forming a chapter in a concise history of Egypt.¹ In the 1940s, M. Tawfīq also published some articles in al-Hilāl magazine and the Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University, describing the Egyptian archives. In 1950 M.R. Ramadān published his book ‘Alī Bey Al-Kabīr, originally an M.A. thesis in Cairo University, which was regarded as one of the very rare attempts to make use of the Egyptian archives and the collections of the untouched Turkish manuscripts available in Cairo. Later, in 1956, M. Sharqāwi published the first edition of his three-volume Egypt in the Eighteenth Century.² This book depended heavily on al-Jabarti’s ‘Ajā’ib al-Āthār, summarizing selected parts of it and reorganizing it on the basis of subject rather than the events of successive years.

M. Anis gave a series of lectures in Cairo University in 1962 on the school of Egyptian historians under the Ottomans, following his 1951 Ph.D. thesis submitted to Liverpool University entitled The Developments of British Interests in Egypt in the Late Eighteenth Century. In his lectures Anis divided historians of Ottoman Egypt into the three major categories of scholars writing history in a traditional way, compilers of biographical dictionaries tarājim, and members of the military ajṅād. These lectures were published by the Institute of Arabic Studies of the Arab League. Anis's work was adopted as the basis of many later works on the history of Ottoman Egypt and was of vital importance for scholars in this field of research. In his introduction, Anis attributed the beginnings of serious studies in the history of Ottoman Egypt to Gibb and Bowen’s Islamic Society and the West, and also to the work of Holt and Shaw.

¹al-Mujmal fī al-tarikh al-Misri (Cairo, 1942) 231-248.

²M. Sharqāwi (Cairo, 1956).

He divided the sources for the history of Egypt in this period into three major categories, viz:

- Documents in Egyptian, Turkish, and European national archives (concerning which Anis provided summaries and descriptions); the accounts of travelers who visited Ottoman Egypt and wrote descriptions of their journeys, of whom the most notable were French scholars who came with the invasion of 1798, and the narratives of Arab and Turkish historians who wrote various chronicles and accounts of events occurring in different periods of the Ottoman suzerainty over Egypt.

Anis was followed by another generation of Egyptian historians who made major contributions to the history of Ottoman Egypt. The most notable of these are A.A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm and L. ‘Abd al-Latīf of al-Azhar University in Cairo. ‘Abd al-Rahīm published many articles in English and in Arabic, including ‘Hazz al-quhūf’,¹ ‘Kashf al-kurbah fī raf‘ al-talbah’,² and ‘Bulūgh al-arab fī raf‘ al-tulab’.³

He has published many books on rural Egypt, on the Moroccans in Egypt, and on the judicial system in Ottoman Egypt. ‘Abd al-Rahīm has been concerned with the study and publication of manuscripts. Through the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, he has published for the first time editions of two manuscript histories of Ottoman Egypt: Tarājim al-sawā‘iq fī wāqi‘at al-sanājiq in 1986, and al-Durrah al-musanah fī akhbār al-kinānah in 1988. He also published a third manuscript in 1987, Awdah al-ishārāt, all of these on Egypt in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

¹In JESHO 18/3 (1975) 245-270.

²In al-Majallah al-Tārīkhyyah al-Misryyah, 23 (1976).

³In al-Majallah al-Tārīkhyyah al-Misryyah, 24 (1977).

L. ‘Abd al-Latīf has also published several books on the history of Ottoman Egypt of which the most important are the following:

- The Administration of Ottoman Egypt (1978).
- Studies in the History and Historians of Egypt and Syria under the Ottomans (1980).
- Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule (1987).
- Al-Sa‘īd fī ‘Ahd Sheikh al-‘Arab Humām (1987).

In 1980 she also published an edition of Ahmad al-Rashidi’s Husn al-Safā Wa al-Ibtihāj. Both A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm and L. ‘Abd al-Latīf based their studies on many unexploited manuscripts, and various sijills and defters in the archives of Cairo.

More work on the history of Egypt under Ottoman rule has been published in recent years than ever before. Many scholars and research students are directing their studies towards exploiting the primary sources in the various archives of Ottoman Egypt. There exists a considerable number of unpublished works that have already been finished, and new generations of researchers in the history of Ottoman Egypt are carrying on further research, which eventually will find its way into publication.

Recent writings on the history of Ottoman Egypt have covered almost all the aspects of the period. In addition, research and study has been undertaken on the various historians of Ottoman Egypt. Much has also been published about Ottoman Egypt’s economic history, including explanation of defters, annual incomes, the iltizam system, awqāf organization, and the incomes of the rural areas to the north and south of Cairo. There have also been publications on Cairo itself as a capital and a city of domination and influence, mainly by Raymond, Jumar, and U.Volkof. The religious and ethnic minorities have received the attention of various scholars including M. Winter, M. ‘Afifi, and

‘Azbāwī. Religious institutions, the history of al-Azhar, and Sufism have also been studied in detail, as have the social aspects, the judicial system, the Bedouin and the Hajj route. Despite these recent publications, however, many of them are of very limited distribution. Nevertheless, judging by the volume of this recent research it seems clear that Ottoman Egypt is now receiving more attention, as it gradually proves to be a rewarding topic. Not only historical, but also cultural, architectural, and scientific aspects of Ottoman Egypt are being studied and reconsidered, as more material shows an Ottoman Egypt very different from what it was once thought to be. However, compared to its dominant position and vital importance, very little recent research has been directed towards the political aspects of Ottoman Egypt. Recognizing its importance, Holt has concentrated his attention on the political history of Ottoman Egypt in his articles on the beylicate, Ridwān Bey, Küçük Muhammed, and his general political history of Egypt and the Fertile Crescent. His example has been followed only by a handful of scholars, such as L. ‘Abd al-Latīf, who wrote on the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt, and A. Bakr, who produced a monograph on the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Egypt in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹ Some few additional articles have also been published in recent years dealing with the political system of ottoman Egypt, such as G. Piterberg’s ‘The Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian Elite in the Eighteenth Century’,² and the articles of J. Hathaway.

Much work remains to be done on the role of the Sultan in Istanbul, on the decline of the Pasha’s power in Cairo, and the relationship between Istanbul and Cairo. The functions of the Council, Dīwān, the political role of the Ulema,

¹A. Bakr al-Dawlah al-‘Uthmāniyyah wa Misr (Cairo, 1982).

²In International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 22 (1990) 275-89.

various conflicts between different forces in the political field, and many other topics have not yet been fully considered by recent research.

It may also be noted that most of the research on the political history of Ottoman Egypt is rather too general in subject or in time. Not many issues in the political history of Ottoman Egypt have been studied in detail, as most of the studies in political history tend to cover the three-century period, or at least one or two centuries of Egypt's history under Ottoman rule. This generalizing approach most often restricts research to the very major points, without touching on the particulars that ought to be considered, and does not allow for many important events to be discussed or covered by such studies. Moreover, there is still very little attempt to write the political history of Ottoman Egypt in the light of sources which have recently appeared and are still unexploited. Many of the earlier studies relied heavily on a limited number of sources, which most often led to a repetition of many of the traditional stories of that time that have very little solid basis of support.

III. ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Recent research has concentrated more on the archival material than on literary manuscript sources. These extensive records kept in national archive repositories are preserved in the form of collections of defters and include much material relating to social and economic matters. Financial records, court registers, waqf documents, family papers, and other material are among the priceless collections in the archives of Cairo and Istanbul. They have been taken as the basis of the majority of recent works on Ottoman Egypt. Archival materials are regarded as very important in view of the fact that they provide more details, statistics, and solid material than do manuscript sources. Iltizam defters, qadi court sijills, and other collections include accounts of everyday life in Ottoman Egypt covering all classes of Egyptian society. Much archival material on Ottoman Egypt has been carefully studied and published in books and articles. Ways of reading, understanding, and exploiting these documents have also been thoroughly explained. Usage of the Ottoman archives in Cairo and Istanbul is becoming easier as more work is done on them, and research students gain increased ability in reading the texts.

Despite their importance and value, there have been many criticisms concerning apparent limitations to the use of archival documents as an independent source for the history of Ottoman Egypt. Research students and Ottomanists have faced serious problems in relying upon these archival collections for their studies of Ottoman Egypt, among them the following:

- Sijills and defters were written by and restricted to a limited number of officials. They were not compiled for usage by the general public. Indeed, to ensure a degree of secrecy in these records, they were written in the Qirma script (also called, Siyakat), which is very difficult to read or understand. This

type of script was extensively used in Ruzname defters and continued to be used until it was cancelled in 1280/1834 and replaced by simple Arabic script. Reading these defters is not impossible, but a long time is required for the decoding of much of their terminology, which makes it very difficult to go through many defters or sijills in the limited time available to a research student. Exploitation of this material requires specialists with various linguistic and paleographic skills to decipher these writings.

- Despite some few limited attempts, a complete indexing of the various collections is far from being achieved. Research students have to rely on some very few published indexes, covering a very small part of the available collections. Many of these indexes are handwritten and, in some instances, are inaccurate. A large amount of documents remains unexploited and unavailable for research because they have not yet been properly indexed. Slow development and lack of funds add to the problems and cause further deterioration. While the aim of Dār al-Wathā'iq was established in 1954, to collect all the material relating to Egypt's history from the various places where collections exist, this goal has not yet been achieved. In addition to Dār al-Wathā'iq, further archival material is also available in Dār al-Mahfūzāt near the citadel, the Shari'a Court sijills in the al-Shahr al-'Aqāri building, the Ministry of Awqaf, which has a major archive and many other places too. The process of transferring these collections to Dār al-Wathā'iq is rather slow, and the transferred material is not made available to the public for a long time afterwards.

- Corruption, which spread widely in the centre of the Ottoman Empire and its provinces, puts much of the statistics and information in the documents under serious question. These documents were issued by a centralist bureaucracy and

written by officials not likely to be in touch with the public if compared to chronicles composed by Egyptians writing in Arabic or Turkish.

- The earliest attempt to reorganize the various archive collections in Cairo was first made in 1925 by order of King Fu'ad. The main object then was to index and study material from the time of Muhammed 'Ali Pasha down to 1914. Documents were collected in the 'Abidīn Palace in 1933 under the supervision of Jean Deny who wrote a description of this collection: Sommaire des Archives turques du Caire. This may explain why there is more material in Dār al-Wathā'iq on the later period of Egypt's modern history than on the early Ottoman period. While this may be regarded as a major set-back for the value of Egypt's national archives in providing documents on the Ottoman period, on the other hand it may explain why recent research based on the Egyptian archives has concentrated mainly on the second half of the eighteenth century and the following century. For the earlier period many collections of defters and sijills are missing and incomplete. Examples of these groups from the period of study (1099-1143/1687-1730) are as follows:

a- Mizān Ruznāmeji (income of Khazna): there exist only six annual sijills for a period of forty-four years; these are for the years 1107,1114,1120,1139,1140, and 1143. The remainder are missing.

b- Ruzname, Īradāt wa Masrūfāt (income and expenditure): only three sijills exist for the period of study. These are the sijills of the years 1111,1117, and 1136.

c- Ruzname, Murattabāt Ojaqāt (ojaqs salaries): only ten out of forty-four sijills are available, while the rest are missing. The sijills available are those for the years 1120,1127,1128,1129,1131,1132,1140,1141,1142, and 1143.

d- Ruzname, Hisabāt Wazir Misr (Wazirs' annual accounts): in this very important collection only one budget is available relating to the period of study, the one for the year 1110.

e- Sijills of the al-Dīwān al-‘Āli, which is a vital source for information on the political history of the period. All the sijills for the period of study are missing and nobody knows their whereabouts.

Thus, the Egyptian archives cannot provide the relevant statistics and information for the whole period of Ottoman Egypt. Many documents (up to 60% at some estimates) are missing for unknown reasons. The credibility of available documents is also put in question, and the archival material lacks the continuity which manuscript sources provide for the history of Ottoman Egypt. This leads us to the conclusion that the Egyptian archives alone cannot function as an independent reliable source for research into this period, and study of Ottoman Egypt cannot be carried out without reference to manuscript sources alongside the national archives.

Arabic and Turkish manuscripts are therefore the primary sources for studies of the earliest period in the history of Ottoman Egypt. They continue to be vital for any study on this period. In 1968, in his article ‘Ottoman Egypt 1517-1798: an Account of Arabic Historical Sources’, P.M. Holt was the first to survey manuscript histories of Ottoman Egypt, and to conclude that these histories “have not yet been adequately evaluated and their full exploitation is still far in the future. Very little has been published nor has much work been done on the manuscript sources”.¹ It was not until the 1980s that Holt’s

¹In P.M. Holt, Studies in the History of the Near East (London, 1973) 3.

remarks began to receive the attention of some scholars, and works on manuscripts began to appear, mainly by A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm, D. Crecelius, L. ‘Abd al-Latīf, A. Raymond, and few other historians who made some important contributions in this field. In 1990 a conference, organized by D. Crecelius, was held at California State University and attended by nine scholars who presented papers on the manuscript histories of Egypt in the eighteenth century. One of the major objectives of the conference was “to bring to the attention of the scholarly world the rich range of still unexploited manuscript sources for the eighteenth century”.¹ About fourteen published and unpublished manuscripts were studied in nine articles, but there are still further unexploited manuscripts for this period. The conference proved that Ottoman domination did not put an end to the writing of history in Egypt, as some scholars had earlier asserted. It also helped to raise the issue of manuscript histories for further attention and research.

¹D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt, (Los Angeles, 1990) 3.

IV-LITERARY HISTORICAL SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF EGYPT 1099-1143/1687-1730

It is rather surprising to discover that in the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 contemporary historians and travelers wrote so many manuscript histories. Most of these works are still unexploited. The following manuscripts could well form the basis for a different approach to the history of Ottoman Egypt in this rather neglected period.

1- PUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

a- ‘Abd al-Rahmān al- Jabarti, ‘Ajā’ib al-āthār fī al-tarājim wal ’akhbār,¹

This is the most famous account of the history of Egypt in the eighteenth century, and has been the basis of many studies on the history of Egypt for three periods: Ottoman rule, the French occupation, and the rule of Muhammed ‘Ali Pasha, ending in 1236/1821. Al-Jabarti made reference to all classes of society including the Ulema, Mamluks, and notable merchants. The book gives attention to the tarājim (biographies), but also provides a historical account of events at the time. For the early part of the eighteenth century al-Jabarti had to rely on earlier sources such as Awdah al-ishārāt by Ahmad Shalabi and Tuhfat al-ahbāb by Yūsuf al-Malwāni. The first study on A appeared in a three-volume book in 1957 by A. Sharqāwi, who was followed in 1960 by D. Ayalon, who regarded al-Jabarti as “the greatest of modern Arab historians”.²

This was followed by a study on the sources of al-Jabarti’s introduction to the history of Egypt by P.M. Holt,³ and an article by Crecelius on the sources of A

¹The edition of this text, published in Cairo 1880, will subsequently be referred to as ‘A’.

²D. Ayalon, ‘Studies in al-Jabarti’, Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient 3/2 (1960) 218.

³ P.M. Holt “Al-Jabarti’s introduction to the History of Ottoman Egypt”, in Holt, Studies in the History of the Near East (London, 1973) 161-177.

for the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹ Over thirty-five articles on al-Jabarti and his book, written in Arabic, English, or French, were collected in one volume and published by the Egyptian Ministry of Culture in 1976. In 1990 the works of al-Jabarti were re-evaluated in a conference held in California State University, organized by D. Crecelius, who argued that “the uniqueness of al-Jabarti’s ‘Ajā’ib al-Āthār is reduced by the revelation of the massive borrowings he made from earlier chronicles without attribution.”² However A remains a unique and useful source mainly for the biographical details relating to notables, which earlier chronicles did not pay much attention to.

b-Al-Damurdāshi, Al-Durrah al-musānah fī akhbār al-Kinanah 1100-1169/1688-1755³

This consists of a group of manuscripts available in the following libraries: (1) Vienna, National Bibliothek, MS Hist. Osm. 38; (2) Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bruce 43; (3) London, British Museum, MS Or 1073-4; (4) Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, MS Tarīkh 4048; and (5) Munich, Staatsbibliothek, cod. Arab 399.

A. Bakr studied the interrelationships among this group of manuscripts in a conference paper in which he concluded that there was a common ancestry or relationship among them.⁴ ‘Abd al-Rahīm compared copies of these manuscripts, prepared and an annotated edition of the work, which was published in 1988 by the Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale du Caire. The text was translated into English and annotated by Crecelius and Bakr in 1991. The authors of these works belonged to the military class of the ‘Azebān Regiment and thus this history is attributed to the school of ajṅād . M. Anis

¹ In D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt (Los Angeles, 1990) 89-102.

²ibid., p. 5.

³subsequently referred to as ‘D’.

⁴A. Bakr, ‘Interrelationships among the Damurdashi Group of Manuscripts’. In D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt. 79-88.

referred to D, in lectures given in 1962, as an important source for the history of Egypt in the eighteenth century, and emphasized its importance in providing political, economic, and social information. Despite the valuable information D provides, the chronicle - or group of chronicles - has been criticized for its poor quality, extensive use of colloquial Arabic, and the lack of historical skills displayed by the writers. In his articles 'The Career of Küçük Muhammed', and 'Account of Arabic Historical Sources', Holt referred to these manuscripts which he called "The Damurdashi Group". He compared the copies in Vienna, Oxford, and London and concluded, "These chronicles contain many reported speeches, conveying the impression of inside knowledge, but again this is probably a literary device. There is probably a saga element in these chronicles and the data they appear to provide should be used with caution."¹

Without mentioning the name of the author or making reference to the title al-Jabarti relied heavily on the accounts of al-Damurdashi, and used him as a major source for the early part of his 'Ajā'ib al-Āthār'. Creelius carefully traced this dependence in his article 'Ahmad Shalabi ibn 'Abd al-Ghani and Ahmad Katkhuda 'Azaban al-Damurdashi: Two Sources for al-Jabarti's 'Aja'ib al-Athar fi al-Tarajim wa al-Akhbar', in Eighteenth Century Egypt (89-102).

c- Ahmad Shalabi 'Abd al-Ghani's Awdah al-ishārāt²

Ahmad Shalabi was a Sufi, regarded as one of the Ulema, and his father was a prominent Sheikh in al-Azhar. The manuscript starts with the term of Khair Bey in 923/1517 and goes down to 1150/1737. Holt referred to it briefly in his 'Ottoman Egypt: an Account of Arabic Historical Sources', but at the time that article appeared it was still unpublished. A. 'Abd al-Rahīm studied and annotated the manuscript copy of the text in the library of Yale University and

¹P.M. Holt (ed.), Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt (London, 1968) 3-12.

²subsequently referred to as 'AI'.

published the text in Cairo in 1978. It is of great value for the history of Egypt during the period under study, as it was composed by a contemporary. Shalabi wrote AI upon request from friends. It was compiled in chronological order, as is shown by its accuracy and frequent references to other sources. AI itself was a major source for 'Ajā'ib al-Āthār. Al-Jabarti mentions it as a reference which he later lost when it was borrowed by a friend of his. It is a basic reference for any study of this period and is of vital importance for the political events in the period under study.

d- Al-Murādi, Silk al-durar fī a'yān al-qarn al-thāni 'ashar¹

This is a major source, used by compilers of biographical dictionaries, for persons of the twelfth century AH. Al-Murādi died in 1206/1791 at the age of 32 and had a close connection with al-Jabarti. He was a Syrian and his father was a Hanafi scholar. His book included biographies of many Egyptian notables. Three volumes of S were published in 1291/1873 in Istanbul, while the fourth volume was published in Cairo in 1301/1883. Al-Jabarti knew of al-Murādi's biographical dictionary but did not know what happened to it after al-Murādi's death. M. Anis referred to S in his 1962 lectures as an example of manuscript sources containing biographies of persons who lived during this period.

e- 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nābulsi's al-Haqiqah wal Majāz²

This text, a manuscript copy of which in 246 folios is kept in Cairo (Dār al-Kutub, MS 344 Geography), is Sheikh al-Nabulsi's (1050/1641-1143/1730) account of his travels through Syria, Egypt, and the Hijaz. When the Ottoman Empire incorporated Arab provinces under its rule, vast areas of land were made into one single country. In Mamluk times, Crusaders, Mongols, and

¹Subsequently referred to as 'S'.

²Subsequently referred to as 'H'.

various Shi‘i sects had been actively engaged in violence in Egypt and Syria, making those places unsafe for travelers, but the situation improved under the Ottomans, so that the idea of travel flourished all around the Empire, resulting in many people compiling travel accounts and descriptions of various cities and provinces. This journey of al-Nabulsi is also referred to as al-rihla al-kubra (the great journey); it began in Muharram 1105/ September 1693 and ended in Safar 1106/ September 1694. He completed writing the account in 1110/1698. Al-Nabulsi was a prominent Sufi Sheikh with a wide reputation in the Ottoman Empire. He lived in Damascus and had many students from Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia. His writings exceeded 300 titles. Al-Jabarti wrote about him in his biographies in ‘Ajā’ib al-Āthār (1/232). The titles of his works are listed in Hadiyat al-Ārifīn,¹ which includes mention of all his travel accounts. Al-Nabulsi spent 83 days in Egypt, which occupy the middle section of his book. The Egyptian part is very informative and detailed. It reflects everyday life with reference to social, economic, and political aspects. The main purpose of al-Nabulsi's journey to Egypt was to visit the various mosques and graves of pious people. The Egyptian section of H starts with Khan Yunis, after Gaza, as the first town in Egypt. Al-Nabulsi’s account is very detailed.

Many of al-Nabulsi’s works have been published, but H has not yet received the attention it is due by historians of Ottoman Egypt. In an article written by ‘Abd al-Karīm Rāfiq of the University of Damascus, entitled ‘Syrian Manuscript Sources for the History of Eighteenth-Century Egypt’² some details are given concerning the travel account of al-Nabulsi and its importance. Rāfiq mentions that parts of H were published in Damascus in 1881-2, and in Cairo in 1906-7, but he adds that “it has not been used to any

¹Al-Baghdāi, Hadiyat al-‘Arifīn, 1/590-594.

²In D. Crecelius (ed.), Eighteenth Century Egypt (Los Angeles, 1990) 103-114.

great extent in studies on Egypt.”¹ In 1986 the Ministry of Culture in Egypt published the manuscript in facsimile with an introduction and an index to the whole travel account by A. Haridi. For the period of study, H is an important resource and should be considered for future research in the history of Ottoman Egypt.

f- Sheikh Ahmad al-Rashīdī’s Husn al-safā wal ibtihāj bi thikri man wlia imārat al-hājj

Al-Rashīdī died in 1178/1764, but the work was continued down to 1197/1782. A copy is to be found in Cairo (Dār al-Kutub, 5559 Tarīkh). Al-Rashīdī, regarded as one of the Ulema, wrote about the office of Amīr al-Hājj, which was one of the important offices in the Egyptian political system. Al-Rashīdī went on the pilgrimage several times and witnessed many of the events which he recorded in his book, while he referred to earlier sources for the period that he did not witness, including the works of al-Suyūṭī, al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Iyās, Ibn Zunbul, and al-Ishāqī. This book was studied and annotated by Layla ‘Abd al-Latīf, for its publication in Cairo in 1980, but has not yet been fully exploited. It has rarely been used in recent studies on the history of Ottoman Egypt. The book starts with the very early days of the pilgrimage, but concentrates more on the pilgrimage route (from Egypt to Mecca) and its organization under the Ottomans. It is a good source for events in Jeddah, Mecca and Medina, as well as for the history of Egypt. Attacks by the Bedouin, and their suppression by the Amīr al-Hājj is an important aspect of Egypt during the period of study.

g- Isma‘īl al-Khashshāb, Akhbār ahl al-qarn al-ṭhanī ‘ashar

Manuscript copies of this text are to be found in Cairo (Dār al-Kutub, 2148 Tarīkh Tal‘at, and 2107 Tarīkh Taymūr) and in Paris (1858 Arabe). The text

¹ibid., p. 104.

was briefly mentioned in Holt's article on Arabic sources. Contained in twenty-six folios, the manuscript contains a very brief history of Egypt from 1120/1708 down to the French invasion in 1213/1798. Al-Khashshab had an early religious education and was a friend of al-Jabarti, who wrote his biography when al-Kashshāb died in 1230/1815. The history was only published in 1990 in Cairo by A. Jamaluddin and I. Abu Ghāzi. It is very brief and misses out important events, but it does give some idea of the political conditions in Egypt. It also pays particular attention to the role of the Ulema and could be useful if used with other, more reliable sources.

h- Hussein Efendi Ruznameji's Tartīb al-diyār al-Misrīyah fī al-‘ahd al-‘Uthmāni

A manuscript copy is kept in Cairo (Dār al-Kutub, 1152 Tarīkh Taymūr). It has been published twice: in 1936 by Shafīq Ghorbāl in the Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of Cairo University, and in a book by Stanford Shaw in 1964. The book is a set of answers to questions posed by French officials to Hussein Efendi, in seventy-five pages. Topics include the political system of Ottoman Egypt, its governors, the military and judicial systems, Egyptian provinces, and the iltizam system. This work provides a general view of the Ottoman political and administrative systems in Egypt, and could be a useful source for those aspects in the period under study.

i- Sheikh ‘Ali al-Shādhili's Dhikr ma waqa‘a bayna ‘asākir Misr al-mahrūsah¹

An edition of the manuscript (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 367 Tarīkh Taymūr) was published in al-Majallah al-Tarīkhiyyah al-Misriyyah by A.Tulaymat.² This source deals only with the 1123/1711 crisis, which continued for seventy days, causing much destruction and suffering in Cairo. Al-Shadhili wrote his account

¹ Subsequently referred to as 'SH'.

²14 (1968) 321-403.

as an eyewitness and reported the roles played by the military regiments, the Pasha, the Ulema, the Mamluk beys and the Bedouin who came from the provinces of Egypt to join in alliances and battles. This source is an important and detailed account for an event that took place in the period of this study. An article was written on this manuscript by A. Raymond, entitled 'The Opusculé of Sheikh 'Ali al-Shādhili: A source for the History of the 1711 crisis in Cairo'.¹

¹In D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt (Los Angeles, 1990) 25-38.

2- UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

There are still many unpublished chronicles, biographical dictionaries, and other manuscript sources in the national libraries of Cairo, Istanbul, and European capitals. These manuscripts have not yet been considered, studied, or even recognized by recent researchers. The following manuscripts are some of the very important but unexploited sources for the history of the period 1099/1687-1143/1730. The existence of some of the manuscripts in London and Cairo has not yet been made known, nor have any studies been based on them.

a- Zubdat al-ikhtisār, an anonymous text (London, British Library, Add. 9972)¹

This is a chronicle of Ottoman Egypt, which begins with the regime of Khair Bey in 923/1517 and goes down to 1111/1699, with an additional entry for 1113/1701-2. It is not clear whether the name, ‘Ali ibn Ridwān, at the front of the chronicle is that of the author or the copyist. Another name, Hajj Mustafa al-Halabi also appears on the first page. The introduction is different both in handwriting and style, from the rest of the chronicle. It is also noticeable that the chronicle has been revised and additional information added in the margins. It consists of forty-one folios in a tiny script. It seems that the only historian to have taken notice of this chronicle is Holt, who wrote about it in his survey of Arabic manuscript sources for the history of Ottoman Egypt, where he concluded “It is a most valuable source for the last decades of the seventeenth-century.”² Holt also used ZI as one of the major sources for his writings on the career of Küçük Muhammed and the beylicate in Ottoman Egypt during the seventeenth century. In comparison with other contemporary sources, Holt argued that ZI is an independent source, although it has some similarities with

¹Subsequently referred to as ‘ZI’.

²P.M Holt, Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt (London, 1968) 155.

other chronicles, such as Awdah al-ishārāt, but clearly ZI is an earlier source than Ahmad Shalabi's, and is more detailed in the later part of the period it covers. Holt also noticed that much of its later data are clearly the jottings of a contemporary. It may also be clearly observed that the author was an eyewitness of many of the later events. He also mentions being told by someone else about those later incidents that he did not personally witness.

ZI pays most attention to political events in Egypt and also to major crises such as droughts, the Nile's inundation, weather changes, and other natural phenomena. There are no biographies of notables as in other works such as those of al-Jabarti and al-Murādi, and the author pays more attention to events rather than to people. If it is to be classified, ZI is more in the style of compositions by ajnād (military officials) who wrote on the history of Egypt. The author gives quite abundant information about events inside the Citadel and the Pasha's court, and the various activities of the seven regiments. Very little is given about life in Cairo itself, which suggests that the author spent more time in the Citadel than in Cairo. For details of the political system of Ottoman Egypt, ZI is an important resource.

b- Jād Allah al-Ghunaymī's al-Durr al-nadīr fī adab al-wazīr, (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 1655, and 3549 Ādāb)¹

This manuscript consists of forty-two folios. It was completed in 1101/1689 by Al-Ghunaymī, who was a prominent scholar of his time. His writings vary between literature and philosophy. The dates of both his birth and death are unknown, but it is clearly indicated that he wrote DN in 1101/1689. He also wrote another book on theology in 1155/1742.² DN was presented to Ahmad Pasha, the Wazir of Egypt from Muharram 1101 to Jumada II 1102/ October

¹Subsequently referred to as 'DN'.

²Al-Baghdadi, Hadiyat al-'arifin, 1/249.

1689 to March 1691. The motive behind writing this book was indicated by the author; he refers to a prophetic tradition that at the beginning of each century a reformer would come to reform what has been corrupted. Al-Ghunaymī presented this book to the Pasha hoping that he would be the reformer of the twelfth century, which started with his reign. Ahmad Pasha was known for his piety and is most remembered for rebuilding the famous al-Mu'ayyad mosque in Cairo.¹ He was also involved in fighting the Bedouin, who caused many problems in the provinces. He died in office in 1691, which was not common for Pashas in Egypt, who generally were either dismissed or overthrown. Al-Ghunaymī divided his book into an introduction, two chapters, and an ending. He discusses attributes of the Wazirs, relations between kings and their Wazirs, types of Wizarats and differences between one and another. DN also discusses the way in which a Wazir should deal with his subjects, with a large chapter on justice. The text is full of traditions and stories from the days of the Persians, the Umayyads, and the Abbasids. There is not much reference in the work to current political issues of the time, but it is very important for the following reasons:

- The manuscript of al-Ghunaymī contains much material on political theory and legislation. It dates from a time for which very little documentary material is available on these issues. This manuscript could be regarded as the first work of an 'ālim providing information on the political and legislative bases of Egypt as a province governed by a Wazir.
- This book also gives many clues on the relations between the Pasha and the Ulema, and the ideal view as suggested by al-Ghunaymī. It also reflects views of the Ulema on the ruling class and how an ideal Islamic government should conduct itself.

¹A. Shalabi, *Awdah al-Isharāt* (Cairo 1987) 184.

- Very little writing on these issues existed in Egypt at that time owing to changes in officials' status and in administration. Thus, for the political system of Ottoman Egypt, DN is a vital source.

This manuscript has not yet been studied, nor has there been any known attempt to use this source for research into this period with which we are concerned.

c- Mustafa al-Bakri's al-Nihla al-nasrīyah fī al-rihlah al-Misrīyah (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Geography 651 Mājamī').¹

This manuscript consists of eighty-five folios, containing a report on a journey made to Egypt in 1132/1719, by Mustafa al-Bakri (1099-1162/1687-1749), a well-known Sufi Sheikh, who was born in Damascus, and made during his lifetime several journeys to Aleppo, Jerusalem, Baghdad, Constantinople, the Hijaz, and Egypt. Several years after the journey recounted in the text, he came back to live in Egypt and died in Cairo in 1162/1749. In his dictionary of authors, Hadīyat al-'arifīn, al-Baghdādi mentions over 100 titles of books which al-Bakri composed during his lifetime, most of which are on Sufi themes, and religious matters.² Al-Ziriklī refers to large volume containing the collection of al-Bakri's travel accounts but makes no mention of where this volume is to be found.³ Mustafa al-Bakri started his journey in Shawwāl 1132/1719, accompanying Wazir Rajab Pasha, the governor of Aleppo, who was going to Egypt to become the Wazir appointed by the Porte. Al-Bakri describes the journey with the Wazir as it began in Jerusalem and proceeded via Gaza. Soldiers from Egypt went to accompany the Wazir during his journey for his protection. He also describes the large house of a Mamluk, Muhammed Bey Abu al-Shawārib. He then describes Cairo as it was when he arrived there.

¹ Subsequently referred to as 'NN'.

² Al-Baghdadi, Hadīyat al-'arifīn 2/446-50.

³ Al-Zirikli, al-A'lam, 8/141. See also al-Murādi, Silk al-durar, 4/190-200, and al-Jabarti, 1/165.

This travel account includes the names of places and mosques visited by the author, and there were many references to qādīs and Sheikhs whom he saw during his visit, with very accurate descriptions of the events he witnessed. The work also contains samples of poetry and reports of visits and discussions with scholars at various places in Cairo. Al-Bakri also had a trip on the Nile, which he describes as a horrifying journey. He also visited the northern provinces of Egypt, including, al-Mansūrah, Dimyāt and other cities. The journey was interesting and informative, although al-Bakri was more concerned about the religious places he visited. His travel account casts light on the life of Sufi Sheikhs and the Ulema, who were remarkably rich and influential. This travel account could be useful in various ways for the history of Ottoman Egypt at the time. It was written at a time when the idea of journeys within the Ottoman lands, such as the journey of Evliya Çelebi, and that of al-Nabulsi, was very much in vogue. There were also journeys to other European capitals during the reign of Ahmad III, who sent embassies to Vienna (1719-30), Paris (1721-2), Moscow (1722-3), and Poland (1730). Among the results of these embassies were the various travel accounts composed by those who joined in travels and embassies.

The travel account of al-Bakri has not yet been studied or used in any form of research on the history of Ottoman Egypt, although it is of vital importance for the period.

d-Yūsuf al-Malwānī's Tuhfat al-'ahbāb (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 5623 Tarīkh, in 403 folios).¹

No information is available on Yūsuf al-Malwānī as a scholar or a historian. His work is nevertheless one of the important sources for the period in which he lived. Al-Malwānī continued to record the events he witnessed until his

¹ Subsequently referred to as 'TA'.

death in 1131/1719 and his work was continued by Murtada al-Kurdi until the year 1136/1724. Unlike previous manuscript histories al-Malwāni divides his work into four major chapters dealing respectively with pre-Islamic Egypt, Islamic Egypt to the end of the Fatimid era, the Mamluk Sultanate from its establishment to the death of Tuman Bey and the invasion of Selim I in 1517, and the Ottoman period until 1136/1724.

The first three sections are rather concise and very general, while the last chapter occupies more than two thirds of the whole book. Al-Malwāni refers to all the major events that took place in Egypt in the political, economic, and social spheres. He also records the times of drought, famine, flood or other natural disaster that were frequent in Egypt in his days. He refers to previous sources and, for events which he did not personally witness, al-Malwāni mentions the names of people who were his informants about various incidents. Although Tuhfat al-ahbāb has not yet been published, it has been used as a major source for many recent writings on the history of Ottoman Egypt. A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm, in his article ‘Yūsuf al-Malwāni’s Tuhfat al-Ahbāb, and Ahmad Shalabi Abd al-Ghani’s Awdah al-Isharāt’,¹ compares the two chronicles and proves in various cases that al-Jabarti had copied parts of al-Malwāni's reconstruction of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from it.

e- Ibrahīm al-Sawālihi al-‘Awfi’s Tarājim al-sawā‘iq fī waqi‘at al-sanājiq
(Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 2269 Tarīkh, 244 folios; Paris 843 Arabe; Sofia A1277; and Munich Cod. Arab. 415)²

The work of al-Sawālihi focuses on the 1071/1660 crisis. An edition of the text, studied and annotated by A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm, was published in 1986 by the

¹In D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt, 39-50.

² Subsequently referred to as ‘SS’.

Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire. The text of the Dār al-Kutub manuscript, however, continues down to 1113/1701, a supplement being written by a different author, Mahmūd Ibn Muhammed. This unpublished addition is, in fact, an important source for our period of study as it contains a very rich and detailed account of everyday events in Egypt, superior in quality and quantity to ZI and AI, although surprisingly it has not received the attention of scholars and researchers of Ottoman Egypt. The manuscript reflects the political situation, various military conflicts, and the impact of these events on the capital and the rural areas of Egypt.

f- Tarīkh Mūlūk Āl ‘Uthmān wa nuwwabihim bi Misr, an anonymous text, (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 2408 Tarīkh Taymūr).

A concise history of the Ottoman Sultans and their Wazirs in Egypt, this text begins with the year 923/1517 and ends in 1129/1716, referring to each Pasha and the major political events that took place during their terms in office. No work has been done on this manuscript, nor does there exist any study of it.

There are also other important sources that could be used alongside the above-mentioned manuscripts. Ruzname sijills, containing details of incomes, annual budgets, and salaries of the military, are available for a limited number of years, and some important firmans, which are limited in number but great in value, still survive.¹ Two major waqf documents are also available for this period; these are the waqf of Amīr Mustafa Ibn Yūsuf of 1112/1700, and that of Amīr Shahīn Agha of 1129/1716.

¹Administration des Beins Privés Et Des Palais Royaux, Recueil De Firmans Impériaux Ottomans Adressés Aux Walis Aux Khédives D’Egypte, 1006 H-1322 H/1597 J.C-1904 J.C. Imprimé l’Administration de l’Arpentage, (Cairo, 1933).

A vital source for the political system of Egypt under the Ottomans is the famous Qanunname. The original Turkish manuscript is available, a translation into Arabic of the Qanunname for 931/1525 was published in Cairo in 1986. Other sources are French travelers' and Consuls' reports, which provide useful material for the period of study. The most important of those are the writings of Savary, Granger, Volney, and Olivier. There are also important reports by Consuls Millet and Mure, and several accounts of English travelers, which will be referred to in the next chapter.

Manuscript sources, which cover, partly or fully, the period from 1099/1687 to 1143/1730 are greater in quantity than those of earlier periods. Much of the material has not yet been fully exploited, while many manuscripts have still not received any attention whatsoever from researchers. It is hoped that this study will shed some light on one of the darkest and most obscure periods of Ottoman Egypt. It is also hoped that it will be a step towards uncovering the hidden parts of Egypt's history under the Ottomans, providing more material and encouragement to future research.

CHAPTER

2

HISTORICAL FOREGROUND

I-INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to provide a detailed historical foreground for the period 1099-1143/1687-1730. It gives an outline of the political events of the period in the light of unexploited manuscript sources. The first part of the chapter attempts to provide a balanced historical background to Ottoman Egypt at the start of the twelfth century AH, demonstrating that the roots of Egypt's economic and social, as well as political, transition into the modern era were laid during this critical episode. The second part deals with the gradual disintegration of the military and the successive policies adopted by the Porte to weaken the Egyptian garrison and strengthen the Mamluk beys. The garrison itself was already divided into conflicting factions and interests. By 1121/1709 the Janissary regiment had received a major blow through a movement by the remaining six Ojaqs and with the consent of the Porte. In the absence of a strong single authority, civil war was imminent. The third part deals at length with the causes and outcome of the civil war in 1123/1711. It was this bloody conflict, in which all the political institutions were involved, that brought with it the rise of the local forces and the decline of the Ottoman elements within the political establishment. The final part discusses the events which followed the civil war. It attempts to show the gradual rise of not only the beylicate but also the local Ulema and the tribal chiefs of Upper and Lower Egypt.

This chapter discusses some of the prevailing views on the decline of Ottoman authority over Egypt, the rise of the beylicate, and the causes and outcome of the civil war. The major theme of the chapter is an attempt to demonstrate that the rise of the beylicate was contemporary with the rise of other local religious and economic institutions.

II- EGYPT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, AN OVERVIEW

Egypt maintained its distinctive position under Ottoman rule. Its strategic importance on a vital trade route connecting the three continents of the old world could never be removed by any occupying power. The country maintained trade links with Anatolia, Rumelia, Syria, Palestine, North Africa, and Europe. It was a chief centre of rice and sugar production. As a land of ancient civilization, it had gradually developed to become a centre of cultural, scientific, and economic influence in the Arab world, so that Cairo eventually gained supremacy over Damascus and Baghdad. Istanbul recognized the importance of this region by keeping it as a single entity with a large garrison having extensive influence over Abyssinia and Hijaz. The Porte also appointed to the Pashalik of Egypt some of its most experienced and ablest statesmen. The Egyptian garrison was in charge of the vital ports of Jeddah, Suez, and Alexandria, and had responsibility for protecting the pilgrimage caravans and suppressing the rebellious Arab Bedouin in Egypt and Hijaz. For such purposes the Egyptian military was the largest amongst Arab provinces. Egypt under Ottoman rule was one of the largest, most populated, and richest provinces of the empire.

The Ottoman era has been considered by many historians to be one of the most obscure and backward periods in the history of Egypt.¹ It has been suggested that from the fall of the Mamluk state to the rise of Muhammed Ali, Egypt sank into three centuries of darkness and general decline. Kimche argued,

‘[Egypt] turned into a backwater of stagnation and decay. The highly developed irrigation system crumbled under the ceaseless onslaughts of the Bedouin, agriculture degenerated, trade dwindled, and by the end of the

¹ For a fuller discussion of this point, see J.A.Crabbs, “Historiography and the Eighteenth Century Milieu”, in D. Crecelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt (1990) 9-24.

eighteenth century, the political institutions of the country had begun to disintegrate'.¹

This approach was influenced by major factors which accompanied the rising interest in writing the history of Ottoman Egypt. Amongst such factors was the rise of Arab nationalism in Egypt in the 1950s and 60s. According to its philosophy, Ottoman rule in the Arab provinces was a negative imperialist occupation which only drove the region into darkness and decline. Much of the darkness in the history of Ottoman Egypt could, however, be attributed to the lack of study and research into the primary material and contemporary sources, which are even now far from being thoroughly exploited. A closer look at the movement of trade and cultural and intellectual aspects of the period may show a different sort of picture.

Many modern historians have been influenced by the great emphasis of contemporary sources on the political and economic crises and natural disasters which hit Egypt during the Ottoman era. Al-Damurdashi, for instance, places great emphasis on the Qasimi-Faqari conflict in early eighteenth-century Egypt. 'Ali al-Shādhili concentrates, in his famous work, on the civil war in 1123/1711, while the author of Zubdat al-ikhtisār concentrates more on the campaigns against the Arab Bedouin. But this should not necessarily prevent us from looking at the more flourishing aspects of the region during these years.

Travel Accounts

On the opposite side, there exists a more optimistic picture of Ottoman Egypt, especially at the start of the eighteenth century. This can be derived from travel accounts and consuls' reports, amongst which the most important was the famous account of 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi, a prominent Sufi Sheikh

¹ D. Kimche, "The Political Superstructure of Egypt in the Late Eighteenth Century" Middle East Journal, 22/4 (Autumn 1968) 448.

who traveled to Mecca via Syria and Egypt and wrote his book al- Haqīqa wal majāz during the years 1105-1106/1693-1694.¹ In 1986 this travel account was published by the Egyptian National Library, but it is still a neglected source in the history of Ottoman Egypt. The second source is the account of a journey by Mustafa al-Bakri al-Siddiqi to Egypt in 1132/1719, which he entitled al-Nihla al-nasrīyah fī al-rihlah al-Misrīyah.² This is a still unpublished manuscript in the Egyptian National Library. It has not received the attention of any previous scholar although it provides good material on the development of Sufism and helps to provide a more credible approach to everyday life in Egypt.

In Cairo al-Nabulsi was the guest of Zain al-Abdin al-Bakri, a prominent Sharīf who was a close friend of ‘Ali Pasha. Al-Nabulsi described how rich al-Bakri was, how he had his own palace near al-Azbakiya lake, the aristocracy’s most favoured district, and how these palaces had their own luxury bath-houses, so that their inhabitants did not need to mix with the common people.³ Al-Nabulsi was astonished by al-Qarafa, Egypt’s famous cemetery. He described it as Cairo’s most famous place of entertainment containing a number of white buildings and luxury mosques. Meals were provided in it for the rich and poor, including meats, sweets, and various other types of food. Parties of the aristocracy were often held there and the singing and music never stopped.⁴ He also narrated several poems dedicated to al-Qarafa cemetery, describing its beauty. Al-Nabulsi also gives a completely different impression of the Pasha of Egypt, who was described by many historians as a powerless prisoner of the Citadel. Al-Nabulsi met ‘Ali Pasha several times and accompanied him for walks in a famous garden in Cairo which had all the types

¹ For more information on this Manuscript see p. 35.

² For more information on this Manuscript see p. 43.

³ H, p. 184.

⁴ Ibid., p. 187.

of fruits, vegetables, flowers, and beautiful lakes.¹ There is also an interesting account of the prosperity of science and philosophy. The author himself met many scholars and joined in discussions with individuals from various walks of life. He also had the opportunity to meet many government officials in the military and also sanjaq beys, including Ibrahim Bey Amīr al-Hajj and Ismail Bey Defterdar. Al-Nabulsi's accounts of these visits help to cast more light on the relations between the Ulema and the ruling elite. The prominent Ulema who lived around the lakes of al-Fīl and Azbakiya established good relations with Mamluk beys and military notables as neighbors and friends, in joining in political discussions and regularly meeting the Pasha.² Al- Haqīqa wal majāz also provides a good amount of information on public parks, gardens, and places of entertainment. There were also many crowded public or private bath-houses, the former for use by the common people and the latter for use by the aristocracy.³ During his visit al-Nabulsi went to al-Azhar and to al-Mu'aiyad Mosque, which was the largest in Cairo. Al-Azhar was not only a place of political influence but a university in which science, philosophy and Islamic knowledge were taught.⁴ Sanjaq beys and military notables had large libraries in their houses and had rare collections of books under their possession. Al-Nabulsi also noticed that "most of the houses of Egypt were of three stories and some five stories one above the other".⁵ He also made a visit to the Citadel where the Pasha and the military of Egypt resided. There he saw massive buildings, shops, palaces, mosques, and bath-houses as if it were an independent city on its own.⁶

¹ Ibid., p. 204.

² ibid., pp. 181, 202, and 257.

³ ibid., pp. 184, 275.

⁴ ibid., pp. 225-226.

⁵ ibid., p. 284.

⁶ ibid., p. 285.

Twenty-seven years later Mustafa al-Bakri made his journey to Egypt. In 1132/1719 he left Syria to accompany Rajab Pasha, who was an old friend of his, on the way to Cairo. His book, al-Nihla al-nasrīyah fī al-rihlah al-Misrīyah, provides a similar account of Egypt to that of al-Nabulsi. Despite the civil war of 1123/1711, Egypt's reputation as a prosperous province had not been damaged. Upon his arrival al-Bakri first noticed "the luxury buildings and other things which cannot be found in other famous cities".¹ Like al-Nabulsi, al-Bakri was astonished by al-Qarafa cemetery, the mosques and graves of which he described in great detail.² He met many scholars and Ulema of al-Azhar, and had the opportunity to visit the holy places and old mosques, such as those of al-Hussein and Nafisa, as well as other mosques of historical significance.³ Twice he sailed down the Nile and visited al-Miqyās (the Nilometre) where the flow of the river is measured.⁴ Al-Bakri praised Ismail b. Iwaz Bey for his piety and concern in rebuilding holy sites.⁵ He also narrated many poems on different subjects and thereby preserved some indication of the state of literature at that time. But as he left Cairo to visit places in the Delta, he noticed the lack of security and the state of anarchy caused by the Arab Bedouin.⁶ The accounts of al-Nabulsi and al-Bakri provide useful information about the intellectual life in Egypt, and current developments in poetry and literature. They are also vital sources on the development of Sufism.

Despite the political crisis, Egypt had a very good reputation as an intellectual and religious centre in the Arab world during the period of study. As we have previously noted, Ahmad Shalabi records that 'Abdullah Pasha Köprülü (1142-1144/1724-1731) remained in Cairo for seven months after his

¹ NN, p. 11.

² ibid., pp. 18, 32.

³ ibid., p. 14.

⁴ ibid., pp. 52, 56.

⁵ ibid., pp. 77-76.

⁶ ibid., p. 86.

dismissal, seeking knowledge and studying at the feet of prominent scholars.¹ English travelers who visited Egypt at the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth century gave similar accounts to those penned by al-Bakri and al-Nablusi. Joseph Pitts was in the country in 1685. On his way to Cairo travelling along the Nile he noticed, “There are towns all along its banks, in so much that you are no sooner out of the sight of one but you are in the sight of two or three more”.² He also noticed that the population of Cairo was made up of a mixture of Moors, Turks, Jews, Greeks, and Copts, and that the markets of Cairo were rich in various commodities such as silks, muslins, calicoes, spices, and coffee, while milk, butter, oils, and olives were also generally available. Commenting on the prosperity of trade in Cairo, Pitts claimed that there were seventy-two languages spoken in the city and he estimated there were between five and six thousand mosques and hundreds of khans which were built in three stories, just as al-Nabulsi described them. The facts, as given by Pitts, suggest that he may not have been one hundred per cent accurate, but they do give a general view of the prosperity of the region. With regard to agricultural production, he commented, “I need not tell you of the abundance of rice here, for this is known to be the chief country for that commodity in the whole world”.³ Pitts may not have visited China or South East Asia to compare the production of rice with that of Egypt, but the country was indeed the chief supplier of rice to many cities of the region including Istanbul.

The account of William Daniel in 1700 coincides with those of Pitts, Arab travelers, and foreign consuls on the prosperity of Egypt. During his visit to Cairo he commented, “This city by several authors is accounted to be the largest in the world; whose extent, number of houses, streets, mosques, canes [khans], bazars, etc... you’ll find in most modern authors, and too tedious for

¹ AI, pp. 575-576.

² W. Foster (ed.) The Red Sea and Adjacent Countries (London, 1949) 10.

³ ibid., p. 17.

me to insert. But to add to its felicity it is generally blest with a very good trade".¹

Revival of International Trade

Egypt's distance from the war fronts in Russia, Persia, and Eastern Europe further enhanced its trading activities. Despite changes in international relations, the import and export of commodities between the Indian sub-continent and Europe via Egypt and the Red Sea still continued. By the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth century, there was a great demand for coffee in Europe and Anatolia, for which Egypt became the chief supplier. Coffee was mainly brought from Yemen and exported to the markets of Europe, Syria, Izmir, and Istanbul via Egypt's major ports: Alexandria, Rashīd, and Dimyat. France was the major consumer of coffee. From the total amount of £ 2,729,000 paid by the French annually in return for various commodities from Egypt at the end of the seventeenth century, £1,448,000 of it was spent on coffee.² In the wake of this revival in trading activities in Egypt, the Porte attempted to exert its influence on the export of coffee. In 1115/1703 an Imperial Edict, banned the export of this commodity to Europe, but the trading resumed shortly afterwards upon the request of the French ambassador in Istanbul. Such requests were made in the years 1130/1717 and 1139/1726 by the French ambassador to the Sultan, to allow the resumption of the export of coffee to European markets via Egypt. But actual control of the coffee trade was not entirely in the hands of the Sultan, it was rather up to the authorities in Cairo. In return for bribes, the Mamluk beys and military chiefs backed foreign consuls' requests to allow the export of coffee to their countries and, when the Porte expressed its firm refusal, coffee was

¹ *ibid.*, p. 62.

² Zainab al-Ghannām, *Al-Jalīyāt al-ajnabiyah wa-dawruhā fī al-hayāt al-iqtisādiyyah wal ijtimā'iyah fī Misr*, unpublished Ph.D thesis (Cairo, 1988) 116-7.

exported to Syrian ports and then smuggled to European markets.¹ Although the authorities in Istanbul were aware of these illegal activities and the bribes paid to the Mamluks and the military, it was simply unable to interfere directly. Following the Sultan's Noble Script in 1115/1703 to ban all coffee trade with Europe, it was noticed that substantial amounts of this commodity still reached European markets, and another Noble Script was issued to the authorities in Cairo the following year ordering members of the military to stop all their trading activities. When the orders were read out, the military chiefs flatly refused to abide by them.² Similarly, in 1126/1714, Istanbul again issued an order making all coffee exporting to Europe an illegal activity.³ The following year another Noble Script came to Egypt, in which the Sultan expressed his anger and threatened that any official in Cairo would be severely punished if the orders to stop all coffee trade with Europe were not executed.⁴ Because of these restrictions, European traders did not engage officially in the export of coffee from Cairo and thus the records available and information about shipments are far from accurate. But with regard to Arab merchants, a good amount of material can be found in contemporary sources. There existed a very strong alliance between the Janissary regiment and the coffee merchants, who formed their own pressure group and became extremely rich. In 1108/1696 coffee merchants challenged the Sultan's orders and refused to accept further taxes imposed on coffee, and in a remarkable show of strength they made a demonstration and paid their Janissary allies to kill the Jewish Ruzname official who brought the orders from Istanbul. After being personally blamed for deceiving the Sultan, the official was brutally murdered and the orders were simply ignored despite the Pasha's apparent opposition to such actions.⁵ Egypt's economy improved and the coffee trade helped to strengthen the

¹ ibid., p. 118.

² AI, p. 225.

³ TA, f. 156.

⁴ ibid., f. 157.

⁵ SS, f. 920.

internal markets of Cairo. A. Raymond has counted around sixty-two markets and shops which specialized in selling this commodity, while cafes spread all around the capital.¹

Amongst the prominent coffee merchants was Muhammed al-Sharaiyibi, who had his own mamluks and became very important in the economic and political life of Cairo. When he died in 1137/1724, his funeral was attended by all the Ulema, members of the military, notables and Mamluk beys. Many manuscript sources explain in detail the inheritance which he left to his sons.² Notables of the Janissary regiment made a fortune out of the coffee trade, through the imposition of a monopoly on the taxation of this commodity and by preventing the other six regiments from interfering in the affairs of coffee merchants. In 1121/1709 members of the ojaqs sent a petition to Istanbul complaining of the Janissary monopoly of the coffee trade. The Porte responded by making any connection between the Janissaries and coffee merchants an illegal act whether it was in the form of protection, or of actual trading activities.³ Following the civil war Mamluk beys became involved in this flourishing trade, which helped them to become richer and less dependent on the iltizam system to improve their financial capabilities. It was this important commodity, which replaced the spice trade, that helped to strengthen the aristocracy in Egypt and eventually encourage them to become more independent.

Coffee was not the only commodity which Egypt exported overseas. The French were also interested in Egyptian leather, which was manufactured in Egypt and sold to European capitals. Spices continued to come from the Indian sub-continent and were exported to Europe via Egypt despite the sharp decrease in the demand for spices in general. The textile trade was very

¹ A. Raymond, al-Qahira, (Cairo, 1993) 224.

² AI, p. 443.

³ D. p. 78.

flourishing in Egypt. There was a big demand for various types of textiles, created by the ruling elite in Cairo, which was mainly met by imports from India and France. The French consul de Maillet was concerned about the quality of French exports to Egypt in the face of English competition. He expressed his concern about this in several reports.¹ The French made up to 40% profit on the sale of textiles in Egypt. The reason for the great demand in Egypt for this commodity was the convention of investing each official with a high quality robe upon his appointment to a post or an important mission, such as becoming a sanjaq bey, or leading a protection force to accompany the annual levy to Istanbul. It could well be argued that these flourishing trading activities and the profit gained by local and foreign merchants encouraged ambitious rulers such as ‘Ali Bey, and later Napoleon and Muhammed ‘Ali Pasha, to exert full control over the region and make it the basis of various expansionist plans.

Construction and architecture

During the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 there was a remarkable amount of construction activity in Egypt. The rise of religious authority further enhanced this activity. The construction of a mosque, a shrine or any building of religious nature was an act of piety that could provide useful publicity for many officials. A detailed study of manuscript sources shows that there were various forms in which the construction revival expressed itself. The important building projects may be listed as follows:

Mosques	9
Public fountains	15
Bath-houses	10
Shrines	5

¹ al-Ghannām, al-Jaliāt, 124.

Libraries	9
Markets	2
Maintenance of major sites	4

Table 1, showing major construction activities during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730.¹

We may review each of these building activities in a little more detail.

a) Mosques. During the forty-four year period there were nine mosques built in Cairo, which is a large number in such a short period of time. These mosques were the Ahmad Ketkhuda ‘Azebān Mosque in the Citadel (built in 1109/1697); the Mustafa Jorbaji Mirza Mosque in Bulaq (built in 1110/1698); three mosques built during the rule of Qara Muhammed Pasha (1111-1116/1699-1704), i.e. al-‘Arabi Mosque, Muhammed Pasha Mosque in Qara Maidan, and a third mosque inside the Citadel; al-Disouqi Mosque (built in 1136/1723); and another two mosques built during the rule of Muhammed Pasha al-Nishanji (1133-1141/1721-1728). Among the most important mosques of Egypt that were rebuilt during this time were the following:

1-Al-Mu’ayad Mosque, in 1101/1689, by orders from Ahmad Pasha, who also supplied it with new furniture and white paint. This was regarded as the most pious deed of Ahmad Pasha, which won him the praise of all contemporary historians.

2-Al-Azhar Mosque, toward which Istanbul paid a large sum of money and ordered Rajab Pasha personally to supervise the reconstruction in 1132/1719.

¹ Information on the above mentioned constructions will be found scattered in the following sources: AI, pp. 186, 198, 206, 251, 256, 258, 303, 310, 367, 379, 423, 532, 556, 567, and 576; D, pp. 31, 34, 63, 119, and 120; ZI, ff. 24, 31, 40, and 41; TA, ff. 113, 117, 122, 123, 152, 182, and 192; SS, ff. 792, 806, 813, 860, 937, and 969; J. 1/44, 159, and 184.

3-Al-Hussein Mosque, which was extended, repainted, and furnished in 1123/1711.

b) Shrines. About five major religious shrines were established during this period as Maqāmāt (public places of worship over the grave of a deceased pious persons). These were Maqām al-Kilāni, which was constructed during the rule of Qara Muhammed Pasha; Maqām al-Rubi, constructed in Fayyum in 1120/1708; the two mosques of al-Mulaiji and al-Badawi, which were rebuilt by Ismail Bey around 1132/1719; and a building in Qarafa which ‘Abdullah Köprülü Pasha built in 1143/1730 as a tomb for himself and his family.

Three) Library (Maktabāt). These generally consisted of a large hall for reading and religious teaching, and other rooms as residences for the poor. There would also be a kitchen and water tank in the same building. About nine of these buildings were constructed in the period of study: two during the rule of Ismail Pasha (1107-1109/1695-1697), one by ‘Ali Pasha in 1106/1694, and another three during the rule of Qara Muhammed Pasha. There were ‘Ali al-Dimiyati Library (built in 1122/1710), Abu al-Iqbāl ‘Arfīn Library (built in 1125/1713), and Muhammed Mustafa al-Mohasabji Library (built in 1129/1716).

Four) Public fountains (asbilah, sing. sabil). These consisted of water tanks with a tap for public drinking. They were usually built by Mamluk beys and military officials as a token of their piety. Certain people were assigned to fill these tanks with fresh water and, because they were cheaper to build than mosques and libraries there were many of them. There are references in manuscript sources to fifteen public fountains built during the period of study, among them the fountains of Ibrahim Jorbaji (built in 1106/1694), Hasan Agha Kumhari (built in 1106/1694), Hasan Katib ‘Azebān (built in 1113/1701), and Muhammed Ketkhuda (built in 1131/1718).

Five) Markets (wakālāt). There is reference to only two major markets established during the period of study: ‘Abbas Agha Market (built in 1106/1694) and al-Judariya market (built by Bakir Pasha in 1142/1729). But, according to A. Raymond, there were many more markets established at the beginning of the eighteenth century specializing in coffee, spices, soap, and leather.¹

Six) Bath-houses (hammāmāt, sing. hammām). There was a remarkable increase in the number of bath-houses built during this period. Owners of public baths gained a great deal of profit. According to Ahmad Shalabi, the number of bath-houses in Cairo increased from fifty in 1071/1660 to seventy-three in 1136/1723.² The Pashas of Egypt paid attention to the people’s need for bath-houses and built many during their terms of office, while merchants and Mamluk beys profited by investing in this form of business. There is record of more than ten bath-houses being built in Cairo during the period of study, in addition to the private ones which were built for the use of the aristocracy in their own palaces so that they need not mix with the common people. Al-Nabulsi, for instance, was allowed to enter the private bath-house of Zain al-Abdin al-Bakri.³ During the term of office of Muhammed al-Nishanji Pasha four bath-houses were built, some of which were restricted for the use of women while some others had two shifts, one for women and one for men. In his book on the social history of Cairo, A. Raymond described the development of bath-houses and he particularly counted all those built during the eighteenth century.⁴

¹ A. Raymond, Al-Qahira, 244.

² AI, pp. 278-279.

³ H, p. 184.

⁴ A. Raymond, Tārīkh al-Qahira al-‘Uthmāniyah (Cairo, 1974) 115-163.

Seven) There were also many improvements made in the Citadel, which had its own mosques, graveyards, houses, public bath-houses, water supplies, gardens and palaces. Al-Nabulsi described it as an independent town in its own right.¹ It is recorded in manuscript sources that Ismail Pasha (1107-1109/1695-1697) built a great palace in the Citadel and laid out a beautiful garden around it. Qara Muhammed Pasha (1111-1116/1699-1704) built a mosque, and a bath-house, and he reconstructed several halls and residences, while Muhammed al-Nishanji Pasha reconstructed the Dīwān hall and also built a mosque and two bath-houses.

Eight) There was an interest in developing public parks and private gardens for the use of the aristocracy. In them trees would be planted, and fountains and artificial lakes were created. The most famous of these was in al-Qarafa cemetery, which had been transformed into a place of entertainment. Al-Nabulsi described the beauty of this place but was critical of the disrespect shown to the dead by the singing and music parties which lasted until dawn with meat and sweets being distributed around.²

Nine) With the remarkable increase in the numbers of the aristocracy, which included military notables, Mamluk beys, merchants, and Ulema, many palaces were built on the banks of the Nile and around the two famous lakes of al-Azbakiya and al-Fil. Those who lived in the city centre and near the Citadel left these areas after the civil war in 1123/1711 in search of peace and quiet. Among the famous palaces built during the early eighteenth century were those of Hasan Ketkhuda, Muhammed Efendi Javshān, and Ayyub Bey, the last of which was described by al-Shadhili as the most beautiful among all the houses of Egypt, containing every kind of beauty,

¹ H, pp. 248-250.

² ibid., p. 199.

and with all types of roses, fruit trees, and other trees in its garden.¹ There were also the houses of Ifranj Ahmad Bashodabashi, Omar Agha, and other military notables.² Muhammed Jerkes had a unique house with a beautiful garden. His collection of rare plants included a palm tree with seventeen heads.³ Jerkes spent four years building his palace and forced laborers and architects to work without payment. In their accounts al-Nabulsi and al-Bakri described several beautiful palaces in Cairo and noticed the influence of Turkish architecture. Even Pashas built their own palaces in Cairo. ‘Ali Pasha (1102-1107/1690-1695) had a palace in al-Qasr al-‘Aynī, while another ‘Ali Pasha (1129-1132/1716-1719) built a great palace in old Cairo. Unfortunately, all these houses and palaces have completely vanished, the two lakes of al-Azbakiya and al-Fil simply dried out because of a slight diversion in the flow of the Nile, while the ruling elite in Cairo had a common convention to loot, burn, and destroy the houses of the losing party or household. ‘Ali al-Shadhili, Ahmad Shalabi, and Yūsuf al-Malwāni refer to a great number of houses which were destroyed because they were regarded as a symbols of power and dominance.

Public Life

It could also be argued that there has been an over-emphasis placed on the political crises in the history of Ottoman Egypt. In addition to the civil wars, military conflicts, Mamluk feuds, and purges, contemporary sources also mention happy events during these years. In the accounts of Pitts, Daniel, al-Nabulsi, and al-Bakri we read about a prosperous region with active trade, rich markets, large mosques, khans, fountains, palaces, public parks, and gardens. Al-Shadhili describes the life of the Egyptians before the civil war as being “full of happiness and beauties. Egypt was like a paradise with readily

¹ SH, pp. 382-384.

² *ibid.*, pp. 388-389.

³ AI, p. 474.

available foods, drinks, clothes, horses, and general prosperity.”¹ The French consul de Maillet attended many official celebrations and agreed with many travelers that the Egyptian people loved celebrations and festivals, and that they were a gay society which liked to sing and dance. Another French traveler, Paul Lucas, who visited Egypt around 1700, observed that “music and dance continue all night, no day passes without a celebration, which the Egyptians love so much. These celebrations are concentrated more in cities rather than in the rural areas.”²

Public ceremonies were held on the birthdays of the Prophet Muhammed, al-Hussein, and other pious people. Al-Badawi’s annual celebration, held in Tanta, drew particularly large crowds. There were also celebrations held when the pilgrimage caravan departed for Mecca, in which the Pasha and all the military joined. Amongst the religious festivals were ‘Īd al-Adhā and ‘Īd al-Fitr, which are held annually all around the Islamic world. There was also a famous celebration in Cairo when the Nile reached a certain level in its flow. According to de Maillet,³ the celebrations on this occasion lasted for seven days, during which coins were showered over the heads of the people. In addition, the Porte also ordered celebrations to be held in Egypt as an expression of loyalty and happiness in the achievements of the imperial army or when a child was born to the Sultan. These zīnah occasions often lasted three whole days, during which cannons were fired and fireworks burned, sheep were slaughtered, and food was distributed among the population of Cairo. During the period of this study, there were twelve zīnah, which is a large number indeed.⁴ Similar celebrations were also held upon the arrival of each Pasha in Egypt. On these occasions sheep were slaughtered, cannons were

¹ SH, p. 349.

² Voyage du Sieur Paul Lucas au Levant, 1/75.

³ I. Thihni, Misr fī Kitābāt al-rahhālah wal qanāsil al-Firansiyyin fī al-qarn al-thāmin ‘ashar (Cairo, 1992) 320-321.

⁴ For details of these zīnah occasions, see AI, pp. 182, 187, 199, 288, 433, and 453; D, pp. 69 and 194; TA, ff. 114, 118, 166, and 187; SS, ff. 759, 817, 838, 879, 904, and 952.

fired, and the military marched thorough the streets of Cairo. Presents such as horses, robes, and money were exchanged between the elite, and the Pasha was obliged to offer generous payments to the military and outfit the sanjaq beys with luxurious robes.¹ There were twenty-one such occasions, but in times of crisis celebrations were not held according to the convention. Thus, the happy days in Cairo, if counted, were many more than the days of political crisis and civil war.

During the period of our study, Egypt was hit by a series of plagues, which occurred in the years 1105/1693, 1107/1695, 1125/1713, 1130/1717, 1138/1725, 1141/1728, and 1143/1730. These plagues severely depopulated the region and weakened its economy. Agriculture and industry were affected as a result and many officials also died in these plagues. Devaluation of the currency, Bedouin depredations, and continuous civil war were common events in Egypt, but the speed in which the country was able to recover from economic, political, and natural disasters was remarkable indeed. Moreover, Egypt supplied the Porte with sugar, rice, textiles, coffee, cannons, and gunpowder. The garrison in Cairo had to send troops for service in the imperial army, and was also requested to suppress the Arab Bedouin and restore order in Hijaz at the cost of the Egyptian treasury. There was also the burden of the annual khazna, Egypt's annual tribute to the imperial treasury. On top of that Egyptian Mamluks paid huge amounts of money to Istanbul as hilwān ('sweeteners') and bribes in return for support and appointment to official posts in the region. In summary Egypt's success could be attributed to a combination of the following:

- 1) A series of migrations from North Africa, Hijaz, and Syria to Egypt, which continued to supply Egypt with labour.

¹ D, p. 6

- 2) The efficiency of the iltizam system, which treated the multazims (tax farmers) as actual owners of the land under their supervision and gave peasants the freedom to choose their own crops, provided they paid the taxes demanded of them.¹
- 3) The renewing factor of the political system since every few years the Pasha, the Mamluk beys, and military aghas were frequently replaced. This gave opportunity for more statesmen to show their skills and gain experience, and it also prevented anyone gaining a monopoly of the huge income of the region. This may have been the only way for the Porte to guarantee the loyalty of Egypt and prevented ambitious Mamluk beys from seizing full control of the region.

Inquiry into the general way of life in Egypt as it is described in the writings of travelers, historians, and foreign consuls, and a close study of developments in trade, construction and architecture, as well as a recognition of the availability of various agricultural products leads to the conclusion that Egypt at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, while not being in an era of great discoveries or major achievements, was surely not in its dark ages or passing through times of backwardness and general decline.

¹ After the Ottoman conquest of Egypt the entire cultivable land (other than waqf lands) was divided into parcels and distributed amongst the members of the ojaqs and other persons as Multazims. Each parcel of land was burdened with a tax paid by the peasants to the Multazims who held the land as a grant from the state. In the course of the seventeenth century these tax farmers acquired the right of hereditary succession and by the eighteenth century the Multazim appears as the effective owner of his assignment in the sense that he had the power to sell it to other Multazims, bequeath it to his son, or burden it with an irrevocable endowment. See, Gibb and Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, 1.1/258-275.

II- POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PERIOD 1099-1122/1687-1710

Military dominance

The first twenty-two years of the twelfth century AH (1099/1687-1122/1710) could well be regarded as the peak of military power in Egypt. The army was divided into seven regiments, or ojaqs, of which the largest was the

Janissary regiment, followed by the ‘Azebān, Mutafarriqa, Javushān, and three cavalry units referred to as sipahis and consisting of the Gönüllüyān, Tüfekjiyān and Jarakise. Their responsibilities were stated in the Qanunname of Sultan Selim I (931/1525) and varied from protection of the Citadel in Cairo and the major ports of Egypt, to keeping law and order and supervising the iltizam system in the various provinces of Egypt. By the beginning of the twelfth century AH, however, members of the ojaqs had expanded their role and were holding official posts as sanjaq beys¹ and many of their chiefs, or Ihtiariya, were engaged in trading activities. Eventually factional rivalries and open struggles between the seven regiments, especially the Janissaries and the ‘Azebān, began to cause major set-backs to the political and economic stability in Egypt.

The year 1099/1687 begins with a conflict over the position of the bashodabashi² of the Janissaries. An individual by the name of Küçük Muhammed was at the centre of this conflict. He first appears in the manuscript sources in 1085/1673, when he was overthrown from his post as bashodabashi, only to return to that post in 1089/1677. Küçük Muhammed remained in this office until 1094/1682, when he was again overthrown by Suleiman Ketkhudā and sent into exile. Eventually he returned to Cairo and joined the army as an ordinary member until the death of Suleiman Ketkhuda in 1097/1685, when he was reappointed as bashodabashi of the Janissaries. This time Küçük Muhammed had a more serious rival, Ahmad al-Baghdadi, who collaborated with Salim Efendi and Rajab Ketkhuda of the Janissary regiment to oust him from his post in 1099/1687. With the aid of his supporters, Küçük Muhammed then managed to get rid of Salim and Rajab who were appointed as sanjaq beys

¹ Sanjaq bey means ‘lord of a standard’, from the distinctive insignia of these officers. The sanjaq beys of Egypt were not however governors of sub-provinces, which were administered by officials bearing the title of Kashifs. Their title was more of a rank than a specific office. See P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crecent 1516-1922, 31, 73.

²The bashodabashi was the chief of the odabashis, or junior officers, who headed the companies (odas) into which the Janissaries of Egypt were divided. See ibid.,86.

and then assassinated, paving the way for him to regain his position as bashadobashi of the Janissaries in 1103/1691. This time, he enjoyed full authority over the ojaq, and played a vital role in the economic and political affairs in Cairo. Küçük Muhammed was, however, assassinated in 1106/1694 by Ahmad al-Baghdadi following his attempt to force down the price of wheat against the interests of grain speculators and to abolish the payment of the illegal protection levies. After his death there were price rises and the conflict over his post continued to be the most severe of all conflicts at the time.¹

The Egyptian garrison continued to grow in power and authority, despite internal conflicts and feuds. In 1106/1695, the author of Zubdat al-ikhtisār commented on the power of several military chiefs, saying that each one of them was even more powerful than the sanjaq beys.² He also noted that military officers were appointed more frequently as sanjaq beys, because they had the power and money to purchase such posts. In fact, in 1109/1697, the seven regiments deposed Ismail Pasha, following delays in receiving their salaries and, furthermore, they sent their representatives to the Porte requesting that a new Pasha be appointed.³ In another show of strength, a number of Janissaries and ‘Azebān forced Muhammed Pasha to dismiss the Javush Ketkhuda three months before the end of his term in 1112/1700, threatening to tear the Ketkhuda apart if the Pasha refused to dismiss him.⁴ In 1114/1702, ‘Ali Agha of the Janissary Regiment dominated the Egyptian capital, and enforced law and order. Contemporary sources describe him as a ruthless man, who was even feared by sanjaq beys. He remained in office until 1116/1704.⁵

¹ For more information on the career of Küçük Muhammed, see P.M. Holt, “The Career of Küçük Muhammed”, BSOAS 26/2 (1963) 21-8. Also in ZI ff. 19,20,21,25,26,27; TA ff.109,110,115,116; SS ff. 724-6, 732, 744-7, 755, 829-30, 861-4, 868-9.

² Wa kullun min hā’ulā’i mithlu al-sanjaqi wa akthar, ZI. f. 32.

³ ibid., f.35.

⁴ SS, f. 974.

⁵ D, pp.65-69. See also AI, pp. 208-209.

In 1117/1705 Ifranj Ahmad managed to become bashodabashi, with similar later incidents of being ousted and exiled.¹ He returned to his position in 1121/1709 and was finally killed by opponents in the 1123/1711 civil war. Conflicts over control of the Janissary regiment tended to be very complicated and obscure. Surprisingly, the ‘Azebān’ regiment had a big influence over this affair and always had a candidate for this position. Several Janissary bashodabashis found refuge in the ‘Azebān’ regiment when they were overthrown by another faction, thus leading to continuous sour relations and further conflicts between the two regiments.

With major trading and factional interests associated with them for representation and protection, the seven ojaqs were able to threaten both the political and economic stability of Egypt, and to drive the whole province into a state of emergency. They continued to limit the Pasha’s authority. In 1121/1709 the seven regiments decided to send in to exile four officials of Ibrahim Pasha, the reason being, according to Ahmad Shalabi, that those officials were very close to the Pasha, and therefore met him regularly and informed him about all major and minor events.² In several cases the seven regiments had also been able to influence decision-making in Istanbul by sending representatives from each regiment to make various requests, of which the most important was to ask the Sultan personally to prolong the term of the Pashas who paid them regularly. Cases of such requests were mentioned by Mahmūd b. Muhammed, in his unpublished Wāqi‘at al-sanajiq in relation to ‘Abd al-Rahmān Pasha, ‘Ali Pasha, and Hussein Pasha in the years 1098/1686, 1105/1693, and 1110/1698.³

¹ D, pp. 70-71.

² Wa-sababu dhālika annahum ittuhimū bi-annahum yajtamī‘ūn ‘ala al-bāshā wa-yu‘arrifūhu bil-ahwāl al-kulliyā wal-juz’iyyā, AI, p. 226.

³ SS, ff. 762, 856, 956-8.

In the twenty-three year period of this section (1099-1122/1687-1710) present study there is record in the sources of twenty-six serious incidents which involved the seven regiments. Problems could simply start from a dispute between two members of rival regiments over the ownership of a good-looking boy, or even an argument in the shop of a butcher, but end in disturbances on a much wider scale. There were many assassinations and coups over minor and major posts. Conflicts were usually settled by sending the “trouble makers” into exile. The careers of Küçük Muhammed, Muhammed al-Baghdadi, and Ifranj Ahmad should not be studied in isolation from the events of this period. None of them could claim to represent the whole Janissary regiment, let alone the military system as a whole. They rather belonged to a winning party, which often gains control temporarily. It should also be stressed that at this early stage factional differences amongst Mamluk households did not penetrate into the seven regiments, and that the military enjoyed remarkable independence from the Qasimiyya, Faqariyya, and other Mamluk household feuds. Factional disputes within the military were more to do with the garrison’s own factions, with the ability of important personalities such as Küçük Muhammed and Ifranj Ahmad to gather members of the regiment around them, and the trading and iltizam interests with which they had association. The Qasimi-Faqari conflict which the Dāmurdāshi group of chronicles tries to suggest as the major cause of differences within the military, is not illuminated by much historical evidence at this early stage. More detailed and contemporary sources, such as Zubdat al-ikhtisār, Awdah al-isharāt, and Tarājim al-sawā‘iq give a completely different impression by suggesting more convincing internal causes of conflicts.

On becoming aware of the major threat the military can cause when it is out of control, Istanbul and the Pashas of Cairo made several attempts to weaken the military’s role, by reducing their salaries and isolating them from their sources of power, and also by strengthening other parties to equalize the political system, which seemed to be out of balance.

In 1102/1690, Ahmad Pasha made a general ruling that all himayāt, i.e., illegal taxes, were to be abolished, and that no member of the military should impose any form of protection on any member of the public.¹

The following year, a Khat Sharif (literally, Noble Script, a common term used for Imperial Edicts) from the Sultan transferred the control of the awqāf of Mecca and Medina from the Janissaries and the ‘Azebān to four sanjaq posts often held by Mamluk beys. This had a major impact on the income of the military and the reduction of their power and status. On the other side, it was one of the first steps taken by the Porte to strengthen the Mamluk beys and give them a bigger share in the political power and economic control of Egypt.²

In 1105/1693, ‘Ali Pasha ordered all members of the seven regiments to evacuate the markets in Cairo and leave them to their owners. This meant that military officers were no longer able to join as partners or to collect additional taxes from traders. According to Mahmūd ibn Muhammed, the Pasha gave orders to the Janissaries to execute his orders, with the result that eleven markets were evacuated accordingly.³

In 1107/1695, the Sultan ordered huge cuts in the wages of the military, claiming that they had already received the amount of six months’ salary in advance.⁴

The most important incident, however, took place in 1121/1709, following a dispute between the Janissaries on one side and the other six

¹ ZI, f. 24.

² ibid., f.25.

³ SS, f. 860.

⁴ ZI, f. 32.

regiments on the other. Both parties sent representatives to Istanbul, but the six regiments had massive support from the Ulema and the Pasha, requesting various limitations in the income of the Janissaries, with a special emphasis on the coffee trade on which the Janissaries had imposed a monopoly. The response from Istanbul was to send a ruling abolishing all Himayāt and other illegal taxes, to give the Pasha full authority to check the accounts of coffee merchants, and to transfer the Dār al-Darb (the Mint) from the Janissary quarter to the Dīwān, where the Pasha resided. Further cuts in their salaries and authority followed. The Janissaries who were the strongest of all regiments, were to suffer most from this series of rulings.¹

From another prospective, the administrative role played by the military should not be undermined. The Egyptian garrison played a vital role for Istanbul. As the largest and most populous province, Egypt was requested to send the largest share of military reinforcements of all the provinces. The army never failed to send the requested troops to join Ottoman campaigns in Europe or Persia, or to restore order in Hijaz. The military was also in charge of vital official tasks, such as tax collection and the execution of duties to do with the iltizam system, awqāf, and the sending of protection forces to accompany the annual levy (khazna). ‘Ali Agha of the Janissaries proved to be very successful during the reign of Muhammed Pasha (1111-1116/1699-1704) and, during the civil war in 1123/1711, in maintaining order, fighting corruption, and preventing price rises in the markets of Cairo.² Perhaps the most important point to be considered in this respect is the fact that during the period of military dominance, the suzerainty of the Sultan in Istanbul was never called into question. All attempts to do so were ruthlessly crushed by the seven ojaqs. A good example of this was the major task they fulfilled in suppressing the Arab Bedouin when they were declared rebels against the Sultan.

¹ D, pp.78-9. See also, AI, pp 224-5.

² AI, pp; 208-209.

The Rise and Decline of the Arab Bedouin

The Arab Bedouin were the second largest power in Egypt. United together, they could threaten the whole economic system and endanger the political structure of the province. In several areas of the country, Bedouin Sheikhs took advantage of the weakening of the central power to extend their authority over entire provinces. They managed to penetrate into the military and also had secret contact with the Mamluk beys, which made it very difficult for the Sultan and his Pashas in Cairo to make any reform in the rural areas of Egypt or fight the rebellious Bedouin.

In 1098/1686, the seven regiments sent seven representatives with a letter to the Porte, complaining that the Arab Bedouin had caused enormous corruption to the iltizam system and that they were in the habit of plundering and looting the multazims, which caused a severe reduction in both the annual tribute (khazna) and the wages of the ojaqs ('ulufāt).¹ This was only the beginning of the crisis. The following year, a major battle took place behind Jabal al-Jiushi on the outskirts of Cairo. The Egyptian forces, under the command of Ibrahim Abu Shanab, fought against the Bedouin of over twenty tribes who came from Medina, Ta'if, Hijaz, and Gaza. The battle continued from the evening to the morning of the next day, and the losses, according to contemporary sources, were estimated at one thousand Bedouin killed and five hundred taken captive, while a huge amount of booty, mainly camels, was seized. Mahmūd b. Muhammed comments on this occasion: "There is no similar incident which took place previously in Egypt."²

The following year 1100/1688, the Arab Bedouin led a fresh attack on the pilgrimage caravan, an attack which was one of the most serious recorded

¹SS, f. 762.

²Wa hādhihi al-wāqi'a lam jarat bihā 'ada bi-Misr. (ibid.,).

in the history of pilgrimage caravans under the Ottomans. Men were killed and women and children were seized together with around a thousand camels and other booty. Having taken their revenge, the Bedouin made a successful retreat avoiding confrontation with the Egyptian forces which came to the rescue.¹

During the period 1099-1111/1687-1699, the power of the Bedouin increased rapidly and the scale of looting and corruption was much greater than ever before. Refusal to pay taxes was one of the major signs of their disobedience in 1109/1697. The tribe of Hawwara, who were a more settled tribe and were in charge of the iltizam in Jirja, the largest Egyptian province were refusing to pay their iltizam, claiming to be members of the Janissary and ‘Azebān’ regiments and thus to enjoy their protection. To settle this problem Ismail Pasha called notables of the two regiments to certify that members of Hawwara did not belong to them, thus giving a free hand to ‘Abd al-Rahmān Bey of Jirja to collect the iltizam from them by all possible means.²

Contemporary sources record several complaints during this period arising from the corruption of the Bedouin. In 1103/1691 there was a massive public upsurge and a large crowd from Buhayra came to al-Azhar and informed the Ulema that the Bedouin in the province were “raping their wives and daughters, forcing the public to pay illegal taxes and causing injustice to the population.” Moreover, they accused the authorities in charge of the provinces of collaborating with the Bedouin. The Ulema handed this complaint to the qadiasker, who in turn brought it to ‘Ali Pasha. The public were requesting above all a free hand to defend themselves against the Bedouin, who seemed to be enjoying unofficial protection by the authorities. The Pasha responded by granting them their request and replacing the qā’immaqām of Buhayra

¹ AI, p. 183.

² ZI, f. 37.

province, but he refused to replace the bey in charge.¹ Matters came to a head in 1110/1698, according to al-Damurdashi,² when the people of Banu Suwaif met with the people of the Bahnassa province and discussed with each other their complaints about the grievances they suffered from the Bedouin of al-Maghariba, al-Du‘afa and al-Nijma. They decided to write a petition to the Sultan, and to send it by one of the Ulema to the Grand Mufti of Istanbul. The petition read as follows:

“Your excellency, we are suffering because the Bedouin of al Maghariba, al-Du‘afa and al-Nijma destroy our crops, eat our food and rape our women. Every time we complain to the governor (hakim), your agent (wakīl) in Cairo sends an expedition commanded by a sanjaq and aghas of the cavalry units, for [the support of] which we pay a contribution. As the expedition arrives, the Bedouin take refuge in the mountains and send a bribe to the expedition, who accept it and return to Cairo. The Bedouin therefore return and resume persecuting us and demand double the sum we paid [before] complaining [to the authorities]. These Bedouin reside in the two provinces of Banu Suwaif and Bahnassa, but are not local Bedouins. Every shepherd looks after his flock. We have informed you during your lifetime lest you say on the day of Reckoning, when you are before Allah, that you did not know [our plight]. The matter is up to you. Allah grant you long life and keep you victorious, peace.”³

This letter shows that the Bedouin were not an isolated force fighting against the authorities in Cairo and its agents in the provinces; they had many strong contacts with the military which provided protection and representation in Cairo, as contemporary sources show.

¹SS, ff. 819-20

² D, pp. 79-80.

³ ibid.,

On orders from the Porte and the Pasha in Cairo, major expeditions were sent to fight the Bedouin. The military and Mamluk beys with their own forces were involved in fourteen major expeditions from 1100/1688 to 1109/1697 against Bedouin tribes in Sharqiyya, Manufiyya, Gharbiyya, Buhayra, Jazira, Mansoura, Jirja, and other provinces. Huge sums of money were paid for these expeditions, but they did not seem to have much effect as the iltizam system continued to suffer and the peasants were still complaining. Many expeditions returned to Cairo without fighting at all. Contemporary sources do not mention convincing reasons nor do they discuss in any detail why so many expeditions returned without any achievement. However, the above-mentioned letter to the Sultan, and the secret contacts between the military and Mamluk beys on the one side and the Bedouin on the other indicate that bribes and secret settlements were always taking place during this period. Zubdat al-ikhtisār¹ is a very good source for the events that followed. In 1110/1698 a Noble Script came from the Sultan ordering Hussein Pasha and all the sanjaq beys of Egypt to go on a major expedition against the Maghāriba, the Moroccan tribes, and ordered that they be wiped out from all the provinces of Egypt. A major battle took place in 1111/1699, in which the Maghāriba suffered great losses. As they fled from one province to another, they were faced by fresh forces, who inflicted further losses on them and seized their camels and women as booty. The Maghāriba had to face not only the military and Mamluk beys but also the other Bedouin tribes of Hawwara and Muharib, who joined in the government's campaign against them.² This campaign had major effects. It first brought the Bedouin under control, and from 1111/1699 to 1122/1710 there was no mention of troubles caused by the Bedouin except for some minor incidents in 1113/1701 and 1120/1708. Major campaigns ceased, the iltizam system improved rapidly during this period, and contemporary sources do not mention any further complaints from the public.

¹ZI, ff. 38-39.

²ibid., f.40.

It has to be mentioned, however, that the Arab Bedouin were themselves regarded as an essential part of the system, mainly in the urban provinces and on the pilgrimage route. Loyal tribes played a vital role in the iltizam system and the protection of the pilgrimage caravan. Ahmad Shalabi refers to Habib as a very effective Bedouin leader who had several farming villages under his control and was always in charge of the waqf land. He was responsible to the Amīr al-Hajj, who was generally the most notable and strongest Mamluk bey in Cairo, and thus he enjoyed his protection despite his illegal activities.¹ Mahmūd b. Muhammed mentions that the authorities in Cairo depended on loyal Bedouin tribes in policing the route to Hijaz.²

The Central Administration: a Policy Shift

The period 1099-1122/1687-1710 was a critical phase for the Ottoman Empire. In Istanbul the Janissaries were getting out of control. By their continuous rebellions they contributed to the state of instability, while heavy losses on the European, Russian, and Persian fronts left the empire in a critical position. By the time of the Treaty of Karlowitz was signed in 1111/1699, the economic capabilities of the empire were not only exhausted but there was a permanent reduction in the khazna owing to the loss of vast agricultural and taxable provinces in Europe. This in turn meant that the Porte was keener than ever before to exert full power and maintain control over the remaining provinces of the Empire, of which the most important was Egypt. During this period some of the most capable and notable figures of the state were sent as Pashas to Egypt, including ‘Ali, Ismail, Qara Muhammed, and Muhammed Rami Pasha who governed for remarkably long periods. Until the Treaty of Karlowitz, the Egyptian garrison would send an average of 2,000 troops annually, and up to 5,000 in one year, for service in the imperial army. The

¹AI, p. 180.

² SS, f. 834.

Porte pressed on the authorities in Egypt to send more economic and military supplies than ever before. It appears there was a general tendency to strengthen the Mamluks and grant them increased power and authority, as they seemed to be more permanent and capable than any Ottoman official sent from Istanbul. Under this policy Mamluk beys often gained increasing power and authority supported by Istanbul.

While the Egyptian military suffered a major loss of power and authority during this period, the Mamluks managed to fill the gap created by that loss and gradually scored very important achievements, which paved the way for Mamluk dominance in the period which followed the civil war in 1123/1711. Growing feuds and internal conflicts within the seven regiments gave the Mamluks the chance to play the role of mediators. Problems between the seven regiments were often discussed and agreements were reached in the houses of the Amīr al-Hajj and the Defterdar, mainly because of the Pashas' tendency to isolate themselves from the problems of the internal factions in Egypt. This in turn gave the Mamluks more say within the military and the best chance to interfere in its affairs.

In 1103/1691, an Imperial Edict came to 'Ali Pasha from the Sultan stating that the Awqāf al Haramain (i.e., the religious endowments of Mecca and Medina) should be given to the four sanjaq beys of Egypt, the Amīr al-Hajj, the Defterdar and the other notable Mamluks in place of the Agha of the Janissaries, the Ketkhudā, the Bash Javush of the same regiment, and the 'Azebān Ketkhuda.¹ This was a very significant shift of power from the military to the Mamluks, but it was only the first of others that were also to come.

¹ZI, ff. 24-25.

In 1108/1696, an Imperial Edict reached Cairo ordering that the administration of Suez, which was under the control of the military, be given to the Defterdars of Egypt.¹ During the same year, another Edict came from the Sultan stating that the province of Jirja should include all the southern districts and that nobody should express any opposition to this.² From then onwards, this not only meant that Jirja was the largest Egyptian province, but also that a new major Mamluk post was created and that the Mamluk bey in charge of Jirja was to become the strongest sanjaq after the Amīr al-Hajj and the Defterdar. In the period which followed, the beys of Jirja played a vital role in the political events of Egypt and rose in power and status.

Even more orders were to come from Istanbul showing increased concern for the Mamluks. In 1111/1699, an order came from the Sultan in an unusual case, addressing the sanjaq beys by their own names and giving them responsibility to help the Pasha in paying the khazna and other taxes that were overdue.³ Later, in 1112/1700, the Sultan renewed the posts of the Amīr al-Hajj and other vital Mamluk posts for two years instead of the one year term that had previously been normal.⁴ In another movement by the Porte in favour the Mamluks, a prominent sanjaq bey, Iwaz Bey, was appointed as administrator of Jeddah and stayed in his post for eight years, which was a remarkably long period in the Egyptian politics of the time. During his term Iwaz became exceedingly rich, until he was killed in the civil war of 1123/1711, after which, his son Ismail inherited his wealth and played a vital role in the next phase of history.⁵

¹ Ibid., f. 32.

² SS, f. 902.

³ ZI, f. 41.

⁴ SS, f. 970.

⁵ DI, pp. 49, 62-63.

It must be emphasized that the Mamluk beys of this period were seen as loyal servants of the Sultan who gained their status and authority by recognition from Istanbul not by personal power and wealth, which had been the characteristic feature of their appointment in the earlier period. Abu Shanab, Qaytas, Iwaz, and Ayyub Bey were among the Mamluks favoured and supported by Istanbul, sometimes against the Pasha himself, as in the case of Abu Shanab who had secret contacts with the Ottoman capital and whose recommendations were often accepted and recognized. These Mamluks proved to be loyal, capable, and very helpful to the state in securing its annual levy (khazna) from Egypt. They showed their abilities in fighting the Bedouin and were assisted by Istanbul in balancing the political system and halting the uncontrolled growth of the military. Factional rivalry between the Mamluks was not a major theme, as was emphasized by al-Damurdashi in his chronicle. Other contemporary sources do not refer to any such conflicts at this period and the Mamluks seem to have much more united than during the period which followed the 1123/1711 civil war. This will be discussed in length in a later chapter.

Pashas, Reforms and the Economy

During the period of twenty-three years covered by the present study, eleven Pashas reigned in Egypt, an average of two years for each Pasha. All were deposed from Istanbul except for Ismail Pasha, who was overthrown by a military-Mamluk alliance in 1109/1697. To maintain the loyalty of the province, Istanbul sent some of its most capable statesmen to Egypt and increased their authority in order to manage the annual tribute and maintain law and order. ‘Ali Pasha, who ruled for four years and three months (1102-1107/1690-1695) is a good example. He played a vital role in limiting the power of the military, fighting the Bedouin, implementing various reforms, and

paying the annual tribute.¹ Qara Muhammed Pasha had a longer term of five years (1111-1116/1699-1704). He carried out major reforms and cooperated with the Mamluks. Many mosques, hammāms, and other public places were built during his term which was the most peaceful in the period 1099-1122/1687-1710. He was well known for his success in maintaining law and order in the streets and markets of Cairo.² Another notable Pasha was Muhammed Rami (1116-1118/1704-1706), previously a Grand Wazir in Istanbul.³

The Pashas in Cairo, however, did not have much say in major reforms, as they were more concerned in dealing with emergencies caused by draught, plague, currency devaluation, and other political crises. The major role of all Pashas was to supervise the execution of the Sultans' orders, pay the annual tribute, and maintain law and order.

Despite the traditional status which Egypt enjoyed as a major trading centre and a vital trade route, its economy was unstable and shaky during this period. There were four major causes of this economic crisis:

- Widespread corruption in the Ruzname, and in the iltizam system as a whole. Many minor officials were executed when found guilty. There were several executions during the years 1101-1112/1689-1700. These executions were carried out following major scandals mainly to do with the wages of the military. There is also evidence of corruption at higher levels in the political system of Egypt, even involving the Pasha himself in some cases, and also in the judicial system.

¹ For more information on 'Ali Pasha, see AI, pp. 186-197. See also ZI, ff. 24-30; TA, ff. 113-117; and DI, pp. 10-25.

² For more information on Muhammed Pasha, see AI, pp. 206-210. See also ZI, f. 41; TA, ff. 122-129; and DI, pp. 57-69.

³ For more information on Rami Pasha, see AI, pp. 210-211. See also DI, pp. 69-71.

- Military campaigns against the Bedouin and the rebellious Ashrāf in Hijaz. Sending troops for service in the imperial army also exhausted the economy of Egypt.
- Regular devaluation of the currency by orders from Istanbul every two years or so, a move which was necessitated by the decline of gold supplies. These devaluations were a major cause of instability in the local markets.
- The two major plagues which hit Egypt in 1105/1693 and 1107/1695,¹ in addition to successive low water levels in the Nile causing droughts and crop failure. The prices of essential commodities rose in Egypt and shortages in supplies were very common as a result.

Religious Authority

The rise of recognized religious authority was one of the major features of this period. The Ulema were gaining power and influence over public opinion, while at the same time also enhancing their own position in the political system. The Ulema often acted as representatives of the people and derived their strength from the public. They were often viewed as an independent authority with a divine source. The Ulema were moved by the public, who often made demonstrations, gathered at al-Azhar, and requested them to speak on their behalf to the Pasha. Various complaints were made in this manner regarding price rises, devaluations of the currency, rising crime, and the problems created by the Bedouin. The Ulema not only acted as mediators between the public and the ruling elite, but also played a role of their own within the ruling institutions of Egypt. They were remarkably active in helping to solve problems between the Azebān and Janissary regiments. They

¹ TA, ff. 114-117; ZI, ff. 27, 30; AI, pp. 189-199.

also began to participate in meetings of the Dīwān with the Pasha Mamluks and the military, of which the most remarkable case was in 1106/1694 when they were called to participate in discussion over the iltizam system.¹ They also joined in meetings with military chiefs in the houses of the Amīr al-Hajj and the Defterdar where they would discuss the currency crises which were common during this period.

There were several cases in which the Ulema were involved in a show of their strength over their ability to influence decision- making. In 1106/1694, they led an enormous demonstration requesting full payment of the waqf wages to the Ulema, their students, and attendants of the mosques in Egypt. Despite the failure of the iltizam system during this year to pay the full tribute to Istanbul, ‘Ali Pasha had no choice but to order full payment in order to avoid further crises.² Again, in 1121/1709, an official fatwā from al-Azhar helped to put an end to a rebellion by the Janissaries, as the fatwā stated that their action was illegitimate.³ This period witnessed the emergence of al-Azhar as the leading religious institution in Egypt, and gradually al-Azhar reached the peak of its power. Although Sufism flourished in Egypt at the time, its Sheikhs failed to gain any formal access to the political system. This could explain the emergence of the Sheikh al-Azhar as the prominent religious figure in Egypt. In 1120/1708, a bloody conflict over this post took place between the supporters of Ahmad al-Nafrāwi and ‘Abd al-Bāqi al-Qalini, following the death of Sheikh al-Azhar Muhammed al-Nashrati. This succession struggle left many dead and wounded.⁴

The period 1099-1122/1687-1710 was one of the most critical and decisive in the history of Ottoman Egypt. It could best be described as a period

¹ ZI, f. 29.

² Ibid., ff. 28-29.

³ AI, p. 224.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 220-222.

of transition and turmoil. During these twenty-three years, very many changes took place. The military ojaqs were exhausted by their internal conflicts and rivalries, while the power of the Bedouin collapsed temporarily following major losses in the battles of 1099/1687 and 1111/1699. The Pashas' position was waning owing to the gradually increasing weakness of the Porte and the failure of successive Pashas to tackle the serious problems of the province. Meanwhile, the Mamluks and Ulema of al-Azhar were gaining more power and authority.

Egypt was hit by a series of droughts, famines, failures of the iltizam system, and continuous currency devaluations which contributed to the state of instability and turmoil. There seemed to be no central figure or authority capable of solving the problems of the region. In this complicated structure and state of fierce rivalries, the Porte entered into conflicts as the supporter of one side against the other rather than acting as an arbiter, with the result that it eventually lost a considerable degree of control over the province in 1123/1711. By this time there were enough differences and competition between and amongst all these groups to make civil war imminent.

IV-THE CIVIL WAR OF 1123/1711

For this critical period of Egyptian history, the civil war of 1123/1711, there exist a number of primary sources. These are: Yūsuf al-Malwāni's Tuhfat al-ahbāb, al-Damurdashi's al-Durrah al-musānah fī akhbār al-Kinānah 1100-1169/1688-1755, Sheikh 'Ali al-Shādhili's Dhikr mā waqa'a bayna 'asākir Mīsr al-mahrouṣah 1123/1711, Ahmad Shalabi 'Abd al-Ghani's Awdah al-ishārāt, 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Jabarti's 'Ajā'ib al-āthār fī al-tarājim wa al-akhbār.¹ Of recent work on this period, the most important is that of P.M. Holt in his Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516-1922 (1966), and A. Raymond in his 'Une Revolution' au Caire sous les Mamelouks. La crise de 1123/1711.'²

With the exception of a few minor details, the five primary sources give very similar accounts of the civil war, but Damurdashi tends to over-emphasize the Mamluk factor, particularly by viewing the Qasimi-Faqari rivalry as an essential cause of the conflict. This chronicle derives its strength from the fact that its author was a member of the 'Azebān regiment who, according to his personal account, was not only a witness of the events of the 1123/1711 civil war but also participated in the battles which took place. 'Ali Al-Shadhili and Ahmad Shalabi were also eyewitnesses of the crisis. They give very similar accounts with some few differences over some dates and the sequence of events. A close examination of these sources shows that there were indeed other factors and more important causes of the civil war.

¹ For more information on these Manuscripts see Chapter 1, pp. 32-45.

²In Annales Islamologiques, 6 (1965) 95-120.

The 1123/1711 crisis cannot be studied in isolation from the events of the previous years. In the two decades preceding the crisis, many changes were taking place in the balance of power in Egyptian politics, which we may list below:

1-The seven ojaqs were enjoying the zenith of their power at this stage, which led to growing rivalry between the seven regiments over the economic and political control of Cairo. Further, the traditional animosity between the Janissary and 'Azebān regiments was becoming more serious than ever before. The Janissary regiment, which seemed to be in a dominating position, received a major blow in 1121/1709 when Istanbul supported the solidarity of the remaining six regiments, the Mamluks, and the Ulema against the regiment and abolished the himayat (illegal taxes) which its members had imposed on traders in exchange for their providing them with protection. The Janissaries' monopoly over the coffee trade was also put an end to, and the Dār al-Darb (the Cairo Mint) was removed from the Janissaries' quarters and put under the Pasha's supervision.¹ These measures caused a major reduction in the income of the Janissaries.

2-The Bedouin tribes of Upper and Lower Egypt had already sustained two major defeats, in 1099/1687 and 1111/1699, at the hands of government forces. During the next decade they engaged in farming, resulting in their settlement in the agricultural provinces of Egypt and a more peaceful pilgrimage route. In the province of Jirja a new conflict was developing between the Hawwara tribe and Hasan al-Ikhmimi, a leading Bedouin chief, for the control of Jirja, which was the largest single province in Egypt. The conflict was rather complicated. The Hawwara were backed by the Bey of Jirja, Muhammed al-Kabir, who was supported by the Faqari chief in Cairo, Ayyub Bey, and also by Ifranj Ahmad

¹AI, pp. 224-5.

Bashodabashi and his faction of the Janissaries, while Hasan Ikhmimi and his tribe were backed by Muhammed Qatamish, a serious rival for the post of Jirja who was supported by another prominent Faqari chief, Qaytas Bey, and also by Kör ‘Abdullah and his faction of Janissaries.

3-The Mamluks were gaining more power and status in Egyptian politics, since the continuing military conflicts gave Mamluk beys more say in the economic and political affairs of Egypt, while Istanbul helped to enhance their position further by appointing Mamluks to take charge of the Awqāf al-Haramayn, the administration of Suez, and the government of Jeddah. With such growing influence the Mamluks could no longer avoid engaging in the conflicts and struggles within the political system either as mediators or in support of one side against the other.

4-Even the solidarity of the Ulema had been broken in the dispute which developed over the post of Sheikh al-Azhar, in 1120/1709 between the supporters of al-Nafrawi and those of al-Qalini.¹ Conflict over this post was a clear indication of the growing importance of the religious authorities, but it also led to sharp differences in the fatwās which were later issued in favour of one or the other side in the civil war. Manuscript sources do not give many details concerning the struggle over the headship of al-Azhar, but they do clearly indicate that members of the military supported Sheikh al-Nashrati against al-Nafrawi and the fact that the crisis over this post was only solved by direct interference on the part of the Pasha and the Mamluk beys.² Thus, during the Civil War, and in the absence of a single governing authority, al-Azhar seemed to be out of control. From then on external influences played a vital role in the direction of the religious authorities including the appointment of the Sheikh al-Azhar.

¹ibid., pp. 220-21.

²ibid.,

5-Khalil Pasha had just replaced Ibrahim Pasha in 1123/1711. He had little knowledge of the complicated political structure in Egypt, and failed to appreciate the major shifts in the balance of power in Egyptian politics as he sided with the Janissaries. These were still the most dominant regiment amongst the military in Istanbul, but not in Cairo, where they had already lost their economic and political power. Traditionally the Ottoman Pashas in Cairo supported the Janissaries and obtained much support for their policies in return. The Janissaries were viewed as the Sultan's most loyal regiment in Cairo, but power was gradually shifting more into the hands of the Mamluks, Bedouins and the religious authorities while the Pasha and the military were losing ground. The 1123/1711 civil war could best be described as the breaking point in the process of Egypt's transition from foreign government to local control.

Immediate Causes of the Civil War

There were three major causes of the civil war of 1123/1711:

1- Inter-Janissary conflict over control of the regiment, and fierce rivalry over the post of bashodabashi. The period from 1085/1673 to 1106/1694 witnessed a bloody conflict between Mustafa Qāzdağlı and Küçük Muhammed over bashodabashi of the Janissaries, which ended with the assassination of Küçük Muhammed and the appointment of Mustafa, who remained in this post until his death in 1115/1703.¹ Following the death of Murad Ketkhuda, who replaced Mustafa in 1117/1705, a new rivalry over control of the regiment developed, this time between Ifranj Ahmad and Kör 'Abdullah.² Ifranj Ahmad was eventually appointed bashodabashi, only to be ousted and exiled in 1119/1707. He returned shortly afterwards and was raised to the rank of sanjaq bey, following the crisis between the six regiments and the Janissaries in 1121/1709. Eight leading members of the regiment were also exiled, including Ahmad's

¹ J, 1/146. See also P.M. Holt Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 88-90.

²J, 1/168.

rival Kör ‘Abdullah.¹ Ifranj Ahmad returned to his post as bashodabashi, but the crisis resumed with the return of the eight Janissaries to Cairo from exile. Shortly afterwards Kör ‘Abdullah managed to gather six hundred of his supporters amongst the Janissaries and joined the ‘Azebān regiment in 1123/1711, after failing to depose Ifranj from his post.² The six hundred Janissaries, led by eight previously exiled leading members of the regiment, initiated the conflict by surrounding the Citadel and cutting off its water supplies.

2- Janissary-‘Azebān rivalry, which was the basic cause of the civil war. Despite being a smaller regiment, the members of the ‘Azebān were much more united and able to gather the remaining five regiments on their side to counterbalance Janissary dominance. The ‘Azebān was also a favourite refuge for all Janissary rebels against their own regiment, which contributed to deteriorating relations between the two major competing ojaqs. The first incident leading to the outbreak of the civil war was, according to Shadhili,³ the ‘Azebān’s promise to help Kör ‘Abdullah and his faction of six hundred men remove Ifranj Ahmad and return to their Janissary regiment. The ‘Azebān also agreed to protect Hasan Ikhmimi, the powerful rival Bedouin Sheikh who was a member of the Janissaries. Sheikh Hasan paid a large sum of money to the ‘Azebān in order to remove Ifranj Ahmad and secure his status against the Hawwara tribe in Jirja. To the faction of Ifranj Ahmad, these were very provocative measures by the ‘Azebān, and matters became worse when the rival faction of Janissaries cut off water supplies to the citadel. Ifranj Ahmad acted immediately by putting the ‘Azebān quarters under heavy bombardment.

3- Inter-Faqari conflict between Ayyub and Qaytas, who were engaged in a fierce rivalry. Ayyub supported Muhammed al-Kabir (a Faqari bey) and

¹ AI, p. 224.

² SH, pp. 347-352.

³ ibid., p. 350.

Hawwara against Muhammed Qatamish (another Faqari bey) and Hasan al-Ikhmimi and his tribe who were backed by Qaytas Bey. There was, in addition, another struggle behind the scenes between the two prominent Faqari chiefs, Ayyub and Qaytas, over gaining support of the Janissary regiment. Ayyub developed a strong personal friendship with Ifranj Ahmad and backed him to return from exile and resume his position as bashodabashi, while Qaytas was strongly supported by Kör ‘Abdullah and his faction, who insisted in 1120/1709 that Qaytas remains Amīr al-Hājj when the Pasha had intentions to remove him from his post.¹ Ayyub played a major role in support of Ifranj Ahmad by providing him with money and men when fighting broke out between the Janissaries and ‘Azebān. Both Ayyub and Qaytas become engaged in the struggle. They exchanged provocative messages and filled their houses with men and arms. In fact, the fighting did not spread on a larger scale until Muhammed al-Kabir came to Cairo with the Hawwara tribe to support Ifranj Ahmad and Ayyub, while Muhammed Qatamish allied with the ‘Azebān and loyal Bedouin to check his advance.² The Qasimi faction headed by Iwaz interfered first as mediators, but was unable to withstand the provocation of Ifranj Ahmad and Ayyub, and the arrival of a major force from Jirja headed by Muhammed al-Kabir.

THE EVENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Cairo was already in a state of turmoil in mid Safar 1123/April 1711, with six hundred rebellious Janissaries and the ‘Azebān regiment surrounding the citadel and cutting off its water supplies, while Ifranj Ahmad ordered an intensive bombardment of the ‘Azebān quarter. Khalil Pasha and the qadiasker had given full support to Ifranj Ahmad and his faction of the Janissaries, as did the aghas of the Gönüllüyān, Tüfekjiyān, Jarakise, and Javushān regiments, but their corps were not fully loyal. Ahmad counted most on the economic and

¹ Ibid., pp. 351, 356.

² D, p. 88. Also SH, pp. 360-61.

military support of Ayyub Bey. His demands were simple: to send the eight leading rebellious Janissaries into exile and to hand over Hasan al-Ikhmimi to the Pasha for judgment. Ayyub's Faqari rival Qaytas Bey, on the other side, supported the rebellious Janissaries and 'Azebān regiment demanding that Ifranj Ahmad step down as bashodabashi.¹

While the two Faqari foes Ayyub and Qaytas seemed to be preparing for a long war by filling their houses with armaments and men, the Qasimi beys, Ibrahim and Iwaz, were trying in vain to avoid a bloody conflict. At first Qasimi attempts to stop the fighting seemed to have succeeded, resulting in a truce which lasted for about ten days, but the arrival of Muhammed Bey al-Kabir and his loyal Bedouin of Hawwara on 4 Rabi I, 1123/ 5 May 1711 changed the course of events.² The conflict was no longer between the Janissaries and the 'Azebān around the Citadel. Fighting spread and Cairo became the scene of a sharp conflict between all the major competing factions, in which the Bedouin of Hawwara stood against Hasan al-Ikhmimi and his tribe, Muhammed al-Kabir against Muhammed Qatamish (who were competing for the province of Jirja), Ayyub, and Qaytas, who were competing for leadership of the Faqari camp. The Qasimi beys were propelled into the conflict owing to two major factors. Firstly, there was the strong personal friendship between Ibrahim and Qaytas, which lasted until the assassination of Qaytas in 1127/1715, a relationship which continued to drive the Qasimis gradually into full support of Qaytas against Ayyub. Secondly, there was the failure of Iwaz Bey's mediation between the two Faqari beys, and the provocative actions of Ayyub and his faction in sending threatening messages and refusing to negotiate.³ Varying opinions among the Ulema paved the way for further differences. Ifranj Ahmad gained an official fatwā from al-Azhar to legalize his bombardment of the 'Azebān and justify his demand that the eight

¹ SH, p. 354.

² Ibid., pp. 360-61.

³ SH, pp. 356-7.

rebellious Janissaries should be sent into exile, while Qaytas and the Qasimi beys obtained another fatwā from al-Azhar, stating that Muhammed al-Kabir and the Hawwara tribe were corrupt and should be detained by all means.¹ By the time of the arrival of Muhammed al-Kabir, preparations for the war were completed by all sides and the fighting afterwards developed through three major stages, as follows.

-Battles for Mosques, 26 Safar-14 Rabi II, 1123/26 April-1June 1711:

Muhammed Bey al-Kabir first aimed to surround the ‘Azebān and the rebellious Janissaries by gaining control of Sultan Hasan Mosque, which overlooked their quarter. Muhammed Qatamish and the ‘Azebān forces were quicker to act and gained control of the mosque, and they set their defenses in another two small mosques around the Citadel, those of Mahmūd Pasha and Amīr Akhur. After several unsuccessful attempts to break through the ‘Azebān defenses, Muhammed al-Kabir decided to cut off the water supplies of the ‘Azebān by occupying three further mosques neighbouring their quarter. On conflict owing to two major factors. Firstly, there was the strong personal friendship between Ibrahim and Qaytas, which lasted until the assassination of Qaytas in 1127/1715, a relationship which continued to drive the Qasimis gradually into full support of Qaytas against Ayyub. Secondly, there was the failure of Iwaz Bey’s mediation between the two Faqari beys, and the provocative actions of Ayyub and his faction in sending threatening messages and refusing to negotiate.² Varying opinions among the Ulema paved the way for further differences. Ifranj Ahmad gained an official fatwā from al-Azhar to legalize his bombardment of the ‘Azebān and justify his demand that the eight rebellious Janissaries should be sent into exile, while Qaytas and the Qasimi beys obtained another fatwā from al-Azhar, stating that Muhammed al-Kabir

¹ Iwaz Bey and his faction were told by the Ulema, “Yajuzu lakum ’an tudāfi’u ’an ’anfusikum wa ’an ’ummati Muhammed”, which could literally be translated as “You are legalized to defend yourselves and defend the nation of Muhammed.” See D. p. 89; and SH, p. 352.

² SH, pp. 356-7.

and the Hawwara tribe were corrupt and should be detained by all means.¹ By the time of the arrival of Muhammed al-Kabir, preparations for the war were completed by all sides and the fighting afterwards developed through three major stages, as follows.

-Battles for Mosques, 26 Safar-14 Rabi II, 1123/26 April-1June 1711:

Muhammed Bey al-Kabir first aimed to surround the ‘Azebān and the rebellious Janissaries by gaining control of Sultan Hasan Mosque, which overlooked their quarter. Muhammed Qatamish and the ‘Azebān forces were quicker to act and gained control of the mosque, and they set their defenses in another two small mosques around the Citadel, those of Mahmūd Pasha and Amīr Akhur. After several unsuccessful attempts to break through the ‘Azebān defenses, Muhammed al-Kabir decided to cut off the water supplies of the ‘Azebān by occupying three further mosques neighbouring their quarter. On hearing the news the ‘Azebān forces occupied the Mardani and Yūsuf Mosques, while the Janissaries gained control of the Sudun Mosque, which lies between the two. Fierce fighting followed between the two sides in Suwaiqat al-‘Uzza, in which the population of the district were seriously affected, as houses were burnt and shops were looted. The whole district was evacuated before the Janissaries decided to move to the centre of Cairo and occupy three further mosques around Bab Zuwaila. This movement only helped to spread the fighting to the city centre and imposed further pressure on the Qasimi beys to put an end to the hostilities which Muhammed al-Kabir had caused by his unsuccessful attempts to defeat the ‘Azebān.

- Confrontations on the battlefield, 15-29 Rabi II 1123/2-16 June 1711

¹ Iwaz Bey and his faction were told by the Ulema, “Yajuzu lakum ’an tudāfi’u ’an ’anfusikum wa ’an ’ummati Muhammed”, which could literally be translated as “You are legalized to defend yourselves and defend the nation of Muhammed.” See D. p. 89; and SH, p. 352.

Iwaz Bey led a fresh attempt to solve the problem peacefully and, together with the other Mamluk beys, called on Ayyub to accept a new solution by their sending Ifranj Ahmad and Kōr ‘Abdullah, the two competing candidates for the position of Janissary bashodabashi, into exile and by dispersing the remaining seven of the eight leading Janissaries amongst the other regiments. But Ayyub refused to negotiate. On receiving a fatwā from the Ulema against Muhammed Al-Kabir, Iwaz, Ibrahim, Qaytas, ‘Uthmān and Qatamish decided to depose the Pasha and appoint Qansuh Bey as Qā’immaqam, attack Muhammed al-Kabir and his loyal Bedouins and Janissaries, and restore law and order in Cairo. They also appointed five new aghas to the other five regiments. Ifranj Ahmad and Khalil Pasha declared the Mamluk beys to be rebels against the Sultan and agreed with Ifranj Ahmad to form a new military unit of eight hundred men to balance the collective forces of the Mamluk beys and their Bedouin supporters.¹ The first confrontation in which all the conflicting forces were engaged took place in the outskirts of Cairo on 14 Rabi II, 1123/1 June 1711. The battle was fierce but not decisive, and resulted in the tragic death of Iwaz Bey, which had a great impact on both sides. Manuscript sources mentioned that Ayyub Bey appreciated at this stage that he was not going to stay much longer in Cairo, because the Qasimis would be determined to take their revenge.² The Qasimis were indeed very quick to reorganize their forces under the command of Iwaz’s Mamluk, Yūsuf al-Jazzar, and fighting resumed only three days after the death of Iwaz. Battles took place almost on daily basis until 27 Rabi II, 1123 / 14 June, 1711. A second major battle took place, which was no more decisive than the first, but success was gradually shifting in favour of Qaytas and the Qasimis.

-The Final Confrontation 2-8 Jumada I 1123/18-24 June 1711

¹ AI, pp. 238-9. Also in SH, pp. 368-9.

² J, 1/175.

When battles in the open field failed to end the struggle, the Mamluk beys decided to take new measures, which eventually helped to defeat Ayyub and the Janissaries. Qansuh Bey Qā'immaqam ordered all seven regiments to register their names and confirm their wages under their new command, and it was declared that all those who failed to turn up could not be guaranteed their lives or belongings. These orders were executed accordingly against Ifranĵ Ahmad and his faction of Janissaries. His own house was destroyed, while his loyal Janissaries burnt down the houses of their rivals around Rawda and Miqiyas.¹ The Mamluk beys took a final decision to attack the house of Ayyub Bey, in order to destroy his power base and disperse his men. This attack took place on 5 Jumada I, 1123/21 June 1711, and the house was completely destroyed. Ayyub fled to Istanbul and his alliance immediately collapsed. His ally, Muhammed al-Kabir, retreated to Jirĵa with the Hawwara tribe, and was followed by Muhammed Qatamish and the tribe of Hasan Ikhmimi, who inflicted heavy losses on Hawwara as they retreated. Muhammed al-Kabir finally gave up the struggle and followed Ayyub to Istanbul where they both settled temporarily.

In the Citadel, Khalil Pasha, the qadiasker, Ifranĵ Ahmad, and the Janissaries surrendered. Khalil Pasha was requested to step down while Ifranĵ Ahmad was killed by his rivals on 6 Jumada I/22 June. Massive purges followed in which Hasan the Janissary agha, Ahmad Aĵa Tüfekĵi, and Omar Aĵa were killed, together with many notable members of their regiments, while many others were exiled, including the Ulema who had supported Ifranĵ Ahmad.² Kōr 'Abdullah was appointed bashodabashi of the Janissaries; his seven colleagues and six hundred men returned to their regiments.

¹ SH, pp. 382-9.

² Ibid., p. 397.

The developments which followed the civil war do not show a Qasimi victory against the Faqaris as many later historians suggest.¹ Rather it was Qaytas and Muhammed Qatamish of the Faqariyya who gained most from their victory over Ayyub and Muhammed al-Kabir. The Qasimis suffered heavy losses during the war, and the death of Iwaz Bey created a huge gap. It would be a long time before his son Ismail and his Mamluk, Yūsuf al-Jazzar, were to regain Qasimi supremacy.

V-THE PERIOD 1112-1143/1724-1730

Mamluk Dominance

There were major changes in the Egyptian political arena following the civil war of 1123/1711.² The Janissary faction led by Kōr ‘Abdullah took control of the regiment, thanks to the Qasimi-Faqari alliance which had helped to defeat Ifranj Ahmad and his party. The Qasimis, on the other hand, appeared to have emerged from the battle victorious by defeating the alliance which included Ifranj Ahmad, but in reality they had suffered great losses, of which the most severe was the death of their leader Iwaz Bey. It is inappropriate to view the civil war as a Qasimi-Faqari battle which resulted in the victory of the

¹ P.M. Holt, for example argued, “The Great Insurrection ended with the triumph of the Qasimiya, the flight of their leading Faqari opponents and the death of Afranj Ahmad.” (“The Pattern of Egyptian Political History From 1517 to 1798”, p.86).

² P.M. Holt correctly argued, “The Great Insurrection of 1711 demonstrated the ascendancy of the beylicate in Egyptian politics. From this point, the squabbles of the seven corps sank into insignificance, compared with the bitter hostilities which characterized the relations of the Faqari and Qasimi beys, and their Mamluk households. The Ottoman viceroys became mere figureheads, liable to deposition if they offended the dominant beylical faction.” (Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516-1922, p. 90).

Qasimis against the Faqaris, because the real winner was Qaytas Bey and his supporters Muhammed Qatamish and ‘Uthmān Bey, who all belonged to the Faqari camp. The strong relations which Qaytas had managed to establish with heads of the Janissary and ‘Azebān’ regiments gave him the dominance in Cairo. Moreover, the recognition of his status by Istanbul gave him unlimited supremacy. Ahmad Shalabi comments on his status:

“On 4 Rajab an agha arrived [from Istanbul] for the appointment of Qaytas as Defterdar of Misr in place of Ibrahim Abu Shanab, and his Mamluk, Muhammed Qatamish, as Amīr al-Hājī. It never happened before that the master was appointed Defterdar and his Mamluk Amīr al-Hājī at the same time. This was a great honour and happiness. They both wore their robes [of appointment] in the Dīwān and walked out with Qaytas on the right and his Mamluk on the left.”¹

The period of Qaytas’s dominance continued from 1123/1711 until his assassination in 1127/1715. But Qaytas had always realized that it was only a matter of time before the Qasimis would reorganize themselves and recover their losses under the leadership of Ibrahim Abu Shanab, Ismail b. Iwaz, and Yūsuf al-Jazzar. However, Qaytas’s fear of a Qasimi recovery was not based on factional motivations, because he had no problem in allying with Qasimi notables against his fellow Faqaris, Ayyub and Muhammed al-Kabir.² It was rather his tendency to control the province without any rival. When his fears of a Qasimi recovery came true, Qaytas made a plan with Wali Pasha to send Ibrahim, Ismail and Yūsuf on a false campaign against the Bedouin, and he gave orders to Salim b. Habib to kill all three Qasimis as they left Cairo.³ But the plan failed when Salim b. Habib hesitated in executing the orders and the three Qasimi notables, realizing that they had been isolated from their power base, rushed back to Cairo.

¹ AI, p. 262.

² This point will be elaborated in Chapter 4.

³ D, p. 105.

There was a policy shift when Wali Pasha was replaced by Abdi Pasha in 1126/1714. The new Pasha threw the former in jail because of overdue debts to the Porte, and appointed the Qasimi beys, Yūsuf and Ismail, in place of the Faqari chiefs, Qaytas and Qatamish, to the posts of Defterdar and Amīr al-Hājj.¹ This was only the beginning of hostilities, for on 4 Rajab 1127/10 July 1715 Abdi Pasha requested Qaytas to appear before him in Qara Maidan.² As they sat together he showed Qaytas an Imperial Edict giving orders for his death. Qaytas's face became pale; the Pasha's men killed him with daggers and threw his dead body in the square while the Pasha ascended to the Citadel.³ Qaytas's alliance collapsed, his Mamluk, Muhammed Qatamish, fled to Istanbul, while 'Uthmān and other Faqari beys disappeared, and their houses were looted and burned. Kör 'Abdullah was killed and all the seven ojaqs were purged of Faqari supporters.

In the period 1127-1130/1715-1718 the Qasimis were able to penetrate the Egyptian military system, and for the first time they were able to interfere directly in appointments and dismissals within the seven regiments. It should also be noted that this period saw the rise of a new generation of Mamluks, more powerful than their predecessors, richer, and possessing less loyalty to Istanbul. After, and as a result of, a whole series of events including the death of Iwaz Bey, the escape of Ayyub and Muhammed al-Kabir in 1123/1711, and the subsequent assassination of Qaytas, the escape of Muhammed Qatamish, 'Uthmān, and Hussein Beys in 1127/1715, and the death of Qansuh Bey during same year, followed by the death of Ibrahim Abu Shanab in 1130/1718, a new generation of Mamluk beys began to gain control of Egypt and initiate a transition into a new phase of its history. The most notable of these 'new' Mamluks were Ismail b. Iwaz, Muhammed b. Ibrahim, Yūsuf al-Jazzar, Jerkes

¹ AI, pp. 265-8.

² Qara Maidan (the Black Square) was a famous site in front of the Citadel.

³ D, p. 113.

Muhammed, Zain al-Faqar, and a number of lesser Mamluks. The Qasimi house split into two camps: the Shawaribiya headed by Ismail Bey, Yūsuf al-Jazzar, and their supporters; and the Shanabiya headed by Muhammed b. Ibrahim, Jerkes Muhammed and their supporters. Major causes of conflict between the two sides were differences over the appointment of their supporters to leading posts in the military, and over the control and supervision of the iltizam land. Disputes between the Shanabiya and the Shawaribiya reached their peak in 1131/1719, when Jerkes Muhammed was accused of an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Ismail Bey. Eventually Jerkes was captured outside Cairo and exiled to Cyprus, while his house was looted and destroyed.¹ There was a remarkable policy shift however in 1132/1719, during the same year in which Rajab Pasha was appointed as viceroy of Egypt with orders to assassinate Ismail and pardon Jerkes. Rajab Pasha took the opportunity to get rid of Ismail by sending a force of one thousand men to kill him as he was returning from Hijaz at the head of the pilgrimage caravan. In Cairo Rajab Pasha put to death the Defterdar, Javush Ketkhuda, and other supporters of Ismail. Jerkes and several Faqari Mamluks then emerged from hiding. Ahmad Shalabi mentions that Rajab Pasha purged the military and all official posts of Ismail's supporters and, in one day, made one hundred and twenty-nine new appointments to official posts in Egypt.² On hearing the news, Ismail Bey fled from the pilgrimage caravan and entered Cairo secretly dressed in a woman's veil. There he quietly gathered together his supporters and the Mamluks. Rajab Pasha, on the other side, failed to keep to the Shanabi-Faqari alliance and Jerkes became too suspicious of him. He turned back to Ismail and a Jam'iyah (Mamluk council) was held in the house of Muhammed b. Ibrahim, which was attended by military notables and heads of the two competing Qasimi factions together with the Ulema and Ashrāf. The Jam'iyah agreed on the overthrow of

¹ AI, p. 297.

² Ibid., p. 309.

Rajab Pasha. Its members went straight to Rumailah Square and fired cannons and rifles at the Citadel, after which the Pasha surrendered and stepped down.¹

Pashas against Mamluks

When Istanbul realized it was losing control over the affairs of Cairo to the competing Mamluk beys the Sultan decided to send Muhammed al-Nishanji, formerly the Grand Wazir, as Pasha of Egypt. He had proved himself to be one of the most capable statesmen.² Muhammed al-Nishanji stayed in Egypt from 17 Ramadan 1138/12 July 1721 to 11 Muharram 1141/17 August 1728, with the exception of two months in which Jerkes overthrew him until he was reinstated with the help of Istanbul. This long term of office can be divided into three periods in terms of political events:

- a) 1133-1136/1721-1724. During this period the Qasimi chief, Ismail Bey, emerged as the prominent leader of Cairo, becoming known as Sheikh al Balad (the Country's Chief). The popularity of Ismail extended as far as Hijaz and he also exerted control over the Arab Bedouin by preventing them making further attacks on the pilgrimage caravan. The only limitation on Ismail's supremacy was Jerkes, who had his own supporters within the military and also possessed a strong Bedouin ally, Salim b. Habib and his tribe. Eventually Jerkes formed an alliance with the Faqaris Aslan, Kaplan, and Zain al-Faqar, and with the support of the Pasha and qadiasker, they made a plan to assassinate Ismail in the Pasha's Dīwān, which was successfully carried out by Zain al-Faqar on 19 Safar 1136/18 November 1723.³
- b) 1136-1138/1724-1726. With a Faqari-Pasha alliance thus established, Jerkes managed to purge the military of the Mamluks of Ismail. After Ismail's death, most of the sanjaq beys who had supported Ismail were

¹ TA, ff. 187-89. See also D, pp. 140-142, and AI, pp. 313-316.

² For more information on the political skill of Muhammed al-Nishanji, see AI, pp. 535, 540-542.

³ TA, ff. 197-199; D, pp. 143-145; and AI, pp. 382-88.

killed and Jerkes became officially Sheikh al-Balad. However, the Shanabi-Faqari alliance was rather shaky. Jerkes immediately turned against the Faqari camp and, by destroying them became effectively the master of Cairo.¹ When in 1137/1725 Muhammed Pasha attempted to limit Jerkes's authority by preventing the sanjaq beys from going to his house and withdrawing his sanjaq title, Jerkes proved to be stronger and faster to act, as he turned against the Pasha and forced him to step down². When the news reached Istanbul, 'Ali Pasha was sent with firm orders to ban all meetings in the house of any sanjaq bey. 'Ali Pasha arranged secretly with the deposed Pasha, Muhammed al-Nishanji, to form a military-Faqari alliance which also included Qasimi beys from the Shawaribi faction. Jerkes was surprised when the Pashas, with the military and notables of the Ulema and Faqari-Qasimi beys, gathered in Rumailah Square to challenge his supremacy. There was an unequal confrontation between the forces of Jerkes and the united forces of the new alliance which 'Ali Pasha had formed. The house of Jerkes was besieged and bombarded while his defenses collapsed. Jerkes fled and his supporters also ran away or went into hiding, while their houses were looted and destroyed. 'Ali Pasha stepped down in favour of Muhammed Pasha, after spending only seventy-seven days in office. His mission was completed by purging all the supporters of Jerkes from the military, and appointing new sanjaq beys from the Faqaris and Shawaribi faction of the Qasimiyya.³

- c) 1139-1141/1727-1729. After the defeat of Jerkes and his escape, Cairo was far from being stable. The Faqaris turned against their Shawaribi allies, most of whom were killed, while the rest were sent into exile or forced to flee. The Faqaris further enhanced their position by requesting Muhammed Qatamish to come from Istanbul. The Sultan

¹ D, pp. 146-148.

² ibid., p. 154; and AI, pp. 448-451.

³ D, pp. 158-162; and AI, pp. 470-477.

granted him the title of Pasha and his arrival was regarded as a moral victory for the Faqaris, who gained recognition from the Sultan. Zain al-Faqar, on the other hand, became officially Sheikh al-Balad and he appointed his followers to major and minor posts even within the military. Shalabi comments on his status “Zain al-Faqar Bey became Sheikh al-Balad. Inside and outside Cairo, he gained the supremacy and his word was accepted by great and small. Muhammed Pasha invested him with a robe and said to him, ‘You are Sheikh al-Balad’.”¹ But despite all this status, the Faqaris were not the only powerful group in Egypt. There was continued fear that the Qasimis might form a new alliance against the Faqaris.

In 1141/1729, news came to Cairo that Jerkes had gathered the Arab Bedouin and his own followers, and made an alliance with Suleiman Bey of Jirja. The Faqaris prepared a major expedition against Jerkes, and when Bakir Pasha (who succeeded Muhammed al-Nishanji) hesitated in paying the expenses of the expedition, he was immediately deposed.² There was indeed a real threat to the authorities in Cairo. According to Ahmad Shalabi, the rebellious forces amounted to around five thousand men. Successive expeditions were defeated by the forces of Jerkes, who continued to fight for eleven months, after which he began to lose ground. Suleiman Bey was killed in battle while Salim b. Habib turned against Jerkes, who began to retreat and lose his men until he was drowned in 1142/1730 while he was trying to make his escape.³ Meanwhile the Shawaribis who were hiding in Cairo managed to assassinate Zain al-Faqar Bey five days before the death of Jerkes, but they failed to fulfill their ambition of controlling Cairo. Both Qasimi factions were uprooted from Egypt and completely destroyed, while the Faqaris suffered heavy losses in eleven months’ fighting with Jerkes and the death of

¹ AI, p. 525.

² D, pp. 186-187; and, AI, p. 555.

³ D, p. 192; and AI, pp. 567-569.

their leader Zain al-Faqar. The period of our study ends with a new alliance of minor Faqari beys and military notables: Yūsuf Ketkhuda ‘Azebān and ‘Uthmān al-Qazdağlı, who paved the way for a period of Qazdağlı family dominance in Egypt.¹

Decline of the Military

The civil war served as a great opportunity for the Mamluks to penetrate into the military ojaqs and appoint their followers to the highest ranks, such as those of agha, ketkhuda and odabashi. Following the war, the Qaytas-Janissary alliance continued. Qaytas had helped their leading ‘eight’ against Iفرanj Ahmad, while they in return supported him against Ayyub Bey. But this alliance collapsed when Qaytas was assassinated in 1127/1715 and the garrison was purged of his supporters. Under such circumstances Ismail managed to appoint one of his Mamluks in the name of Ismail as Agha of the Janissaries, while another Mamluk of Abu Shanab became Javush Ketkhuda. There was an extensive movement of Mamluk appointments into military ranks to fill the gaps which had been created by the purges which followed the death of Qaytas Bey.²

During the years 1128-1136/1716-1724, Ismail and Jerkes struggled against each other to gain full control of the seven regiments. At one stage Ismail managed to secure the loyalty of the ‘Azebān and the other five regiments, but failed to impose his will on the Janissaries. Jerkes was more successful than Ismail in winning the support of the Janissaries.³ The Mamluk beys continued to struggle for control of the seven ojaqs, but there was a tendency by some military officials to keep away from Mamluk factions and remain independent as much as possible. In 1134/1722 the ihdiyariya (chiefs) of

¹ AI, p. 570.

² ibid., pp. 271-282.

³ ibid., p. 373.

the seven regiments held a meeting in the house of Ibrahim Jorbaji ‘Azebān (a prominent military chief), and there they made an agreement to keep away from the sanjaq beys, not to attend the Jam‘iyahs they held in their houses, and to refuse any cooperation with one Mamluk party against another.¹ The agreement did not last long and the beys continued to interfere in the affairs of the military through their Mamluks within the ojaqs. Another attempt was made in 1135/1722, when fourteen ihdiyār (military chief), two from each regiment, went to Ismail Bey and demanded he solve his problems with Jerkes in his own way. They stated clearly that the military did not belong either to him or to Jerkes, and that they were the Sultan’s loyal army. Following this initiative, the Mamluks held a meeting in which they all agreed not to interfere in the military.² These agreements did not, however, last for long. In 1138/1726 ‘Ali Pasha had to call upon all military officials to declare their obedience to the Sultan and get rid of all Shanabi sympathizers. Despite these attempts, however, a general policy was adopted by the authorities in Cairo to separate the Mamluks and the military. The Pashas were, in fact, losing much of their influence over the Mamluk beys, who were very determined to appoint their followers to official military posts.

In comparison with the period 1099-1123/1687-1711, during this period the military lost much of its status and authority.³ In the years before the civil war, Küçük Muhammed and ‘Ali Agha were able to control the markets of Cairo in order to prevent price rises, and to maintain law and order in the Egyptian capital. Even Ifranj Ahmad was much stronger than any military official after the civil war. The period 1124-1143/1712-1731 did not witness the emergence of strong military leaders who could impose their will over

¹ Ibid., p. 336.

² Ibid., pp. 358-359.

³ M. Winter commented on the outcome of the 1123/1711 civil war as it affected the Egyptian garrison: “The 1711 ‘civil war’ marked not only the defeat of the Janissary regiment and the Faqariyya, but, more significantly, the eventual decline of the regiments and the ascendancy of the beylicate, which lasted until the French occupation in 1798” (Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule 1517-1798, p. 23).

Mamluk beys, and even the post of bashodabashi was no longer as important as it had been. Political supremacy was often achieved by a military-Mamluk alliance, mainly between the Sheikh al-Balad and the aghas of the Janissary and 'Azebān regiments.

Istanbul's Policy towards Egypt

Istanbul adopted a policy of encouraging factional and household rivalries amongst the Mamluk beys, thus helping to limit their authority and prevent any Mamluk from becoming too powerful. Qaytas was assassinated in 1127/1715 when he became the strongest figure in Cairo and imposed his authority over the military.¹ When Ismail developed a power base and became much stronger than an ordinary sanjaq bey, Rajab Pasha was ordered to put him to death too.² Although Istanbul pardoned Ismail later, the Sultan gave his consent to his assassination in 1136/1724. Similarly, when Jerkes reached the status of his predecessors, Qaytas and Ismail, Istanbul sent 'Ali Pasha in 1138/1726 with orders to destroy his household.³ Istanbul not only used the Pashas to limit Mamluk authority, but also encouraged one Mamluk household against its rivals. Encouraging one household to destroy another and eventually build an economic and political power base was rather an investment for the Sultan, since every household paid bribes and bought iltizam land, which all went to Istanbul. The manuscript sources mention that Muhammed b. Ibrahim and Jerkes paid hilwān in return for gaining official posts, which in sum was much larger than the annual tribute.⁴ The destruction of the houses of Ayyub, Qaytas, Ismail, and Jerkes, as well as the hilwān, which was paid by each household to inherit the status of its predecessor, made great profit for Istanbul.

¹ D, p. 113; and AI, p. 271.

² AI, pp. 306-307.

³ D, pp. 162-163; and AI, pp. 458-459.

⁴ Ahmad Shalabi narrates that Muhammed b. Ibrahim Abu Shanab promised to pay 3,000 kise in return for appointing him as Defterdar. In 1138/1726 he had already paid 2,600 kise and 400 remained unsettled. AI, p. 497.

A closer examination of contemporary sources indicates that Istanbul was not as weak as may have been assumed. The Sultan had a definite policy towards Egypt and was kept informed of all the minor and major events in Cairo. In fact, there were many other ways of limiting Mamluk authority in Egypt.

Thus, in 1124/1712 Istanbul sent Khalil Pasha to Jeddah with Ottoman forces to replace the Egyptian military which often executed the orders of Istanbul in Hijaz. On this occasion Shalabi comments “An agha came via the Sham route. His name was Khalil Pasha and he was appointed as governor of Jeddah. He entered Cairo accompanied by a large number of troops who came with him from the Rum [Ottoman] army”.¹ This was not only a show of strength, which Istanbul intentionally sent via Cairo, but was also intended as a major curbing of the Mamluks who were often appointed as governors of Jeddah and made huge profits from the taxes they imposed on traders.

Again, in 1139/1727, Istanbul further sent five hundred troops for the protection of Suez. This move was another attempt to limit the power of the Egyptian military and the Mamluks who were previously in charge of Suez.² Thus, Istanbul exerted full control over the income of the Mamluk beys who were making huge profits from both ports (Jeddah and Suez) by collecting taxes. It also served to surround its largest province by its own forces and keep a close watch over its affairs.

Furthermore, Istanbul sent some of its best statesmen and distinguished figures to serve as Pashas of Egypt. For instance Wali Pasha (1123-1124/1711-1714) was a well-known figure in Istanbul and during his peaceful term in Egypt, he carried out many reforms and was later remembered for the

¹ AI, p. 260.

² Ibid., p. 498.

construction works that were carried out under his aegis. Ahmad Shalabi describes his days as a dream.¹ ‘Abdi Pasha (1126-1129/1714-1717) was a cunning and firm ruler, who managed to isolate Qaytas and assassinate him, purge his supporters from the military, and defeat his allies Muhammed and ‘Uthmān Beys.² ‘Abdullah Pasha (1142-1144/1729-1731), who was from the famous Köprülü family. Many contemporary sources praised his abilities and his love of science and the arts. After the end of his term in office, he spent another seven months in Cairo seeking knowledge from Egyptian scholars.³ The most remarkable Pasha during this period was Muhammed al-Nishanji, who had previously served as Grand Wazir in the Ottoman court. He had the longest term, one of seven years (1133-1141/1721-1728). Istanbul fully supported Muhammed Pasha in his policies and cooperated with him to put an end to several ambitious Mamluk beys. He was very clever in dealing with ambitious Mamluks. Ahmad Shalabi comments on his policy:

“He put an end to two households: Shawaribiya, beginning with Ismail and ending with ‘Ali al-Hindi, and the household of Jerkes and his party. Ismail’s faction consisted of eighteen sanjaqs, let alone aghas, jorbajis, kashifs, and emirs. And [there were] thirteen sanjaqs in Jerkes’s faction, let alone aghas, jorbajis, kashifs, and emirs. The sanjaqs who died or ran away [during his rule] from both parties were thirty-seven sanjaqs, [while of] ten aghas plus kakhias, jorbajis, javushes, and odabashas some died and others ran away, around ten thousand men.”⁴

When his term of office in Cairo ended, he became Pasha of Jeddah. He was honoured and respected by the Egyptian military, all the Mamluks of Cairo sent him presents, but he died shortly afterwards.

¹ AI, p. 265.

² D, pp. 112-122.

³ AI, pp. 575-576.

⁴ Ibid., p. 535.

Bedouin Tribes and the Ulema: the Rise of Local Forces

The civil war in 1123/1711 proved to be a great opportunity for the Arab Bedouin to join the competing forces in the power struggle in Cairo following the two major defeats of the collective Bedouin forces at the hands of the Egyptian military in 1098/1686 and 1111/1699. Sources do not suggest that the Bedouin had any political significance before the civil war, but then the Hawwara tribe accompanied Muhammed al-Kabir to Cairo and participated in battles against Qatamish and other Mamluk beys who supported Hawwara's main rival Hasan al-Ikhmimi and his tribe.¹ Although the Hawwara were defeated yet again and Muhammed al-Kabir fled to Istanbul, this tribe continued to have the supremacy in Upper Egypt and had vast areas of iltizam land in Jirja under its control. The Mamluk beys realized at this stage the importance of the Bedouin as the only armed Arab force which could be very helpful in the provinces of Egypt. The Bedouin Sheikhs, on the other hand, looked to the Mamluk beys as the only group capable of representing their interests and cooperating with them in the provinces as well as gaining them recognition in Cairo.

In the period 1124-1127/1712-1715, an alliance was formed between a prominent Bedouin Sheikh, Habib, whose tribe was settled in Dijwa in the Qaliubiya province, and Qaytas Bey. According to contemporary sources, Qaytas attempted to assassinate his rival Qasimi beys in 1125/1713, using Habib and his tribe to fulfil his plans.²

On the other hand, Jerkes began to form a new alliance in Upper Egypt with the tribe of Hawwara, which had gained a reputation since the civil war of becoming a refuge for rebellious Mamluks fleeing Cairo after the destruction of their households. Jerkes collaborated with the Hawwara in controlling the

¹ SH, pp. 358-359.

² D, pp. 105-110

transport of crops to Cairo at certain rates, and agreed upon the prices of some grains.¹ When Jerkes made his final escape in 1138/1726, Hawwara territory became a safe refuge for the followers of Jerkes who were persecuted in Cairo. When Jerkes returned to Egypt in 1141/1729, the Hawwara and other minor tribes provided him with four thousand men and fought alongside him under the command of Suleiman Bey.²

Salim b. Habib succeeded his father in leading the tribe, and managed to gain many advantages by playing the factional rivalry game. He promoted his tribe as a legitimate power which provided essential service to the central government in such matters as policing the districts and protecting the iltizam land. All competing factions in Cairo feared Salim's ability to cause severe damage and corruption in the provinces and along the pilgrimage route. He thus was enabled to erect a strong power base, and his authority became further enhanced when he gave assistance to Jerkes. In 1141/1729 Salim b. Habib allied himself with the Faqari beys of Cairo, alongside the tribes of al-‘Aiyd and al-Hanādi, against Jerkes. Fighting lasted for eleven months, during which the Bedouin were most active, and the crisis was only ended by the death of Jerkes in 1142/1730 following the defeat of his forces. After 1147/1730 his tribe, the Habayba, enjoyed high status and prosperity for over forty years.³

The tribe of Hawwara also strengthened its position. They became the strongest economic and military power in Egypt despite their defeat in 1142/1730. They controlled Jirja, which was the largest and most fertile province in Egypt, and no kashif could supervise iltizam land and collect taxes without their cooperation. For this purpose the authorities in Cairo were always keen to avoid a confrontation with or future rebellion by the tribe of Hawwara. The Bedouin tribes, however, never belonged to any Mamluk household or had

¹ AI, p. 429.

² Ibid., p. 554.

³ For a full biography of Salim b. Habib see, J. 1/388-396.

any factional interests; rather they were a counterbalancing element which Muhammed al-Kabir made use of in 1123/1711 and Jerkes in 1141/1729. While Muhammed and Jerkes lost everything and suffered the complete destruction of their households, the tribes of Habib and Hawwara were strengthened further and became legitimate political powers with effective representation of their interests in Cairo.

The local Ulema also had a major opportunity during the civil war to penetrate more deeply into the political system of Egypt. With the exception of the Naqib al-Ashrāf, the qadiasker, and a handful of Egyptian Ulema who supported Ifranj Ahmad, the Sheikhs of al-Azhar stood firmly with the winning party. The Ulema thus became more important in the political system than previously. There were three major legitimating sources of power for the Ulema to at that time, viz.:

- 1- Religious legitimacy, represented in the official fatwās which al-Azhar issued during important political events. In 1138/1726, when ‘Ali Pasha came to destroy the power of Jerkes and restore Muhammed al-Nishanji as Pasha of Egypt, the Ulema issued a fatwā condemning Jerkes. They also accompanied the two Pashas and the military in al-Rumailah Square, where they showed their solidarity with the existing system against the Shanabi rebels.¹ Jerkes had earlier realized the importance of their religious authority when he intended to depose Muhammed Pasha by calling for a Jam‘iyah in his house. This was attended by the Ulema, who were forced to sign a petition to the Sultan complaining about the existing Pasha and requesting another one to replace him.²

¹ AI, p. 472.

² Ibid., pp. 449-450.

2- Political independence, which was a major feature of the Ulema during the period of study. The Ulema did not belong to any Mamluk household and never took part in sanjaq rivalry. With the exception of the sympathy of an individual 'alim towards a powerful sanjaq bey, the Ulema of al-Azhar were not Qasimi or Faqari members and were thus very successful mediators between the two sides. This fact earned them the respect of all sides in the Egyptian court. In 1133/1721 Sheikh al-Azhar Muhammed Shanan, Ahmad al-Bakri, Sheikh al-Sadāt, and the Naqib al-Ashrāf successfully brokered a truce between Rajab Pasha and Jerkes through mediation at the highest level. When Jerkes and Ismail developed grudges against each other which seemed likely to lead to a confrontation between the followers of both sanjaqs. Sheikh 'Abd al-Khaleq al-Sadāt invited both sanjaqs and their followers to his house and agreed to supervise a peace agreement between them.¹

3- Representation of the public. The public often came to al-Azhar to voice their concerns and express their anger at high prices or devaluation of the currency. The Ulema were requested by the crowds to ascend to the Citadel and inform the Pasha of the people's demands. Contemporary sources refer to four such incidents in the years 1128/1716, 1130/1718, 1135/1723 and 1137/1725, when the public made massive demonstrations and requested the Sheikh al-Azhar to go to the Pasha to complain of their poverty and the continuing price rises.² The Egyptian Ulema belonged directly to the public and were usually of Arab descent, which made them more accessible to Egyptian society than the Mamluks or military, who were of Turkish and European origins.

The Ulema played a vital economic role too. After the civil war it became practically impossible to hold Jam'iyahs in Mamluk houses or make

¹ Ibid., p. 340.

² TA, ff. 130, 143; AI, pp. 286-6, 370,433.

important decisions concerning the currency, taxes, rural reforms, of any other economic matter without the presence of the Ulema. In 1135/1723 Muhammed Pasha attempted to introduce changes in the currency. Sanjaq beys and notables expressed their fears that such decisions might cause another public upsurge and they all decided to consult the Ulema. The Jam‘iyah, which was held in the house of Tüfekji Agha, failed to persuade the Ulema to give their consent. Thus the Pasha had no choice but to cancel his decision and order the agha of the Janissaries to declare to the public that the value of the currency had not changed.¹ This was indeed a recognition of the new economic role of the Ulema and an appreciation by the ruling elite that only religious authority was capable of controlling the public and voicing their concerns. When Jerkes intended to reform the taxation system and abolish all the taxes that were imposed after 1083/1671, his first action was to consult the Ulema about the legitimacy of his decisions. The Ulema responded by saying this was “a great favour for which Jerkes will enter paradise, God willing.”²

The period 1123-1143/1711-1731 was a very critical phase in the history of Egypt. It witnessed the transfer of power and authority from external government into local hands. While the Pasha, the military ojaqs, and the authority of Istanbul weakened, the Mamluk beys, Ulema, and the Arab Bedouin grew stronger, thus paving the way for local leaders with separatist ambitions to come to the fore in the second half of the eighteenth century, among them such persons as ‘Ali Bey al-Kabir.³ It also permitted the emergence of some Ulema and Bedouin Sheikhs, such as al-Sadāt, and al-Shabrāwi of al-Azhar,⁴ as well as Suwailim and Sheikh al-‘Arab Humam⁵, to exert massive political influence.

¹ AI, p. 370.

² Ibid., p. 439.

³ J, 1/430-435.

⁴ Ibid., 1/295-296.

⁵ Ibid., 1/384-388.

CHAPTER

3

THE OTTOMAN SYSTEM

I-INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to study the political structure, established by the Qanunname of 1525, on the light of the developments of the eighteenth century to show that the balance of power which the Qanunname attempted to maintain was sharply disrupted by Istanbul's shift towards the local a'yān (notables) of Egypt in favour of its own elements and representatives. Thus, the Pashas' role further declined, the military became increasingly localized, and the qadiasker lost his religious significance as the role he played was taken over by the local Ulema. The Dīwān which had been established by the Qanunname as the effective governing council, lost its significance and was replaced by an alternative Mamluk council, the Jam'iyah.

An attempt is also made in this chapter to discuss some of the theories and arguments proposed by modern historians concerning the relationship between the viceroys of Egypt and the Porte, building on a theory formulated by a late seventeenth-century scholar on the relationship between the Sultan and his Wazirs.

The major argument of this chapter is that the decline of the viceroys, the military, and the qadiasker, in addition to the disruption in the Dīwān system, were not caused by the central administration's decline, but rather by a deliberate policy on the part of the Porte to weaken those elements and achieve a new approach that could retain Egypt for the Empire and increase the amount paid to Istanbul in annual tribute.

II-THE FORMATION OF A SYSTEM

When Egypt was fully incorporated into the Ottoman state in 1517, Sultan Selim I left Khair Bey, the previous governor of Aleppo, as the de facto governor of Egypt in return for his support for and allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan against his fellow Mamluks. His role was to govern the newly incorporated region with the aid of the Ottoman garrison which remained in Cairo, to consolidate Ottoman supremacy in the region, and restore law and order.¹ As long as Khair Bey remained governor of the region, Egypt was securely in Ottoman hands, but following his death in 1522 a crisis developed and several ambitious Mamluk and Ottoman officials attempted to secede from the empire and declare Egypt an independent sultanate.² Most remarkable was Ahmad Pasha, who, upon his failure to become the Grand Wazir in Istanbul, appointed himself as Sultan Ahmad in Cairo, being aided in this move by the Mamluk beys who longed for the reassertion of the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt. But in 1524 the rebellion suddenly collapsed. The Grand Wazir Ibrahim Pasha arrived in Cairo accompanied by an Ottoman force and supported by full authority to enact the relevant legislation that would preserve the region for the Ottomans.³

Following a two-month study of the region and a scrutiny of the previous experiences of Qansuh Bey and Khair Bey in the administration of the province, Ibrahim Pasha produced the famous Mısır Kanunnamesi (in Arabic sources referred to as Qanunname), in which he laid the basis for the administration of the region for the next two and a half centuries. Several manuscript copies of this Qanunname still survive in the national libraries and

¹ P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1561-1922, pp. 40-41.

² Between 1522 and 1524, two revolts against Ottoman authority took place, the first led by two Mamluk beys, Janim and Inal al-Saifi, and the second by the Ottoman wali Ahmad Pasha. (Ibid.).

³ ibid., pp. 50-51.

Museums of Cairo and Istanbul.¹ There has also been some recent work on the publication and translation of this work into Arabic and Modern Turkish, of which the most relevant are by:

- 1) Ömer Barkan, a chapter in his İmparatorluğunda Zirai, Ekonomi, Hukuki ve Mali Esasları.²
- 2) Ahmad Fu'ād Mutwallī of 'Ain Shams University in his edition of the Mısır Kanunnamesi.³

Although the Qanunname was written in 1525, during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, it is often referred to by many contemporary sources during the period of study as Qanun al-Sultan Selim, but it has been confirmed by Jabarti⁴ and the scholars of the French expedition⁵ that there existed only the one Qanunname, which was written during the reign of Sultan Suleiman. These laws, composed by Ibrahim Pasha, provided general guidelines for the size, functions, and limitations of the military on the one side and the administration and economy of the region on the other.

On first appearance, the Qanunname seems to be no more than an imitation of the Ottoman central administrative system, whereby the Sultan was the head of both systems, in Istanbul and in Cairo. The Grand Wazir headed the Dīwān, which met four times a week, and the Pasha in Egypt was to hold four Dīwāns weekly in the Citadel. Religious affairs and the judicial system were the responsibility of the Sheikh al-Islām or the Grand Mufti in Istanbul, and the

¹ One copy of the Qanunname exists in Cairo (Dār al-Kutub, Tarīkh Turki Tal'at, no.4), and another in Istanbul (Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esat Efendi Kitapları, numara 1827, Tarihi: 1524, 931).

² Ömer Barkan, XV ve XVI Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Zirai, Ekonomi, Hukuki ve Mali Esasları: I Kanunlar. (Istanbul, 1945).

³ A. F. Mutwallī, Mısır Kaunnamesi. 'Ain Shams University (Cairo, 1986).

⁴ J. 1/109.

⁵ Estève, "Mèmoire sur les Finances de l'Egypte depuis la Conquête de ce Pays par le Sultan Selim Ier jusqu'au Gènèral en Chef Bonaparte" in Description de l' Egypte, vo1. II, p. 43.

same duties were given to the qadiasker in Cairo. Both the Grand Wazir and the Pasha of Egypt had a deputy, called Kahya Bey. The former headed and supervised the various administrative functions of his Wazirs, while the latter had a cabinet of sanjaq beys. The economic affairs of both systems were headed by the Defterdar, while the military were in charge of law enforcement and security in both capitals. An interesting parallel developed with a Janissary-Sekbān conflict in Istanbul and the neighboring regions on one side, and a Janissary-‘Azebān rivalry in Cairo and the provinces of Egypt on the other side.¹ The numerous similarities between both systems could well be attributed to the fact that during the reigns of Selim I and Suleiman I the Ottoman central administration kept a firm control and tended to influence the development of the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt. In the long term, however, the political system of Ottoman Egypt was also influenced by local factors and took a different form than the central Ottoman administration.

One of the basic and most fundamental differences between the Ottoman system and the Qanunname of Egypt may be seen in Ibrahim Pasha’s intention to distribute power and authority between the various institutions of the Egyptian system in order to prevent any further revolts against the Ottoman Empire, and to rule out any monopolization of power by one single authority in the region. Religious and economic affairs were under close observation, and were to be reported directly to the Sultan, while appointments to all major military and administrative posts remained the prerogative of the authorities in Istanbul.² The Pasha himself had to consult the Porte in almost all the executive jobs and minor appointments in Egypt.³ A close examination of Ibrahim Pasha’s laws of 1525 reveals that the Qanunname was intended in the first place to appoint an administrative Pasha whose major responsibility was to

¹ H. Inalcik; ‘Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire 1600-1700’, Archivum Ottomanicum, 6 (1980) 297-301.

² A.F. Mutwallī, Mısır Kanunnamesi, p.77.

³ ibid., pp. 78, 80, and 81.

supervise the execution of the Sultan's orders rather than act as an independent governor. Misunderstanding of the purpose of the Qanunname of 1525 has led many historians to view the apparent weakness of the Pashas in Egypt as a sign of the decline and disintegration of the Ottoman system. In fact, this could well have been a sign of the central administration's strength.¹ In many instances a strong Pasha in Cairo did no more than weaken to some extent the role of the central administration.

Several institutions formed the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt, and thus more attention was paid to the balance of power rather than the actual government of the province. The following is a very concise description of the vital elements in the political system of Ottoman Egypt:²

- The Pasha, also referred to as Wālī Misr and Muhāfiz Misr, was regarded as the representative of the Sultan in Egypt. The Pasha's principal function was to receive formal orders from Istanbul, pass them to the officials in charge of various departments, supervise the execution of these orders, and inform the Porte of all the developments in their regard. The Pasha also headed the Dīwān and was personally in charge of sending the annual tribute to the Imperial Treasury and preparing military recruits for service in the Ottoman campaigns. The Pasha of Egypt was supported by a body of staff of whom the most senior was the Ketkhuda, who was appointed by the Sultan and held the title of sanjaq beys. The Ketkhuda served as a vice-governor of Egypt and sometimes replaced the Pasha when his term ended. There were also other administrators,

¹ L. 'Abd al-Latīf, for instance, noticed that the Pashas of Cairo were changed more frequently during the eighteenth century than during the two previous centuries. This was mainly because the administrative system of the empire and Istanbul's control over its provinces were both stronger. As the central administration declined, the status of the Pashas also declined. (al-Idārah fī Misr fī al-'asr al-'Uthmānī, pp. 72-76).

² See further S.Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organisation and Development of Ottoman Egypt 1517-1798 (Princeton, 1962).

translators, and personal guards, who often accompanied the Pasha when he came from Istanbul.¹

-Sanjaq beys: These officials were often appointed by firmān from the Pasha on the consent of the Sultan, or directly from the Porte by a Noble Script. There were twenty-four sanjaq beys, who held various major responsibilities such as supervising the iltizam land in the major provinces of Egypt, heading military units in Ottoman campaigns, leading forces in campaigns against the Bedouin of Egypt and the Hijaz, and also guarding the annual tribute which was sent to Istanbul. The most important of the sanjaq beys were the Amīr al-Hajj, who took charge of the pilgrimage administration, and the Defterdar, who handled the economy of the region. Sanjaq beys had several kashifs under their command. These Kashifs looked after the irrigation, taxation, law and order, and other internal affairs of the urban districts of Upper and Lower Egypt. One of the strongest sanjaq posts was that held by the Bey of Jirja. This was because of the large size of the province and the sanjaq beys' frequent alliances with the Bedouin tribe of Hawwara. The sanjaq beys were formally in charge of carrying out reform programs and maintaining the dams and irrigation systems of the land under their responsibility. Sanjaq beys were either chief military officials or leading Mamluks, who served as a permanent and more experienced element helping to stabilize the system.²

-The Military. Their principal role was to defend Egypt from internal and external threats. Chief officials also had the responsibility of maintaining law and order, and collecting taxes in the regions. The military developed as a small contingent but gradually increased in power and size. It contained Turks, Mamluks, Bedouin, Syrians, and Moroccans. Their number varied at different times, ranging from twelve to fifteen thousand. Senior ojaq members, such as

¹ L. 'Abd al-Latīf, al-Idārah fī Misr, pp. 61-127.

² P.M. Holt, 'The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt during the Seventeenth Century', in Studies in the History of the Near East, pp. 177-219.

aghas and ketkhudas, held some administrative posts. This contingent force was formed of seven regiments or ojaqs. The Mustahfizān, commonly known as the Janissaries (from Turkish yeniçeri, ‘new militia’, Arabized as Inkishariyyah), was the largest and most influential of the regiments in Egypt during the eighteenth century. They helped the Pasha in executing the Sultan’s orders, and were also in charge of security in the Citadel and the public places in Cairo. Senior Janissary officials held some of the most important military and administrative posts, such as commanders (sirdars) of official campaigns and of the pilgrimage caravan protection forces. The ‘Azebān’ regiment developed to be the second largest in size. Members of this regiment were in charge of the major ports of Egypt and the collection of taxes on sea trade, in addition to other minor duties in Cairo. They are followed by the Mutafarriqa, who formed the protection force for the castles and fortifications of Alexandria, Dimyāt, Aswan and other cities of Upper and Lower Egypt. The Javushān supervised the tax collection system on the iltizam land, protected the state’s grain stores, and also supervised price controls and weights and measures. The other three regiments were cavalry units, the Gönüllüyān, Tüfekjiyān, and Jarakise, members of which were commonly called Sipahis. They served the Pasha and were also under the service of certain kashifs and multazims in the regions.¹

-The qadiasker was the head of the judicial system of Egypt. The Qanunname gave the qadiasker an important role to play and a very big influence in the government of Egypt. The qadiasker was appointed from Istanbul and could only be dismissed by decree from the Sultan. He supervised judgements on the legitimacy of all political activities and gave official fatwās which were often binding. Officials who held this post were not only second in importance after

¹ L. ‘Abd al-Latif, al-Idārah fī Misr, pp. 173-240.

the Pasha, but also participated in the Dīwān, and their presence was one of the symbols of Istanbul's supremacy over Egypt.¹

-The Ruznameji was the effective head of the Ruzname system in Egypt, which was created in 1017/1608 by Maqsūd Pasha. The principal object of its establishment was to remove from the Defterdar, who had come to represent the local beys, the primary administrative power in the Treasury and to shift it to an officer who would continue to represent the Sultan in the financial process. At the same time, the Treasury had to be reorganized to meet the needs of the more complex financial structure which had evolved in Egypt.² The Ruznameji was not to be appointed without the consent of the authorities in the Ottoman capital, and was responsible directly to the Sultan. Ruznamejis often received instructions either directly from Istanbul or via the Pashas, and were required to pass them to minor officials, called efendis, in different sections (Aqlām, plural of Qalam) of the Ruzname to be executed and confirmed in the relevant registers (sijills or defters).

The above mentioned elements of the political system of Ottoman Egypt formed the Dīwān of Egypt, which was required to meet four times weekly to decide the internal affairs of the region and ensure that the sultan's orders were read, understood and executed. Meetings often resulted in the issuing of decrees, called firmāns, which were signed by the Pasha as the Sultan's representative. Other important personalities, such as the Ulema, were frequently invited to participate for consultation and advice.

This system, which was based upon the Qanunname, provided a general framework for the effective administration of the region for almost three centuries of Ottoman rule. There were many cases in which different elements

¹ M. Winter, Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, pp. 111-113.

² S. Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, pp. 338-348.

of the Dīwān exceeded their authority or declined in status. Power would shift from one party to another. There is, however, evidence that the Qanunname remained an essential reference tool for the effective administration of Egypt. According to Mahmūd b. Muhammed, a major difference of opinion occurred in the year 1104/1692 between the Janissary and the ‘Azebān’ regiments over the holding of keys to the Citadel. ‘Ali Pasha and qadiasker interposed and persuaded the conflicting parties to refer to the Qanun Sultan Selim, which was preserved securely in the treasury. Unfortunately, however, the text made no reference to the ownership of the keys of the Citadel and the Pasha had to issue a firmān ordering that both regiments should keep a copy of those keys.¹ The Qanun al-Sultan Selim was referred to again at different periods during Ottoman rule over Egypt, which indicates that these laws were still regarded as of primary authority for the administration. However the Qanunname left many gaps (such as directions concerning the holding of keys to the Citadel and certainly more important issues), which resulted in the invention of other authorities for deciding protocol, amongst which were the following:

1- Pashas’ Qanuns

In times of crisis and political unrest the Porte sent capable Pashas as their plenipotentiaries to make the necessary laws and regulations for solving such disturbances. Very relevant to the period of study are two cases of qanuns being issued, by Ibrahim Pasha in 1082/1671 and by Ismail Pasha in 1107/1695. Most of these regulations in the form of qanuns dealt with measures for reorganizing the administrative system of Egypt in order to increase the annual tribute paid to Istanbul and cut local spending. To do so qanuns had to solve several political issues connected to the income and expenditure of the treasury. Once passed by Istanbul, these laws became official and superseded previous contradictory legal instruments. Manuscript

¹ SS, f. 840.

sources do not convey much detail concerning the contents of the qanuns of Ibrahim and Ismail Pashas, but there has been some research on these laws, of which the most remarkable is that of S. Shaw.¹ The importance of these laws is sometimes taken notice of in contemporary sources. The following are examples of such cases:

a- Qanun Ibrahim Pasha:

In Awdah al-isharāt, Ahmad Shalabi adverts to several administrative activities in 1082/1671, such as the request made for the Ruznameji and some minor officials in the Ruzname to go to Istanbul. There were also changes in the value of the Egyptian currency and resetting of dates when the annual tribute (khazna) was due.² Although references to Ibrahim's reforms are rather vague, there is later evidence of their importance, as they are used as reference points for later economic and political issues. For instance, in 1137/1724 a major reform scheme was based upon abolishing all the taxes that had been introduced after 1082/1671, thus considering Ibrahim's reforms as the basic authority for the legal value of taxes acceptable to the authorities in Istanbul.³ During the same year another problem evolved concerning Muhammed Pasha's desire to expel the Bedouin of Hawwara who had become members of the military regiments. As the military refused, the laws of Ibrahim Pasha were appealed to and it was found that the military consisted of Arab Bedouin, merchants, and local Egyptians and thus Muhammed Pasha had to reverse his decision and accept the laws of 1082/1671.⁴

b- The reforms of Ismail Pasha in 1107/1695:

¹ S.Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organisation and Development of Ottoman Egypt, pp. 295-297.

² AI, pp. 170-171.

³ ibid., p. 439.

⁴ ibid., p. 442.

Ismail Pasha was sent to Egypt at a very critical time, when there was famine, drought, and a consequent failure to pay the annual tribute. According to Mahmūd b. Muhammed, one of the first actions of Ismail Pasha, was to revise the laws of Ibrahim Pasha issued in 1082/1671 and send a summary of the relevant defters to the Porte. He suggested several reforms, a report on which he also sent to Istanbul for approval.¹

The reforms of Ismail Pasha, although approved by Istanbul, were not popular to local Egyptians. A senior official in the Ruzname was brutally murdered by the military upon his arrival from Istanbul,² and eventually Ismail Pasha was deposed in an open revolt in 1109/1697.³ Despite the enormous opposition by local Egyptians, the laws of Ismail Pasha were passed and executed specially with regard to the value of the currency, increases in the annual tribute and the taxes imposed on merchants of coffee and other commodities too.

2- Noble Scripts⁴

These were orders and instructions from the Sultan, addressed to the Pashas of Cairo. They were brought by an official called Amīr Akhur. The contents of these Scripts varied, but in general they dealt with the major issues such as the appointment of a new Pasha, qa'immaqam or qadiasker; orders for preparing military units; responses to various local requests made by the Pasha, the military and sanjaq beys; the introduction of new taxes; instructions for changing the value of local currency; as well as informing the Egyptians of the major events in Istanbul, such as the death and appointment of Sultans, victories achieved by Ottoman forces, and new children born to the Sultan. The

¹ SS, f. 886.

² ZI, ff 35-36.

³ ibid., f. 33.

⁴ In Arabic, Khutūt Sharīfah, sing. Khat Sharīf. (In Ottoman hatt-i şerif).

convention was that, upon the arrival of a Noble Script, the Pasha would order the full Dīwān to meet. Invitations were also extended to other influential figures such as the Ulema and Ashrāf. The Script would be publicly handed to the Pasha, who would kiss it, place it over his head, and then pass it over to the official in charge to be read out aloud.¹ Responses to Sultans' orders were immediate, as all relevant issues would be passed to officials in charge during the same Dīwān. The Amīr Akhur was not only supposed to pass on the message, but had to stay in Egypt to observe that the orders were actually executed and inform the authorities in Istanbul of the honour and dignity in which the Noble Script had been received. Unfortunately few Noble Scripts survive today.² However, manuscript sources, have preserved full details of correspondence activities between Istanbul and Cairo. Some Noble Scripts arrived secretly and were not supposed to be read in public, most significantly those which ordered the execution of certain deposed Pashas or sanjaq beys. In some cases, members of the Dīwān wrote petitions pleading with the Sultan to review his decisions, especially those which ordered a devaluation of the currency, cuts in certain wages and salaries, and the introduction of new taxes. Noble Scripts were, on the whole, regarded as the highest authority, not admitting of reversal by a Pasha's firmān or any other political authority. The only possible way in which a Sultan's decision could be reversed was by a successor's issuing another Noble Script or by a change of heart on the part of the same Sultan. In 1134/1721, for instance, Muhammed Pasha issued a firmān appointing a certain 'Ali Bey to an administrative office. But the 'Azebān regiment produced a Noble Script which stated that this office was to be held amongst the responsibilities of the regiment. The Pasha's response was "A Wazir's firmān does not annul a Noble Script", (Firmān al-Wazīr lā yaqbal al-

¹ D. p. 5.

² Only four Noble Scripts are available for the period of study. See J. Deny, Sommaire des Archives turques de Caire. Recueil de Firmans Impériaux ottomans adressés aux Walis et aux Khèdives d'Égypte, 1006-1322/1597-1904.

khat al-Sharīf).¹ He suggested, therefore, that ‘Ali Bey should write to the Porte requesting a Sultanic appointment.

3-Conventions

Conventions were a major element in the political system of Ottoman Egypt. Some of the established conventions had survived from Mamluk times, while many others were introduced by the Ottomans. The number of sanjaq beys, for instance, which never exceeded twenty-four at any time, was a convention which was preserved until the disintegration of Ottoman authority in Egypt. Public celebrations held on certain occasions such as the arrival of a Pasha, the inundation of the Nile, and the departure of the pilgrimage caravan, which was accompanied by certain acts and rituals, were some other of these conventions. Many responsibilities of the seven ojaqs were held by convention without any laws or decrees to specify such details. Investitures of officials in ceremonial robes (qaftans) of appointment, and also the manner of unfrocking officials were further examples. When ‘Ali Pasha (1118-1119/1706-1707) decided to change the type of cloth used in these robes, it was regarded by local Egyptians as a breach of the convention.² When Bakir Pasha arrived in Cairo in 1141/1729, and invested three officials with robes of appointment as he sat in the Dīwān, the local officials publicly expressed their opposition to this procedure and told the Pasha that it was against convention to perform such an action at that time. The Pasha did not seem to have much respect for these conventions, as he responded ‘If it has not been a previous convention, I shall make it one now’.³ (Like many systems which are kept up for a long time and develop certain conventions,) the more permanent officials of the political system of Ottoman Egypt became accustomed to such conventions and were

¹ AI, p. 334.

² ‘Lam tajri biha ‘adatun min qabl’. AI, p. 211.

³ ‘In lam takun ‘adah fa’ana ’aj’aluha ‘adah’. ibid., p. 536.

very proud of the ways in which the country was run with limited interference by the Sultan or his Pashas in Cairo.

Eighteenth-Century Developments

The Qanunname aimed in the first place at creating a balance of power and preventing a monopoly of delegated authority by any member institution of the Dīwān. By the beginning of the eighteenth century many changes had taken place in the political sphere. There were two major developments which caused Istanbul to discard this complex balance of power and lean towards Mamluk beys' being delegated with more power and authority.

First we may note that in his article; 'The Ottoman Wazir and Pasha Households 1683-1703',¹ Rif'at Abou el-Hajj made the interesting suggestion that the rise of the Wazirs' and Pashas' households in Istanbul added new competitors in the power struggle and gradually resulted in an "end of traditional dynastic absolutism and the triumph for over a century of the rule of an oligarchy whose main beneficiaries were various Wazirs and Pasha households." These developments began in 1695, when Sultan Mustafa II gave Sheikh al-Islam Feyzullah Efendi, his chief adviser, freedom to interfere in the conduct of state business in order to retard the possible ambition of the Grand Wazir Hussein Pasha. But following the humiliating defeat at Zenta in 1697, Sultan Mustafa withdrew from the personal conduct of state affairs and Feyzullah developed his own ambitions, designed to secure for himself and his direct progeny perpetuation in the highest posts of the religious bureaucracy and a monopoly of the political advisorship to the Sultan. This inevitably led to a conflict between the ambitious Mufti and the fairly independent Grand Wazir, who stopped short of limiting the powers of the Mufti. Later Grand Wazirs, Amcazade and his successor Mehmet Rami Pasha, intrigued to rid themselves

¹ Published in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, 94/4 (1979), pp. 438-447.

of both Feyzullah Efendi and Sultan Mustafa II. Rami Pasha triggered the revolution of 1703, which put paid to the ambitions of the Sultan, the Sheikh al-Islam and the Grand Wazir himself. The revolution signaled the failure of Mustafa II to regain the absolute power and prerogatives of his sixteenth-century predecessors.

The history of Ottoman Egypt in the eighteenth Century cannot be studied in isolation from such events. Mehmet Rami was later appointed as Pasha of Egypt. What is more significant is the fact that contemporary sources give clear indications that the power struggle in the Ottoman capital also presented an opportunity for the exercise of increased political competence in Cairo. Upon disagreement with the other six regiments over the abuse of delegated power in 1121/1709, the Janissaries sent their own petition to the agha of the Janissaries in Istanbul.¹ The authors of Zubdat al-ikhtisār and Awdah al-isharāt also hint in several instances at secret contacts between Ibrahim Abu Shanab (and later his son Muhammed) and influential figures in the Ottoman capital, which at one stage saved Ibrahim's life.² There were also later incidents in which a major role was played by the Grand Wazir and Kizlar Aghas in reversing decisions of the Sultan, of which the most remarkable was their persuading the Sultan to grant Ismail Bey pardon following successive orders to the Pasha in Egypt to put him to death.³ The absence of a strong central authority in Istanbul paved the way for the power struggle in Egypt which took the form in 1123/1711 of a bloody civil war in which Istanbul was effectively unable to act. Although the power struggle in Istanbul ended in favour of the Wazirs, by contrast events in Cairo went against the Pashas partly because sanjaq beys developed their own high level connections, which caused an enormous shift in the balance of power in the Egyptian political system.

¹ TA, f. 131.

² ZI, f. 21.

³ AI, pp. 344-345.

Second, by the end of the seventeenth century, it became evident to the Ottoman authorities that the military and provincial governors were abusing delegated powers in the various provinces of the empire. In Egypt the military were imposing illegal taxes on both trade and agriculture. Several Noble Scripts failed to stop the military's monopoly of the coffee trade which flourished at the start of the century.¹ The Porte achieved nothing in numerous attempts to isolate merchants from the ojaqs.² Pashas were committed in alliances with the Janissary regiment, by which not only Egypt but even Istanbul was denied substantial supplies of goods and revenue. There were many examples of such abuses of delegated power, the most serious of which occurred in 1109/1697 when local Egyptians decided to depose Ismail Pasha. A petition was addressed to the central administration explaining in detail how the Pasha misused authority, and listing the palaces and other riches which he gained for himself and his family.³ Another serious abuse of delegated power was the petition written in 1121/1709 by the sanjaq beys and the six ojaqs with the consent of the local Ulema, against the Janissary regiment, making specific reference to their monopoly of the Cairo Mint, the coffee trade, and the Gunpowder Magazine.⁴ This could explain why Istanbul was not reluctant to support the Pasha-Janissary alliance in the civil war of 1123/1711, despite their appearing to be the legitimate authority in the province.

But Istanbul was not content simply to watch developments taking place against the interest of the central administration. Gradually the Porte delegated more power to the sanjaq beys who were regarded as the a'yan (notables) of Egypt. As local inhabitants the Mamluk beys had greater familiarity with the province's politics than the relatively inexperienced Pashas. Very relevant to this situation is the argument of H. Inalcik, who has suggested that because of

¹ TA, ff. 113, 156 and 157.

² ZI, f. 24. See also SS, f. 860.

³ SS, ff. 930, 970.

⁴ D. p. 78.

the Ottoman Empire's disastrous defeat at the hands of the Habsburgs on the Hungarian front in the years 1686 and 1717, the central government faced monetary difficulties created by war and the permanent loss of vital taxable land in Europe. To solve this problem several new taxes were introduced, such as the Imdad-I Seferiyye, Imdad-i Hadariyye, and Din ü Devlet İmdad. The central administration was concerned to protect the public against the abuses of government agents, which led in turn to growing local autonomy where provincial administration was concerned. Inalcik considered these newly introduced taxes as one of the major factors paving the way towards an 'era of a'yan predominance in administration'.¹ Not only did practices related to this tax strengthen the position of the notables against the Pasha, but they also provided ample grounds for more effective participation in provincial administrative matters. There was a tendency in Istanbul to strengthen the iltizam system in Egypt, and create a multazim class of local a'yan more capable of supplying goods and revenue. Inalcik further argued that the spread of the iltizam system brought with it a strong multazim class that controlled and intercepted most of the state revenues, and became increasingly involved with responsibilities in the provincial administration. It was from this group of multazims, with large provincial revenues under its control, that many of the a'yan and local dynasties of the eighteenth century arose.²

Evidence for Istanbul's increasing concern to delegate increased power to local a'yan in Egypt and reduce the authority of certain Pashas can be found in many contemporary sources. In a major development at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as various chronicles note, Noble Scripts not only addressed the Pashas of Egypt, but also addressed notable sanjaq beys by their names and gave them shared responsibility for iltizam land and the annual

¹ 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire 1600/1700', Archivum Ottomanicum, 6 (1980) 283-337.

² ibid., pp. 331.

khazna.¹ Certain sanjaq beys, such as Qaytas, Ibrahim Abu Shanab and Yūsuf al-Jazzar, spent longer periods as qa'immaqams, up to four or five months before a new Pasha was sent from Istanbul. Defterdars, the Amīr al-Hajj, and beys of Jirja, in some cases, were appointed for two-year terms rather than for one year, and eventually began to replace the Pasha and military chiefs in the duty of supervising the awqāf and the major ports of Jeddah and the Suez.² But the most important development during the period under study is the fact that Noble Scripts arrived in Cairo ordering Mamluk beys to hold Jam'iyahs in their own houses rather than in the Dīwān, in order to solve problems in connection with the iltizam system and the Arab Bedouin,³ which marked a major shift of power from the Citadel (where the Pasha and the military resided and where the Dīwāns were held) to the palaces of Mamluk households in the aristocratic districts of Cairo.

Efficiency of the System

Many historians have argued that the rise of the beylicate at the beginning of the eighteenth century was a clear signal of the disintegration of the Ottoman political system, which first started to appear in the provinces of the empire.⁴ The following argument however tries to suggest otherwise, that in fact the political system of Ottoman Egypt, based upon the Qanunname, was an efficient one which survived for over two and a half centuries. The balance which Ibrahim Pasha created between the various institutions of the Dīwān in 1525 ensured that power never lay in the hands of a single ambitious man. Moreover, it gave Istanbul the supremacy, legitimacy, and always the final judgment on all the major affairs of the province. The weakness of Pashas was

¹ ZI, f. 31 and 41; SS, f. 903; TA, f. 177

² SS, f. 822; ZI, f. 32.

³ SS, f.878 and 882.

⁴ See L.'Abd al-Latīf, al-Idāra fī Misr, pp. 72-76, and A.A. 'Abd al-Rahīm, Awdah al-isharat, intro., pp. 6-8.

not necessarily a sign of the weakness of the central administration, owing to the simple fact that the Qanunname in the first place aimed at creating a weak Pasha with limited powers. It is not strange that the Porte sometimes decided to support certain sanjaq beys against some Pashas. It gave orders for disfavoured Pashas to be deposed, imprisoned, and even executed at the hands of local Egyptians. Sanjaq beys, on the other hand, were not viewed as ambitious emirs who wanted to revive the Mamluk Sultanate, but were treated rather as local notables (a'yan) of the province, who proved to be more loyal than the military and many Pashas too. The rise of the beylicate in the eighteenth century does not contradict the existence of an efficient political system, and does not necessarily mean that Istanbul was weak and incapable of administrating the region. It could rather imply the opposite. The revenues of Istanbul from Egypt increased dramatically during the period of the Mamluks' rise to power, and the annual tribute, iltizam taxes, and additional taxes which were later introduced were paid accordingly. Egyptian forces were still being enlisted for service in central Ottoman campaigns. Istanbul exercised its authority of appointment and dismissal more than ever before. Ahmad Shalabi points out that in 1134/1722 the Porte sent 129 robes of appointment to holders of official posts in Cairo.¹ There is also evidence that Istanbul not only appointed Pashas, qadis, and sanjaq beys but also aghas of the Janissary regiment,² ketkhudas of Pashas,³ and Ruznamejis⁴ at different times. In emergencies Istanbul also sent Ottoman troops to Suez,⁵ Jeddah,⁶ and even to march through the streets of Cairo,⁷ in a show of strength to curb any secessionist ambitions. All this points to the conclusion that the rise of the beylicate was a deliberate Ottoman policy

¹ AI, p. 309.

² SS, f. 770.

³ ibid., f. 978.

⁴ TA, f. 167.

⁵ AI, p. 498.

⁶ ibid., p. 260.

⁷ ibid., p. 445.

which aimed to curb the abuse of delegated power by the Pasha and military of Egypt.

It must also be recognized that the Ottoman system had a much wider reach than many recent historians have suggested. The Qanunname not only consisted of the Pashalik and the military institution, but also incorporated the judicial, economic, and agricultural aspects of the province, including the Ulema, Mamluk emirs, and even the Arab Bedouin in the system. As power shifted gradually towards local a'yan, there developed a clear difference between what was Osmanlı (Ottoman), and what was Mısrılı, (Egyptian). The Ulema formed their own independent institution as a major competing rival for political legitimacy. But all the three sides accepted the supremacy of the Sultan, and their participation in the political affairs of Egypt was always within the boundaries of the central administration and the rules set by the Qanunname, Noble Scripts, Pashas' firmāns, and the accepted convention. This chapter will deal with the Osmanlı institution within the system.

II- THE PASHA

To make sure that future Pashas of Egypt would not act upon their own initiative, the Qanunname specified the responsibilities of the military regiments, provincial kashifs, and Bedouin chiefs. It also described the system of taxation in the iltizam land and the major ports of Egypt. Following this the responsibilities of the Pasha were described, which were in actual fact no more than to supervise the execution of the previous laws and regulations and to consult Istanbul on any developments, appointments, and problems which might arise. Thus the Qanunname stated that the Pasha had to:

- reside the in Citadel,
- hold the Diwān four times a week,
- preserve law and order and the common welfare of the population,
- prevent injustice caused by the military against the re'aya (public),
- ensure Shari'a regulations were not breached,
- supervise the affairs of the economic and judicial system under the Ruznameji and qadiasker, and
- maintain the cleanliness of Cairo, making sure its streets and markets were washed frequently.¹

For the central administration the Pasha's existence was vital because it was a symbol of Istanbul's supremacy over Egypt. The Ruznameji and qadiasker shared with the Pasha in representing the Sultan and his supremacy

¹ A.F. Mutwallī, Mısır Kanunmesi, pp. 73-77, 84.

over the region.¹ Ibrahim Pasha made sure in 1525 that the Porte would be represented by more than just one figure and thus even the aghās of the ojaqs were either sent from Istanbul or appointed amongst the garrison by consent of the Sultan.²

By convention the Pashas of Egypt headed various celebrations and festivals including the inundation of the Nile, the departure of the pilgrimage caravan and the bidding farewell to the forces protecting the annual tribute (khazna) sent to Istanbul. Pashas were also responsible to the Porte for kashifs' failures to pay their debts or taxes. Orders of the Pashas appeared in the form of buyuruldu (buerledy in Arabic sources) or firmāns, which were written in Turkish or Arabic and usually issued after a meeting of the Dīwān. These firmāns were the only legitimate source for local orders, which made the Pasha (despite his strength or weakness) an essential and vital part of the executive affairs. In many cases weak Pashas were forced, by the military or sanjaq beys, to issue firmāns against their will. If they refused, they were deposed and firmāns would then be issued by a qa'immaqam, as in the cases of Khalil Pasha (1123/1711) and Bakir Pasha (1141/1729) who were both deposed by sanjaq beys and qa'immaqams who issued firmāns in their place.³

Contemporary sources show clearly that the Pashas of Egypt executed their vital duties, such as preparing forces to fight the Bedouin rebels, sending the annual tribute, heading the Dīwān, co-operating with the Ruznameji and qadiasker in their administrative responsibilities, and receiving orders of Sultans and consulting Istanbul in the minor and major events of the region. Between 1099/1687 and 1113/1701, the Pashas of Egypt prepared more than fifteen campaigns of joint Mamluk-military forces to be sent against the rebellious Bedouin in the provinces of Egypt. There is also reference to many

¹ ibid., p. 82.

² ibid., pp. 80-81.

³ D, pp. 186-7.

campaigns being prepared by the Pashas of Cairo during the period of study, to be sent against the rebellious Ashrāf and their Bedouin allies in Hijaz.¹

There might have been a substantial decrease in the amount of the annual khazna during the early years of the twelfth century AH, but the tribute never failed to reach Istanbul in any of the forty-four years of study (1099-1143/1687-1730). There is also evidence that the Dīwān was very active and was always headed by the Pashas. Sources also point out that districts of Cairo were frequently lighted and cleaned, streets were widened and dust was removed, even mosques, schools (madrassas) and (tikkas) were washed and repainted, and new markets and public fountains were constructed by orders from Pashas. With regard to these activities particular reference is made to two enterprising Pashas who paid much attention to maintenance and construction work in Cairo; these were Qara Muhammed Pasha (1111-1116/1699-1704) and Wali Pasha (1123-1126/1711-1714).²

Causes of Decline

There were several limiting factors to the power and authority of the Pashas of Cairo during the period of study which contributed to the decline of the status of the Pashas and a diminution in their effective administration.

Among these limiting factors was, first of all, the Pashas' lack of experience in the administration of Egypt. Most of the Pashas appointed to Egypt were former governors of other provinces and even former holders of the post of Grand Wazir, but the complicated balance of power in Cairo and the conflict of institutions posed major difficulties for many Pashas, who failed to show political skill. Khalil Pasha (1123/1711) who ruled for only eight months,

¹ AI, pp. 185, 187, 217, 263, 288, and 368.

² ibid., pp. 206-210, and 264-265.

and Bakir Pasha (1142/1729), whose ruled lasted for only nine months, are good examples of such failure.

The Qanunname itself placed many limitations on the power of the Pashas of Egypt. Its principal aim being to prevent a monopoly of power in the hands of Pashas, the Qanunname imposed upon the Pasha the duty of consulting the Porte before taking any minor or major action, and requesting instructions on economic or financial difficulties. In appointing and dismissing sanjaq beys, military commanders, kashifs, and Ruznameji officials, again he had to obtain the consent of the Sultan.¹ The distribution of iltizam land also had to be authorized by the Sultan.² Only in emergencies which could brook no delay, the Pasha and Ruznameji were authorized to act but were nevertheless required to inform the Porte of the specific details of their decision and await consent.³ Provincial kashifs were given extended authority to collect taxes, make reforms, and maintain law and order in the districts. All such limitations made the Pashas of Cairo unable to act upon their initiative, since any policy had to gain the consent of the Porte. The co-operation of kashifs, sanjaq beys, and military chiefs was vital.

The rise of the beylicate at the beginning of the eighteenth century was another serious limitation to the Pashas' authority. Istanbul's tendency to depend more on Mamluk beys and extend their administrative responsibilities came as an appreciation of the loyalty and skill of certain sanjaq beys. As they were permanent and sometimes richer and more influential than Pashas were, the Porte delegated more authority to sanjaq beys as local a'yan.

Further limitations were imposed by the Porte upon disfavoured Pashas. Among such unfortunate governors was 'Ali Pasha, who came to Egypt in

¹ Mısır Kanunnamesi, p. 81.

² ibid., p. 82.

³ ibid., p. 94.

1118/1706. He was recalled by Sultan Ahmad after ten months, allegedly because he had overdue debts to merchants in Istanbul which he failed to pay. He returned in 1129/1717 for a second term, but was dismissed three years later and executed for unknown reasons.¹ Hussein Pasha (1109-1111/1697-1699) and Mehmet Rami Pasha (1116-1118/1704-1706) were jailed in Cairo because they were not able to pay their debts to the Porte. Several ambitious Pashas were not able to make any reforms or govern effectively because they lost the support of the central administration and were eventually dismissed, including Hasan Pasha (1099/1687), who had the shortest term in office of seventy days, and Ibrahim Pasha (1121-1122/1709-1710), who was deposed after eight months. Many officials, including the qadiasker, the Pasha's ketkhuda, military aghas, and sanjaq beys, were appointed without the Pasha's consent, which made it effectively difficult for the Pasha to govern them. Unpopular officials in the central administration, such as Mehmet Rami Pasha (1116-1118/1704-1708), were sent to Egypt in order to be distanced from Istanbul and thus various limitations were imposed upon them when they were appointed as Pashas of Egypt.

¹ AI, p. 303.

Table 2, Pashas of Egypt during the Period 1099-1143/1687-1730.¹

	PASHA	TERM IN OFFICE	PREVIOUS POST	COMMENTS
1	Hasan	(1099/1687) 70 days		
2	Hasan	(1099-1100/1687-1688)1y 9	Grand Wazir	Returned in 1119
3	Ahmad	(1101-1102/1689-1690)1y 6m	<u>Ketkhuda</u> of Ibrahim Pasha	Died in Cairo
4	‘Ali	(1102-1107/1690-1695)4y 3m		
5	Ismail	(1107-1109/1698-1697)2y 1m	Pasha of Damascus	Deposed
6	Hussein	(1109-1111/1697-1699)2y	Pasha of Saida	Jailed in Cairo
7	Qara Muhammed	(1111-1116/1699-1704)5y		
8	Rami	(1116-1118/1704-1706)2y	Grand Wazir	Jailed in Cairo
9	‘Ali	(1118-1119/1706-1707)10m	Governor of Dimshwar	Returned in 1129/1717
10	Hasan	(1119-1121/1707-1709)1y	Grand Wazir	
11	Ibrahim	(1121-1122/1709-1710)8m	<u>Qapudan</u>	
12	Khalil	(1122-1123/1710-1711)8m	Pasha of Saida	Deposed
13	Wali	(1123-1126/1711-1714)3y 2m	Governor of Saqiz	
14	Abdi	(1126-1129/1714-1717)2y 8m		
15	‘Ali	(1129-1132/1717-1720)3y	Pasha of Egypt 1118-1119/1706-1707	Executed in Cairo
16	Rajab	(1132-1133/1720-1721)8m	Governor of Aleppo	Deposed
17	Muhammed Nishanji	(1133-1138/1721-1726)4y	Grand Wazir	Deposed but restored same year
18	‘Ali	(1138-1138/1726-1726)77days		
19	Muhammed	(1138-1141/1726-1729)3y	Grand Wazir	
20	Bakir	(1141-1142/1729-1730)9m		Deposed

¹See, AI, pp. 181, 182, 184, 186, 197, 202, 206, 210, 211, 214, 226, 228, 251, 265, 292, 304, 321, 957, 477, 536, 557; D. pp. 2, 6, 9, 10, 26, 40, 57, 69, 71, 75, 79, 83, 103, 112, 122, 132, 142, 162, 168, 178, 190.

21	‘Abdullah Köprülü	(1142-1144/1730-1732)2y		
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In actual fact there were eighteen Pashas (three had two terms). The Pasha who governed for the longest term was Muhammed al-Nishanji, who governed from 1133-1141/1721-1729, with a short break of 77 days in 1138/1726 when he was deposed but later restored to his post. Qara Muhammed Pasha had a term of five years (1111-1107/1699-1695) and ‘Ali Pasha spent over four years (1102-1107/1690-1695) in office. In a period of forty-five years, the average term of each Pasha was two and a half years. Most Pashas were experienced statesmen who had held vital administrative posts before coming to Egypt, including three former Grand Wazirs and a member of the Köprülü family, for long among the ruling aristocracy in the Ottoman capital. In fact, ‘Abdullah Köprülü Pasha (1142-1144/1730-1732) was praised by many contemporary chroniclers as a capable statesman who loved knowledge and science.¹ There were also six Pashas who had been governors of other provinces before coming to Egypt. Five of the eighteen Pashas were overthrown by Mamluk-military alliances with the alleged secret encouragement of certain figures in Istanbul. The only occasion on which the Porte rejected such local deposition and acted immediately by sending a force to restore the deposed Pasha was in 1138/1726 when Muhammed al-Nishanji was overthrown by Muhammed Jerkes.

Although the Pashas of Egypt represented the central administration, their relative weakness, at some stages, did not mean that Istanbul’s control over the region was waning. The Qanunname of 1525 was produced in the aftermath of the revolt of Ahmad Pasha and aimed at preventing future Pashas from doing the same by limiting their authority. Many Arab historians have blamed the Pashas of Egypt for not implementing major reforms and engaging in construction schemes, interpreting this as a sign of their greed and an indication that Pashas were only concerned to collect taxes and heap up

¹ AI, pp. 575-576, and J. 1/113.

money.¹ These allegations lack real understanding of the responsibilities of the Pashas. The regulations of the Qanunname made local Egyptian a‘yan, such as the kashifs and Bedouin chiefs, directly responsible for maintenance and reform in the land under their control. Pashas who implemented certain reforms and construction activities without consulting the Porte were accused of exceeding their authority. Ismail (1107-1109/1695-1697) Pasha is a good example of this. He was deposed by the military and sanjaq beys in Cairo. A petition addressed to the Sultan accused Ismail of exceeding his limits by ordering major construction work in the Citadel, allegedly to further his ambition to become more independent.²

Al-Ghunaymī’s Theory

One of the very important manuscripts composed during the period of study was a treatise by Jād Allāh al-Ghunaymī al-Fayyūmī, al-Durr al-nadhīr fī adab al-Wazīr,³ presented by the author in 1101/1689 to Ahmad Pasha (1101-1102/1689-1690). This treatise discusses several issues concerning the Pashas of Egypt, including the relationship between Sultans and their Wazirs, the ideal manners of governors from the religious point of view, ways to control the military and avoid their revolts, and, most significant for this chapter, the different types of Wazirates and the limits and authorities of Wazirs. Rather than talking about ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ Wazirs, al-Ghunaymī constructed an interesting argument suggesting that there are two types of Wazirates, distinguishable from the first day of their appointment by the Sultan. These two types are the Wazīr tafwīd, (delegate), and Wazīr tanfīdh, (implementer).

¹ The prominent Egyptian historian Abdul Rahman al-Rafī‘i is a good example of those who take a very critical view of the Ottoman government of Egypt. See, for instance, his assessment of the Ottoman presence in Egypt in the eighteenth century in, Tarīkh al-harakah al-qawmiyyah wa tatawwur nizām al-hukm fī Mīsr, (Cairo 1939), 1/54-54. This critical view may also be found in the writings of A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm and L. ‘Abd al-Latīf.

² ZI, f. 35.

³ Two copies of this manuscript will be found in Cairo, (Dār al-Kutub, Catalogue no. 1655, and 3549 Ādāb). Will be referred to as, DN.

The Wazīr tafwīd was that person whom the Sultan appointed to a province and delegates to him full authority to govern. In this case the Wazir had the same status and power as the Sultan, but in the province only. Several conditions were set for the choice of such a Wazir. He had to be a Muslim, male, mature, free (not a slave), and possessing sufficient knowledge, courage, wisdom, and experience. For a person to become a legitimate Wazir of this kind, the Sultan had to write a script or make an oral pronouncement, appointing his Wazir and delegating to him full authority to govern in the designated region. Once a Wazīr tafwīd was appointed, he had the same powers as the Sultan with three major exceptions. He should not: (a) delegate his own delegated power to another person, (b) resign his post or leave his duties without being requested to do so by the Sultan, and (c) depose any official appointed directly by the sultan.¹

A Wazīr tanfīdh, on the other hand, had less freedom to act than the Wazīr tafwīd. He always had to act upon instructions from the Sultan and to abide by his rules; in other words, he was no more than a representative who passed on orders and regulations from the Sultan to the administrative officials. The conditions for the choice of this type of Wazir were more lenient; he did not have to be a free male and was not required to have much knowledge. Al-Ghunaymī even suggests that some earlier scholars also stated that he should not necessarily be a Muslim.² According to al-Ghunaymī, the difference between the two types of Wazirs was that the first had full authority to govern, to judge between re'aya, to appoint his officials (unless appointed by the Sultan), to prepare armies and declare war, and have effective control over the

¹ DN, f. 23.

² ibid., f. 22.

income and expenditure of the treasury, whereas the Wazīr tanfīdh had none of these authorities.¹

If we are to apply this theory to the Pashas of Egypt, we get a more accurate picture than that of the ‘strong-weak’ Pashas representing the ‘firm-waning’ grip of Istanbul. It has to be admitted that none of the Pashas during the period of this study had the full power and authority of the Sultan himself, but we may indeed discern a clear distinction between Pashas who were delegated with extended authority to fulfil a certain mission and other Pashas who were simply representatives of the Sultan. The following pages will identify those delegated Pashas and the missions for which they were granted full authority.

1- Ismail Pasha (1107-1109/1695-1697)

In 1107/1695 Egypt was hit by devastating plague, famine, and drought. Poverty was widespread and prices rose dramatically, provoking violent demonstrations. In addition, the military rioted and the Egyptian treasury failed to pay the annual tribute to the Porte. In these circumstances Ismail Pasha arrived in Cairo. He was accompanied by a number of administrators and accountants, whose mission it was to bring the state of anarchy under control and restore the annual tribute to its previous levels.² Ismail Pasha was granted exceptional powers. He made his own appointments, and distributed land amongst sanjaq beys and provincial kashifs. He also paid huge sums of money to feed the beggars and bury the dead. When the crisis was felt to be over, he held a party for the circumcision of his son in a celebration in which 2,365 children were circumcised and he distributed money and clothing among the

¹ ibid., f. 23.

² AI, p. 197.

public.¹ Ismail Pasha then embarked on restoring the level of the annual tribute (khazna) to the Porte to an annual sum of thirty million paras. To do so he increased the revenues of the Imperial Treasury by 6,679,498 paras and decreased its expenditure by 639,689 paras, leaving a total surplus of 7,319,187 paras, equaling the deficit which had accrued in the year before Ismail Pasha came to Egypt.²

The author of Zubdat al-ikhtisār points out that Egyptians were not happy with the reforms of Ismail Pasha,³ which neglected the military part of their salaries. New taxes were imposed on merchants and the value of the currency was reduced. The Pasha became excessively rich and rumors of corruption in the Ruzname spread. In 1109/1697 military chiefs and sanjaq beys supported by the Ulema and merchants came to the conclusion that Ismail Pasha was misusing authority and decided to depose him. A petition was sent to the Sultan by Egyptians explaining the reasons for deposing the Pasha. They accused Ismail Pasha of carrying out major construction schemes in the Citadel to suit his unlimited ambitions, introducing cuts in the wages and salaries of the military, the Ulema and the poor, making further cuts in the budget of the pilgrimage caravan, and failing to pay benefits for orphans and the widows. His son and friends became very rich, Ismail personally bought several palaces in Cairo and his wealth increased by reselling the land of kashifs even when they were still alive.⁴ This was a typical example of a Pasha who was granted extended authority to reform the economic system of Egypt in order to make the designated annual tribute but became too ambitious and was accused of misusing authority.

2- Qara Muhammed Pasha (1111-1116/1699-1694)

¹ ZI, f. 31. Also, AI, p. 198.

² S.Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organisation of Ottoman Egypt, pp.296-7.

³ ZI, ff. 32-33.

⁴ For full details of the petition, see ZI, f. 36, and SS, ff. 938-40.

Muhammed Pasha arrived in Cairo in similar circumstances, his predecessor Hussein Pasha having failed to send the annual tribute to Istanbul, while the military were preparing for revolt because they had not received their wages.¹ Sanjaq beys refused to co-operate with Hussein Pasha, since he had failed to show administrative skill. The mission of Qara Muhammed Pasha was to collect taxes, pay salaries to the seven ojaqs and restore order to the province. To do this he was appointed for a five-year term by a Noble Script on the condition that he paid all the wages and benefits, and sent the designated khazna accordingly.² Muhammed Pasha proved to be a capable administrator. He appointed a new Ruznameji and deposed unco-operative Mamluk beys from their sanjaq posts, with the result that eventually the crisis was resolved. Muhammed Pasha then implemented major construction schemes in the Citadel and carried out maintenance projects in various religious shrines. He also tried to put an end to prostitution and other forms of corruption, and appointed ‘Ali Agha of the Janissaries to patrol the streets and markets of Cairo to prevent crime and inspect weights and measurements.³ During the reign of Qara Muhammed Pasha, Egypt witnessed a five-year term of economic and political stability, and the Pasha was praised by contemporary sources for being a pious and capable statesman.⁴ We should notice that Muhammed Pasha enjoyed significant authority in appointment and dismissal without having to consult the Porte. As long as he paid the full khazna, he was given a free hand in dealing with the financial affairs of the region and the construction activities which he implemented.

2- Muhammed Pasha al-Nishanji (1133-1141/1721-1729)

¹ ZI, ff. 32-33.

² SS f. 970.

³ D, pp. 65-68.

⁴ AI, pp. 209-210.

A former Grand Wazir who had the longest reign during the period of study, Muhammed Pasha was a cunning and experienced politician who enjoyed staunch support from Istanbul during his seven-year term. His mission was rather a complicated one, for al-Nishanji had to put an end to Mamluk dominance over the local affairs of the province. To do this he had to deal with remarkably powerful beys such as Ismail, Jerkes, and Muhammed Abu Shanab. Al-Nishanji's mission reflected Istanbul's realization that its policy to strengthen the Mamluk beys against the military had backfired. Once a new generation of ambitious and powerful Mamluks took over, the central administration gradually lost its grip over the affairs of Egypt. Al-Nishanji showed no interest in any economic reform. His first achievement, in 1136/1723, was to successfully carry out a plan to assassinate Ismail Bey in the Dīwān in co-operation with the latter's rival Muhammed Jerkes.¹ When he then turned against Jerkes, al-Nishanji was deposed by this powerful Mamluk bey. Istanbul reacted immediately by sending 'Ali Pasha, who restored his predecessor, so that Jerkes was forced to flee. By the end of his term, in 1141/1728, al-Nishanji had successfully reduced the power of the beylicate and exhausted the Mamluk households by reshuffling alliances and encouraging internal strife between the sanjaq beys. At the end of his term in office, Ahmad Shalabi commented,

“His days were full of killing and looting. We were told he did the same when he was governor of Crete. He put an end to two households: al-Shawaribiya, beginning with Ismail and ending with al-Hindi; and the household of Jerkes and his faction. The faction of Ismail consisted of eighteen sanjaqs, let alone aghas, jorbajis, kashifs and emirs; also thirteen sanjaqs who belonged to Jerkes, let alone aghas, jorbajis, kashifs and emirs. Those sanjaqs who died or fled from the two households were thirty-seven, plus ten aghas,

¹ AI, pp. 32-385.

and kakhyas, jorbajis, javushes, and odabashis, some killed and the others having run away: around ten thousand in total.”¹

In short, al-Nishanji was given a free hand to carry out a massive purge supported by the central administration. When al-Nishanji finally left Cairo after the conclusion of his term in office in 1141/1728, he had no debts to pay, which was very surprising to Shalabi, who commented that earlier Pashas reigned for one or two years and paid huge sums of debts to the Porte, whereas al-Nishanji Pasha was requested to pay nothing.²

The remaining Pashas who served in Egypt during the period of study may be classified under the category of Wuzarā’ Tanfīdh, (implementers), who had only a limited authority. A good example is Hussein Pasha (1109-1111/1697-1699), who threatened to return to Istanbul and hand in his resignation if the sanjaq beys continued to procrastinate in paying their taxes.³ Similarly, upon Mamluk refusal to co-operate in the payment of overdue debts in 1133/1720, Rajab Pasha threatened again to take the qadiasker with him and return to the Sultan to inform him of the disobedience of Egyptian amīrs.⁴ Both cases give the impression that the Pashas were unwilling to take any measure, because they did not have the authority to act upon their own initiative.

It can therefore be argued that the office of Pasha in Egypt was governed by the law of the Qanunname, which gave the Pashas only limited power and authority. During the eighteenth century, the Pashas’ position was further undermined by the Porte’s remarkable shift in favour of the beylicate made up of local a‘yan in Egypt. It is inappropriate to measure Istanbul’s control over Cairo by the strength and weakness of its Pashas in the region. Jād Allāh al-Ghunaymī has provided a better approach to the Pashalik in Egypt by

¹ ibid., p. 535.

² ibid., p. 540.

³ ZI, f. 37.

⁴ TA, f. 195.

distinguishing between implementers with limited authority and delegates with extraordinary power and backing by the central administration. The main argument of the present section is that the Porte's policy to exert full control over its provinces was thought to be best achieved through strengthening the local a'yan and weakening the role of the Pasha-Wazir households who undermined the Sultan's position in the Ottoman capital and its provinces.

IV- THE MILITARY

It is very difficult to determine whether the military in Egypt at the beginning of the eighteenth century could still be regarded as an Ottoman institution controlled by the Sultan and his Pashas, or as a local Egyptian force loyal to the beylicate. At the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, the military was made up of Turks, Georgians, Circassians, Kurds, Bosnians, Armenians, Arab Bedouin, Syrians, and even local merchants and artisans who bought their posts to provide sufficient protection and tax exemptions for their businesses.¹ Rivalry for control and leadership of the seven ojaqs was a major phenomenon during the period of study, involving not only members of these ojaqs, but also other local and Ottoman institutions which interfered extensively in these affairs. Because control of the military meant effective control of Egypt as a whole, each conflicting side would put up candidates for leadership, causing massive and sudden shifts in loyalty and control. Many purges also took place during this period.

The Qanunname of 1525 laid down the army's structure and administration. The garrison was divided into six ojaqs, with an additional ojaq under the Pasha's service, incorporated in 1554 which was referred to as the Mutafarriqa and aimed at strengthening the Pashas of Egypt.² These divisions within the garrison were intended to prevent a single military unit from monopolizing power. Ibrahim Pasha's major role in 1525 was to secure Egypt to the Ottomans. For this purpose he introduced rather strict laws to organise the administration of the garrison. These laws included the following principles:

- A maximum number for each ojaq was set.

¹ This is indicated by al-Jabarti's biographies of the notables of Egypt. For more details, see J. 1/143-214.

² S.Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organisation and Development of Ottoman Egypt, p. 192.

- No appointments to high or low ranks were to be made without instructions or consent from Istanbul.
- No enlisting to the army should be made before a vacancy occurred.
- Discipline was to be strict and all members of the regiments had to do their own types of training, depending on their services and duties.
- Circassians and Bedouin were excluded from important posts and duties.
- Harsh terms were imposed on the Jarakise regiment, composed of remnants of the Mamluk forces.
- Officers were warned against abusing peasants, artisans, and merchants.
- Members of the Janissary ojaq were instructed to reside in the Citadel, together with the ‘Azebān, and were warned not to engage in any trading activity in the region.
- Murattabāt (salaries) and ‘Ulūfāt (provender) were set for the different ranks of each ojaq, and the duties of every regiment were made clear. Thus, the ‘Azebān and Mustahfizān (Janissaries) were to guard the Citadel and police the streets and main gates of Cairo. The Javushān were to serve as private guards to the Pashas and remain under their service. The Mutafarriqa were introduced in 1554 in order to fulfil similar duties, and to strengthen Pashas and to enhance their ability to control the other units. The Gönüllüyān, Tüfekjiyān and Jarakise were the cavalry regiments (Sipahis), who had to help the regional kashifs in tax collection and maintaining law and order in the urban districts of Upper and Lower Egypt.¹

During the two centuries which followed the establishment of this system in 1525, power shifted dramatically from one regiment to another within the army. At first, the Gönüllüyān were the largest regiment in number, but in 1004/1595 the Mutafarriqa became the largest and best paid, the Tüfekjiyān and Javushān came second, although gradually the Janissaries and ‘Azebān took the lead. In 1082/1671 the Janissary regiment became larger than

¹ ibid., pp. 189-200.

any other unit and the ‘Azebān started to compete for status and authority. The following table shows these shifts at selected years:

*Table 3 Wages paid to the active Military Corps (in paras) and their numbers.¹

CORPS	YEARS						
		1004	1005	1082	1083	1121	1130
Mutafarriqa	Men	1,410	1,398	2,023	2,871	1,485	1,680
	Wages	7,424,876	6,287,327	10,127,791	9,459,720	4,530,009	3,577,182
Javushān	Men	1,026	1,001	1,435	1,471	1,641	2,293
	Wages	3,792,840	3,703,294	5,054,503	4,923,252	4,345,863	5,637,425
Janissaries	Men	640	938	6,461	6,821	5,263	5,106
	Wages	2,341,859	2,022,422	10,492,180	10,646,196	8,424,930	6,690,267
‘Azebān	Men	498	504	2,703	3,007	3,285	3,810
	Wages	1,147,300	1,163,043	2,056,483	2,089,480	6,743,010	6,245,515
Gönüllüyān	Men	724	701	1,244	1,278	1,236	1,321
	Wages	2,568,318	2,132,928	2,348,944	2,372,388	1,561,651	1,507,997
Tüfekjiyān	Men	1080	9,87	1024	1066	1030	945
	Wages	1,446,293	1015293	1,826,728	1,781,680	734561	600,425
Jarakise	Men	490	478	1,026	1,074	981	900
	Wages	1,427,646	1,195,162	1,679,910	1,775,220	1,138,251	818,147
Total	Men	6,168	6,007	15,916	17,588	14,921	16,582
	Wages	20,149,132	17,519,469	33,586,539	34,526,473	27,478,295	25,278,984

¹ Derived from S.Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative...*, pp. 392-393.

The Ojaqs During the Eighteenth Century

By the end of the eleventh century AH, the military underwent major changes; the total numbers of the corps rose from 6,168 in 1004/1595 to 17,588 in 1083/1672 and their salaries also increased. Many of the laws of the Qanunname fell into desuetude as the military began to become locally dominated. Army officers engaged in artisan and trading activities, pursuits which were forbidden them by the laws of 1525. Members of the corps would even sell their posts and send poorly trained Bedouin and native Egyptians to serve in their place in Ottoman campaigns.¹ Increase in the number of corps did not match salary increases and thus did not improve the quality of the garrison in Egypt. Rather it burdened the treasury and convinced the Porte that the military had become out of control. Bedouin, artisans, merchants, and Mamluks had infiltrated the army and it seemed that the military had become a body composed of opposing interest groups rather than an armed force. In several cases, Bedouin of Hawwara refused to pay taxes for the land under their control in Jirja because they claimed to be exempted on account of their membership of the Janissary and 'Azebān ojaqs.² As early as 1107/1695, the Janissaries took control of tax collection and revenues in the major ports of Egypt. They paid an annual tax of 2,089,000 paras in return for control of Alexandria, Rashīd, Dimyāt, Bulaq and old Cairo.³ This led to an increased involvement of army officers in the illegal coffee trade with Europe, which produced huge profits. By 1121/1709, the Janissaries had managed to achieve a monopoly on the trade of several commodities, of which the most important was coffee. A rise in the economic role played by the military led to two major consequences.

¹ M. Winter, Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, p. 63.

² ZI, f. 37.

³ L. 'Abd al-Latīf, al-Idarah fī Misr, p. 96.

First, senior army officers began to dominate political and administrative affairs, undermining the role of the Pashas and sanjaq beys. Contemporary sources refer to Küçük Muhammed (the Janissaries' bashodabashi 1103-1106/1691-1694) as the ultimate governor of the province, who made his own appointments, controlled the distribution of provender, and imposed price levels in the markets of Cairo. He continued to have an unchallenged supremacy until his assassination in 1106/1694.¹ In the period from 1111 to 1116/1699-1704, 'Ali Agha of the Janissaries emerged as a strong political figure. He was described as a ruthless leader who had very strange ideas of discipline and would punish for any tiny fault, yet he maintained law and order and prevented corruption and cheating. From 1118/1706 to 1123/1711, Ifranj Ahmad Bashodabashi dominated the political scene in Cairo. He was regarded as the man who ignited the civil war and was blamed for all its consequences.²

The salaries shown in the above table do not reflect the actual income of the seven regiments as representatives of major trading activities and as influential merchants. Senior army officers gained much more by illegal means, mainly through the smuggling of coffee to Europe. When the central administration decided to introduce new taxes on coffee in 1108/1696, merchants went in secret to the seven ojaqs and paid them generously to reverse the Sultan's orders. Despite Ismail Pasha's initial refusal, he was ultimately forced to issue a firmān abolishing these taxes.³ Army mutinies took place in successive years during the period of study, because the Pashas failed to pay the salaries of the military. In return, the Pashas blamed the military for grain shortages, claiming that the ojaqs protected provincial kashifs, Bedouin chiefs, and merchants who refused to pay taxes. A major development during

¹ D, pp. 14-21.

² SH, pp. 346-354.

³ ZI, ff. 33-34.

the period of study was the extensive appointment of army officers to posts as sanjaq beys. Military officials became Defterdars and Umara' al-Hajj. In addition, up to thirty aghas, kakhyas and bashodabashis were raised to the beylicate, some to be isolated and murdered, others to be moved from their power base, but the majority were appointed to fill gaps following massive purges which took place in successive years during the period of study.

A second consequence of the rise of the military was the infiltration of diverse interest groups into the ojaqs. Merchants seeking protection for their trade and Bedouin kashifs seeking exemption from taxation purchased military posts.¹ Ambitious Mamluks who wanted to play a bigger role in the political affairs of Egypt also infiltrated into military. Rivalry and competition between the seven regiments and within each regiment for control and leadership was most dominant during the period 1099-1123/1687-1711. At first, minor alliances between army officers and influential merchants and artisans caused the replacement of one agha or bashodabashi by another. A good example is the assassination of Küçük Muhammed in 1106/1694, which was conducted by an alliance formed between his rival al-Baghdadi and certain merchants and Bedouin chiefs who were angered by his attempts to enforce lower prices on grains.² But after the civil war of 1123/1711, rivalry and competition for control of the seven regiments became the point of collision between the Mamluk beys.

Prominent Mamluks who became very important sanjaq beys, such as Yūsuf al-Jazzar,³ Ismail Agha,⁴ Muhammed al-Dali,⁵ and Hussein Yadak⁶ began

¹ ZI, ff. 33,34, and 37.

² AI, pp. 189-191.

³ J. 1/171.

⁴ ibid., 1/173.

⁵ ibid., 1/170.

⁶ ibid., 1/174.

their careers as ojaqlis, but later rose to dominate their regiments. They were eventually raised to the beylicate. Mutinies and coups, followed by massive purges within the military were, at first, motivated by diverse interest groups, but later caused by Mamluk infiltration into the military, which brought with it Mamluk household strife.

Gradually the military became a major obstacle to the development of the region, as illegal infiltration by native Egyptians reduced the quality of the military. The smuggling of coffee to European markets created a new class of excessively rich and powerful army officers. These officers protected Bedouin chiefs and artisans who refused to pay taxes creating major problems in the iltizam system. Frequent coups and purges produced a general absence of law and order.

At the end of his treatise, al-Ghunaymī discussed some causes of the military's corruption and made proposals how this could be avoided. Unfortunately these proposals were rather general, but he did offer some useful hints to Ahmad Pasha.¹ The army's main duty, al-Ghunaymī argued, was jihād: “the Pasha and army officers were not appointed for comfort, eating and drinking, but should be on guard by land and sea and keep up with training.”² Among the seven factors which al-Ghunaymī argued to be the causes of the corruption of the military was the failure to choose army officers on a basis of ability, training and experience. He also recommended that the Pasha should avoid taking the weak, cowardly, and in-experienced into the garrisons since they would do more harm than good. Delaying the payment of wages and salaries was the sole reason for the army's mutinies and disorder. The corps, he argued, should also be under a watchful eye. They should be punished for their faults, but discipline should be kept to a minimum and no blood should be as this would cause other officers to cherish grudges against the governor and

¹ DN, ff. 79-81.

² ibid., f. 78.

later seek revenge. Al-Ghunaymī's stress on keeping the military in a good condition with regard to armaments, salaries and training was clearly aimed at those members of garrison's who had become engaged in trade, construction of palaces, and illegal trade. It had become clear that the military's engagements in these activities had come to pose an obstacle to the system, so that action had now to be taken to reduce their powers.

Decline of the Seven Regiments

The Porte adopted a policy of gradual reform rather than drastic changes that would produce a negative outcome or a general military revolt. Power and authority were transferred to Mamluk beys through successive Noble Scripts, of which the first was issued in 1103/1691 when the Sultan ordered the transfer of certain endowment supervision offices from the ketkhuda of the 'Azebān and Bash Javush of the Janissaries to four sanjaq beys including Ibrahim Amīr al-Hajj and Murad Defterdar.¹ Later, himāyāt (protection taxes imposed by the military on artisans and merchants) were abolished, markets were purged of members of military corps, and Bedouin were driven out of the military. In 1120/1708 the six ojaqs united against the Janissaries and wrote a petition to the Porte complaining against Janissaries' monopoly over the mint, slaughter houses, customs houses, coffee merchants, transport of grains from Upper and Lower Egypt, and control over the grain stores in Cairo. The Ottoman government sided with the six ojaqs, and ordered all himāyāt to be abolished, and the mint and gunpowder magazine to be removed from the Janissary headquarters to the Dīwān.²

The civil war of 1123/1711 contributed to the decline of the military. In it the seven ojaqs suffered heavy losses and massive purges were carried out within these regiments. It has been suggested by M. Winter that the Ottoman

¹ ZI, ff. 24-25, and TA, f.113.

² TA, ff. 131-132, and AI, pp. 218-19.

high command faced a basic problem of the constant infiltration of unauthorized elements into the army of Egypt, and attempted to extirpate these ghuraba (strangers) from the ranks of real soldiers (khuls) who were properly trained as a fighting force. Several edicts were sent to Cairo ordering that the ghuraba be expelled from the army,¹ but the military failed to keep up with the demand of the Porte for corps to join imperial campaigns. In fact, the authorities in Istanbul would regularly send orders to Cairo for a certain number of ghuraba to join the army on account of the desperate need for their services in central campaigns. Thus, for example, in 1097/1686, a Noble Script demanded for a force of two thousand ghuraba to be formed and incorporated into the army, one thousand to become ‘Azebān and one thousand to join the Janissaries, their salaries to be paid by the Egyptian treasury, and that they should be sent to Morea.² In 1109/1697 a Noble Script demanded five hundred ghuraba to be armed and sent to accompany a force of two thousand of the corps for another campaign. The edict ordered that these five hundred should be distributed amongst the seven ojaqs and specified their wages, which should be paid to them from the treasury.³ In emergencies the authorities in Cairo made similar decisions to incorporate ghuraba into the military. In 1123-1711 the Janissaries lost six hundred of their corps to the ‘Azebān regiment. As a consequence Ifranj Ahmad decided to form a new force of eight hundred ghuraba to replace those who had joined the ‘Azebān regiment.⁴ These policies contributed to the decline of the military, as the new corps members were low paid and poorly trained. Not only did they cause instability and corruption in Cairo, but they were also found to be useless in Ottoman campaigns and thus,

¹ M. Winter, Egyptian Society..., p.p. 44-47.

² AI, p. 179.

³ TA, f. 103.

⁴ ibid., f. 142.

in 1130/1717, a Noble Script requested three thousand men from the military which should not include any of the ghuraba.¹

Infiltration of irregulars into the army was also taking place by other means. Arab Bedouin and merchants would refuse to pay taxes because they claimed to be Janissaries and 'Azebān. Several attempts by many Pashas failed to eliminate merchants and artisans from the army. Arab Bedouin, however, posed a larger threat because they had vast iltizam lands under their control. Although the seven regiments declared in 1110/1698 that they had expelled all Bedouin from their ranks, when Hussein Pasha attempted to throw a Bedouin chief in jail because he had refused to pay his tax, the Janissaries moved quickly and requested the Pasha to pardon him because he was a jorbaji in their regiment. His debts were ultimately paid by his colleagues.²

The civil war enabled Mamluk beys to interfere directly in the appointment and dismissal of personnel in senior army posts. Successive prominent sanjaq beys appointed their own loyal Mamluks to leading army offices, while Istanbul never hesitated to confirm such appointments in return for large amounts of hilwān. The majority of sanjaq beys appointed after 1123/1711, were previously military chiefs, such as Yūsuf al-Jazzar, Muhammed al-Dali, and Yūsuf al-Muslimani, while Omar, the javush ketkhuda, was appointed as Amīr al-Hajj.³ There were such inter-relationships that several attempts to isolate the military from the sanjaq beys proved to be unsuccessful. It is rather interesting that al-Jabarti started to use the term amīr in reference to both military officers and sanjaq beys, whatever might be their origins or the posts they held, because successive purges and new appointments after the civil war caused real confusion between the army and the beylicate.

¹ ibid., f. 171.

² ZI, f. 37.

³ AI, p. 483.

The Military's Administrative Role

Despite all its problems with the military, the Porte still wanted a large army in Egypt for many reasons. The garrison in Egypt contributed large corps of soldiers, reaching up to six thousand in one year, to the Ottoman campaigns. The break in hostilities on the European front with Austria and the loss of Belgrade, together with the continuing battles with Russia and Persia posed an obstacle to reform in the Ottoman Empire and kept the whole system on alert. The assertion that Egypt was fairly safe from these troubles is not quite true, as there is evidence that the Ottoman central administration feared an attack on Egypt by Austria and in several edicts warned Pashas to be cautious from expected attacks. In 1129/1716, for instance, an Imperial Edict ordered Abdi Pasha to rebuild the fortress of Alexandria and enhance its defenses,¹ and in 1139/1726 Istanbul sent five hundred of its Anatolian forces to guard Suez.²

The following table provides information on the number of corps members, their destinations and their Mamluk commanders, (sirdars), during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730. It will be noticed that corps of the Egyptian garrison were not only called upon for imperial campaigns, but were also ordered to restore order in Hijaz. As sirdars of campaigns, Mamluk beys had further opportunity to exert full control over the seven regiments.

Table 4: Contributions of the Egyptian Garrison to Ottoman Campaigns³

YEAR	MEMBERS	DESTINATION	SIRDAR
1099	1,000	Morea	Muhammed Bey
	1,000	(not mentioned)	Mahmūd Bey

¹ TA, f. 169.

² AI, p. 498.

³ Information in this table is derived from, AI, pp. 179, 181, 184, 188, 192, 202, 228, 256, 258, 261, 266, 290, 347, 368, 403, 501, 574; D, pp. 5, 8, 15, 38, 57, 62, 123, 125, 149; ZI, ff. 20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 31, 36; TA, ff. 110, 112, 114, 115, 118, 135, 151, 153, 156, 169, 171; SS, ff. 773, 784, 785, 803, 836, 849, 860, 878, 905, 940, 942, 944.

1100	2,000	Edirne	Mustafa Bey
	3,000	(not mentioned)	Murad Bey Defterdar
1101	2,000	Belgrade	Mustafa Bey Jirja
1104	1,000	Crete	Ibrahim Abu Shanab
	1,000	Crete	Hussein ‘Ali Yadak
1106	2,000	Ankara	Ismail Bey
	1,000	Rhodes	Ahmed Bey
1107	2,000	(Not mentioned)	Murad Bey
1108	1,000	(not mentioned)	‘Ali Bey
1109	3,000	(not mentioned)	Yūsuf al-Muslimani
1113	1,000	Mecca	Iwaz Bey
1123	3,000	Moscow	Ismail Bey
1124	3,000	Moscow	Mustafa Bey
1125	3,000	Moscow	Mustafa Bey al-A‘sar
1127	3,000	Morea	Ahmad Agha
1129	3,000	Austria	Jerkes Muhammed
	3,000	(not mentioned)	Ahmad Kashif
1130	3,000	(not mentioned)	Qasim Bey
1134	500	Mecca	(not mentioned)
1135	1,500	Mecca	(not mentioned)
1136	3,000	Persia (Riwat)	(not mentioned)
1139	3,000	Persia (Qandahar)	(not mentioned)
Total	50,000		

Tarājim al-sawa‘iq provides some details on the contribution of each regiment of corps to the army going on imperial campaigns (safṛāt). It will be noticed that the Janissaries always had the largest share of corps in these safṛāt. In many cases (as in table no:6) the safra never completed the number requested by the Porte.

Table 5: Safra to Edirne in 1100/1688. 2000 corps requested.¹

OJAQS	SOLDIERS
Mutafarriqa	144
Javushān	144
Gönüllüyān	134
Tüfekjiyān	124
Jarakise	114
Mustahfizān	880
‘Azebān	460
Total :	2,000

Table 6: Details of two safrāt in 1106/1694 to Rhodes and Ankara prepared together. Total of 3,000 soldiers requested.²

OJAQS	SOLDIERS
Mutafarriqa	216
Javushān	216
Gönüllüyān	186
Tüfekjiyān	156
Jarakise	138
Mustahfizān	1280
‘Azebān	438
Total :	2,630

Egypt faced a serious threat from neighbouring provinces as Bedouin tribes of, Gaza, North Africa, and Hijaz caused widespread devastation in Upper and Lower Egypt. Bedouin tribes even engaged in piratical activities along the Nile and caused disruption to trading caravans from Syria and Hijaz.

¹ SS, f. 786.

² ibid., f. 880

From 1099/1687 to 1111/1699, the military was engaged in full confrontation with the Bedouin in Egypt and Hijaz also.¹ The Porte depended on the military to restore order, which was temporarily achieved after the major battle of 1111/1699 between the Egyptian military and a major tribal alliance. In reports of these events, particular reference is made to the tribes of Ibn Wafi, Habib, Dhu'afa, Najma, and Hawwara. After the civil war the Hawwara became the dominant tribe in Upper Egypt.² They dominated the iltizam of land in Jirja and offered a safe refuge to rebellious Qasimi beys who fled successive purges and persecution in Cairo.

The following table summarizes the major campaigns against the Arab Bedouin during the period of study depending on information from contemporary manuscript sources.

Table 7: Campaigns against Arab Bedouin in Egypt During the period 1099-1143/1687-1730.³

¹ ZI, ff. 20-41.

² ibid., p. 39.

³ Information in this table are derived from, ZI, ff. 20, 22, 23, 24, 29, 32, 37, 38, 40; SS, ff. 762, 778, 783, 787, 792, 799, 802-809, 816-820, 824, 834, 846, 881, 886, 900-908, 914,925, 945, 951, 955-961, 965, 976-7; TA, ff. 110, 111, 112, 116, 119, 120-122, 143, 164, 178, 182, 184; D, pp. 7, 40, 41-51, 86, 110, 119, 135, 185, 187, 192. For campaigns against Jerkes, see AI, pp. 550-567.

YEAR	DESTINATION	COMMANDER
1099	Jabal al-Jiushi (Cairo)	Ibrahim Abu Shanab
1100	Fayyum and Bahnassa	Qaytas Bey Defterdar
1101	Lower Egypt	Ibrahim Abu Shanab
1101	Lower Egypt	Ibrahim Zain al-Faqar
1102	Sharqiyya	(not mentioned)
1103	Buhayra	(not mentioned)
1103	Buhayra	(not mentioned)
1106	Lower Egypt	several Mamluk beys
1107	Qalyubiyya and Fayyum	Ibrahim Abu Shanab
1108	Sharqiyya and Mansoura	‘Abd al-Rahman Agha
1108	Fayyum	Ibrahim Abu Shanab
1109	Fayyum	‘Ali Agha
1111	Jīza and Upper Egypt	Ibrahim Abu Shanab and Iwaz
	(major campaign)	(not mentioned)
1113	Qalyubiyya	Muhammed Abaza
1123	Jirja	Muhammed Qatamish
1127	Qalyubiyya (Dijwa)	Ismail Bey
1132	Pilgrimage route	Ismail Bey
1134	Sharqiyya, Manufiyya, Buhayra	Qasimi Beys
1135	Qalyubiyya (Dijwa)	(not mentioned)
1141-2	10 campaigns against Jerkes Upper Egypt	Several Faqari Beys

The role played by the military in Hijaz should not be undermined. The Egyptian garrison provided the forces which assisted the governors of Jeddah, Yanbu‘, Mecca and Medina. Several edicts ordered the military of Egypt to restore a certain Sharīf whom Istanbul wanted to appoint. Iwaz Bey for instance, remained as governor of Jeddah from 1113/1701 to 1121/1709. As he resided in Cairo, he appointed Yūsuf al-Jazzar as vice-governor of the region,

aided by 500-1,000 Egyptian troops.¹ Istanbul's dependence on the Egyptian garrison to control the affairs of Hijaz continued despite the decline of the military. In the years 1128-1134/1715-1721, and 1136/1723 the Porte ordered more than two thousand soldiers to be sent to Jeddah and Mecca to assist the Pashas of Jeddah and the Sharīf of Mecca in their conflict against the Bedouin tribes and rebellious Ashrāf.²

Several considerations must be taken into account when discussing Istanbul's policy towards the garrison in Egypt. The military provided an element of stability to the political system despite the damage it managed to cause. Strong aghas and Janissary bashodabashis, such as Küçük Muhammed and 'Ali Agha proved successful in maintaining law and order in Cairo, preventing price rises, and eradicating corruption. The Bedouin's power was reduced by intensive military campaigns, bringing a greater degree of peace and order to Egypt. The military was not merely a Mamluk force. In fact, chief officers regarded themselves as 'askar al-Sultan (the Sultan's army) and stressed the fact that they were not the army of Ismail or Jerkes.³ The army was the main institution responsible for destroying several Mamluk households, under the leadership of al-Nishanji and 'Ali Pashas.

Nevertheless, although increased in the numbers of its corps, the military's power declined rapidly during the eighteenth century. It was clearly an Ottoman policy to weaken the ojaqs in Egypt and keep them engaged in constant local and Imperial campaigns, while Istanbul's treasury reaped good profits from Mamluk household rivalries, as will be shown in the next chapter. This policy further enhanced local devolution of power in the region and, by the second half of the eighteenth century, it weakened the overall grip of the Ottoman authorities on Egypt.

¹ D, pp. 49, 76.

² AI, pp. 288, 346-347, 368-369.

³ ibid., pp. 336, 359.

V-THE QADIASKER

The office of qadiasker was parallel to that of the Pasha. The Qanunname allotted extraordinary powers to this office and stated that all cases of differences among the public must be dealt with by the qadiasker rather than the Wālī. It added that the police of Cairo should not execute any punishment

against anyone before consulting the qadiasker and obtaining his consent.¹ Chronicles recorded the arrival of the qadiasker with a similar amount of pomp as that shown on the arrival of the Pasha, since both came from Istanbul and, together, they were regarded as representatives of the Sultan. Several Noble Scripts addressed the qadiasker together with the Pasha and granted him honorary titles. Above all, the qadiasker was not only the head of the judicial system, but also an essential figure in the Dīwān, thus giving the holder of this office the opportunity to have a major share in the decision-making process, as long as the Dīwān remained effective. The symbolic presence of the qadiasker as representative of the Sultan, whatever might be the individual qadi's actual skill or authority, was highly appreciated by native Egyptians. In 1133/1720 Rajab Pasha complained about the Mamluks' refusal to cooperate in the collection of taxes. When negotiations with the sanjaq beys reached a deadlock, he threatened to take the qadiasker and return with him to Istanbul in order to inform the Sultan of the native Egyptians' disobedience. The sanjaq beys responded immediately by giving him tickets which could be paid by merchants of Istanbul.² In another incident, in 1134/1721, qadiasker Muhammed Efendi requested the Pasha to grant him permission to depart to Istanbul because his term of office had ended. Muhammed Pasha rejected his request unless a new qadi were appointed in his place. One month later Ibrahim Efendi Zadeh arrived in Cairo as the new qadiasker and the Pasha gave permission to his predecessor to leave, thus ruling out any possibility of a vacuum in this important office.³

The most significant case in this respect was the deposition of Rajab Pasha in 1133/1720, when the sanjaq beys of Egypt appointed Yūsuf al-Jazzar as qa'immaqam. The Ulema supported the Mamluk alliance but the qadiasker sided with Rajab Pasha. When the sanjaq beys attempted to depose the

¹ Mısır Kanunnamesi, p. 82.

² TA, f. 195.

³ AI, pp. 341-345.

qadiasker, the Janissary regiment moved in quickly and refused to oust the qadi claiming that it was ‘alāmat al-‘Isyān (a sign of disobedience), and thus a firmān was issued for the qadi to remain in his post.¹

As an essential figure in the Dīwān, the qadiasker could not avoid involvement in the political affairs of Egypt. In a number of cases contemporary documents point out that several qadis were politically active and rather influential. Pashas were eager to get qadis on their side in cases of disagreement with the military and sanjaq beys. In 1109/1697 army officers and sanjaq beys requested the qadiasker to attend a meeting to decide upon the deposition of Ismail Pasha, but the Pasha locked his qadi up in the Citadel to prevent his attendance. Eleven days later, the chief qadi was freed. He then signed a petition which went to Istanbul explaining the reasons why the military, the sanjaq beys, and the Ulema found Ismail Pasha incapable of governing the region.² A similar incident took place in 1123/1711 when Khalil Pasha allegedly locked up both the Naqib al-Ashrāf and the qadiasker in the Citadel in a maneuver to gain legitimacy against rebellious ojaqs and sanjaq beys.³

Decline of the Office of Qadiasker

Chief qadis were not particularly popular in Egypt. The qadi who came with Rajab Pasha in 1133/1720 claimed that the people of Egypt had “become disbelievers and that his mission was to renew their Islam.” This qadi was particularly hated by locals, so that when Rajab Pasha lost his office the qadi

¹ TA, f. 190.

² ZI, f. 35.

³ TA, f. 146.

was insulted by the public.¹ Another qadi, Ahmad Efendi, in 1136/1723, became involved in the conflict between Ismail Bey and Jerkes Muhammed. Using his influence in Istanbul, he arranged for Muhammed b. Ibrahim Bey to become Defterdar of Egypt, with the result that hatred developed between Ismail and Ahmad Efendi. In the same year the Janissaries strongly opposed a fatwa issued by the qadi against their Bash Javush. They surrounded his house and threatened to write to Istanbul against Ahmad Efendi. The only person capable of solving the crisis was not the Pasha or Muhammed Jerkes, but Ismail Bey, who held a meeting which ordered that no sanjaq bey or agha should meet with the qadiasker under any circumstances, thus isolating Ahmad Efendi from his allies in the camp of Jerkes. Moreover the council decided that official fatwas should be obtained from local Sheikhs of the four madhhabs, who were mentioned by name. Thus powerless and humiliated, Ahmad Efendi arranged for the assassination of Ismail Bey in the Dīwān, by making a secret agreement with Jerkes and Faqari Beys. The plan was successfully implemented and, according to Ahmad Shalabi, the chief qadi became too ambitious and interfered in the minor and major affairs of Egypt after the death of Ismail. A few months later, in 1136/1723, Muhammed Pasha became disillusioned with the qadi and got rid of him by poisoning.²

In fact the office of qadiasker suffered a series of major setbacks after its establishment in 1517. While the majority of Egyptians followed the Shafī'i madhhab, the qadiasker had to be a Turkish Hanafi sent from Istanbul. The later appointment of four vice-qadis for the four madhhabs did nothing to blunt the prestige of the chief qadis. As early as 1525 the Qanunname referred to the corruption of the judicial system through qadis appointing incapable and corrupt deputies (wukalā') who caused injustice and sided with the strong

¹ AI, pp. 305, 315.

² ibid., pp. 379-384, and 418-419.

against the weak.¹ Chief qadis were also isolated from the public because they did not speak Arabic and always had to communicate with them through dragomen. This encouraged the public depend on local Ulema who were more accessible and belonged to their own class.

In general, the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 did not witness the emergence of any strong chief qadis. In comparison to qadiaskers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the later qadiasker was in office for a longer term, and had more power and influence. Chief qadis were undermined during the period of study by the rise of local religious institutions, mainly al-Azhar, as centres of religious authority. Although chief qadis participated in Diwān meetings, they were restricted to a short term of one year while the local Ulema spent their whole life in Egypt. The rise of the Sheikh al-Azhar as the prominent religious leader in Egypt posed a serious challenge to the authority of the qadiasker. During the civil war (1123/1711), the fatwa of the qadiasker in favour of Khalil Pasha and Ifranj Ahmad was challenged by an opposing fatwa from several Ulema of al-Azhar.² In the aftermath, the office of qadiasker became of a symbolic and political nature, while religious legitimacy shifted to the local Ulema. In major events the name of the qadiasker was pronounced alongside those of the Ulema and Ashrāf. In some cases, chronicles never bother to refer to the qadiasker when the Ulema of al-Azhar made a collective decision. Because of the involvement of several chief qadis in the political affairs of Egypt and their engagement in Mamluk household rivalries, they lost their independence and legitimacy.

This office was further weakened by the general shift towards localism in eighteenth-century Ottoman Egypt. Influential Mamluk beys obtained more sympathy and cooperation from local Ulema than from successive Turkish chief qadis. There is evidence that the Porte recognized the growing power and

¹ Mısır Kanunnamesi, p. 83.

² SH, p. 352.

religious influence of al-Azhar. Local Ulema made direct contacts with the chief Mufti, Sheikh al-Islam in the Ottoman capital, while the Porte issued orders for the maintenance of al-Azhar and enhanced the position of its Ulema. Like the Pashalik, the office of qadiasker gradually developed to become of a symbolic nature, while the effective handling of its responsibilities lay in the hands of the local Ulema.

VI- THE DĪWĀN

The decision-making and policy implementing council in the political system of Ottoman Egypt was called the Dīwān. Ibrahim Pasha's Qanunname of 1525) ordered the Pasha to hold the Dīwān four times weekly, that is, on the same basis as Istanbul's Dīwān.¹ No further details were mentioned in the

¹ Mısır Kanunnamesi, p. 73.

Qanunname with regard to the functions of or attendance at the Dīwān. By convention, the Dīwān was headed by the Pasha, and consisted of the Pasha's ketkhuda, the gadiasker, Defterdar, Ruznameji, Amīr al-Hajj, other sanjaq beys, aghas and ketkhudas of the seven ojaqs, in addition to several minor officials such as the turjuman (translator) and mehirdar (stamp-holder). L. 'Abd al-Latīf asserted that there were actually two different types of Dīwān: a daily council which discussed the everyday affairs of Egypt, attended by the Pasha, his ketkhuda, Defterdar, Ruznameji, and several military officers; whereas the al-Dīwān al-'Alī a larger and more formal council which met less frequently.¹ For the period of study no sijills of the al-Dīwān al-'Alī have yet been found, and records of this important council in Shahr Aqari in Cairo only start in 1154/1741. The following discussion will concentrate on the wider concept of the Dīwān, as the Pasha's executive council which received Noble Scripts, discussed the ways of implementation, and issued various firmāns containing instructions on the execution of orders. There is no evidence that this council did in fact meet four times weekly. In times of crisis the Dīwān never met at all, especially in times of friction between the Pasha and the sanjaq beys. There were also other notables who attended the Dīwān but who were not regarded as permanent members. The Ulema were often called in for discussion of matters concerning the iltizam lands or problems relating to awqāf. Eunuchs (aghas) were also invited to attend Dīwān concerning their affairs. In the Ottoman system the Dīwān was the council which incorporated the Pashalik, the military, the Mamluks, and religious authorities giving them a common responsibility for the government of Egypt. New elements were more often invited to attend such meetings during the period of study, including the a'yan, a term used at the start of the eighteenth century in appreciation of the expansion of a local aristocracy in Cairo.

¹ L. 'Abd al-Latīf, Al-Idarah fī Misr, pp. 132-135.

Activities of the Dīwān

Specific reference should be made in this context to the Tarājim al-sawā'iq of Mahmūd b. Muhammed, which preserves a good amount of material on the activities of the Dīwān during the period of study. This chronicle shows that the responsibilities of the Dīwān were wide and varied. Above all, a full Dīwān met whenever a Noble Script arrived from Istanbul and certain procedures were carried out in it prior to reading the edict. There was an extensive correspondence between Istanbul and Cairo at the start of the twelfth century AH. In 1107/1695, for instance, six Noble Scripts were read in one single Dīwān.¹ At one stage the Porte requested the authorities in Egypt to send large amounts of gunpowder, rice, oil, olives, and grains. When, however, the issue was discussed it was concluded that this request could not be met as Egypt was suffering from a drought, and that a letter should be prepared for sending to the Porte explaining the critical conditions of the region.²

The affairs of Hijaz were also discussed in the Dīwān. In 1105/1693 a force of 1,500 men from the Egyptian army was sent to depose Sa'd al-Ashram from his post as Sharīf of Mecca,³ but the following year the Dīwān decided to restore the Sharīf after consultation with the governor of Jeddah and the Ashrāf of Egypt.⁴

There were other vital meetings of the Dīwān in which the accounts of the khazna were settled and concluded. Names and numbers of corps called for service in Ottoman campaigns were also discussed in these councils. The procedures of appointment to and dismissal from administrative and military posts, which included reading the edicts or firmāns, investing officials in robes

¹ SS, f. 904.

² ibid., f. 886.

³ ibid., f. 860

⁴ ibid., f. 878.

of honour, and holding a celebration for new officials, were amongst the various activities of the Dīwān. The Dīwān also served as a court for the aristocracy. It was headed by the qadiasker and attended by the Pasha, members of the military, and sanjaq beys as witnesses. Most of the decisions on sending campaigns against the rebellious Arab Bedouin were taken in the Dīwān.¹

There is also evidence that the Dīwān was still able to solve several urgent crises which threatened the economic system of the region. In 1106/1694 two major meetings were held in the Dīwān to discuss ways of solving the crisis caused by the low level of the Nile and the failure of the multazims to pay the taxes due. Important decisions were reached in this regard.² Two years later, the iltizam system was again in danger, this time because the multazims were refusing to pay their taxes, claiming to be members of the military who should thus be exempted from taxation. The council gave Ismail Pasha a free hand to collect the taxes due by any means and without any interference by the military or sanjaq beys, who assured the Pasha that they would not provide the multazims with any form of protection or backing.³ In 1109/1697 another major Dīwān was held to discuss the illegal infiltration of Arab Bedouin into the Janissary and ‘Azebān’ regiments, Aghas of both regiments gave assurance to the council that they would expel the irregular Bedouin from the corps and prevent any further infiltration into the ojaqs.⁴

Various other business matters were dealt with in the Dīwān. There was, for example, the extensive sale of iltizam lands by multazims who had died or fled the country. The belongings of Kizlar aghas (ex-service black eunuchs of

¹ ibid., f. 847.

² ibid., f. 872.

³ ibid., f. 916.

⁴ ibid., f. 946.

the Sultans' Harem) and deceased beys were sold in the Dīwān, because only the aristocracy could afford to buy such riches and because the money thereby raised was sealed in boxes and sent to the Sultan, who was regarded as the ultimate owner of eunuchs' belongings.¹ In extra-ordinary cases there were also demonstrations and riots outside the Dīwān hall.² Many assassinations and executions took place in the Dīwān. In 1111/1699, for instance, the Ashrāf gathered in protest in the Dīwān and requested the Pasha and qadiasker to order the death of an 'Azebān who had killed a Sharīf. When the qadi gave his consent, the murderer was brought into the Dīwān, killed by dagger blows and his body dragged out and burned in Rumayla Square.³ In 1136/1723 Ismail Bey was assassinated in an alleged plot by the Pasha, the qadiasker, and Muhammed Jerkes.

Tarājim al-sawā'iq gives the impression of a very active Dīwān dealing with the political, economic, and social issues of the region. Until the civil war of 1123/1711, the most dominant council on internal affairs was the Dīwān, as many contemporary sources show.

The Dīwān's Weakening Role

It is however inaccurate to suggest that the Dīwān was not weakened by the rise of local institutions within the political system of Ottoman Egypt. Desperate to extract more cash from its provinces, the central administration adopted a policy of strengthening local a'yan. This policy proved to be useful at the start, but in the long term it gradually eroded the Ottoman aspects of administration in the provinces with regard to the role of the Pasha, the loyalty of the military, the legitimacy of the qadiasker, and the functioning of the Dīwān. In 1106/1694 'Ali Pasha held several Dīwāns but failed to find a

¹ ibid., ff. 916, 962.

² ibid., f. 968.

³ ibid., f. 964.

solution to the economic crisis caused by a low Nile. It was only in 1107/1695, when the Pasha ordered Ibrahim Abu-Shanab, the Amīr al-Hajj to hold a Jam‘iyah (meeting of the council) in his house and delegated to him authority to reach a solution with the multazims, that the sanjaq beys and the military were invited to discuss the failure of the iltizam lands in the areas most affected by drought. The meeting is described as having been quite successful.¹ Several edicts ordered the sanjaq beys to hold their own meetings and discuss certain issues relating to the khazna deficits, Hijazi issues, and campaigns against the Arab Bedouin. These proved to work, especially with regard to raising more funds for the annual tribute when a serious deficit occurred.

A close analysis of contemporary chronicles shows that there were three stages of development in the executive council of internal affairs in Ottoman Egypt and the gradual transition of power and authority from the Dīwān to the Jam‘iyah. These may be summarized as follows.

- 1- In the seventeenth century the Dīwān was the only legitimate council dealing with political and administrative affairs in Egypt. This situation remained until the end of that century and beginning of the eighteenth century, as is implied by Tarājim al-sawā‘iq.
- 2- As Istanbul adopted a policy of strengthening local a‘yan, more local figures joined the Dīwān. A common term began to be adopted at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Jam‘iyah fī al-Dīwān in reference to a meeting of the usual council in addition to new members who had not previously formed part of the Dīwān. Zubdat al-ikhtisār refers to a Jam‘iyah fī al-Dīwān in 1107/1695 which was attended by all the sanjaq beys, amīrs, Sadāt, Bakriyya, Ulema and the qadiasker.² Several later Jam‘iyāt fī al-Dīwān were also held. It is interesting to find that Tarājim al-sawā‘iq refers to an incident

¹ ZI, f. 28. See also, D, pp. 28-29.

² ZI, f. 33.

in which a meeting was held to decide who should attend the Dīwān, indicating that the Dīwān had become overcrowded by the presence of unwelcome attendants. The story goes as follows:

“On 11 Shawwal 1106 the emirs, kakhyas, and ihtiyariyya of the seven ojaqs met in Imam Shafi‘i Maqam (Shrine) and decided that the sanjaq beys, emirs and aghas of the ojaqs should not ascend to the Dīwān or meet the Pasha, except for the Defterdar, the Javush ketkhuda, the turjuman, the Bash Mutafarriqa, the ketkhudas of the regiments, and the Bash Javush of the Janissaries, ‘Azebān, Javush, and Mutafarriqa regiments. The next day Javush Ketkhuda saw some awlad al-‘Arab (native Egyptians) in the Dīwān. he expelled them and ordered the door to be locked. When he saw some of the Pasha’s eunuchs, he told them “You have no business in here.”¹

The Porte authorized local emirs and influential native Egyptians to hold their own Jam‘iyahs as long as they were held in the houses of the Amīr al-Hajj and the Defterdar, being part of the political system recognized by the Porte. In some cases Noble Scripts ordered such Jam‘iyahs to be held if an important issue was to be determined.

- 3- In the aftermath of the civil war, Jam‘iyahs were more frequently held without any delegation from the Porte or the Pashas. Most of the activities of the Dīwān shifted to the Jam‘iyahs held in the houses of the Amīr al-Hajj and Defterdar. In 1137/1724 Ahmad Shalabi noticed that nobody attended the Dīwān, neither the a‘yan, the Defterdar, nor any of the sanjaq beys, except for the Ruznameji and some members of the Javush regiment. Instead Jam‘iyahs were held in the house of Jerkes for the conduct of local administration.² In an attempt to restore the system, Muhammed Pasha sent messengers to the seven ojaqs, sanjaq beys, and the Ulema informing them that Jerkes was deposed from his office as Defterdar and his sanjaq title was lifted. This Noble Script was an

¹ SS, f. 884.

² AI, pp. 448-449.

attempt to revive the activity of the Dīwān, but it did not achieve its perpetuation. Like other Ottoman institutions, the Dīwān became more of a symbol than being actually effective. The receiving of new orders from Istanbul and holding of celebrations were still held in the Dīwān, but land distribution, appointment, and dismissal in addition to other vital internal issues were managed by the Sheikh al-Balad's Jam'iyahs.¹

This chapter has attempted to study the role of the Pasha, the functions of the military, and the status of the qadiasker. It can well be argued that while the military became engaged in constant warfare in local and imperial campaigns, it lost political influence and sank into insignificance. Meanwhile Istanbul's tendency toward increased centralization of power entailed a policy of dealing directly with a new class of local a'yan, which gradually weakened the role of its official representatives. This shift towards the Mamluk institution caused the eventual erosion of the laws of the Qanunname and the complicated balance of power it had established in Egypt. As a consequence, the Dīwān, which was intended to achieve a working balance representing all elements within the political system, was reduced to insignificance and its role shifted to the Jam'iyah, an alternative Mamluk council.

¹ This will be elaborated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER

THE MAMLUK INSTITUTION

I-INTRODUCTION

This chapter raises several questions concerning prevailing views adopted by modern research on the rise of the beylicate. It attempts to provide answers on the basis of newly found sources with regard to the relationship between the old Mamluk Sultanate and the Mamluk institution in the eighteenth century. It also analyses the major sources of power that brought the beylicate to the fore as the dominant Mamluk institution capable of governing the region and encouraging later Mamluk beys to become more independent.

The various households, from formation to extinction, are thoroughly discussed and it is hoped that this part of our study will therefore further contribute to the understanding of the Mamluks' history in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The final two parts of this chapter will deal with the dominance of the Jam‘iyah as a Mamluk council which gradually replaced the Dīwān, and will also make an assessment of the administrative role played by the Mamluk institution in favour of the Ottoman system, and the benefit which Istanbul gained from its policy of strengthening the local a‘yan of Egypt.

II- A SYSTEM WITHIN A SYSTEM

Mamluk Roots

This chapter seeks to approach the study of the Mamluk system in Egypt during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 within the Ottoman context. There is a dominant view that the Mamluks of eighteenth-century Egypt were merely a continuation of their predecessors' Sultanate, which was destroyed in 1517. Although there are elements of truth in this argument, a detailed study may well show that the later Mamluks owed more for their revival to the Ottomans than to the Mamluk Sultanate. P.M. Holt argued, "The marked differences between the beys in Egypt and in the other Ottoman provinces suggest that the Egyptian establishment was not a genuine Ottoman institution, but the continuation or revival of the high amirate as it had existed under the Mamluk

Sultans.”¹ This argument has a strong basis. According to Holt, there are many similarities between the Mamluk system of Ottoman Egypt and the Mamluk Sultanate. Traditionally there were twenty-four beys, just as there had been twenty-four Emirs. The major offices of Amīr al-Hajj, Defterdar, and qa'immaqam are very similar to those of the command of the pilgrimage in the Mamluk Sultanate, so as the Khazindar Kabir and Na'ib al-Ghayba.

There is yet more evidence of the continuation of the Mamluk Sultanate's institutions in the Ottoman administration of Egypt. The Wali (head of the police force in Cairo) continued in the same manner during the life of both states. Mamluk kashifs of the provinces held very similar responsibilities in both systems, and the awqāf (endowments) system of the Sultanate was hardly subject to any change at all under the Ottomans. L. 'Abd al-Latīf found more hidden signs of Mamluk influence on the administration of Ottoman Egypt.² Most significant, the coalition of the military and civilians referred to as arbāb al-sayf wa-arbāb al-qalam was a common feature in the political and administrative systems of both states. 'Abd al-Latīf makes specific reference to the Dīwān as an example, which consisted of the Ruznameji, qadiasker, and Defterdar, in addition to the seven regiments and sanjaq beys. In fact, the Qanunname of 1525 depended on the Mamluk administrative system to establish its own Ottoman type of administration. Although it weakened the Mamluks of Egypt, it contained an element of their continuity in the long term. There is ample evidence that Ibrahim Pasha did approve many policies of the Mamluk Sultanate as part of his own Qanunname, referring to them as the laws of Kayit Bey, the following statements are extracted from Qanunname:

Ve kayıtbay zamanında adet-i cariye bu veçh ile idi ki her kaşifin taht küşüfiyyetinde olan yerlerin taksiti irtifa defterleri mucebince bi-temamihi

¹P.M. Holt, 'The Beylicates in Ottoman Egypt', in Studies in the History of the Near East, p. 185.

² L. 'Abd al-Latīf, al-Idarah fī Misr, pp. 14-24.

tahsil olunub hazine-i ‘amireye vasil olmak kaşifin uhdesinde ve iltizamındadır.¹

Ve rusumi küşüfiyyet dahi kayıtbay zamanında cari olan adet ve kanun üzere riayet oluna ol kanundan tecavüz olunmaya.²

Ve rusumi seyahat dahi kayıtbay kanuni üzerine alınub andan tecavüz olunmaya.³

Ve resmi misahat dahi kayıtbay kanuni üzere alına ziyade alınmaya.⁴

These Mamluk roots within the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt led Holt to argue that the beylicate was a Mamluk and not an Ottoman institution and that the Mamluk system continued to exert an enormous influence on the political system of Ottoman Egypt.⁵

Rise of the Beylicate under the Ottomans

There was certainly an element of continuation in the beylicate system and there was a great revival of the Mamluk institution during the period of study, including the expanding role of the Defterdar, and Amīr al-Hajj, authority and term of office of the qa'immaqam, and the establishment of the new and prominent post of Sheikh al-Balad. But this revival was due to certain Ottoman influences on the Mamluk system rather than the opposite. The Ottoman central administration adopted a new policy at the start of the eighteenth century which aimed at strengthening the local a‘yan as kashifs and administrators whose duty it was to curb the abuse of delegated power by

¹This section instructs the Kushshāf to collect taxes using the ‘Irtifa defters’, of Sultan Kayit Bey as a taxation guide. A.F. Mutwallī, Mısır Kanunnamesi, p. 6.

² A decree stating that the laws and regulations that were previously in effect during the reign of Sultan Kayit Bey remain valid and should be executed. ibid., p. 7.

³A decree stating that, Kayit Bey’s laws organizing Bedouin chiefs’ activities and their fees in the provinces should be followed and never breached. ibid., p. 10

⁴A decree stating that, the fees for the officials in charge of iltizam supervision remain the same as they were at the time of Sultan Kayit Bey. ibid., p. 10

⁵P.M. Holt The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt, p. 186.

provincial governors. The rise of the Egyptian elite in Ottoman Egypt should be viewed against this background. In administration, although the Ottomans adopted the Mamluk allocation of mukāta'āt, this was only a technical continuity; in essence there seems to have been a radical change in the latter days of the Mamluk Sultanate as the system of appropriation was decentralized. But the Ottomans introduced the Emanet system, to which centralization was inherent. Later, it was replaced by the iltizam system, which proved to be more efficient and rewarding for the Imperial Treasury. By the eighteenth century the iltizam system became the dominant mechanism of surplus appropriation in Ottoman Egypt.¹ Thus the rise of the beylicate could well be attributed to the flourishing iltizam system introduced by the Ottomans, rather than to the Mamluk roots of the beylicate.

Although the Mamluk institution survived from the days of the Sultanate, it was subjected to major changes in its structure under the Ottomans. David Ayalon has described in detail the Mamluk society of Ottoman Egypt, making special reference to the relationships between households (buyūt, sing. bayt), and factions within each household, where there was a master (sayyid or makhdūm) served by different types of Mamluks who were referred to as Khushdashūn (brothers), chiraqs, atba', and sarrajūn (saddlers). But Ayalon has also pointed out some difference between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Mamluk institution of Ottoman Egypt.² First, he noted that whereas in the Mamluk Sultanate it happened only rarely that the son of a Mamluk would reach the rank of bey, it seemed to have become a normal procedure, in eighteenth-century Ottoman Egypt, upon the death of a sanjaq bey to appoint his son and not his Mamluk in his stead. Thus, on the death of Iwaz Bey in 1123/1711 his son Ismail became a sanjaq bey, in his place. Another major difference was the fact that civilians in Ottoman Egypt owned many Mamluks, who later became influential in the political affairs of

¹G. Piterberg, 'The Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian Elite', p. 285.

²D. Ayalon; 'Studies in al-Jabarti', JESHO (1960). (312), pp. 148-174. (313) pp. 275-325.

Egypt, while it was not possible for a civilian to own Mamluks during the Mamluk Sultanate. There is a reference in contemporary sources to merchants of the Sharaiybi family, Ulema, and black eunuchs who owned Mamluks. A good example is Mustafa Bey, the Mamluk of Yūsuf Kizlar Agha, who became a prominent figure and assumed the post of qa'immaqam at one stage.¹ Another example is found in ʿAwdah al-isharāt in reference to a Jew who killed his Muslim Mamluk in 1134/1721. It was consequently declared that Christians and Jews should not hold in their possession Muslim Mamluks.²

Another major development within the Mamluk institution under the Ottomans in eighteenth-century Egypt was the possession of free Muslims by Mamluks. Mamluk beys held in their possession a number of sarrajūn, who served as their private bodyguards. These sarrajūn were free males who joined the service of Mamluk beys and were regarded as their atbaʿ, a term commonly used for Mamluks. They formed an essential part of a Mamluk households and were treated as if they were chiraqs or khushdashūn. The number of sarrajūn rose dramatically after 1123/1711. By 1136/1723, al-Malwāni commented on the increase in their numbers and rising power and influence, “It seemed there was a new eighth regiment called Buluk al-Sarrajūn.”³ The sarrajūn earned a bad reputation, as they terrorized civilians and caused unrest in the Egyptian capital. The authorities made several decisions to disarm them, as a measure to curb their uncontrolled activities.⁴ Owing to the rise of the beylicate at the beginning of the eighteenth-century, the quickest way to make a career was through the Mamluk institution, which was thus subject to the infiltration of non-Mamluks into the system. The sarrajūn were not the only free Muslims who joined the service of Mamluk beys. In emergencies individuals were armed and used as a protection force for Mamluks. ‘Abd al-Rahmān Bey of

¹J. 1/178.

²AI, p. 337.

³TA, f. 199.

⁴AI, p.375.

Jirja in 1113/1701, ‘Uthmān and Muhammed Qatamish in 1126/1714, and Jerkes in 1138/1725 armed up to one thousand local Egyptians to strengthen their defenses against the military.¹ These additional forces were often referred to as ghurabā’, and have been discussed in some detail in the preceding chapter. Thus, the Mamluk households of eighteenth-century Ottoman Egypt took a much different form than in the predecessor Sultanate. They incorporated free males, who formed an essential part of Mamluk households, while leadership was inherited by the sons or brothers of a deceased Mamluk.

The word tabi‘ (attendant) was commonly used of a Mamluk’s sarrāj, chiraq, and even supporters and sympathisers of a prominent sanjaq bey even if they were Mamluks of another, less significant patron. Thus, it became difficult to distinguish if the tabi‘ was a Mamluk or a sarrāj. Much care has to be taken in the treatment of contemporary material when talking about the atba‘ of a certain patron.

Mamluk beys of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were generally loyal to the Ottoman Sultan and fulfilled the state policies that aimed at the maintenance of the existing system. Amongst these sanjaq beys was Ismail Defterdar, Iwaz Bey and Ibrahim Abu Shanab, who were all very active in the period 1099-1123/1687-1711 in protecting Ottoman suzerainty in Hijaz and the provinces of Upper and Lower Egypt. Moreover, the Mamluk establishment of Ottoman Egypt in the eighteenth-century formed a vital part of the Ottoman administrative system. Mamluk beys recognized that the only source of legitimacy at this stage was the Ottoman Sultan, without whom the political control of local institutions, mainly the military, could not be achieved. Despite the significant power of Ismail b. Iwaz Bey, sources show him unable to rest before getting an official pardon from the Sultan, which was

¹AI, pp. 273, 470-475.

finally achieved in 1134/1721, after spending several days in hiding because he had been declared an outlaw.¹

The result of this complicated set-up was the development of a unique Mamluk system within the Ottoman system. This could be attributed more to Istanbul's policy of strengthening the local a'yan of Egypt than to continuity with the previous Sultanate which collapsed two centuries before. This Mamluk system derived its strength not from the old Sultanate's conventional roots but rather from the backing and support of the central administration in the eighteenth century.

The Mamluk System of Ottoman Egypt in the Eighteenth Century

Before examining the Mamluk institution's sources of power at the start of the eighteenth-century, we will attempt a brief description of the major developments which affected the Mamluk posts of the Ottoman administration in Egypt.

- Sanjaq beys: Holt argued that the beys of the usual type in the Ottoman Empire held large grants and that they were in origin commanders of the provincial levies and governors of their provinces. But this was not true of the beys in Egypt, who were not holders of land grants but recipients of an annual allowance (saliyane) which was a charge upon the treasury of Egypt.² There were twenty-four sanjaq beys in the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt. These were: the Wazir's ketkhuda; the four Qapudans of Dimyatt, Alexandria, Rashid and the Suez; the Amir al-Hajj; the Defterdar; the Sanjaq al-Khazna (Imperial Treasury); and the five governors of the major provinces (or aqalim)

¹AI, pp. 318, 343.

²P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, pp. 30,73.

of Egypt; Jirja, Sharqiyya, Gharbiyya, Manufiyya, and Buhayra. The remaining eleven sanjaq beys were either governors of minor provinces, or had the duty of guarding the main gates of Cairo. They were referred to as beys and were holders of a rank rather than of a specific post. Contemporary sources often make reference to a sanjaq battāl, that is, a person who is either bankrupt or too old to perform a responsibility, but who still holds the title of sanjaq bey. Apart from the Pasha's ketkhuda and the four Qapudans, the sanjaq beys of Egypt belonged to Mamluk households. By 1130/1717, the Pashas of Egypt had to take utmost care to distribute these titles equally between the two major households -Qasimiyya and Faqariyya- or between the two factions within a household such as Shanabiyya and Shawaribiyya. Several army officers were raised to the office of sanjaq bey in attempts by Pashas to equalize Mamluk control in these ranks, but eventually the Mamluks managed to dominate the military system and started to appoint aghas and ketkhudas of the seven ojaqs, who were merely their own atba' and Mamluks, as sanjaq beys. Besides providing the governors of the five major provinces of Upper and Lower Egypt, sanjaq beys were also appointed as commanding officers (sirdars) for expeditions which joined the imperial army in its wars on the European, Russian, and Persian fronts. Egyptian forces were frequently summoned to service in Crete and Hijaz. They were also appointed for expeditions against the rebellious Bedouin tribes of Egypt, Syria, and Hijaz. These forces had to be commanded by a holder of a sanjaq rank. Of a similar nature was the annual appointment of a sanjaq beys to command the treasury convoy (khazna) which took the tribute of Egypt overland to Istanbul. Beys who were appointed as sanjaq al-khazna often played an important role in establishing direct contacts with the Porte and influencing Ottoman imperial policy towards Egypt. So, for instance, Muhammed b. Ibrahim Abu Shanab who was the commander of treasury convoy in 1132/1719, was able to persuade the Sultan that Ismail b. Iwaz was a very dangerous and ambitious person who seized control of the

military and administration of Egypt. He managed to obtain an official pardon for his father's tābi's, Jerkes, and achieved a policy shift backed by the Porte.¹

Amongst the important posts held by sanjaq beys was the government of Jeddah. Iwaz Bey, for instance, held the title Hākim Jeddah for eight years (1112-1120/1700-1708), during which he became very wealthy and gained huge sums of money from taxes.² Iwaz appointed his tābi's Yūsuf al-Jazzar, as his deputy while he himself stayed in Cairo and played a major role as the sirdar of several tajridāt (expeditions) against the Bedouin of al-Maghariba.

The rise of the Bedouin's power and their corruption increased the importance of Mamluk beys, on whom the authorities in Istanbul relied heavily to curb the rebellious tribes. Expeditions against the Bedouin presented an opportunity for Ismail Defterdar, Ibrahim Amīr al-Hajj, Ibrahim Abu-Shanab, Iwaz Bey, and 'Abd al-Rahman Bey of Jirja, in addition to other, less significant sanjaq beys, to prove their loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan during the period 1099-1111/1687-1699, as they quelled a series of Bedouin campaigns against Ottoman authority in Egypt, Hijaz, and Syria. Increasing appointment of Mamluk beys as Sirdars of military forces paved the way for increased interference by the beylicate in the affairs of the military, which in turn led to further dominance of the Mamluks in the political system of Ottoman Egypt.

- Amīr al-Hajj: One of the major offices in the Ottoman state was command of the pilgrimage caravan. The Amīr al-Hajj was responsible for the safety of the pilgrim convoy, maintenance of the pilgrimage route, and payment to its Bedouin inhabitants of sufficient amounts to prevent any attacks on the pilgrims. The Amīr al-Hajj also had to assure the safe arrival of the surrah (the funds assigned for the administration of the holy cities in Hijaz).

¹D, p. 130.

²ibid., p. 63.

S. Shaw has argued that the duties of the Amīr al-Hajj were of three principal kinds, viz.:

a- To organize the pilgrimage caravan, arrange for the purchase and transport of supplies to be sent ahead of it to the fortresses lying along its route, and to provide for their proper distribution during the course of the journey.

b- To receive and transport the contributions in cash and kind sent annually by the Imperial Treasury of Egypt to the people of the holy cities and to arrange for their distribution during the time the caravan stayed in Mecca and Medina.

c- To ensure the protection of the pilgrimage caravan during the course of the journey, assisted by a contingent of troops drawn from the seven military corps in Egypt and led by the Sirdar al-Hajj, himself an emir of lesser rank.¹

During the period of study the role played by the Amīr al-Hajj increased dramatically. In economic terms, as Shaw has pointed out, the contributions of the Imperial Treasury sent with the Amīr al-Hajj continued to increase until they were set at 940,920 paras annually in the reform of 1082/1671. In 1107/1695 a Musa'ade Jedid (new assistance) was added to the revenues of the Amīr al-Hajj to enable him to fulfil his duties. The status of the Amīr al-Hajj continued to grow as the Porte granted him increased recognition. Ahmad Shalabi also points out that in 1124/1712 Qaytas Bey Amīr al-Hajj held a Jam'iyah and requested the beys and military Aghas to support his demand for 50 kise (1 kise, or purse, = 25,000 paras), to be taken from the Imperial Treasury. Upon the initial consent of the Pasha, a formal request was sent to Istanbul for the confirmation of this amount to be paid.² In 1133/1720 the Amīr al-Hajj was also granted an annual payment of 45,000 paras from the Imperial Treasury and was, in addition, excused from the payment of Mali-Haraj (land tax) for all the muqata'at which he held. Moreover, in 1136/1723, It was decided that the iltizams of villages yielding an annual profit of 375,000 paras were to be established in waqf for the Umarā' al-Hajj and their Mali-Haraj was

¹S.Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organisation and Development of Ottoman Egypt. p. 240.

²AI, p. 259.

also excused by the Sultan. By 1142/1729 the Amīr al-Hajj was receiving up to 4,355,027 paras from the Treasury aside from his salary.¹

Politically the Amīr al-Hajj became a prominent figure in the political affairs of Ottoman Egypt. Umarā' al-Hajj were authorized to hold Jam'iyahs in their houses as well as to act as members of the Dīwān, which they attended during their stay in Cairo. Several holders of this office played a major role in controlling the Bedouin and enforcing law and order in the provinces of Egypt and Hijaz. In the years toward the end of the seventeenth-century, Istanbul made appointments to this office by an Imperial Edict, but in the period after the civil war of 1123/1711, several appointments were made locally and later confirmed by the Porte. Ismail b. Iwaz was particularly popular as Amīr al-Hajj because he paid the Bedouin in advance. He also carried out extensive maintenance work to fortresses and wells, and was described as being very generous to the pilgrimage caravan.²

On the other hand, Muhammed Qatamish, who was appointed Amīr al-Hajj in 1124/1712, proved to be rather unsuccessful. The Hajj of that year ended in disaster, as he failed to save the convoy from Bedouin raids and hundreds of pilgrims died on their way back to Egypt. Upon his arrival in Cairo, women and children chanted insulting songs against him.³ Despite such rare cases of incompetence, the office of Amīr al-Hajj, which was dominated by Mamluk beys, maintained its status as one of the most important posts in Ottoman administration during the period of study, while holders of this title achieved more economic and political gains than their predecessors.

- Defterdar: Within the local administration of Egypt the most important office was that of Defterdar (Treasurer). It was a non-military post but of considerable

¹S. Shaw, p. 241-242.

²D, p. 145.

³ibid., pp. 76-77.

importance. The Defterdar was not only a permanent member of the Dīwān and a person authorized to hold Jam‘iyahs in his house, but he also had the advantage of being required to stay in Cairo, whereas the Amīr al-Hajj had to go on his annual trip which lasted at least three months. During the period of study, Defterdars were chosen from amongst the Mamluk beys of Egypt and usually the strongest Mamluk was chosen for this post.

This office underwent considerable development and became increasingly important in the political system of Ottoman Egypt. In 1103/1691 an Imperial Edict granted the Defterdar the supervision of al-Muhammediyya endowments.¹ Moreover, in 1108/1696 another Imperial Edict stated, ‘We have given the supervision of Suez to whoever becomes Defterdar in Egypt. He is to be exempted from all sorts of kushufiyah and other forms of taxes’.²

The most distinguished Mamluk beys who served as Defterdar included Ismail Bey al-Faqari, his patron Ibrahim Zain al-Faqar, Ibrahim Abu Shanab and Qaytas Bey. The authorities in Istanbul tended to reshuffle the two important offices every year, whereby the Amīr al-Hajj would be appointed as Defterdar and vice versa, to prevent a monopoly of either office by the two prominent Mamluk households. Following the assassination of Qaytas Bey in 1126/1714, this office was challenged by the creation of the new office of Sheikh al-Balad. It was held by the most prominent sanjaq bey, while the Defterdar’s post was given to one of his less significant tabi’s. A good example is the appointment of Ismail Agha the tabi’ of Ismail b. Iwaz, as Defterdar in 1135/1722, while the latter became both Amīr al-Hajj and Sheikh al-Balad.³

¹TA, f. 113.

² “Innā a‘tynā nazarat bandar al-Swais likulli man yakunu defterdar bi Misr al-mahrousa, min ghair kushufiyyah wa-lā yu‘ti ila ahadin ‘awa’id abdan.” See, ZI, f. 32; SS, f. 920.

³AI, pp. 368-369.

- Qa'immaqam: By the end of the seventeenth-century, the holder of this post exercised full viceregal powers between the death or removal from office of one viceroy and the installation of the next. Ibrahim Abu Shanab was the most favoured candidate to this post. He was appointed as qa'immaqam in the years 1099/1687, 1107/1695, 1119/1707, 1126/1714, 1129/1716, and 1131/1718 for a total period of over fourteen months in which he was the actual governor of Egypt. During his office as qa'immaqam, Abu-Shanab gained large sums of money. Ahmad Shalabi commented on the fifty-five days which he spent as qa'immaqam in 1129/1716, saying, "During the fifty-five day term Abu Shanab gained great many things, and (collected) money until his back became straight."¹ Among the distinguished Mamluk beys who held the title of qa'immaqam was Mustafa Bey, tabi' Yūsuf Kizlar Agha. On 12 Rabi' II 1109/ 29 September 1697 he was appointed acting viceroy upon the dismissal of Ismail Pasha. The author of Zubdat al-ikhtisār comments on the extended authority granted to him by saying that when Mustafa Bey ascended to the Dīwān, 'he governed ordered and forbade.'² In office Mustafa also made appointments to the offices of Bey of Jirja, Amīr al-Hajj, and several kashifs. He then prepared the annual khazna to be sent to Istanbul. Mustafa Bey spent five months as qa'immaqam, before Hussein Pasha arrived on 22 Rajab 1109/ 4 February 1698, which is a remarkably long period. Qansuh Bey also enjoyed similar authority during the time of the civil war in 1123/1711. On this occasion, however, Khalil Pasha refused to accept the Mamluks' appointment instead of one of their colleagues and resisted their decision to remove him. It is reported that Qansuh Bey issued firmāns, paid salaries, and governed from his own house until the Pasha surrendered and Qansuh Bey resumed his responsibilities in the Dīwān.³ In 1133/1720 Yūsuf al-Jazzar, the tabi' of Iwaz Bey, was appointed by the sanjaq beys who had deposed Rajab Pasha

¹"wa jabā abu Shanab fī al-khamsah wa-khamsūn yaumān shay'an kathiran min bilād mahlul wa-athaminah 'ilā an kama thahruh". AI, p. 291; See also' J. 1/153; TA, f.174.

²ZI, ff. 35-36.

³SH, pp. 368-369.

qa'immaqam. He spent four months in office. This time the Porte recognized his appointment as acting viceroy and sent a Noble Script in which he was addressed by name, holding him responsible for all the internal affairs of Egypt, until the new Pasha should arrive. Preparation of the Khazna was made the responsibility of Yūsuf al-Jazzar because he was Defterdar as well as qa'immaqam.¹

- Kashif: The sub-provinces of Egypt were referred to as aqālīm or kushūfiyyāt and were administered by kushshāf (sing. kashif). The majority of these kushshāf were Mamluks who did not hold the rank of bey. Apart from the major aqalim, which were governed by sanjaq beys, the remaining provinces were the responsibility of minor Mamluks who were often appointed by their masters, who in turn chose them from among their best atba'. In their aqalim the kushshāf were in charge of administration, tax collection, irrigation, and the maintenance of law and order. These kushshāf formed a vital element in the operation of the iltizam system and the actual government of Upper and Lower Egypt. Conflicts between sanjaq beys over the appointment of their Mamluks in the aqālīm was a major feature of this period. A dispute over a minor iqlīm in the Delta cost Ismail b. Iwaz his life in 1136/1723 at the hands of Zain al Faqar, who claimed his prior right to that iqlīm.² Despite these struggles revenues from the aqalim not only formed a large share of the annual khazna, but also guaranteed the continuity of the Mamluk households which flourished during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730.

Among the major developments within the Mamluk institution in Ottoman Egypt during this period was the creation of the two following major posts.

¹TA, f. 157; AI, p. 320.

²D, p. 143.

- The Bey of Jirja, (Hākīm al-Sa‘īd): Although this office existed earlier, it underwent a major development in 1106/1694, when Asyūt and Itfih were incorporated into Jirja, and again in 1109/1697, Aswān, Minya, and Manfalūt were added to it too forming the largest Egyptian iqlīm. The lands from Minya to Aswan became one large province governed by a single bey, yet the bey of Jirja had to share government of the province with the tribe of Hawwara, which controlled a large portion of the grain supplies to Cairo and Istanbul. They imposed their own prices on these grains and the beys of Jirja had a difficult task in coming to terms with the chiefs of Hawwara. After Muhammed Bey al-Kabir became Hākīm al-Sa‘īd, he made an alliance with Hawwara during the civil war of 1123/1711. The arrival of al-Kabir with his Hawwara allies changed the sequence of events and provoked fighting, but the results did not go in favour of the alliance. Contemporary sources focus on the arrival of al-Kabir and the power he enjoyed amongst other beys. Al-Kabir was followed by Muhammed Qatamish as Bey of Jirja, who allied with the rival tribe of Hasan al-Ikhmimi, but were more intensive efforts at Jerkes-Hawwara alliances during the period 1138-1141/1725-1729.

- Sheikh al-Balad: One of the major developments within the Mamluk institution during the period of study was the rise of the Sheikh al-Balad as the prominent Mamluk figure in Ottoman Egypt. Not much study has been made of the creation of this post,¹ but it could be traced back to 1135/1722 when Ismail b. Iwaz was honoured with the appointment of his Mamluk ‘Abdullah as Amīr al-Hajj and his tabi‘ Ismail as Defterdar. Ahmad Shalabi’s comment, ‘wa-sara Ismail beyk Shaykh al-Balad.’² This does not necessarily indicate that it had become an official post. It seems rather that the title was used in reference to the head of a household who gained the supremacy in Cairo. In 1136/1723, however, Muhammed Pasha officially appointed Muhammed

¹Useful comments on the emergence of the Sheikh al-Balad as the prominent political figure in Cairo will be found in P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, pp. 92-93; and M. Winter, Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, pp. 24, 26.

²AI, pp. 368-9

Jerkes as Shaikh al-Balad. Following the assassination of Ismail Bey,¹ Jerkes was invested with a robe of appointment in an official ceremony, in which also the other offices of Amīr al-Hajj and al-Mansura Kushufiyah were granted to other sanjaq beys. It seems that it was Muhammed Pasha who made this post official, because he later invested Zain al-Faqar Bey with a robe of honour and appointed him as Sheikh al-Balad following the dismissal of Jerkes Bey in 1138/1725². In 1140/1727, when Muhammed Qatamish returned from Istanbul with the title of Pasha, the Faqari house was in effective control of Cairo, so that Shalabi commented that Zain al-Faqar had become the master in Cairo and other provinces of Egypt too, and that young and old had become obedient to him. He added that Muhammed Pasha invested him with a fur coat and addressed him as Shaikh al-Balad.³ After the long term of Muhammed Pasha, it became a convention to appoint the most prominent Mamluk bey as Sheikh al-Balad. In 1142/1729 ‘Abdullah Pasha Köprülü, upon hearing the news of the death of Zain al-Faqar, held a Dīwān and dismissed Muhammed Qatamish from his office of Amīr al-Hajj only to appoint him as Sheikh al-Balad in an official ceremony. During the same Dīwān, two other sanjaq beys were appointed to the offices of Amīr al-Hajj and Defterdar, which could have been an indication that the Sheikh al-Balad had indeed become the most important post among the Mamluk institutions of Ottoman Egypt.⁴

Reviewing the major Mamluk posts within the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt, it becomes apparent that the beys of Cairo were enhancing their position with the backing and support of Istanbul. Mamluk beys were governing the region as qai'mmaqams and handling the economy as Defterdars. They also administered the aqalim as kushshāf. By the official creation of the office of Sheikh al-Balad, the prominent Mamluk bey in Cairo

¹ibid., p. 399.

²Wa-albasa Zain al-Faqar qaftanānan ‘ala shaykh al-balad (ibid., p. 477).

³ibid., p. 525.

⁴ibid., p. 565.

began to challenge the status and authority of the Pasha himself. It was the new offices of Sheikh al-Balad and Bey of Jirja, in addition to the importance which the Porte accorded to the Defterdar, Amīr al-Hajj, and qa'immaqam that caused the eventual rise of the beylicate, rather than the Mamluk Sultanate's influence, which was in fact already subject to much erosion by the start of the eighteenth century.

III- SOURCES OF POWER

The period 1099-1143/1687-1730 witnessed a revival of the beylicate as a Mamluk institution within the political system of Ottoman Egypt. It will be useful in this section to analyse the causes of the revival of this institution and the sources from which it derived its extended power and authority at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. P.M. Holt has pointed to several examples of the Mamluk beys' gradual gaining control of the vital administrative posts such as the qa'immaqam, the Defterdar, and the Amīr al-Hajj.¹ After the civil war the Mamluks also dominated the military establishment and the iltizam system. With growing economic and administrative capabilities, Mamluk beys eventually became the dominant element in trading activities on account of the official posts they held in the administration of Jeddah, Bulaq, Suez, and other ports of Egypt. Mamluk domination of the administrative system was enhanced by the revival of trade between Europe and Egypt, principally in based on coffee, textiles, and leather. In other words, the Mamluk beys of Ottoman Egypt derived their extended role during the early years of the eleventh century AH from certain developments in Egypt that occurred on account of its being an Ottoman province. In the following pages we will examine the major areas of influence in which the Mamluks gained deep infiltration and their remarkable power and authority during the period of study.

Administrative Dominance

Decentralization of the Ottoman central administration paved the way for new policies towards the provinces of the Empire. Many changes occurred, the most important of which was the drastic change in the system of surplus appropriation in Egypt, which took a new form in the second half of the

¹P.M. Holt, 'The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt', in Studies in the History of the Near East, pp. 177-219.

seventeenth century. The new iltizam system replaced the Emanet, and the Mamluks took a firm grip on its new posts. This in turn increased the importance of the Mamluks as tax collectors and administrators of the iltizam land. Their familiarity with the everyday affairs of the province was superior to that of the Ottoman elements within the administrative system, and thus they were successful in monopolising the iltizam system and establishing direct contacts with the authorities in the Ottoman capital. It also served as an opportunity for Mamluk beys to provide their services and prove allegiance to the Sultan. In recognition of the role they played, the Porte extended the power the Mamluk establishment so that, in effect, it became equal to that of the Pasha and the military (which seemed to be getting out of control). In 1103/1691 a Noble Script appointed four sanjaq beys to vital awqāf offices to replace military chiefs of the Janissary and ‘Azebān regiments.¹ Another Noble Script, issued in 1108/1696, stated that government of Suez should be given to the Defterdar of Egypt and that he should be exempted from all forms of taxation.² The preface to this Noble Script also spoke of the increase in the revenues of the Amīr al-Hajj during these years. In 1112/1700 Iwaz Bey was appointed governor of Jeddah, an office which he retained for a remarkably long period, and enjoyed extended authority, upon which al-Damurdashi comments, “Iwaz Bey went down to Jeddah, and sent his qa’immaqam to the Habesh (Abbyssinia). He remained as Hākīm of Jeddah for eight years until a new Pasha was sent by the state.”³ Another remarkable development was the new style of Noble Scripts, which now not only addressed the Pasha as they had done previously, but also referred to the sanjaq beys. Zubdat al-ikhtisār refers to a Noble Script which addressed the qadiasker, the Defterdar, and the sanjaq beys each by their name.⁴ In an earlier incident the Sultan sent two

¹TA, f. 113.

²ZI, f. 32; SS, f. 912.

³D, p. 63.

⁴ZI, f. 41.

scripts: one to the Pasha and another to the Defterdar, Ruznameji and the sanjaq beys of Egypt.¹

By the start of the eighteenth-century, it had become apparent that the sanjaq beys of Egypt were sharing actual government with the Pasha and challenging his authority. Contemporary sources make several references to cases in which the Porte ordered sanjaq beys to hold a Jam‘iyah in the houses of the Amīr al-Hajj and the Defterdar to solve vital issues concerning the iltizam, the payment of the khazna, and the fight against the Bedouin, without the Pasha being involved. When Rajab Pasha was deposed in 1133/1720, an unusual Imperial Edict delegated the actual government of Egypt to four sanjaq beys: Muhammed Abu Shanab, Yūsuf al-Jazzar, Ahmad al-A‘sar, and Muhammed Jerkes, and held them personally responsible for the payment of salaries, collection of taxes, and solving of the various problems of the province.² It must also be stressed that the vital administrative posts in the political system of Ottoman Egypt such as those of the Amīr al-Hajj, Defterdar, qa’immaqam, and Sanjaq al-Khazna, in addition to the kashif offices of the major iltizam districts, became essentially part of the Mamluk institution within the system.

Direct Contacts with the Porte

As a result of the growing role of the Mamluk beys in the administration of Ottoman Egypt on the one side and the gradual decentralization of the state system in Istanbul on the other, several Mamluks established direct contacts with various elements in the Ottoman court. Contacts with major officials such as the Chief Mufti, Kizlar Agha, and the Grand Wazir were a major source of backing for the Mamluk beys, a clear example of which was the case of Ibrahim Abu Shanab. In 1099/1687 Hussein Pasha attempted to assassinate

¹ibid., f. 31.

²AI, p. 318

Abu Shanab, but, in what seemed to be a surprise move a messenger arrived from Istanbul with a Noble Script which deposed the Pasha and appointed the fortunate bey as qa'immaqam. There were clear signs that Abu Shanab had his own contacts with the Porte and knew of his appointment prior to the arrival of the messenger. In fact, he started celebrating his new appointment even before the message reached Cairo. Ibrahim Bey was clearly the local figure most favoured by the authorities in Istanbul; he was appointed qa'immaqam for over seven terms, as well as being Amir al-Hajj and Defterdar.¹

There were several occasions on which Abu Shanab sent recommendations to the Porte for the appointment of certain officials including Ahmad bin Ghalib, who was appointed Sultan of Mecca upon the recommendation of Ibrahim Bey, who made efforts to obtain a formal appointment from the Sultan.² The achievements of Abu Shanab in solving the economic crisis and bringing the Bedouin under control won him a good reputation in the Ottoman capital. His house became a familiar venue for the Jam'iyah. Even after his death, his son Muhammed Bey made use of his father's status in the Ottoman court. In 1133/1720 Muhammed departed from Cairo heading the protection force accompanying the annual khazna and upon his arrival in Istanbul he was able to meet chief officials and persuade them to pardon his father's Mamluk, Jerkes, and to destroy the power of his rival Ismail Bey. Muhammed paid a large sum of money (hilwān) in return for his faction's appointment to administrative posts in Ottoman Egypt.³

Contemporary sources also make reference to 'Ali Bey al-Hindi, a Mamluk of Georgian origin. His patron was the commander of the Egyptian forces, was killed in battle, thus 'Ali was appointed by the Sultan as a sanjaq bey to replace the deceased. He was later appointed to several important

¹AI, p. 196.

²ZI, f. 22.

³D, p.130.

offices. Al-Jabarti makes reference to his status in the Ottoman court, noting that several Noble Scripts arrived in Cairo issuing orders in his favour.¹ It is remarkable that his Shanabi and Faqari foes spared his life on several occasions, particularly in the purges of 1133/1720 and 1136/1723. This was no doubt because he was favoured by the Sultan,² but he was finally executed in 1140/1727 by Zain al-Faqar, who wanted to put an end to the Qasimi house. A better example is that of Muhammed Qatamish, the Bey of Jirja, who fled Cairo upon the assassination of his master, Qaytas Bey in 1127/1715. Qatamish resided in Istanbul and established firm relations with the Sultan. In 1139/1726 the Faqari house rose victorious after several conflicts with both factions of the Qasimi house, and the Faqari chief Zain al-Faqar became Sheikh al-Balad. In a remarkable development, the authorities in Istanbul sent the Faqari bey, Muhammed Qatamish, back to Cairo to enhance the rising power of the Faqaris. Qatamish enjoyed distinctively high status and exceptional powers, upon which Ahmad Shalabi comments,

“On the arrival of Muhammed Qatamish, he was greeted by Muhammed Pasha, who invested him with a fur coat. There were three Noble Scripts in his favour. One stated, ‘We have granted Muhammed Pasha a sanjaq office,’ another ordered, ‘No matter should be concluded in Egypt without his knowledge and observation,’ and the third ordered, ‘All his iltizam land which belonged to him eleven and a half years earlier should be returned to him.’”³

Three years later he was appointed Sheikh al-Balad by ‘Abdullah Pasha in an official celebration.

In her article, ‘The Role of the Kizlar Ağasi in 17th-18th Century Ottoman Egypt’, Jane Hathaway highlighted the role of the Kizlar Aghas of the Ottoman court in the affairs of Egypt, making special reference to the

¹J. 1/169-199.

²D, p. 145.

³Al, p. 499.

important offices they held in the administration of the Awqāf al-Haramayn and noting particularly the term of Uzun Suleiman (1704-1713) and, more importantly, Bashir Agha (1717-1746).¹ These Aghas had Mamluks and agents, (wukalā') in Cairo, who had a direct influence on the political system of Ottoman Egypt. Tarājim al-sawa'iq provides a rich source of information on the role of the Kizlar Agha, which will be discussed at length in a later chapter. The rising power of the Kizlar Agha in the Ottoman court presented a new opportunity for the Mamluks of Egypt to gain access to the Ottoman court. Kizlar Aghas had possessions and interests in Egypt and obviously wanted them to be represented and protected. Many Aghas had been previously owned by Mamluk beys or had been imported via Cairo, where they stayed for some time. There is a specific reference to Hasan Efendi, who in 1135/1722, sent his slave Agha to Istanbul as a present to the Sultan. This Agha became very powerful and managed to obtain an appointment for his former master's son as Agha of the Mutafarriqa regiment.² Another powerful Mamluk was Mustafa Bey, who was tabi' of Yūsuf Kizlar Agha. Mustafa was appointed to several vital offices in the administrative system of Egypt, such as those of sanjaq bey, qa'immaqam, Defterdar, and governor of Jirja. Despite his old age, he maintained his Sanjaqiya without performing any official duties until his natural death in 1142/1729. The career of Mustafa Bey is rather interesting because he was also the wakīl of Bashir Agha, and looked after his properties and interests in Egypt.³

Contemporary chronicles also note that Ismail b. Iwaz Bey had his own access to the Ottoman court. Following the successful attempt made by Muhammed b. Abu Shanab to isolate Ismail, the prominent Qasimi bey fled Cairo in 1133/1720. Shortly afterwards, during the same year, Ismail returned

¹J.Hathaway, 'The Role of the Kizlar Ağasi in 17th-18th Century Ottoman Egypt', in Stuida Islamica, Ex fasciulo, LXXV (Paris) 140-158.

²AI, p. 363; J. 1/214.

³J. 1/178

secretly and led a successful coup against Rajab Pasha. To obtain an official pardon, Ismail offered one thousand kise to the Porte as a hilwān. It was paid to the Grand Wazir and Kizlar Agha, who thereupon made efforts to persuade Sultan Ahmad to issue a Noble Script in pardon of Ismail Bey. The details, which are mentioned by Ahmad Shalabi, are rather significant:

“Bashir Agha chose a happy moment to remind the Sultan of Ismail’s request for pardon. Upon hearing the Sultan’s consent, he immediately kissed the ground before him and handed over the one thousand kise, while Ibrahim Pasha, the Grand Wazir, rushed for a script to be written and a robe to be sent as a present to the Qasimi bey.”¹

Muhammed b. Abu Shanab and Jerkes felt rather bitter about this because they had earlier paid three thousand kise for the execution of their rival, which may explain the rebellious actions of Jerkes in the years 1138-1140/1725-1727.

Access to the Ottoman court was often available upon the payment of a generous hilwān. The Porte encouraged such direct contacts, which were rather profitable but caused further decline to the status of Pashas, who were no longer the only link to the Porte. As they grew richer, Mamluk beys of the Qasimi and Faqari factions were able to pay more in hilwān and influence the decision making process, thereby destabilizing the Ottoman policy towards Egypt.

Control of the Military

¹AI, p.344.

It has been argued by V.L. Ménage that in the early seventeenth century the only available system to recruit slaves was the Mamluk system, because by then its alternative, the devşirme system, had fallen into disuse and was finally abolished by Sultan Murad IV in 1638. By the late eighteenth-century, every Mısrılı, whether ojaqlı, Ihtiyar, or Bey, was in the habit of both purchasing Mamluks and recruiting sarrajūn through the Mamluk system.¹ The Balfiyya house, which dominated the Janissary regiment at one stage, developed in the same way as any other Mamluk household in Cairo. Hasan Balfiyya, (d.1115/1703) Agha of the Janissary regiment had three tabi's: Mustafa Ketkhuda al-Qazdağlı (d.1115/1703), Omar Agha (d.1123/1711), and Mustafa Balfiyya (d.1148/1735). Amongst the atba' of Omar Agha was Zain al-Faqar (d.1142/1729), who eventually became the chief Faqari bey and was appointed Sheikh al-Balad from 1138/1725 until his death in 1142/1729. It may be noted in this context that Zain al-Faqar Bey made his career in the military as a Mamluk whose patron himself was the tab' of the Agha of the Janissary Regiment. Al-Jabarti also noted that another Faqari bey, by the name of Ismail Bey Defterdar (d.1119/1707), married the daughter of the same Janissary chief, Hasan Balfiyya. The son of Ismail from this marriage was Muhammed Bey Amīr al-Hajj (d.1149/1736), who was a leading Mamluk bey in the Faqari house.² The result of this marriage was a Janissary-Faqari alliance which continued as long as the Balfiyya house dominated the regiment. It was the Qasimi bey Muhammed Jerkes who made use of this alliance against his rival Ismail Bey. Jerkes provided shelter and protection to the minor Mamluks of the Faqari house to strengthen his stance against Ismail b. Iwaz. This in turn won him the sympathy and support of the Janissary regiment, which resented the dominance of Ismail and his faction. Yūsuf al-Malwāni refers to this, saying that, "Jerkes was hiding many of those who escaped during the crisis of Abdi

¹Victor L. Ménage, 'Devşirme' EIZ.

²J. 1/144.

Pasha and the civil war of 1123/1711.”¹ Ismail was always suspicious of the secret alliances which Jerkes had made. Upon an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Ismail in 1131/1718, the seven ojaqs were instructed to surround the house of Jerkes but, according to Shalabi, while members of the other ojaqs obeyed the orders, this was “except for the Janissary regiment amongst whom nobody moved.”² By 1138/1725 the picture was clear; when Jerkes turned against his Faqari allies he was forced to escape himself, and a new cabinet of sanjaq beys was formed, distributing the important offices between the Shawaribi faction of the Qasimis and Mamluks of the Faqari house. Henceforth, the Janissaries were on the side of Zain al-Faqar, while the ‘Azebān allied with ‘Ali al-Hindi, the prominent Qasimi bey.³

Control of the military gave the Mamluk institution formidable power. Following the civil war, the seven regiments could not avoid being used to inflame Mamluk household rivalries. Mamluks were also appointed as commanders, (sirdars) of local and imperial campaigns. The result was Mamluk supremacy over the military, and the sanjaq beys had a large say in the affairs of the seven ojaqs with regard to wages and appointments. Since those beys held leading military offices, such as those of the Amīr al-Hajj, Sanjaq al-Khazna, and sirdars, the Mamluks became deeply involved in the internal affairs of the ojaqs and assumed control of the recruitment system. Gradually they appointed their own kashifs to leading offices within the ojaqs. After a short career these kashifs were promoted to sanjaq beys, so that the previous distinction between a Mamluk bey and a military chief began to vanish. In 1127/1715, for instance, Qansuh Bey al-Faqari appointed his tabi‘, Zain al-Faqar as Agha of the Tüfekjiyān and he was later promoted to the office of

¹TA, f. 190.

² Illa ojaq al-Inkishāriyah lam yanzil minhu ahad. AI, p.297.

³ibid., p. 477.

sanjaq bey.¹ Amongst the Mamluk beys who were appointed to leading military posts and later promoted as sanjaq beys were Yūsuf al-Jazzar (d.1134/1721), who was Jorbaji ‘Azebān and Wakīl for his master Iwaz Bey in Jeddah. After being promoted to sanjaq bey, he became Defterdar, Amīr al-Hajj, and qa’immaqam in successive years.² Similarly, Mustafa al-Jorji (d.1133/1720), who was Sirdar of the Mutafarriqa regiment, was promoted to sanjaq bey in 1109/1697.³

Acquisition of iltizam Land

Faced with serious, obstacles in the effective government of Egypt, Muhammed al-Nishanji Pasha carried out several purges and made many attempts to isolate the military from the Mamluk institution,⁴ but his long term ended without being his able to fulfil his ambition. In his article, ‘Land Holding and Land-Tax Revenues in Ottoman Egypt’, S. Shaw argued that, for Mamluk beys,

“military power was an essential factor for farming out taxes as well as surviving the competition to acquire new or vacant iltizam rights, and thus the more surplus is appropriated the greater the ability to increase military power and the greater the capacity to obtain yet more surplus.”⁵

The eighteenth century witnessed a growing accumulation of iltizams in the hands of the Mamluks. The result was that conflicts over gaining iltizams increased dramatically, as may clearly be seen in the struggle between Jerkes and Ismail b. Iwaz during the years 1130-1136/1717-1723. Ahmad Shalabi narrates that Ismail usurped a share in a village from Ahmad Efendi

¹ ibid., pp. 272, 289.

² J. 1/153

³ ibid., 1/174-77.

⁴ He repeatedly warned military chiefs from making alliances and holding meetings with sanjaq beys. See TA, f. 188.

⁵ S. Shaw, ‘Land Holding and Land -Tax Revenues in Ottoman Egypt’, in P.M. Holt (ed.) Political and Social, p. 94.

Ruznameji. Ahmad Efendi turned to Jerkes, who tried to seize the village back but failed and the problem was never solved. In 1133/1720 Shalabi gives interesting details of a meeting of the Jam‘iyah in which Mamluk beys attempted in vain to solve their differences. Most of the debate was over villages usurped by the Defterdar and other major sanjaq beys. A Mamluk bey, Ahmad al-Muslimani, insisted on getting all his bilād back before reaching any solution. Addressing Ahmad al-A‘sar Defterdar, he said, “Your behaviour does not suit your offices and titles.” Another Mamluk, Muhammed Abaza, supported al-Muslimani and accused the Defterdar of injustice and carelessness about the public. Abaza was personally upset about al-Sharqiya province being usurped from him by the Defterdar and given to another bey. The Jam‘iyah never agreed and Ismail b. Iwaz decided to leave before any conclusion was reached.¹

In many cases the Porte interfered directly to solve problems over land usurpations, and sometimes ignored all rights of ownership to such land by ordering that certain bilād be given to certain Mamluks as a gift from the Sultan. Such bilād were neither sold, nor was any compensation given to previous Multazims. Acquisition of land was very important for the Mamluk system. Prominent sanjaq beys appointed their best Mamluks as kashifs of their aqalim. Moreover, those kashifs were funded by the system rather than by their own masters, which lifted much of the burden from sanjaq beys. To become a kashif was an initial stage for career formation within the Mamluk system and thus conflicts for such minor posts tended to be fierce. In 1136/1723 Ismail seized the iltizam estate of Zain al-Faqar and granted it to a member of his household. When Zain al-Faqar’s repeated demands for his estate seemed to be hopeless, he assassinated Ismail Bey in the Dīwān with the backing of Jerkes and the qadiasker.²

¹AI, pp. 319-320.

²D, p. 143.

Trade and Taxation

In addition to the salaries and income from the iltizam surplus, sanjaq beys were also engaged in extensive trading activities. Control of Suez, which was handed over by the Porte to the Defterdars of Egypt, was a major source of wealth. Through appointed wakīls in Alexandria, Cairo, Yemen, Hijaz, and Sudan, influential merchants and sanjaq beys made huge profits from the flourishing Red Sea trade. Al-Jabarti, for instance noted that the beys of Egypt began to dominate trading activities in Suez from 1123/1711.¹ The income of the Pashas from Suez in 1110/1698 (before it was transferred to Defterdars) was estimated at 4,543,196 paras, and it continued to increase until it reached 8,750,000 paras.² This rise was obviously due to the flourishing coffee trade at the beginning of the eighteenth-century.

Mamluk beys also controlled Jeddah and its trading activities. Iwaz Bey was the actual governor of Jeddah for eight years and his influence extended to the Sudan where he appointed his own wakīl.³ The Mamluks' role in the flourishing eighteenth-century Red Sea trade has not yet been subjected to serious study and research, yet the impact of this trade on the Mamluk institution in Egypt is clearly observable. Ismail b. Iwaz, who was regarded as the first Sheikh al-Balad, inherited his father's wealth and status, which had been gained from Red Sea trading activities rather than from kushūfiyas in Egypt. Relations between Western consuls, particularly the French, and Ismail b. Iwaz, and later Jerkes Muhammed, are yet to be considered, but for the Sharabati family and other local coffee merchants in Cairo there is a good amount of primary material. In emergencies merchants funded campaigns and had to pay large sums of money when the treasury of Egypt fell short of affording such costs. Since the Porte banned any trade in coffee with Western

¹J. 1/49.

²L. 'Abd al-Latīf, al-Idarah fī Misr, p.98.

³D, p. 62.

states, this vital commodity was smuggled to Europe via Syria or directly to the French in secret agreements with French consuls and certain Mamluk beys. Between 1126/1714 and 1131/1718, Yūsuf al-Malwāni refers to five Imperial Edicts repeating that it is illegal to sell any coffee to Christians in the West. One such Edict accused the Egyptians of “ignoring the Sultan’s order and intentionally acting against his instructions. By doing so they are therefore disobedient subjects. The only reason was the greed of officials who obtain more money from illegal taxes on the smuggled commodities.”¹ Several attempts by the Porte to introduce taxes on coffee faced enormous opposition in Egypt.

Private Forces (Sarrajūn and Mamluks)

With growing economic and political power, the Mamluk beys of Egypt were also able to buy more Mamluks and extend their authority. Sometimes they hired forces to protect their houses and other interests. In three major cases Mamluk beys armed large numbers of men to balance their forces with their foes. In 1132/1711 Ayyub Bey agreed with Iفرanj Ahmad to form a new force of eight hundred men to fight against the opposing party.² Again, an ad hoc force of ghurabā’ was hired by Muhammed Qatamish and ‘Uthmān Bey to defend their household following the assassination of their master, Qaytas Bey, in 1127/1715.³ In 1138/1725 Jerkes too formed a force of hired ghurabā’ which numbered about one thousand, to back him in his battle with the Faqari-military alliance led by Muhammed Pasha.⁴ What was more serious and threatening to the public in Cairo was the dramatic increase of sarrajūn. Mamluk beys

¹TA, f. 112; the text reads as follows: “Innā arsalnā lakum miraran nuhathirukum ‘an bay‘i shay’in min al-ghilāl wal-bun li-nnasara al-harbiya, fa lam tamtathilū, wa-istamarraytum ‘ala al-mukhalafah, wa-artakabtum ma yūjibu al-‘isyān, wa kad balaghanā thālika wa tahakaknāhu, wa sababuhū tama‘ al-makksīn fī kathrat al-darāhim wa muwalasatihim.”; See also, ff. 110, 113, 146 and 150.

²AI, p. 239.

³ibid., p. 273.

⁴ibid., pp. 470-475.

acquired them as a body-guard. They were free men who joined the service of prominent sanjaq beys, and they were often imported from European provinces of the Ottoman Empire. When in Egypt, they formed gangs which carried out assassinations, raped women, seized public property, and caused havoc in the Egyptian capital. Despite being free, they were counted amongst the possessions of their masters, since they depended completely on their financial support, and were later incorporated into the military. Sarrajūn were often referred to as the atba' of a certain sanjaq beys, but were unable to get sufficient training or gain senior offices in the political system of Ottoman Egypt. In 1134/1721 the Pasha held an emergency Dīwān meeting to discuss the increasing numbers of sarrajūn and the corruption they caused in Cairo. According to Ahmad Shalabi, each sanjaq bey had a gang of sarrajūn, about forty sarraj for each senior sanjaq bey, while minor sanjaq beys had about ten sarraj each. Members of the Dīwān decided to demilitarize these gangs and increase police patrols in the city,¹ but the problem of the sarrajūn continued to increase. In 1135/1722 Shalabi estimated the number of each prominent sanjaq bey's sarrajūn at fifty to sixty. They paraded the streets freely armed and thus the Pasha gave orders to execute on site any individual carrying a weapon in the streets of Cairo, excluding authorised military officers.² Even so, the numbers of sarrajūn continued to increase. The population of Cairo was discontented and began to speak of seven ojaqs and an eighth regiment, called Buluk al-Sarrajīn³ indicating that Mamluk beys who had failed to obtain military support for their households had formed their own minor gangs of sarrajūn.

The numbers of Mamluks also increased as sanjaq beys were able to afford to purchase more of them as they grew richer. 'Ali Bey al-Hindi (d.140/1727), for instance, had amongst his possessions eighty-four Mamluks,

¹AI, pp. 326-327.

²ibid., p. 375.

³TA, f. 196.

seven eunuchs, forty-eight sarraj and sixty concubines,¹ while the Mamluks of Jerkes at one stage were estimated at around three hundred altogether.² These ad hoc forces contributed to the decline of the military, but for the Mamluk institution they served as a vital source of support in factional rivalries and as a deterrent against Pashas who wanted to reduce Mamluk power and maintain military support.

The ascendancy of the beylicate in Egypt was first triggered by the Porte's policy of strengthening local a'yan against the military and the viceroys. Giving the Mamluk beys more administrative power and political legitimacy required direct contacts with Istanbul. Gradually the sanjaq beys dominated the iltizam and taxation system. They also came to control a major part of the trading activities and, more importantly, the military, which they used to extend their power and support their households. By 1143/1730 prominent sanjaq beys had their own forces of personal body-guards, which continued to undermine the Ottoman elements within the political system of Egypt and encouraged the expression of more Mamluk independence.

The above-mentioned factors which tended toward the enhancement of Mamluk power are probably best attributed to the eighteenth-century developments in the Ottoman Empire rather than to origins in the Mamluk Sultanate, since we are viewing a state of affairs which existed after two centuries of Ottoman rule over Egypt.

¹AI, p. 506.

²ibid., p. 436.

IV- FACTIONS AND HOUSEHOLDS

Mamluk society was always divided into distinct groups. In 1517 some Mamluks opposed Ottoman conquest while others collaborated with Sultan Selim I. There had been also two groups of rulers in the Sultanate: Bahriya and Burjiya. P.M. Holt has argued that inveterate factionalism within the elite was a feature of the Mamluk Sultanate which reappeared in a new form during the Mamluk revival of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Under the Sultanate this had appeared in its most marked form as hostility between the Julban, the household of the reigning Sultan, and the Qaranisa, the survivors of the earlier Sultan's households.¹ This explanation may be true to some extent, but it does not provide a full rationale of the divisions within the Mamluk society of Ottoman Egypt. There were a number of differences between the Mamluks of the Sultanate and those of the Ottoman suzerainty. Under the Sultanate, Mamluk factionalism could best be described as a natural division caused by the absence of a strong single authority that could impose its decisions on various parties of the elite; there were rather several parties struggling for power and each group was frequently replaced by another. But a close study of the formation of a Mamluk household (bayt), in the Ottoman system would most probably discover major differences from the Mamluk divisions under the Sultanate. The material on the formation of Mamluk households is coloured by legend which may be attributable to a concealed wish to depict the Mamluks as local inhabitants. Two reasons in particular may have been at play in this.

First, the Ottomans were always viewed as foreigners in Egypt. They never spoke Arabic and did not mix with the public. Moreover they were frequently changed by the Porte, so that they were never present long enough to penetrate deeply into Egyptian society. Mamluk beys on the other hand, were

¹P.M. Holt, 'The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt' in Studies in the History of the Near East, p. 187.

seen as an alternative to the Ottomans capable of handling the administration of the region more successfully. However, although the Mamluk institution was deep-rooted within Egyptian society, the Mamluks themselves had been as much foreigners to the region as were the Ottomans. The majority of these Mamluks were purchased as slave boys and were of Circassian, Georgian Armenian, or Kurdish origins. They were incorporated into the service of their masters in Cairo and, as they grew up, they formed the basis of households and factions. It was these legendary tales linking certain of these houses to the local Egyptian society that helped members of these households look like local a‘yan of an original descent, even if it sounded artificial.

Second, in the complicated political structure of Ottoman Egypt at the start of the twelfth century AH, emerging factions were in vital need of having their own identity and finding a common origin to which they belonged. It is thus very common to read about beys who were neither Mamluks nor belonged to any household, but who voluntarily joined the service of a prominent household leader. A good example is Muhammed Jerkes, who was a tabi‘ of a certain Yūsuf Bey, who was generally regarded as an independent bey who owed his status to his personal abilities and wealth. Upon the death of Yūsuf Bey, Jerkes joined the service of Ibrahim Abu Shanab and became a prominent leader of his Qasimi household.¹

The Formation of Households

The following examples of narratives concerning the formation of certain factions, attempting to link the Mamluks to local origins of honour and prestige, will further clarify the above point.

¹J. 1/189-196.

a- An anonymous work entitled; Qahr al-wujuh al-‘abisa bi-dhkir nasab al-Jarkisa min Quraish,¹ is an attempt to demonstrate the descent of the Circassians (Arabic, Jarakise, sing. Jerkes) from Quraish. It is a story of a member of the Quraish tribe called Kisa, who ran away (Arabic, Jarā) from a sentence during the days of the second Caliph, ‘Umar. When his escape was discovered, the cry went out, ‘Jarā Kisa’ (Kisa ran away). From this the story goes on to relate that Ridwan Bey (d.1066/1656) was merely an Arab from the tribe of Quraysh.

b- Al-Jabarti narrates the story of another Mamluk household called Bayt al-Fallāh referring to a humble Egyptian peasant (fallāh) who was brought up in the service of a Multazim because his father failed to pay his debts. Gradually he accumulated a fortune, purchased Mamluks and infiltrated them into the ojaqs. His house was said to be the largest faction of the al-Qazdağliya branch. This fallāh was very rich, he lent money at interest, and many Mamluk beys were indebted to him.² This is another example of a story linking a major Mamluk household to local origins. Contemporary chronicles make no reference to this story and its authenticity is, to say the least, questionable.

c- The two major houses which dominated the political affairs at the start of the twelfth century AH were the Qasimis and Faqaris. There are two stories on the formation about these two camps which divided the Mamluk society of Ottoman Egypt for generations. The first was suggested by Ahmad Shalabi, who referred these two houses to a Circassian Mamluk called Sudun al-‘Ajami, who is said to have prevented his two children, Qasim and Zain al-Faqar, from joining with the Mamluk forces in their battle against the Ottoman invaders in 1517. Sultan Selim I paid a visit to this Mamluk to express his appreciation for the action he had taken and honour his children. In a show of their skill and abilities in warfare, the two brothers engaged in a duel and were on the point of

¹See P.M. Holt, ‘The Exalted Lineage of Ridwan Bey’ in Studies in the History of the Near East, p. 220-229.

²J. 1/190.

killing each other when the Sultan intervened and ordered the fighting to be stopped.¹ This story is more symbolic than factual. It attempts to show the Mamluks of the two houses as obedient subjects who refused to fight the Ottomans, while the Sultan is depicted as the final arbiter in the Qasimi-Faqari conflict. The second story is provided by al-Damurdashi. He refers to the formation of these two major houses towards the end of the seventeenth-century. It was apparently alleged that a certain Qasim Bey Defterdar built an impressive hall and invited his colleague, Zain al-Faqar Amīr al-Hajj, for dinner. The latter was impressed by the building and in return invited Qasim Bey to his own house, where he gathered together all his Mamluks from among the ojaqs. Some of his men also held the rank of sanjaq beys, ketkhudas, and other senior offices. Before dinner Zain al-Faqar told his host, “They are all my Mamluks and after my death they will ask Allah to have mercy upon me. Your hall which you have built does not speak, but this is what I have built.” Qasim Bey was disturbed by this comment and from that day the Mamluks of Egypt were divided into the Qasimi and Faqari camps.²

There are similar stories about the formation of the households of Balfiya and Qazdağliya, none of which provides any realistic explanation of the divisions within Mamluk society, but taken together do reflect the fact that, as Mamluk beys grew richer and purchased more Mamluks, they eventually formed their own households. Members of these houses evidently felt the need for some sort of common identity and an explanation of their existence. On examination most of these stories are historically unfounded, but were nevertheless incorporated into many contemporary chronicles since this was the commonly accepted way to approach the complicated political structure of Ottoman Egypt during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. These stories differ much in context and time-span, but they have major common features. They have no historical basis, but attempt to link various

¹A.I. pp. 284-285.

²D. pp. 2-4.

Mamluk households to local origins, implying that the Mamluks were indeed the local a‘yan of Egypt. All these stories appeared suddenly in chronicles at the start of the eighteenth century, attempting to explain the sudden rise of the beylicate in Ottoman Egypt. A detailed study of the formation of eighteenth-century Mamluk households shows that they divided into distinct households according to their interests and conflicts between certain individuals over the control of Egypt. Early Islamic historical sources, as well as historians of Mamluk Egypt such as Ibn Iyās do not provide any material to support the assumptions of the eighteenth-century chronicles.

Damurdashi’s Chronicle as a Source of Eighteenth-Century Mamluk History

In this context Al-Durrah al-musānah fī akhbār al-Kinānah, often referred to as the ‘Damurdashi group of chronicles’, require our particular attention. This group of chronicles has been the subject of more scrutiny than any other contemporary source. It has been translated and published several times, and even al-Jabarti based many of his assertions concerning the early twelfth century AH on what the text describes; “books composed by some ajnād (Soldiers).”¹ Luckily, we have other contemporary sources against which we may check the accuracy of the information provided by Damurdashi, in particular: Ahmad Shalabi’s Awdah al-isharāt, the anonymous Zubdat al-ikhtisār, Mahmūd ibn Muhammed’s Tarājim al-sawā‘iq and Yūsuf al-Malwāni’s Tuhfat al-ahbāb, in addition to several other manuscripts of shorter duration written by ‘Ali al-Shādhili, al-Nābulsi, and al-Bakri. When compared with these sources, it is evident that the Damurdashi group of chronicles does not provide accurate accounts of the events of the period with regard to dates and details, for instance:

¹See, for instance, the English translation of this chronicle, D. Creelius and A. Bakr, Al-Damurdashi’s Chronicle of Egypt 1688-1755. (Leiden 1991); also the Arabic edition by A.A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm, al-Durrah al-musānah..., (Institut Français d’Archéologie du Caire, 1988); and an article by A. Bakr, ‘Interrelationships among the Damurdashi Group of Chronicles’, in D. Creelius (ed.) Eighteenth Century Egypt, pp. 79-88.

- In 1099/1687 Abu Shanab was appointed as qa'immaqam, just when the Pasha was planning to assassinate him, while Damurdashi mentions the same story amongst the events of 1107/1695.¹
- The death of Zain al-Faqar Amīr al-Hajj is mentioned by the chronicle as having occurred in 1100/1688, while other sources date it in 1102/1690.²
- In reference to the year 1099/1697, Damurdashi claims there was a major safra, consisting of five thousand troops who went to join an imperial campaign, while the other sources refer to only two thousand ojaqlis and five hundred ghuraba. It should be borne in mind that the Porte never requested more than three thousand troops at any one time for any imperial campaign.³
- In connection with the year 1109/1697, Damurdashi describes an event in which Ismail Pasha received orders from the Porte to prepare a major campaign against the Maghariba Bedouin. A council was immediately summoned and the Pasha gave orders for the forces to be prepared. In Damurdashi's narration, the Mamluk beys are represented as obedient servants of the Porte who kiss the ground before the Pasha and set out immediately for their designated campaigns.⁴ The narration of Damurdashi, which was composed as a folkloric tale with much repetitiveness, is contradictory to other sources such as al-Malwāni's Tuhfat al-ahbāb, which suggests that the Mamluks hesitated to fight and kept on delaying the campaign until the Pasha became upset. He prepared to lead the campaign himself, and only then did the sanjaq beys make serious efforts to prepare the required forces.⁵

¹D, pp. 23-24; ZI, f. 21; TA, f. 111; SS, f. 754.

²D, p. 7; AI, p. 185; ZI, f. 23.

³D, p. 5.

⁴ibid., p. 40-49.

⁵TA, f. 120.

- In 1127/1715, the pilgrimage caravan suffered a disaster, as thousands of pilgrims died of thirst and the Bedouin looted the survivors. Yet Damurdashi claims that the caravan returned in peace and safety.¹

There are other examples of inaccuracy in the dates provided by Damurdashi, particularly in dating imperial campaigns, pilgrimage journeys, and other significant incidents which took place during the period of study. Although Damurdashi was an eyewitness of several events, he lacked the proper language, historical skill, and accuracy. But a more important criticism of the Damurdashi group of chronicles is that the narrative overemphasizes the Qasimi-Faqari divisions as an explanation of many events of the period. The chronicler made several assumptions, but failed to fit them properly into the chain of events. An example is the reference to Mustafa Bey Kizlar (d. 1142/1729), who was the Wakīl of Bashir Kizlar Agha. Mustafa was a prominent sanjaq bey and became qa'immaqam for over five months in which he assumed full authority to govern the region.² Damurdashi mentions his name once as Qasimi bey and once again as a Faqari.³ But in narrating the 1123/1711 crisis, the chronicle makes a third contradiction by saying that Mustafa Bey Kizlar together with five other sanjaq beys were neutral, being neither Faqaris nor Qasimis: "Lā-hum min dūl wa-lā hum min dūl, ma'a man ghalab."⁴ Moreover, the chronicle attempts to fit the career of Küçük Muhammed into the Qasimi-Faqari conflict claiming that the Faqaris wanted to bring Küçük Muhammed to dominate the ojaq. Yet, none of the other sources link this affair with the Qasimi-Faqari conflict, nor is there any evidence that Küçük Muhammed was a Faqari sympathizer or that he gave the Faqaris any important offices in the Janissary regiment. The affair was, rather, linked with the concerns of certain interest groups and the assassination of the bashodabashi in

¹D, p. 120; AI, p. 266; TA, f. 111.

²J. 1/178.

³D, p. 4

⁴ibid., p. 90.

1106/1694 was a result of his attempt to prevent price rises, causing losses to the Bedouin of Hawwara and the grain merchants in Cairo. In sum, the Damurdashi group of chronicles starts with the story of Qasimi-Faqari divisions as a basis for viewing the history of Ottoman Egypt in the light of Mamluk rivalry. More reliable contemporary sources provide a more balanced and realistic approach. The over-emphasis on the Mamluk factor during the pre-civil war period led Damurdashi to fall into contradictions. This chronicle alone could not be regarded as a reliable source on the Mamluk history of Ottoman Egypt, particularly with regard to factionalism and Mamluk households.

Cross-Household Alliances

Three major Mamluk alliances were formed during the years 1123-1142/1711-1730. These alliances depended more on personalities and interests than on the Qasimi-Faqari households.

The first alliance was during the civil war of 1123/1711, when a Janissary rift caused an open battle. At the same time, there was rivalry between the two Faqari beys, Ayyub and Qaytas. The latter was a close friend of the Qasimi bey, Ibrahim Abu Shanab. This friendship between the two beys eventually led the Qasimi household into a struggle in support of their Faqari ally. The struggle was thus initiated by a Janissary rebellion backed by two diverse factions of the Faqari house and later took the form of a full-scale war. The Pasha, qadiasker, and the religious institutions, in addition to the Arab Bedouin, were involved in open battles and it is historically unrealistic to claim that the civil war was merely a battle between Qasimis and Faqaris. Many modern historians have assumed that the civil war resulted in the victory of the “Qasimiya over the Faqariya”, which is in fact an unfounded assumption.¹ Al-Jabarti commented on the civil war, “It ended with the ‘Azebān’ victory over the

¹See for instance, P.M. Holt, ‘The Pattern of Egyptian Political History’, in Studies in the History of the Near East, p. 86.

Janissaries.”¹ The Qasimis themselves suffered heavy losses, amongst which was the death of their chief Iwaz Bey. The Faqari faction of Qaytas gained most from the war. They effectively dominated the political arena at the time when the Qasimis were trying to recover the losses they had suffered during the war. The civil war of 1123/1711 was fought between military factions, rival Bedouin tribes, and Mamluk beys. The Faqari bey, Qaytas, allied himself with Qasimi Ibrahim, which is an indication that the battle was not based on household rivalries but on personal relationships which crossed households.

The second alliance was between the Qasimi Bey, Muhammed Jerkes, and the Faqari household on one side, against Ismail b. Iwaz on the other side, who was another Qasimi bey. It lasted from 1130/1717 to 1136/1723. Following the assassination of Qaytas Bey and the escape of his Mamluks in 1127/1715, Ismail b. Iwaz gradually managed to dominate the Qasimi house and control the army. But there was a major split within the Qasimi house, which eventually broke into two factions, viz.:

- a- Iwaziya, more often referred to as Shawaribiya (in reference to Ridwan Abu al-Shawarib, the patron of Iwaz Bey), led by Ismail b. Iwaz and Yūsuf al-Jazzar; and
- b- Shanabiya, led by Muhammed b. Ibrahim Abu Shanab and Jerkes Muhammed.

The former faction was larger in its numbers of men and had the greater wealth. Both Ismail and al-Jazzar had great personal abilities and enjoyed remarkable popularity. Muhammed b. Ibrahim Abu Shanab, on the other hand, lacked skill, but had the wealth which he had inherited from his father. Realizing this, Jerkes (who was the tabi‘ of Ibrahim Bey) had no choice in strengthening his faction but to ally himself with the Faqari beys. Ahmad Shalabi commented that Faqaris owed their revival to Jerkes Bey. He always complained about the lack of co-operation of his Qasimi colleagues and relied

¹“Wa intahat bi thuhur al-‘Azab ‘ala al-Inkishariyah.” (J. 1/169). This point had been discussed in length in Chapter 2, pp.88-99.

more on the Faqaris. In fact the leaders of the 1136/1723 coup against Ismail were Faqaris whom Jerkes situated as guards on the gates of Cairo.¹ The man who carried out the assassination of Ismail b. Iwaz in the Dīwān was Zain al-Faqar Bey, a Faqari Mamluk who was strongly backed by Muhammed Jerkes.²

As soon as they assumed power in 1136/1723, the Shanabi-Faqari alliance collapsed. Jerkes became rather suspicious of the Faqaris. He killed some and sent others into exile. During the period 1136-1138/1723-1725, a third major alliance was formed, this time between the Shawaribis and the Faqari beys, against Jerkes. But it was a weak alliance because Jerkes was in full control. He had the army and Ulema on his side and, in 1138/1725, he deposed Muhammed Pasha and appointed his own qa'immaqam. In Jumada II 1138/February 1726 Muhammed Pasha managed to mobilize the army against Jerkes and forced him to flee. The Faqari and Shanabi beys revived, grew stronger, and inherited the wealth of the Shanabis. The Shanabi house was completely exterminated, while the two sides of the alliance became stronger.³

Events unfolded in a similar sequence. The Shawaribis turned against their Faqari allies, but their plans failed and, in fact, the Shawaribi house was totally exterminated by 1140/1727.⁴ As the Faqaris further enhanced their position and became stronger, they also broke into several factions. D. Ayalon commented on the events which followed:

“The first carnage within the Faqarite faction took place in 1149/1736 in which eleven major amīrs lost their lives including Muhammed Qatamish. Internal strife went on within factions of the Faqari household. ‘Ali Bey al-Kabir, After destroying al-Qatamisha and al-Damayta started within his own

¹AI, p. 391.

²AI, pp. 384-385; D, pp. 143-145.

³AI, p. 485.

⁴ibid., pp. 506-510.

house one of the bloodiest purges in the history of the mamluks under the Ottomans.”¹

It may be noted concerning this series of alliances and purges within each household, that the Mamluk houses of the Faqariya and Qasimiya served families which consisted of a master as father, khushdashūn as brothers, and various generations of minor Mamluks regarded as descendents. This provided the newly incorporated Mamluks with an identity and a certain name to which they belonged. These households could hardly be described as also being military alliances. Conflicts were fought within factions and involved cross-alliances with other households. The cases of Qaytas, Jerkes, and Zain al-Faqar are good examples. Alliances were often made on the basis of common interest and a capable leader who could afford war costs and maintain the support of the allies. It must also be taken into account that during the period of study no battle was fought over the dominance of a major house. These houses were constantly breaking into factions and thus Ibrahim Abu Shanab referred to his own household as ‘my house’ (bayti).² Zain al-Faqar, who became the Faqari Sheikh al-Balad in 1140/1727 was the tabi‘ of Omar Agha (d.1123/1711) of the military house of Balfiyya, not from the main core of the Faqari house.³

Another point to be considered is the fact that several Mamluks were not originally members of the Qasimi or Faqari households; rather they were the Mamluks of independent masters such as Suleiman al-Armani (d.1121/1709), Yūsuf al-Qird (d.1107/1695), Ramadan Bey qa'immaqam (d.1113/1701), ‘Abdullah Bushnaq (d.1115/1703), and Mustafa Kizlar (d.1142/1729). Most of these beys and their Mamluks supported the strongest side, because it was apparently a shorter way to make a career. In fact, Muhammed Jerkes, who dominated the Shanabi faction of the Qasimi house was himself the tabi‘ of an independent Mamluk bey called Yūsuf. Jerkes made a career for himself by

¹D. Ayalon, ‘ Studies in al-Jabarti’, p. 309.

²J 1/92.

³ibid., 1/208-121.

joining the service of Ibrahim Abu Shanab following the death of his first patron.¹

The following is a family tree of the major sanjaq beys of the two Qasimi factions and the two factions of the Faqariya. The only missing branch is that of Ayyub Bey (d.1124/1712) the tabi' of Darwish Bey al-Faqari (d.1105/1693), whose origins are obscure. Distinction is only made between natural sons and atba'. Whether the tabi' was an actual Mamluk or a free member of the household is not always clear. Mention is also made of the year of death (where known) and the highest offices held by the prominent sanjaq beys. It will be quickly observed that, on the whole, neither house was able to survive for more than two generations at the most.

¹J. 1/189.

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Two Generations

In considering the structure of the Mamluk households during the period of study, a distinction must be made between two generations of Mamluk Beys.

¹J. 1/189.

The first generation dominated the administration of Ottoman Egypt in the period 1100-1123/1688-1711. Amongst the beys were Zain al-Faqar Bey (d.1102/1690), who served as Amīr al-Hajj for eleven years, and his son Ibrahim (d.1107/1695), who was Amīr al-Hajj for five successive years, also Ismail al-Faqari (d.1119/1707), Iwaz Bey (d.1123/1711), Murad Bey (d.1107/1695), and Ibrahim Abu Shanab (d.1130/1717). These beys needed Ottoman support as much as the central administration needed them. They served as qa'immaqams, Defterdars, Sirdars of military campaigns, and governors of Jeddah. They also participated in curbing the Bedouin and providing efficient administration of the iltizam system. In return, the Porte provided them with legitimacy and enhanced their position by appointing them to certain posts held previously by military chiefs. They were frequently honoured and often instructed to hold their own meetings in the Jam'iyah rather than in the official Dīwān. Bedouin rebellions were very frequent in the years 1099-1111/1687-1699 and thus the Porte was in desperate need of the Mamluks' leadership abilities and military skill. Gradually, these Mamluks extended their powers, grew wealthier, and purchased more Mamluks. They often depended on their own personal abilities as administrators and their military skill as Sirdars of campaigns. However, none of the above-mentioned Mamluks developed ambitions to assume full control of Egypt. Relations between these beys and the Porte were firm, while some, such as Ibrahim Abu Shanab, developed direct contacts with various elements in the Ottoman court.

The rise of Muhammed b. Abu Shanab (d.1138/1725), Jerkes Muhammed (d.1140/1727), Ismail b. Iwaz (d.1139/1723), and Yūsuf al-Jazzar (d.1134/1721) in the period which followed the civil war marked the emergence of a new generation of beys who inherited wealth and prestige from their fathers (or masters) and owed their status more to their predecessors than to the Porte. Being able to control the army and buy its loyalty some Mamluks, Ismail and Jerkes particularly, developed great ambitions and imposed their will over the Pashas. During the period 1124-1143/1712-1730, several Pashas were

humiliated and deposed while sanjaq beys had more say in appointments to and dismissals from vital administrative and military offices. In Istanbul Muhammed Abu Shanab expressed great concern at the growing power of Ismail b. Iwaz. Confiding to the Grand Wazir, he said, “If you tolerate him [Ismail] one more year in Egypt he will mint the coins under his own name, have the Friday sermon said in his name, and expel the governor, for he controls the seven regiments and seven sanjaq beys.”¹ Although it was really too early for such assumptions, Ismail was declared a rebel against the Sultan and was stripped of all his titles in 1133/1720. Even so, the Porte was unable to get rid of him. After two months in hiding, Ismail was able to form a Mamluk-military alliance and depose Rajab Pasha. It was not until 1136/1723 that he was got rid of by being assassinated in the Pasha’s Dīwān.² The Porte however faced a more serious threat in Jerkes Muhammed, who refused to abide by an Imperial Edict which prevented him from holding Jam‘iyahs and deposed him from his sanjaq office. His response was simple; to hold another Jam‘iyah in which the attendants were forced to sign an agreement to depose Muhammed Pasha al-Nishanji. Such actions could not be tolerated by the Porte, and so it arranged for the formation of an opposing alliance, which forced Jerkes out of the country in 1138/1725. Yet, Jerkes was able to return later. He gathered an army of Bedouin and Mamluks numbering in total around five thousand and continued to cause chaos and disorder in the province until his death in 1142/1729.³

There were therefore fundamental differences between the pre-war generation of Mamluks, who served as successful administrators and military leaders, and the second generation of beys, who came after the civil war with ambitions to dominate the political system of Egypt, a concept which the Porte was not ready to tolerate. As we have seen, there were some differences between the Mamluks of the Sultanate and the eighteenth-century Mamluks of

¹D, p. 130.

²AI, pp. 384-385.

³ibid., pp. 567-569.

Ottoman Egypt. The late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Mamluk households were unable to survive for more than two generations, after which each household broke into conflicting factions. These factions took the form of alliances across households and depended most on the wealth, power, and skill of certain sanjaq beys. On the other hand, Mamluk houses served more as family ties than as military alliances. Thus Damurdashi's suggestion that the predominant Qasimi-Faqari conflict was a major cause of political unrest in Egypt has no strong basis, since it is observable that Qasimi Mamluks allied with Faqari beys against rival individuals from their own households, and Faqari beys did the same. As stories about the formation of Mamluk households are legendary, the use made of these stories to explain the political development of Egypt at the start of the eighteenth century is likewise without historical foundation. By studying the two successive generations of pre-war and post-war Mamluk beys, we could possibly offer a more realistic approach supported by more reliable chronicles. It was an Ottoman policy to strengthen the beylicate in favour of the military and the viceroys. This in turn caused the emergence of a generation of Mamluks who were skilled and capable administrators. They formed their own factions and households, but their wealth and prestige were inherited by a second generation of sons and atba' who gradually led Egypt's transition from external government to a government in local hands.

V- THE JAM'İYAH

By the end of the seventeenth-century, the new council system of the Jam'iyah gradually began to challenge the Pasha's Dīwān. At first, these Jam'iyah meetings were allowed simply as a recognition by the Porte of the new role played by Mamluk beys in the administrative affairs of the province. In their early days Jam'iyahs were extended meetings held in the Pasha's Dīwān. Contemporary sources refer to major meetings which were often attended by legitimate members of the Dīwān in addition to other local notables. These were known as, Jam'iyah fī al-Dīwān, but later a clear distinction emerged between the two councils.

The year 1106/1694 witnessed remarkable Jam'iyah activities. Egypt was hit by drought and famine, and the Pasha was unable to deal with the crisis. Multazims failed to pay taxes on account of crop failures, causing a sharp reduction in the annual tribute. In addition to these crises, the Arab Bedouin also caused enormous damage and corruption in the aqalim, while Hijaz suffered political and economic unrest. To solve these problems, a much larger council of military chiefs, sanjaq beys, Ulema, and Ashrāf, as well as officials of the Ruzname, was needed in order to come up with collectively binding decisions. The author of Tarājim al-sawā'iq points out that an Imperial Edict ordered Ismail Pasha to consult the emirs of Egypt on all the issues of Hijaz, including the best possible means of appointing a new governor of Mecca. In response, the Pasha immediately issued a firmān for a Jam'iyah to convene in the house of Amīr al-Hajj for this purpose.¹ Ismail Pasha also ordered a Jam'iyah to be held in the house of Murad Defterdar to discuss the crisis caused by drought and crop failure. The Defterdar held a successful Jam'iyah in which

¹SS, f. 878.

sanjaq beys, kashifs, military chiefs, and the Ulema took part in solving the crisis of the province.¹

During the same year a third Jam‘iyah was held in the house of Hasan Agha Balfiyya to solve the problem of the khazna shortfall. Ismail Pasha issued an order to all the a‘yan of Cairo to assemble in the house of Balfiyya. There were differences on the best way to solve the crisis, until Balfiyya interposed. The story goes as follows:

“Hasan Agha Balfiyya asked, “where are you, Hasan Agha Efendi?” to which [Hasan Efendi] replied, “Here I am.” [Hasan Agha Balfiyya] then said, “Come and resolve this problem.” So he stood in the midst of the assembly, sat down in front of Hasan Agha [Balfiyya] and said, “Canceling the 20,000 ‘uthmanis is impossible because they have already been distributed among the regiments and are not assigned to a single department. Returning to the method of discounting will cause tax farmers (multazimīn) to desert their villages (tax farms) and the taxes levied on the land would be lost. As to the additional tax on the tax farms, the tax farmers holding them always claim a loss.” [Hasan Agha Balfiyya] then asked, “What is the best method [to make up the treasury’s deficit]?” to which [Hasan Efendi] responded, “We will take from every beard a single hair to make a large beard, that is, we will levy on every purse [25,000 nisf fiddas] of the revenues of Egypt a new tax (mudaf jadid) of 1,000 nisf fiddas [paras] for every purse, to be collected in the summer. That will cover the deficit of the Imperial Treasury (al-Khazīnah al-‘Āmirah).” Hasan Agha responded, “That’s the best solution.” The entire council agreed and recited the Fātihah. The judge wrote for them an official document incorporating their report. Kara Muhammed Agha, the governor’s ketkhuda, left with the retainers of the governor including the Kapici Bashi and delivered the document to the Pasha. They related everything that had been said in the meeting and told him how Hasan Efendi, the Ruznameji, had resolved the problem by suggesting to

¹ibid., ff. 884-886.

levy on every purse 1,000 nisf fiddas [paras] as a new tax. From that day he became the favourite of the governor, who made him and Ibrahim Bey Abu Shanab his counselors in all matters. Hasan Efendi then announced the new tax, covered the Treasury's deficit, and even produced a surplus of 18 purses."¹

This narration by Damurdashi gives a clear picture of the procedure of Jam'iyahs and the way problems were solved in them. The number of attendants at these councils varied, but it was certainly more than attended the Dīwān. According to several narrations, the halls of the Amīr al-Hajj and the Defterdar were full of the a'yan, who attended in large numbers. In official Jam'iyahs, sanjaq beys attended, as well as the Pasha's ketkhuda, qadiasker, military chiefs, and the Ulema. The only occasion on which Pashas attended Jam'iyahs were when they were held in the Dīwān in the Citadel.

Dominance of the Jam'iyah System

Istanbul's policy of encouraging Mamluk participation in the decision-making process through legalizing the Jam'iyah council may have helped to solve the economic crisis of 1106-1107/1694-1695, but very soon it back-fired. The results of this policy in the long term went against the Ottoman authorities. In 1109/1697 a major Jam'iyah council, consisting of sanjaq beys, military chiefs, and the Ulema, decided to depose Ismail Pasha and accused him of corruption and abuse of delegated authority. Members of the Jam'iyah collectively signed a petition which went to Istanbul informing the Porte of Ismail Pasha's major faults and requesting a new Pasha to be sent.² From then on, four other Pashas were forced to step down as a result of Mamluk-military collective decisions in the Jam'iyah. Egypt became effectively governed by such ad hoc councils at different times. In 1133/1720 Mamluk beys became suspicious of Rajab Pasha, feared the way he handled their disputes, and

¹D, pp. 27-29.

²ZI, f. 35.

decided to depose him before he was able to turn against them. The Mamluks of both factions, together with the Ulema, Sadāt, Bakriya, Naqīb al-Ashrāf, and all the Ihtiyariya of the seven ojaqs, held a Jam‘iyah which decided that Rajab Pasha should be deposed and Yūsuf al-Jazzar be appointed as qa'immaqam. The Pasha was thus forced to step down. As soon as the coup was over, the same Jam‘iyah convened and members signed a petition which explained to the Sultan why Rajab Pasha had been deposed.¹

Activities of the Jam‘iyah included several other issues, including the settlement of land disputes, devaluation of the currency, and preparation of forces to join imperial campaigns. In 1134/1721 three Jam‘iyahs were held in the houses of the Amīr al-Hajj and Defterdar to prepare campaigns against the Arab Bedouin who had looted a state-owned caravan. A year later the Pasha wanted to take measures to reduce the currency, but sanjaq beys and military chiefs refused to accept them before a meeting of the Jam‘iyah had been summoned to consult the Ulema and a‘yan of the province. Unfortunately, the Jam‘iyah refused to pass these measures and the Pasha had to cancel his plans.²

As the beylicate grew stronger and came to dominate the political and administrative system, there were alarming signs that the Dīwān was gradually losing significance as most of the decisions were actually being taken in the Jam‘iyah. In 1136/1723 Muhammed Jerkes held a Jam‘iyah in his house which aimed at limiting Muhammed Pasha’s authority by reducing the number of attendants at the Dīwān. On reading the minutes of the Jam‘iyah the Pasha commented, “I do not need in my Dīwān any sanjaq beys or military chief except for the Defterdar, the Ruznameji, and the usual administrators in my service.”

¹AI, pp. 312-316.

²ibid., p. 370.

He signed the firmān and Jerkes started to hold Jam‘iyahs and govern from his own house.¹ Ahmad Shalabi commented, “The Pasha’s Dīwān became vacant, and none of the a‘yan, or sanjaq beys, (except for the Ruznameji) attended. Not even the Defterdar attended and the Dīwān’s system became severely damaged.”²

It was mainly on account of the lack of trust between the Pasha and the sanjaq beys that the Dīwān never met. The assassination of Ismail Bey took place right in front of the Pasha, in the Dīwān itself. Most of the sanjaq beys became suspicious and feared further assassinations if they continued to attend.

The system of the Dīwān almost collapsed in 1138/1725 when Jerkes deposed Muhammed al-Nishanji Pasha and appointed his master’s son, Muhammed b. Abu Shanab, as qa’immaqam. Al-Jabarti narrates that Muhammed b. Abu Shanab resumed his duties as qa’immaqam in his own house rather than in the Citadel. Muhammed Bey, however, held actual Dīwān meetings in his own house and made appointments and dismissals from there. “He became just like the Sultan,”³

The central administration was too late to recognize the damage being caused to the political system of Ottoman Egypt in replacing the Dīwān by the Jam‘iyah as the executive council of the actual government of Egypt. Only in 1138/1725 did the Porte take direct action against the increasing role of the Jam‘iyah. ‘Ali Pasha declared that no Jam‘iyah should be held without a Pasha’s firmān, and that Jerkes in particular he banned from holding any meeting in his house. The Pasha then warned that if any sanjaq beys held a Jam‘iyah in his house he should only have himself to blame for the

¹“La a‘uzu fī al-dīwān illa al-defterdar wa al-ruznameji wa-khadamatu al-dīwān, wa-amma al-sanājiq fa lā hajata lī bi-tulū‘ihim.”(ibid., p. 401).

²“Dīwān al-sultān ma baqiya ahadun min al-a‘yān yatla‘uhu, wa lā al-defterdar, wa lā ahad min al-sanājiq... wa ‘akhramū nizām al-dīwān.”(ibid., p. 448).

³“Wa sara ka’annahū sultān.”(J. 1/201).

consequences.¹ But the warning was already too late since most of the decisions were already being taken by local a‘yan headed by the Sheikh al-Balad. In 1141/1728 Bakir Pasha refused to provide sufficient funds to prepare a campaign against Jerkes, who made up an army estimated at five thousand men and marched towards Cairo. A new Jam‘iyah decided to depose the Pasha and appointed Muhammed Darwish Bey as qa’immaqam, who in turn was given the authority to issue a firmān to provide sufficient funds from the treasury of Egypt.²

It can therefore be argued that owing to the rise of local a‘yan as administrators and influential figures in the political system of Ottoman Egypt, the Dīwān failed to continue as the effective governing council. The Jam‘iyah system provided a more successful alternative, dominated by the Mamluks who gradually came to control the local affairs of Egypt. The Mamluk beys were at first encouraged to participate in the decision-making process as they seemed more capable of offering solutions to the economic problems of the region. Since the Dīwān was a council of limited membership, the Jam‘iyah gradually took over as it proved to be more capable of adjusting to extended participation to include the local a‘yan of the province. Successive Jam‘iyah meetings made notable achievements particularly in collecting sufficient funds for the annual tribute. But in the long term enormous damage was inflicted on the political system of Ottoman Egypt, by shifting the balance of power towards the Mamluk institution, which ultimately dominated the decision-making process.

¹ibid., p. 458.

²ibid., p. 555.

VI- MAMLUK BEYS AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF OTTOMAN EGYPT

In an overall assessment of the role played by the Mamluk beys within the political system of Ottoman Egypt during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 it could be argued that the beylicate provided the system with capable administrators who handled their duties with experience and skill. Several beys held the title of Amīr al-Hajj for periods of five, seven, and even ten successive years. As qa'immaqams, the beys of Egypt effectively governed the province for several months until a Pasha was sent. Within the political system of Ottoman Egypt the Mamluk institution served as a vital balancing element through which the Porte was able to put into practice several policies to weaken the military's control. The role played by Ibrahim Abu Shanab, Iwaz Bey, and Abd al-Rahman Bey in destroying Bedouin forces in Upper and Lower Egypt cannot be denied. Hijaz was largely administered by the beys of Egypt, who served as governors of Jeddah before Istanbul started to send its own Pashas to the region. Most significant was the role of Iwaz Bey and his Mamluk, Yūsuf al-Jazzar who served as the Wakīl of his master in Jeddah for almost eight years.¹

Despite the political unrest, the various rebellions, and civil wars, the Sultan's sovereignty was never put into question in any single event during the period of study. It is, for example, interesting to note that even Jerkes Muhammed, when he was declared an outlaw and stripped of all his titles, was still keen to confirm his loyalty to the Porte by holding an official celebration (zīnah) for the Ottoman victories in Persia, and to send the annual tribute to Istanbul.

¹D, p. 62.

It must also be taken into account that during the forty-four year period of our study, sanjaq beys led a total of fifty thousand troops from Egypt to join the Ottoman forces in twenty major campaigns, in addition to about forty campaigns led by sanjaq beys against rebellious Bedouin tribes in the region.¹

It could be also argued that during the Mamluk dominance over Egypt, Istanbul received more from the annual khazna and hilwān than in any other period before. It is reported that the Porte received 1,500 purses from the belongings of the Faqari beys who were killed in 1127/1715.² In 1133/1720 Ismail Defterdar and Ismail Javush ketkhuda were killed in the Dīwān and the money which they possessed, estimated at 1,200 purses, was sent to the Porte.³ In addition, Muhammed Abu Shanab paid 3,000 purses in return for the Sultan's pardon of his father's Mamluk, Jerkes.⁴

The following table shows that during the peak of Mamluk dominance (1130-1137/1717-1723) the Porte received more from the Khazna than ever before. These facts may help to explain why the Porte was not serious about any reform scheme to put an end to the bloody struggle amongst Mamluk households in Egypt. They also show how useful the Mamluk institution in its existing structure was to the financial status of the Ottoman Empire, which was in desperate need of financial support.

¹See tables of imperial and local campaigns in Chapter 3.

²AI, p. 288.

³ibid., p. 325.

⁴ibid., p. 497.

Table 8: Irsaliyye-i Hazine payments (in paras) delivered to the Porte in different years between 1059/1642 and 11142/1729.¹

IRSLIYYE-IHAZINE	DELIVERIES TO PORTE
YEAR	AMOUNT SENT
1059/1649	7,750,000
1060/1650	10,125,000
1072/1661	9,900,000
1086/1677	15,060,003
1110/1698	14,532,243
1114/1702	19,510,386
1118/1706	13,843,204
1121/1709	13,361,260
1130/1717	17,844,550
1132/1719	27,808,798
1133/1720	26,866,741
1134/1721	23,057,756
1135/1722	25,132,089
1136/1723	23,857,320
1137/1724	29,987,053
1142/1729	21,518,382

¹Statistics derived from S.Shaw, The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, p. 400.

Locally, the Sheikh al-Balad came to challenge the status of the Pasha, while the Jam‘iyah gradually replaced the Dīwān as the executive council dealing with the local affairs of the region. The power and authority of Ottoman elements in the system were eroded as the beys seized control of the iltizam land and dominated the military institution. To obtain increased financial support, the Porte tolerated the take-over of the beys, since it brought to the fore more permanent and skilled administrators than the Pashas, who even failed to maintain the symbolic purpose of their existence in Egypt and were frequently deposed by the local a‘yan. This policy resulted in the rise of a strong, wealthy, and more skilled class of local Mamluks. As soon as the Sheikh al-Balad managed to nullify the rival household, he became the unrivalled effective governor of the province. In this way the Ottoman system was gradually being replaced by a new system which, in the long term, proved less favourable to the Porte. The local elite turned out to be a source of grave concern for the central administration as they assumed more power. Thus, in 1786 Istanbul decided to abolish the a‘yanship and sent an Ottoman force to revive the system of the Qanunname, which had been subjected to serious erosion during the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER

5

RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

I-INTRODUCTION

The rise of the beylicate ran in parallel with the rise of the local Ulema. In Ottoman Egypt religion was an essential part of the political establishment. Prominent Ulema gained remarkable representation in the Ottoman court in Istanbul and within the political establishment in Ottoman Cairo.

This chapter attempts to study the relationship between the Ulema and the elite, and the role played by the Ulema in the political affairs of the region. Religion in Ottoman Egypt has received the attention of many modern scholars, who have covered most of its manifestations. This chapter will nevertheless attempt to contribute more to this field by analyzing the political role played by the Sufis and the Ashrāf as active religious groups in Ottoman Egypt. We will focus particularly on the increasing political significance of al-Azhar and the rise of the office of Sheikh al-Azhar as the dominant representative of the Ulema's consensus and head of an institution which incorporated different madhhabs under one roof to provide a united political voice during the period which followed the civil war of 1123/1711.

II- THE ULEMA AND THE RULERS

The period 1099-1143/1687-1730 witnessed the emergence of politically influential class of Ulema and the remarkable involvement of the religious institutions in the political affairs of Ottoman Egypt. Many factors lay behind this new role played by the Ulema, amongst which was the gradual weakness of the Ottoman provincial authorities, paving the way for a stronger local elite in which the Ulema were a vital part. The need for religious legitimacy to support the political institutions in the Ottoman State was a common aspect of the empire as a whole. In an apparent struggle between the Pasha, qadiasker and the Ottoman elements in the political system of Egypt on the one side and the growing Mamluk institution on the other, there was a common need for a neutral element to act as arbiter. Istanbul failed to play this role owing to its policy of strengthening the local elite of the provinces and the playing off the Mamluk households' struggle in Egypt to maintain its revenues. The alternative arbiter was the Ulema of Egypt, who were neither Mamluks nor Turks, but belonged rather to the peasant-artisan population of the province. The Ulema became very active as mediators between conflicting institutions and rival households. They also acted as legislators by issuing fatwas, which were often accepted by all parties (unless there were differences within the Ulema and contradictory fatwas issued as a result).

The period 1123-1143/1711-1730 witnessed a violent and bloody transition, this created a big gap in the management of social affairs and the maintenance of law and order. Reform was not a priority to the elite. In this situation the Ulema came to fill the gap and played a vital role in representing the interests of the public, fighting corruption and injustice, and calling for agricultural and economic reform. The Mamluk beys in particular needed religious legitimacy during their political career and therefore cultivated good

relations with the religious institutions of Ottoman Egypt. Local Ulema started to challenge the status of the qadiasker. They enjoyed a distinctive status and remarkable immunity during their engagement in the political affairs of the province. Above all, they represented a divine source and spoke on behalf of the public, which gave them remarkable strength and excellent support for their political role.

The Ulema and the Political System

In their relations with the elite, the Ulema played two different roles. First, they formed what could be described as a loyal opposition to the existing ruling elite. The role of the Ulema in this context has been regarded by some historians as “acting as a court of appeal for the ruled.”¹ Since there was no effective machinery by which complaints on the part of the population could reach the rulers, the Ulema were the only means of redress in case of injustice, abuse of power by the elite, or increased taxation. For instance, in 1128/1715 a devaluation of the currency caused massive disruption to trading activities and put the markets of Cairo at a halt. A huge mob moved towards al-Azhar to complain to the Ulema, who locked the doors of the mosque while the Sheikh al-Azhar, Muhammed Shanan ascended to the Citadel in order to represent the mob and voice their concern. His negotiations resulted in the Pasha’s issuing an order for the Jam‘iyah council to convene in the house of the Defterdar to specify the prices of essential commodities in order to prevent price rises, and eventually normal life resumed.²

The Ulema of Egypt were always loyal to the Ottoman Sultans and never questioned their legitimacy. But designated Pashas were not always as

¹A.L. Marsot, ‘The Political and Social Functions of the Ulema in the 18th Century’, JESHO, vol. 16, part 2 (1973) p. 133.

² AI, p. 286.

fortunate, as the Ulema often supported Mamluk-military alliances which aimed at deposing Pashas who were accused of corruption.

In the deposition of Ismail Pasha (1107-1109/1695-1697), the Ulema gave enormous support to the Mamluk-military alliance. It is reported that they gathered in Rumeyla Square to demonstrate their solidarity with the local forces and once the Pasha stepped down, the Ulema, Ashrāf, and qadiasker signed a petition which listed the abuses of the Pasha, pointing to the financial corruption of the system which he had presided over during his two-year reign and the illegitimate riches he gained during this period.¹ Rajab Pasha (1132-1133/1719-1720) had a less fortunate career. The Ulema together with the sanjaq beys led the forces which surrounded the Citadel and bombarded the Pasha's residence. The headquarters of the coup was the Sultan Hasan Mosque in Rumeyla Square, where they negotiated the Pasha's peaceful resignation and the transfer of his authority to the qa'immaqam. Another petition was signed by the Ulema together with the sanjaq beys, describing again the abuses of Rajab Pasha. It is also reported that Sheikh al-Sadāt, a prominent member of the Ashrāf, wrote a supporting comment on the petition urging the Sultan to accept the Ulema's mediation. The messengers who handed the petition to the Grand Wazir were seven members of the seven regiments, a member of the Ashrāf, and one of the Ulema.²

The second role played by the Ulema could best be described as forming an essential part of the political system of Ottoman Egypt. Since the Mamluks dominated the iltizam system and had the awqāf land under their control, in one way or another local religious institutions depended on their cooperation and administration of their sources of income. Mamluk beys, on the other hand, needed religious backing to gain some sort of legitimacy and public

¹ ibid., f. 35.

² TA, f. 188; AI, pp. 313 -316 .

recognition. There was therefore a common cause to develop firm relations between the two sides.

During the civil war of 1123/1711, the Ulema were divided amongst themselves and were easily bribed to issue contradictory fatwas supporting either side of the conflict. According to ‘Ali al-Shadhili, “Ahmad Odabashi, Ayyub Bey, and Khalil Pasha bribed the Ulema of al-Azhar into issuing a fatwa on their side, while the other party paid several Ulema of al-Azhar to issue contradicting fatwas on their side.”¹ As the struggle continued, it seemed that the Ulema who took the side of the Pasha and qadiasker were a minority, of whom the most remarkable was Sheikh Ahmed Efendi, known as Shaykh al-Tai’fah al-Rūmiyyah (Head of the Turkish men of religion in Egypt). The group of twelve Ulema who supported the Pasha were exiled². The remaining Ulema, who supported the sanjaq-‘Azebān alliance, enhanced their position, and became automatically an essential part of the political establishment of the province, being recognized as official members of Jam‘iyahs and the Dīwān in return for their support.

The engagement of the Ulema in political affairs was conducted in three major forms, viz.:

a-The Ulema as Mediators

The neutrality of the Ulema, in addition to their religious status, won them the respect of the elite and enabled most prominent Sheikhs to play a vital intermediary role. Differences and rivalries between the seven ojaqs provided a the major opportunity for their direct interference. At the start of the twelfth century AH, the Ulema played an important role in solving the serious crisis caused by internal military conflicts, particularly in the cases of Küçük

¹ Al-Shadhili, p. 352.

² ibid., pp. 397-398.

Muhammed and Ifranj Ahmad. In 1105/1693 the conflict between the two factions of the Janissary regiment reached its peak. In the case of Ifranj Ahmad, his rival, al-Qazdağlı, managed in 1105/1693 to gain the support of the Ihtiyariya of the Janissary regiment and rebelled against the existing Bashodabashi, Küçük Muhammed. One of the Ulema, Sheikh al-Bakri, handled the negotiations between the two sides and took personal responsibility to guarantee that Küçük Muhammed would not cause harm to the opposing side, and in this way the rebellion was called off.¹

In the aftermath of the civil war, military power declined but the Ulema continued to play an increasing mediatory role between Mamluk households. In 1134/1721, for instance, Sheikh ‘Abd al-Khaliq al-Sadāt held a meeting in his own house and invited the sanjaq beys of the two Qasimi factions including Jerkes and Ismail b. Iwaz, the purpose being “to make peace and establish friendship between both sides.”²

b- The Ulema as Members of the two Executive Councils (the Dīwān and Jam‘iyah)

There are many examples which could be cited in demonstration of the fact that the Ulema formed an essential part of the Dīwān and Jam‘iyah councils during the period of study. In almost all the political, administrative, and economic affairs of Egypt, the Ulema were invited to participate in discussions and issue relevant fatwas in order to ensure public acceptance of the laws passed. The following are some examples of the meetings in which the Ulema were present and of the variety of issues raised:

-In 1103/1691 ‘Ali Pasha called the Ulema, Bakriya, Sadāt, Naqib al-Ashrāf, and qadiasker, in addition to the sanjaq beys and the ihdiyariyya of the seven

¹ ZI, f. 27.

² “Min bāb al-mahabbah wa li-’ajli al-sulhi baynahum”, AI, p. 340.

ojaqs to sign their acceptance to a Noble Script which ordered all the southern districts to be united in the major iqlīm of Jirja. Members of this Dīwān signed their acceptance and the Script was duly sent back to the Porte.¹

-In 1106/1694 ‘Ali Pasha called for a Dīwān in which the Ulema, Sadāt, Bakriya, and sanjaq beys were invited to discuss the multazims’ failure to pay their taxes. After a long discussion, a solution was suggested by the qadiasker which was accepted and endorsed.²

-In 1108/1696 Ismail Pasha called for a Jam‘iyah in the Dīwān. The Ulema were invited, in addition to the sanjaq beys and the military chiefs, to discuss the serious deficit in the khazna and the most sensible means of extraditing the revenues from the iltizam land.³

-In 1123/1711 Iwaz Bey invited the Ulema to a Jam‘iyah in which an agreement was reached to depose Khalil Pasha and appoint Qansuh Bey qa’immaqam.⁴

-In 1128/1715 the Pasha invited the Ulema, in addition to the usual members of the Dīwān, in order to obtain their consent to his plans to issue a new coin at a lower value for the purpose of overcoming the economic crisis caused by the shortage of gold. The Dīwān gave consent to the decision, but was later forced to reverse it on account of public opposition.⁵

-In 1134/1721 four Jam‘iyahs were held to find a solution to the Bedouin corruption in the aqalim. The Ulema were invited to participate in these discussions.⁶

-In 1137/1724 Jerkes invited the Ulema to a Jam‘iyah in order that he might obtain a fatwa legalizing his proposal for a reform plan in the agricultural system, including the abolition of several taxes which had been introduced after

¹ SS, f. 844

² ZI, f. 28.

³ ibid., f. 33.

⁴ SH, pp. 368-9.

⁵ TA, f. 166.

⁶ AI, p. 342.

1082/1670. The Ulema gave their consent and subsequently Muhammed Pasha had a firmān issued approving these reforms.¹

-In 1138/1725 Jerkes invited the Ulema to a Jam‘iyah in which they signed their agreement to the deposition of Muhammed Pasha.²

-In 1140/1727 Muhammed Pasha invited the qadiasker, the Ashrāf, and the Ulema of the four madhhabs to the Dīwān for consultation on ways to restore order after rumours of Jerkes’s return to Cairo.³

It would be possible to cite numerous other cases of the Ulema’s participation in the Dīwān and Jam‘iyah meetings, but those mentioned above are sufficient to give some of the different purposes for which the Ulema were invited, the extent of their involvement in the political affairs of the region, and their influence on the decision-making process and policy implementation.

c- The Ulema as Legislators

In theory, the Ulema were the only authority capable of contradicting Sultan’s Noble Scripts and Pashas’ firmāns if they were found to be against Shari’a principles. To the Mamluks they were a valuable source of support and useful legislative backing if the authorities withdrew their recognition from them. The Ulema exercised their authority by issuing fatwas, which were binding if they took a decision collectively.⁴ Particular reference should be made in this context to three major fatwas which had an enormous influence on the affairs of the region. The first was issued in 1121/1709 when the fatwa of the Ulema against Janissary mutiny destroyed their morale, with the result that their rebellion was called off.⁵ The second was issued in 1127/1715, when

¹ ibid., p. 439.

² ibid., p. 449.

³ ibid., p. 519.

⁴ When the Ulema failed to agree, the contradictory fatwas they issued were worthless, as in the case of the civil war of 1123/1711.

⁵ AI, p. 224.

Muhammed and ‘Uthmān, both the atba’ of Qaytas Bey, rebelled after their master’s assassination. Upon their refusal to negotiate, the Ulema gave their fatwa that those beys were rebels against the Sultan’s authority and should be fought against by all possible means.¹ Fortified by this fatwa, the Pasha ordered the army to attack and they were forced to flee. A third historic fatwa was issued in 1138/1725, when Jerkes decided to resist a triple alliance of the Pasha the military, and Faqari beys. ‘Ali Pasha ordered an attack by cavalry units and Jerkes was forced to flee.² These fatwas were often issued in answer to questions raised by the authorities, but were only issued if the accused refused to appear before the qadiasker or a council of the Ulema for discussion.

Limitations and Sources of Power

It is rather astonishing that the Ulema had no economic ability to back their vital role. Apart from certain individuals, such as the aristocratic Ashrāf families of al-Bakriya and al-Sadāt, the majority of the Ulema tended to be poor and had limited sources of income. Most of the Ulema’s income came from endowment foundations (awqāf), the revenues from which paid their salaries and the maintenance of religious institutions. These awqāf were agricultural villages, profit-making buildings and other revenue-yielding enterprises. The Ulema therefore depended on the successful administration of the endowment properties of the Mamluk institution and on the generous donations of the elite. Only a few received salaries and the most prominent of them assumed wealth and prestige. In fact, this lack of funds was a major setback to the religious leaders. In 1106/1694 the Ulema led a demonstration, headed towards the Dīwān, and complained to ‘Ali Pasha that the Multazims were not paying the awqāf salaries and the expenses of religious shrines. The Pasha acted immediately by forcing the responsible multazims to pay even though the country was suffering one of its most severe droughts in the

¹ TA, f. 160.

² AI, p. 472.

Ottoman era.¹ Although the Ulema succeeded in obtaining their payments, this incident was an indication that the Ulema had failed to find independent sources of income and had not penetrated the Egyptians sources of economic funding. A.A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm noted that the Ulema did not own iltizam land and failed to take effective part in its system. At the start of the eighteenth century, there was no mention of the Ulema in iltizam defters except for a few rich individuals. By the end of the century, there were only 307 Sheikhs named as multazims (i.e., 6.9% of the total number of multazims in Egypt).²

Many Ulema received limited incomes from teaching or working in courts as judges, shuhadā’ (witnesses), or attendants in religious shrines. The Ulema gained most of their power and prestige from their social role. In the conservative and religious society of Egypt, the Ulema led the public in religious ceremonies, public prayers, festivals, celebrations of the prophet’s birthday (mawālīd, sing. mawlid). They also played major roles in times of drought and famine by leading prayers and guiding the public in special acts of worship to safeguard against disasters. As Arabic speakers of native origins, they were directly related to the peasant-artisan population of Ottoman Egypt. They voiced public concern and derived their power as representatives of the masses. In several cases the Ulema demonstrated their ability to cause unrest and put the Egyptian capital at a halt. On the other hand, they used their influence to control the public and maintain peace and order. To the common public, the elite were isolated in their living, language, and monopoly of the political and administrative posts of Egypt, whereas the Ulema could act as an effective link between the common public and the elite.

The Ulema made good use of the position they held. Above all, they represented divine authority in a society (plebeian and elite alike) which respected religious authority. The Ottoman state further enhanced the status of

¹ TA, f. 115; AI, p. 192; ZI, f. 28; and SS, f. 882.

² A. A. ‘Abd al-Rahīm, al-Rif al-Misri, (Cairo, 1986) 112.

religion in politics and administration by annually sending a qadiasker to Egypt and directing the public to bring their differences for settlement to the Shari‘a courts rather than to the Wali. The local Ulema enjoyed much support and backing from the Mamluk institution, which was to them a major source of income and prestige. A good example is the case of Ismail b. Iwaz Bey, who fell into a disagreement with the qadiasker in 1136/1723. Ismail acted by isolating the chief qadi and declaring that only three local Sheikhs from the Shafi‘i, Maliki, and Hanafi Madhhabs were authorized to issue legal fatwas.¹ Gradually the status of qadiaskers declined as they became engaged in the political rather than the religious affairs of Egypt.

The local Ulema of Ottoman Egypt started to play an increasingly political role at the start of the eighteenth century and enjoyed the respect of the common public and the elite. The major limitation in exercising their new role was the religious institution’s dependence on the beylicate for financial support. While the Pashas and the military declined, a new alliance was being formed between the local Ulema and the Mamluk institution. The latter wanted religious backing and legitimacy, and the former infiltrated step by step further into the political establishment and benefited financially in return. The rise of the local Ulema in Egypt was not therefore favourable to the authorities in Istanbul; rather it promoted Egypt’s gradual transition from central to local government.

¹ AI, pp. 380-2.

III-SUFISM

For the purpose of study there exists a good amount of material on the conditions of Sufi Sheikhs and the development of Sufism in Ottoman Egypt. Most remarkable are the accounts of the Journeys made by two prominent Sufis: ‘Abd al-Ghani al-Nābulsi’s al-Haqiqa wal majāz compiled in 1105/1693, and Mustafa al-Bakri’s al-Nihla al-nasriyah, an account written by a Syrian Sufi Sheikh who made his journey to Cairo in 1132/1719.¹ Ahmed Shalabi and ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti also paid special attention to Sufism in their works, but while Shalabi was a devout Sufi, al-Jabarti was rather critical of extreme Sufism and voiced his opposition to their manner and acts of worship.

There also exist several contemporary studies on Sufism in Ottoman Egypt, of which the most remarkable are those of Tawfīq al-Tawīl and Michael Winter.² Winter argued that the Ottoman conquest did not transform Egypt's religious institutions and that while Sufism had already been active and mature under the Mamluks, the Ottoman regime gave it a further strong impetus. During the three centuries of Ottoman rule, Sufism made great progress in Egyptian society. The Sufi orders multiplied and their activities intensified.³ Tawfīq al-Tawīl attributes much of Sufi development to the generous awqāf made in Egypt, which transferred the principle of Sufism from individualistic trends to group activities and social events. The Sufis of Ottoman Egypt could hope for nothing better than to live in awqāf buildings and tekkes constructed by the aristocracy as a sign of piety while they ate, drank, and enjoyed the company of their friends without having to work or pay anything.⁴ It is estimated that in the seventeenth century there were around eighty tarīqas (Sufi orders) in Egypt which may not be an accurate survey of orders but does give

¹ See Chapter 1 for further information on these two texts.

² See Bibliography for full list of their works.

³ M. Winter, Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, p. 129.

⁴ T. al-Tawīl, Al-Sha‘rāni, p.130.

an idea of the extent of Sufism and its remarkable development under the Ottomans.¹

Many historians have argued that Egypt was the most suitable place for the development of Sufism, because the majority of the local population were poor and ignorant and had no chance to play any part in the political or administrative affairs of the province. To them Sufism represented a more meaningful way of life with very few restrictions and prohibitions. Mawlids and festivals were for the Sufis occasions of pleasure and entertainment rather than action and worship. The public tended to accept anybody's claim to have become a dervish or saint and believed in the dead much more than they believed in those alive. They adopted the habit of visiting shrines and tombs to pray for solutions for a variety of problems and expected to be cured from sicknesses, magic spells, and certain curses of ghosts. People felt that Sufism could give them the comfort and help that orthodox Islam failed to confer. On the social aspect of the turuq Winter has commented that Islamic Mysticism did not demand, and did not even recommend, celibacy. Consequently, the orders increased in size not only by new applicants joining but also through natural growth. As Sufism ceased to be an elitist movement, many people were born into an order just as they were born into a social class, a village, or a profession. Social mobility was minimal in those times and most people had little choice about which social organization or milieu they belonged to.² Clear evidence of the spread of Sufism and the popularity of mawālid and other Sufi events, is found in Shalabi's record of the events of 1140/1727. He wrote that when the annual mawlid of Sidi Ahmad al-Rifā'i was held, it attracted such crowds that seventeen people were killed by suffocation or being trodden underfoot by the worshippers, who ran away from the site in horror.³

¹ ibid., p. 75

² M. Winter, Egyptian Society, p. 152.

³ AI, p. 524.

The Failure of the Sufi Sheikhs to Play a Political Role

Widespread Sufism does not necessarily indicate the political power of saints or leaders of the turuq. With the rise of al-Azhar as a school of (religious) theology and as a politically influential institution, the status of Sufism started to decline. People started to seek refuge in al-Azhar and request its Ulema to interfere in solving economic and political crises rather than seeking refuge in shrines and tombs. The present section of this study does not seek to examine the social or economic role of Sufism, but rather to examine the political role of Egyptian Sufism during the period of study.

In origin Sufism is an extreme state of worship on an individual level, involving renunciation of worldly gains such as money, offices, and all forms of pleasure.¹ However, Sufism developed to be conducted on a group level and its turuq became an indispensable part of Egyptian society in its various regions. At different times Sufism did develop political ideologies and armed movements, but all attempts at Sufi political engagement in Ottoman Egypt ended in complete failure. The following is an example.

In 1110/1698 a Sufi Sheikh called, Muhammed al-‘Ulaimi, from the Fayyum province, arrived in Cairo claiming to be a saint of extraordinary character. He was accompanied by a group of followers. Having settled in Rumeyla Square, he began to demonstrate his strange acts, including standing on one foot and staring with only one eye for several days. He ate only one date in the morning and another in the afternoon. In the course of a few days a large crowd gathered in the square to see the saint. Men, women, and children filled the place, causing great disorder. Ahmad Shalabi, ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, and Yūsuf al-Malwāni all claim that it was because of the disorder caused that the Pasha summoned him to the Dīwān and ordered his execution, because the

¹al-Tawīl, al-Sha‘rāni, p. 7.

military chiefs and sanjaq beys complained about the disorder he was causing.¹ He was killed together with his followers and the crowd dispersed. However, new evidence indicates that al-‘Ulaimi’s career had a political scope which angered the elite, and particularly the Janissary chiefs. The authors of Zubdat al-ikhtisār and Tarājim al-sawā’iq continue the story by arguing that the reason for al-‘Ulaimi’s brutal execution in the Dīwān was not the crowd he attracted and the disorder he caused, but the fact that the Moroccan Bedouin had asked the Sheikh to speak on their behalf to the Pasha. It is alleged that when several ships arrived from Jirja carrying dates which belonged to the Moroccan Bedouin, ‘Abd al-Rahman Bey of Jirja requested Hussein Pasha to seize the shipment in retaliation for the Bedouin looting of state-owned villages. When Hussein Pasha seized the shipments, the Bedouin wrote a petition to the Pasha to be handed to him by al-‘Ulaimi, who was to be accompanied by the crowds to put greater pressure on the Pasha to release the dates. The plan however failed. The Sheikh was invited to the Dīwān for negotiations but was murdered by the Janissaries before he reached the Pasha’s Dīwān.² It is not clear whether it was Hussein Pasha who ordered the execution or the Janissaries, who did not want the shipment to be released, but the story shows that Sufi Sheikhs were not immune against military greed, and were denied the right to interfere in the administrative affairs of the region. It is not strange that there was no public outcry or any hint of serious repercussions at the death of al-‘Ulaimi. He was quietly buried in al-Qarafa graveyard and normal life resumed. This was because Sufi Sheikhs generally had no political backing nor did they make any effort to become politically influential. By contrast, with the class of Ulema, centred at al-Azhar, an insult or harm inflicted on one of their members could provoke massive demonstrations and public outrage. Consequently, the military and the sanjaq beys did their utmost to avoid any conflict with the Ulema.

¹AI, p.204; J. 1/450; TA, f.120.

²ZI, f. 38; SS, ff. 950-952.

A clear indication of the Sufis' lack of political backing and failure to play a significant role in Egypt's politics was the case of the civil war of 1123/1711. When the war was over, the Ulema who had taken the side of Khalil Pasha and Ifranj Ahmad were simply exiled without being hurt or insulted. Rather, they were told to leave Cairo within three days and go to the destinations they chose without actually being forced to do so. As a result, only twelve left, together with their students.¹ By contrast, Muhammed b. 'Ashour, (the Sheikh of the tariqa of Sidi Ibrahim al-Disūqi), was arrested and brutally murdered. He was struck on the head with cudgels and then hurled down from the walls of the Citadel.² There were other similar cases of Sufi dervishes being lashed and severely punished for smoking during the fasting days of Ramadan or behaving rudely in public.

Growing Opposition to Sufism

For the local Mamluk elite who challenged the status of Ottoman provincial governors, the Ulema provided legitimacy and morale, but the Sufi Sheikhs of Egypt did not develop any political career and were restricted to their social activities. But there was a more serious challenge to Sufism which contributed to its political decline and endangered its status within the region. This was the growing opposition to the Sufi style of worship and the ideological aspects of Sufi philosophy as a whole. In 1123/1711 a Turkish preacher, referred to simply as Wā'iz al-Rūm, started a religious circle in the Mu'ayad Mosque, which was regarded as a centre of the Turkish Ulema in Cairo. The preacher attacked Sufism and the improper acts of worship in the tekkes, mosques, and graveyards. His ideas were summarized by Ahmad Shalabi in four major points, viz.: (a) saints' miracles ceased with their deaths; (b) Sha'rani's statement that saints can see the 'preserved tablet' was not true, since not even prophets could see this tablet or know its contents; (c) the

¹SH, pp. 296-297.

² ibid., p. 295.

custom of lighting candles and lamps on the graves of saints was not permissible; and (d) sepulchres and cloisters built over the graves of saints should all be destroyed.¹ He also urged his followers to prevent the Sufi custom of performing the dhikr in Bab Zuwaila, and to prevent similar Sufi acts.

It seems that the preacher had massive support not only from the Turkish attendants of al-Mu‘ayad Mosque but also from many members of the seven ojaqs. Contrary to the allegations of Ahmad Shalabi (who, as a Sufi, was very critical of the preacher), there were many local Egyptians amongst his followers.² The movement was a serious challenge to Sufi principles and the people concerned were very quick to obtain fatwas from the Shafi‘i, Maliki, and Hanafi Sheikhs of al-Azhar condemning the preacher and requesting the authorities to apprehend him. On reading the fatwa, the preacher called his followers to raise the issue at the highest level and put it before the qadiasker for him to give his judgment. It is not clear if the qadiasker sympathized with the preacher, but he was certainly frightened by the big mob which entered the court and attacked his dragoman.

The preacher was thus banned from giving any more talks in al-Mu‘ayad Mosque, but this did not resolve the crisis. An angry mob of the preacher’s followers attacked the court and forced the qadiasker to accompany them to the Dīwān to inform Rajab Pasha of their demands, which were the return of the preacher and the trial of the Azharite Sheikhs for their fatwas against their preacher. Rajab Pasha secretly informed the sanjaq beys that he wished them to put an end to the crisis. Ibrahim Abu Shanab immediately called for a Jam‘iyah. In it the sanjaq beys agreed with the chiefs of the seven ojaqs to punish their members who followed the preacher and send them into exile, while ‘Ali Agha of the Janissaries was ordered to disperse the crowd, which

¹AI, p. 204.

²This is indicated first by the fact that the mob which went to the qadiasker needed a dragoman and also by the fact that Shalabi’s Sheikh, Ahmad al-Tayluni, complained that the people of Egypt ‘would follow any deviant’. See AI, pp. 253-254.

was estimated at one thousand who had gathered in the Mu‘ayad Mosque. The movement of Wai‘z al-Rūm was thus ended by force and its leader simply disappeared.¹

This incident should not be viewed as an ethnic struggle between Turkish and Arab Ulema, but should rather be studied against a wider background. The movement was not supported by the Pasha or qadiasker, nor did the main body of the military offer al-‘Ulaimi any protection or backing. The preacher himself did not attack the Arab Ulema in particular, but he was clearly against the main principles of Sufism. There was thus a theological conflict and religious diversity of opinion rather than ethnic differences between the Turkish and Arab Ulema.² The opposition to Sufism was not restricted to this preacher and his followers. There was a deep-rooted movement which developed with the rise of local tendencies in Egypt. Al-Jabarti himself was very critical of Sufi mawliḍs and Dervish behaviour. He condemned the spread of the corruption, prostitution, and improper actions which accompanied Sufi festivals and, in his views, completely contradicted the principles of Islam.

Al-Jabarti may have been influenced by the Hanbali minority in Egypt and the Wahhabis who had fled from Muhammed ‘Ali’s campaign to Hijaz. But as early as 1105/1693, al-Nabulsi expressed his deep concern at the religious ideas being spread in Egypt and condemned Sufi principles as innovations (bida‘, sing. bid‘ah). He devoted more than seven pages in his travel account to a discussion of the claims made by Sufi critics, making special reference to a local alim called al-‘Allamah al-Halabi, who wrote a book entitled Munyat al-Musalli criticizing Sufism. He noted that other Ulema

¹The full story of the Wai‘z al-Rūm will be found in, AI, pp. 251-255; TA, ff. 148-150; and J. 1/183-186.

²M. Winter, Egyptian Society, pp. 157-160.

also condemned Sufis as innovators and misguided persons. The main points raised by Sufi critics were summarized by al-Nabulsi as follows:

1-Dhikr meetings, which involve dancing and uttering strange words, are not permissible.

2-Many Sufi acts of worship are merely playing with religion.

3-To seek refuge in dead saints and ask them to mediate between living people and Allah is a misguided and deviant act.

4-Those who do such acts are not Muslims and should not lead group prayers, because prayers made by them will not be accepted.

Al-Nabulsi was very careful to collect as many fatwas from the Maliki, Hanafi, and Shafi'i Ulema of al-Azhar condemning such allegations and accusing those who criticized Sufism as deviant. He urged the Pasha to prosecute them in order to avoid divisions and deviation within society. He also recommended that these people should be invited to repent and make a public retraction of their claims or be punished severely. Al-Nabulsi cited more than ten fatwas from Ulema of al-Azhar repeating these statements, defending Sufi turuq, and requesting the authorities to interpose on their side.¹ Al-Nabulsi then went on to describe these people as crazy, cursed, and deviant.

Some historians refer to the Turkish fundamentalist writer Birgili Mehmet (d. 981/1573), one of the first critics of Sufism, by whom the above-mentioned preacher was influenced.² But there were certainly earlier Arab theologians such as Ibn Taymiyah and his students Ibn al-Qayyim and Ibn Kathir, who were very critical of extreme Sufism. In fact, Arab opposition to

¹Al-Nabulsi, ff. 265-272.

²Winter, Egyptian Society, p. 157.

Sufism was much greater than that of the Turks, who overall were more influenced by Sufi saints and dervishes.

It can therefore be argued that, although Sufism was widespread in Egypt, it was merely of a social and religious nature. Sufism in principle does not make politics a priority and thus Sufi Sheikhs in the eighteenth century were not able or willing to develop a political career. Sufism in eighteenth-century Egypt faced two further challenges: a growing opposition movement which questioned its principles and acts of worship, and the remarkable rise of al-Azhar as the dominant religious institution. The Ulema of al-Azhar were not Sufi critics but provided a more practical and widely accepted alternative to the rising Mamluk institution. These factors distanced the Sufi turuq from playing a significant political role, and kept Sufism away from administration and politics.

IV- THE ASHRĀF

Al-Sādah al-Ashrāf is a term commonly used in manuscript sources in reference to the descendants of the Prophet Muhammed. The Ashrāf came to

Egypt from Hijaz in a series of migrations. Under the Ottomans they were highly respected. An official called the Naqib al-Ashrāf was appointed to represent their interests and look after their needs. The Ashrāf were many in number but most often managed to act as a united group. They wore green turbans to distinguish them from the general public and marched under the Prophet's banner during public ceremonies and festivals. The Ashrāf were recognized as a distinct class within Egyptian society and were respected by both the common people and the ruling elite. Amongst the Ashrāf there were two particularly distinguished families who rose to high economic and political status in Egypt. It is worth considering these separately under the two following headings.

a- Al-Bakriya

This was an old Egyptian family strongly associated with Sufism, who claimed descent from Abu Bakr, the first caliph in Islamic history. This family produced several well-known Ulema, including 'Abd al-Qadir al-Dashtuti (d.924/1517), Muhammed Shams al-Din Abyad al-Wajh (d.994/1586), and Taj al-'Arifīn al-Bakri (d.1003/1594) who inherited enormous wealth. During the eighteenth-century, many Bakris achieved prominence as Sufi Sheikhs and the family increased its wealth and status. By the end of the century, their leaders assumed the title of Naqib Al-Ashrāf, which had been previously restricted to Turkish Ashrāf sent from Istanbul. The head of the Bakri family was called Shaykh al-Sajjādah (Chief of the prayer rag) al-Bakriyyah. He represented its members in council meetings and political affairs. Several Bakris played an important role in the political affairs of the province. In 1106/1694, for instance, one of the Bakris (whose name is not recorded) personally guaranteed Küçük Muhammed to his foes amongst the Janissary regiment and promised them on his behalf that no harm would be done to them if they called off their mutiny. His mediation was accepted since he was also backed by a number of

Ulema.¹ Prominent Bakris enjoyed remarkable legal immunity and great respect from the aristocracy. Thus, Sheikh Abu al-Mawahib al-Bakri, who died of old age in 1126/1714, had during the preceding three years protected Omar Agha, one of the chief aides of Ayyub Bey, who fled to Istanbul when he lost the war. According to Shalabi, all the enemies of Omar Agha knew he was hiding in the house of Sheikh al-Sajjādah al-Bakri Abu al-Mawahib, but nobody dared to ask the Sheikh or to attempt to force the Agha out. When the Sheikh died, Omar immediately ran away and “disappeared”.²

b- Al-Sadāt Al-Wafa‘iyyah

This family traced its descent from ‘Ali b. Abī Talib, the Prophet’s cousin, son-in-law and the fourth caliph. Al-Sadāt al-Wafa‘iyyah enjoyed a similar status to that of the Bakris. They had charge of al-Hussein Mosque and supervised many awqāf, and thus received regular salaries from the Porte. This family had more connections with Sufism and was strongly attached to the Shadhili order. In 1106/1694 there was public fear of an extraordinary low Nile, which caused one of the greatest droughts in the history of Ottoman Egypt. The Pasha ordered Sheikh Yūsuf al-Sadāt to spend several days in the Nilometer (al-Miqyās) and read the designated prayers in the hope that the water would rise.³ Sheikh ‘Abd al-Khaliq al-Sadāt was a particularly strong political figure and highly respected among the Mamluks. In 1134/1721 he invited both Ismail and Jerkes, in addition to the sanjaq beys, to his house and urged them to make peace and overcome their differences,⁴ which is a clear indication that the Sheikh did play an important role in the political affairs of the province.

¹ZI, f. 27.

²AI, pp.262 -263

³ZI, f. 27.

⁴AI, p. 340

The Ashrāf and the Political Elite

Thanks to al-Nabulsi, there exists a clear picture of the life of the Ashrāf and their political role, and he makes particular reference to the Bakriyya family, since he was a guest in the house of Zain al-Abidin al-Bakri, the younger brother of Sheikh al-Sajjādah al-Bakriya. On his way to Cairo from Gaza, al-Nabulsi passed by a town called Khankah. Its governor was his host Zain al-Abidin, who had been appointed to this post by the Sultan.¹ Al-Bakri appointed a Wakīl who himself was a Sharīf, and it was this person who welcomed al-Nabulsi to the town and treated him with generosity. Upon his arrival in Cairo, al-Nabulsi described the wealth and prestige of his Sharīf host. Apparently he resided in a luxurious house in an aristocratic district on Al-Azbakiya pond. Every Saturday the Pasha sent a messenger to al-Bakri early in the morning inviting him to the Citadel, where they spent hours in political and scientific discussions.² Al-Nabulsi himself had the opportunity to meet the Pasha several times during his stay in Cairo. Most of the neighbours of Al-Bakri were senior officials holding administrative posts, including ‘Uthmān Efendi, Katib al-Khazna.³ Zain al-Abidin also arranged for his guest to meet several sanjaq beys including the Amīr al-Hajj, the Defterdar, and a prominent sanjaq bey called Murad Bey.⁴ This sheds light on the status and prestige of the Ashrāf and also their relations with the Pasha, sanjaq beys, and various senior administrative officers. Such relations and wealth enabled the Ashrāf to play a prominent political role and always be regarded as an essential part of the eighteenth-century political establishment in an Ottoman Egypt in which the local elite dominated the affairs of the region. The Ashrāf also penetrated within the military, and several ojaqlis were referred to as being Ashrāf

¹Al-Nabulsi, f. 179

²ibid., f. 181.

³ibid., f. 219

⁴ibid., ff. 272 and 281

particularly amongst the ‘Azebān’ regiment. In 1133/1720 Sheikh Ahmad al-Bakri married his daughter to Kamīl Ketkhuda of the Javush regiment. The ceremony was attended by all the Ihtiyariya of the seven ojaqs, in addition to the most prominent sanjaq beys. Huge amounts of coffee and sugar were consumed and money was distributed,¹ which is an indication of the wealth of prominent Ashrāf and their relations with the ruling elite.

Not all the Ashrāf were rich and respected, however. The two prominent families of Bakriya and Sadāt were already part of the political system and regarded as members of the aristocracy, but many other Ashrāf were simply poor and ordinary. Some Ashrāf served as servants to wealthy merchants and others worked as peasants and artisans without enjoying any benefits or recognition from the state. The majority of the Ashrāf did not play any significant political role, nor did they enjoy the immunity and respect which the Bakriya or Sadāt enjoyed. As long as these two families were connected to the Ulema and qadiasker, forming a single religious entity, they were strong and influential, but when the Ashrāf wanted to act upon their own initiative and engage in political affairs in isolation from the Ulema, they faced serious limitations and suffered major set-backs.

Decline of the Office of Naqib al-Ashrāf

The Naqib al-Ashrāf was an office which existed in the days of the Abbasids, Fatimids, Mamluks, and Ottomans in different forms as a sign of respect for the Prophet Muhammed and his descendants. The duty of the Naqib Al-Ashrāf, varied from one state to another, but was generally to supervise the affairs of the Ashrāf and issue legal certificates of identity to them in order to prevent false claims to the title of Sharīf. They also had some religious and ceremonial duties. Under the Ottomans, the Naqib al-Ashrāf was, in a way,

¹AI, p. 329

similar to the Pasha and qadiasker. He was appointed for one year (renewable) by the Naqib Al-Ashrāf in Istanbul and was responsible to him. To fulfil his duties of registering the Ashrāf, paying them state allowances, heading ceremonies, and following up the affairs of the Ashrāf in Egypt, the Naqib Al-Ashrāf had several wakīls. There is evidence that holders of the office of Naqib Al-Ashrāf played a significant political role. They participated in Dīwān meetings, and negotiated peace agreements between rival Mamluk and military factions.

It is however noticeable that the Naqib al-Ashrāf lost much of his popularity and status following the civil war of 1123/1711. With the increasing tide of localism, most Turkish posts in the political system of Ottoman Egypt lost their significance to the newly introduced local offices. The Pasha was challenged by the Sheikh al-Balad, the qadiasker's authority was undermined by the united local Ulema led by the Sheikh al-Azhar, while the Naqib al-Ashrāf began to lose much of his status to Arbāb al-Sajājīd, a title most commonly applied to the Bakriya and Sadāt families. Contemporary sources refer to several Dīwān and Jam'iyah meetings in which the Ashrāf were represented by the Sadat or the Bakriya rather than the Naqib al-Ashrāf, when in fact the Naqib al-Ashrāf was present. Thus, we read,

“Jama‘a ‘Ali Pasha, al-‘Ulama, wa al-Bakriya, wa al-Sadāt al-Wafa’iya, wa Naqib al-Ashrāf wa qadiasker.”¹

and in Jam'iyahs,

“Tajama‘at al-Sadāt wal Bakriya wa al-Umara wa ghairuha min al-‘Ulama wa al-Sanajiq.”²

The implications of these texts is that the Naqib al-Ashrāf did not represent the Ashrāf in such councils and he himself was not particularly essential if other local Ashrāf attended. In an extreme case, in 1122/1710, when a new Naqib al-Ashrāf, Abd al-Qadir Efendi, arrived from Istanbul, he was received by the

¹SS, f. 844.

²ZI, f. 27.

Ashrāf and became the guest of Ahmed Bash Javush, who was also a Sharīf. The next morning he was found slaughtered. The Bash Javush was taken to prison but nobody knew who actually killed the Naqib al-Ashrāf. The Ashrāf decided to appoint Muhammed Ketkhuda of the ‘Azebān’ regiment.¹ The event was considered to be a sign of the unpopularity of Turkish Nuqaba’ al-Ashrāf, who failed to play a significant role or compete with the wealthy aristocratic and influential families of the Bakriya and Sadāt. Power and authority amongst the Ashrāf continued to shift towards the local families until 1176/1762, when Muhammed ‘Abd al-Hādi, an Egyptian of the Sadāt Wafa’iya, became the first local Naqib al-Ashrāf. From then on the office was taken by members of the two prominent Ashrāf families and the custom of sending the Naqib from Istanbul was discontinued. Local Ashrāf who held the office of Naqib al-Ashrāf played a very important role in the political affairs of Egypt and gained more prestige and recognition from the authorities than had the previous Turkish holders of the office.

Political Participation of the Ashrāf

The Ashrāf were quite active in the political arena in Egypt during the period of study. Al-Bakriya and Sadāt were mentioned as members of several Jam‘iyahs and Dīwān councils, particularly after the civil war. They attended meetings of the two councils to discuss issues relating to the Bedouin,² devaluation of the currency,³ abolition of illegal taxation,⁴ deposition of the Pasha,⁵ and restoration of law and order in cases of public outrage,⁶ in addition to many other issues which required religious approval. The Ashrāf were

¹TA, f. 134; AI, p. 227

²AI, p. 342

³ibid., p. 370

⁴ibid., p. 439

⁵ibid., p. 449

⁶ibid., p. 519

particularly consulted on the affairs of Hijaz. Sometimes the military and the Pasha met with them in meetings of a smaller scale to discuss the rebellions and various struggles between the Ashrāf of Mecca, whose family relations were particularly unstable during the period of study. As early as 1106/1694, the Pasha received a message from a Sharīf in Yanbu‘ informing him that the previous Sultan of Mecca Sa‘d had deposed the new Sultan, Ahmed b. Ghalib, and assumed his title. ‘Ali Pasha gave the sanjaq beys and the military authority to hold a Jam‘iyah and discuss the next measure to be taken. It is rather interesting that the Bakriya and qadiasker were chosen amongst the members of the Jam‘iyah to inform the Pasha that they had decided to appoint Sa‘d officially as Sultan in order to avoid further bloodshed in the holy city.¹

On their own the Ashrāf were not more fortunate than the Sufi Sheikhs. The Ashrāf showed remarkable solidarity but still did not succeed in imposing their will over the system. A degree of success may have been achieved in 1099/1687, when ‘Abd al-Rahman kashif of an iqḷīm in Mansurah killed several Ashrāf in an ambush. The Ashrāf made a demonstration and brought the case before the qadiasker, who sentenced the kashif to death. The Janissaries refused to pass the sentence against their colleagues and eventually a compromise was reached.² But in 1111/1699 the Ashrāf were to suffer from their arrogant manner and excessive pride after a soldier of the Mutafarriqa killed a Sharīf during a quarrel in the market. The Ashrāf refused any compensation and insisted on killing the soldier. He was brutally murdered with daggers, dragged down to Rumeyla Square and his body burned. The ‘Azebān chiefs were angered by the way in which one of their soldiers was killed and exerted pressure on the Pasha, who condemned this act and ordered

¹SS, ff. 876-878

²ibid., ff. 768-770.

two coffee shops which belonged to the Ashrāf to be destroyed. The shops were looted and destroyed in retaliation.¹

In a more serious incident in, 1124/1712, a Sharīf had a quarrel with a Mamluk in the market place. The Sharīf was killed and the Ashrāf were outraged. Demonstrations broke out and the Ashrāf were summoned from all the aqalim and villages to meet in al-Hussein Mosque. They led a violent demonstration causing damage and unrest. The authorities were angered by the actions of the Ashrāf, and many of them were sent into exile. Those who remained replaced their green turbans with white ones in fear of being recognized and suffering harm or persecution. After the mediation of the Ulema, the Ashrāf were pardoned and the crisis was over.² The Ashrāf were not as organized as the Ulema of al-Azhar. They did not enjoy the respect and prestige of the minority Bakriya and Sadāt families, who were not mentioned in accounts of the crisis, nor does it appear that they made any effort to interfere, no doubt fearing to do so might damage their reputation and good relations with the elite.

As long as they were associated with the Ulema and qadiasker, the Ashrāf were recognised as an essential part of the religious establishment in Ottoman Egypt. The relations which the Bakriya and Sadāt developed with the ruling elite provided their political role with support and backing. However, as the Naqib al-Ashrāf failed to make use of this position of respect and did not gain the support of the local Ashrāf, his political and religious status was seriously undermined. Until this post was transferred to the Ashrāf of the Sadāt and Bakriya families, there was a period of decline and disorder for the main body of the Ashrāf who lived in Cairo and the aqalim of Egypt. The actions described above in which the Ashrāf were involved in the years 1099/1687, 1111/1699, and 1124/1712 showed that they lacked the organization and

¹ibid., f. 964.

²Al, pp. 256-7; TA, f. 151.

political skill that would enable them to play a prominent leading role as a distinctive class in society. The way they were suppressed and punished also shows that the elite did not take their religious characters seriously as guaranteeing them immunity.

V- AL-AZHAR

The period 1099-1143/1687-1730 witnessed major developments in the old established institution, al-Azhar. Founded in AD 970 by the Fatimids, al-Azhar developed a distinctive status in the days of the Ayyubids, Mamluks, and

Ottomans. In the eighteenth-century, however, al-Azhar took a new form and its Ulema started to participate in the political and economic affairs of the region. As much as the Citadel was the centre of politics, al-Azhar became the centre of religious authority, as it united under its college/mosque structure prominent Sufis, leading Ashrāf of the Bakriya family in particular, and the main body of theologians and Islamic jurists. Several foreign observers, such as Granger and de Maillet, were impressed by the variety of subjects taught the number of students and Ulema gathered in one single college, the remarkable independence the Ulema of the four madhhabs had in the administration of this establishment, and the number of people it could feed and house.¹ No other mosque, college, or religious foundation could compete with the status of al-Azhar in the period of study. There are many factors which account for the rise of al-Azhar as the prominent religious institution in Egypt.

In Egypt the Ottomans established a central religious authority based on the office of qadiasker. This Turkish-Hanafi institution was completely foreign to native Egyptians, who, despite two centuries of Ottoman dominance, failed to co-operate with it. Turkish judges always needed dragomen to translate the cases brought before them by the public. This language barrier was never bridged nor would it help much when the qadiasker based his judgments on the Hanafi madhhab while the majority of Egyptians were either Shafi'is or Malikis. A more serious set-back to the Turkish religious establishment was the decline of the judicial system caused by excessive bureaucracy and the low caliber of the qadis who came from Istanbul. In 1109/1697, for instance, one of the qadis was found guilty of forging legal documents. He was dismissed from office and then sent into exile,² as indeed were several other qadiaskers. In 1136/1723 the sanjaq beys and the military were shocked by a fatwa issued by qadiasker in return for an alleged bribe paid secretly to him. The reaction was to deprive the qadi of his fatwa-issuing authority and to permit three Azharite

¹I. Thihni, Misr fī kitābāt al-rahhāla wa-ʿl qanāsīl al-Faransiyyīn, (Cairo, 1992), p. 274.

²ZI, f. 34

Ulema to take over the responsibility.¹ It was such incidents as these which brought al-Azhar forward as an alternative local institution, more accessible to the public at large.

Official Recognition

Under the Ottomans, al-Azhar attained an exclusive position of pre-eminence. In comparison, other mosques, such as al-Mu'ayad and al-Hussein, and schools, including al-Salihiya, were rather insignificant. The main body of the Ulema and students belonged to al-Azhar and not on a national level only, for Ulema and students of jurisprudence, theology and Islamic sciences came from all over the Arabic-speaking provinces of the Ottoman Empire to study in al-Azhar, as also in fact did many Turkish students who came from Anatolia. Many Pashas who ruled Egypt contributed funds to al-Azhar as pious charitable deeds intended for the benefit of its residents and Ulema. In 1107/1695, for instance, Ismail Pasha entered al-Azhar, performed the prayers, and gave generous donations to the residents.² Several other Pashas also followed his example and were praised by compilers of contemporary chronicles.

The clearest sign of Istanbul's recognition of the new role played by al-Azhar was given in 1132/1719, when Muhammed Shanān asked the Pasha to obtain official approval from the Sultan for the maintenance of al-Azhar's building, which was showing signs of dilapidation through age. Two letters were sent to Istanbul, one signed by the Ulema and the Sheikh al-Azhar, while the other was signed by the Pasha.³ A few months later, the qadiasker and Sheikh al-Azhar were called to the Dīwān to hear the reading of a Noble Script in which the Sultan granted 50 kise for the maintenance plan. It took several

¹AI, pp. 380-382

²SS, f. 900.

³AI, pp. 303 and 310.

months before the renovation work was completed. When the 50 kise fell short of what was necessary for the completion of the work, Ismail b. Iwaz Bey donated a further 13 kise in appreciation of the Ulema's backing against Rajab Pasha.¹ Several other mosques were repainted and maintained, including al-Mu'ayad, Tulun, and al-Hussein, but the work carried out in al-Azhar captured the attention of chroniclers because of the amount paid and the superiority of al-Azhar, which the Porte seemed to have recognized.

The Increasing Political Role of al-Azhar

The status of al-Azhar was further enhanced by the tide of localization, and the emergence of a local elite to take control of the major offices of the province. Mamluk beys spent substantial amounts of money on al-Azhar to gain the support and sympathy of its Ulema. It is reported that Zain al-Faqar Bey (d.1142/1729) used to send donations of money and robes for the Ulema and the poor.² 'Ali al-Shadhili also narrated that during the civil war of 1123/1711 the two conflicting sides paid a great deal of money to the Ulema hoping to obtain from them a fatwa supporting their side in the conflict.³

During the civil war, Khalil Pasha and Ifranj Ahmad succeeded in winning the qadiasker and Naqib al-Ashrāf to their side, thus, in a sense, capturing the official religious authority on their side. But the role which the Ulema of al-Azhar played in issuing a fatwa in favour of the sanjaq beys turned the tables against the Pasha. The Ulema of al-Azhar showed their solidarity with the Mamluk-Azebān alliance. They collectively signed a petition which condemned Khalil Pasha and explained to the Porte the religious basis of their fatwa and support for the sanjaq beys' demands for official recognition of the Pasha's deposition and the appointment of Qansuh Bey as qa'immaqam.

¹TA, ff. 182, 185, 192.

²J. 1/212.

³SH, p. 352.

Al-Azhar developed to be a neutral and powerful institution to which many sections of society preferred to bring their complaints. The public often asked its Ulema to approach the authorities to help relieve them of injustices and cancel unpopular policies. The Ulema's mediation was rarely turned down. The elite found al-Azhar to be the most suitable institution that could be used to address the public and control them in critical circumstances. In shows of strength and solidarity, the Ulema of al-Azhar appeared to be much more successful and influential than the Sufi Sheiks and the Ashrāf. For instance, in 1100/1688 a group of Janissary soldiers arrested an Azharite Sheikh, by the name of Ahmad, in a quarrel in the market-place. The alim was insulted and handed over to the odabashi, who took him to court. The judge found him innocent and ordered his release, but when this news came to the students of al-Azhar, they locked its gates, closed neighbouring shops. When the ketkhuda of the Janissaries heard of the outcome, he feared a confrontation with the Ulema and immediately ordered the odabashi to be imprisoned in the Citadel. He also asked Sheikh Ahmad for pardon and expressed his deep regret at the incident.¹ In a similar incident, in 1130/1717, the Agha of the Janissaries ordered the son of an Azharite alim, Sheikh Mansour al-Manufi, to be beaten because he had failed to show respect when the Agha was passing by. On hearing the news, the Ulema halted all teaching in al-Azhar and went in protest to the Dīwān, complaining to the Pasha about the agha's actions. 'Ali Pasha acted by deposing the agha of the Janissaries and appointed another senior military officer in his place in order to avoid any further confrontation with the Ulema.²

It will be noticed from the above examples that the ruling elite avoided confrontations with the Ulema. It was not only respect for religious status that made the Pasha and the military fear the anger of the Ulema, but it was also fear of the public, as the Ulema carried such weight with the common people.

¹SS, f. 790.

²TA, f. 172.

The Emergence of the Office of Sheikh Al-Azhar

At the start of the twelfth century AH, the new religious office of Sheikh al-Azhar began to attract the attention of chroniclers. Several studies have been made of the emergence of the office of Sheikh al-Azhar at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of eighteenth-centuries, including those of Daniel Crecelius,¹ Michael Winter,² ‘Abd al-‘Athim,³ and A. Shannawi.⁴ This office was held by the head of the Azharite Ulema. It has been frequently translated as ‘the Rector of al-Azhar’. It emerged in obscure circumstances at the end of the seventeenth century and it has been argued that Muhammed ‘Abdullah al-Khurashi, who died in 1101/1689, had the honour of being the first alim to bear this title.⁵ It has also been generally accepted that al-Azhar was Shafi‘i-Maliki dominated. The first Hanafi Sheikh al-Azhar took office in 1870, long after Ottoman-Mamluk power in Egypt had been broken.⁶ The first five Shuyūkh al-Azhar were all Malikis, they were, successively: (1) Muhammed al-Khurashi (d.1101/1689); (2) Muhammed al-Nashrati (d.1120/1709); (3) ‘Abd al-Baqi al-Qalini (d. ?); (4) Muhammed Shanan (d.1133/1720); and (5) Ibrahim al-Fayyumi (d.1137/1724).

The next Sheikh al-Azhar, ‘Abdullah al-Shubrawi (d.1171/1757), was a Shafi‘i. From his term onwards, the Shafi‘is acquired a monopoly over the post. There were later incidents of conflicts between the Ulema of these three major

¹D. Crecelius, ‘The Emergence of Sheikh Al Azhar’, in Colloque International sur l’Histoire du Caire (1972), pp.109-23.

²M. Winter, Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, pp. 120-123.

³A. Abd al-‘Athim, Mashyakhat al-Azhar, (Cairo, 1978).

⁴A. M. Shannawi, Al-Azhar Jami‘an wa Jami‘ah, vol. 1,(Cairo, 1983), pp. 187-109.

⁵D. Crecelius, ‘The Emergence of...’, p. 109.

⁶ibid., p. 111.

madhhabs¹ over this office, of which the most remarkable was the renewed conflict between the Hanafis and Shafi'is in 1193/1779, which ended in the Shafi'is' victory over the Hanafis, who were supported by the government at the time.

Many of these details must, however, be revised in the light of newly found material. Al-Jabarti's statement on the succession of al-Nashrati as Sheikh al-Azhar following the death of al-Khurashi is simply borrowed from Ahmed Shalabi's Awdah al-isharāt,² which tends to be concise and rather imprecise. When talking about al-Khurashi³ and al-Nashrati⁴ in his biographies, al-Jabarti never refers to any of them as Sheikh al-Azhar or the latter being the successor of the former in any sense, which is an indication that al-Jabarti himself (on whom many later historians based their assumptions regarding the Sheikh al-Azhar) never had any other information than for what was provided by Shalabi.

The author of Awdah al-isharāt, on the other hand, although a contemporary historian who witnessed many events of the years 1099-1143/1687-1730, tends to be rather concise and his work only starts to be specific and detailed from the year 1106/1694. For the period 922/1516 to 1105/1693 only very little historical data is available. Chronicles such as Tarājim al-sawā'iq, Tuhfat al-ahbāb, and Zubdat al-ikhtisār provide more detailed accounts for the period starting from the middle of the seventeenth century/ end of the eleventh century AH.

¹The Hanbalis were a minority and could not compete for the post.

²A comparison between the two statements, in J.1/296 and AI, p.186, shows that they are almost identical.

³J. 1/113.

⁴Ibid. 1/124.

While it is accepted that the post of Sheikh al-Azhar emerged in obscure circumstances and insufficient material is available to be precise, there is evidence of an early Shafi'i dominance over this post before the Malikis imposed their monopoly over it. Specific reference is made to a prominent Shafi'i alim called Sultan al-Mazāhi (d.1075/1664), who was called by contemporary chroniclers as Sheikh al-Azhar.¹ On the other hand, al-Jabarti refers to Sheikh Shams al-Dīn al-Shirinbilāli (d.1107/1695) as Sheikh Mashaikh al-Azhar,² which may not necessarily mean that he held the office of Sheikh al-Azhar, but does indicate a Shafi'i dominance over the senior teaching offices at al-Azhar. In fact Shirinbilāli was a contemporary of another alim, Sheikh Muhammed b. Qasim al-Baqari (d.1111/1699 at the age of 93), who was the most prominent Shafi'i alim at al-Azhar. Al-Jabarti claims that the majority of Egyptian Ulema were either his students or the students of his students.³ During this period of Shafi'i dominance there is reference to another Shafi'i alim who was also described as Sheikh al-Azhar. His name was Ibrahim al-Barmāwi, who was a student of his predecessor Sheikh al-Azhar, Sultan al-Mazahi. Al-Barmawi died in 1106/1694, which may suggest that al-Nashrati did not take over the office immediately after the death of al-Kharashi in 1101/1689. Al-Barmawi was a prominent Shafi'i alim who composed many books in theology and jurisprudence and had a great number of Shafi'i students at al-Azhar.

In his book Mashyakhāt al-Azhar A. 'Abd al-'Athim argues that the second Sheikh al-Azhar after al-Khurashi was indeed al-Barmawi, who was missed by al-Jabarti. He makes references to a book composed by Ahmad Rafi' al-Tahtawi confirming that al-Barmawi was the second Sheikh al-Azhar and assumed office in 1101/1689, holding it until his death in 1106/1694. He was

¹ZI, f. 15; TA, f. 103; and AI, p. 161.

²J. 1/114.

³Ghalibu 'ulama'i misr immā tilmithuhū aw- tilmithu tilmithihī. (ibid., 1/116)

then followed by al-Nashrati, who remained until 1120/1708.¹ This may point to the conclusion that the period 1075-1106/1664-1694 witnessed more than one Shafī'i 'alim who assumed the title of Sheikh al-Azhar and dominated this institute before the Malikis took over. In the light of more contemporary sources, it can be argued that Sheikh al-Khurashi may not have had the honour of being the first alim to bear the title of Sheikh al-Azhar, since there is concrete evidence of the existence of the mashyakhah as early as 1075/1664.

It must be admitted, however, that the office of Sheikh al-Azhar became quite significant and worthy of the attention of contemporary chroniclers in 1120/1708, when Sheikh al-Nashrati died. The events which followed are narrated by Ahmad Shalabi,² 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti,³ and Yūsuf al-Malwāni,⁴ indicating that in assuming this office, the Sheikh al-Azhar had at his disposal large revenues as the supervisor (nazir) of several endowments, which caused him to become an increasingly important political as well as religious figure in Cairo.

On 28 Dhu al-Hijjah 1120/10 March 1708 Sheikh al-Nashrati died. The sanjaq beys, military Aghas, senior officials, and a great number of other people attended his funeral, which was one indication of the high status which Sheikh al-Azhar enjoyed at that time. Several days later there was a division amongst the Azharites over who should assume the office of Sheikh al-Azhar. There were two candidates for the post: Ahmad al-Nafrāwi and Abd al-Baqi al-Qalini. Both were Malikis. It is alleged that al-Nafrawi (d.1125/1713) had the backing of the qadiasker and the Pasha to succeed al-Nashrati, but the supporters of al-Qalini did not accept government interference and called the Sheikh (who was not in Cairo) to hurry to al-Azhar and assume the post. The

¹A. 'Abd al-'Athim, Mashyakhah al-Azhar, (Cairo, 1978), p. 61.

²AI, pp. 219-222.

³J. 1/295-296.

⁴TA, f. 130.

supporters of al-Nafrāwi were faster in appointing him in the place of his predecessor and enabled him to teach in al-Madrasa al-Aqbughāwiya, where al-Nashrati used to teach. This provoked the other party's outrage. They attacked al-Azhar and a bloody conflict took place, in which ten people were killed and dozens injured, while the valuables in the mosque were looted. The matter was brought to the attention of the Pasha, qadiasker and Naqib al-Ashrāf in the Dīwān. Both competing Sheikhs were present. It is reported that several members of the military were also involved. Hasan Pasha imposed a house arrest on al-Nafrāwi and appointed al-Qalini as Sheikh al-Azhar. On account of such bloody events, it seems that al-Qalini was not very popular among the Azharites. Biographical dictionaries and contemporary chronicles do not give any information on this unfortunate alim, not even the year in which he died.

Following this bloody incident the office of Sheikh al-Azhar became a focus of attention, apparently on account of two factors: government interference in the appointment of the Sheikh al-Azhar and the personality of the new Sheikh al-Azhar, Muhammed Shanān (d.1133/1721) who was an influential political figure and a wealthy landowner possessing estates, villages, palaces, Mamluks, and concubines.¹ Moreover, Shanān became much more involved in the political affairs of Egypt than any of his predecessors. He attended Jam'iyahs, and Dīwān meetings, and cooperated with Rajab Pasha, Muhammed b. Abu Shanab, and Jerkes Muhammed for the extradition of Ismail b. Iwaz and his faction within the Qasimi house.² Shanān also won fame for having been able to persuade the Porte to donate 50 purses for repairs at al-Azhar. In fact, Istanbul's consent to the proposed maintenance work was regarded as a formal recognition of the increasing role al-Azhar had begun to play in Egypt at the period of this study.³

¹J. 1/128-129.

²AI, p. 332.

³ibid., p. 324.

There was a policy change at al-Azhar following the death of Shanan in 1133/1720, as his successor, Ibrahim al-Fayyumi (d.1137/1724), distanced al-Azhar from Mamluk factionalism. Al-Fayyumi himself had no political ambitions; he was described as a man of other-worldly disposition who neglected the institution's administration. About four of the 50 purses which the Porte donated to repair al-Azhar went missing,¹ while much of the timber and other materials were stolen. Ismail b. Iwaz Bey donated 13 purses to continue the work, while al-Fayyumi defended himself by claiming that it was the responsibility of Yūsuf al-Jazzar, who had been appointed by the Pasha as supervisor of the scheme, to make sure the work was carried out efficiently.²

On the death of al-Fayyumi in 1137/1724, the Shafi'is took over dominance of the office of Sheikh al-Azhar. 'Abdullah al-Shubrawi (d.1171/1757) remained in this post for thirty-four years, during which he established firm relations with the ruling elite. He was a poet as well as a historian. Al-Jabarti narrates that during his term in office the Ulema became more respected and dignified, and that even students enjoyed very high regard and recognition by the common public and the elite.³ Much of the presidency of al-Shubrawi as Sheikh al-Azhar is beyond the scope of the present study, but it is useful to know that the prestige of al-Azhar continued to grow and that the office of Sheikh al-Azhar became superior to those of qadiasker and Naqib al-Ashrāf. In addition to Shafi'i dominance, Hanafis also began to assume a part in the affairs of this establishment at a later date.

Apart from Shanan and al-Shubrawi, the remaining Ulema who held the office of Sheikh al-Azhar did not play any political role during the period of study. Not only were they regarded as inferior to the qadiasker and Naqib al-Ashrāf, but also al-Azhar was more often represented by a group of Ulema

¹TA, f. 192.

²AI, p. 324.

³J. 1/295-197.

rather than by the Sheikh al-Azhar alone. This was because the Malikis were unable to represent the other madhhabs and religious fatwas needed a consensus in which Ulema of the four madhabs must be represented. It was perhaps the bloody conflict of 1120/1708 which brought the office of Sheikh al-Azhar to the fore. In fact D. Crecelius points out that this office was not recognized by the Porte, nor was it regarded as part of the religious leadership in Cairo.¹ It is not the office of Sheikh al-Azhar which could be regarded as significant and politically important during the period of study, but rather the Ulema's consensus and solidarity, in which al-Azhar provided the platform for a united stand. The significance of this period, however, is that it was those years which saw the creation of a post which later became of vital religious and political influence.

CHAPTER

¹ D. Crecelius, 'The Emergence of ...', p. 114.

6

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

I-INTRODUCTION

Egyptian society under Ottoman rule was divided into guilds, factions, and pressure groups. This was a natural result of the complicated political set-up and the absence of a strong single authority in governing the region. The Mamluks, military ojaqs and Ulema were associated with some of these groups and had interests which they wished to be looked after. On the other hand, the different groups within the Egyptian society were also seeking their own protection and some sort of representation in the political system.

The Arab Bedouin were the largest and most powerful local armed force in Egypt. They had an enormous impact on the transition of Egypt into growing

localism by allying with various Mamluk households and providing shelter for a number of rebellious beys. Above all, the Bedouin controlled a major part of Egypt's economy, which was based on agriculture. It was however very difficult to incorporate them into any long-enduring political alliance.

The merchants also enjoyed representation within the system since both the military and the Mamluk institution had many interests in the growing local market, which was monopolized by a group of wealthy families in Cairo. Our purpose in this chapter is to analyse the political role of these two major groups and the extent to which (a) they were able to influence the decision making process from outside the political system, and (b) they were themselves influenced by the system.

We will also turn our attention to the Kizlar Aghas in Istanbul and their relations with the authorities in Egypt. The material in this chapter is based on newly found manuscript sources and it is hoped that the issues raised will further contribute to research about the Kizlar Aghas. This study argues that the Kizlar Aghas were a strong group which accumulated enormous wealth and played a significant role in the political affairs of Egypt. But the growing tide of localism brought with it a remarkable decline in the role of the Kizlar Aghas in Egyptian politics.

The chapter concludes with two brief sections on the religious minorities and the participation of the public in the political affairs of Egypt. From the very little material available, the study attempts to fashion an argument, the conclusion of which is that the majority had little say in the system and were rather more influenced by the political system than themselves being influential.

II- THE ARAB BEDOUIN

The Arab Bedouin played an important role in the political affairs of Ottoman Egypt. Since Selim I's invasion of Egypt in 1517, the Bedouin's controversial participation placed them at the centre of chronicles' attention. Starting with Ibn Iyas and ending with al-Jabarti, historians of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and the eighteenth centuries used the term A'rāb exclusively to denote the Bedouin. This term has traditionally been used in Arabic texts since the days of Ibn Khaldun and even earlier in reference to the nomadic tribes of Arabia and North Africa, but there is a more important reason why historians of Ottoman Egypt used this term. Most of the tribes who settled in Egypt were no longer referred to as Bedouin. They subsisted on agriculture and had become a

settled population of Upper and Lower Egypt. They spoke Arabic and lived in a traditional and conservative Arabian atmosphere. Having planted and utilized the fertile land along both banks of the Nile, they gained an economic monopoly over whole districts and provinces. They had become a powerful force and controlled a large share of the financial resources of Egypt, whose economy up to this stage was largely based on agriculture. Unlike the peasant population of Sa'īd and the Delta, the Bedouin had their own armed forces and often solved their differences and imposed their control by organized raids and military might. Government forces could hardly challenge their power since they lived at too great a distance from the capital and were more familiar than the Cairene administration with the districts under their control. Moreover, their fighting tactics were still of nomadic character, and thus the authorities were reluctantly compelled to keep peace with them by paying them regular salaries and recognizing their role in the aqalim. We are therefore speaking of an Arab authority in the aqalim with remarkable economic and military power alongside that of the Ottoman-Mamluk authorities in Cairo. They enjoyed a semi-independent status in the districts under their control.

Not all the Bedouin tribes were the same in their structure and organization. The Moroccan tribe of Ibn Wafi were of a more nomadic nature than the tribes of Hawwara and Habayba, who established their centre of power in the towns of Farshut and Dijwa respectively. Before discussing the political role played by the Bedouin, it will be useful to discuss briefly the four major tribes who dominated the aqalim during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730.

a- Al-Maghariba ('Urban Ibn Wafi)

. Although they were settled and controlled farming districts centred north of Manfalut in a village called Titliya,¹ they started a campaign in

¹ Mainly the districts of Meer, Qusiyah and Sinbu. See A.L. Sayyid, Qabā'i'l al-'Arab bi-Misr, (Cairo, 1935) 119.

1099/1687 against the neighbouring areas reaching up to the Buhayra province. In that same year al-Malwāni described ‘Abdullah Ibn Wafi, the tribe’s chief, in the following years:

“A rebellious Moroccan who gathered around him rebellious men and started to raid villages in Buhayra with cannons and armaments, causing harm to its people. Many campaigns were launched against him by the military, but they failed to get hold of him.”¹ In 1101/1689 the kashif of Bahnassa and Fayyum, Ismail Bey, complained to the authorities in Cairo that his forces were outnumbered by the Maghariba of Ibn Wafi. Therefore, an armed force was sent under the command of Qaytas Bey. They fought a single combat and the Bedouin retreated.² The activities of Ibn Wafi continued to cause disruption to the iltizam system, in response to which several further expeditionary forces (tajridāt)³ were sent against him. They all claimed victory against the Bedouin of Ibn Wafi and yet the power of this tribe continued to grow. It may be noted that chronicles composed by local Cairene ajnād or Ulema show some ignorance concerning the Bedouin tribes as they never distinguish one tribe from another. In the Bahnassa, Fayyum and Manfalut districts, it was the Moroccan tribes of Al-Du‘afa and al-Nijma who raided towns and villages, but it is unclear whether or not they were under the united leadership of Ibn Wafi. Similarly, the chroniclers fail to inform us why these settled tribes should launch such a string of campaigns against the authorities that would last until 1111/1699. In 1106/1694 Ibn Wafi widened the scope of the campaigns by raiding the iltizam land in Qusiya. Ibn Wafi himself was assassinated by local Ashrāf at a time when the Moroccan chief wanted to make peace and marry the daughter of one of his previous victims.⁴ The power of Ibn Wafi’s tribe was not reduced by his death. In 1108-1109/1696-1697 they gained complete control

¹ TA, f. 110.

² SS, f. 808.

³ Common usage in contemporary sources is to refer to a campaign against the bedouin by the term, tajridah, while a campaign initiated by the central government is referred to by the term safrah.

⁴ SS, f. 886.

over Fayyum and made an alliance with the Nijma tribe.¹ An imperial edict ordered the Pasha to prepare a major force, put an end to the rebellious tribe of Ibn Wafi, and expel them from all the aqalim of Cairo.² In 1110/1698 a tajrīdah of a thousand troops under the leadership of Iwaz Bey left Cairo heading towards the Bedouin of Ibn Wafi. It took more than eight months for these forces to destroy the power of this tribe. Several other tajārīd, under the leadership of Ibrahim Abu Shanab and Abd al-Rahman Bey, were sent in support of Iwaz, against the Maghariba, who retreated from Buhayra, to Jīza, to Fayyum, Manfalut, and later dispersed. Over a thousand camels were seized, women and children were taken as slaves, while the power of the tribe was reduced to insignificance.³ The campaign lasted until the start of 1111/1699, after which no more mention of the tribe of Ibn Wafi was ever made by contemporary chroniclers.

b- Habayba (the tribe of Habib)

The chief of this tribe was Sheikh al-‘Arab Habib, a person of obscure origins according to al-Jabarti.⁴ Their power base was Dijwa in the Qaliubiya province on the eastern bank of the Nile. The first mention of Habib by contemporary chronicles is in 1098/1686, when one of his men slaughtered a government inspector of taxes in Bulaq and threw him into the Nile because he had repeatedly disturbed the ships of Habib. Dijwa itself was a waqf village under the administration of the Amīr al-Hajj. It was positioned at a strategic point along routes by land and river to Bulaq and Habib used it as a centre from which to raid ships and caravans. He was backed by a number of sanjaq beys

¹ ibid., f. 926.

² ZI, f. 38.

³ ibid., ff. 38-40.

⁴ J. 1/388

because he allegedly sent to them regular gifts of rice, sheep, honey, cheese, camels, and horses as bribes. This, according to Shalabi was the most important reason why the men of Habib were never harmed.¹

The career of Habib effectively started in 1125/1713, when he raided the villages and destroyed the crops and cattle of the Qasimi beys in collaboration with the Faqari chief, Qaytas Bey. A major campaign was prepared by Ismail Bey against the Habayba. The town of Dijwa was almost wiped out while the whole tribe fled to Gaza in 1127/1715, where they settled temporarily. Following the death of Habib, his son Salim became the tribe's leader. By 1134/1721 Salim had restored the previous status of his tribe. Ismail gave him permission to return in Dijwa. This time they offered protection to caravans and ships going in and out of Bulaq in return for taxes. By 1138/1725 the power of the Habayba had greatly increased. They were unchallenged by any neighbouring tribe and enjoyed official recognition by the authorities. In 1142/1729 the tribe of Salim b. Habib assisted government forces in their campaign against Muhammed Jerkes. Salim died in 1151/1738 and was succeeded by his brother Suwailim. Their tribe continued to grow in status until it became one of the richest and most important in Egypt. Suwailim led a typically aristocratic life. He enjoyed wealth and prestige, built palaces, and turned Dijwa into a flourishing town. He died in 1183 /1771.²

c-Hawwara

The centre of this tribe was Farshut in the province of Qina, from which they controlled the west. It was the largest in size and power amongst all other tribes. The Hawwara were the most settled of the tribes and had the massive farm lands of Jirja under their control. They had economic power and their own armed forces. The tribe of Hawwara were particularly strengthened after the

¹ AI, p.180.

² J. 1/388-396.

collapse of the Maghariba tribe of Ibn Wafi in 1111/1699. From 1111/1699 to 1113/1701 the tribe of Hawwara suffered on account of ‘Abd al-Rahman, the Bey of Jirja, who strengthened their rival tribe of Hasan al-Ikhmimi. But they arranged for his deposition and assassination in Cairo since they had very powerful representatives and Wakīls in the Egyptian capital.¹ During the civil war of 1123/1711 the Hawwara tribe played a significant role in the fighting in Cairo under the leadership of Muhammed al-Kabir. They were however defeated and forced to retreat to Jirja. From then on this tribe gained a reputation for providing refuge to unfortunate Mamluk beys who had lost out the inter-household struggles in Cairo. Several incidents are mentioned by contemporary sources connected with Hawwara’s refusal to co-operate with the authorities, their demands for certain beys to be appointed to the post of Jirja,² and their refusal to pay taxes, at one time claiming to be members of the Janissary and ‘Azebān regiments³ and another time arguing that the land they farmed was their own and must therefore not be taxed because they had irrigated and reclaimed it from the desert.⁴ In 1142/1729 Hawwara supported Suleiman Bey against the authorities in Cairo. After discovering a plan to assassinate him, he rebelled against the government and led the Hawwara in an alliance with Jerkes Muhammed. Together they inflicted heavy losses on several tajrīdas sent against them,⁵ but finally the alliance broke and Jerkes died. Hawwara were not affected much by this defeat. Under the command of Sheikh al-‘Arab Humam they became a formidable power and had a major influence in the political and economic affairs of Egypt.

d-The Tribe of Hasan al-Ikhmīmi

¹ AI, p. 191.

² SS, f. 908.

³ ZI, f. 39.

⁴ SS, f. 846.

⁵ J. 1/389.

The rival tribe of the Hawwara in Upper Egypt were led by Hasan al-Ikhmimi, who was a Janissary ally. His forces assisted ‘Abd al-Rahman Bey in his campaign against the Hawwara that lasted from 1111/1699 until 1113/1701.¹ Hasan was one of the major Multazims. He controlled Tanta, Shandwiel, Tukh, and Shanbūr, while his power base was Ikhmīm itself. He was in constant conflict with Hawwara in Upper Egypt. In 1123/1711 al-Ikhmīmi assisted ‘Azebān Mamluk forces against the main body of the Janissaries and the tribe of Hawwara lead by Muhammed al-Kabir. Although their town Ikhmīm, was destroyed by the Hawwara, they were able to take their revenge and inflict heavy losses on the Hawwara as they retreated. There is not much reference to this tribe after the civil war. In 1127/1715 they were forced to escape from an attack of the Hawwara. Much later in 1144/1731 they made a counter-attack against their rivals but did not have much success. By 1169/1755 they were reduced to insignificance, while their land was fully usurped by Sheikh al-‘Arab Humam al-Hawwari.²

The administrative Role

The Ottoman authorities made several attempts to incorporate the Arab Bedouin into the administrative system of Egypt. The Qanunname of Ibrahim Pasha reaffirmed the Bedouin’s role in the aqalim. In clauses 15 to 19, under the heading ‘Ahvali Meşayih Urban’,³ it gave them the same status and responsibilities as kashifs. Bedouin chiefs were required to collect taxes in cash and in grain from the aqalim under their control. They were also responsible for law and order, public works, irrigation, and the maintenance of dams and canals. Bedouin chiefs were also instructed not to be accompanied by a large force of men while carrying out the inspection, in order not to burden the peasants or frighten them. The Bedouin were warned not to provide refuge to

¹ Shadhili, p. 358

² Mısır Kanunnamesi, pp.37-41.

³ L. ‘Abd al-Latīf, al-Sa‘ūd fī ‘ahd shaikh al-‘Arab Humam, (Cairo, 1987) 50-59.

rebels against the state and always to hand over those they found to the Pasha or relevant kashifs.

Bedouin chiefs supervised the lending of seeds from government granaries to the peasants. They reported unusual climatic events, such as hailstorms, and their effects on the harvest. They were also responsible for keeping record of income and expenditure which were subject to inspection by local and central Ottoman authorities.¹ During the period of study, loyal tribes fulfilled several vital functions. They were responsible for the security of the areas for which the state paid them subsidies, and they were particularly useful along the pilgrimage route, which they had to inspect and to warn against robbers. They also provided transportation to the pilgrims' caravans and carried the yearly supply of grain to the holy cities in Hijaz. On his way to Mecca via the Egyptian Hajj route al-Nabulsi was supplied with personal guards who guided the party to their destination and ensured their safe journey. These were merely Arab Bedouin supplied to al-Nabulsi by the Amīr al-Hajj, Ibrahim Bey, who seems to have been in control of the Bedouin along the route. Al-Nabulsi was also supplied with a firmān ordering all tribes along the route to provide him with assistance and protection on the way.² There is frequent reference to several tribes in charge of the security of the certain land and sea routes. We find, for example, reference to the tribe of Bahja, who protected the route from Alexandria to Rashid during the years 1132-1135/1719-1722, and the tribe of al-Samahat, who were in charge of the Rashid-Dimiyat route.³ In 1136/1723 Jerkes appointed Salim b. Habib to take charge of the route from Bulaq to Dimiyat. He invested him with a robe of honour and told him to prevent all plundering of and attacks on the caravans on this route.⁴ Several Bedouin tribes fulfilled an important task in assisting the government forces in their

¹ M. Winter, Egyptian Society, p. 92.

² Al-Nabulsi, ff. 292-3.

³ A. Suleiman, 'Nuzum idarat al-'amn fi Misr al-'Uthmaniyyah', Ādāb Faculty Bulletin, (University of Cairo, 1992) 73-75.

⁴ AI, p. 395.

campaigns against other rebellious Bedouin. For instance, the Hawwara of Upper Egypt helped the forces of Iwaz Bey in looting the Maghariba tribe of Ibn Wafi.¹ The Muharib tribe also played an important part in the campaign.²

Confrontation with the System

The loyalty of the Bedouin was always an uncertain matter. Tribal chiefs shifted their alliances frequently. They were adept at playing off opponents in the Mamluk household rivalries and benefited from both the Qasimiya and Faqariya when each household controlled the administration of the province. The Arab Bedouin were never regarded as a part of the system despite the numerous attempts to incorporate them into the administration of the provinces. The tribes of Habib, Ikhmīm, and Hawwara are at one stage mentioned by contemporary chronicles as being on the side of the government and at another stage as rebels against the state. In many cases the damage which the Arab Bedouin inflicted on the administrative system of Ottoman Egypt was much greater than any service they provided.

During the period 1098-1111/1686-1699, the power of the Bedouin increased rapidly, and in many cases they outnumbered the forces sent by the government. Amongst the factors which may have caused the various rebellions by the Bedouin tribes during the period of study is the massive migration of Bedouin into Egypt from the west. Abu Salim al-‘Ayyashi, a well-known North African traveler who visited Egypt in the middle of the seventeenth century, attributed the influx of the Bedouin from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica to the oppressive rule there and to economic need. The most important North African tribes -the Hanadi, the Bahja, and the Afrad- settled in the Buhayra province.³ These tribes were engaged in raids and plundering of

¹ TA, f. 121.

² ZI, ff. 39-40.

³ M. Winter, Egyptian Society, p.103.

villages, they looted crops and cattle, and imposed certain taxes on the peasants in order to survive. Moreover, they made alliances with more settled tribes who needed manpower to overcome rivals, as in the case of the Maghariba of Ibn Wafi, who allied themselves with the Du'afa and Nijma tribes against the Hawwara but were defeated by joint government-Hawwara forces. On the other hand, there was another influx of Bedouin tribes from the east. Contemporary sources speak of a major battle on the outskirts of Cairo between forces of the seven regiments and the sanjaq beys under the leadership of Ibrahim Abu Shanab on the one side, and a great number of Bedouin on the other. This was a serious threat to the whole provincial authority since the battle was for Cairo itself. Sources speak of an alliance of over twenty tribes who came from Medina, Hijaz, Tā'if and even from Gaza. These tribes were forced to migrate because of drought and famine. It is reported that over one thousand Bedouin were killed and around five hundred taken captive, while hundreds of camels and horses were taken as a booty.¹ It took more than a decade to overcome the threat posed by the Bedouin influx into the region. It exhausted the treasury of Egypt and severely affected the iltizam system.

The Arab Bedouin had several villages and aqalim under their control. They constantly refused to pay taxes, making various excuses. In 1098/1686 the provincial authorities complained to the Porte about the Bedouin as they were delaying the payment of government taxes, which in turn caused a reduction in the khazna.² When Iwaz Bey went on an inspection mission to register the land to be taxed, he was stopped by the Bedouin of Hawwara, who prevented him from inspecting the farming land of Jirja. Their justification was that they had come to this land when it was merely a desert, they had started irrigation and plantation schemes, had built dams, and transformed the whole region into farms, and so the land should be exempted from taxation because it

¹ AI, pp. 182-3; TA, ff. 111,112 and 137.

² SS, f. 762.

had not been included in previous surveys.¹ More disturbing was the refusal of the Bedouin of Hawwara in 1109/1697 to pay any taxes because they belonged to the Janissary and ‘Azebān’ regiments and should consequently be exempted. ‘Abd al-Rahman Bey complained to the Pasha, who held a Dīwān in which both regiments agreed to expel the Bedouin who claimed to belong to them. The qadiasker wrote the minutes of this meeting, which were countersigned by the officers of the regiments, who promised not to offer the Bedouin any protection or exemption from the overdue taxes.²

Infiltration of Bedouin into the Military

Pashas who wanted to put an end to Bedouin corruption were faced by serious obstacles. The Bedouin of Hawwara had already infiltrated into the military and became members of the Janissary and ‘Azebān’ regiments, which dominated the economy of the region. As early as 1103/1691 Tarājim al-sawā’iq refers to Emir Ahmad as being “min tāi’fat Hawwara wa-huwa min tāi’fat Mustahfizān”.³ The Bedouin exerted some influence over the system not only through rebellions and raids, but also from within the system since they became actual members of the seven ojaqs. The power of Hawwara was clearly demonstrated in the case of Küçük Muhammed in 1106/1694. There was a low Nile in that year and, when the prices of wheat started to rise, Küçük Muhammed imposed a price control on grains. The Wakīls and Multazims of Hawwara in Cairo held a meeting and asked the Janissaries’ Bashodabashi to change his mind about pricing the wheat, but he insisted. Three days later he was assassinated. The only explanation for his death, according to contemporary sources was that the Wakīls of Hawwara were senior officials in Cairo (Ru’asā’ Misr ashāb al-hall wa-’l-rabt) and so they killed the

¹ ibid., f. 846.

² AI, p. 203; ZI, f. 37; SS, f. 946; TA, f. 119.

³ SS, f. 824.

Bashodabashi when he continued to insist on selling wheat at a low price.¹ In another show of power, when the Bedouin of Hawwara learned of the Pasha's intention to appoint the unpopular Mustafa Bey as the sanjaq bey of Jirja for the year 1106/1694, they sent a message to the Pasha threatening that they would not send any grain to Cairo if Mustafa were to be appointed to this office. The Pasha bowed to the pressure and appointed Muhammed Abaza instead.² Claiming to be Janissaries and 'Azebān, the Bedouin of Hawwara refused to pay any more taxes. It took long discussions and meetings to persuade both ojaqs not to accept the Bedouin into the corps. Three copies of their agreement to this were issued, but only a few days later the Janissaries refused to give up a Bedouin chief to be jailed for overdue debts which he had failed to pay. This provoked the anger of Hussein Pasha, who threatened to return to Istanbul in protest. Ultimately, the debts were paid, but only after long delays.³ But the Janissaries continued to protect the Bedouin and take them into the corps. Two years later there was a similar incident, in which two chiefs of Hawwara took refuge in the Janissary regiment whose chiefs had helped them to regain their lands which had been previously sold.⁴

It seems that the Pashas failed to tackle the problem of Bedouin infiltration into the military, and were thus unable to limit their power or exert full control on the aqalim in which they lived. Muhammed Pasha al-Nishanji failed to bring prices down or expel the Bedouin from the military. In 1137/1724 he decided that none of the Hawwara should be a member of the seven ojaqs. The military boycotted the Dīwān, while the Hawwara sent no more grain to Cairo in protest. Under enormous pressure the Pasha summoned the military aghas for negotiations. During this meeting Ibrahim Pasha's laws of 1082/1670 were revised and it was found that the Bedouin were indeed

¹ AI, pp. 189-191.

² SS, f. 908.

³ ZI, f. 37.

⁴ SS, f. 962.

recognized as members of the seven ojaqs, whereupon Muhammed Pasha gave up his plans.¹ There is also evidence of some cases of cooperation between the Mamluks as kashifs and Multazims and the Arab Bedouin. In 1137/1724 Jerkes became Sheikh al-Balad and started to cultivate friendly relations with the Hawwara. They exchanged gifts and Jerkes received from them “a palm tree with seventeen heads.” Eighty men engaged in the work of planting the huge tree in his garden.² In listing the injustices caused by Jerkes, Ahmad Shalabi narrated in the above-mentioned year that the prices of grains, and wheat in particular, had begun to rise day after day. The cause for this was an agreement between Jerkes and Hawwara not to send their grains to Cairo before he could sell his own stock.³

Bedouin-Mamluk Collaboration

The Bedouin benefited a great deal from the Mamluk household rivalries, in which they were able to use each side for their own interest. At first it was believed that the Mamluks were using the Bedouin. A Noble Script in 1106/1694 accused the Mamluk beys of using the ‘Urban tribes against each other.⁴ Eventually it became clear that in such collaboration the Bedouin tribes gained more than did the Mamluk households.

During the civil war of 1123/1711, the tribes of Hawwara and Habayba were both on the side of the Janissary-Pasha alliance. It was Ayyub Bey who summoned Muhammed al-Kabir and Hawwara to come from Jirja. Ayyub also

¹ ibid., f. 962.

² ibid., f. 415.

³ ibid., f. 429.

⁴ ibid., f. 882.

called Habib and his tribe to support the Pasha's forces. A group of Moroccan gunners was also incorporated into the Pasha's forces. On the Mamluk-'Azebān side, there were the major tribes of Buhayra: al-Sulaha and al-Hanādi. When the Pasha-Janissary alliance collapsed, Ayyub and Muhammed al-Kabir fled while Khalil Pasha surrendered. Hawwara retreated to the south, and were followed by Muhammed Qatamish and Hasan al-Ikhmīmi. The unfortunate tribe suffered heavy losses. Their cattle, crops, and belongings were seized, hundreds were killed, and they were forced to retreat to Qina and Qous. The chiefs of Hawwara later asked Ibrahim Abu Shanab to intercede on their behalf. He managed to obtain for them a pardoning firmān, the campaign against them was halted, and they were allowed to return to their homeland in Jirja provided they paid taxes in cash and grain regularly to the authorities in Cairo.¹ Ibrahim Abu Shanab also helped the Habayba to return to Egypt following their expulsion by Ismail b. Iwaz. This won the Shanabi house enormous support from both tribes, but it was a support that was short-lived since Bedouin loyalty could never be guaranteed by either side.

Following the civil war, the Bedouin started to meddle in Mamluk rivalries more than ever before. At first, Qaytas Bey al-Faqari (d.1127/1715) cooperated with Salim b. Habib and the Maghariba to put an end to the Qasimi house. In a secret agreement between the Faqari chief and Salim, they arranged for a false tajrīda in which Qasimi beys were sent. Once they were outside Cairo, away from the main body of followers, Salim b. Habib was supposed to attack Ismail b. Iwaz, Ibrahim Abu Shanab, and Yūsuf al-Jazzar, but the Bedouin chief hesitated and the plot was discovered by the beys, who rushed back to Cairo.² It was, in fact, Qaytas who lost the conflict in 1127/1715, when he was assassinated by Abdi Pasha while his atba', Muhammed Qatamish and 'Uthmān Bey fled to Istanbul. From then onwards Salim b. Habib entered into a new alliance with Jerkes Muhammed against Ismail b. Iwaz. Salim was

¹ J. 1/83.

² ibid., 1/89-90.

instructed by Jerkes to raid and plunder villages of the Shawaribi chief. In 1133/1720 the Habayba were at the head of a force of two thousand who left Cairo intending to kill Ismail on his way back from the pilgrimage.¹ But Ismail managed to escape. With the secret backing of Jerkes, the Habayba escalated their raids against the villages of Ismail and his faction. They repeatedly attacked the pilgrimage caravan with the intention of damaging the reputation of Ismail, who was one of the most popular Umarā' al-Hajj during this period. When Ismail was assassinated in 1136/1723 Salim b. Habib was welcomed in Cairo and officially appointed to take charge of the vital Rashid-Bulaq route.

In the meantime a new Shanabi-Hawwara alliance was being formed. Jerkes maintained good relations with the Hawwara tribe in Jirja, whose chiefs were indebted to his master Ibrahim Abu Shanab for his backing and assistance until his death in 1130/1717. The Hawwara tribe were driven into an alliance with Jerkes when they became aware of the authorities' plans to put to death Suleiman Bey of Jirja and the chief of Hawwara, Yūsuf Humam. For ten months the joint forces of Jerkes, Suleiman, and the Hawwara defeated the forces of the government, who sent more than eleven tajrīdas against them. Gradually the rebellious forces weakened and their alliance was broken by the death of Jerkes in 1142/1729.

In reading the biographies of Salim and Suwailim b. Habib and also of Sheikh al-Arab Humam,² it can be noticed that while Jerkes, Ismail, Qaytas, and other Mamluk beys of the Faqariya and Qasimiya died in tragedies and their houses were brought to an end, the Bedouin chiefs survived and built their semi-independent states in Dijwa and Farshut. During the period 1123-1143/1711-1731, the tribes of Hawwara and Habayba established the basis of a powerful and a dominant force. They changed their career from one of outlaws living by raids and looting into one of officially recognized forces in charge of

¹ AI, p.307.

² J. 1/384-396.

the security of land and sea routes, and also as Multazims of equal status with kashifs and government-appointed officials. At first, the Arab Bedouin adopted the method of infiltrating the military and cooperating with the garrison chiefs to represent their interests in Cairo, but as the military declined, the two major tribes of Hawwara and the Habayba started to play off parties in the Mamluk household rivalries. Although the Bedouin chiefs assumed administrative offices and cooperated with the authorities in Cairo, the damage and corruption caused by their tribes was great indeed. The Pashas found it very difficult to bring these tribes under control because they were constantly able to win the backing and support of influential Mamluks and military chiefs. As the beylicate grew stronger in Cairo, the Arab Bedouin also enhanced their position and built their own semi-independent states in the provinces under their control. With the dominance of the Sheikh al-Balad in the capital of Egypt and the growing power of Sheikh al-‘Arab in its provinces, Ottoman control was weakened, causing great damage to the political system of Ottoman Egypt in the second half of the twelfth century AH.

III- THE MERCHANTS

At the start of the eighteenth-century, Egypt witnessed the emergence of a class of merchants who played a significant political and economic role. Very little material is provided in chronicles and manuscript sources on the emergence of this class. Serious study and research into the revival of Red Sea trade and its effects on politics in Egypt, as well as the emergence of capitalism, is still lacking. One of the very few studies in this field are Peter Gran's Islamic Roots of Capitalism, Egypt 1760-1890¹ and A.‘Abd al-Rahīm's Zuhūr al-ra’smaliyyah al-misriyyah taht al-hukm al-‘Uthmāni 1517-1798.² While the first starts thirty years after the period of this study, the second is too

¹Peter Gran, Islamic Roots of Capitalism, University of Texas Press, (Austin, 1993).

²A chapter in, Fusūl min tārīkh misr al-Iqtisadi wa’-l-Ijtima’i, (Cairo, 1990) 145-183.

general to concentrate on just one rather interesting aspect of Egypt's economic history.

Economic Revival

The flow of European capital based on the coffee trade, in addition to the concentration of Syrian, Yemeni, and North African merchants in Egypt, strengthened the tide of localism and provided a new source of income alongside the iltizam system. There was thus a growing independence tendency, which was enhanced by an economic revival. French interest in the Red Sea trade in the early eighteenth century expressed itself in two missions led by de Merveille (1708) and de la Lande (1711) who signed several agreements with Mocha. French presence in Egypt came earlier. In 1702, there were around fifty French merchants in Cairo, and probably a similar number in the ports of Alexandria and Rashid¹. The English showed a similar interest in Egypt. An English consul was appointed in Cairo and a deputy in Alexandria in 1697. The initial plans to link India to Great Britain via the Red Sea also began to develop at this time.² This had an impact on the local market in Egypt. Large companies were formed, shopping complexes and specialized markets (wakālāt), flourished selling different types of commodities, but especially coffee, sugar, rice, leather, textiles and rugs. Egypt became a major importer of Indian textiles and Yemeni coffee, and the sole exporter to European, Syrian, and Turkish markets, not to undermine its leading position as a producer of wheat, sugar and rice. Local merchants began to invest their money in farming, real estate, shop leases, bath-houses, stores, and wakālāt, in addition to establishing privately owned factories producing textiles, glass-ware, oil, sugar, and soap. The produce was either sold locally or exported. One of the major investments for merchants was in Mamluk pledges of iltizam villages at interest in return

¹ibid., pp. 131-2.

²ibid., pp. 133-5.

for cash which they needed to buy government offices and fund campaigns against rival households.

In his study Le Caire, A. Raymond argued that the international coffee trade, which replaced the spice trade by the late seventeenth century, had an impact on the local market in Cairo. There were sixty-two markets (wakālāt), and stores (khans) in the city centre which specialized in coffee.¹ As the local a‘yan grew in wealth and prestige, increased interest was shown in local trading activities and construction work. Between 1111/1699 and 1114/1702, six wakālāt were built by Mustafa Mirza and Yūsuf Sa‘id.² By 1136/1723 there were eighty-one bath-houses, forming a particularly large investment. Many of these bath-houses were actually built by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.³

The Porte adopted a policy of minimum interference in the trading activities in Egypt. As long as the provincial authorities in Cairo sent the annual levy and the specified amounts of grain to Istanbul and the holy cities in Hijaz, they were free to sell the surplus of agricultural production, and to import and export any commodities of any sort. However, during the break of hostilities, the Porte introduced certain trading restrictions, stipulating that armaments, gunpowder, and sometimes grains and coffee were not to be sold to certain European states. Coffee in particular was treated in a different way. It was not only Istanbul’s desire to bring economic pressure to bear on European states which caused the prohibition of the sale of this commodity, as it was also part of the central administration’s attempts to reorganize this trade in order to benefit from its revenues. This policy faced enormous opposition from the military and local merchants. There were several attempts to impose taxes on

¹A. Raymond, Le Caire, Arabic Edition, Dar al-Fajr, (Cairo, 1994) 225.

²ibid., p. 245.

³AI, p. 379.

coffee which caused violent reactions. In several years during the period of study, Noble Scripts repeatedly ordered the Pashas in Cairo to ban all sale of coffee to the Christian Europeans (referred to as *Nasārā* or *Ifrañj*), but the flow of this commodity to European markets never stopped. Shipments of coffee were either smuggled or sent conspicuously to Syrian ports, where they were re-exported to Europe. It is alleged that the military and sanjaq beys supervised these illegal activities in return for bribes paid by foreign consuls in the form of presents and even cash. In 1120/1708 Hasan Pasha received ten thousand paras in return for allowing a shipment of coffee to France, while in 1133/1720 Rajab Pasha gave his consent for a shipment of this commodity in return for thirteen thousand paras.¹ As a result of Istanbul's ban, there were no foreign merchants working officially in the coffee trade and thus most of the shipments and amounts paid were not documented. It is known however, that there was competition between the British, Dutch, and French in the Red Sea trade, particularly in coffee and textiles, and that local Egyptian markets flourished by the sale of these commodities.

Merchants and the Political Elite

Amongst the significant outcomes of the early eighteenth-century trade revival was the emergence of wealthy merchant families such as al-Rashidi, al-Mabrouqi, and the famous family of al-Sharayibi. Heads of these families participated in the political affairs of the region. Chroniclers' attention was directed towards Muhammed Dada al-Sharayybi, who died in 1137/1724. When he died he had one of the biggest funerals in the history of Ottoman Cairo. It was attended by all the Ulema, Bakriya, sanjaq beys and the ihdiyariya of the seven ojaqs. He left one thousand four hundred and eighty purses in cash. He also left seven wakālāt, two bath-houses, three ships, and thousands of

¹Z. al-Ghannām, al-Jaliyāt al-Ajnabiyyah, unpublished Ph.D thesis, 'Ain Shams University (Cairo, 1985).

paras-worth of pledges of villages by Mamluk beys.¹ During his lifetime, Muhammed Dada was a prominent figure. He purchased Mamluks and infiltrated them into the military. He was described to be a cunning and yet generous man, who never had an accountant (kātib), but rather did all his calculations by himself. He was, however, accused of spreading the concept of usury by lending money to state officials at interest.

One of the priorities of the central administration was to isolate the military from the merchants and the guilds. This policy aimed at weakening the Egyptian garrison on one side and at the same time exerting some control over trading activities by collecting taxes and using the flow of commodities to Europe to pressurize the Ottoman enemies. In 1121/1709 the Porte gave consent to a petition brought by a sanjaq beys, Ulema, and six ojaqs proposing certain limitations to the trading activities of the Janissaries and their monopoly over several commodities. Several days later the qadiasker gathered together the artisans and merchants, and informed them that a Noble Script prohibited them from joining the regiments. They all replied in protest “We are all ‘askeris and sons of ‘askeris.”² Following their refusal, the qadiasker feared a violent reaction and he simply refrained from proposing the idea once again. It was clear that the interests of the army and the merchants had converged, and that Istanbul’s attempts to separate both parties would reach nowhere. Merchants had not only become members of the military, but had also actively engaged in the political affairs of the region, using their ability to finance many schemes for leverage. Such connections to the governing system were the natural result of many factors, including the following.

(a) With the decline of the Devşirme system and rise of the alternative Mamluk system, it became accepted that a Mamluk would be freed by his

¹AI, p. 443.

²AI, p. 225; TA, f. 133.

master who would then find a guild or a merchant with whom this Mamluk could earn a living. The patron would also attach his Mamluks to one of the seven ojaqs. By the end of the seventeenth-century, a major part of the corps in the seven ojaqs were already members of the guilds or engaged in some sort of a trade. Al-Jabarti, for instance, referred to several military officers by the type of trade in which he or his master were engaged. A good example is Ahmad Jorbaji ‘Azebān (d.1120/1708), who was known as Qayyumaji because his master, Hasan Jorbaji, was a goldsmith.¹ There is also reference to Ibrahim Sabunji (d.1131/1718), who was a prominent ‘Azebān, called Sabunji because he married the daughter of a leading soap merchant.²

(b) Another factor was the competition between the Janissary and the ‘Azebān regiments to control the financial institutions in Cairo, recognizing that these were a major source of power. At the start of the twelfth century AH, this competition became very fierce. When in 1121/1709, the ‘Azebān managed to isolate their rival ojaq from the Mint, slaughter-house, and the coffee trade, the Janissary regiment was weakened. In 1123/1711 it became possible to launch a counter-offensive, as a result of which both ojaqs achieved for the first time a parity of power.³

(c) The illegal practice of imposing protection taxes (himayāt), which developed in this period, enabled the military to infiltrate further into the guilds and merchant activities. For merchants with small capital, the himayāt were a major burden. Traders had to pay a sum of money in return for an ojaq’s protection to their business against any attacks or other dangers. In 1103/1691 ‘Ali Pasha replaced the agha of the Janissaries because he had asked the owners of shops and markets to pay him specified amounts of money in return

¹J. 1/151.

²ibid., 1/171.

³Al, p. 225.

for his protection. The merchants complained to other chiefs of the Mustahfizān and Sipahi regiments, who informed the Pasha of the agha's abuses, so that he was consequently deposed.¹ But for merchants with large businesses, particularly coffee traders, the himayāt money was a small imposition in comparison to the taxes they had to pay to the state.²

(d) Another reason for the military's infiltration into the guilds was the startling reduction in the wages of the ojaqs as reflected in table no. 7, provided in Chapter 3. Ojaqlis still wished to improve their standard of living, and ambitious officers needed cash to pay bribes and purchase offices. Moreover, widespread corruption in the Ruzname system, and within the iltizam in some cases, caused further reduction in the salaries in cash and kind (murattabāt wa-ʿulūfāt). Many officers were reluctant to find a more stable source of income. The flourishing trade of eighteenth-century Egypt provided an attractive alternative for these officers. In 1105/1693 'Ali Pasha ordered that the 'Azebān and Janissary corps residing in the wakālāt of Cairo should evacuate them immediately. It was reported that eleven wakālāt were purged of military officers and one wakālah was completely shut down after their evacuation owing to its association with prostitution and illegal wine shops.³ But this did not put an end to the military's association with trade. Muhammed al-Nishanji Pasha had little success in 1137/1724 when he gave orders for the expulsion of merchants and Bedouin from the seven ojaqs. There was an outcry and a general meeting of the military. After extensive consultation, the Pasha gave

¹SS, f. 884.

²Owners of big businesses took refuge in the Janissary regiment. They either joined as ojaqlis or paid this himayāt in return for protection even from state taxes. Amongst the conditions in the 'Azebān petition of 1119/1707 which they wrote against the Janissaries, "Wa 'an lā yahtamī ahadun min al-aswaq li-wijaqin minhum." TA, f. 129.

³SS, f. 860.

up, admitting that merchants and Bedouin had been members of the ojaqs since the days of Ibrahim Pasha, who had recognized their status in 1082/1671.¹

Political Participation of the Merchants

The merchants were sometimes able to influence the decision-making and reverse the Pasha's firmāns. Being well established within the military and with available cash to fund their plans, it was rather difficult to contradict a consensus of the merchants. In 1108/1696 there was a real show of power when a Jewish Ruzname official returned from Istanbul with unpopular policies adopted by the Sultan. Most outrageous was a reduction in the currency and a new tax introduced on coffee. The author of Zubdat al-ikhtisār narrates that coffee merchants went to the ojaqs and offered a large sum of money if they managed to cancel these orders. Military Aghas and sanjaq beys expressed their opposition and blamed the Ruzname official, referred to by the sources as Yasif al-Yahūdi, for deceiving the Sultan. He was obviously an easy target because the Dhimmis did not enjoy any protection or political representation. The Pasha tried in vain to protect Yasif from the army. It is alleged that Ismail Bey Defterdar and Ibrahim Amīr al-Hajj, speaking on behalf of the military, told the Pasha either to cancel the coffee tax and surrender Yasif, or to step down. The Pasha issued a firmān giving assurances that no taxes would be introduced on coffee but insisting on protecting Yasif from the military. The unfortunate Ruznameji official was brutally murdered, his body was dragged down to Rumeyla square and then burnt to ashes, despite the Pasha's opposition.²

In some cases money was enough to solve problems. In 1101/1698 a group of Moroccan merchants were jailed because they clashed with the members of the Janissary regiment. Muhammed al-Sharaiyibi, who was of a

¹AI, p. 442.

²ZI, f. 34; SS, f. 920; TA, f. 118.

Moroccan origins, sympathized with the prisoners, and paid Ismail Bey Defterdar a sum of money in return for their release. The Defterdar went to the Pasha and arranged for their immediate release.¹ In 1114/1702 the merchants used another means of putting pressure on the government. On account of the spread of counterfeit coins, merchants suffered major losses. They closed their shops and to show their solidarity, demonstrated against the government's failure to act to resolve the economic crisis. A group of the merchants went to al-Azhar and asked the Ulema to interpose. The Ulema's intercession worked, with the result that a Jam'iyah was held in order to solve the crisis. The counterfeit coins were banned and prices of commodities were specified.

The merchants were not however immune against the system. Despite growing Mamluk dominance, the Mamluk beys did not have the Pasha's authority to spend from the Khazna when necessary. They depended more on the cash obtainable from merchants. Cash was not only needed for 'sweeteners' (hilwān) and bribes, but also for the preparation of military campaigns which were a big burden on the Mamluk households. In 1142/1729 Bakir Pasha refused to pay the costs of preparing a major tajrīda against Muhammed Jerkes. Thus, Zain al-Faqar and Muhammed Qatamish decided to depose the Pasha who voluntarily stepped down when he found it difficult to meet the Faqaris. The Faqaris in Cairo needed four hundred purses to prepare the campaign. Zain al-Faqar took the responsibility of providing the cash, and sent his sarrājin to the merchants, asking each one of them to lend the Faqari beys an amount of money depending on the size of their businesses. Some paid 3,500 kise, others 5,000. Those who at first refused to pay the money were in the end forced to do so, and so Zain al-Faqar had the full amount ready in only three days.²

¹AI, p. 205.

²ibid., p. 555.

The start of the eighteenth century witnessed the emergence of a wealthy merchant class which played an important role in the political affairs of Egypt. Through their connections with the military and sanjaq beys and with their financial abilities and control of the markets, these people were able to influence the decision-making and enjoy excellent representation in the Dīwān and Jam‘iyah councils. But in general the merchants played their role not as a part of the political establishment in Ottoman Egypt, but rather as a pressure group that could also be squeezed by an oppressive rule.

IV-THE KIZLAR AGHAS

The political role of Kizlar Agha or Agha Dār al-Sa‘āda (the chief black eunuch of the Ottoman Imperial Harem in Istanbul), in Egypt has hardly attracted the attention of any modern scholar of Ottoman Egypt. Lack of primary material partly explains why so many historians have been discouraged from investigating this office. The only relevant study available is Jane Hathaway’s article entitled, ‘The Role of the Kizlar Ağasi in 17th and 18th Century Ottoman Egypt’.¹ Unexploited chronicles and manuscript sources may uncover many of the hidden aspects of the role played by imperial black

¹Published in, Stuida Islamica, Ex fasciculo LXXV (Paris) 140-158.

eunuchs, but many questions remain far from being answered while the majority of archival sources remain missing or inaccessible. In the following section, an attempt is made to analyse the role played by the Aghas in the internal affairs of Egypt. The discussion covers three areas, viz.:

- a- The Aghas who were already exiled in Egypt during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730.
- b- The wakīls and masters of Kizlar Aghas who became an important part of the political set-up in eighteenth-century Ottoman Egypt.
- c- The direct interference by Kizlar Aghas in office in the affairs of Egypt, using their power and influence within the Ottoman court.

The Aghas in Egypt

There is a close connection between Egypt as a province of the Ottoman state and the office of Kizlar Agha. Eunuchs were presented to the Sultan by the Pasha and Mamluk beys and were selected for this purpose from slave caravans that arrived annually from Sennar and Darfur in sub-Saharan Africa.¹ To cement this Egyptian connection, the typical Kizlar Agha was exiled to Egypt on being removed from office. Hathaway argues that, in a hundred and fifty years, seventeen of thirty-eight Kizlar Aghas were banished to Egypt, where they received a stipend through the Keshide, a sort of corps of imperial appointees attached to the Ottoman governor's Dīwān.² The period 1099-1143/1687-1730 witnessed the reigns of four Ottoman Sultans (Suleiman II, 1099-1102/1687-1690; Ahmad II, 1102-1106/1690-1694; Mustafa II, 1106-1115/1694-1703; and Ahmed III, 1115-1143/1703-1730). This frequent succession of Sultans caused frequent changes in the Harem and thus further changes in the Aghas of the Harem. The majority of these Aghas were banished to Egypt, where they actually formed a class of their own and established a network with the Porte. Exiled Aghas in Cairo not only received

¹Gibb and Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, 1/1 p. 305.

²Hathaway, 'The Role of the Kizlar Ağasi...', p. 142.

salaries, but were also required to participate in certain administrative and economic functions fulfilled by the provincial authorities. Black Eunuchs were not seen as individuals but as a group of ex-service men who had excellent connections with the Porte and enjoyed a distinctive status in Egypt. They were particularly disliked by the military ojaqs and often viewed as a burden on the local treasury. For the Porte, exiled eunuchs were a big investment, owing to the riches the treasury gained upon the confiscation of Aghas' belongings, following their death, and sometimes during their lifetime.

The period 1099-1108/1687-1696 witnessed the peak of the Aghas' power in Egypt. In 1099/1687 Bakir Agha Aghāt al-Walida, chief of the Sultan's mother's Aghas, was granted the office of Nazir al-Keshide (a waqf founded by Hurrem Sultan, wife of Suleiman I, 1520-1566). He arrived in Egypt with an Imperial Edict in his favour ordering the transfer of this office from the Amīr al-Hajj to Bakir Agha, who consequently resided in Egypt.¹ Aghas' power was further enhanced by another Imperial Edict in 1100/1688, which ordered that the Aqalim of Boush, Ishmun, and Jaris be granted to the Kizlar Agha and 'Ali Agha, khazindar of the Sultan. Sanjaq beys and military chiefs protested against these orders, complaining that they had paid a high price for these districts. The protesters then warned Hasan Pasha, "The Aghas who made the requests should behave themselves while in Cairo or we will banish them to Ibrim."² In outrage the military chiefs forced Bakir Agha to resign his office as Nazir al-Keshide, which was given back to the Amīr al-Hajj.³

From another perspective the Kizlar Aghas in Cairo shared the burden of preparing campaigns against the Bedouin. In 1103/1691 'Ali Pasha sent 'Abdullah Bey on a tajrīda against the 'Urban in Buhayra. Sanjaq beys funded

¹SS, f. 772.

²ibid., ff. 782.

³ibid., f. 782.

part of the campaign and the Aghas were also required to pay towards it out of their own funds. It is reported that ‘Abbas Agha sent ten of his own Mamluks to fight in this campaign,¹ which is a clear indication that the Aghas had their own tabi’s and Mamluks. This proposition is further supported by an Imperial Edict in 1105/1693 which addressed the provincial administration as follows:

“The black eunuchs served the Sultans several years and came to Egypt. Then you burden them with costs of tajārīd and include their atba’ for these tajārīd. On account of their service to the Sultans, they should no longer be burdened with costs of tajārīd nor should their atba’ join these tajārīd or anything else.”²

The Military chiefs protested and accused the Aghas of complaining against them to the Sultan, but the Aghas defended themselves. ‘Ali Pasha kept quiet until the Noble Script was read in full, whereupon he left the Dīwān, while the Aghas ran away in fear of the military who were in a state of outrage. These orders were not taken seriously by the state or the military. In 1108/1696 another Noble Script appointed a certain ‘Ali Bey as commander of a safra, in connection with which the military had to pay the costs of preparing five hundred men. The Noble Script stated, “The black eunuchs should prepare five hundred to accompany ‘Ali Bey”. The Aghas did not prepare the five hundred and were deprived of their salaries for five months.³

The author of Tarājīm al-sawā’iq provides significant information about the Aghas and their belongings. The reader could obtain the impression that the Porte aimed at strengthening these eunuchs and exempting them from paying any local administrative costs because of the money and valuables the Aghas had to return to the khazna. The Imperial Harem eunuch thus served as an investment for the central administration, which adopted several other means of

¹ ibid., f. 830.

² ibid., f. 856

³ ibid., f. 920.

collecting as much as possible from Egypt. During the period 1099-1126/1687-1714 six Aghas lost their fortunes on the execution of orders from the Porte to confiscate all their belongings in Egypt, sell them by auction, and send the money raised to Istanbul. Following are some of the examples of the riches of Kizlar Aghas and great revenues gained by the Imperial Treasury when their belongings were confiscated.

- In 1099/1687 Yūsuf Kizlar Agha was banished to Egypt. A Noble Script ordered the confiscation and sale of his belongings. First, Yūsuf's wakīl Ahmad Agha, was called to give full information about the Kizlar Agha's belongings. His predecessor, Mustafa Agha, who was the previous wakīl, was also called for investigation. When all was registered, the aqālīm of Yūsuf Agha were sold by auction in the Dīwān. On the second day his kitchen-ware including dishes, bowls, and trays were all sold. His eighteen Mamluks were also sold. One was sold for nineteen thousand paras to Murad Javush Mustahfizān, another sold for eighteen thousand paras to Hussein Agha of the Mutafarriqa, and Ibrahim Agha 'Azebān bought four Mamluks for fifty thousand paras. It is interesting to note that Yūsuf Agha owned a vast number of villages and districts, which were sold at high prices. Amongst the belongings also were two wakālāt, a public fountain, a bath-house, and seven shops in Cairo. There were also five palaces and several other estates, but these were not sold because they were awqāf. The rest of his belongings were sold for 977 Purses (1 purse = 25,000 paras), including the cash which has been preserved by his wakīl.¹

- During the same year, 'Ali Agha Khazindar was also banished to Egypt. He too owned a large number of villages, which were all sold to the sanjaq beys and military chiefs. His belongings and estates were sold, leaving him only a

¹ibid., f. 758.

small house to stay in.¹ Details of the total amounts paid for his belongings are not available.

- In 1101/1689 an Imperial Edict confirmed that ex-Hareem Aghas who had been banished to Egypt should receive their salaries in full (from the revenues of the province) as long as they remained alive and that when they died all their salaries and belongings should go to the Imperial Treasury.²

- In 1106/1694 two ex-service chief black eunuchs residing in Cairo were jailed and their houses and belongings confiscated on orders from the Porte. Horses, Mamluks, concubines, furniture, palaces, and villages were all sold by auction. The total amount gained was estimated at 1,400 purses, which were sent to Istanbul.³

- In 1108/1696 Abbas Kizlar Agha died. This time, not only his horses, Mamluks, concubines, palaces, wakālāt, and furniture were sold, but also his awqāf estates were also offered for sale by auction and sold accordingly.⁴

- In 1126/1714 an unnamed Kizlar Agha was jailed in Anatolia. His wakīl in Cairo, Ahmad Agha, gave a full account of all his belongings, which were all sold and sent to the Imperial Treasury.⁵

The above examples indicate that the banished Aghas were excessively rich. They purchased their own Mamluks, but failed to create households because they were not given a chance by the Porte to continue their careers. Most of the Aghas were stripped of all their riches during their lifetime which

¹ibid., f. 764.

²ibid., f. 810.

³ibid., f. 888; AI, p.192.

⁴SS, f. 960; Z1, f. 35.

⁵TA, f. 155.

was indeed a severe limitation to the ex-service Aghas, who could have been one of the most influential groups in the political and economic affairs of Egypt.

Wakīls and Masters

While in office, Kizlar Aghas exercised their powers and influence in Egypt through their wakīl, who also looked after their masters' villages and represented their interests. Many influential Kizlar Aghas are associated in chronicles with their wakīl in Cairo. Taking into account the riches and influence of Aghas, their wakīls in Cairo played an important part in the political affairs of Egypt. Those wakīls were actual manumitted Mamluks of the Aghas. Two examples of influential wakīls, Mustafa Bey and Ahmed Agha, could well support this view:

(1) Mustafa Bey Kizlar was described by al-Jabarti as tabi' Yūsuf Agha Dār al-Sa'āda. He was raised to the office of sanjaq bey in 1094/1681, and was also appointed qa'immaqam in 1109/11697 and Defterdar in 1133/1720. During the civil war of 1123/1711, Mustafa was amongst a handful of beys who chose to be neutral and did not take part in the conflict. He maintained his sanjaq title during his lifetime and, unlike the majority of Mamluk beys, he died of old age.¹ Mustafa Bey was also the wakīl of Bashir Kizlar Agha. It was from the service of these two rather influential and powerful Aghas that Mustafa gained his status and prestige, being appointed to the highest offices in the Ottoman provincial administration and preserving his title of sanjaq beys although he became blind and too old to hold a new office or responsibility. It must be taken into account that in Mamluk-dominated Egypt during the period 1123-1143/1711-1730, it was rather difficult for any Mamluk bey to make such a

¹J. 1/178.

career without being a member of the Qasimi or Faqari households, unless they were backed by rich and influential external officials.

(2) Ahmad Agha. Very little is known about Ahmed Agha, but he maintained a good status and served for quite a long period as wakīl of more than one Kizlar Agha. In 1099/1687 his name appeared as the wakīl of Yūsuf Agha. Tarājim al-sawā'iq confirms that he was a member of the Jarakise regiment and enjoyed the regiment's protection.¹ In 1126/1714 his name appeared in Tuhfat al-ahbāb, this time as the wakīl of a Kizlar Agha who was jailed in Beyaz Hisar. Al-Malwāni recalls that Ahmed Agha was indeed the tabi' of Yūsuf Agha, which implies that he was not only his Wakīl but also his Mamluk.²

The relationship between Kizlar Aghas and their wakīls was that of masters and their Mamluks. Another example is mentioned briefly by Damurdashi in recording the events of 1107/1695. When 'Ali Agha died, his wakīl, who was in charge of the registers and accounts of 'Ali Agha, went to Istanbul. The Kizlar Agha appointed the wakīl to take charge of his master's house; "An yatawalla baita Sayydihi", a Noble Script ordered the provincial administration in Cairo to incorporate 'Ali Agha's wakīl into the Janissary regiment. He later became Mutafarriqa bashi.³

It can also be noticed that there were strong relations, and indeed solidarity, between the Aghas in Istanbul and Cairo. Al-Jabarti refers to a certain 'Abd al-Ghaffar, who became chief of the Mutafarriqa regiment because his father's Mamluk (who was a black eunuch) had become a senior official in Istanbul and had arranged for his master's son to hold this office in

¹SS, f. 752.

²TA, f. 155.

³D, p. 29

the Egyptian garrison.¹ It is reported that in 1142/1729 ‘Abdullah Pasha Köprülü was searching for ‘Abd al-Ghaffar Agha to honour him because he was known to the Grand Wazir’s Ketkhuda (who was himself a black eunuch previously owned by Abdi Pasha). This rather interesting network of eunuchs implies that they functioned as a group which played an important part in the beylicate (as in the case of Mustafa Bey) and the military (e.g., Ahmed Agha and ‘Ali Agha’s Khazindar). They also arranged for their colleagues to gain high offices in Egypt and protected the interests of their masters in their absence.

Kizlar Aghas in Office

Very little information is provided by manuscript sources concerning two important Aghas who served as Sultan’s Kizlar Aghas in Istanbul: Abbas and Yūsuf Kizlar Aghas. Both were banished to Egypt, and all their belongings were later confiscated and sold. There is, however, a good amount of material on Bashir Kizlar Agha (1129-1158/1717-1746) who has been described as the longest lived and the most powerful Kizlar Agha in Ottoman history. In 1125/1713, while holding the office of Hazindari-Shehriyari, (Palace Treasurer), he was removed to Cyprus with the deposed Kizlar Agha Uzun Suleiman (1116/1704-1125/1713). He was later appointed Shaikh al-Haram al-Nabawi and was recalled to the palace to become himself Kizlar Agha in 1129/1717.² Contemporary chronicles find particular importance in the appointment of Bashir Agha to the office of Kizlar Agha. His arrival in Cairo in 1129/1717 and his residence there for two months was carefully documented.³ This is not surprising since Bashir Agha had a particular interest in Egypt. Not only did he stay in Cairo for two months before leaving for Istanbul, but he also built public places such as a fountain and a school, as is

¹J. 1/214-6.

²J. Hathaway, ‘The Role of the Kizlar ...’, p.150.

³AI, pp. 289-90; TA, f. 169.

mentioned by Shalabi. Through his wakīl, Mustafa Bey Kizlar, he was well informed about the events in the Egyptian capital, but unlike other Kizlar Aghas he developed personal contacts with several Mamluk beys and participated in the Mamluk household struggles. Bashir Agha did not support one side against another, but accepted hilwān and gifts in return for intercession with the Sultan. It must be emphasized that there is no clear evidence supporting Bashir's sympathy or backing for the Faqaris against the Qasimis. His wakīl in Cairo, Mustafa Bey, maintained a neutral stance and was hardly involved in the factionalism which dominated Egyptian politics during the period of study.

In connection with the year 1134/1721, Shalabi narrates the story of Bashir's intercession for Ismail's pardon by the Sultan:

“In a moment of happiness and pleasure Bashir Kizlar reminded the Sultan of Ismail Bey's request for pardon and forgiveness. The Grand Wazir commented, ‘Your slave Ismail did not receive a notification of your pardon, so he could resume his service of the Sultan.’ The Sultan answered positively. Bashir Kizlar Agha kissed the ground before him and paid the one thousand purses which Ismail b. Iwaz sent in order to be granted forgiveness. A Noble Script was written and sent with a fur coat immediately to Egypt.”¹

Regarding another incident during the same year, Shalabi also reports that Jerkes sent his chief Sarraj, Muhammed al-Saifi to the Grand Wazir and to Bashir Kizlar Agha requesting their intercession with the Sultan that he might be granted forgiveness after having been declared an outlaw. Jerkes promised to pay four hundred kise but said that he was unable to pay this amount immediately and rather wanted it to be divided into four installments to be paid over the following four years. This caused the Kizlar Agha change his mind about Jerkes. He was ordered to pay the full amount immediately.² In 1136/1723 the name of Bashir Agha appears again, this time when he requested

¹AI, p. 344.

²ibid., p. 346.

the Sultan to exclude two Ketkhudas in the Egyptian garrison from an imperial campaign. The two officers were invited to stay in Istanbul and receive a salary as long as they stayed in the Ottoman capital.¹

Although Bashir Agha complained at one stage about Qasimi usurpation of his villages in Egypt, but he also helped ‘Abd al-Rahman Bey, who was a Qasimi sanjaq bey, against his rivals. Damurdashi narrates concerning 1138/1725 that ‘Abd al-Rahman Bey of Dalja fled to Istanbul in fear of Mohammed b. Abu Shanab’s plans to kill him while he was out of Cairo. The Shawaribi bey complained to the Grand Wazir and Kizlar Agha about Jerkes and his abuses. Bashir Agha sent a message to his wakīl to look after Dalja on behalf of ‘Abd al-Rahman Bey and managed to obtain a Noble Script which ordered that Dalja should remain in the possession of the Qasimi bey and should not be sold or transferred to anybody else. Bashir’s wakīl was Mustafa Bey, who had previously been the wakīl and tabi‘ of Yūsuf Kizlar Agha. Dalja was incorporated into the land which Mustafa Bey looked after on behalf of Bashir Agha.²

It can be noticed that Kizlar Aghas in office were able to form a network of Mamluks and black eunuchs who served their interests, but as soon as they were isolated from their power and riches, their households or network of Mamluks and Aghas collapsed, only to be replaced by another Kizlar Agha. This prevented the long endurance of any Agha-Mamluk household, since Kizlar Aghas were frequently removed and their possessions and estates were confiscated by the Imperial Treasury.

Despite the important political and economic role played by the Kizlar Agha, this office was heading towards a period of decline. Aghas in Egypt were not liked by the sanjaq beys and the military. The office of Kizlar Agha

¹ibid., p. 411.

²D, pp.156-7

remained foreign to Egypt. Kizlar Aghas operated through wakīls and Mamluks, and only worked for their own interests and well-being. Bashir Agha may have been the most powerful person to hold this office, but he was also the last significant and politically influential Agha. Not only did the provincial administration oppose the wealth and prestige of black eunuchs, but certain institutions within the Ottoman system in Istanbul also opposed their role. The confiscation of possessions and isolation of ex-service Aghas is good evidence of this.

V- RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

Chronicles and manuscript sources do not provide many details on the life and political influence of the religious minorities in Cairo during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730. Recent scholarship has depended on Sultans' edicts, archival sources and, more important, registers and memoranda preserved in the Coptic churches in Cairo. Travelers such as al-Nabulsi and al-Bakri made no reference to the religious minorities, and nor do the chronicles of Shalabi and Malwāni pay particular attention to Copts and Jews. There are, however, sporadic references to certain incidents which took place during the period of study that help to provide a general view of the economic, administrative, and political influence of the two groups. M. 'Afīfī's, al-Aqbāt fī Misr¹ is one of the pioneer works on the Copts in Ottoman Egypt. The main sources for his research were church registers and foreign travelers' accounts of the general life

¹Published in Cairo, in 1992.

of Christians and their churches. On the Jews, M. Winter was able to collect sufficient material from edicts and archival sources in Istanbul, in addition to several chronicles, which enabled him to provide a general outline on the life of Dhimmis in Ottoman Egypt, for which the material on the Jewish community is superior to that on the Copts.¹ This may be explained by the fact that the Jewish community in Ottoman Cairo achieved important status as sarrāfs and Ruzname officials. They were particularly wealthy, and were able to purchase Mamluks and cultivate good relations with the elite. The fact that Jewish and Christian subjects in the Ottoman state were allowed to hold important administrative and financial offices, such as those of tax collectors and chief accounts, indicates that, at this stage, the Ottoman central administration had not adopted a particular policy against the minorities in its provinces.

Known for their experience and honesty, Jewish money-changers (sarrāfs) held prominent offices in the service of Pashas and Mamluks, and also within the Ottoman Court. Although there existed no policy or a law to prevent Jews and Christians becoming involved in the political affairs of the state and its provinces, it was an accepted convention that people of religious minorities were not appointed to any significant office in the political system, mainly because of the practical reason that they did not enjoy the backing and support of the local or central institutions. There were certainly individual cases of good relations between certain government officials and members of the Jewish community in particular, but these did not exceed the personal level and did not develop into any kind of political alliance.

There was also a small community of foreign merchants and consuls, who were not regarded as part of the Coptic Christian community. They were rather seen as representatives of their own countries. The largest company of foreign merchants and state representatives were the French, who in 1123/1711

¹M. Winter, Egyptian Society, p.199-229.

in Cairo were counted as follows: twenty-three merchants, nine artisans, and two doctors, in addition to the consul. By the mid eighteenth-century, there were twenty-eight French merchants and artisans in Cairo, sixteen in Alexandria, and seven in Rashid, making a total of fifty-one.¹ This small minority of Europeans cannot be regarded in this study as members of the Christian Coptic society in Ottoman Egypt, as they clearly belonged to other Christian sects and were representatives of foreign states, rather being actual members of Egyptian society. The political role played by European consuls and merchants was limited to representing their states and looking after their own businesses. Their contacts were limited to the elite in the Egyptian capital and, in the more serious cases, directly to the central administration through their colleagues in Istanbul.

Religious minorities were always seen by contemporary chroniclers as inferior to Muslims. Court Sijills make several references to Christians and Jews bringing their cases before Muslim courts. There was a general hatred and hostility by the public against Jews and Christians when the differences involved a Muslim against either of the two groups. Some sources tend to use harsh language against Dhimmis and repeatedly associate them with cheating and widespread corruption within the Ruzname system. This does not necessarily mean that the religious minorities lived in an oppressive and hostile atmosphere; on the contrary, there was in general peace and harmony between Muslims and Dhimmis. The following discussion will attempt to show that Dhimmis formed recognized groups, very much like other groupings which were formed in a divided society. The Christian community (Ta'ifat al-Nasarah) lived in their own districts and practiced their own occupations like the other tawā'if and guilds in eighteenth-century Egypt. Dhimmis were subject to the influence of the political system rather than being influential themselves. There is very little evidence to indicate that either Jews or Christians were able

¹I. Thihni, Misir fī kitābāt al-rahhālah wa-l knāsīl al-Firansiyyin, (Cairo, 1992) 301-2.

to interfere in the decision-making process or to participate in the major political events of the region. For the sake of clarity, the following study will look into the events in which the Dhimmis were involved during the period of study and analyse the ways in which both Copts and Jews were more influenced than influential.

The Copts

Many estimates have been made of the number of Copts inhabiting Cairo. In 1673 Vansleb commented that there were ten to fifteen thousand Copts who paid the Jizyah¹ to Istanbul. By the end of the seventeenth century, de Maillet estimated the number at over thirty thousand. There was also another estimate, made by Boucher de la Richardiere, of twenty-four thousand (of half a million making up the population of Cairo).² They lived in seven Christian quarters over a combined area of 16.7 hectares. Five of them were on the western side of the city with the two main quarters touching al-Azbakiyya pond.³ The available material shows the Copts as a part of the society who shared common interests and disasters with the Muslim minority. In 1117/1705 there was a drought caused by a low Nile. Prices rose and commodities became rare in the markets. Muslims performed their prayers hoping for the distress to be relieved and the Coptic Pope also ordered the Christians to fast in solidarity with Muslims to avert the common disaster.⁴ Copts were also effective members of the artisan community. Names of Christians appear in court sijills as blacksmiths and architects. They were neighbours of Muslims in the wakālāt and recognized members of the guilds led by their Sheikh.⁵ The most important occupation in which the Christians of Cairo were engaged was that of

¹Poll tax imposed on non-Muslim subjects in the Ottoman Empire, also referred to as Jawali.

²‘Affi, pp.195-97.

³A. Raymond, Le Caire Sous les Ottomans, p.81

⁴‘Affi, p. 70.

⁵ibid., p. 153-178.

goldsmiths. Their financial experience in coins and minerals enabled them to hold official posts in the Mint, and also as accountants, and tax collectors. What prevented the Copts from achieving high status and certain political posts were the limitations imposed by the state against them, which placed the Dhimmis in an inferior position compared to Muslims. Christians, for instance, were not allowed to ride horses, but could only ride donkeys for their transport. In 1136/1723 a quarrel between an alim and a Dhimmi resulted in the issuing of a law which stated that all Dhimmis should have a bell around their necks when they entered bath-houses so that they could be recognized, and many Dhimmis thereafter refrained from visiting bath-houses to avoid this humiliation. The author of Awdah al-isharāt commented that most of the bathhouses' visitors were Dhimmis, and thus the law caused major loss to the bath-house owners, who paid eight thousand paras in return for the cancellation of this law. They were represented in their petition by the Shaykh al-Hammamīn.¹

In 1138/1725 Muhammed Pasha issued a firmān which stated that the Jews should wear a blue headgear (the local Christians wore special hats called qalāiq). They were not allowed to wear the types of clothes, shoes, and turbans that were the costume of Muslims. The firmān also gave permission for the public to seize all the clothes of Dhimmis if they were found to be different than the costume set.² Despite the strong words of the firmān, such regulations were never taken seriously by Muslims or Dhimmis. It is interesting to note that Christians and Jews are referred to in the firmān as tā'ifat al-Nasāra wa tā'ifat al-Yahūd, which indicates that they were regarded as two distinct groups within society. Such firmāns as the one just noted may not have had as their object the degrading of Dhimmis, but rather to make clear distinctions in society which were certainly part of the political set-up. There were many occasions on which other firmāns were issued regulating costume, behaviour,

¹AI, pp. 378-9.

²ibid., p. 469.

and restrictions imposed on several other tawā'if such as the Mamluks and the sarrājīn.

The Jewish Community

The Jews were a much smaller community than the Copts. They lived in Hārat al-Yahūd, which covered an area of six hectares in the city centre of Cairo, close to the goldsmiths' quarter (where precious metals were bought and sold and money was changed). The streets in this quarter were extremely narrow. Some, in fact, were not wide enough for a horse or a camel or for two people walking side by side to pass along. Many houses were well furnished although their outward appearance seemed to indicate the opposite, which was argued to be an attempt to deceive the authorities and to conceal the wealth of the Jewish population who held many important offices in the Ruzname.¹ A large sector of the Jewish community in Cairo worked as money-changers, bankers, tax collectors, and goldsmiths. Many were also involved in trade. Some were appointed as directors of customs at sea and river ports. They became well known within the Ruzname and had good relations with the Pasha, Defterdar, and Ruznameji. Damurdashi refers to Ya'qub Robin al-Yahūdi and Solomon al-Yahūdi Katib al-Khazna.² In another context, the Ruznameji is mentioned in the company of his scribes (kuttāb, sing. kātib) who were Muslims, Christians, and Jews, the most notable amongst Jewish officials was Yasif al-Yahūdi, the chief scribe of 'Ali Pasha (1102/1690-1107/1695) and later of Ismail Pasha (1107-1109/1695-1697), whose ketkhuda was Burhan al-Yahūdi.³ Yasif became a central figure in the Ruzname and served as a private consultant of Ismail Pasha. He is a clear example of a Dhimmi who rose in power and authority only to be regarded as exceeding his limits. In 1108/1696 he was summoned to Istanbul for consultation on ways to

¹M. Winter, Egyptian Society ..., p. 216.

²D, p. 21.

³ibid., p. 27.

increase the revenues of the Imperial Khazna from Egypt. On his way back, he was received by the Jewish community, who celebrated his arrival in an unusual way. It was later known that Yasif had brought with him an Imperial Edict which introduced taxes on coffee and ordered a reduction in the value of the currency. The laws were passed by Ismail Pasha, which caused violent protests and an outcry against the coffee merchants and military chiefs who were deeply involved in this trade. It was Yasif who was blamed for “deceiving” the Sultan. The protesters asked for the cancellation of these laws and demanded that the Pasha submit his chief Katib, who was also Multazim of the Mint, for persecution. When the Pasha refused to hand over Yasif al-Yahūdi the military broke into the Citadel’s prison, where he was being kept for his safety, brutally murdered him, and burnt his body in Rumeyla Square.¹ Had Yasif been protected by one of the powerful institutions within the political system, he might have survived and a petition been simply written to the Sultan asking for the cancellation of these orders, but since he was a Jew and did not enjoy the backing of the sanjaq beys, and ojaqs let alone the Ulema, he was thus blamed for these laws and suffered the worst consequences.

There were similar later incidents reflecting public hatred and hostility towards the Jews. In 1134/1721 a Jewish merchant was accused of killing his Muslim Mamluk, who was said to be a Jew. He was beheaded and a firmān was issued ordering that no Jews or Christians should have Muslim slaves in their service.² In 1140/1727 a qadi in the court of Alexandria was stoned by the public because he had found a Jewish man not guilty of killing a Muslim. The mob then killed the man, and looted his house and the wakālah in which he worked. They also attacked and looted other Jewish shops in the wakālah.³ The public showed more hostility to the Jews than to the Copts. One explanation is public envy of the wealth and prestige which the Jewish community

¹ZI, f. 33; AI, p. 200; SS, f. 920; D, p. 63.

²AI, p. 337-8.

³ibid., p. 530.

accumulated through their specialization in financial affairs. Another reason could simply be the Pashas' use of Jewish officials as scapegoats whenever a cheating scandal in the Ruzname came to light. In 1127/1715 Abdi Pasha ordered the execution of three Jewish Katibs in the Ruzname. Their Muslim chief, 'Ali Efendi, the Ruznameji, went into hiding because of the same scandal.¹ It may not have been a state policy to discriminate against the Jewish community, but the Jews who achieved high status in the administrative system had no backing and were therefore the easiest target within the provincial system of government.

The religious minorities were an essential part of Egyptian society in Ottoman Cairo. They entered into the guilds and the financial institutions, but failed to play a significant political role. The limited participation they did have proved to them that this could be too risky for them and so they became discouraged from trying to engage at any more powerful level in the political affairs of Egypt. Since they did not enjoy the backing and support of any dominant Ottoman, Mamluk, or religious institution, they failed to gain representation of their interests. Despite certain events in which the public showed hatred and hostility against the Dhimmis, they were still recognized as tawā'if within the community of Ottoman Cairo.

¹TA, f. 165.

VI- THE PUBLIC

It is rather ironic that the majority in Ottoman Egypt had the least representation and recognition in the political system. Biographies, chronicles, and history books are dedicated to a small minority of bureaucrats, Mamluk beys, military officers, and prominent Ulema. Very little information is provided by the sources about the re'aya (literally 'flock') or the 'āmmah (public). The society of Ottoman Egypt was divided into groups, or tawā'if, an expression that reflects the groupings which were formed as a natural outcome of a system which ignores the majority and subjects them to oppression and abuse.

Egyptian society was naturally divided into tawā'if, each led by a shaykh al-tā'ifah, who represented the interests of his group and spoke on their behalf. Together, members of each group defended themselves and helped each other in natural disasters and political crises. Some tawā'if were based on a certain trade, such as grain dealers, rice merchants, or oil sellers. Others were based on services such as donkey drivers, water carriers, builders, and painters. There were also tawā'if regarded as immoral people, such as prostitutes, beggars, pimps, and scavengers. High-status tawā'if were merchants, Mamluks

and the military. There were also religious tawā'if such as Sufi orders, Ulema, Jews, and Christians. Ethnic divisions were also represented in the tawā'if; there were Shuwām (Syrians), Rūm (Turks), Maghāribah (Moroccans), and Ifranj (Europeans). Sheikhs (chiefs) of traders in the wakālāt represented them in negotiations with the authorities. When 'Ali Agha was appointed as muhtasib, he summoned all the Sheikhs of the wakālāt and negotiated with them the prices of wheat, oil, soap, cheese, bread, sugar, honey and all other commodities. Each Sheikh was named by the commodity his tā'ifah sold, so that there was for example, the Shaykh al-Sukkariyah for sugar merchants and the Shaykh al-Tahhanīn for wheat sellers.¹ There is also reference to a Shaykh al-Shahhatīn, who was the chief of the beggars, who headed his tā'ifa in public marches and in certain events.² Cairo was also divided into quarters (hārāt), based on guilds, ethnic, religious, and other divisions of society, such as the aristocracy and the Ulema. All the hārāt had gates which were shut at night and a guard was appointed to prevent the access of intruders. Damurdashi at one stage makes reference to the Shaykh al-hārāh, who judged between the people of this district over their differences, and generally looked after them.³ Such divisions meant less interference by the authorities in the local affairs of each tā'ifa, since it was represented and looked after by its own Sheikh. It also made it very difficult for a member of a tā'ifa to develop a career other than in the specialty which was his own. Those fortunate members of an aristocratic and wealthy tawā'if maintained a high status, while those of degraded class remained so. In the long term society never developed or changed, on account of a class system that was so rigid and localized that every member had to belong to a group and develop the same mentality of his predecessors. In a period of almost three centuries under the Ottomans, Egyptian society underwent very little change. The majority remained a minority in the system with regard to representation and influence.

¹D, p. 66.

²ibid., p. 15.

³ibid., p.131.

An interesting example of the divisions within Egyptian society is recorded by al-Jabarti and Damurdashi:

In 1107/1695 Ismail Pasha celebrated the circumcision of his child. The celebration lasted 15 days, and no greater or lesser person missed it. The common people came to see the celebrations. Invitations were issued in the following order. On the first day the chief judge and the judges of the courts [were invited]. The public dancers performed in the Dīwān of al-Ghourī while the Mamluks of Ibrahim Bey attended in service and Kara Muhammed sat with them to welcome the visitors. The second day was designated for the learned scholars (Ulema), the teachers, and the students. The third day was for the Naqib al-Ashrāf and all the descendants of the Prophet. The fourth day was reserved for the heads of the major dervish orders (arbāb al-sajājīd) and the guilds (harāt). The fifth was for the sanjaq beys and Aghas; the sixth for the members of the Jawishiya and the Mutafarriqa corps. The seventh day was for the senior officers of the Mustahfizān corps and their Jorbajis. The eighth day was for the ‘Azebān corps, along with the senior officers and Jorbajis. The ninth day was for the Odabashis of the Janissaries. The tenth day was for the Odabashis of the ‘Azebān; the eleventh for the people of Khan al-Khalili and the jewelers market. The twelfth was for the merchants, the Rūmi braiders, hat makers, and saddle makers. The thirteenth was for the North African merchants (tujjār al-Maghāribah), the people of al-Ghowriya and Ibn Tulun districts. The fourteenth was for the blind students of al-Azhar Mosque and the beggars. A banquet was offered for the blind, and another for the poor, in the courtyard of the Dīwān. On the fifteenth day [of the celebrations], which overlapped Thursday and Friday, [the governor] circumcised his two sons and the 2,360 other sons of officials working in the Citadel. He gave each one a suit and a golden coin in his mouth.¹

¹J. 1/185-89; D, pp.32-33.

It is rather difficult to talk about the life of the peasants and the population of the aqalim. Very frequently villagers complained about government taxation, abuse, and mistreatment on one side, and on the other side, protested against the Bedouin raids, looting, rape, and corruption. A hint of the neglect accorded to them is provided by Ahmad Shalabi, who, in reference to the peasants in connection with the events of 1133/1720, commented, "The peasant has no brain to recognize with."¹ Such a comment shows how degraded peasants were generally deemed to be by the people of Cairo. No doubt, the lack of information or comments about the peasants in the aqalim is a reflection of their political insignificance. The peasants were never permitted to play any part in the political and administrative affairs of Egypt, neither were they able to achieve any representation in Cairo.

The public's participation in the political affairs of the region and their attempts to influence the decision-making process and policy implementation were conducted by way of violent demonstrations and public protests. The causes of such public uprisings were mainly economic. The period from 1099/1687 to 1143/1730 witnessed a series of droughts and famines, and political unrest further exacerbated the position. The economy of Egypt during this period suffered very much; hunger, rising prices, the spread of counterfeit coins, and the lack of essential commodities were frequent and common. The following are some examples of the re'aya's political achievements through demonstrations and mass protests:

- In 1103/1691 the people of Buhayra persuaded the Pasha to replace the qa'immaqam, who was the effective governor of the province because of his abuses and collaboration with the rebellious Bedouin. They came in protest to

¹AI, pp. 307.

Cairo with a petition from the qadi of Buhayra. Together with the Ulema, they voiced their concern and their demands were met.¹

- In 1107/1695 Egypt was hit by a great drought, famine, and hunger. The beggars ascended to the Dīwān and stoned its members, they shouting, ‘We are dying of hunger.’ It was this event which ignited a massive demonstration. Stores and shops were looted.² When ‘Ali Pasha failed to solve the crisis, he was replaced by Ismail Pasha, who made each sanjaq bey responsible for one or two hundred beggars until the crisis was over.

- In 1128/1715 the public demonstrated in protest against the devaluation of the currency. They forced al-Azhar to close its doors, Shop-owners were also forced to close their stores, and the Sheikh al-Azhar was taken against his will to the Dīwān to represent the crowds who were suffering from hunger and the rising prices of commodities because of the changes in the currency. The Pasha ordered a Jam‘iyah council to convene, which, when it did so, set fixed the prices on all commodities to prevent further rises.³

- In 1137/1723 the abuses of Jerkes and his lack of administrative skill as Sheikh al-Balad caused a public uprising. Shops were looted, the crowds clashed with the guard of Jerkes, while some climbed up minarets and shouted condemnation of Jerkes’s oppression and tyranny.⁴ A few days later, Jerkes held a Jam‘iyah in which he proposed a new reform plan to abolish illegal taxes, prevent military’s illegal protection taxes on traders, and introduce other economic measures to end the crisis.⁵

¹ZI, f.25.

²ZI, ff 29-30; SS, f. 890; TA, f. 116.

³AI, pp. 286-287.

⁴ibid., pp. 433-4.

⁵ibid., p.439.

There is evidence that the authorities sometimes feared to adopt unpopular policies, believing that they might cause public uprising and demonstrations. In effect, this meant that the public were of some account when an economic or administrative policy is to be adopted by the Dīwān or Jam‘iyah. A clear example of this is narrated by the author of Awdah al-isharāt. In 1135/1722 the Pasha proposed a reduction in the value of the currency. The sanjaq beys objected to this change on the ground that it would provoke public demonstrations and devastation of the city.¹ The Ulema were consulted and the Pasha was persuaded to give up his plans.

The public did not enjoy any representation within the political system of Ottoman Egypt. As subjects (or ‘flock’), they were only to be administered and governed by justice. When the government became oppressive and unjust, the public reacted violently and showed their ability to force their will and voice their concerns. Their motives were always economic. Divisions amongst the society of Ottoman Egypt into tawāi’f provided some sort of protection and care for ta’ifa members which was never provided by the authorities. However, it prevented development and positive change in a society which underwent very little change in almost three centuries of Ottoman rule.

¹ ibid., p. 370.

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The period 1099-1143/1687-1730 was an important one in the history of Egypt. Roots of change and transition into the modern era can be traced back to this period. Chronicles and manuscript sources show that the slow sequence of events transforming the political, economic, and administrative fields was ignited at the start of the twelfth century AH. This may explain why ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Jabarti and Ahmad al-Damurdashi started their histories with the initial years of the century. Similarly, al-Nāblusi, al-Khashshāb, al-Shādhili and the authors of Zubdat al-ikhtisār, Tarājim al-sawā‘iq and Tuhfat al-ahbāb embarked on writing the history of these years recognizing that historical events of important consequence were being made. There are three major factors which initiated the process of transition:

Istanbul’s policy was to strengthen local elements in the political system of Ottoman Egypt. The motives were clear; it was an attempt to prevent local governors from abusing their powers, to check the military’s expansion beyond their recognized limits, but, most importantly the Porte’s realization that the local elements were the most capable of preparing a full Khazna and additional payments as gifts and hilwān. Mamluk beys were permitted to hold their own

council meetings in the Jam'iyahs. They were given more power and authority through successive Imperial Edicts, which started to address them by name and title. The Pashas were instructed not to take actions without consulting sanjaq beys. More important, the Porte repeatedly accepted and recognized Mamluk modifications to the system, even their depositions of Pashas, and met their demands as long as the Sultan's suzerainty and the full annual levy were maintained. The local Ulema's participation in the political affairs of the region was also recognized, and their recommendations and demands were frequently accepted and met. The central administration took a series of steps to weaken its own elements within the system, to the extent that the military was neglected and lost a large part of its authority, responsibilities, and salaries, while many Pashas lost support and backing, which passed instead to the Mamluk beys.

The replacement of the two systems of the Emanet and the Devşirme, by the iltizam and Mamluk recruitment systems, further enhanced the process of localization. Military Aghas started to form their own households, while many recruits and senior officers were merely the Mamluks of prominent local sanjaq beys. In the process of transition, the Mamluks gained a monopoly over the aqalim and thus came to dominate the iltizam system. They became richer, more powerful, and much more capable of controlling the affairs of Egypt and fulfilling the orders of the Porte than the successive Pashas, whose role was sharply reduced. By the end of the seventeenth century both the Emanet and Devşirme had fallen into desuetude and instead, at the start of the eighteenth-century, the two supplanting institutions were functioning at full capacity under locally conducted administration and control.

Coffee brought prosperity and a trade boom to Egypt, which became a chief supplier of this commodity. However, the Porte failed to provide an efficient machinery to benefit from this flourishing trade, and proved unable to establish any form of control over shipments going to Europe via Egyptian

ports. Locally the revival of trade had an enormous impact; profits were made and the flow of capital sustained and further enhanced the position of a local class of sanjaq beys, Mamluk-dominated military ojaqs and wealthy families who laid the bases of capitalism in the Egyptian market. The general public meanwhile were still denied any form of benefit or welfare. This is why the coffee trade did not attract much attention in contemporary chronicles. Locally, it encouraged influential Mamluk beys to make it their goal to mass great fortunes, which could be accomplished without the need for foreign supervision. Externally, trade was at the root of a long-lasting rivalry between Britain and France over the region. It started by their appointing consuls and competing for the sale of coffee in European markets, but it ended in these European powers' general seizure of this strategic and vital region.

The outcome of these important factors was very significant. Political change brought with it economic and social development. The first signs of political shift in Egypt under Ottoman rule can be traced back to the period of study. The following are the most important developments of the period:

(1) The rise of local Sheikhdoms as an alternative to the political system established two centuries before by the Qanunname. The office of Sheikh al-Balad was introduced in the 1130s AH as a challenge to the status of the Ottoman Pasha for overall control and dominance over the political and economic affairs of Egypt. Ismail, Jerkes, and Zain al-Faqar were able to depose Rajab, Muhammed al-Nishanji and Bakir Pashas. For a short period these Mamluk beys assumed full authority, yet still the concept of government by Mamluk beys for a longer term had still not taken hold. Household rivalries prevented the Mamluk institution from gaining a firm grip on the political system of the region.

The office of Sheikh al-Azhar also came to the fore during this period. It may have existed some time before, but the office became a focus of attention

at the start of the twelfth century AH. As a religious figure, Sheikh al-Azhar may not have been able to challenge the status of the qadiasker, but, as a representative of the local Ulema's consensus, the Sheikh al-Azhar started to become an increasingly important figure in political affairs. The status of the qadiasker continued to decline, while that of the Sheikh al-Azhar rose dramatically. With 'Abdullah al-Shubrawi this office became the centre of religious authority in the region. Al-Azhar enjoyed both the backing of the local elite and recognition by the authorities in Istanbul.

There was a dramatic decline of the military, as its chiefs failed to dominate the political affairs of the region. The gap the military left was partly filled by Bedouin chiefs, such as Shuyukh al-'Arab, Habib, Salim, and Yūsuf b. Humam. Gradually, the Arab Bedouin became a formidable power and gained many benefits from their engagements in Mamluk household rivalries. The next generation of tribal Sheikhs, represented by Sheikh al-Arab Humam and Suwailim b. Habib, ruled over vast lands and controlled a major sector of the Egyptian economy.

The result was the dominance of the following three powerful local Shiekhdoms:

-Shaikh al-Balad, the prominent political figure in Cairo.

-Shaikh al-Azhar, the dominant religious figure and the representative of religious authority in the region.

-Shuyukh al-Arab, the tribal chiefs who effectively governed and controlled the aqalim of Egypt.

In many cases holders of these Shiekhdoms cooperated together against the Ottoman authorities and led the transition of Egypt into local control.

(2) The localization of the Ottoman garrison in Egypt. As the Mamluk system of recruitment became dominant, sanjaq beys infiltrated their tabi's and Chiraqs into the seven ojaqs. The result was the military's involvement in

factionalism and Mamluk household strife. The other factor which enhanced the military's localization process was the involvement of the ojaqs in merchant and artisan activities. Artisans and merchants repeatedly emphasized that they were “askaris and sons of ‘askaris”, which meant that the corps have become members of Egyptian society. The ojaqs of eighteenth-century Egypt contained Mamluks, Bedouin, artisans, and merchants, thus making it very difficult to call it an Ottoman garrison.

(3) The growing tide of localization in the political institutions of Ottoman Egypt, which paved the way for the emergence of ambitious local rulers, such as ‘Ali Bey al-Kabir and Muhammed ‘Ali Pasha, to secede from the Ottoman Empire. The first models of strong and independent-minded local rulers who could control the economy and administration of the region were Ismail b. Iwaz, Muhammed Jerkes, and Zain al-Faqar. They inherited enormous wealth from their predecessors and enjoyed religious and military backing during their career. Although some were declared outlaws and forced to flee, they were still able to change the Porte's policies by paying large bribes, and impose their will over the Pashas by careful use of their wealth and military might. Yet, the experiences of Ismail Jerkes and Zain al-Faqar were too early. The localization process was not fully completed and thus their powerful careers did not last more than four or five years in power.

The starting point for all these developments was the civil war of 1123/1711. For the first time in the history of Ottoman Egypt, a group of Mamluks, Egyptian Ulema, and a locally influenced sector of the military was able to challenge the Ottoman provincial legacy. The Pasha, qadiasker, Naqib al-Ashrāf and the Janissaries (the largest and most powerful regiment in the Ottoman garrison), who represented the Sultan's authority in Egypt, were forced to surrender to the locally dominated opposition. There were indeed two Faqari beys with the Pasha-Janissary alliance, but the main body of the Faqariya and the Qasimiya was supported by the majority of the local Ulema.

The Porte made a historic decision to recognize the changes made by the local Egyptian elite, thus initiating a period of Mamluk dominance within the political system of the province. The central administration may not, however, have had much choice at this critical stage as the Ottoman court was being increasingly decentralized. Ottoman losses on the European front and the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1111/1699 deprived the state from a major source of income, while the decline of gold supplies caused further deterioration and decline.

It can therefore be argued that the localization process during the period 1099-1143/1687-1730 was the first step in Egypt's transition into the modern era. It was not the calls of Napoleon for the local Egyptians to rise against Ottoman oppression, nor was it Muhammed Ali's secessionist policies that laid the bases of Egyptian nationalism, but rather it was the culmination of a long process of institutionalizing localism during the period of study that laid the foundation for the modern Egyptian state.

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