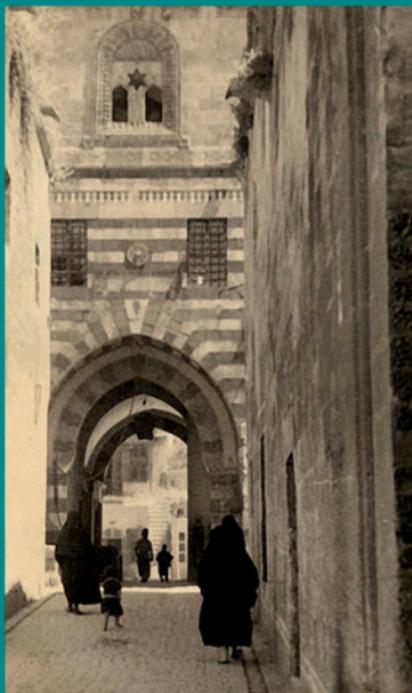


Forging Urban Solidarities

OTTOMAN ALEPPO 1640-1700



BY

CHARLES L. WILKINS

BRILL

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Forging Urban Solidarities

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To My Mother and Father

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AŞ	Atik Şikayet Defterleri, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul
DBKL	Büyük Kale Kalemî, Bab-i Defteri, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul
EV.HMH	Evkaf-ı Hümayun, Nezaret Öncesi Evkaf Defterleri, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul
EI ²	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , Second Edition
ES	Evamir-i Sultaniyye (Aleppo), National Archives, Damascus
IE	Ibnülemin Tasnifi, Prime Ministry Archives
İA	<i>İslam Ansiklopedisi</i>
IJMES	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
IJTS	<i>International Journal of Turkish Studies</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JFH	<i>Journal of Family History</i>
KK	Kamil Kepeci Tasnifi, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul
MD	Mühimme Defterleri, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul
MM	Maliyeden Müdevver Tasnifi, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul
OTAM	<i>Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi</i>
REMMM	<i>Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée</i>
SAH	Sijillat Awqaf Halab, Mudiriyyat al-Awqaf, Aleppo
SMS	Sijillat al-Mahakim al-Shar'iyya (Aleppo), National Archives, Damascus
TKS	Topkapı Saray Müzesi Arşivi, Topkapı Palace Museum Archives
TT	Tapu Tahrir Defterleri, Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul

Months Of The Islamic Hijrī Calendar, in Chronological Order

M	<i>Muḥarram</i>
S	<i>Şafar</i>
RA	<i>Rabī' al-Awwal</i>
R	<i>Rabī' al-Ākhir</i> or <i>al-Thānī</i>

JA	<i>Jumādā'l-Ūlā</i>
J	<i>Jumādā'l-Ākhira</i> or <i>al-Thāniya</i>
B	<i>Rajab</i>
Ş	<i>Sha'bān</i>
N	<i>Ramaḍān</i>
L	<i>Shawwāl</i>
<u>DA</u>	<i>Dhū'l-Qa'da</i>
<u>D</u>	<i>Dhū'l-Ḥijja</i>

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

One of the methodological problems facing the historian studying Ottoman Aleppo is deciding on a system of transliteration. Aleppo was in the seventeenth century—and remains today—a polyglot city. Although the majority of the inhabitants spoke Arabic, there were significant numbers of people speaking Armenian, Kurdish, and Turkish, as there are today.

The local Ottoman court records, on which this study draws heavily, contain both Arabic- and Ottoman Turkish-language documents. Most, but not all, legal cases were recorded in Arabic; some Turkish-speaking persons came to court requesting documents that could be read and used in other Turkish-speaking parts of the Empire. Also found in the court records is correspondence with the central government in Istanbul, which was usually recorded in Ottoman Turkish.

Given the multilingual nature of official discourse in Aleppo and the extensive use in this study of records from both local sources and the central government archives in Istanbul, I have employed a system of transliteration that keeps close to the textual and institutional origins of the subject matter. Arabic and Ottoman Turkish are transliterated generally according to the system used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Words that appear in an unabridged English dictionary language are spelled according to the dictionary and not transliterated (for example, bey rather than *bek*; and agha rather than *ağā*). Note the exceptions of shaykh, not sheikh; and ulama, not ulema.

For the sake of consistency, place names in the province of Aleppo, except for those now located in the Turkish Republic, are rendered in Arabic (taking city quarters as examples, I use Aqyul rather than Akyol, and Ughulbay rather than Oğulbey).

Legal and institutional usages and terms pertaining to Muslim religious practice are usually rendered in Arabic (for example, *waqf* and not *vakıf*). Words of Arabic origin but taking on a specific meaning in Ottoman administrative practice are rendered in Turkish transcription; hence *‘avārız* rather than *‘awāriḍ*; *muḳāṭa‘a* rather than *muḳāṭa‘a*; and *beyt* rather than *bayt*. Compound terms of mixed origin generally follow Ottoman Turkish transliteration, the best example of this being *kaşapbaşı*.

In general, proper names will be marked with diacriticals. For people who can be identified as Turkish or Anatolian in origin, their names are rendered in Turkish transcription. Generally, most high-ranking state officials and military officers will be rendered in Turkish transcription; otherwise, Arabic is used.

Common Era dates are used as a rule. When citing law court records, both Common Era and Muslim (Hijrī) dates are used, in which case dates in the Hijrī calendar will be given first and separated from their Common Era equivalent by a slash. For the sake of concision, Hijrī dates will be rendered using standard abbreviations.

INTRODUCTION

Aflas al-jundī, fattash al-dafātir al-‘itāq.

When a soldier runs out of money, he just looks thru his old account books.¹

Recorded in seventeenth-century Aleppo, the foregoing popular saying conveys something of the resentment directed against military cadres as they became tax collectors, creditors and merchants. Like most businessmen, enterprising soldiers would maintain account books of outstanding debts owed them, but the less scrupulous soldiers, so implies the popular saying, fabricated “old” account books and used them to demand more money from debtors. As Ottoman armies waged sustained campaigns along the empire’s borders, state authorities intensified tax collection, and soldiers not deployed on campaign intermingled with civilian society, most noticeably in cities. Extraordinary taxes that before the seventeenth century had been imposed only occasionally came to be collected annually or every few years. Institutions and properties that had enjoyed exemption from taxation, such as religious endowments (*waqf*) and royal estates, sustained new exactions designed to meet campaign expenses. Even local garrisons were targeted, part of their salaries redirected to war costs.

The growing numbers of kinds of taxes and their increasing frequency entailed the expansion of the administrative apparatus to assess and collect them. It is generally recognized that urban and rural elites, called the *a’yān* by the Ottomans, took on roles as administrators and financiers in this process, thereby strengthening their economic and political position. They would emerge as the foremost political counterbalance to central state power in the eighteenth century. Less understood are the long-term consequences of war on broader segments of Ottoman society. Urban institutions such as residential neighborhoods (sing. *maḥalla*, *ḥāra*), which functioned both as social networks and

¹ Yūsuf al-Qūshāqjī, ed., *al-Amthāl al-Sha’biyya al-Ḥalabiyya*, 2 Vols. (Aleppo: Maṭba’at al-Iḥsān, 1977), II: 459, #3573. Significantly, a variation of this popular saying simply replaces “soldier” with “merchant” (*tājir*.) Qūshāqjī found this proverb in a manuscript compilation of proverbs dating from 1666 and housed in the Maronite church in Aleppo.

as administrative units, and professional organizations such as guilds (*şinf*) and local military garrisons came under new pressures as the result of an accelerated process of taxation. In the process of mobilization, significant numbers of men were geographically relocated and thrown together in military units, creating communities of interest that challenged the constellation of social and political forces in many areas. Renegade military forces launched what came to be known as Jelali revolts, causing persistent disruption to the social and political order. The acquiescence of Ottoman state authorities in allowing many soldiers to settle among civilian populations set the stage for a complex interplay between garrisons and local populations that has yet to be fully explored.

This study surveys a range of social and institutional processes set in motion by war and wartime economic demands in the Syrian city of Aleppo from 1640 until 1700. After the Jelali rebellions around the turn of the century, the city continued to commit substantial human and material resources to campaigns being waged by the empire in wars with Venice (1644–69), Hungary (1658–62), Poland (1672–77) and the Hapsburg Empire (1683–99), as well as in smaller-scale conflicts with the Safavid Empire throughout the period.² Aleppo presents a good case for study of war-related social and institutional change in part because of its geographic position. Since Aleppo was not in a frontier zone where Ottoman armies undertook major campaigns, the city provides a suitable site for study of the indirect effects of war (intensified taxation, heightened military-civilian interaction and the like) isolated from the direct effects of battle. Aleppo was also a major administrative center and the strategic gateway for Ottoman armies entering the Arab provinces or advancing to the eastern frontier with the Safavids. Central state authorities expended considerable resources to ensure control over such a vital area. Thus the degree to which central state authorities maintained disciplined military forces in Aleppo suggests an upper limit on central control. Soldiers

² For a conventional political narrative of this period, see Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The History of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); chapters by V. J. Parry, "The Period of Murad IV, 1617," A. N. Kurat, "The Reign of Mehmed IV, 1648–1687," and A. N. Kurat and J. S. Bromley, "The Retreat of the Turks, 1683–1730," in M. A. Cook, *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 133–220; and Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 2 Vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), I: 169–228.

who felt the freedom of action to exploit tax responsibilities, enter into commerce, or directly flout central state directives in Aleppo would likely sense similar conditions in Damascus, Tripoli, Diyarbekir, and Baghdad and act accordingly.

An Overview of Historiography

Into the 1970s students of the Ottoman Empire tended to view the seventeenth century merely as a transitional period witnessing gradual change from the vigor of classical Ottoman age in the sixteenth century to the age of central imperial weakness and of provincial magnates in the eighteenth century.³ Such a teleology, however, renders the seventeenth century as lacking any internal periodization or historical contingency. Starting with Halil Inalcik's seminal article in 1980, which explains changes in that century as deriving largely from a state-driven process of fiscal and military decentralization, scholars have begun to investigate social and political developments of that time more fully.⁴ Several scholars have challenged the characterization of the Ottoman state as undergoing stagnation, if not decline. Kunt and Abou-El-Haj describe the short-term outcome of seventeenth-century devolution essentially as a broadening of the polity, a structural realignment within the Ottoman state and ruling class that reflected effective adaptations to political conditions, not a degeneration of the empire's overall power.⁵ Murphey and Darling contend that, contrary to common

³ Bernard Lewis, "Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire," *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958): 111–127; idem, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline," *Islamic Studies* 1 (1962): 82–87; Halil Inalcik, "The Ottoman Decline and its Effects Upon the Reaya," in Henrik Birnbaum and Speros Vyronis, Jr., eds., *Aspects of the Balkans: Continuity and Change* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), 338–354; idem, "The Heyday and Decline of the Ottoman Empire," in P. M. Holt, A. K. Lambton and Bernard Lewis, eds., *The Cambridge History of Islam*, 2 Vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), I: 342–353; and Kemal H. Karpat, "The Stages of Ottoman History, A Structural Comparative Approach," in K. H. Karpat, ed., *The Ottoman State and Its Place in World History* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 79–106.

⁴ "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980): 283–337.

⁵ Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Rifaat Ali Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Leiden: Netherlands Historische-Archaeologische Instituut te Istanbul, 1984); and idem, *Formation of the Modern State in the Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York, 1991).

assumptions, the central Ottoman state engaged in innovative bureaucratic and military reorganization, acting in some cases in parallel with other states in Europe.⁶ These and other scholars have also pointed out important contextual considerations and problematics in interpreting Ottoman Advice for Kings (*Naṣīḥatnâme*) literature, which has been so influential in shaping scholarly conceptions of the empire.⁷ By gathering new evidence and reconsidering the old, many historians have made significant contributions to the reconceptualization of the central Ottoman state and ruling elite in the post-classical period. It is not coincidental that some historians are openly challenging the conventional periodization of Ottoman history in general.⁸

At roughly the same time, historians dedicated studies to changes that took place in state-society relations and within localized elite groups themselves. In one of the more provocative examples of revisionism, Barkey argues that the state met the political challenge of civil unrest through a deliberate and highly successful strategy of bargaining, co-optation, and incorporation.⁹ Her main conclusions are that in the seventeenth-century Ottoman rulers enhanced their power and legitimacy by creating multiple sites of armed force and privilege, and that disorder was a better protector of state and class power than was regularized law and order. Barkey's broad comparative study, however, concentrates on those Ottoman social groups, primarily state

⁶ Rhoads Murphey, "Continuity and Discontinuity in Ottoman Administrative Theory and Practice during the Late Seventeenth Century," *Poetics Today* 14 (1993): 419–443; Linda Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), esp. 1–21; and idem, "Ottoman Fiscal Administration: Decline or Adaptation?" *The Journal of European Economic History* 26 (1997): 157–177.

⁷ Douglas Howard, "Genre and Myth in the Ottoman advice for kings literature," in Virginia Aksan and Dan Goffman, eds., *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 137–166; idem, "Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of 'Decline' of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Journal of Asian History* 22 (1988): 52–77; Mehmed Öz, *Osmanlı'da "Çözülme" ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları (XVI. Yüzyıldan XVIII. Yüzyıl Başlarına* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1997); and Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4 (1997–1998): 30–75.

⁸ Jane Hathaway, "Problems of Periodization in Ottoman History: The Fifteenth Through the Eighteenth Centuries," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 20, 2 (1996): 25–31; and Linda Darling, "Another Look at Periodization in Ottoman History," *Turkish Studies Association Journal* 26, 2 (Fall 2002): 9–28. See also Halil İnalcık, "Periods in Ottoman History," in idem, *Essays in Ottoman History* (Istanbul: Eren, 1998), 15–28.

⁹ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

officials and peasants, who were significant actors in the European context. Consequently, we learn little of the roles that Ottoman urban populations played in the negotiation of power. Ze'evi, in his study of Ottoman Jerusalem, argues that it was not the sixteenth but rather the seventeenth century that witnessed the full "Ottomanization" of the city, and he demonstrates how local social and political structures and practices were reoriented to the concerns of a composite imperial elite.¹⁰ Going a bit further, in a bold and innovative study, Canbakal traces the formation of a powerful urban notability in a seventeenth-century Anatolian town. She shows how this group became in effect a ruling class, having consolidated its power not only through well-established strategies of economic exploitation but also through monopolistic control of legal and representative processes. She captures the social fluidity of the period, tracing the poorly regulated expansion of privileged status groups, including soldiers and the *ashrāf* (sing. *sharīf*), those persons who claim descent from the Prophet Muhammad.¹¹

The works heretofore discussed shed much light on the dynamic relations of power between state and society, depicting a powerful central authority that nonetheless accommodated the interests of broader state elites and local populations. It is in this framework that we approach the question of how the process of warmaking, an activity initiated by the central government, reshaped relations between the state and local populations in terms of social, political, and institutional change. From a comparative point of view, arguably the most productive theory integrating warfare into the broader narrative of European political and social history is that of Charles Tilly. Contending that "wars make states" as much as "states make war," Tilly conceives of warmaking as an ongoing political process that transcends the "events" of wars themselves. In the context of European history, warmaking, through its orchestration of state coercive apparatuses and "private" financial capital, propelled the development and bureaucratic expansion of dynastic monarchies.¹² Students of the Ottoman Empire

¹⁰ Dror Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

¹¹ Hülya Canbakal, "Ayntab at the End of the Seventeenth Century: A Study of Notables and Urban Politics," Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1999; and idem, *Society and Politics in an Ottoman Town: 'Ayntab in the 17th Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

¹² Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of the National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ:

have found Tilly's conception attractive, not only because it questions the binary state-society formulations characteristic of much of Ottoman historiography but also because it sheds light on reasons for the noted capacity of Ottoman institutions and social groups to adapt to changing conditions.¹³

Likewise historians of early modern Europe have made substantial efforts to address the question of the interactions among warmaking, economic activity, and larger, non-elite segments of society, largely because war was such a central feature of life in seventeenth-century Europe. Scholars have been able to identify variations in the general effects of war over time and place, as well as to reconsider older assumptions about the connections between war and disease, mortality, and economic disruption.¹⁴ While war could stimulate certain economic sectors, especially those which provided goods and services directly to armies on campaign, its long-term consequences were adverse for all parties. In general, large cities were better equipped than smaller settlements to withstand embargoes, the redirection of trade, and property destruction.¹⁵

The risks and opportunities inherent in warmaking also had important social consequences. Although it is difficult to isolate completely the effects of warmaking from other developments of the time, some

Princeton University Press, 1975), 3–83; and idem, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1992* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990). For a critical assessment of the latter book, see Gregory Kasza, "Review Article: War and Comparative Politics," *Comparative Politics* 28 (1996): 355–373.

¹³ Some examples include Ariel Salzmann, "An Ancien Régime revisited: Privatization and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *Politics and Society* 21 (1993): 393–424; and Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ For example, Frank Tallet questions the direct linkage some historians have made between war and disease; see Tallet, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe 1495–1715* (London: Routledge, 1992), 148–150, 160–165. See also Christopher R. Friedrichs, *The Early Modern City, 1450–1750* (Harlow, UK: Longman, 1995), 292–301; M. S. Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime 1618–1789* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 63–68; and Myron P. Gutmann, *War and Rural Life in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 133–150, 164–166.

¹⁵ Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime*, 73–76; Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe* (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 1998), 212; Tallet, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe*, 223–225; André Chédeville, "Les ports militaires en Bretagne aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles," in Thomas Riis, ed., *Garrison Towns and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1993), 92–100, esp. 100; and S. Vilfan, "Discours de clôtüre: Les villes de garnison en Europe—esquisse d'une comparaison," in Riis, ed., *Garrison Towns and Society*, 101–105, esp. 105.

historians conclude that warfare contributed to an increasing stratification of European society in the early modern period. According to one scholar, the burdens of taxation and of quartering soldiers in seventeenth-century German towns fell more heavily on the middle and lower classes than on the rich.¹⁶ In Russia, many village communities witnessed the ascendancy of households led by local headmen who could efficiently administer military recruitment and taxation among their own population.¹⁷ There is agreement that throughout Europe social mobility could be spectacular, as with merchants who grew rich from serving as state financiers or provisioners, or soldiers ennobled through battlefield valor, but the scale of such phenomena was small.¹⁸ In England, the departure of men for the battlefield also gave greater scope of action for their wives and other female relatives, whose political activism in their absence during the Civil War in the 1640s provoked concern among members of Parliament.¹⁹ In general, the dual engagement of individuals in military and civilian careers broadened the range of economic and social advancement available to them.²⁰

The question of whether local militias or other self-defense units organized in times of war became important social and political units remains underexplored. Since the late fifteenth century, central state

¹⁶ Christopher Friedrichs, *Urban Society in an Age of War: Nördlingen, 1580–1720* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 141–143.

¹⁷ John L. H. Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar: Army and Society in Russia, 1462–1874* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 148–153; and Marshall Poe, “The Consequences of the Military Revolution in Muscovy: A Comparative Perspective,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38 (1996): 603–618, esp. 613ff. It has also been argued that in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France taxation arising from wartime demands placed progressively heavier burdens on the peasantry at a time when the landed aristocracy gained more tax exemptions. See Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1986), 134–135; and Tallet, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe*, 154–155.

¹⁸ Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime*, 69–70, 74–76; and Daniel Stone, “Commoners in the Polish Officer Corps in 1790,” in Gunther E. Rothenberg, Béla Király and Peter F. Sugar, eds., *East Central European Society and War in the Pre-Revolutionary Eighteenth Century* (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1982), 239–250. Cf. Tallet, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe*, 183–186.

¹⁹ Tallet, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe*, 166–167.

²⁰ This dynamic is more fully studied in the Russian context. On the engagement of soldiers in crafts, trades, and agriculture in Russia, see Y. E. Vodarsky, “The Influence of Garrisons upon Formation of Towns in Russia during the 10th–17th Centuries,” in Riis, ed., *Garrison Towns and Society*, 17–27, esp. 25; Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, 62–63; Black, *European Warfare, 1660–1815* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 85, 220; and Michael Hochedlinger, *Austria’s Wars of Emergence: War, State, and Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1683–1797* (Harlow, UK: Longman, 2003), 294.

authorities throughout Europe had formed militias to supplement professional armies and provide local defense.²¹ While militia service was an important component of burgher status, it seems that the prestige of the militia depended on the vulnerability of the town to military threats; thus, in some frontier settlements all members of the militia were from the social elite.²² There is some evidence to support the conclusion that militias, while ostensibly intended for self defense, came to be used by central governments as an instrument of control over potentially disruptive segments of the population, as in eighteenth-century Denmark, where authorities used militia rolls to restrict the movement of military-service-age males.²³ These and other findings prompt investigation into how, in the Ottoman case, warmaking generated social and institutional change in situations removed from the battlefield.

Research parameters

This study examines social and political transformations in the Ottoman Empire by evaluating various stresses on and adaptations by urban institutions. It seeks to understand how, in a period of great challenges to the empire's political order, social and political unity was preserved, and the loyalty of a vast and heterogeneous population ensured. Focusing on the Ottoman Arab city of Aleppo, the study investigates three basic social units—the residential quarter, the military garrison, and the professional organization or guild—as they witnessed the regularization of extraordinary taxation and the diffusion of soldiers in provincial society. The study does not aim to be comprehensive, as it omits other important social units such as non-Muslim religious communities and Muslim mystical orders.²⁴ With respect to the diffusion of soldiers in provincial society, it is important to point out that it was

²¹ Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe*, 198–206; and Black, *European Warfare*, 218–224.

²² Alexander Cowan, *Urban Europe, 1500–1700* (London: Arnold, 1998), 76.

²³ J. W. Stoye, “Soldiers and Civilians,” in J. S. Bromley, ed., *The New Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VI, *The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688–1715/1725* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 762–790, esp. 774–775.

²⁴ A study that examines important social and political changes taking place in the non-Muslim communities of this period and uses Aleppo as a case study is Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). On Sufi orders, see, for example,

not a single, unidirectional movement but one in which soldiers and civilians intermingled dynamically. Just as soldiers sought entry into civilian social and professional spheres, so civilians, especially merchants and artisans, sought membership in military units, if primarily for the fiscal and legal privileges that membership conferred. Thus one can speak of two simultaneous processes, the “militarization” of the civilian population and the “civilianization” of the military population. In this study the first term will be used to refer to both processes.

The study will present a kind of typology, one that considers a broad array of social organizations and attempts to identify the similarities and differences in their collective responses to seventeenth-century developments. It considers not only those entities that may be considered components of “civil society,” namely, residential quarters and guilds, but also units associated with the state, namely, military garrisons. The working definition of “civil society” used in this study is sociological in its conception and aims at inclusiveness:

An intermediate realm situated between state and household, populated by organized groups or associations which are separate from the state, enjoy some autonomy in relation with the state, and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests, values or identities.²⁵

Falling within this definition, naturally enough, are neighborhoods and guilds, whose transformations in the seventeenth century show the ability of local populations to act *collectively* and carve out their own spheres of action vis-à-vis state authority. Military units, because they were undergoing transformations that drew them deeply into local society, are also considered. When examining the three social units, the goal of this study is not to describe them comprehensively but rather to study the aspects of their solidarity, namely (1) modes

Derin Terzioğlu, “Sufi and Dissident in the Ottoman Empire: Niyāzī-i Misrī (1618–1694),” Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1999.

²⁵ The literature on concepts of civil society is enormous and is pulled in various ideological directions. The present study employs the concept as it was developed by the eighteenth-century German philosopher Hegel. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, edited by Allen W. Wood and translated by H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 219–274. The definition cited here is taken from Gordon White, “Civil Society, Democratization and Development (I): Clearing the Analytical Ground,” *Democratization* (1994): 375–390. See also Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992).

of leadership and (2) forms of mutual commitment among members. Modes of leadership range from the consultative egalitarian leadership found among quarters and guilds to the more hierarchical forms of domination found in military units. Forms of mutual commitment encompass individual and collective acts, including oaths, pledges, and civil agreements.

It is important to point out that while these organizations achieved considerable scope of action, they did not achieve absolute autonomy. According to the conception of civil society used in this study, it was the state that created the conditions for corporate life to exist via a system of rules and regulations. This conception stands in contrast to one in which the state simply regulated pre-existing institutions. What arises, then, is a symbiotic relationship between state authority and local institutions in which the rules and regulations were constantly being tested, negotiated and amended.

Outline of Chapters

The study is composed of four chapters organized into three parts. Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) focuses on residential quarters (*maḥallas*). Faced with the challenges of heavy taxation and the militarization of society—and the opportunities offered by administrative decentralization—urban civilian populations were compelled to adapt, and they did so in many and varied ways. Quarters were one of the principal administrative units through which taxes were collected and, in the name of imperial defense, manpower was mobilized. Chapter 1 describes the evolution of the administrative apparatus assessing and collecting extraordinary taxes. Chapter 2 explores how quarter residents responded to taxation on both the individual and collective levels. It examines how individuals applied for tax exemption and, failing that, how they undertook acts of resistance or organized themselves collectively to mitigate the effects of taxes on themselves and their neighbors.

Part II (Chapter 3) surveys professional military organizations in Aleppo and proceeds to examine aspects of their cohesion. The chapter deals with the questions of where and in what concentrations they lived within the city; how important civilian occupations were to their livelihood; in what proportion they mobilized in times of military call-up; and whether they formed a cohesive interest group beyond

their purely military function. This chapter argues that the seventeenth century witnessed a process in which military cadres became progressively enmeshed in local society, making full use of their financial and legal privileges to secure their interests. Far from dissolving, group solidarity seems to have been redirected to preserving group privileges vis-à-vis non-military social groups.

Part III (Chapter 4) examines craft and trade guilds and the ways in which wartime demands (re)shaped guilds. It starts with an investigation of the nature of organizational autonomy and of the balance of hierarchy/egalitarianism as manifested by internal guild agreements. The chapter then turns to forms of guild leadership as they were, in many cases, challenged by state demands for military provisions. Concluding the chapter are discussions of inter-guild dynamics, with emphasis on the relationship known as *yamaḳ* and inter-guild cooperation in times of crisis. The chapter argues that the interplay between guilds and state authorities in the seventeenth-century wartime economy was one of both obligation and opportunity. While taxation and the requisitioning of material for military purposes exacted a heavy burden on rank-and-file guild members, state authorities gave wide latitude to enterprising guild members to organize and mobilize guild resources. As a consequence, in some cases the pre-existing leadership structure, as well as the dynamics of inter-guild relations, was transformed. Soldiers and artisans at times cooperated and at other times clashed in a general struggle for wealth and social mobility.

Sources and Methods

A populous, strategic, and economically dynamic city throughout the period of Ottoman rule in Arab lands (1516–1918), Aleppo has drawn the attention of historians for many years. Studies focusing on the city in the last twenty years have made full use of the registers (sing. *sijill*) of the local Ottoman courts to shed light on local social and economic life.²⁶ The present study follows this trend but at the same time

²⁶ For Aleppo, see Abraham Marcus, “People and Property in Eighteenth Century Aleppo,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1979, revised and published as *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Margaret L. Meriwether, “The Notable Families of Aleppo, 1770–1830: Networks and Social Structure,” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981, later revised and published as *The Kin who Count: Family*

attempts to balance use of this source with the records of the central Ottoman state now preserved in Istanbul and Ankara—in addition to other sources (traveler accounts, biographical dictionaries, etc.) long used by historians.

The study of the social history of the empire based on the use of *sijills* has been one of the dominant methodological trends of the field in the last thirty years. More recently historians have begun to shift away from the original approach to the court registers, which regarded the registers simply as a source of information that could be taken at face value. Textual criticism, the combined use of *sijills* with other contemporary, contextualizing sources, and anthropological perspectives have cast light on the problematics surrounding this source, including the assumption of empirical accuracy.²⁷ Yet the newer approach in general does not dismiss the court records as a valid source but rather demands that the historian recognize in practical terms the complex social, cultural and political matrix in which Ottoman courts operated. The interests of the court as an Ottoman state institution, of the various local officials that staffed it, and of the people who chose to make use of the court all interacted in a process that involved negotiation and bargaining. The often laconic nature of the court records makes tracing this process a challenging task, as will be seen in due course.

and Society in Ottoman Aleppo, 1770–1840 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999); and Bruce Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600–1750* (New York: New York University Press, 1988). An earlier generation of social and economic historians used primarily consular records. See Herbert Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760–1826* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963); and Ralph Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square* (London: MacMillan, 1967).

²⁷ For only a partial list of the appraisals of the court records and, more generally, legal texts as historical sources, see Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), esp. 152–200; Işık Tamdoğan-Abel, “L’écrit comme échec de l’oral? L’oralité des engagements et des réglemets à travers les registres de cadis d’Adana au XVIII^e siècle,” *REMMM* 75–76 (1995): 155–165; Najwa Al-Qattan, “*Dhimmi* in the Muslim Court: Documenting Justice in Ottoman Damascus, 1775–1860,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1996, pp. 23–35, 89–147; Dror Ze’evi, “The Use of Ottoman Shari’a Court Records as a Source for Middle Eastern Social History: A Reappraisal,” *Islamic Law and Society* 5 (1998): 35–56; Leslie Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 86–125, passim; and Zouhair Ghazzal, *The Grammars of Adjudication: The Economics of Judicial Decision Making in Fin-de-Siècle Ottoman Beirut and Damascus* (Beirut: Institut Français du Proche-Orient, 2007). The Summer 2008 issue of the journal of *Islamic Law and Society* is dedicated to the court records and their use by historians.

An especially important set of questions relates to why and how the courts were used. Secondary literature on the Ottoman Empire has generally characterized the shari'a court as an important instrument for maintaining stability in provincial society and legitimizing the authority of the central state. Members of the subject population, it is argued, frequently came to court because the court was the primary institution to be counted on for administering an impartial, final justice and, when necessary, for interceding when other state officials abused their powers. Courts thus provided the chief means to redress local grievances and thus constituted a ready alternative to petitioning the governor, other provincial administrative officials, or the authorities of the central state.²⁸ Drawing on the contributions of other scholars in textual criticism and anthropology as well as on his own research on Anatolian courts, Boğaç Ergene has questioned this characterization. He depicts a legal system in which courts varied widely from one another in their relationship with local populations, and in which qadis (judges) themselves differed one from the other in their rulings. In general, the shari'a court appears to have been more vulnerable to influence by local interests than first supposed. People frequently petitioned the court less because they saw the qadi as a just arbitrator and more because they sought to "play" the court. Given the right material incentives, a newly-appointed qadi might be persuaded to overturn the ruling of his predecessor, and so forth. Noting the adjudicating activities of other local administrators and the central state, Ergene also shows that the court was only one of several sites of dispute resolution available to litigants and petitioners; consequently, court records themselves disclose only one aspect of judicial processes.²⁹ Recognizing the incomplete nature and institutional bias of the court records,

²⁸ Amy Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration around Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 122–123, 127; Huri Islamoğlu-Inan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 6–9; Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 103–105; Haim Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600–1700* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1988), 205; and idem, *State, Society and Law in Islam: Ottoman Law in Comparative Perspective* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 66.

²⁹ Boğaç Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652–1744)* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 99–124, passim; see also Peirce, *Morality Tales*, 123–125, 134–149, 336–42.

the present study applies a comparative frame of reference and whenever possible provides context to a given document through the use of central state archives and other relevant court documents.

This study combines a conventional thematic reading of the registers with simple quantitative analysis. The methods used are in part the result of constraints imposed by the fragmentary nature of the historical record. The study makes use of 20 of the 22 registers surviving from the period 1640–1700; for comparative purposes, three additional registers from outside this period were also consulted. The surviving 22 registers themselves are not a chronologically continuous series generated by one court but rather a heterogeneous set of registers that are the products of at least four different courts within the city with some temporal overlap. Given the mixed composition and partial coverage of the surviving registers, no attempts at reaching aggregate totals for the entire city based on these sources on any given question were made (see the bibliography for a listing and coverage of each register).

Some law courts in Aleppo were more important than others. The highest court of the city (al-Maḥkama al-Kubrā) was the seat of the chief qadi, who among other duties oversaw the conduct of the deputy judges (sing. *nā'ib*) in the other courts. Of the latter courts, one was named after the Islamic school of law that governed its decisions (al-Shāfi'iyya) and the remaining ones were named after various places where they were located (al-Ṣalāḥiyya, name of a local college (*madrassa*), and Banqūsa, a district of the city) or which they had apparently administered at one time (Jabal Sam'ān, a rural district).³⁰ The Kubrā, Shāfi'iyya, and Ṣalāḥiyya courts were located not far from one another in the heart of the intramural city. Identifying the distribution of the registers selected for this study among the five courts is complicated by the fact that their contents are heterogeneous: 8 registers (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 15, 23, 37) are of mixed provenance and include documents from earlier and/or later periods, suggesting they were compiled at a later time and not necessarily by officials of that court; and the provenance of three registers (Nos. 24, 25, 39) is unknown. The remainder are divided among four courts (Kubrā, Nos. 22, 33, 34,

³⁰ Brigitte Marino and Tomoki Okawara, *Dalīl sijillāt al-maḥākīm al-shar'iyya al-'uthmāniyya al-maḥfūza bi-Markaz al-Wathā'iq al-Tārikhiyya bi-Dimashq* (Damascus: Institut Français d'Études Arabes, 1999), 18, 20, 44, 46.

36; Shāfi'iyya, Nos. 30, 32, 35, 41; Şalāhiyya, Nos. 27, 28; and Banqūsa, Nos. 26 and 38). Two registers from Banqūsa (Nos. 29 and 31) were omitted because their contents contain a very narrow range of legal transactions (mainly real estate sales) and therefore make little comment on the questions addressed by this study. No registers explicitly labeled as generated by the Jabal Sam'ān court survive from this period, though the court probably did function. One implication of this distribution of surviving registers is that legal cases arising in the outlying areas of the city, especially the administrative affairs of residential quarters, may be underrepresented in this analysis.

The contents of Ottoman court registers vary significantly from city to city and even from court to court within the same locality; over time, the contents also changed, though this process was a gradual, long-term one.³¹ As a whole, the court records of Aleppo fortunately comprise a rich variety of transactions, including property sales, business and loan contracts, receipts, inheritance settlements, appointments to office, petitions to state authorities, claims cases, criminal cases, marriage, divorce, and manumission. One kind of action found in the court records that should be considered separately from the others is the establishment of charitable foundations (sing. *waqf*). Constituting an indispensable source for Aleppo's social history, *waqf* foundations project the personal interests of individual Aleppans and figure prominently in discussions of residential quarters and households. Information about *waqfs* taken from the court registers is supplemented in a limited way by selected records of the Ankara-based General Directorate of Waqfs (Evkaf Genel Müdürlüğü), a legacy of late Ottoman bureaucratic reforms that has survived into the Turkish Republic, and a similar institution, the Directorate of Waqfs (Mudiriyyat al-Awqāf), a Syrian government department with a branch in the city of Aleppo itself.

Official correspondence relating to the general political and economic affairs of the population of Aleppo remains essential to an understanding of local urban institutions and their dealings with central authority. Official correspondence was recorded in summary form in several places, most notably in the Atik Şikayet ("Old Complaint") series housed in the Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul and in an Ottoman Turkish-language series of registers peculiar to Aleppo, the

³¹ Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice*, 32–56.

Evāmir-i Sultāniyye (“Imperial Orders”), housed in Damascus. The Maliyeden Müdevver classification housed in the Prime Ministry Archives contains a large number of registers of diverse type and of great importance to this study. We find in this classification not only registers recording appointments and summaries of dispute cases relating to the economic life of the city and countryside but also records of comprehensive *‘avārız* (extraordinary tax) surveys and periodic tax assessments. Arguably the most important archival discovery in this study, the *‘avārız* surveys fix homeownership and tax status for the entire property-owning population, enabling the researcher to draw conclusions on social stratification, demographic trends, and, when they are used in conjunction with the court registers, the theory and practice of state-sponsored administrative reform. Complementing the documentary sources are literary sources, primarily conventional narrative chronicles, biographical dictionaries, and traveler accounts.

PART I

CHAPTER ONE

EXTRAORDINARY TAXES (‘AVĀRİZ) AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The long-standing question, going back to the concepts of Max Weber, of whether Islamic cities can be said to possess a unified civic culture, rests in large part on the extent to which cities can be considered vertically segmented into quarters, formed on the basis of ethnicity or religion or other criteria.¹ While scholars have in the last two decades rightly moved away from monolithic, essentialist characterization of Islamic cities, there remain many commonalities—social, political, and cultural—among Middle Eastern Arab cities that call for historical explanation. The residential quarter (in Arabic, *maḥalla*) is one such commonality that furthermore embodies, within the framework of early modern Islamic history, a host of questions about the relationship between state and society and the formation of corporate loyalties, in addition to questions directly concerned with the evolution and nature of Arab cities as organic units.

To choose the residential quarter as a unit of analysis may imply a mental dissection, and thus a fragmentation, of the city. Yet this study, as part of a larger investigation, holds the quarter to be only one of a multiplicity of social groups and institutions to which each city-dweller belonged, binding him together with others in overlapping networks of social relations that served, in the end, to unify the city. Trade and craft corporations, religious communities, Sufi brotherhoods, households and patron-client ties, among others, offered different modes of belonging that balanced the quarter as a focus of personal engagement and commitment. This chapter, then, considers only one dimension of

¹ Max Weber, *The City*, trans. and ed. Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth (New York: Free Press, 1958), 80–89. Important contributions to the development of this debate are Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); and Albert Hourani, “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables,” in W. Polk and R. Chambers, eds., *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 41–68. For a recent review of this literature, see E. Eldem, D. Goffman, and B. Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1–16.

the urban experience and in a specific time and place. It aims to historicize the quarter as a product of forces both internal and external to it, and to qualify the relations of power at work within it.

One of the more dynamic periods in the historical evolution of Arab Middle Eastern cities, and in the evolution of residential quarters in particular, occurred in the middle centuries of Ottoman rule, from the conquest of the Arab lands in 1516–17 to the Tanzimat reforms beginning in the 1840s. In the sixteenth century, the Ottoman state intervened in the affairs of urban and rural communities alike on levels unprecedented in the history of Islamic states. While adapting to many practices of the Mamluk Sultanate, Ottoman officials nonetheless innovated in aspects of fiscal administration, undertaking large-scale cadastral surveys (*tapu tahrirs*) of town and countryside that, in effect, mapped the population to the household level and grouped them administratively in villages, quarters or tribal units, thereafter regulating their affairs through a centralized system. From the late sixteenth century onward, however, important changes in warfare itself posed increasing challenges to the Ottoman army and treasury, even as the state was gradually shifting from a machine of military conquest to a more sedentary bureaucracy. Ottoman officials replaced the centralized system with a set of more decentralized administrative arrangements that permitted provincial populations to participate more fully in their own government but at the same time maintained, if not increased, levels of military mobilization and taxation.²

No less important for Arab and Anatolian cities was the development in the seventeenth century of large private armies in the service of provincial governors. While they may have stimulated some sectors of local economies to meet their material needs, these forces when garrisoned in cities imposed substantial burdens on the civilian population, who were compelled not only to quarter them but also to tolerate their exactions and interference in commerce, as well as their lawlessness and violence. If garrisoned for extended periods, members of the private armies could assimilate to the local population and, by virtue of their tax exemptions and privileged status, compete with

² See the introduction for a summary of the major debates on the nature of change taking place within the Ottoman state. Particularly informative are Inalcik, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire"; Faroqhi, "Crisis and Change" in Inalcik with Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994); and Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*.

other privileged social groups for control of tax farms, access to rural produce, and other sources of wealth.³ Quarters, it must be pointed out, were the principal administrative units through which persons were officially assimilated into—and expelled from—urban society. In other words, quarters were the chief agents in the process we are calling militarization.

The seventeenth-century challenges of heavy taxation and militarization—and the opportunities offered by administrative decentralization—elicited various responses from urban civilian populations. Quarters, as both administrative units and social groups, undertook new responsibilities and were subject to new pressures. To explore these developments, this chapter will investigate the administration of extraordinary ('*avārız*) taxes in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo in the years 1640–1700, a period marked with fiscal strain caused in part by Ottoman wars, most notably with Venice (1644–1669), the Hapsburg Empire (1658–64 and 1683–99), and Poland (1672–77).

Studies dealing with '*avārız* taxes either in whole or in part have tended to adopt the perspective of the central state. In a monograph that was among the first to use the central Ottoman archives on an extensive scale, Lütfi Güçer surveys the range of taxes assessed on grain agriculture, demonstrating the ability of the state effectively to extract taxes in cash or in kind, especially for the strenuous demands of military campaigns in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴ The more recent study of Linda Darling on the central bureaucracy and its administration of the '*avārız* and *cizye* (non-Muslim poll tax) levies does much to illuminate bureaucratic procedures in Istanbul in roughly the same period, offering strong evidence for the continued vitality of central state administration in a time of considerable political turbulence.⁵ Both works offer only part of the story, as they set aside the question of how provincial populations responded to the

³ Inalcik, "Military and Fiscal Transformation," 288–303, *passim*; Metin I. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); André Raymond, *Artisans et Commerçants au Caire au XVIII^e siècle* (Damascus: Institut Français d'Études Arabes, 1973–74), II: 587–808, *passim*; Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century*, 87–92, 145–54; and Dina Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 44–76, *passim*.

⁴ Lütfi Güçer, *XVI.–XVII. Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Hububat Meselesi ve Hububattan Alınan Vergiler* (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi, 1964), esp. 67–92, 136–145.

⁵ Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 281–306, *passim*.

assessment and collection of taxes. This chapter and Chapter Two are meant to complement the studies of Güçer and Darling, even as these chapters place greater stress on the nature of taxation as an ongoing process of negotiation. The only other published study that focuses on *‘avārız* tax administration from a local perspective is an article by Süleyman Demirci. Using the court records of seventeenth-century Kayseri, he analyzes the various types of complaints submitted by tax payers and argues that the system of redress administered by the local qadi (judge) and other state officials was largely free of abuse and corruption.⁶

While Demirci aims to be comprehensive and examines tax administration among both urban and rural populations in his study, this chapter concentrates on the urban population. As will be seen, the *‘avārız* tax was, at least in the province of Aleppo, primarily an *urban* tax: although it was collected in both rural and urban areas, its burden fell disproportionately on the populations settled in large cities such as Aleppo. The chapter examines the normative procedures by which extraordinary taxes were assessed and collected on the local level, from the conduct of periodic tax surveys to the regular actions of quarter tax officials. “Normative” is a relative term here as the Ottoman state continued to experiment with the extraordinary tax system, and Ottoman officials assigned to Aleppo over time interpreted imperial tax laws differently.

The ‘Avārız Tax Regime and the Conduct of Tax Surveys

In this study “extraordinary taxes” refer to the wide range of exactions taken in the form of services, in kind, or in currency that the state

⁶ Drawing on a set of court records that are remarkably continuous in their temporal coverage from 1618 to 1700, Demirci makes the case that tax complaints, insofar as they were regularly entered into local records, were relatively few in number (on this question, see Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 203). Demirci’s corollary argument that administration of the *‘avārız* taxes was efficient and fair is weakened by a tendency to accept court records at face value. Hence, he concludes, “Not a single case could be found in the sicils used in this study, in which the central government itself acted unjustly or tolerated injustices to its subjects” (p. 473). See “Complaints about *Avarız* Assessment and Payment in the *Avarız*-Tax System: An Aspect of the Relationship Between Centre and Periphery. A Case Study of Kayseri, 1618–1700,” *JESHO* 46, 4 (2003): 437–474. For an appraisal of the occurrence of corruption in Ottoman courts, see Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice*, 108–124.

required the population to pay directly to it in order to meet expenses in extraordinary circumstances, especially in times of war, throughout the Ottoman period until the promulgation of the Tanzimat reforms in the nineteenth century. Such taxes included the delivery and sale of supplies to logistical stations or directly to the army; the provision of draught animals and vehicles; the marshalling of specialized corps as assistance to the army and siege operations; and the remittance of cash.⁷ Within the city of Aleppo in the years 1640–1700, by far the best documented of these kinds of tax was the cash remittance, which appears most frequently under the names ‘*avārız-ı divāniyye* and *bedel-i nüzül*. For brevity, ‘*avārız* will be used hereafter to refer to this combination of cash levies.

‘*Avārız* taxes as they developed in the seventeenth century did not supplant older regular taxes but rather were a means to supplement them. How important ‘*avārız* taxes were within total imperial revenues in the period under study can be estimated from central fiscal records. Appointment orders in 1667 and in 1685 for the *muḥaṣṣıl*, the chief financial official in Aleppo province, project a budget in which ‘*avārız* taxes make up around 22 percent of total revenues.⁸ These percentages, moreover, reflect the proportion of projected aggregate ‘*avārız* revenues to total projected Ottoman state revenues as reported by O.L. Barkan for the years 1660–61 and 1669–70.⁹ From the central

⁷ For an introduction to the ‘*avārız* tax system, see Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “‘Avarız,” *İA; Darling, Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 87–118, passim; Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land 1600–1800* (Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 105–120; and “Osmanlı Avarız-Nüzül Teşekkülü, 1600–1830,” *TTK (Türk Tarih Kurumu) Bildiriler VIII* (1981): 1327–1391.

⁸ The appointment orders for 1667 can be found in Istanbul, Başbakanlık Arşivi (Prime Ministry Archives), Maliyeden Müdevver Classification (hereafter referred to as MM), Register No. 2742, p. 195; see also MM 657: 95–97 (AH 1084–1086/1673–1676 CE). The orders for 1685 can be found in MM 2933, p. 8 (5 M 1097/2 December 1685). Other major tax sectors under the control of the *muḥaṣṣıl* were to take, in the 1667 budget, the following proportions: the rural land tax of the province (*Dīmūs-i Haleb*), 36%; customs fees collected in Aleppo (*Haleb Gümrüğü*), 19%; customs fees collected at the port of Iskenderun (*Iskele Mukāta’a*), 7%; and the poll tax collected on Christians and Jews (*Cizye*), 6%. The remaining 10% of the budget was divided among many small sectors. It should be remembered that these numbers reflect budget projections and not confirmed tax receipts (*teslīmāt*), which are documented relatively poorly for this period.

⁹ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “1070–1071 (1660–1661) Tarihli Osmanlı Bütçesi ve Bir Mukayese,” *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 17 (1955/56): 304–347; and “1079–80 (1669/1670) Mali Yılına ait bir Osmanlı Bütçesi,” *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 19 (1957/58): 219–76.

state perspective, the seventeenth century was arguably the highwater period for 'avārız taxes. According to Ahmet Tabakoğlu, they gradually dropped from roughly 20 percent of projected state revenues in the 1690s to 9 percent in the late 1740s.¹⁰ One should, of course, view these figures with caution since they represent projections and not actual collections.

More important for our study of extraordinary taxes is the fact that they were apportioned on the basis of small fiscal units called 'avārızhānes. Each 'avārızhāne denoted the tax liability of a variable number of households, the number being assessed according to their ability to pay. This arrangement differed from the early Ottoman *tapu* system in which one *hāne* generally referred to a single household.¹¹ Each 'avārızhāne (hereafter called *hāne*) was supposed to be capable of bearing a burden equal to that of all the others, whether in the Ottoman Balkans, Anatolia, or the Arab provinces. Under this system, a single large household or, alternatively, a group of two or more smaller households could constitute a *hāne*. The inherent flexibility of this system lay in the fact that *hānes* were no longer tied to discrete familial units but instead divided equitably among households of varying means in a single neighborhood. As the fortunes of each family unit varied over time, quarter officials, who knew well the conditions of their neighbors, could re-negotiate and alter the distribution of the tax burden within a neighborhood.

Over the course of the seventeenth century the Ottoman state strove to determine *hāne* assessments at the household level in the province of Aleppo in two major surveys, one in AH 1025 (1616–17 CE) and the second in AH 1089 (1678–79 CE).¹² For the sake of brevity, they

¹⁰ Tabakoğlu, *Gerileme Dönemine Girerken Osmanlı Maliyesi* (Istanbul: Dergah, 1985), 153ff.

¹¹ Barkan, "Avarız," *İA*; and Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 105–108. For a fuller discussion of the relationship between numbers of households and 'avārızhānes, see the section entitled "A Fiscal Demography of Aleppo," below.

¹² The relevant registers are MM 3400 (AH 1025/1616–17 CE) and MM 8467 (AH 1089/1677–78 CE). While the first survey seems to have generated only one register (MM 3400), the second generated several. MM 8467 comprises 216 pages constituting the detailed (*mufaşsal*) survey of the *każā'* of Aleppo, including the city of Aleppo and the three subdistricts (*nāhiyes*) of Jabal Sam'ān, Bāb, and Jabbül. MM 678, dated the same year and comprising 556 pages, is probably the corresponding *mufaşsal* survey for the outlying districts (*każā'*s) of Aleppo province; this register was not accessible to this researcher due to its poor condition. Kamil Kepeci (KK) Register No. 2684 is a summary (*icmāl*) register of both MM 8467 and 678.

will be referred to hereafter as the surveys of 1616 and of 1678.¹³ These surveys were carried out in specific circumstances. The survey of 1616 should be viewed in part as an outgrowth of an empire-wide state initiative to develop and refine the assessment of ‘*avārız*’ taxes and expand the demographic basis of the taxation, especially after the prolonged war with the Hapsburg Empire (1593–1606).¹⁴ Central authorities were also trying to consolidate their hold over Syria after the major revolt of Canpuladoğlu ‘Alī Pasha (1605–07) and subsequent rural disturbances. An ‘*avārız*’ survey of the province of Damascus was undertaken one year later, in 1026/1617–1618.¹⁵ The survey may be linked specifically to the visit and inspection in 1615–16 of Aleppo by the grand vizier Öküz Meḥmed Pasha, on his way to fight the Safavids in the Caucasus.¹⁶ The grand vizier may well have had a personal connection to Aleppo: there he invested in shops and endowed a Sufi convent.¹⁷

¹³ Since the Hijri year 1025 largely falls within 1616 CE (20 January 1616–8 January 1617), I will use 1616 CE as the year of the survey. As for the second survey, we can date it within the period starting with 21 Ḍ 1087/24 February 1677 (the date of the authorizing order) and 15 Ṣ 1089/2 October 1678 (the earliest court document found referring to the “new” survey). Since the date of MM 8467, broadly given as AH 1089, falls in the Gregorian years 1678–79, we will use the year 1678 since it is common to both dating sources and because it may well mark the completion of the survey.

¹⁴ Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 93–94. For an article analyzing the survey register and providing a transcription and facsimile of excerpts, see Mustafa Öztürk, “1616 Tarihli Halep Avarız-Hane Defteri,” *OTAM* 6 (1997): 249–293.

¹⁵ Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 93.

¹⁶ For analysis of the Canpuladoğlu rebellion and the larger context, see William J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion 1000–1020/1591–1611* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1983), 60–156; Abdul-Karim Rafeq, “The Revolt of ‘Alī Pasha Janbulad (1605–1607) in the Contemporary Arabic Sources and Its Significance,” in *VIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler* (Ankara: Türk Tarihi Kurumu, 1983), 1515–34; Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 18–24; and V. J. Parry, “The Successors of Sulayman, 1566–1617,” in M. A. Cook, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 103–132, esp. 130–132.

¹⁷ On the inspection of 1615–16, see Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn, *Provincial Leaderships in Syria, 1575–1650* (Beirut: The American University in Beirut, 1985), 37–38; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 6 vols. (Istanbul: Türkiye Kültür Bakanlığı and Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), VI: 1065–66; and Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion*, 211. The grand vizier endowed a Sufi convent outside Aleppo, the *Takiyya* of Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Wafā’ī, with revenues from rents of shops he had owned in the city. See Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, Bağdat 306, pp. 174a; Prime Ministry Archives, ‘Atik Şikayet Classification (hereafter AŞ) 9:2, *Awākhir* L 1091; Khayr al-Dīn al-Asadī, *Aḥyā’ Ḥalab wa-Aswāquhā*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Rawwās Qal’ajī (Damascus: Dār Qutayba, 1984), 254–57; and ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Rawwās al-Qal’ajī, *Ḥalab al-Qadīma wa’l-Ḥadītha* (Beirut: Mu’assasa al-Risāla, 1989), 223–225. See also Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 142–143.

It is likely that the survey of 1678 was also carried out as part of a wider regional initiative, as an *‘avārız* survey of Damascus took place three years earlier, in 1086/1675–1676.¹⁸ The survey of 1678 may be directly linked to the grand vizier *Çara Muştafâ Pasha* (1676–1683) who, like members of the reforming *Köprülü* dynasty with whom he was associated through marriage, undertook a number of large-scale *‘avārız* and *şapu* surveys,¹⁹ and who, more significantly, had substantial interests in Aleppo given the extensive properties he came to possess there, properties that he endowed in 1682.²⁰ The putative links between grand viziers and *‘avārız* surveys, if true, suggest the part-private, part-public nature of fiscal initiative.²¹ Based on examples from Anatolia, Darling suggests that significant demographic changes may have led administrators to request surveys; among these were the desertion of homes due to heavy taxation (*Menteşe* and *Sığla*) and epidemic disease (*Erzurum*).²²

¹⁸ The register recording the Damascus survey has now been published in a critical edition by Halil Sahillioğlu, entitled, *Şam Şehriniñ XVII. Asırda Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı (1977 Numaralı ‘Avārız Defteri’ne Göre)* (Istanbul: İslam Tarih, Sanat ve Kültür Araştırma Merkezi (IRCICA), 2005).

¹⁹ The early 20th-century Aleppan historian Kamil al-Ghazzi writes that in the year AH 1089 (1678–79) the houses of the *ashrâf* and the janissaries were registered. See *Nahr al-dhahab fi târih Hâlab*, ed. S. Sha‘ath and M. Fâkhûri, 3 vols. (Aleppo: Dâr al-Qalam al-‘Arabî, 1992), III:225. On the *şapu* survey of Podolia after its conquest in 1678, see Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, “The Defter-i Mufassal of Kamanıçe from Ca. 1681—An Example of late Ottoman Tahrir: Reliability, Function, Principles of Publication,” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 13 (1993): 91–98; and idem, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia (ca. 1681)*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). On a *şapu* survey carried out in Crete between 1669 and 1674 following the island’s conquest, see Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 23–25, passim. See also Colin Heywood, “Çara Muştafâ Paşa,” *EF*²; and V. J. Parry, “The Reign of Mehmed IV, 1648–87,” in M. A. Cook, ed., *History of the Ottoman Empire, 171–72*; and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, I: 214–15.

²⁰ *Çara Muştafâ Pasha* built and endowed in Aleppo a large caravansaray, the well-known and still-standing *Khân al-Wazîr*, as well as storehouses (*makhâzîn*), a smaller caravansaray (*qayşariyya*), bakeries (*furûn*), a courthouse (*mahkama*), and shops (pl. *dukâkin*). Damascus, Dar al-Wathâ‘iq, Evâmîr-i Sultâniyye (hereafter referred to as ES), Register No. 1, pp. 25, 102, *Awâkhir* N 1102/29 April 1691. See also André Raymond, “Alep à l’Époque Ottomane (XVI^e–XIX^e siècles),” in *La Ville Arabe, Alep, à l’Époque Ottomane (XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Damascus: Institut Français d’Études Arabes, 1998), 279.

²¹ This is an observation consistent with one historian’s view of the idealized and actual functions of high state officials in the economic development of the Ottoman state. See Metin I. Kunt, “Derviş Mehmed Paşa, Vizier and Entrepreneur: A Study in Ottoman Political Theory and Practice” *Turcica* 9 (1977): 197–214.

²² Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 94–95, 97–98.

Viewed chronologically, the surveys of 1616 and of 1678 may be taken as reflections of stages in the general development of the 'avārız tax system and the kind of intervention that the state could undertake in the affairs of provincial cities. The changing composition of the people actually executing the survey largely coincides with the conclusions of the more general study of taxation by Darling, namely, that qadis (judges) were employed less and less frequently, and government scribes and military officials more and more frequently, over the course of the seventeenth century.²³ We know that the qadi of Aleppo, a certain Meḥmed Emīn Efendi, undertook the 1616 survey,²⁴ and that a former scribe of the imperial janissaries (*Kātib-i Yeniçeriyān-i Dergāh-i 'Āli*), Ḥasan Efendi, assisted by two deputies (*ḥalīfes*) from the *Mevkūfāt Kālemi*, a bureau of the central finance ministry, undertook the 1678 survey.²⁵

Although this shift suggests a specialization of personnel in the execution of surveys, and perhaps a reduction in the jurisdiction of qadis, there is evidence in the case of Aleppo indicating a significant reliance on local persons and administrative cadres.²⁶ Specifically, the

²³ Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 92–93. On the judicial officials known as qadis, see Emile Tyan and Gy. Káldy-Nagy, "Qāḍī," *EP*; and Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice*, 99–124.

²⁴ MM 3400:2. The descriptive heading of the defter is as follows: "Şüret-i defter-i ḥānehā-yı 'avārız-ı kaḏā-yı Haleb ve tevabī'uha be-mūcib-i taḥrīr-i cedīd-i Mevlānā Meḥmed Emīn kaḏī-yı maḥmiye-yi mezbūre el-vāki' fi sene 1025 gayr az fūru-nihādegān-i sene 1036." The qadi may well be Şadreddinzāde Meḥmed Emīn Efendi, tutor to the grand vizier Naşūh Pasha (1611–14) and later a distinguished teacher (*müderis*) in Istanbul, who died in 1627. See Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, II: 471–72, and IV: 1230.

²⁵ MM 8467:1a (pagination of this volume is in folio); and MM 3837:63 (AH 1088/1077–78 CE). While the *taḥrīr* register itself (MM 8467) includes no orders or official correspondence, a *bedel-i nüzül* register, MM 3837, dated AH 1088 (1677–78 CE) contains a copy of a short order authorizing the survey and assigning the responsible officials. According to Darling, the *Mevkūfāt Kālemi* was "the finance bureau that recorded income from properties temporarily in the possession of the treasury and later was in charge of the 'avārız tax administration." See *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 90–91, 316.

²⁶ On the contraction of the jurisdiction and/or competence of qadis, see Halil Inalcik, "Şikāyet Haḫkı: 'Arḏ-i Ḥāl ve 'Arz-i Maḫzarlar," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 7–8 (1988): 33–54. The evidence for this process in Aleppo is anecdotal and inconclusive. In two documents, a deputy qadi (*nā'ib*) is in effect having to protect his jurisdiction from the interference of *ahl al-'urf*, a broad category literally meaning "people of customary law" but generally referring to persons in state service and functioning in administrative and military roles; in this context, *ahl al-'urf* (Turkish *ehl-i 'örf*) describe the large retinues of provincial governors and major officials. See *Sijillāt al-Maḫākim al-Shar'iyya*, Aleppo (hereafter SMS), Volume 23, p. 67, 16 JA 1052/12 August 1642;

surveyor (*muḥarrīr*) of the 1678 survey, Hasan Efendi, classifies seven local persons as exempt (*mu'āf ve müselleme*) from all extraordinary taxes in exchange for services they provided during the survey.²⁷ Several observations can be made about this group. Most remarkably, not only does this group represent the full range of social groups comprising the urban notability, from “secular” military-administrative elites and merchants to the ulama, but each member resides in a different part of the city, both *intra-* and *extramuros*, with only one area, the northern extramural, not represented.²⁸ Their duties probably included practical assistance, such as lodging and provisioning of the surveying teams, but more crucially, the “local” knowledge necessary to identify concentrations of wealth and poverty and to report on customary administrative practices and general movements in local society. At the same time, these tax-exemptions appear to have had a symbolic value. This group—including a preacher, Sufi shaykh, merchant, cavalryman, and officer attached to the provincial council—represented to the state and to the city itself an established social order, a representation that was supposed to reassure the local population that the surveyors were mindful of the interests and solidarities of its principal status groups.

A comparison of the survey register of 1616 with that of 1678 furthermore yields substantial differences in format and content. Whereas the earlier survey register lists only those residential properties that were taxable, the latter evidently sets out to list *all* residential proper-

and SMS 23:393, 16 JA 1052/12 August 1642). Another document implies the loss of tax-collection authority by a *nā'ib* (SMS 25:290, 22 D 1058/7 January 1649). Two final documents indicate that the Chief Qadi of Aleppo was compelled to remind his deputies (*nā'ibs*) that they were not to issue any administrative orders to the countryside districts of Aleppo province (SMS 27:A450, 17 DA 1075/1 June 1665; and SMS 32:331, 4 L 1084/12 January 1674). All of these documents, on the other hand, may equally reflect the consolidation of non-judicial, administrative authority in the hands of the chief qadi at the expense of his deputies.

²⁷ Of these seven persons, six are identified by name in the register. The persons assisting in the survey, as well as their quarters of residence, were recorded in the Turkish-language survey register MM 8467 as follows: “Şeyḫ Mehmed b. Mehmed Şeyḫü'l-Beled” from Bāb Qinnaşrīn (10a–11b); “Fahṛü'l-Tüccār Hācc Yahyā Helvānizāde” from Zuqāq al-Shaykh in Baḥsīta (29a–29b); “Sa'deddīn b. Şeyḫ Hüseyin Ḥaṭīb ve Müderris ve Vā'iz ve İmām” from Zuqāq al-Bustān in Altūn Büghā (45b–48b); “Ahmed Ağa b. 'Abdullāh el-Zā'im” from Dākhil Bab al-Nayrab (49b–52a); “Şeyḫ Mehmed b. 'Ömer 'an Şulāḥā” from Sachlikhān al-Taḥṭānī (109a–110a); and “Hüseyin Çavuş b. Bāyezīd Çavuş-i Divān-i Haleb” from Qāḍi 'Askar (103a–104a).

²⁸ Hourani, “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables,” 48ff.

ties in the city and then annotates the tax status of each.²⁹ This development reflects a broader pattern whereby after about 1620 ‘*avārız*’ surveys became more inclusive, apparently in an attempt to extend tax liability to all taxpayers in a given area.³⁰ By the 1640s, ‘*avārız*’ surveys were listing not only taxable but also tax-exempt populations.³¹ This change marked a significant transition in the tax system as it implicitly if not explicitly challenged the social foundations of the Ottoman state. The Ottoman political order operated on the principle of a functional division between the ruling class, the ‘*askerī*’, and the subject population, the *re‘āyā*. While the subject population, made up of merchants, artisans and peasants, were engaged in productive activity and paid taxes, the ‘*askerī*’ class worked as servants of the state and were remunerated officially with government salaries and exemptions from taxes. While the ‘*askerī*’ class was an elite group, it encompassed a broad range of professionals, from soldiers and administrators to religious, educational, and judicial cadres.³²

As stated above, the surveying officials in 1678 sought to record *all* residential properties, but strict rules governed the tax liability of a given property. Whether a homeowner paid extraordinary taxes depended on a combination of two independent factors: the tax status of the property and the tax status of the person. One category of property status, “*ḳadīm*,” literally “old” in Arabic, referred to properties

²⁹ Properties that were *exclusively* commercial in function were not included in the survey. Hence, while khans (caravansarays) containing lodging chambers (sing. *oḍa*) for merchants were included, other commercial structures such as shops (sing. *dukkān*) and larger courtyard storehouses (sing. *qayşariyya*) were not. See, for example, SMS 34:92, 14 L 1089/29 November 1678; and MM 8467: 21a.

³⁰ Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 92.

³¹ The Anatolian town of Harput may have been the first town to undergo a survey of this type. See Mehmed Ali Ünal, “1056/1646 Tarihli Avarız Defterine Göre 17. Yüzyıl Ortalarında Harput,” *Bellekten* 51 (1987): 119–129. This is not necessarily to say that ‘*avārız*’ defters detailing individual taxpayers were drawn up for each town or district in the empire. As Darling points out, summary (*icmāl*) registers, in which the number of ‘*avārızhānes*’ only at the level of the quarter, village, or district are given, make up the bulk of surviving registers today. Administrative practice may have been to prepare detailed ‘*avārızhāne*’ registers for only selected provinces. See Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 92.

³² Halil Inalcik, “The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600,” in Halil Inalcik with Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History*, 16–17; Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, 65–70. For a nuanced discussion of the ‘*askerī*’ class, especially in the context of seventeenth century developments, see Canbakal, *Society and Politics*, 61–89.

that had been recorded in “the old register” (that of 1616).³³ Consistent with precedent, properties in this category were universally taxable, whether the owner had a personal status of *‘askerī* or *re’āyā*. The second category of property status, *hāric*, literally “outside” or “excluded” in Arabic, referred to properties that had *not* been recorded in the old tax register. Properties in this category were exempt from taxation but *only* if they were owned by persons of *‘askerī* status.³⁴ All properties were furthermore placed in one of three tax brackets based on the square area and condition of the property. Recorded in the fiscal registers as high (*a’lā*), middle (*evsaṭ*), and low (*ednā*), these values provide one indication of the relative affluence or poverty of a given quarter.

The decision by surveyors to require members of the *‘askerī* class who owned *ḡadīm* properties to pay extraordinary taxes seems to have been a compromise to address competing political and social demands. It appears that central fiscal authorities, in their efforts to balance the state’s demand for revenue with the acknowledged claim of *‘askerī* members to tax privileges, had developed by 1678 a fiscal mechanism that aimed, first, to minimize fluctuation in the number of tax-exempt houses (and thus revenue levels) and, second, to do away with the burdensome bureaucratic procedures needed to change the tax status of a property every time a member of the *‘askerī* class bought or sold it. An illustration of this tax arrangement was the tax status of residential properties located within the citadel of Aleppo. All properties there were declared or maintained as *hāric* with the expectation that soldiers were to maintain their residence in that location; if they moved from the citadel, however, they were to be subject to whatever taxes were owed on their new properties.³⁵

The court records yield a substantial amount of evidence demonstrating that real estate properties came to have a permanent tax status

³³ As a rule, properties that were recorded in the 1616 survey were listed as taxable in the 1678 survey. For an example of one such property, see SMS 34:112, 11 DA 1089/25 December 1678. For a more technical discussion of the differences between the 1616 and 1678 surveys, see Charles Wilkins, “Households, Guilds, and Neighborhoods: Social Solidarities in Ottoman Aleppo, 1640–1700” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2006), 13–16.

³⁴ The summary of a dispute involving the residents of Suwayqat Hātīm quarter in 1687 and citing the 1678 survey illustrates this rule. See SMS 36:158, 12 DA 1098/19 September 1687.

³⁵ Surveyors called the citadel area, “Enderūn-i Kal’e-yi Halebü’ş-Şehbā’,” and listed 165 houses (*beyts*) in the area. See MM 8467:1b–3a (AH 1089/1678–79 CE); and ES 1:106, R 1100/January–February 1689.

independent of whether the owner had ‘*askerī* or non-‘*askerī* status. In cases where homeowners and quarter officials disputed the tax assessment of a given property, the two parties usually argued their claims with reference to the last tax survey (*taḥrīr*), the former claiming that a certain person had owned the property at the time of the survey and that his name was *not* recorded in the survey register (and therefore his property was tax-exempt), and the latter arguing that a different person had owned the house at the time of the survey, and that his name *was* recorded in the survey register (and his property was therefore taxable). It appears in many cases that the last survey was that of 1616. Significantly, the parties did not debate the tax status of the owner’s person, but rather the tax status of the property he owned, and the quarter officials referred to the property not by the name of the present owner but rather by the name of the owner at the time of the survey. In the majority of the cases that he won, the litigating homeowner was able to document a continuous chain of ownership extending back to the last survey and showing that the name of the owner at the time of the last survey was not entered in the survey register, and the house was therefore tax-exempt.³⁶ In those cases in which the property was found to be taxable, quarter officials had the qadi consult the register to confirm that a certain house had been assessed a tax in the last survey, and then they produced witnesses who verified that the house in question was indeed the house that was assessed a tax in the last survey.³⁷ With regard to the treatment of taxable properties, the survey of 1678 can thus be seen as preserving past practice.

The closer linking of ‘*avāriž* taxes to land than to people is a significant finding, probably showing the adaptation of state authorities

³⁶ SMS 2:233, 4 JA 1073/15 December 1662; SMS 2:277, 16 JA 1073/27 December 1662; SMS 28:140, 19 RA 1071/22 November 1660; SMS 28:187, 11 R 1071/14 December 1660; SMS 28:590, 20 JA 1073/31 December 1662; SMS 3:364, 9 JA 1065/17 March 1655; SMS 3:386, 26 JA 1065/3 April 1655; SMS 3:390, 27 JA 1065/4 April 1655; SMS 3:393, 8 B 1066/2 May 1656; SMS 28:89, 25 S 1071/30 October 1661; and SMS 28:610, 27 J 1073/6 February 1663. In those cases that could be checked, which are roughly half of those cited above, the findings recorded in these documents corroborated the contents of MM 3400, the register of the 1616 Survey.

³⁷ SMS 3:369, 13 JA 1065/21 March 1655; SMS 3:368, 14 JA 1065/22 March 1655; SMS 28:35, 27 M 1071/2 October 1660; 3:382, 22 JA 1065/30 March 1655; SMS 3:797, 25 RA 1066/22 January 1656; SMS 23:213, 19 B 1052/13 October 1642; SMS 24:387, 6 J 1055/30 July 1645; and SMS 24:35, 24 JA 1058/16 June 1648. In those cases that could be checked, which were majority of those cited above, the findings recorded in these documents corroborated the contents of MM 3400, the register of the 1616 Survey.

to a geographically mobile and dynamic population.³⁸ Describing the central Anatolian town of Kayseri in the seventeenth century, Demirci likewise mentions the existence of this kind of taxation. The few cases cited make it clear that anyone who owned agricultural land classified as “*‘avāriż toprađı*” (*‘avāriż* land), including members of the *‘askerī* class, were expected to pay the appropriate taxes.³⁹ Even if *kađım* properties were designated as permanently taxable, their status could still change. Homeowners applied for and received exemption from the central fiscal authorities, but because such exemptions were considered permanent, government officials tried to limit how many were awarded, with varying degrees of success. According to annotated survey documents, in the ten years following the survey of 1616, the city of Aleppo saw 506 reductions or outright exemptions awarded to individual homeowners. Consequently, the total tax assessment fell 220 *hānes*, from 3478 to 3258, or 6.3 percent.⁴⁰ Using the same kind of source, in the 20 years following the survey of 1678, we obtain a figure of only 117 exemptions awarded to individual homeowners, resulting in a drop of 46.33 *hānes*, from 2690 to 2640.33 *hānes*, or 2 percent.⁴¹ The increasing ability of state authorities over time to limit tax exemptions suggests the effectiveness of this system.

Members of the *‘askerī* class, it seems, did not exercise control over *hāric* properties, but rather had to compete with other prospective buyers on the market to obtain them. Given their elevated social and legal status, members of the *‘askerī* class may have enjoyed a right of pre-emption to such properties, a right akin to the Islamic legal concept of *shuf‘a*.⁴² Namely, when the current owner of a *hāric* property

³⁸ Vera P. Mutafčieva, *Agrarian relations in the Ottoman Empire in the 15th and 16th centuries* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1988), 167; Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 97; and Nenad Moacanin, *Town and Country on the Middle Danube, 1526–1690* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 216ff.

³⁹ Demirci, “Complaints about *Avarız* Assessment,” 459 fns. 42 and 43.

⁴⁰ MM 3400, passim. Cf. Öztürk, “1616 Tarihi Halep Avarızhane Defteri,” 256–258.

⁴¹ MM 8467, passim. In the roughly one-year period for which MM 8467 and ES 1 overlap in coverage (ca. B 1101/April–May 1690 to B 1102/March–April 1691), with few exceptions, the annotations marking exemption in MM 8467 coincide with full-length administrative orders for such changes recorded in the Evāmīr-i Sulṭāniyye register series. The pace of granting individual reductions, however, may have been too slow to respond to a significant degradation in the ability of the urban population to pay property taxes. The twenty-year period following the 1678 survey witnessed two large-scale *tevzi* reductions both in the city of Aleppo and in the surrounding rural districts.

⁴² See M. Y. Izzī Dien, “*Shuf‘a*,” *EI*².

wished to sell, members of the ‘*askerī*’ class were to be asked, before any person of *re‘āyā* status, if they wished to purchase the property. Local court records do evince the power of persons with ‘*askerī*’ status to intervene in transactions involving both tax-exempt and taxable properties prior to the 1678 survey. In 1672, the residents of Jisr al-Zalāḥif quarter sold to Muḥammad Beşe b. Abū Bakr, a soldier and a member of the ‘*askerī*’ class, a house in the same quarter for 24 *ghurūsh asadī*.⁴³ On the same day, the soldier secured an agreement from the quarter officials that they charge not more than 5 *ghurūsh asadī* in annual taxes on the property. The soldier, in turn, sold the property on the same day to another, non-‘*askerī*’ person for the same price that he paid for it. What appears to be taking place here is that the second buyer had hired Muḥammad Beşe to take possession of the property and re-negotiate a tax assessment using his ‘*askerī*’ privileges, and then to resell it to him. Even if the second buyer were not ‘*askerī*’ and therefore not eligible for tax-exemption for the property, he could well have had other strong incentives to purchase the property—security, proximity to family or to work, and so forth. What is significant in this instance is that the soldier was able to re-negotiate a tax assessment and to see that assessment apparently maintained even after he had sold the property to other persons.⁴⁴ A counterargument could be made that soldier was merely coercing both the seller and buyer to transact their business through him, but then we must explain why each of these actions—sale, tax agreement, and a second sale—was conducted before a qadi and summaries of each recorded separately and consecutively in a court register. Still, interventions such as these no doubt were part of what drove the central authorities to undertake

⁴³ The *ghirsh asadī*, (pl. *ghurūsh asadī*) was the Dutch leuventhaler, a silver coin that was the most commonly used currency recorded in the court records in Aleppo in the years 1640–1700. Its value appears to have varied considerably relative to the *aḳçe*, the official currency of account, over the course of the seventeenth century. Taking a sampling of central tax records (‘*avārız defterleri*’) relating to the Syrian provinces, we find the *ghirsh* valued at 80 *aḳçe* in 1641–42, 100 *aḳçe* in 1673–74, and as high as 120 *aḳçe* in 1695–96. See MM 3845:44, MM 2505:45, and MM 3807:36a, respectively. See Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 149–52; Şevket Pamuk, “Evolution of the Ottoman Monetary System,” in Halil Inalcik with Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History*, 947–85, esp. 956, 959, 964–970; idem, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 90, 142–148; and idem, “Prices in the Ottoman Empire, 1469–1914,” *IJMES* 36 (2004): 451–468, esp. 458–460.

⁴⁴ SMS 32:96–97 (three different documents), 28 R 1083/23 August 1672. See also SMS 3:703, 8 DA 1065/9 September 1655.

a new survey, like the one in 1678, to define more clearly what was and what was not taxable property. It is interesting to note, in this regard, that in the survey of 1678, even ruined properties (*ḥarāb*), though not given tax assessments (*ednā*, *evsaṭ*, and *a'lā*), were broken down into *ḳadīm* and *ḥāric* categories.⁴⁵

Significantly, this system of taxation, based as it was on a fixed number of specific revenue-bearing properties, recalls another administrative mechanism, *gedik*, that also developed in the course of the seventeenth century. Professional corporations, principally the craft and trade guilds, awarded *gedik* rights to persons as a means of recognizing membership in the profession and frequently tied these rights to the use of pre-designated shops.⁴⁶ The purposes of the each mechanism were likewise similar: just as the *gedik* institution was intended to preserve economic monopolies for the benefit of the guild members, the tax regime as defined by the survey of 1678, was intended, in the first place, to maintain the monopoly of membership in the imperial *'askerī* class and the financial privileges that were associated with it.

We can offer a concrete illustration of the efforts that surveying officials took to restrict privileges to the state elite. In the aggregate tabulation for the city of Aleppo (*Maḥallāt-i Haleb*) found in the 1678 survey register, the numbers of inhabitable *ḳadīm* and *ḥāric* houses reached 7433 and 3105, or 71 and 29 percent, respectively.⁴⁷ These figures represent the proportions of inhabitable, taxable and tax-exempt properties immediately prior to the 1678 survey and reflect which homeowners would have paid taxes and which would not. When the rules of the 1678 survey were applied, in which tax exemption was contingent on the tax status of both the person and the property, a

⁴⁵ A small number of residential property units (sing. *beyt*) as defined in the 1678 survey register may have been registered as a combination of *ḳadīm* and *ḥāric* properties, furthering the idea that officials kept a strict accountability of taxable and non-taxable structures. These *beyts*, many belonging to persons of high social status, had additional qualifiers, with the *ḳadīm* properties marked with the phrase "*ma' ḥāric*" ("with an exemption") and *ḥāric* properties having "*ma' dāḥil*" ("with an inclusion"). See also MM 8467: 81b–82b and SMS 34:63, 24 § 1089/ 11 October 1678, in which a property registered in the 1678 survey with "*ḥāric*" was, in the court records, the subject of a tax dispute between the owner of a house and the owner of three adjoining shops.

⁴⁶ See André Raymond, et al., "Şinf," *EL*²; and Ahmet Akgündüz, "Gedik," *İA*.

⁴⁷ For a fuller, more technical discussion of these figures, see Wilkins, "Households, Guilds, and Neighborhoods," 43–44. I have excluded houses that are ruined (*ḥarāb*) from these calculations.

substantial change had taken place. Starting in 1678, 9439 homeowners (89 percent of the total) were to pay taxes, with only 1099 homeowners (11 percent) obtaining tax exempt status, representing a full two-thirds reduction in the number of tax exempt homeowners.⁴⁸

In sum, we can make the case that the survey of 1678 was a systematic and penetrating initiative, one that aimed to inventory the city comprehensively, fix permanent tax assessments on individual properties, and scale back the number of tax-exemptions.⁴⁹ Yet the survey of 1678 may well have marked the apogee of central administrative (fiscal) intervention in seventeenth-century Aleppo. The subsequent adjustments to *hāne* apportionment through the end of the century did not take place through new centralized surveys but rather through large-scale reassessments (*tevzi*) conducted by a combination of central state officials, on the one hand, and qadis and their local deputies (*nā’ibs*), on the other. No longer itemizing and re-evaluating *hānes* individually, records of these reassessments show that qadis adjusted *hāne* counts of residential quarters and villages collectively, based no doubt in part on precedent, personal observation of economic and demographic change, and reports by local notables. Two major *tevzi* assessments, dating from 1691 and 1699–1700, demonstrate that while *hānes* continued to be used as tax units, the lowest level of itemization was either residential quarters or villages.⁵⁰ From this, one could argue that officials of the central finance administration had for the time

⁴⁸ This is not to say that the number of tax-exempt homeowners could not undergo a regulated growth. Bona fide members of the *‘askerī* class could purchase, subject to the conditions of pre-emption, more houses classified as *hāric* and owned by *re‘āyā*, and therefore obtain effective tax-exemption for them. Yet this was, in the eyes of the surveying officials, an unlikely event since such a return would require a massive and concerted effort by members of the *‘askerī* class to acquire these properties.

⁴⁹ The care with which the surveyors completed their task in 1678 is suggested by the very small number of complaints about incorrectly registered properties. For the one case found by this researcher in which a property was registered under the wrong name, see SMS 34:213, 6 R 1090/17 May 1679.

⁵⁰ ES 1:32–33 (3 L 1101/10 July 1690); and KK 2802 (*Ghurrat DA* 1111/20 April 1700) and MM 19081 (*Ghurrat M* 1111/29 June 1699) relate to the same reassessment. See Linda Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 174–75; Inalcik, “Military and Fiscal Transformation,” 335–337; M. Çağatay Uluçay, *18 ve 19 Yüzyillarda Saruhan’da Eşkiyalık ve Halk Hareketleri* (Istanbul, 1955), 52; and Michael Ursinus, “Avarız Hanesi und Tevzi’hanesi in der Lokalverwaltung des Kaza Manastir (Bitola) im 17. Jh.,” *Prilozi za Orijentalnu Filologiju i Istorija Jugoslovenskih Naroda pod Turskom Vladivnom* 30 (1980): 481–93. Cf. Bruce McGowan, “The Study of Land and Agriculture in the Ottoman Provinces within the Context of an Expanding World Economy,” *IJTS* 2 (1981):57–63.

being ceased interposing between the individual taxpayer and the tax collector a standard of assessment by which the administration could monitor and regulate 'avārīz tax collection.

With special regard to the survey of 1678, it should be noted that tax surveys by themselves did not constitute sufficient evidence of a sustained, long-term change in the way that taxes were collected. Bureaucratic virtuosity did not necessarily translate into effective policy. Large scale surveys carried out by France and Spain in the eighteenth century to fix tax status, especially of the noble estate, only partially succeeded in their goals and were eroded over time by the counterstrategies of noble families.⁵¹ Further research needs to be conducted in eighteenth-century Ottoman documentary records to determine whether the survey of 1678 had a long-lasting legacy.

The Mechanics of Local Tax Administration: Land Use, Personal Liability, and Apportionment

The survey registers of 1616 and 1678 project the intentions of the imperial surveyors but tell us little about the day-to-day implementation of tax assessment and collection. For these sorts of questions, we must turn to the local shari'a court records. These sources provide a picture, however incomplete, of how the qadi and his deputies interpreted the imperial regulations and surveys. Matters that he adjudicated include the taxability of differing forms of land tenure, namely *milk* (freehold) and *waqf* (pl. *awqaf*, a pious endowment); limitations on personal tax liability; and finally, the apportionment of tax liability among joint homeowners and, more generally, among residents in a given quarter.

⁵¹ On various attempts to reform the noble estate in ancien régime France, see Jean Meyer, *La Noblesse Bretonne Au XVIII^e Siècle* (Paris: École Pratique des Hautes Études, 1966); on the largely unsuccessful cadastral survey carried out under the direction of the Marques de la Ensenada in mid-eighteenth century Spain, see Antonio Rodríguez Villa, *Don Cenon de Somodevilla, Marques de la Ensenada* (Madrid: Librería de M. Murillo, 1878); Antonio Matilla Tascón, *La única contribucion y el catastro de Ensenada* (Madrid: Servicio de Estudios de la Inspección General del Ministerio de Hacienda, 1947); and Dolores Mateos Dorado, "La única contribución y el catastro de Ensenada (1749–1759)," in *La época de Fernando VI* (Oviedo: Cátedra Feijoo, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad de Oviedo, 1981), 227–240. I am grateful to James Boyden for suggesting these references.

The basic unit of both surveys was the *beyt*, which corresponds in the court records to the Arabic term, *dār*, and can be defined as a single courtyard house.⁵² A second unit larger in size was the *kaşariyye* (1616) or *kaşarlık* (1678), a multi-chambered courtyard structure that encompassed not only the smaller commercial buildings scattered throughout the city but also the great caravansarays concentrated in the central market area.⁵³ It is clear that these buildings were subject to taxation because they served partially as residential properties where merchants, artisans, soldiers, nomads, and other groups lived and paid rent. When taxable residential properties were converted to commercial use, they remained subject to the same level of ‘*avāriż* taxes at least until the next survey was conducted. In 1660, a Christian man, Dādūr w. Danyīl al-Naşrānī, complained to the court that Ḥājj Muştafā b. Jum‘a refused to pay his share of taxes on the one *hāne* assessed on Dādūr’s house (*dār*). Dādūr claimed that Ḥājj Muştafā was owner of a bakery that had been detached (*mustakhraj*) from Dādūr’s house, and furthermore, the rental proceeds of the bakery exceeded that of the house. In response, Ḥājj Muştafā acknowledged that the bakery had been detached but maintained, without producing evidence, that no tax was due on the bakery. In the end, however, they agreed to a division of tax responsibility: Dādūr agreed to pay seven-eighths of the *hāne*, and Ḥājj Muştafā, one-eighth.⁵⁴ Similar agreements may have shaped the tax obligations of other commercial properties.

Beyts and *kaşarlıks* could be converted from *milk* to *waqf*, but this appears to have been increasingly circumscribed in the seventeenth century. In general the surveyors in 1616 recorded only *milk* properties in their inventory of taxable real estate, suggesting that *waqf* properties

⁵² Of Arabic origin, the survey term *beyt* is rendered according to the Turkish transcription system, and this highlights its specific meaning. In the (mostly) Arabic-language court records, the Arabic word *bayt* refers to a dwelling within a *dār*.

⁵³ *Kaşarlıks*, at least as the term was used in the 1678 survey, varied greatly in size and quality of construction and were used for both residential and commercial purposes. On the *kaşarlık* (Ar. *qaşariyya*) in the eastern Mediterranean region, see S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967–1993), I: 194; and Alexander Russell, *Natural History of Aleppo*, 2 vols. (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1794), I: 36, 162. See also Enver Çakar, *17. Yüzyılda Halep Eyaleti ve Türkmenleri* (Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi, 2006), 99–103, 106–109.

⁵⁴ SMS 28:217, 24 R 1071/27 December 1660. This practice continued after the 1678 survey as demonstrated by a dispute in the quarter of Aqyül; see SMS 34:28, 18 B 1089/5 September 1678; SMS 34:44, 25 B 1089/12 September 1678; and MM 8467: 83a–85a.

were as a rule tax-exempt. There were, of the 5791 household properties that were recorded, 5 designated as *waqf*, but these seem to have been founded exclusively by non-Muslims.⁵⁵ In 1678, however, surveyors attempted a full inventory of all urban residential property, *milk* and *waqf*, standing and ruined. Of 10,538 total inhabitable properties, 10,134 were *milk* and 404 were *waqf*. Among the total inhabitable properties were 192 *kaşarlık*, and of these, 149 were *kaşarlık-ı milk* (*milk* properties) and 43 were *kaşarlık-ı vakıf* (*waqf* properties).⁵⁶

In the 1678 survey only Muslim *waqfs* were recorded, and those listed were, as a rule, exempt from taxation. Closer inspection of the *waqf* entries indicates that only public *waqfs* were recorded and exempted from taxation. Public (*khayrī*) *waqfs* were endowments that, at least in part, benefited public institutions such as mosques, Sufi lodges, and schools, while family (*ahlī* or *dhurrī*) *waqfs* were established exclusively for the benefit of the founders' families. It was not uncommon, however, for *waqfs* to benefit both public and family interests. Not surprisingly, the entries of *waqf* properties found in the inventory of each residential quarter in the 1678 survey name only public institutions as the beneficiaries. For example, the quarter of Sāḥat Biza included ten caravansarays and twenty-three houses endowing a wide range of public interests, among which were the great 'Ādiliyya and Khusruwiyya mosques, the Gulshāniyya Sufi lodge, and schools in the neighborhood.⁵⁷

Official correspondence, indeed, emphatically documents the official tax-exempt status of properties endowed to public *waqfs*, especially the great imperial Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn *waqf* that benefited the

⁵⁵ See the "*mevkūf*" entries in MM 3400 for the following quarters: Judayda, pp. 78–9; Mashāriqa, 79–80; Zuqāq al-Basātina (Dākhil Bāb al-Naṣr quarter), 87–88; Zuqāq al-Arba'in (Dākhil Bāb al-Naṣr), 89; Zuqāq Tūmā Bishāra (Dākhil Bāb al-Naṣr), 92; and Zuqāq Tūmā 'Abd al-'Aziz (Dākhil Bāb al-Naṣr), 92. Only Mashāriqa Quarter has no Christian homeowners recorded, but it is in proximity to the other quarters listed here. For a social demography of Aleppo in the eighteenth century, see André Raymond, "Groupes sociaux et géographie urbaine à Alep au XVIII^e siècle," in Thomas Philipp, ed., *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992), 147–163.

⁵⁶ For a scribal summing of the *waqf* properties, see MM 8467:140a. Interestingly, the register of the 1676 survey in Damascus does not use the *kaşarlık* term at all, even while the register lists other properties that include commercial functions. See Sahillioğlu, *Şam Şehriniñ XVII. Asırda Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı*, passim.

⁵⁷ MM 8467:9a–b.

Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina.⁵⁸ The fact that such rulings on exemption were recorded, however, probably reflects attempts by quarter officials or others to collect taxes on such properties. In 1690 a Sufi attached to a local prominent lodge, Darwīsh Muḥammad al-Ḥāfīz al-Gulshānī, complained to the court that quarter officials were unlawfully trying to collect ‘*avāriż*’ taxes on the house he was occupying, a house that was endowed to the Ḥaramayn *waqf*. He claimed that this house at the time of the 1678 survey was not included among those houses that paid ‘*avāriż*’ taxes, but that it had later been wrongfully written into the (local) register. The qadi requested that the appropriate register preserved in Istanbul be consulted; subsequently, it was found the house that Darwīsh Muhammad was occupying was indeed part of the Ḥaramayn *waqf* and therefore tax-exempt.⁵⁹ It is clear, from survey registers, official correspondence, and court records that properties endowed to the Ḥaramayn foundation enjoyed more legal protection from ‘*avāriż*’ taxation than did other *waqfs*, including other public *waqfs*.

Liability for payment of tax on either *milk* or *waqf* property was, in the view of state authorities, strictly limited to the owner(s) of the property or the administrator of the *waqf*. In a petition submitted to the Imperial Divan in 1689, a resident of Aleppo claimed that, although he owned no real estate property requiring payment of extraordinary taxes, quarter officials were nonetheless trying to collect taxes from

⁵⁸ The Ḥaramayn *waqf* was a set of large pious foundations that regularly contributed money to the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina from throughout the Empire. For a specialized study on this *waqf* as it operated in Algiers, see Miriam Hoexter, *Endowments, Rulers, and Community: Waqf al-Haramayn in Ottoman Algiers* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1998). For how these foundations operated in Egypt, see Stanford Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 269–271; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 140, 147–148, 152–157.

⁵⁹ ES 1:26, 15 D 1101/19 September 1690. See also SMS 3:742, 3 DA 1065/4 September 1655; and SMS 34:233, 7 JA 1090/16 June 1679. In another case, this time from the countryside of Aleppo, representatives from the village of Rām Ḥamdān reported that persons from other villages in the same district, Ma‘arrat al-Miṣrīn, had tried to collect ‘*avāriż*’ taxes from them. They claimed they were exempt from such taxes because their village belonged to the Ḥaramayn *waqf*, and they produced an imperial order to that effect. The other villagers, however, countered that the village of Rām Ḥamdān was a part of the Ibn Manjik *waqf*, not the Haramayn, and was therefore subject to taxes. Significantly, the qadi refused to accept the so-called imperial order itself as sufficient proof and ordered the plaintiffs to produce an imperial register (*daftar sulṭānī*) verifying the village’s status. See SMS 10:471, 9 N 1065/13 July 1655.

him. Imperial authorities upheld the petitioner's claim.⁶⁰ If the homeowner, however, gave formal permission to one of his family to make payments on his behalf, this was considered a valid deputization in court. In a particularly interesting case, a Christian named Allāhverdi sued his father Avāsik in 1656 for repayment of a large sum of money. He charged that nine years prior his father, before embarking on a trip, had given him permission (*idhn*) to expend his own funds during his father's absence on the latter's *cizye* obligations, the extraordinary taxes assessed on his house in Shamisātiyya Quarter, and the maintenance of his wife and two minor children. All told, these expenses had amounted to 100 *ghurūsh asadī* each year, multiplied by the nine years, to equal 900 *ghurūsh asadī*. His father Avāsik countered that he had never given his son such permission, that he was gone only five years, and that he had left adequate provisions (*dhakhīra*) for his family for that period. Allāhverdi, however, produced two witnesses that testified in accordance with the original claim, that Avāsik in fact granted permission to his son in their presence. Two quarter officials also came forward and testified that Allāhverdi had been paying taxes owed on the house. The qadi subsequently ordered Avāsik to repay his son.⁶¹ From the perspective of the local court, then, tax liability, like

⁶⁰ AŞ 13:142, '647, *Awākhir* N 1100/9–18 July 1689. For an example pertaining to seventeenth-century Kayseri, see Demirci, "Complaints about *Avarız* Assessment," 467.

⁶¹ SMS 3:851, 6 JA 1066/2 March 1656. Avāsik was ordered to repay his son only 500 *ghurūsh asadī*, which suggests that some settlement was reached after negotiation. Cf. SMS 28:187, 11 R 1071/14 December 1660. Similarly, tax liabilities that were tied to ownership could be at least partially transferred through mutual agreement. One case in particular illustrates this modification, and at the same time suggests the economic and legal power urban notables could wield over villagers. In 1679, peasants from Ma'arrat al-Māristān, a village in the subdistrict of Jabal Sam'ān, sued a group (*jamā'a*) of five persons who owned orchards (pl. *kurūm*) located in the lands of their village but who did not reside in the village. Among the defendants were Aḥmad Çelebi Jawbīzāde, a member of a wealthy merchant family in Aleppo, and two members of the high-status *ashraf*. The peasants claimed that the defendants had not shared at all in the payment of extraordinary taxes (*takālīf*) that had been assessed on the inhabitants of their village, and they therefore demanded a contribution to the tax payment. The defendants replied that, on the contrary, each year they were paying two *ghurūsh asadī* to cover the ground rent (*hīkr*) and extraordinary taxes for each orchard they owned. The defendants furthermore produced a fatwa that supported their counterargument. The fatwa clarifies the arrangement between the peasants and the group, stating that both sides had agreed on the amount of the annual contribution for each orchard. What is significant here is that according to the agreement the contribution of the group was assessed not in units of *'avarīzhānes* but rather with a flat monetary rate. The peasants may have benefitted from this arrangement in years when tax levels

most other financial obligations, could be transferred from the person of the owner to an appointed representative.

If a homeowner was liable for property taxes and he regularly fulfilled his tax obligations, he was to obtain the exclusionary rights that other residents of the quarter enjoyed; that is, he was protected from certain other taxes levied by outside authorities. Instances of the extension of this protection appear most frequently when the defendant is a rural immigrant to the city or when he has some link with nomadic groups. A typical case was that of Ḥasan b. Muḥammad, a homeowner resident in the quarter of Jabīla in 1662. Persons from Ṭāʾifat al-Baqara, a bedouin tribe, sued him for payment of the *kışlak* tax, saying that he was a member of the Baqara.⁶² If Ḥasan contested their allegation that he was a member of the Baqara, the court document does not record it. More important for court authorities was Ḥasan’s status as taxpayer. Ḥasan was able to produce witnesses from Jabīla quarter who testified that he was owner of a house in the same quarter, that the house was assessed with one-half *ḥāne*, and that he was paying taxes on it. The qadi found this testimony sufficient and ordered the plaintiffs to desist from their collection of the *kışlak* tax. Similar cases arose in Kayseri in the seventeenth century.⁶³

When two or more people owned different parts of a house that was recorded in the tax register as a single tax unit, the division of tax responsibility could become a point of dispute, and in these cases a qadi would sometimes intervene. The court records contain numerous agreements between homeowners in which each party acknowledges

were low, but in years when taxes were heavy, they had to cover the remaining balance of the tax obligation. In any case, after reflection (*taʾammul*), the qadi ruled in favor of the group of landowners, saying that as long as they were paying the amount that had been agreed upon, they were under no obligation to pay more. Thus, the group of landowners were able, in essence, to alienate the liability imposed by the administrative mechanism of tax assessment, the *ʾavārīzḥāne* mechanism, in exchange for what was probably a low annual fee, while continuing to enjoy the full rights of private ownership. This set of arrangements may have been a pragmatic response to a system of tax assessments which, at least since the survey of 1678, taxed urban and rural populations on different bases. While *ʾavārīz* taxes were assessed by house (*beyt*) in the city of Aleppo, they were assessed by *nefer* (individual head of family) in the surrounding countryside. See SMS 4:78, 8 L 1090/12 November 1679.

⁶² Literally “winter pasturage,” *kışlak* specified a tax assessed on nomadic groups.

⁶³ SMS 28:579, 26 R 1073/8 December 1662. See also SMS 3:382, 23 J 1065/30 April 1655; and SMS 34:145, 17 M 1090/28 February 1679. For examples of cases in Kayseri, see Demirci, “Complaints about *Avariz* Assessment,” 468–469, 469–70.

his share of the total tax assessment.⁶⁴ The share of each owner was calculated according to how much area his property occupied, and not on the basis of the condition of the structure.⁶⁵ As parts of houses were bought and sold, such actions were taken to determine and fix tax responsibility.

On a larger scale, the qadi acted to sanction agreements or resolve disputes regarding tax apportionment between groups of homeowners, usually religious communities, within a given quarter. The relations among religious communities on these matters seem to have varied considerably. In 1662, after Muslims had purchased some houses from Christians in the extramural quarter of Hazzāza, representatives from both communities in the quarter agreed—in what appears to have been an uncontested process—to alter accordingly the proportion of the quarter's total tax that each religious community paid. In an arrangement that suggests the good relations between the communities, the Muslims agreed to collect the taxes from the Muslim houses and then, rather than remitting the revenues directly to the imperial functionary, hand them over first to Christian tax collectors, who in turn would remit, along with revenues from the Christian population, the total quarter tax payment.⁶⁶

As a counterexample, some Muslim residents of the intramural Bandara quarter complained to the qadi in 1678 that the Jewish home-

⁶⁴ SMS 3:373, 7 JA 1065/15 March 1655; SMS 24:236, 26 RA 1055/22 May 1645; SMS 24:236, 26 RA 1055/22 May 1645; SMS 26:81, 2 B 1068/5 April 1658; SMS 28:35, 27 M 1071/2 October 1660; SMS 28:735, 13 D 1073/19 July 1663; and SMS 28:217, 24 R 1071/27 December 1660. The facts of all cases of this nature set down in the court records are consistent with the information contained in the 1678 survey register: SMS 34:48, 29 B 1089/16 September 1678 with MM 8467:53b; and SMS 34:55, 11 L 1089/26 November 1689 with MM 8467:122a.

⁶⁵ Area was typically measured in the *dhirā'*, a unit of length prevalent in the Arab provinces, though the unit seems to have varied according to locality. According to Inalcik, it is roughly equivalent to an *arşun*, or 0.758 m. See Inalcik, "Introduction to Ottoman Metrology," *Turcica* 15 (1983): 311–348, esp. 328, 337, 338; and idem, *An Economic and Social History*, 987–994. Examining the court records of Aleppo earlier in the century, Antoine Abdel Nour also finds square area to have been the basis of tax assessment. See his "Habitat et structures sociales à Alep aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles," in Abdelwahab Boudhiba et Dominique Chevallier, eds., *La Ville arabe dans l'Islam* (Tunis: Université du Tunis; and Paris, Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 1983), 69–102.

⁶⁶ SMS 28:569, 18 R 1073/30 November 1662. The total quarter assessment in 1662, fifteen and one-fourth *'avārīzhānes*, was the same as that registered in the survey of 1616. Using MM 3400, MM 8467, and court documents, we can follow shifts in the proportion of taxable Muslim and Christian homeowners in Hazzaza quarter—and other quarters as well—throughout much of the seventeenth century.

owners of their quarter were no longer willing to pay their share of the tax burden, which had been to that point two-thirds of the total quarter assessment. The defendants admitted that they had for a long time paid this proportion, but they showed that they now owned only 31 of 106 taxable houses in the quarter, and they sought a re-distribution of taxes on this basis. They also produced a fatwa, or legal opinion written by a mufti, an authorized Muslim scholar. The mufti supported their claim, arguing that the distribution should be just (“*bi’l-ītidāl*”) and not dependent on precedent (“*la ‘ibra bi’l-muqaddam*”). Significantly, the mufti’s rejection of precedent is exceedingly rare to find in the court records. In disputes brought before the qadi, both residential quarters and guilds invoked ancient habit (*‘āda qadīma*) with great frequency, and they seemed to enjoy a high rate of success.⁶⁷ In this particular case, after deliberation, the qadi ruled in favor of the Jewish residents.⁶⁸ In support of the defendants, the survey of 1678 records 106 taxable houses, of which only 24 are owned by Jews.⁶⁹

In a second case in the same year, the qadi ruled in favor of the Christian residents of Almāji quarter, who had complained that the Muslim residents of the quarter sought to impose tax rates on them that were not in accordance with the three-tiered tax system dictated by the new survey register (*al-daftar al-jadīd*).⁷⁰ In these cases the findings of the survey of 1678 appear to have encouraged non-Muslim religious communities to seek changes to an old tax distribution that had ceased to reflect demographic realities or was simply disadvantageous. The foregoing examples illustrate that as the system of tax assessment based on *ḥānes* continued to function, it was mediated by communal structures that sometimes resisted adjustments, and the qadi, in order to implement such adjustments, required significant institutional support, namely periodic surveys conducted by imperial officials, and the concurring opinion of the mufti. Significantly, it appears that the survey of 1678 contributed to a distribution of tax burden that was more equitable, especially between Muslim and non-Muslim religious communities; about this more will be said in Chapter Two.

⁶⁷ For an interesting discussion on custom as it relates to guilds, see Haim Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600–1700*, (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1988), 42–45; and Chapter Three.

⁶⁸ SMS 34:11, 8 JA 1089/28 July 1678.

⁶⁹ MM 8467:33b–35a.

⁷⁰ SMS 34:79, 19 N 1089/25 October 1678. See also SMS 3:733, 25 DA 1065/26 September 1655.

The Responsibilities and Compensation of Quarter Tax Officials

Given the shifts in the regulation of local tax affairs, one may expect the responsibilities of quarter tax officials, and the dynamics between them and quarter residents, to have changed significantly in the period under study. The records of the local shari'a courts in Aleppo, on which this discussion is largely based, offer a general picture of the ways in which the quarter officials performed their tax duties, but do not, with the exception of a few suggestive documents, enable us to explore in any depth the changes that may have taken place in the quarters' organization or social composition over the course of the seventeenth century. This is true not only because the shari'a court records of Aleppo cover only parts of the seventeenth century, but also because the qadi seems to have allowed quarter officials considerable autonomy throughout this period.⁷¹

This autonomy is reflected in the variety of titles given to those collecting taxes or otherwise administering the affairs of the neighborhood. In most quarters the principal tax official was the imam or shaykh, who had other responsibilities as the principal administrator of the quarter. We also find the term *kethüda* (lieutenant or deputy), but it is unclear whether the duties of this office extended beyond tax collection.⁷² As an indication of the importance of fiscal duties, most appointment orders for the imam issued by the qadi, after commanding the incumbent to discharge the general duties of his office, further specified that he was responsible for the collection of extraordinary

⁷¹ For a general discussion of tax collection personnel empire wide, see Darling, *Revenue-raising and Legitimacy*, 161–178.

⁷² SMS 24:362–63, 371, and 376, *Awâkhir* JA 1055, 14–23 July 1645. Relying on central state fiscal documents, principally the *tapu tahrîr* registers, Enver Çakar states that in the sixteenth century the title of the chief administrative official in the quarter was *kethüda*. See XVI. *Yüzyılda Halep Sancağı (1516–1566)* (Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi), 120–121. On the variable role of the *kethüda* in the Ottoman lands, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988), 77, 152, 181, 228, 466; Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle, Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique, et sociale* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1962), 373–377, 382–386; Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 201; Halil İnalcık, "Istanbul," *EI*², 234–35; idem, "The Appointment Procedure of a Guild Warden (*Kethudâ*)," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 76 (1986): *Festschrift Andreas Tietze*, 135–42; and Jane Hathaway, who used the colloquial adaptation, "kāhya," in her *Politics of Households*, 38–39, 76–78, 86–87, 171.

taxes; rarely are other duties specified.⁷³ Assisting the imam in the task of tax collection were other residents of the quarter, some of whom were recognized with titles. Appointment documents indicate that the person occupying the office of *yiğitbaşı*, which was also found in Aleppo craft corporations of the same period, was ordinarily charged to collect taxes as the deputy of the imam.⁷⁴ In 1656 residents of Bayyāda Quarter nominated, and the qadi confirmed, 'Ali b. Kamāl as *yiğitbaşı*, to collect extraordinary taxes, with the stipulation that he collect such levies only with the sanction of the imam and of the quarter residents.⁷⁵ Another office, that of *mu'arrif*, also included tax responsibilities, and seems to have been a common usage in northern extramural Aleppo, generally referring to one deputized by the imam or higher authority.⁷⁶ How much authority a *mu'arrif* could wield is stated in an appointment document of 1660. The qadi confirmed the nomination by the Christian residents of Judayda Quarter of Maqṣūd w. Garābīd

⁷³ SMS 25:10, 17 R 1058/11 May 1648; SMS 25:168:3, 13 N 1058/1 October 1648; SMS 25:306, 4 S 1059/17 February 1649; SMS 3:677, 18 L 1065/21 August 1655; SMS 26:240, 3 L 1070/12 June 1660; SMS 26:245, 23 L 1070/2 July 1660; SMS 28:24, 25 M 1071/30 September 1660; SMS 3:813, 18 R 1066/14 February 1656; SMS 28:348, 15 J 1071/15 February 1661; SMS 34:24, 3 B 1089/21 August 1678; and SMS 34:118, 23 L 1089/8 December 1678. Sometimes the imam is qualified as "*imām ḥasabī*," probably to distinguish him from a prayer leader and religious functionary known also by an imam. See SMS 23:234 (#907), 29 B 1052/23 October 1642; and SMS 23:240(#925), 28 B 1052/22 October 1642. (Note that this register is not paginated but rather numbers each entry, with multiple entries on each page.) For the appointment of imams in villages for tax collection, see SMS 32:38, 17 D 1082/15 April 1672.

⁷⁴ SMS 23:234 (#907), 29 R 1052/23 October 1642; SMS 3:813, 16 R 1066/12 February 1656; SMS 36:220:1, 11 M 1099/17 November 1687; and SMS 36:266, 1 RA 1099/5 January 1688. See also Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī fī Bilād al-Shām fī al-'ahd al-'uthmānī," *Majallat dirāsāt tārikhiyya* (Damascus) 4 (1981): 30–62, reprinted in idem, *Buḥūth fi'l-tārikh al-iqtisādī wa'l-ijtimā'i li-Bilād al-Shām fi'l-'asr al-ḥadīth* (Damascus: n. p., 1985), 168–69; and idem, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change in Ottoman Syria," *JOAS* 111 (1991): 495–511, esp. 501.

⁷⁵ SMS 3:836, 22 B 1066/18 February 1656.

⁷⁶ SMS 27:76, 26 J 1068/31 March 1658. The term *mu'arrif* has no specific administrative meaning today but may be semantically related to *'arif*, which Lapidus defines, in the context of Mamluk Syria, as the "chief spokesman and administrator of the district... [who was] selected... by the governor of the city and was subject to removal by him." See Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 92. The sense of *mu'arrif* as a representative of a group before the authorities, and not necessarily an internal leader of the group, is further illustrated by the qadi's appointment of a *mu'arrif* for a group of individuals holding positions as brokers (*dallālin*) in the Dār al-Ghanam tax farm. In this case the person appointed as *mu'arrif* is someone other than the presumptive head of the group, the office holder (*ḍābitī*) of the tax farm.

al-Naşrānī, a young Christian man, to be their *mu'arrif* and *mutakalim* (spokesman), to handle their affairs and meet their obligations, to gather from them all customary taxes and extraordinary taxes before the authorities. They further authorized him to borrow what was necessary to meet the customary taxes imposed on them.⁷⁷ Significantly, two years later, both the Muslim and Christian residents of the quarter of Qaşṭal al-Māwardī jointly chose a Christian, Awhān w. Yāghūb, to be the *mu'arrif* of their quarter and to collect the extraordinary taxes that were levied on the quarter population.⁷⁸ Awhān w. Yāghūb may have been chosen for his wealth; at this time, Christian merchants in Aleppo and elsewhere in the empire were growing rich from trade, and wealth was a desirable if not essential qualification for these kinds of offices.⁷⁹ Finally, there is the term *lammām*, the general meaning of which is “one who gathers,” but which refers specifically either to the imam himself in his capacity as a tax collector or to an official deputized to collect taxes, or alternatively, rents on houses jointly owned by the members of the quarter.⁸⁰

Just as frequently one finds that tax collectors had no titles but were simply nominated by quarter residents to undertake the duty, probably on a temporary basis, but with substantial powers.⁸¹ In particular Christian residents of certain quarters nominated Muslims, some of them soldiers, to collect their taxes in this fashion.⁸² Christian residents of Zuqāq ‘Abd al-Ḥayy, an alley in the Khārij Bāb al-Naşr neighborhood, nominated Ḥājj Darwīsh b. Ḥājj Darwīsh Muḥammad, a resident of the same neighborhood, to collect extraordinary taxes from them, taking what was due from each house (*dār*) according to the imperial register, with the provision that anyone who disputed him in his duties “will meet with what he deserves,” i.e., some form of disciplinary action, possibly in this case corporal punishment.⁸³ In another case the residents of Mushāṭiyya Quarter settled accounts with Khalifa

⁷⁷ SMS 27:253, 5 D 1070/12 August 1660.

⁷⁸ SMS 28:529, 19 RA 1073/1 November 1662.

⁷⁹ Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 62–64, 90–105; idem, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 71–80.

⁸⁰ SMS 2:573, 22 M 1087/6 April 1676; and SMS 41:341, 27 JA 1112/9 November 1700.

⁸¹ SMS 28:723, 15 D 1073/21 July 1663; SMS 28:68, 16 S 1072/11 October 1661.

⁸² SMS 3:733, 25 DA 1065/26 September 1655; SMS 28:107, 5 RA 1071/8 November 1660.

⁸³ SMS 3:391, 25 JA 1065/2 April 1655.

b. ‘Abdullāh, a person whom they had appointed to be a collector of extraordinary taxes, but in the same document they also released him from any claims relating to the cash endowment (*waqf*) of the quarter and the endowment of the congregational mosque located in the quarter.⁸⁴ These additional releases suggest that he had a wider range of responsibility.

The perception that the imam and other quarter officials enjoyed considerable autonomy must be balanced with evidence that other officials—on the city level—exercised some authority in the affairs of quarters. An official for whom we possess little information but who may have had some supervisory role over the imam, is the *shaykh al-balad*.⁸⁵ One document dated 1678 records that a large delegation of quarter imams succeeded in removing the *shaykh al-balad* from office for reasons that are only vaguely described. The specific duties of the *shaykh al-balad* remain unspecified. Forty-one persons, representing thirty-six quarters, half of them imams of their quarters, reported that Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Daqqāq, popularly known as “Qarā Imām,” then occupying the office of *shaykh al-balad*, was idle (*‘āṭil*) and treacherous (*khā’in*), and provoked public disturbances (*muwaqqiz li’l-fitan*), and was thus unsuitable for that office. They recommended in his place a previous *shaykh al-balad*, saying that his conduct with the poor people of the area (*fuqarā’ al-balda*) had been better. Acceding to their request, the qadi removed him and appointed their recommended replacement.⁸⁶ It is tempting to draw a connection between this action and the survey of 1678 described above. The survey register records that a certain Shaykh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad *Shaykh al-Balad* owned a house in the quarter of Jallūm al-Kubrā and, more

⁸⁴ SMS 31:342a, 29 J 1076/6 January 1666.

⁸⁵ This office does not seem to have had any importance in Syrian cities under the Mamluk Sultanate. See Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 92–95. Nor does it appear as an office in the other great Syrian city, Damascus, in the early Ottoman Period. See Muhammad Adnan Bakhit, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century* (Beirut: Libraire du Liban, 1982). The office may have evolved from the position of *şehir kethüdası* (“city steward”) that was occupied in the mid-sixteenth century; see Enver Çakar, XVI. *Yüzyılda Haleb Sancağı*, 89–91. Jane Hathaway describes *shaykh al-balad* as an administrative innovation asserted by a rebellious Ottoman official in mid-eighteenth-century Egypt and later appropriated by the Ottoman central authorities as a legitimate. See her “Ottoman Responses to Çerkes Mehmed Bey’s Rebellion in Egypt, 1730,” in idem., ed., *Mutiny and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2002), 105–113, esp. 107–108.

⁸⁶ SMS 34:36, 11 B 1089/29 August 1089.

significantly, that the property was declared tax-exempt (*mu'āf*) because of the many services he provided in the course of the survey.⁸⁷ We might conjecture that the quarter officials of the city banded together to oust Shaykh Muḥammad due to his conduct during the recent survey. He may have, for example, too readily collaborated with the surveyor, undermining the efforts of the quarter officials to limit the depth or scope of the survey, or he may have shown favor to certain interests and segments of the population (note that among the imams only half of the quarters are represented).

More reliable is a second document, dated fifteen years earlier, which indicates that one of the duties of the *shaykh al-balad* was management of the local *manzil* system. It records the attendance in court of a certain Shaykh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad “*Shaykh al-Balda*,” perhaps the same person described above, who was included in a group of three persons, the other two being soldiers of officer rank. Together they verified before the judge the status of a certain house as not being a *manzil* (or *ḵonaḵ*), that is, a house designated for the quartering of soldiers or officials. Thus, one of the duties of the *shaykh al-balad* may have been the apportionment of *manzil* responsibilities among the urban quarters—a duty that would have had city-wide importance and that required balancing the needs and demands of different neighborhoods of the city. Judging from the limited number of documents at our disposal, we may say generally that the *shaykh al-balad* undertook to distribute the fiscal obligations when they were assessed on the population of Aleppo as a whole and as such may have intervened from time to time in the affairs of individual quarters.

That, in general, quarter residents appointed as tax collectors not only the imam and his titled assistants but also other persons without title or position indicates the labor-intensive nature of the process. Tax collections covering the entire quarter became frequent and routine, and considerable manpower was needed. Hence, when in 1655 the qadi ruled that Sayyidī Maṣṣūr b. ʿAbdullāh, a resident of Baḥṣita Quarter, was released from *ʿavārız* tax payments, he felt it appropriate to warn no fewer than seven persons that they were not to levy any tax on him.⁸⁸ In 1662, seven persons, all of them Jews living in the Quarter

⁸⁷ MM 8467:11b, 1089/1678–79. Shaykh Muḥammad was one of only seven persons city-wide granted tax exemption in exchange for their service during the survey.

⁸⁸ SMS 3:386, 26 JA 1065/3 April 1655. Documents certifying tax exemption found in the court records frequently admonish multiple tax collectors not to collect taxes on the bearer of the document.

of the Jews (Maḥallat al-Yahūd), agreed to assist the imam by collecting taxes for him one day out of each week.⁸⁹ Such demands of time and effort raise the question of material compensation. How were such officials remunerated, if at all? In this document the seven persons “pledge” their commitment to serve as tax collectors, suggesting theirs was a voluntary action undertaken without compensation.⁹⁰

The majority of appointments of imams and their assistants, however, explicitly state that such officials will receive some form of material compensation. Whereas central finance officials involved in direct tax collection were allocated a certain proportion of the ‘avārız tax revenues they collected, customarily called *ma‘āş* or *ma‘īšet*, local tax officials such as the imam and *yığıtbaşı* were, in separate transactions, assigned salaries or granted tax exemptions by the residents of the quarter themselves.⁹¹ In 1663 the residents of Bayyāda quarter nominated Ḥusayn Çelebi b. ‘Alī to be a tax collector, assigning him a daily allowance of twenty-five *ağçes*.⁹² Other salary assignments consisted of the monetary equivalent of a *hāne* or a fraction thereof.⁹³ Still others awarded a full or partial tax credit for property owned.⁹⁴ The residents of Guljuk Quarter in 1649 jointly agreed to collect from the imam Murād b. Muḥammad the taxes due on one-half of the *hāne* assessed on his house and to pay, in exchange for his services, the remaining

⁸⁹ SMS 28:567, 17 RA 1073/30 October 1662.

⁹⁰ The verb *ta‘ahhada* as it is used in the court records of Aleppo means “to pledge” or “to promise” and connotes a voluntary action. In a series of appointments for tax collecting positions in the large quarter of Khārij Bāb al-Naşr, the appointees pledge (*ta‘ahhada*) to carry out their duties as assistants to the steward (*kethüda*) of the quarter. No compensation is mentioned. See SMS 24:362–63, 371, and 376, all dated *Awākhir* JA 1055/14–23 July 1645. Cf. SMS 38:330, 26 D 1101/30 September 1690 and SMS 3:703, 8 DA 1065/9 September 1655.

⁹¹ According to an imperial orders commanding tax collection in AH 1102/1691–92 CE, the central finance officials bearing ‘avārız tax revenues from the province to the central treasury were entitled to a fee called *ma‘āş* or *ma‘īšet*, which would be collected additionally from each *hāne* tax unit. According to one series of documents, central finance officials were entitled to collect for themselves 50 *ağçes* beyond the 400 *ağçes* levied on each ‘avārızhāne. See ES 1:35, 12 N 1101/19 June 1690; ES 1:45, 20 D 1101/24 September 1690; and ES 1:46, 10 D 1101/14 September 1690). An alternative name for this fee was the *ghulāmiyya*, which may refer to the status of the finance official as a slave (*ghulām*) of the sultan. See SMS 3:855, 3 JA 1066/28 February 1656. The system of remuneration for the imams of quarters stayed the same into the eighteenth century. See Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 325.

⁹² SMS 28:723, 15 D 1073/21 July 1663; and SMS 26:245, 23 L 1070/2 July 1660.

⁹³ SMS 31:383a, 15 M 1077/18 July 1666; SMS 28:24, 25 M 1071/30 September 1660; SMS 36:266, 1 RA 1099/5 January 1688

⁹⁴ SMS 3:836, 22 R 1066/18 February 1656; SMS 28:107, 5 RA 1071/8 November 1660.

half.⁹⁵ The variety of compensation arrangements, much like the variety of position titles, points to the internal autonomy of quarter tax administration.

The fact that tax collectors were paid by the residents of their district indicates that they were less government officials than local residents invested with official recognition. Accordingly, each party held the other accountable and each instituted procedures by which they could settle financial accounts, usually falling at the end of a tax year or at the end of an official's tenure.⁹⁶ For the purposes of this discussion, these procedures are less interesting in themselves than in the ways they highlight the authority and the economic and political status of the tax officials, especially the imam. What documents survive from this period show that in several cases residents owed the imam a certain sum of money. Some imams were no doubt selected in part because they had the cash to cover the tax obligations of the poorer residents of the quarter, at least in the short term. In 1656 the imam of Bayyāḍa quarter, Shaykh Muḥammad b. Ḥājj Ḥabīb, sued six residents, claiming they had failed to pay customary levies (Ar. *takālif 'urfīyya*) for a period of three years, 'avārīz taxes for one year, dues for the maintenance of the quartering (*manzil*) system and provisions during a recent siege of the city, totaling a substantial sum of 186 *ghurūsh riyālī*—all of which he had paid on their behalf. The defendants did not contest his claim and acknowledged the debt.⁹⁷ In cases where the imam owed money to the residents, the document certified his immediate payment or the residents' forgiveness of the debt in recognition of expenditures he had undertaken on behalf of the quarter.⁹⁸ The settling of accounts, if satisfactory, was furthermore an occasion

⁹⁵ SMS 25:306, 4 S 1059/17 February 1649.

⁹⁶ SMS 28:325, 4 B 1071/5 March 1661; SMS 28:372, 28 D 1072/14 August 1662; SMS 31:342a, 29 J 1076/6 January 1666; SMS 31:359a, 27 Ş 1076/4 March 1666; SMS 31:369a, 3 D 1076/7 May 1666; SMS 31:387b/24 M 1077/27 July 1666; SMS 2:577, 8 S 1087/22 April 1676; SMS 34:183, 8 RA 1090/19 April 1679; and SMS 36:213, 2 M 1099/8 November 1687.

⁹⁷ SMS 3:810, 14 R 1066/10 February 1656. The *ghirsh riyālī* was the Spanish real. In the period of study, it was equal roughly to 1.117 times the value of the *ghirsh asadī*. See Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 149–52; and Pamuk, "Evolution of the Ottoman Monetary System," 956, 964–965; idem, *Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*, 99–111, 142–148; and SMS 2:281, 2 JA 1073/12 December 1662 and SMS 32:435, 25 Ş 1085/24 September 1674.

⁹⁸ SMS 32:504, 13 M 1086/9 April 1675; SMS 37:300, 19 S 1099/25 December 1687; SMS 36:220, 11 M 1099/16 November 1687, cf. SMS 36:266, 1 RA 1099/5 January 1688).

for the quarter residents to affirm the upright and honest character of the imam and to express their confidence in his continued service.

When the accounts could not be reconciled, however, both parties had recourse to the shari‘a court. The limited number of cases does not permit firm generalizations but rather offers some suggestive evidence on the substantial credibility and authority that the imam generally enjoyed. When in 1662 after a prolonged dispute the residents of Jubb Asadullāh Quarter sued their imam Sayyid Ya‘qūb for embezzlement (*ikhṭilās*) of quarter funds, the qadi ruled, in the apparent absence of witnesses, in favor of the imam, explaining that “Sayyid Ya‘qūb is authorized (‘*ma‘dhūn*’) by the [quarter residents] to manage receipts and expenditures like his counterparts in other quarters, so his word and his oath (*yamīn*) are sufficient [for the court].”⁹⁹ Thus the commission of office that quarter residents gave to the imam, based as it was on integrity and upright conduct, conferred on him a credibility which could be challenged only with considerable effort and difficulty. Accordingly, the removal of the imam from office for misconduct seems always to require an assembly of the urban notables resident in the quarter, notables whose social status and credibility alone would have exceeded his own.¹⁰⁰

To consider, in general, the responsibilities and social composition of imams allows us to further qualify their social status and thus to understand more fully the relationship between tax payer and tax collector. Studies focusing on the Mamluk Sultanate and on later Ottoman periods show that the duties of the imam included, in addition to tax collection, mediation between quarter residents and the authorities, and the handling of collective tasks prescribed by the government, namely the upkeep of local facilities, the prevention of crime, the organization of self-defense, and the maintenance of public morality; seventeenth-century court records confirm these duties and notably add the contracting of marriages.¹⁰¹ Given such a broad range of

⁹⁹ SMS 28:379, *Awāsiṭ* D 1072/2 July 1662.

¹⁰⁰ SMS 3:674, 14 L 1065/17 August 1655; SMS 25:112, 5 B 1058/26 July 1648; SMS 25:168, 13 N 1058/1 October 1648; SMS 25:290, 22 D 1058/6 January 1649; and SMS 28:563, 10 R 1073/22 November 1662. On the relationship between social status and credibility of legal testimony in the Ottoman court system, see Canbakal, *Society and Politics*, 123–49.

¹⁰¹ Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 92–93; and Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 325–26. An example of an appointment authorizing an imam to contract marriages, among other duties, is SMS 26:245, 23 L 1070/2 July 1660. It is logical that this duty would be given

responsibilities, one would suppose that imams were members of the social and political elite, yet they seem to have possessed only middling status. Few or none of the imams appearing in the court records were members of local elite families, who usually distinguished themselves by adopting family names and various titles.¹⁰² This contrasts with pre-Tanzimat Istanbul, where the imam was the “central figure of the neighborhood community,” typically combining religious leadership in the local mosque with lucrative administrative duties, most notably trusteeship of local charitable foundations (*waqfs*) and tax assessment and collection.¹⁰³ Still, the imams of quarters in Aleppo must have enjoyed some measure of power and prestige, given their ability to dispense patronage through the distribution of privileges and tasks. Some had sufficient social status to bring others to court for public defamation or slander.¹⁰⁴ Others were able to stay in office for years at a time and still others passed on their office to their brothers or sons.¹⁰⁵

A sign perhaps of decline in the social status of imam was a Turkish-language order issued in 1684 by the qadi of Aleppo directing his deputies not to authorize imams of quarters (*mahallāt imāmları*) to contract marriages because, in his words, most of them were illiterate (*ümmī*) and ignorant (*cāhil*). Only imams and *ḥaṭībs* (preachers)

to the imam since it would have enabled him to know who was married to whom within the quarter and therefore to identify and prevent extramarital liaisons, which subverted public morality for which he had prominent responsibility. Additionally, the court records of Aleppo mention that imams were responsible for accounting for any strangers (*ajānib*) lodging in the quarter. See SMS 25:295, 8 M 1059/22 January 1649.

¹⁰² Elite status here is based on the use of family names, the value of real estate exchanges and of moneylending transactions. This observation is consistent with that of Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 325, who is describing Aleppan society in the middle of the 18th century. For a view that contrasts with Marcus, see Jean-Pierre Thieck, “Décentralisation ottomane et affirmation urbaine à Alep à la fin du XVIII^e siècle,” *Mouvements communautaires et espaces urbains au Machreq* (Paris: Centre d’Études et de Recherches sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain (CERMOC), 1985), republished in Jean-Pierre Thieck, *Passion d’Orient* (Paris: Karthala, 1992), 113–76, esp. 125–26, 164–65.

¹⁰³ Cem Behar, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul: Fruit Vendors and Civil Servants in the Kasap İlyas Mahalle* (Albany: State University of New York, 2003), 68–78.

¹⁰⁴ SMS 27:95, 9 N 1068/10 June 1658. One pattern that arises from the shari’a court records is that generally only persons of high status, especially the *ashraf*, tended to sue for public defamation (*shatm*) or slander (*iftirā*).

¹⁰⁵ SMS 32:504, 13 M 1086/9 April 1675; SMS 28:348, 15 J 1071/15 February 1661; and SMS 24:270, 18 R 1055/13 June 1645.

connected with mosques, he continued, were qualified, and he would authorize such persons himself.¹⁰⁶ Did the changing nature of tax duties have any connection to this decline in social status? As tax-collection became more frequent and overrode other duties in the later half of the century, the profile of an imam may have shifted from an educated and multi-skilled administrator, to an uneducated person, perhaps a soldier or strongman who, being familiar with the use of force, could extract taxes more efficiently. This shift, if true, would parallel a process among non-Muslim communities, specifically the ethnic Greeks and Armenians, in which bankers, merchants, and other parvenu “secular” groups came to compete with the religious hierarchy for communal leadership.¹⁰⁷

The preceding discussion has considered customary tax collection practices at the quarter level. The occasional large-scale surveys, conducted by central finance officials and qadis, and the regularized, perhaps monthly or weekly, tax collections, carried out by local tax officials, formed the dominant rhythm of central state intervention for seventeenth-century urban Aleppans. Yet, however frequently the state and its agents collected taxes, their efforts were constrained by the basic material conditions of the population and by even small changes in their settlement patterns.

A Fiscal Demography of Aleppo

Whether chastened by famine, disease, or war, or drawn by economic opportunity or fertile land, the population of Aleppo and its hinterland, it is argued here, underwent noticeable shifts in the proportion of urban to rural settlement in the seventeenth century. What follows is an attempt at fiscal demography, specifically, an attempt to draw, on the basis of ‘*avāriż*’ tax records, some tentative, limited conclusions concerning the distribution of population and wealth in the province of Aleppo in the period under study, with emphasis on the city of Aleppo.

¹⁰⁶ SMS 35:60, 19 B 1095/2 July 1684.

¹⁰⁷ Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, “Introduction,” in idem, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982), 1–34, esp. 17–22.

Students of Ottoman history have been reluctant to employ *‘avārız* tax records as a source for demographic analysis, for three primary reasons. First, the highly variable value of the *hāne* as an indicator of numbers of households—a question that has engaged the attention of historians for some time—renders it an unreliable indicator of raw population numbers, especially over large geographical areas. For each *hāne*, the official number of *nefers*, literally “individual” but meaning a head of a household, varied greatly from place to place, from as few as 3 to as many as 15.¹⁰⁸ The second issue with *hāne* counts is that they may have omitted the registration of significant numbers of the population who, because of their status as government officials (*‘askerī* status), were exempt from taxation.¹⁰⁹ Small-scale local adjustments to the tax burden, entered in this period into both central fiscal records and local court documents, may reflect less change in population than the acquisition of tax privileges by powerful individuals. Finally, the steady, absolute decline of *hāne* numbers across the empire from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, documented by McGowan and Demirci and mirrored in the movement of *hāne* numbers of the province of Aleppo, raises questions of whether the *‘avārız* tax system itself was in decline.¹¹⁰ As other kinds of extraordinary taxes came to compete with and override *‘avārız* taxes, the accounting system by which *‘avārız* taxes were assessed may have been updated less frequently and carefully, thus affecting its descriptive potential to historians as a measure of demographics and economic activity. Still, it is

¹⁰⁸ Ö.L. Barkan, “Essai sur les données statistiques des registres des recensement dans l’empire ottoman aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles,” *JESHO* 1 (1958): 9–36; Leila Erder, “Measurement of Pre-Industrial Population Changes: The Ottoman Empire from the 15th to the 17th Century,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 11 (1975): 284–301; Necat Göyünç, “Hane’ Deyimi hakkında,” *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 32 (March 1979): 331–348; Kemal Karpat, “The Ottoman Family: Documents Pertaining to Its Size,” *IJTS* 4 (1987): 137–145; Maria Todorova, “Was There a Demographic Crisis in the Ottoman Empire in the Seventeenth Century?” *Études balkaniques* 24 (1988): 55–63, esp. 59–62; and Bekir Kemal Ataman, “Ottoman Demographic History (14th–17th Centuries): Some Considerations,” *JESHO* 35 (1992): 187–198.

¹⁰⁹ Persons coming to the shari‘a court to confirm their tax-exempt status frequently produced documents issued by previous qadis certifying that they have “neither name or fee” (*‘lā ism wa lā rasm*) recorded in the *‘avārızhāne* defter, and are therefore tax-exempt.

¹¹⁰ McGowan, *Ottoman Europe*, 114, 120; and Demirci, “Demography and History,” 15–24. See also the declining share of *‘avārız* tax receipts in eighteenth-century Ottoman budgets as tabulated by Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı Maliyesi*, 153–164.

worth undertaking analysis of *hāne* counts as long as such analysis can in some measure address these criticisms.¹¹¹

Four administrative “events” in the seventeenth century generate the principal sources for the analysis, the first two being the ‘*avārīz hāne taḥrīr*’ surveys of 1616 and 1678, and the third and fourth, the *tevzī* (“distribution”) assessments of 1690 and 1700. The findings are presented in Table 1.1. We have relied primarily on documents from these counts because they are the only counts which provide detail down to the local level and which were apparently the results of personal inspection, either by central government officials or by qadis appointed to the localities. As described above, the surveys of 1616 and 1678 enumerate individual houses. As for the assessments of 1690 and 1700, they enumerate the tax burden by urban quarters.¹¹² For purposes of comparison, we have included counts from other documents considered less reliable: (1) the updated count taken from annotations to entries in the survey register of 1616; (2) an ‘*avārīz*’ register dated 1656; and (3) a second ‘*avārīz*’ register dated 1706–7. When using the ‘*avārīz hāne taḥrīr*’ registers, this analysis will not consider the absolute decline of the *hāne* number as an indicator of demographic change. Changes in the *proportion* of the total province-wide tax burden undertaken by administrative subunits, such as rural districts and the urban quarters of Aleppo, will be considered as more reliable indicators of demographic shifts.¹¹³

¹¹¹ A recent and more elaborate attempt at drawing demographic trends from taxation data, but in the central Danube basin in Ottoman Europe, is Moaçanin, *Town and Country*, 194–232.

¹¹² Other available fiscal records, mostly notably a long series of extant ‘*avārīz*’ and *bedel-i nüzül* registers preserved in the Ottoman state archives, ordinarily provide counts only down to the level of the subdistrict (*nāḥiye*) and city (e.g. *Nefs-i Haleb*), and may have been more susceptible to interference by local interests. Most of these ‘*avārīz*’ and *bedel-i nüzül* records are merely updates of *hāne* counts that were adjusted as individual tax exemptions were approved—and not necessarily checked by a disinterested party until the next survey or assessment. Such counts may therefore include more tax exemptions obtained through influence and would therefore misrepresent the changes in the economic if not demographic strength of a given area. See McGowan, *ibid.*, pp. 111–12, 115–120; and *idem.*, “Osmanlı Avarız-Nüzül Teşekkülü, 1600–1830.” Cf. Linda Darling, “Avarız Tahriri: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Ottoman Survey Registers,” *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 10 (1986): 23–26.

¹¹³ The decision to emphasize changes in the relative, and not absolute, values of local tax categories is in part drawn from the analysis in Suraiya Faroqhi, “Taxation and Urban Activities in Sixteenth-Century Anatolia,” *IJTS* 1 (1979/1980): 18–53.

Restricting the sources, then, to the ‘*avārīzḥāne taḥrīr* and *tevzī*’ registers, and furthermore recognizing the shortcomings of these counts as well, we obtain four snapshots of the distribution of *ḥānes* across the province (*vilāyet*) of Aleppo from 1616–17 to 1706–7. A preliminary review yields several significant observations. First, judging from the high percentage of the tax paid by the city of Aleppo, we conclude that the tax burden fell disproportionately on the shoulders of the

Table 1.1. Numbers of Tax Units (‘*Avārīzḥānes*) in the Province (*Vilāyet*) of Aleppo, 1616 to 1707

Administrative Unit	<i>Taḥrīr</i> *		1656	<i>Taḥrīr</i>	<i>Tevzī</i>	<i>Tevzī</i>	1706–7
	1616–17	1626–27		1678–79	1690	1700	
City of Aleppo (<i>Maḥallāt-i Haleb</i>)	3576	3245	3209	2690	2399	2022	2122
Subdistrict (<i>Nāḥiye</i>) of Jabal Sam’an	229	214	210	362	261	168	168
Subdistrict of Bāb	167	167	168	92	50	31	31
Subdistrict of Jabbūl	32	39	39	56	36	25	25
Total—District (<i>Ḳazā</i>) of Aleppo	4004	3665	3626	3200	2746	2246	2346
City as Percentage of District	89%	89%	88%	84%	87%	90%	90%
Province (<i>Vilāyet</i>) of Aleppo†	4837	4533	4617	4788	4583	3236	3215
City as Percentage of Province	74%	72%	69%	56%	52%	62%	66%

Sources: Istanbul, Başbakanlık Arşivi, Maliyeden Müdevver (MM) 3400 (1616–17 and 1626–27), Kamil Kepeci (KK) 2626 (1656); MM 8467 (1678–79), MM 3837 (1678–79), KK 2802 (1700), MM 3808 (1706–7); Damascus, Dār al-Wathā’iq, Evāmīr-i Sulṭāniyye 1:32–33 (1690).

* The term “*taḥrīr*” designates the counting results of imperial surveys by the same name. “*Tevzī*” designates counts which, unlike the *taḥrīr*, do not itemize individual households (*beyts*).

† The core judicial districts (*ḳazā*’s) of the province of Aleppo (*Vilāyet-i Haleb*) in the seventeenth century were, besides the *ḳazā*’ of Aleppo itself, Antakya, Ariḥa, Ma’arrat Mişrīn, Sarmin, Dirḳūsh, Ḥārim, Kafr Ṭāb, Tizīn, Idlib al-Şughra, Baghrāş, Shaykh al-Ḥadīd, Munbij and Rāvādan, Ma’arrat al-Nu’mān, and Shāghūr. See, as an example of the administrative breakdown of the province, MM 3837, p. 63, dated AH 1089. For parts of the seventeenth century the province of Aleppo extended its administrative reach to the more distant districts of ‘Ayntab, Birecik, and Ruha (Urfa), and several subdistricts of the provinces of Adana and Mar’ash, but because these were not recorded with consistency in central fiscal records as subordinate to Aleppo, they were excluded from this analysis. See Enver Çakar, XVI. *Yüzyılda Haleb Sancağı (1516–1566)* (Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi, 2003), 17–40; and idem, 17. *Yüzyılda Haleb Eyaleti ve Türkmenleri* (Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi, 2006), 56–70.

population settled in the city, as opposed to the peasants living in the outlying rural districts. It is remarkable to find that in an agrarian society where the vast majority of the population were presumably peasant agriculturalists, the tax apportionment should be so heavily weighted toward the population of a large city. As a point of comparison, *hāne* figures for several sub-provincial districts (*livā*'s) in central and eastern Anatolia in the same century show a wide range of proportions between the *każā*' of the administrative seat and the other *każā*'s, from as little as 9% in the *livā*' of Bozok to as much as 84% in the *livā*' of Kayseri.¹¹⁴ This pattern may simply reflect the geographic and demographic peculiarities of each area and the arbitrariness of administrative line drawing; in the case of Aleppo it suggests the degree to which the city dominated the provincial economy.

Second, by comparing *hāne* counts of the city of Aleppo (*Nefs-i Haleb*) to that of the district of Aleppo (*Każā'-yı Haleb*), which comprised the city and the three surrounding rural subdistricts (*nāḥiyes*), we notice important shifts in the rural and urban components of the tax base. Whereas in 1616 the count for the city of Aleppo reached 3576 *hānes*, or 89 percent of the *każā*'-wide total, by 1678 it had fallen to 2690 *hānes*, or 84 percent. The subsequent assessments of 1690 and 1700 show that the city of Aleppo, though its *hāne* count was declining in absolute terms, was again taking an increasing share of the *każā*'-wide total, measured at 2399 of 2746 *hānes* (87 percent) and 2022 of 2246 *hānes* (90 percent), respectively. On a province-wide scale, a parallel movement was taking place but with greater proportional changes and a considerable delay. Whereas in 1616 the count for the city of Aleppo reached 74 percent of the provincial total of 4837 *hānes*, by 1678 it had fallen to 56 percent of that total. The subsequent assessments show that, in variance with the internal changes within the district of Aleppo, the city of Aleppo continued to take a decreasing share of the provincial count in the assessment of 1690, but then rebounded in the assessment of 1700. Counts for the city of Aleppo in 1689–90 made up 52 percent of the provincial total and in 1700, 62 percent. On both the *każā*' and *vilāyet* levels, then, the survey of 1678 marks, in comparison with the survey of 1616, a significant redistribution of *hānes*, imposing a proportionally heavier tax burden on the outlying

¹¹⁴ Demirci, "History and Demography," 15–24. The other *livā*'s studied are those of Sivas and Konya.

subdistricts of the province and effectively relieving the city of Aleppo of 25 percent of its tax burden. This redistribution seems to have been more or less sustained through the *tevzi* assessment of 1690. The subsequent assessment of 1700, which imposed a heavier proportion of the provincial tax burden on the city of Aleppo, marks a reverse trend, though never returning to the proportions of 1616.

There are several possible interpretations to the redistribution of *hānes* from the city to the countryside taking place with the survey of 1678. The outlying districts and subdistricts of Aleppo province in the period from 1616 to 1678 may have undergone considerable demographic expansion, or the surveyors may have included populations in remote areas who had previously gone untaxed or under-taxed.¹¹⁵ One could also make the argument that the city of Aleppo had contracted, given that the *hāne* count had dropped 25 percent, from 3576 to 2690 *hānes*. Other evidence, however, challenges such a conclusion. Household units that were termed “*hānes*” in the sixteenth-century *tapu tahrîr* registers and “*beyts*” in the ‘*avārîzhāne tahrîr*’ registers, and upon which the ‘*avārîzhāne*’ counts are based, attained their greatest number in the 1678 survey.¹¹⁶ A count in 1683 by French Consul Chevalier Laurent d’Arvieux, which was first analyzed by André Raymond, appears to corroborate this trend, as it shows that the aggregate number of households continued to increase from 1678 to 1683.¹¹⁷ Such a finding, then, supports the contention that the city of Aleppo was in a period of population expansion.

If one accepts the supposition that the city of Aleppo was expanding, how do we explain the drop in the *hāne* count after one of the most intensive *tahrîr* surveys conducted in the seventeenth century? It may

¹¹⁵ Demirci, “History and Demography,” 10–11.

¹¹⁶ MM 8467: 140a. See Wilkins, “Households, Guilds, and Neighborhoods,” 75f.

¹¹⁷ Chevalier d’Arvieux (1635–1702), *Memoires du Chevalier d’Arvieux*, 6 Vols. (Paris: C.J.B. Desespine, 1735), VI: 434–438; and André Raymond, “The Population of Aleppo in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries According to Ottoman Census Documents,” *IJMES* 16 (1984):447–60. D’Arvieux may have viewed a working copy of MM 8467 used by the finance officials in Aleppo in 1683, some five years after the survey had taken place. In a recent study, Çakar examines MM 8476 for aggregate population figures and questions Raymond’s estimate, arguing that the multiplying factor Raymond uses is too high. Both authors contend, however, that there was substantial demographic growth over the course of the seventeenth century. Raymond estimates the city’s 1678 population at 115,000 residents, while Çakar’s figure is 95,000. See Çakar, 17. *Yüzyılda Halep Eyaleti*, 143; cf. Öztürk, “1616 Tarihli Halep Avarız-Hane Defteri,” 255.

be that survey officials also raised the demographic value of the *hāne* unit. Demirci observes that such a change took place in Kayseri in the 1640s when the *hāne* assessment did not rise proportionally with the documented *nefer* count, apparently as a result of negotiation.¹¹⁸ There is in the case of Aleppo no direct evidence of such an administrative change. One major innovation in the 1678 survey that may have had some effect on *hāne* valuation was the institution of the progressive, three-tiered *ednā/evsaṭ/a'lā* tax assessment system in the city of Aleppo. If the value of the *hāne* did increase, assuming that each *hāne* assessed in outlying districts was capable of bearing a burden equal to that of *hānes* in the city of Aleppo, then the countryside would also have undergone a considerable repopulation.¹¹⁹ There is, unfortunately, little corroborating evidence to suggest that rural repopulation did take place leading up to the 1678 survey. For example, while five villages in the subdistrict (*nāhiye*) of Jabal Sam‘ān are recorded in the register of the 1678 *taḥrīr* survey as being resettled (*müceddeden iskān ṣode*), four others are said to have become “deserted and ruined” (*ḥālī ḥarāb*).¹²⁰ One recent study suggests that over the long term state initiatives to resettle populations in the area met only partial success, as heavy state taxes on the one hand and recurring nomadic incursions on the other compelled some settlers to flee once more.¹²¹ In any event, the redistribution of *hānes* from the city to countryside documented in the 1678 survey, in all constituting a sixty-six percent tax burden increase for the rural districts of the province, must be regarded as an important indicator of the increased confidence that survey officials, as first-hand observers of local conditions, had in the current and future agricultural productivity of that area.

If the period 1616 to 1678 can be characterized as one of both urban and rural expansion, the remaining years of the century can be characterized as an era of stagnation, if not minor demographic

¹¹⁸ Demirci, “History and Demography,” 5.

¹¹⁹ Such an assumption must be made explicit, since in the 1678–79 survey accounting terms varied between urban and rural areas: in the city of Aleppo one *‘avārīz hāne* equaled 3.5 *beyts*, while in the countryside it equalled a value ranging between 6 and 12 *nefers*, or adult males, the general average being 11.5 *nefers*. Compare, for example, MM 8467, p. 5b and 146a.

¹²⁰ MM 8467, pp. 172b, 189a, 191a, 193a, 193b.

¹²¹ Çakar, *17. Yüzyılda Haleb Eyaleti*, 119–126. On resettlement initiatives from a state perspective, see Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *XVIII Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda İskan Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleşmesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991).

contraction. A pattern of economic stagnation was mirrored in Egypt, where flooding, famine, and high commodity prices struck the local populations hard.¹²² Shifting climate patterns may have also been a factor; unusually cold winters in Europe in the 1690s probably contributed to crop failures and famine.¹²³ Other contributing factors may have been the recurrence of epidemic disease.¹²⁴ In the province of Aleppo, the reverse movement of *hānes* from the countryside to the city, recorded first on the *każā*' level in the 1690 and 1700 assessments, and later on the *vilāyet* level in 1700, may reflect not only a decline in rural population but also, and more specifically, migration to the city of Aleppo, perhaps for reasons of security.¹²⁵ One does not find such a redistribution of *hānes* among *każā*'s (that is, between the *każā*' of the administrative seat and the outlying *każā*'s in the same *vilāyet*) in Anatolia, suggesting that demographic patterns may have differed significantly between the two regions, with Anatolia enjoying greater demographic stability.¹²⁶

That the reductions of *hānes* for the city and for the countryside in both assessments follow a roughly similar ratio suggests a stable and continuous demographic movement. The 1690 assessment orders the reduction of 202 urban *hānes*, and 364 rural *hānes*, for a ratio of 1:1.80; and the 1700 assessment orders a reduction of 377 urban *hānes*, and 597 rural *hānes*, for a ratio of 1:1.58. Official correspondence corroborates that these years were challenging for the provincial population. The 1690 tax assessment and reduction appear to be a direct response by central state authorities to a petition in the same year by the population of the province of Aleppo. Summarized in administrative records in Istanbul and recorded in the body of the imperial order that was entered in the shari'a court of Aleppo, the petition states that the people of the province are struggling to pay their *'avāriż* taxes

¹²² Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I: 81–106.

¹²³ Stoye, "Soldiers and Civilians," 764–765; and John. A. Eddy, "The 'Maunder Minimum': Sunspots and Climate Change in the Reign of Louis XIV," in Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, eds., *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd Ed. (London: Routledge, 1997), 264–298; and Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, "Introduction," in idem, eds., *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd Ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 1–31, esp. 6–13.

¹²⁴ According to Ghazzī, the plague (*tā'ūn*) struck Aleppo in the years 1669–70, 1685–86, and 1690–91. See *Nahr al-dhahab* III: 225, 228.

¹²⁵ Masters, "Patterns of Migration to Ottoman Aleppo in the 17th and 18th Centuries," *IJTS* 4 (1989): 75–89; and Çakar, *17. Yüzyılda Haleb Eyaleti*, 144.

¹²⁶ Demirci, "History and Demography," 15–24.

because they have been impoverished by the frequency of these and other exactions (*tekālîf*) and, more recently, by new exactions forcibly imposed by governors and their representatives. In response the central authorities prohibited the collection of the new exactions, calling them an abominable innovation (“*bid‘a-yi munkare ve muzlîme-yi ‘azîme*”).¹²⁷ The imperial order commanding the tax assessment and reduction was issued less than three weeks later.¹²⁸

While there is no direct reference to population movements in the order, the increased frequency of tax levies as evinced by central state records may have had some effect on the disposition of the population to stay or to resettle in other places within or without the province. Complaint registers maintained by central state authorities indicate that in the years leading up to the 1690 order, the residents of Aleppo and the surrounding countryside submitted petitions to Istanbul in greater numbers, complaining of unlawful or excessive taxation by administrative-military cadres. Not only *waqf* administrators and villagers, who had habitually complained of the interference of military-administrative cadres (*ehl-i ‘örf*) in their affairs, but also guildsmen, merchants, and other segments of the city’s population were now submitting petitions appealing for relief from their interference, primarily in the form of new and arbitrary taxes.¹²⁹

Casting a broad view over the developments just described, we might periodize demographic shifts as follows: substantial rural and urban growth and economic expansion between 1616 and 1678, a

¹²⁷ Başbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme Defterleri (hereafter called MD), Vol. 100, p. 38, *Awâkhir* N 1101/27 June–6 July 1690; ES 1:31, *Awâkhir* N 1101/27 June–6 July 1690. Preceding this correspondence by days is an order commanding the collection of ‘*avârîz* and *bedel-i nüzûl* taxes and warning against abuses, ES 1:35, 12 N 1101/19 June 1690. In another order coming only a month later, Kurdish, Turcoman, and Arab Bedouin populations in the rural districts of Aleppo province complain of the imposition of unlawful taxes, ES 1:44, 14 L 1101/21 July 1690.

¹²⁸ ES 1:32, 3 L 1101/10 July 1690.

¹²⁹ See AŞ 11, 12, 13 and 15. For petitions submitted by villagers and nomads, see AŞ 11:72, *Awâsiî* JA 1099/13–22 March 1688; AŞ 11:105:2, *Awâkhir* JA 1099/23 March–2 April 1688; AŞ 11:106:1, *Awâkhir* JA 1099/23 March–2 April 1688; AŞ 11:135:5, *Awâ’il* J 1099/2–11 April 1688; AŞ 11:339:2, *Awâsiî* Ş 1099/10–19 June 1688; AŞ 11:475:3, *Awâkhir* L 1099/18–27 August 1688; and AŞ 15:70:318, *Awâsiî* JA 1102/9–18 February 1691. For petitions by artisans see AŞ 11:294:2, *Awâkhir* B 1099/21–30 May 1688 and AŞ 11:507:1, 13 *DA* 1099/9 September 1688. For a petition by merchants see AŞ 11:65, *Awâsiî* JA 1099/13–22 March 1688. For petitions by notables, (“*ulama’ ve eşrâf ve a’yân*”), see AŞ 11:383:5, *Awâ’il* N 1099/30 June–9 July 1688 and AŞ 11:405, 15 N 1099/14 July 1688.

period of balanced demographic movements (but necessarily stability) between 1678 and 1690, and prevailing rural-urban migration (and perhaps emigration from the province) and limited demographic contraction in the years 1690 to 1700. Many of the conclusions drawn from patterns in the distribution of *hānes*, whether on the provincial, district, or city level, are admittedly tentative and must be treated with caution. They are presented nonetheless to offer a provisional demographic context to discussions of how the local population, whether on the quarter, household, or individual level, responded to the challenge of extraordinary taxation. Keenly aware of shifts in settlement patterns and the distribution of the tax base, Aleppans did not passively receive imperial commands but rather engaged tax collectors in a broadly defined negotiating process, in which they employed a number of strategies to alleviate financial hardships.

CHAPTER TWO

URBAN RESPONSES TO THE IMPOSITION OF EXTRAORDINARY TAXES

On 4 December 1662 a woman living in Aleppo went to court and made a serious accusation against a man resident in the same quarter, charging that he had entered her house four months earlier and raped her. Residents of the quarter, the court authorities noted, had appointed the man to collect extraordinary taxes (*‘avārīz*) from them. When the qadi asked for evidence of the act, the woman was unable to produce any, and the qadi, acting in accordance with established legal procedure, admonished the woman for making an idle accusation and ordered her not to oppose the tax collector in his duties. Shortly thereafter, the court initiated an inquiry into the character and background of those involved. Nine residents of the quarter, Baḥsīta, subsequently reported that the woman was “sinful” and “malicious,” and that “whenever the *‘avārīz* taxes due on her house were demanded from her, she would accuse the collector of rape and similar things.” Two months later, the qadi had to order her a second time to desist from her opposition to tax payment.¹

While the legal documents from which this story is drawn leave a number of questions unanswered, they nevertheless point to an important material reality in seventeenth-century Aleppo. Whether the tax collector perpetrated the rape or not, the fact remains that the quarter witnesses offered the statement that the woman was trying to evade taxation as a *plausible* explanation of her behavior—a statement that the qadi accepted as satisfactory. The routine of *‘avārīz* tax collection had indeed entered the everyday life of Aleppans, and with it the common recognition that the tax burden could indeed be heavy and cause

¹ SMS 28:577, 22 R 1073/4 December 1662 and SMS 28:620, 7 B 1073/15 February 1663. In the second document, the quarter witnesses report that the same woman is sinful (*shaqiya*), malicious (*sharīra*), and mentally deranged (*mukhtallat al-‘aql*), and that she is always accusing people of scandalous acts (*wa-innahā dā‘īman tattahim al-nās bi’l-fuḥsh*). The witnesses’ latter generalization of her deviant behavior does not, however, contradict the contention that they initially offered a plausible explanation for her behavior.

considerable hardship. Thus reasonable observers, represented here by witnesses from the same quarter, judged that others could be driven to unusual forms of evasion. On the level of the quarter, indeed, the challenge of heavy taxation—and the opportunities offered by administrative decentralization—compelled Aleppans to adopt a variety of responses. Quarters, as both administrative units and social groups, were subject to new pressures and undertook new responsibilities.²

This chapter will investigate popular responses to the administration of extraordinary taxes—including *‘avārız*, *bedel-i nüzüül*, and other types of exactions—in the years 1640–1700. It addresses the various ways in which individuals and social groups, i.e., residential quarters, negotiated the challenge of extraordinary taxation as these impositions became regularized over the course of the seventeenth century. An assessment of the frequency of taxation and of property tax levels sets the background for the main discussion of the ways in which Aleppans obtained individual exemptions or, failing that, resorted to resistance and evasion or resigned themselves to various accommodations, made easier through mutual support and collective action. In each of these cases the residential quarter was either the basis of solidarity, where residents banded together to challenge or meet the terms of various impositions, or a site of conflict, where status groups invoked their privileges and refused to share in the payment of the tax burden. The interplay of these two tendencies offers one picture of the cohesion of the quarter and its ability to act collectively in the interests of its members.

The Frequency and Level of Extraordinary Tax Levies

In her study of Ottoman central fiscal administration, Darling has shown that *‘avārız* taxes were largely transformed into regular levies

² On the role of the residential quarter (*maḥalla*) in Ottoman urban administration, see Chapter One. On the importance of the *maḥalla* as a unit of social organization in Islamic society, see Albert Hourani, “The Islamic City in the Light of Recent Research,” in *The Islamic City: A Colloquium*, edited by Albert Hourani and Samuel Stern (Oxford: Cassirer; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970), 9–24. For a specialized treatment of the residential quarters in Ottoman Anatolia, see Özer Ergenç, “Osmanlı Şehrindeki ‘Mahalle’nin İşlev ve Nitelikleri Üzerine,” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 4 (1984): 69–88; and idem., *Osmanlı Klasik Dönemi Kent Tarihçiliğine Katkı XVI. Yüzyılda Ankara ve Konya* (Ankara: Ankara Enstitüsü Vakfı, 1995), 145–148.

by about 1620.³ The large number of surviving tax registers pertaining to Aleppo from 1640s onwards, while possibly incomplete, nevertheless enable us to form an impression, a lower limit, of the frequency of tax assessments for most of the empire. Since each tax register corresponds to an imperial order to collect extraordinary taxes, the number of imperially mandated tax levies in a given period can be estimated. Listing by decade the tax registers found in the Maliyeden Müdevver classification of the Prime Minister's Archive in Istanbul, Table 2.1 shows that trends in administration of *'avārız* and *bedel-i nüzül* taxes in the province of Aleppo generally follow those for the empire as a whole. Tax recordkeeping only becomes systematic in the 1650s, but once established in this form continues sustained through at least the middle of the eighteenth century. From the 1650s to the first decade of the 1700s, these tax levies varied in number between six and nine per decade, with the exception of the 1670s, in which there were only three. Including the extraordinary tax of the *sürşat*, an in-kind tax, or its cash equivalent, *bedel-i sürsat*, we obtain a fuller picture in which tax levies are greater in number, namely, between eight and twelve per decade.⁴ One should not view tax collections connected with a single order as falling within a limited period. Statements of receipt (*teslimât*) annotated in the tax registers themselves indicate that taxes were paid in installments in periods varying in length from one to three years.

Using a combination of shari'a court registers and central state records, one can estimate the general magnitude of tax burdens on individual non-exempt homeowners in Aleppo in the decades between the surveys of 1616 and 1678. Shari'a court documents in this period indicate that the annual tax burden of one *dâr*, or house, ranged between 5 *ghurūsh asadī* (0.25 *hānes*) and 28 *ghurūsh asadī* (1.25 *hānes*), and the annual tax burden of one *hāne*, which generally made

³ *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 93–94; cf. McGowan, *Ottoman Europe*, 108–122.

⁴ The inclusion of the *bedel-i sürsat* tax levies in this figure suggests tax patterns that are more consistent with the chronology of warfare. Fewer military campaigns took place in the years 1701–10, after the Ottomans had signed the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699), and before the Pruth Campaign (1710) and conflicts with Venice and Austria. See Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, I: 223–33. For a sampling of documents indicating the liability of urban quarters for payment of the *sürşat* tax, see SMS 3:394, 29 J 1065/6 May 1655; SMS 32:504, 13 M 1086/9 April 1675; and SMS 34:197, 22 RA 1090/3 May 1679.

Table 2.1. Number of Tax Assessment Registers (*‘Avārız*, *Bedel-i Nüzül*, and *Sürşat*) Pertaining to the Province of Aleppo Found by Decade in the Maliyeden Müdevver Classification, Prime Ministry Archives

Decade	<i>‘Avārız</i>	<i>Bedel-i Nüzül</i>	<i>Sürşat</i>
1601–10	0	0	0
1611–20	0	0	0
1621–30	1	1	0
1631–40	0	0	0
1641–50	3	1	0
1651–60	8	1	0
1661–70	4	2	5
1671–80	2	1	5
1681–90	5	2	3
1691–1700	6	2	4
1701–10	3	3	0
1711–20	7	3	3
1721–30	8	4	1
1731–40	7	4	0
1741–50	6	5	0
Total (1600–1750)	60	29	21

up one or more houses, ranged between 16 and 22 *ghurūsh asadī*.⁵ Although these documents present an incomplete picture of tax levels, they nonetheless offer some concrete sense of property taxes on a household level in any given year. Such figures can be rendered more meaningful if they are compared with real estate property values. Table 2.2 provides a broad picture of real estate values in Aleppo, for both the intramural and extramural city.⁶ In order to compare the values of varying sizes of traded real estate, it is necessary to calculate a “whole house” price for those transactions in which only part of a house was sold. For example, if 12 of 24 shares (*qīrāṭs*) of a house are being sold

⁵ SMS 3:851 (1648–56); SMS 28:496 (1662); SMS 28:606 (1663); SMS 30:151 (1663); SMS 28:600 (1663); SMS 30:169 (1663); and SMS 31:376a (1666). See Wilkins, “Households, Guilds, and Neighborhoods,” 89–90.

⁶ Since the table presents information taken from a sampling ten years or more after the information on tax burden, it should be viewed with some caution. Still, it is reasonable to assume that no dramatic shifts in real estate values took place in the intervening years. See also Abdel Nour, “Habitat et structures sociales.” On pp. 82–83, Abdel Nour analyzes the pricing patterns of real estate being sold in Aleppo in the year 1625 and finds that 55 percent of houses being sold cost between 20 and 59 *ghurūsh*.

Table 2.2. Price (in *Ghurūsh Asadī*) and Proportion of Houses Sold in Aleppo According to Court Register No. 32, Feb. 1672–Jan. 1675

District	No. of Sales*	Average Price Whole House (<i>ghurūsh</i>)	Avg. Prop. of House (<i>qirāṣ</i>)	Distribution of Whole House Prices (<i>ghurūsh</i>)					Aggregate Value (<i>ghurūsh</i>)
				1–20	21–50	51–100	101–500	501–1500	
<i>Intramural City</i>									
Eastern	42	88	20	7	9	12	13	1	3696
Western	94	85	18	24	27	15	22	6	7990
Subtotal	136	86	18	31	36	27	35	7	11686
<i>Extramural City</i>									
Northern	49	44	14	3	17	19	10	0	2155
Khārij Bāb al-Naṣr	86	64	15	13	19	29	22	3	5541
Northeastern	5	47	17	0	3	1	1	0	233
Eastern	6	18	18	3	1	2	0	0	109
Southern	10	13	12	5	2	2	1	0	128
Western	46	26	14	15	10	14	7	0	1195
Subtotal	202	46	15	39	52	67	41	3	9361
Total	338	62	16	70	88	94	66	10	21047

* "No. of Sales" refers to the number of sales transactions that took place; "Average Price" refers to the average price of the piece of real estate property being sold; "Avg. Price of Whole House" refers to the average price of the entire house (24 *qirāṣ*, or shares, of a *dār*) based on value of the proportion being sold; and "Avg. Prop. of House" refers to the average proportion of the houses being sold on a 24 unit (*qirāṣ*) basis. As can be seen, on average only a part of the house (between 12 and 20 *qirāṣ*, depending on the city district) was being sold.

for 50 *ghurūsh*, the price of the entire 24 shares, or the whole house price, is 100 *ghurush*. The range of prices presented in Table 2.2 indicates that 70 of 338 properties (21 percent) sold in the years 1672–75 had a whole house price of between 1 and 20 *ghurūsh asadī*, and 88 of 338, or 26 percent, had a whole house price of between 21 and 50 *ghurūsh asadī*. Thus a full 46 percent of houses traded had property values roughly equal to, or not much higher than, an annual tax assessment. Table 2.2 further shows that low-value properties were to be found throughout the city, but made up a greater proportion of the properties sold in the extramural city, particularly in the eastern and southern suburbs.

While we may expect that such low-value properties were assessed taxes according to their market value, that cannot be assumed. In fact, the court registers record a considerable number of instances in which the assessed annual tax of a house is a very substantial proportion of the total property value, demonstrably up to one-half. A particularly illustrative comparison is that provided by the case of Takūlī bt. Bālī, who in 1662 sold her house in the quarter of Kharābkhān to four officials from the same quarter. Rather than collect the proceeds of the sale, a sum of 25 *ghurūsh asadī*, she authorized them to spend it primarily on the accumulated tax obligations of the house: 16 *ghurūsh* for the preceding two years of 'avārīz taxes, 3 *ghurūsh* for *beldār* taxes (a levy to finance road security), 3 *ghurūsh* for *takālīf 'urfīyya* (customary exactions), both for the preceding year, and the remaining 3 *ghurūsh* for six years' ground rent (*ḥīkr*) owed to the neighborhood mosque.⁷ Either the homeowner realized her insolvency and acted to end her tax commitments, or the quarter officials compelled her to sell the property, which presumably they could manage more effectively under their direct control. In another transaction the same year, four persons sold to a group of three a large house in the extramural quarter of Dūdū. The house was assessed at one *ḥāne*, a substantial assessment by any standard, yet the sale price was only 15 *ghurūsh asadī*. Clearly the sellers were trying to rid themselves of the millstone of the 'avārīz tax, as they made the sale conditional on the purchaser's willingness

⁷ SMS 28:517, 12 RA 1073/25 October 1662. On *beldār* taxes, see Mehmed Zeki Pakalın, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü* (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1983), I:202.

to pay that year's tax obligation—an obligation which may well have equaled or exceeded the purchase price.⁸

So substantial were extraordinary taxes relative to real estate values that for some properties, as alluded to above, the taxes became a major, if not dominant, point of negotiation. In 1674 three brothers, Yūsuf, Shaḥāda, and Sayf, sons of Muḥammad, jointly purchased from 'Umar b. Aḥmad a home in Farrā'in quarter, in the eastern suburbs; they not only paid a nominal sum of 2 *ghurūsh asadī* but were also able to obtain an agreement from eight quarter officials that they would not collect from them in any one year more than 10 *ghurūsh asadī* of 'avārīz and other extraordinary tax levies.⁹ Some persons sought to revoke real estate purchases or obtain compensation because of heavy taxes. In 1663 a soldier resident in Aleppo, Khalīl Beṣe b. Ḥaydar Beṣe, sued a woman, Sitt al-'Ajam bt. 'Alā' al-Dīn, for deception (*ghurūr*) after she had sold him a house in Jallūm al-Kubrā Quarter for 20 *ghurūsh asadī*. Khalīl Beṣe had understood, he claimed, that the house was assessed at 1/2 *ḥāne*, but in the year since he had purchased the house, he had learned from tax collectors that the actual assessment was one full *ḥāne*. The defendant, Sitt al-'Ajam, was able to produce witnesses testifying that Khalīl Beṣe knew of the actual assessment at the time of purchase, and the qadī subsequently ruled in her favor, judging the sale to be final and ordering Khalīl Beṣe not to interfere any further.¹⁰ Although Khalīl Beṣe, it is true, could have used this claim to hide other reasons for seeking compensation or revocation, the fact that he made such a claim before the court indicates that the claim itself was plausible and could have arisen from substantial financial loss. In sum, the apparent financial hardships of individual homeowners

⁸ SMS 28:584, 27 R 1073/9 December 1662.

⁹ SMS 2:756, 16 JA 1085/18 August 1674. For similar agreements, see SMS 23:6 (#268), 10 R 1052/8 July 1642; SMS 30:129, 4 M 1074/8 August 1663; SMS 30:233, 30 JA 1074/30 December 1663; SMS 31:375a, *Salkh* DA 1076/3 June 1666; SMS 31:376a, 17 D 1076/20 June 1666; SMS 31:381b, 2 M 1077/5 July 1666; SMS 32:29, 21 DA 1082/20 March 1672; and SMS 32:407, 9 J 1085/10 September 1674.

¹⁰ SMS 30:13, 27 JA 1073/7 January 1663. In another case some years earlier, Muṣṭafā Beṣe b. Jābir brought suit against Ḥusayn Beṣe b. Ḥājj Ḥusayn for selling him a house in Zāwiya Quarter and failing to tell him that the property was assessed at 3/4 *ḥāne*. On the basis of this claim he sought the revocation of the sale and the return of his money. The defendant Ḥusayn Beṣe was able to produce two witnesses who testified that indeed Muṣṭafā Beṣe accepted the sale fully cognizant of the tax assessment, and the qadī consequently ruled the sale to be valid and final, Ḥusayn Beṣe having no further legal recourse. See SMS 26:130, 16 DA 1069/5 August 1659.

and related litigation indicate the presence of a tax regime that was, at the least, not responsive to the limited tax-bearing ability of many homeowners, and probably was a heavy burden for the entire taxpaying population. In many cases, tax assessments on individual houses were not being adjusted to levels commensurate with the condition of the property.

Popular Strategies for Tax Relief: Tax Exemption

Confronted with the frequent and routine collection of *‘avārīz* taxes, the population of Aleppo sought relief in several ways. The preferred avenue was outright exemption, a privilege that was issued by the central imperial government and enforced by the local administration. Before the survey of 1678, it appears, homeowners could obtain exemption for their residences in two ways, either by petitioning the authorities, if they met certain conditions, or by purchasing a property already having tax-exempt status. In theory, eligibility for tax exemption was based on occupational status. As indicated in Chapter 1, the *‘askerī* class, comprising the military and administrative cadres of the state, were officially exempt, while the remainder of the population, the *re‘āyā*, including merchants, artisans, and peasants, were as a rule taxpayers. There were *re‘āyā* groups, however, who held such privileges in exchange for certain services. In Aleppo, these included the *re‘āyā* who were charged with maintaining *menzilhānes*, the stations in and around the city that stored grain for military use and provided mounts for imperial couriers.¹¹ The sultan also issued exemptions to

¹¹ *Menzilhānes* refer, at least in Turkish-language administrative parlance, to those facilities used to store grain and keep mounts for official use. *Manzil*, discussed earlier, was the Arabic term the local populace called houses or larger structures used to quarter military-administrative personnel temporarily assigned to Aleppo; see N. Elisséef and P. A. Andrews, “Manzil,” *EP*. Though not great in absolute number, a wide variety of individuals or groups were exempted from *‘avārīz* taxation, or some categories of *‘avārīz* taxation, in exchange for providing specific services to *menzilhānes*. In addition to the groups providing *menzilhāne* goods and labor, there were others who worked on the lands and in the institutions of the Awqāf al-Ḥaramayn, the extensive and centrally-administered waqf that endowed the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina; in the great *waqfs* of the Vālide Sultān and other members of the Ottoman imperial household; and in the Mamlīḥat Jabbūl, the Imperial Saltworks in the suburb of Jabbul, southeast of the city of Aleppo. See, for examples, SMS 3:742, 3 DA 1065/4 September 1655; SMS 27:385, 14 B 1072/5 March 1662; SMS 28:496, 15 S 1073/29 September 1662; and SMS 28:574, 28 R 1073/10 December 1662. On the exceptional

certain individuals and groups as a means of meeting his moral and religious obligations as sovereign of a Muslim state. Accordingly, a key group whose social status could qualify them for tax exemption were the *ashrāf* (sing. *sharīf*), those who claimed descent from the family of the Prophet Muḥammad. Persons who had a reputation for piety and spiritual devotion, especially members of Sufi orders, could also qualify.¹² As we shall see, however, the granting of tax exemptions to members of any of these groups was far from automatic.

In theory, exemption from taxation was a privilege that the state conferred on the individual and that was accordingly transferred with his person. In the practice of early and middle seventeenth-century Aleppo, however, the obtainment of exemption from *‘avārız* taxation by a qualifying individual for a specific residential property remained with the property, even if the property was subsequently sold to someone lacking personal qualification for exemption.¹³ If the qualifying individual then moved to another property that was not tax-exempt, it was necessary for him to apply again for exemption. The shari‘a court records of Aleppo contain a considerable number of cases in which a homeowner claiming no qualification for exemption on a personal basis nevertheless verifies the tax-exempt status of his house by producing a set of sales deeds that establish a chain of ownership

exemption policies in Bosnia, see Avdo Sućeska, “Bosna Eyâleti’nde Tekâlif-i Şakka,” *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 12 (1981–82):755–762.

¹² The same pious concerns that prompted state authorities to grant exemptions to the *ashrāf* also prompted them to grant exemptions to members of Sufi orders. The survey of 1678–79, in its ordering of status groups, establishes as a category the “*tekke-nişin*,” literally “those who inhabit Sufi lodges,” specifically referring to persons in positions of leadership within certain Sufi orders. Of the three homeowners with the *tekke-nişin* title appearing in the survey, one possessed tax-exempt property, and a second secured exemption two years following the survey. The term *tekke-nişin* was also used in local court records prior to the 1678–79 survey. See, for example, a tax exemption granted to a *mutawallī* of a Sufi lodge in the vicinity of Bâb, a town northeast of Aleppo, SMS 28:630, 15 B 1073/23 February 1663. Not only the leadership but also the rank-and-file members of Sufi orders enjoyed tax-exemption privileges. Usually termed in the local court records “*şulahâ’ şâlihün*,” or “virtuous persons following the spiritual path,” members of local Sufi associations applied for and secured tax exemptions on the basis of several factors, namely advanced age, poverty, and a reputation for spirituality, but poverty appears to have been the decisive factor in many cases. See, for example, SMS 3:390, 27 JA 1065/4 April 1655 and ES 1:36, 20 N 1101/27 June 1690. The 1678 survey register also gives tax exemption to a small number of individuals identified as *faqīr*, which in popular parlance means an impoverished person, but in mystical terminology refers to a Sufi adept. See N. A. Nizami, “Fakir,” *EP*.

¹³ Abdel Nour, “Habitat et structures sociales,” 80–81.

extending back to the last *hāne* survey, when the property was first declared exempt.¹⁴ In sum, tax-exempt properties circulated in the local real estate market and were a means by which non-qualifying persons could obtain tax exemption. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the absolute number of tax-exempt properties was small and that the ordinary taxpayer stood little chance of obtaining such properties. We note that of 386 sales considered in Table 2.2, only 8 were recorded as tax-exempt.

The survey of 1678 maintained the fundamentals of the old tax arrangement but at the same time envisioned significant changes. The surveyors upheld the principle that real estate properties possessed a permanent tax status independent of the tax status of their owners. As a corollary to this, the central administration alone had the authority to approve any and all changes to their status. What had changed were the rules of qualification and the mechanics of fixing liability. No longer was it possible for the *re'āyā*—those persons without *'askerī* status—to purchase tax-exempt (*hāric*) properties. Just as important, the requirements for *'askerī* status seem to have tightened. It has been argued that a large number of homeowners (approximately 2000) who on the eve of the survey had enjoyed possession of *hāric* properties and therefore tax exemption, were re-classified as *re'āyā* and consequently lost formal tax-exemption, even though their properties remained *hāric* (see Chapter 1). Those homeowners who had managed to obtain or retain tax-exemption in the new survey did so only after proving their possession of *hāric* property *and* meeting a more stringent definition of *'askerī* status. The fact that in 1678 the surveyors, in an apparently unprecedented measure, broke the group of *'askerī* homeowners into numerous subcategories underlines their determination to fix the defining criteria of *'askerī* status. These subcategories were the *eṣrāf* (descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad), *'ulemā'* (judi-

¹⁴ In many cases, indeed, it appears that the last preceding survey was that of 1616–17. Not only shari'a court records but also other kinds of evidence—*mevķūfāt* bureau receipts, testimony of local tax officials, the *'avārızhāne taḥrīr* register itself—were used to verify tax status of a given property. See SMS 23:213, 19 B 1052/13 October 1642; SMS 3:364, 9 JA 1065/17 March 1655; SMS 3:369, 13 JA 1065/21 March 1655; SMS 3:390, 27 JA 1065/4 April 1655; SMS 3:797, 25 RA 1066/22 January 1656; SMS 3:939, 8 B 1066/2 May 1656; SMS 28:89, 25 S 1071/20 October 1660; SMS 28:187, 11 R 1071/14 December 1660; SMS 2:233, 4 JA 1073/15 December 1662; SMS 28:590, 20 JA 1073/31 December 1662; SMS 2:277, 16 JA 1073/27 December 1662; and SMS 28:610, 27 J 1073/6 February 1663.

cial, educational, and religious functionaries), *‘askeriyān* (military cadres), and *şulahā* (members of Sufi orders). It is clear that *‘askerī* status alone, according to the survey documents of 1678, was not sufficient to obtain automatic exemption for one’s residential property, nor was it a guarantee that the homeowner would obtain tax exemption in the longer term by petition.

Having noted the evolving changes in tax administration, we can employ both imperial fiscal documents and local court records to discern certain patterns in the way the tax exemptions were distributed among qualifying groups in the city of Aleppo. The following discussion considers in large part how successful each of those groups was in obtaining full tax exemption according to the survey of 1678: that is, exemption on the twin bases of property tax status and personal *‘avārız* status. Within the *‘askerī* class, military cadres figure prominently. In addition to soldiers formally assigned to the local garrison, such as the *gönüllüyān* (sing. *gönüllü*; or *yerlü*, pl. *yerlüyān*) and citadel guards (*müstaḥfız*, pl. *müstaḥfızān*), there were janissaries (*yeniçeris*), imperial cavalymen (*kapıkulu sipāhīs*), *ṭīmār*-holding cavalymen (sing. *ṭīmārī* or *zā‘im*), and irregular soldiers (*sekbāns*) residing long-term in the urban area.¹⁵ More than other groups, the tax status of these military units seems to have been subject to local negotiation and agreement and thus varied considerably over time. The *gönüllüyān* were a unit distinct from the *müstaḥfızān*, the former performing military duties both inside and outside Aleppo, and the latter largely performing guard duty in the citadel itself.¹⁶ Table 2.3 presents, among other information, the distribution of real estate properties owned and occupied by *gönüllüyān* in the city at the time of the 1678–79 survey. It shows that of 30 *gönüllü* homeowners, 7 enjoyed exemption from *‘avārız* taxation, reflecting only modest success in obtaining such privileges. At the same time, judging from assessments of real estate property in

¹⁵ The present discussion will only briefly describe the function of each of these military cadres; a fuller discussion of these military cadres will be given in Chapter Three.

¹⁶ MM 8467:1b–3a, passim. On *gönüllü* units, see Halil Inalcık, “Gönüllü,” *ET*; and Abdulkadir Özcan, “Gönüllü,” *İslam Ansiklopedisi*; Pakalın, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, I: 675–676. Of the *müstaḥfızān* resident in the citadel of Aleppo, 9 owned houses assessed at *a‘lā* (high value) 30 at *evsaṭ* (medium value) and 126 at *ednā* (low value), for a ratio of 1:3:14. Of the *gönüllüyān*, 3 owned houses assessed at *a‘lā*, 12 at *evsaṭ*, and 14 at *ednā*, for a ratio of 1:4:5, indicating a higher proportion of higher-value houses. See Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 196.

Table 2.3. Tax Status of Social/Professional Groups in Aleppo According to the Survey of 1678 (MM 8467)

Quarter	Liable to 'Avânîz taxes							Exempt from 'Avânîz taxes										
	Ulama	Ashraf	sary	Şipâhî	Timârî	Gönüllü	Beşe	Admin	Total	Other Mil-	Ulama	Ashraf	sary	Şipâhî	Timârî	Gönüllü	Beşe	Total
<i>Intramural City</i>																		
Eastern	9	41	5	8	11	8	43	21	146	10	24	0	11	6	3	0	9	63
Western	13	39	7	4	2	8	34	11	118	19	41	1	3	1	2	0	17	84
Subtotal	22	80	12	12	13	16	77	32	264	29	65	1	14	7	5	0	26	147
<i>Extramural City</i>																		
Northern	4	18	0	0	1	1	8	5	37	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	2	12
Khârij Bâb al-Nasr	0	20	0	1	0	3	2	1	27	0	22	1	0	1	0	0	1	25
Northeastern	6	13	0	0	1	1	16	16	52	5	5	0	0	0	1	0	2	13
Eastern	5	11	1	2	0	2	19	3	43	4	6	1	0	0	1	0	3	15
Southern and Western	1	16	0	0	0	0	12	1	30	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Subtotal	16	78	1	3	1	7	57	26	189	10	47	2	0	1	2	0	8	70
Total	38	158	13	15	14	23	134	58	453	39	112	3	14	8	7	0	34	217

Notes:

- (1) The figures here denote properties owned and occupied by members of these status groups. Where a person has multiple properties, all but his residence are excluded from counting.
- (2) Some of the professional categories in this table are those used by the tax surveyor, others are aggregations. The term "ulama" is used to encompass the full range of religious, academic, and judicial offices, including imam (prayer leader), *khâfif* and *wa'iz* (preacher), *mu'darris* (teacher), mufti (jurisconsult), qadî (judge), and *şulâhâ* (plural, heads of Sufi brotherhoods). "Other Military-Administrative" is a residual category including (a) those persons of elite administrative-military status, mostly with rank of agha, bey, or pasha, who do not fit neatly into the administrative categories above, (b) administrative, primarily financial, officials employed at the provincial seat, and (c) a range of various, primarily military, cadres, among them *çavuş*, *cebeci*, *kaşıcı*, and *topçu*. Persons in the "Other Mil-Admin" category are not great in number and will be noted where they are found.

1678–79 survey, the *gönüllüyan* seem to have been, on the whole, a wealthier group. Of the same 30 homeowners, 21 were concentrated in the intramural city. A number of studies have shown that the houses of highest quality and real estate value in Aleppo were generally found in the central, walled city and that the quality and value fell for houses in the extramural quarters, particularly the eastern, southern, and western parts.¹⁷ Other studies on Cairo and on Anatolian cities have likewise found there to be significant differences in the value of real estate from quarter to quarter.¹⁸

On the other hand, the *müstahfizân* had, according to documents from the 1678 survey, enjoyed exemption from all taxes since the time of the Ottoman conquest as long as they resided in the houses on the citadel hill of Aleppo and fulfilled the duties of citadel defense. The surveyors confirmed this exemption and, significantly, specified by name the full range of extraordinary taxes from which they were to enjoy release: not only the direct sultanic extraordinary taxes (*‘avâriz-i dīvāniyye*, *bedel-i nüzül*, and *bedel-i sûrşat*) but also all exactions imposed by locally assigned administrative and military cadres (*mîrmîrân ve sâyir tekâlîf-i ‘örfiyye ve şakka’nun külliyyesi*).¹⁹ But no more than ten years later a number of *müstahfizân* were owning houses among the civilian population outside the citadel, and they seem to have struggled to retain tax privileges in those locations. In 1689 the warden (*dîzdâr*) of the citadel, Hâjj Muştafâ Kaya, petitioned Istanbul on behalf of the citadel guards. He reported that some of the citadel guards were of necessity (*“iqtizâ’ ile”*) living in the residential quarters of the city and were paying, along with their civilian neighbors, those taxes incumbent on their properties, namely the *‘avâriz*, *bedel-i nüzül*, *bedel-i sûrşat*, and *beldâr* levies. His complaint was not that these taxes were being levied on them, but rather that quarter tax officials were trying to collect additional exactions, namely *tekâlîf-i ‘örfiyye ve şakka* and *subaşı salyanesi*, that were apparently being imposed under pressure

¹⁷ Jean-Claude David, “Alep, Dégénération et tentatives actuelles de réadaptation des structures urbaines traditionnelles,” *Bulletin d’Études Orientales* 28 (1975): 19–49, esp. 20–26; Meriwether, “The Notable Families of Aleppo,” 119–120; Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 317–22; and Raymond, “Groupes sociaux,” 147–51.

¹⁸ André Raymond, *The Great Arab Cities in the 16th–18th Centuries, An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 58–69; and Suraiya Faroqhi, *Men of Modest Substance: House Owners and House Property in Seventeenth-Century Ankara and Kayseri* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 146–147.

¹⁹ See MM 8467:3a.

from other standing military forces in the city.²⁰ The commander's request was limited and specific, suggesting that that citadel guards did enjoy and came to expect the maintenance of certain tax exemptions; the response of the imperial authorities was unrecorded.²¹

Like the *müstahfizān*, members of the janissary (*yeniçeri*) corps resident in Aleppo enjoyed limited tax privileges but by the end of the century were struggling to maintain them. Along with their *re'āyā* neighbors in the city, janissaries were held liable for 'avārīz taxes on properties they owned. Their privilege lay in the fact that they were to be released from payment of *tekālif-i 'örfiyye*, the exactions customarily collected by the governor and his retinue. Additionally, from time to time, they were able to obtain temporary exemption from *bedel-i nüzül*, a centrally-administered extraordinary tax that alternated, or was coupled, with the 'avārīz-ı *dīvāniyye* tax.²² Since a large concentration of janissaries owned homes in the western intramural quarters of the city throughout the century, an account of how these quarters dealt with the presence of janissaries offers a significant explanation of the changes in their tax status in the seventeenth century. As early as 1634, the *re'āyā* residents of Jallūm al-Kubrā quarter complained to the court that the 'askerī residents, including soldiers, were not meeting the tax obligation incumbent on them. The 'askerī obligation amounted to a substantial 39.75 *hānes* of a total of 110 *hānes* levied on the quarter, the largest in the city. The complaint no doubt arose because the *re'āyā* population were being required to carry the delinquent *hānes* themselves. In response to this petition, the *hāne* tax units incumbent on the 'askerī population had, in an administrative process called *ifrāz*, been separated from that of the *re'āyā*.²³ The tax burden appears to have been reduced proportionally for both groups through mid-century, though it is unclear if the proportions corresponded to the actual population ratio.²⁴ In 1663 the commander (*serdār*) of the janissary force interceded on behalf of the rank and file soldiers, reporting to the court that the military cadres were no longer capable

²⁰ ES 1:106, no date but probably in the month of *Rabī' al-Thānī* 1100/January–February 1689.

²¹ ES 1:106, 26 R 1100/17 February 1689.

²² SMS 28:143, 21 RA 1071/24 November 1660.

²³ SMS 28:483, 8 S 1073/22 September 1662.

²⁴ According to a 1656 'avārīz register, the 'askerī population was paying 36.25 *hānes*, and the *re'āyā* population 66.50 *hānes*, for a total quarter burden of 102.75 *hānes*. See KK 2626: 3b.

of making such payment since “some soldiers had died, some had passed on their property to their children, and some had sold their property to others.”²⁵ The qadi sanctioned a reduction of 10.5 *ḥānes*, the resident janissary force being relieved of six *ḥānes*, and the *sipāhī* force 4.5 *ḥānes*. Despite petitions by the *serdār* for further reduction, the qadi stood firm.

There does indeed appear to have been a drop in the number of janissaries owning property in Jallūm al-Kubrā, perhaps due in part to migration to other quarters and a change in their social and military status. Table 2.3, using information taken from the survey of 1678–79, shows that janissary homeowners were still overwhelmingly concentrated in the intramural city, with the largest pockets in the western quarter of Jubb Asadullāh and the eastern quarter of Sāḥa Biza—not in Jallūm al-Kubrā. Judging from the property assessments, their level of wealth was comparable to that of the *göñüllüyān*, but they enjoyed fewer tax exemptions. Of fifteen janissary homeowners, thirteen were liable for the *‘avārız* tax, indicating, relative to the *göñüllüyān*, their weaker socio-political position. Later, in the last decade of the seventeenth century, state authorities attempted to hold janissaries who had settled in the provinces more strictly accountable for their military readiness and service. In 1691, Istanbul issued a general order to the province of Aleppo and to other provinces offering exemption from *tekālīf-i ‘örfiyye ve şakḥa* taxes for only those members of the janissary corps who were actively taking part in imperial military campaigns; others were to be stripped of their tax privileges and the trappings of their status.²⁶

Other regular, formally organized units in Aleppo included the imperial cavalrymen (sing. *ḳapıḳulu sipāhī*), who were compensated by salary, and the *tīmār*-holding cavalrymen (sing. *tīmār sipāhī*), who were compensated with revenues from assignments of land (*tīmārs*) located in the province. The latter group encompassed both the ordinary *tīmār*-holding *sipāhīs* and their commanders, who held larger assignments (sing. *ḥāşş* and *ze‘āmet*) and who in official documents were usually called *za‘ims*. According to Table 2.3, the *ḳapıḳulu sipāhī* forces as a group attained a higher rate of exemption than most other military units, as roughly half of them (14 of 29) possessed *ḥāric* properties in

²⁵ SMS 28:702, 24 DA 1073/30 June 1663.

²⁶ ES 1:78–80, 12 JA 1102/11 February 1691.

the 1678 survey. Central state authorities clearly needed to reinforce the elite status of this group, which served as an important instrument of sultanic power in the provinces. *Çapıķulu sipāhīs* also seem to have enjoyed a high standard of living, as an overwhelming majority (26 of 29) lived in the affluent intramural city. The *tīmār*-holding *sipāhīs*, referred to as “*tīmārīs*” in Table 2.3, are also represented among homeowners in the 1678 survey but in smaller numbers (22 homeowners). A comparison of the number of *tīmār*-holding homeowners with the number of all active land assignments (*tīmār*, *ze’āmet*, and *hāşş*) in the *ķazā’* (local administrative unit) of Aleppo (31) suggests that a sizeable number of *tīmār*-holders in the *ķazā’* may have had homes in the city of Aleppo and administered their assignments at least part of the time from their urban bases.²⁷ Only about a third of *tīmār*-holding soldiers (8 of 22) were exempt from taxation, showing their relative weak position vis-à-vis the *ķapıķulu sipāhīs*. Significantly, *ķapıķulu sipāhīs* and the *tīmār*-holding *sipāhīs* tended to live in the same areas. Of 51 residences owned by them, 47 were located in the intramural city, and of these 47, 36 were to be found in the eastern quarters, with concentrations in Sāħa Biza (11), BayyāĊa (7), and Jabıla (6) quarters. Residing in larger numbers within the same quarters may have given these groups greater leverage when it came to negotiating individual shares of tax obligations with other quarter residents.

In contrast to regular military units, members of the auxiliary *sekbān* forces appear less often in the court records. Central fiscal records, in particular the surveys of 1616–17 and 1678–79, do not recognize *sekbān* or the title that sometimes accompanies it, *sarıca*, as a military status. A series of eleven documents recorded in the court records and contemporaneous with the 1678–79 survey, however, provide some limited information on the tax status and settlement of *sekbāns* in the city of Aleppo. Indeed, it appears from these documents that members of *sekbān* forces were taking advantage of the imperial survey to disenroll themselves from the *sekbān* corps and register themselves as residents of urban quarters. In each case, the applicant presented the same religious opinion, or fatwa, written by the mufti of Aleppo,

²⁷ It is also possible that *tīmār*-holding soldiers from other *ķazā’*s within the province of Aleppo had homes in Aleppo. For a distribution of the *tīmār*, *ze’āmet*, and *hāşş* assignments among the *ķazā’*s of Aleppo province according to the 1678 survey, see Çakar, 17. *Yüzyılda Haleb Eyaleti*, 127–129. For a listing of active and inactive *tīmār* holders in Aleppo province in 1654–55, see Başbakanlık Arşivi, Tapu Tahrir Defteri (TT) 786, pp. 212–13.

supporting his claim that he had renounced status as a *sekbān*, been registered as *re'āyā* in the new *tahrīr*, and was paying taxes with his neighbors. Having taken these steps, the applicant could no longer be held liable for the exactions (“*tekālīf*”) specifically imposed on *sekbān* forces and could not be pressed into their service.²⁸ The nature of the exactions imposed on the *sekbāns* are unfortunately not defined, but they must have been considerable, given that they constitute an important element in the text of the fatwa. Of the eleven *sekbān* applicants appearing in the local court records, at least two can be confirmed as registered in the survey according to central state fiscal records.²⁹ Finally, the fact that each of these *sekbāns* was residing in the generally poorer, eastern extramural neighborhoods of the city suggests that on average they had little income and may have had difficulty paying the *sekbān* dues.³⁰

While each of the military groups described above is reasonably well-defined by unit affiliation and function, there is a final category of military personnel living in the city whose function remains ambiguous. One finds in the records of the survey of 1678–79 a number of persons who possess the title “*beşe*” but who lack any further qualifier indicating unit affiliation or military specialization. The orthography of the title itself presents problems, as both “*beşe*” and “*başe*” are used with no absolute consistency. This study assumes that these orthographical variants refer to the same title.³¹ The term *beşe* has been

²⁸ SMS 34:242–244, 257, covering dates 4 J 1090/13 June 1679, 5 J 1090/14 June 1679, 7 J 1090/16 June 1679, and 9 J 1090/18 June 1679; and 13 J 1090/22 June 1679.

²⁹ It is possible to confirm that at least two of the *sekbāns* were recorded as Aleppo residents in the 1678–79 survey: Abū Zayd b. Khaṭṭāb, in the quarter of Qārliq (MM 8467:99a); and Ḥājj Khalifa b. Ḥājj ‘Umar, in the quarter of Ḥamza Bey (MM 8467:139b). More research needs to be done in order to confirm whether the other *sekbāns* were also registered.

³⁰ The neighborhoods absorbing these *sekbāns* were Kharābkhān, Ibn Ya‘qūb, Dūdū, Abrāj, Qārliq, Dallālīn, Ḥamza Bey, and Akrād al-Balāt.

³¹ There is no absolute consistency in the usage of *beşe* and *başe*, but certain patterns emerge in the survey register of 1678. In the by-name listing of the heads of households within the citadel of Aleppo (*Enderūn-i Kāl'e-yi Haleb*), which was overwhelmingly populated by the citadel guards (*müstaḥfiżān*), there are 81 occurrences of *beşe* and only 8 occurrences of *başe*. Second, only one instance was found of a person with *askerī* status, in this case a *gönüllü*, with the variant of *başe*; janissary cadres (*yenīçeris*) all used the variant *beşe*. We notice among *re'āyā* homeowners a significantly higher incidence of *başe*. In a sampling of 24 quarters (of 74 total quarters) distributed geographically throughout the city, we found 45 occurrences of *başe* and only 21 of *beşe*. There did seem to have been a certain tendency toward exclusivity of one usage within a given quarter: for example, we found only *beşe* in the quarter of Bāb Qinnasrīn and near exclusive use in Jallūm al-Kubrā, while in Jabila only *başe* is

generally recognized as a military title used by soldiers and officers at ranks below that of *agha* and does not seem to denote a specific position.³² The residence of *beşes* in Aleppo certainly was not exclusive to that city. Other studies have shown that persons with the title of *beşe* were resident in Anatolia, Bulgaria, Crete, and other parts of Syria.³³ The study of Ottoman Crete contends that the title *beşe* came to refer specifically to individuals who claimed military status and yet pursued civilian occupations; in this way, they were akin to individuals known as *yamaç* (literally, “helper”) in the Balkans and *yoldaş* in Cairo.³⁴ The characterization of *beşes* as soldiers having strong ties to the local economy is corroborated by one study of the Damascus suburb of the *Miḍān* in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The author describes *beşes* as “investors,” finding that they tended to invest a greater proportion of their wealth in real estate property than did other military groups.³⁵

The intermediate status of *beşes* emerges also from evidence pertaining to Aleppo. That the survey of 1678 confers the title of *beşe* on virtually all janissaries (designated as “*yeniçeri*”) owning homes outside the citadel and all citadel guards (*müstaḥfiẓān*) owning homes within suggests the strong association between *beşe* and military service. Yet the survey records a substantial, additional number of homeowners (134) categorized as tax-liable *re‘āyā* who possess the title of *beşe* (see

used, and in the quarter of Meḥmed Bey, again, near exclusive use of *başe*. One possible though hard-to-prove explanation for these variations is linguistic: the surveyors may have recorded the title as they heard it, perhaps writing *beşe* for Turkish speakers and *başe* for Arabic (and Kurdish?) speakers. In our survey of the local court records for the period 1640–1700, we found *beşe* to be universally used. On the likely derivation of *beşe*, see H. Duda, “Başa-Beşe,” *Festschrift für Wilhelm Eilers* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967), 159–163; cf. J. Denys, “Pasha,” *EF*.

³² Midhat Sertoğlu, *Osmanlı Tarih Lügati* (Istanbul: Enderun, 1986), 49; and Mustafa Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadi ve İçtimai Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959), II: 353fn.

³³ Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, passim; Greene, *A Shared World*, 90–91; Rossitsa Gradeva, “War and Peace along the Danube: Vidin at the End of the Seventeenth Century” (paper presented at a conference entitled, “The Ottomans and the Sea,” at the Skilliter Center for Ottoman Studies, Newnham College, Cambridge University, 29–30 March 1996), cited in Greene, *A Shared World*, 90; and Brigitte Marino, *Le Faubourg du Midan à Damas à l'époque ottomane: Espace urbain, société et habitat (1742–1830)* (Damascus: IFEAD, 1997), 151.

³⁴ Greene, *A Shared World*, 90–91. For her analysis, Green draws on Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II:728; and Aḥmad Damurdāshi, *al-Damurdāshi's Chronicle of Egypt (1688–1755)*, trans. and ed. Daniel Crecelius and 'Abd al-Wahhab Bakr (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991), 128.

³⁵ Marino, *Le Faubourg du Midan*, 151.

Table 2.3).³⁶ Precisely who these individuals were is subject to debate. Checking their names against the names of the home-owning citadel guards and other units as recorded in the 1678 survey and against a contemporaneous salary register, we find that as many as twenty-five may have been citadel guards living, or at least maintaining additional households, outside the citadel (usage of common Muslim names makes this figure approximate).³⁷ The remaining 109 *beşe* homeowners thus emerge as soldiers with no officially recognized military affiliation, at least according to the 1678 survey. At the same time, the surveyor's granting of the title of *beşe* to these homeowners is significant since there were instances of individuals who were given the title by the local shari'a court, but who did *not* receive such recognition by the 1678 surveyors.³⁸

Turning to residence patterns, a moderate concentration of *beşes* is found in the eastern part of the city, both inside and outside the walls. Forty-three of 77 *beşes* within the walls resided in the eastern intramural quarters, and 35 of 57 outside the walls resided in the eastern extramural quarters. Still, *beşes* were to be found in substantial numbers in every district of the city, and their membership represented, from the standpoint of real-estate ownership, a cross-section of the entire urban population. Nonetheless, the inclination of *beşes* to group in the eastern part of the city, with its strong representation of military cadres, suggests that a substantial number of *beşes* maintained a military posture. Persons with the title of *beşe* may have customarily served, possibly within the quarter organization, in leading paramilitary and security roles and may consequently have acquired the title informally as a mark of respect; or they may have been members of an officially recognized auxiliary military force that supported the regular units, thus earning the title formally.

³⁶ Only the *ashrāf* exceeded the *beşes* in the number of houses owned according to the 1678 survey.

³⁷ Twenty-five citadel guards constitute 15 percent of the homeowning citadel guard force, and 4 percent of the total forces, according to MM 8467 and DBKL 32201, respectively. For examples of guards owning homes outside the citadel, see Farhād b. Nāşir, owner of a house assessed at *evsaṭ* in the quarter of Jallūm al-Kubrā (MM 8467:16a) and a citadel guard (*müstahfiz*) in *Bölük* 5, both in DBKL 32201 (AH 1090/1679–1680 CE) and DBKL 32222 (AH 1100/CE 1688–1689); and Rajab b. 'Alī, owner of a house assessed at *evsaṭ* in the quarter of Kallāsa (MM 8467:127b–130a) and citadel guard in *Bölük* 5 in DBKL 32201.

³⁸ See, for example, titles granted to members of the *kasapbaşı* family, that of Muḥyi al-Dīn b. Sālim, discussed in Chapter Four.

Having surveyed those military personnel residing in the city of Aleppo, we consider, for the sake of comparison, the tax status of soldiers living in the city's hinterland. Located some twelve kilometers to the southwest of the walled city of Aleppo, the garrison at Khān Ṭūmān was charged with the protection of travelling merchants and pilgrims. At some point in the early Ottoman period, soldiers assigned to the garrison had been administratively detached from the garrison of *mūstahfizān* guards at the Aleppo citadel. Accordingly, they enjoyed the same tax privileges, namely, exemption from *'avāriż-i dīvāniyye*, *bedel-i nüzül*, *bedel-i sūrşat*, and *tekālīf-i 'örfiyye ve şakka* with the stipulation that they reside in and maintain the defense of the fortress.³⁹ The village of Khān Ṭūmān, located next to the fortress, however, seemed to have suffered depopulation in the final decade of the century, which may have affected the fortunes of the garrison itself. In 1690 residents of the village petitioned for and received complete exemption from *'avāriż* taxes after they reported they were unable to meet their tax obligations.⁴⁰

Persons claiming *'askerī* status in the town of Idlib al-Şuġhrā, today the Syrian town of Idlib, provide a contrasting story. In 1656 a large number of representatives from several neighborhoods in Idlib al-Şuġhrā complained to the governor in Aleppo that 30 fellow residents, all either possessing the *beşe* title or claiming *yeniçeri* status, were part of the town's established population ("*aban 'an jadd min ahālī al-qaşaba*") and had formerly paid their share of *'avāriż* taxes. Now, however, these residents were, according to the plaintiffs, refusing to pay their share, causing great harm to the town as a whole. When the governor Murtażā Pasha subsequently questioned the defendants, they claimed that, though they were part of the town's established population, they had become servants of the sultan ("*şārū min al-qūl al-sultānī*") and therefore were entitled to tax exemption. Such a claim was probably based on military service these persons had performed previously and the understanding that they would receive privileges in exchange. Significantly, Murtażā Pasha overruled their claim, reasoning that the defendants should pay their full obligation of *'avāriż* taxes so that the other residents of the town would not suffer unduly

³⁹ MM 8467:145b. For a description of the Khān Ṭūmān fortress, see K. A. C. Creswell, "Two Khans at Khan Tuman," in *Syria: Revue D'Art Oriental et d'Archéologie* 4 (1923): 134–39.

⁴⁰ ES 1:52, 26 N 1101/3 July 1690.

from over-taxation.⁴¹ The non-privileged status of these persons was confirmed five years later when the qadi of Aleppo made a ruling, on the basis of an earlier imperial inspection, that all residents of Idlib were *re'āyā* and not janissaries, as some were claiming.⁴²

On the basis of the preceding review of military groups in and around Aleppo, we can make some general observations on their tax status. Most notable is the fact that, according to the survey of 1678, only a proportion of men from any one unit or corps enjoyed exemption from payment of the *'avāriż* real estate tax. The general rule that administrative-military cadres should, as servants of the sultan, receive full tax exemption had been replaced by a more complex set of arrangements in which exemptions were selective and were applied to different categories of taxes. While it remains difficult to determine on what grounds such exemptions were awarded, it is nonetheless possible to draw a general profile of those persons who did and did not obtain exemptions. The percentage of persons in each military category obtaining exemptions, viewed together, can furthermore suggest the relative political status of each group. While the *gönüllüyān* and the janissaries obtained exemption rates that were roughly comparable—23% and 18%, respectively—members of the *ķapıķulu sipāhī* corps and *tīmār*-holding *sipāhīs* achieved considerably higher rates: 48% and 36% respectively. Such a finding suggests that both the salaried and *tīmār*-holding *sipāhī* corps continued to exercise considerable political influence.⁴³ Irregular troops such as the *sekbān* and *şarıca*, and those persons holding the title of *beşe*, on the other hand, appeared to enjoy no formal recognition of their services to the state and were as a rule excluded from privileges associated with the *'askerī* class.

It has already been mentioned that the Ottoman state awarded exemptions not only in exchange for public service but also as a means of recognizing those individuals and groups whose piety and social status reflected the moral and religious concerns of the dynasty. Just as the military cadres resident in Aleppo represented the public servants, the local *ashrāf* represented a group—indeed, the only substantial

⁴¹ SMS 3:844, 3 JA 1066/28 February 1656.

⁴² SMS 28:317, *Āķhir* J 1071/1 March 1661.

⁴³ The fact that the *tīmār*-holding *sipāhīs* had their residence in the city, enjoyed tax exemptions there, and continued to be recognized by the state as *sipāhīs* suggests their successful adaptation to changing political and military systems. See Douglas Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and Its Transformation, 1563–1656," Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1987.

status group—on which that the state conferred recognition as a group embodying religious ideals. Claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad and ordinarily given the title of *sayyid*, the *ashrāf* were entitled to respect and reverence and, on account of their prestige, were frequently granted economic and legal privileges.⁴⁴ While Islamic literary sources generally uphold the *ashrāf* as religious and social exemplars, relatively little is known about their actual status and organization and the strategies by which they maintained themselves as an exclusive group. The court records, supplemented with other sources, provide a partial but suggestive picture of their status and activity in Ottoman Aleppo.

The court records of Aleppo provide numerous examples of the ways in which the *ashrāf* distinguished themselves from the general Muslim population. Wearing a green turban or another green article of clothing visually defined members of the *ashrāf*; no others were allowed this privilege.⁴⁵ Official correspondence recognizing a person as a *sharīf* specifies, as the first privilege of the holder, the wearing of green; conversely, orders for removing a person from the corps of *ashrāf* are equally unequivocal and direct.⁴⁶ The *ashrāf* were to be accorded proper respect in public places, and they could seek legal redress if they felt they had been insulted. The fact that a large proportion of the persons suing in court for slander were *ashrāf* suggests that they took their status seriously and did not tolerate any personal affront in public.⁴⁷ Such examples indicate that denigration of the *ashrāf* was, in their minds, denigration of the religion of Islam and of the state that championed it.

Managing the affairs of the *ashrāf* community in Aleppo was the “marshal,” the *naqīb al-ashrāf*, who was sometimes called the *qā'immaqām naqīb al-ashrāf*, because the chief *naqīb al-ashrāf* of

⁴⁴ For a general introduction to the *ashrāf*, see C. van Arendonk and W. A. Graham, “Sharīf,” *EP*. For the opinion of a 16th century Egyptian scholar on how the *ashrāf* should be treated, see Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction, 1982), 278–82.

⁴⁵ Van Arendonk and Graham, “Sharīf,” *EP*, 334; and Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 1517–1798* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 188.

⁴⁶ SMS 36:75, 18 B 1098/30 May 1687; ES 1:77, B 1102/March–April 1691.

⁴⁷ In one case, a member of the *ashrāf* sued, and was able to obtain *ta'zīr* punishment for, the imam of the quarter after the latter allegedly beat him. See SMS 34:112, 11 DA 1089/25 December 1678 and SMS 34:135, 28 D 1089/10 February 1679. See also SMS 3:400, 29 JA 1065/6 April 1655; SMS 3:849, 10 JA 1066/6 March 1656; SMS 24:251, 10 R 1055/5 June 1645; and SMS 28:544, 29 RA 1073/11 November 1662. See also Van Arendonk and Graham, “Sharīf,” *EP*.

the empire, residing in Istanbul, delegated authority to his appointed representatives in the provinces. The *naqīb* had the double responsibility of (1) protecting the *ashrāf* from external interference and (2) ensuring internal discipline and uniform standards of membership.⁴⁸ As part of the second responsibility, he maintained the rolls of the *ashrāf*, ensuring that only those persons who could verify their noble descent were permitted to enjoy group privileges; and, as in Egypt, he may have functioned effectively as the qadi among the *ashrāf*, adjudicating court cases and assigning reward and punishment.⁴⁹ No less significant were perquisites that accrued to the *naqīb* as the incumbent of this office. Persons who founded charitable foundations (*waqfs*) sometimes entrusted the administration of such institutions to the *naqīb*.⁵⁰ Perhaps the best example of this pattern in Aleppo is the *waqf* established by Ibşir Muştafâ Pasha, who served both as the governor of the province and as the grand vizier in the 1650s.⁵¹ Administrative control of the economic resources of vast foundations such as that of Ibşir Muştafâ Pasha gave the *naqīb* considerable local power, so that the office of *naqīb*, at least by the middle of the seventeenth century, became an object of intense competition among the *ashrāf* and may have exacerbated internal divisions among them. In this connection, recent studies have shown the intensity of political maneuverings undertaken by two prominent Aleppo *ashrāf* families, the Tāhā and Zuhra, in the seventeenth century, and other works have shown the continuing importance, if not pre-eminence, of the *naqīb* in local politics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁵² In general, there

⁴⁸ See, for example, the appointment order for the *naqīb al-ashrāf*, ES 1:11, *Awākhir* N 1101/27 June–6 July 1690. See also Bodman, *Political Factions*, 82–85, 92–94. On *naqībs* in another Ottoman province, see Michael Winter, “The *Ashraf* and *Niqabat al-Ashraf* in Egypt in Ottoman and modern times,” *Asian and African Studies* XIX (1985): 17–41; idem, *Egyptian Society*, 192–198.

⁴⁹ Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule*, 193; and Bodman, *Political Factions*, 92–93.

⁵⁰ H. Watenpaugh suggests that the office of *naqīb* was favored as an instrument to administer *waqfs* because over time it was rotated among different persons and families and did not become hereditary as some *waqf* administrative positions did. See *The Image of an Ottoman City*, 170–171. Cf. Bodman, *Political Factions*, 99.

⁵¹ Jean-Claude David, *Le waqf d’Ipşir Pāşā à Alep (1063–1653): Étude d’urbanisme historique* (Damascus: Institut Français d’Études Arabes, 1982); and Watenpaugh, *Image of an Ottoman City*, 155–174. See, for a dispute arising over the administration of the Ibşir Muştafâ Pasha *waqf*, SMS 36:275, 16 RA 1099/20 January 1688.

⁵² The *ashrāf* had internal divisions not least because some were Sunni and some Shī’i. See Marco Salati, *Ascesa e caduta di una famiglia di ašraf sciiti di Aleppo: I Zuhrawi o Zuhra-Zada (1600–1700)* (Rome: Istituto per l’Oriente C. A. Nallino, 1992);

is considerable evidence to suggest that the provincial *naqībs* in the Arab lands gained influence over the course of the early and middle centuries of Ottoman rule, a development parallel to the political assertion of urban notables with whom they were associated.⁵³

Other organizational features further strengthened the corporate identity of the *ashrāf*. Assisting the *naqīb* in carrying out his responsibilities were two messengers (Tr. *çavuş*, Ar. *jāwīsh*), whose positions appear to be modeled on the organization of the chief *naqīb al-ashrāf* in Istanbul.⁵⁴ Although their exact duties are not known, information on their counterparts in other Ottoman cities sheds light on their possible functions. Court documents from Tripoli indicate that in 1668 a group of religious and educational functionaries in that city nominated, and a qadi confirmed, the appointment of a messenger (*jāwīsh*) over the same group. The *jāwīsh* was expressly charged with delivering summons to members of the ulama for appearance in the qadi's court or the governor's council.⁵⁵ In Egypt, the *naqīb* had two *jāwīshes*, one of whom was charged with allocating allowances to individual members, and the other with confirming representatives of the *ashrāf* in each district and city.⁵⁶ The *ashrāf* also were the beneficiaries of a *waqf* endowed in their name. In 1660, for example, prominent members of the *ashrāf* jointly agreed to contribute funds from the Waqf al-Sādāt al-Ashrāf to the *Naqīb* of Mecca to pay for travelling expenses as he journeyed from the Ḥijāz to Istanbul.⁵⁷ In short, the *ashrāf* of seventeenth-century Aleppo emerge as a self-conscious and organized status group.

Bodman, *Political Factions*, 79–102; and Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 36–38, 41–42, 46–47. See also Thieck, “Décentralisation ottomane,” 165–171. For a Turkish primary source document on the removal of one member of the Ṭāhā family from office of *naqīb*, see SMS 36:162, 23 JA 1098/6 April 1687.

⁵³ Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule*, 192–198.

⁵⁴ SMS 24:224, 23 RA 1055/19 May 1645.

⁵⁵ Transcription of an Arabic document in Nahdī Şubḥī al-Ḥimşī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus min khilāl wathā'iq al-mahkama al-shar'iyya bi'l-niṣf al-thānī min al-qarn al-sābi' al-ashar al-milādī* (Tarāblūs: Dār al-Ayman, 1086), 275–77.

⁵⁶ 'Alī Bāshā Mubārak, *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-Jadīda* (Būlāq, 1887–89), III: 134, cited in Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule*, 186.

⁵⁷ SMS 28:58, 12 S 1071/17 October 1660. How the *naqībs* of Mecca and Aleppo ranked in relation to each other is unknown. See also SMS 23:243, 2 L 1052/24 December 1642. Claims by the *ashrāf* of *waqf* revenues varied from city to city: the *ashrāf* in Cairo claimed that certain *waqfs* specifically benefitted them, while the *ashrāf* in 'Ayntab made no such claim. See Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule*, 188; and Canbakal, “‘Ayntab,” 186.

Indeed, one could argue that the *ashrāf* of Aleppo seem to have adopted organization and duties that elsewhere are performed by janissaries or other cohesive military cadres.⁵⁸ The office of *jāwīsh* was a standard official in Ottoman military organization, and in Egypt the assignment of *waqf* administrative posts was channeled to the janissary agha. These developments in Aleppo were key to the later emergence of the *ashrāf* as a “faction” in the eighteenth century. It is worth noting that by the seventeenth century the *ashrāf* in Egypt, even without their control of *waqf* foundations, asserted a fierce independence. Narrative sources report that on different occasions they forcefully resisted external inspections of their membership, collectively sought restitution for the murder of fellow members, and are described as a military body consisting of horsemen and infantry that partook in a campaign against a rebellious governor in Upper Egypt.⁵⁹

Despite their elevated social status and developed corporate organization, however, the *ashrāf* in Aleppo obtained only partial or selected exemption from taxes on their real estate property. Court documents indicate that rank-and-file *ashrāf* were, on the one hand, to be exempt from the customary exactions (*tekālīf-i ʿorfīyye*) imposed by local administrative-military officials but were, on the other, subject to the direct imperial *ʿavārīz-ı dīvāniyye* taxes assessed on their properties. Members of the *ashrāf* who managed to combine their social status with the influence gained from public office or considerable wealth, or conversely who were impoverished, seem to have been more successful in securing exemption from both kinds of taxes. Typical of the first category was a certain Sayyid ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn b. Sayyid Muḥammad, a resident of Dākhil Bāb al-Nayrab Quarter. In a statement made to the shariʿa court in 1655, he acknowledged that he was paying the *ʿavārīz-ı dīvāniyye* tax incumbent on his property, but requested that he not be charged any *tekālīf-i ʿorfīyye*, or customary exactions. The court granted him his request on the basis (1) that he was a *sharīf* of recognized lineage and (2) that he, like his non-*sharīf* neighbors, was meeting his *ʿavārīz-ı dīvāniyye* obligations.⁶⁰ Local court officials seem

⁵⁸ I thank Jane Hathaway for her comparative insights on Egypt.

⁵⁹ Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule*, 189–190.

⁶⁰ See SMS 3:428, 3 B 1065/9 May 1655. For other examples of tax exemptions of this kind, both from the city and the countryside, see SMS 24:383, 7 J 1055/31 July 1645; SMS 28:455, 19 M 1073/3 September 1662; SMS 34:104, 30 L 1089/14 December 1678; SMS 34:112, 11 DA 1089/25 December 1678; SMS 36:158, 12 DA 1098/19 September 1687; and ES 1:18, 18 D 1101/22 September 1690.

to have taken at least part of the responsibility for the welfare of the *ashrāf* poor. In 1691, a deputy (*nā'ib*) of the qadi of Aleppo, Sayyid 'Abd al-Salām, petitioned for and received exemption from 'avārīz taxation on behalf of Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ḥanbalizāde because “the latter, in addition to being from among the *ashrāf*, is also unable to make payments.”⁶¹ If indeed both the most prominent of the *ashrāf*, as well as their most indigent, were being released from tax obligations, then we could argue that the *ashrāf* of middling circumstances, many of whom were craftsman and petty merchants, were bearing a proportionally heavier part of the 'avārīz tax burden.

A more general picture of the status of the *ashrāf* with regard to liability for 'avārīz taxation is presented in Table 2.3. What stands out is that the *ashrāf* were the largest homeowners status group, spread geographically throughout the city and comprising relatively large numbers of both tax-exempt and tax-liable propertied persons in each district. Thus the *ashrāf*, more than any military status group, represented in this period the social diversity of the city and were drawn from most segments of the urban population. It is then instructive to compare, within each district of the city, the numbers of tax-exempt and tax-liable *ashrāf* homeowners. The tax-exempt *ashrāf* outnumbered the tax-liable not only in the western intramural district—which is predictable given the elevated political status of that area—, but also in the northern extramural quarter of Khārij Bāb al-Naṣr.⁶² In all other districts, the tax-exempt members were a minority. In the eastern intramural neighborhoods, only 24 of 41 (37%) *ashrāf* homeowners obtained exemption, and the extramural quarters yielded a range between 28% (northeastern) and 35% (eastern) of *ashrāf* obtaining exemption. The general distribution of tax privileges among the *ashrāf*, then, was not unlike that for military cadres, in that it was concentrated in the walled city, the significant difference being that

⁶¹ ES 1:96, 3 B 1102/2 April 1691.

⁶² These findings are consistent with Bodman, who suggests that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the greatest concentration of *ashrāf* was in the suburb beyond Bāb al-Naṣr. See *Political Factions*, 97. In any case, the survey of 1678 identifies remarkable concentrations of *ashrāf* homeowners, both tax-exempt and tax-liable, in certain lanes (*zuqāqs*) of Khārij Bāb al-Naṣr: Zuqāq 'Abd al-Raḥīm; Zuqāq Qawwās; and Zuqāq al-Ṭabla. It may be that these areas are enclaves of Shi'i *ashrāf*, who may have found a more tolerant environment in the religiously pluralistic neighborhoods of the northern suburbs. The contemporary Imāmi Shi'i community of Damascus is settled in neighborhoods adjacent to those of Christians and Jews in the eastern intramural quarters.

the tax-exempt *ashrāf* were most numerous in the western, and the military in the eastern, intramural quarters. This polarity in residence observed in the seventeenth century may reflect social tensions that could contribute to the janissary-*ashrāf* factionalism for which Aleppo would be so famous in the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries.

While the Ottoman central authorities upheld the privileges of the *ashrāf*, they also sought to monitor and, if necessary, limit their numbers. In a period when the Ottoman state was struggling to maintain fiscal discipline, the potential expansion of the tax-exempt *ashrāf* in Aleppo was a development the central authorities could scarcely observe with indifference. Dominating Ottoman political affairs for much of the second half of the seventeenth century, the Köprülü family of grand viziers undertook a broad range of reforms to restore a sound fiscal basis to the state.⁶³ In 1659, the grand vizier Köprülü Mehmed Pasha dispatched to Aleppo and other Anatolian and Arab provinces a high-ranking official to carry out inspections. The objectives were to eliminate residual Jelali elements, disarm the civilian population, and audit the enrollment of status groups so as to remove persons with fraudulent claims from the *'askerî* and *ashrāf* ranks. The inspector, Isma'îl Pasha, confirmed the exemption of the *ashrāf* from the *tekâlîf-i 'örfiyye* exactions, but at the same time in some geographical areas he considered their numbers excessive and ordered reductions in the rolls.⁶⁴ Court documents indicate that during and shortly after his inspection, persons came to court claiming that they were *ashrāf* of recognized lineage and complaining that Isma'îl Pasha had unjustly removed them from the rolls. In one case, the qadi, perhaps acting under local pressure, restored their privileges.⁶⁵ *Sharîf* status was thus contested in a process in which central state authorities sought to impose discipline on the social and fiscal order, and claimants to such status pursued both social prestige and the attending tax relief.

From the foregoing survey of social groups we can draw several conclusions about how accessible tax exemption was to the urban population. As the collection of extraordinary taxes became regularized

⁶³ M. Tayyib Gökbilgin and R. C. Repp, "Köprülü," *EP*; and M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Köprülüler," *İA*.

⁶⁴ Gökbilgin and Repp, "Köprülü"; Mustafa Na'ima, *Tārîḫ-i Na'imā*, (Istanbul: Matba'a-yı 'Amire, AH 1281-83), VI: 415-18; and Canbakal, "Ayntab," 157-58.

⁶⁵ SMS 28:223, *Ākhir* D 1070/5 September 1660; SMS 28:455, 19 M 1073/3 September 1662; and SMS 36:75, 18 B 1098/30 May 1687. There was at least one other initiative in the late seventeenth century to reduce the numbers of *ashrāf*; see AŞ 11:475, *Awākhir* L 1099/18-27 August 1688.

and intensified, and as the residential quarter organization was elaborated to meet tax collection, exemption from such taxes became attached to real estate property, not to homeowners themselves. This change may have arisen as much from practical administrative considerations as from anything else, since the frequency of urban real estate transactions would have rendered it difficult for the central state to track the owner as he bought and sold property. The second significant change, related to the first, was that belonging officially to the military-administrative class or to traditionally privileged social groups such as the *ashrāf* did not, in itself, entail exemption from 'avārīz taxation. What seems likely is that those persons who were able to combine membership in these groups with other elements of social status—political access, wealth, piety, learning—were most capable of securing more tax exemptions. In other words, state authorities continued to recognize and offer privilege to status groups, but they were now more inclined to reward solely the leaders or prominent members of status groups, notably the *naqīb al-ashrāf* and commanders of local garrisons, teachers in the more prestigious *madrasas* and mosques, and the wealthier merchants.

Other Individual Strategies for Tax Relief

For the vast majority of Aleppans who did not belong to privileged status groups, provide service to the Ottoman state, or own tax-exempt houses, 'avārīz taxation was a frequent and routine fact of life. Still, in some years when the tax burden was judged exceptionally onerous, some taxpayers could expect relief. The *muḥaṣṣil*, the chief financial officer of the province, was responsible for the supervision of the 'avārīz tax regime and sometimes intervened in the collection process. Although he could not adjust the *hāne* count unilaterally—that action could be approved only by the central finance administration—he could undertake certain personal initiatives when conditions warranted. In what appears to have been a particularly difficult year, 1673, groups of residents representing three different quarters petitioned the *muḥaṣṣil* that they were unable to pay fully the remaining 'avārīz tax arrears for three preceding annual levies (1668–69, 1671–72, and 1672–73) due to the fact that the majority of their tax units were ruined and unproductive. In each case, after the *muḥaṣṣil* acknowledged this state of affairs, he declared he would show “mercy” to them and pay the bal-

ance of their debts from his own funds. In the aggregate, the quarters of Guljuk, Zāwiya, and Maḥallat al-Yahūd were able to pay only 397 of 1245 *ghurūsh asadī* demanded, or approximately 2 of 10 *ghurūsh* for each *ḥāne*, the remaining balance of 848 *ghurūsh*, a substantial sum, being defrayed by the *muḥaṣṣil*.⁶⁶ At the same time, the quarter of Qal'at al-Sharīf petitioned the *muḥaṣṣil* for similar reasons, and he forgave them an even larger sum of 1130 *ghurūsh asadī*, or 13 *ghurūsh* for every *ḥāne* assessed on them.⁶⁷ Indeed, checking the conditions of these same four quarters only a few years later, in the 1678–79 tax survey records, we find a high percentage of unoccupied, ruined houses relative to other quarters in the city. The western intramural quarter of Qal'at al-Sharīf had 13 percent of its houses ruined, and Maḥallat al-Yahūd in the same district had 23 percent of its houses ruined, both well above the average of 8 percent for the western intramural district. More remarkably, Guljuk and Zāwiya Quarters, situated in the eastern extramural district, had catastrophic rates of 63 and 75 percent, respectively, far beyond the district rate of 22 percent and indeed among the highest rates of ruin in the entire city.⁶⁸ To return to the *muḥaṣṣil*'s action, we nonetheless cannot assume that such instances of apparent altruism occurred frequently, or that Aleppans of the time expected them to occur: the instances described above are the only ones noted in the local court records for the second half of the seventeenth century.

Some Aleppans, when faced with tax charges, sought to evade or resist. Some residents, such as the aforementioned woman from Baḥsīta, may have sought to discredit or shame the tax collector and delay collection. Others fled their homes, at least temporarily. While tax flight was a common strategy for peasants in the countryside of Aleppo, it seems to have occurred much less frequently in the city. As an example of the former, in 1674 'Alī Bey Wazīrāde, a prominent member of the military-administrative class settled in Aleppo, sued three men of Baṭnaṭā, a village for which he was the tax collector (*ḍābiṭ al-qariya*), for abandoning their village with the intention of evading payment of 'avārīz taxes. He won the case, and the judge ordered the

⁶⁶ SMS 32:207 (2 documents), 20 M 1084/7 May 1673 and SMS 32:209, 29 M 1084/16 May 1673.

⁶⁷ SMS 32:234, 25 M 1084/12 May 1673.

⁶⁸ MM 8467:3b–5b, 29b–31a, 116a–116b, and 118b–119b.

three men to return and pay their tax obligations.⁶⁹ Still other Aleppans are reported to have assaulted the tax collector. In 1658, Shaykh Faṭḥūllāh b. Shaykh Taqāḥa, the imam of the eastern intramural Qaṣīla quarter, brought charges against a homeowner, alleging that when the imam requested payment of *sürṣat* and *bedel-i nüzüil* taxes, the homeowner cursed him, struck him, and, in a sign of the utmost disrespect, knocked his turban from his head. The plaintiff went on to provide witnesses who verified his claims.⁷⁰

It is not clear what motivated Aleppans to perpetrate slander, assault, and other actions of defiance, since the effect may have been only to temporarily delay collection or worse, to bring down punishment on their heads. We can compare such actions, however, to everyday forms of peasant resistance, a topic to which historians and social theorists have given considerable attention. According to one view, acts of evasion and resistance, when carried out in a repeated and regular rhythm, were part of “the *ordinary* weapons of relatively powerless groups,” other tactics being foot-dragging, false compliance, pilfering, and arson. As such they were a means to release the inherent tension between taxpayers and tax collectors.⁷¹ When they increased in frequency, moreover, such actions conveyed to the central authorities, who were experienced in these matters, that local officials may have been perpetrating abuses.⁷² Acts of resistance, however, appear seldom in the court records, and it may be that taxpayers carried out such tactics only as a last resort. The fact that tax collectors were appointed

⁶⁹ SMS 32:364:5, 1 M 1085/7 April 1674. ‘Ali Bey Wazīrzāde was the son of a certain “Meḥmed Pasha al-Wazīr” and, judging from his extensive moneylending activities, probably was a tax farmer for many rural villages. In 1684, he is identified as the *mir-i livā’* of the district of Ma‘arrat al-Nu‘mān, to the southwest of the city of Aleppo. See SMS 2:495, 20 JA 1095/5 May 1684, SMS 35:220, 20 DA 1095/29 October 1684, and SMS 235:248, 23 M 1096/30 December 1684. For tax flight on a much grander scale, see SMS 23:493, 18 M 1055/16 March 1645, in which the rapacious collections of a *waqf* administrator compelled peasants to abandon ten villages, partially or in full. See also Marco Salati, “I Villaggi Imamiti della Provincia di Aleppo in Epoca Ottomana,” *Rivisti Studi Orientali* LXIII, 4 (1989–90), pp. 231–255.

⁷⁰ SMS 27:95, 9 N 1068/10 June 1658. See also SMS 32:302, 2 § 1084/12 November 1673.

⁷¹ James C. Scott, “Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 13 (1986): 5–35, esp. 6; and “Resistance Without Protest and Without Organization: Peasant Opposition to the Islamic *Zakat* and the Christian Tithe,” *Contemporary Studies in Society and History* 29 (1987): 417–52.

⁷² Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials*, 124–25. See also Jane Hathaway, ed., *Rebellion, Repression, Reinvention: Mutiny in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Praeger, 2001).

from among the quarter's residents no doubt was a powerful restraint on taxpayer misconduct.

What appeared more common as a strategy of tax relief was outright alienation of property, either through sale if the property was freehold, or exchange (*istibdāl*) if part of a *waqf* endowment. In general, records of sale note the reason why the buyer is selling the property only in cases when he is meeting a debt, or, relevant to this discussion, when the financial interests of orphans are at stake. In 1656 Aḥmad Efendi b. Ḥasan Efendi, a high-ranking financial official (*tezkiireci*) in Aleppo, acting as executor (*wāṣī*) of his minor son's estate, sold a house in Bayyāḍa quarter formerly owned by the boy's deceased mother, Ṭayba bt. 'Abd al-Ghānī Çelebi, to Muṣṭafā Agha b. Çerkes Meḥmed Agha, a janissary officer. Aḥmad Efendi did so only after six persons from the same quarter testified that the house was dilapidated, that its rental income no longer sufficed to meet the tax obligations assessed on it, and that sale of the property for the given price would therefore be beneficial to the minor child.⁷³ As in the case of Takūlī, described above, the weight of property taxes was probably the dominant consideration in the sale of the house, even though no reason is specified.

Residential properties endowed to family and public *waqfs* were also subject to *'avārīz* taxation. In 1645 'Alī b. Qāsim, the administrator of the family *waqf* established by his grandfather Isma'īl b. 'Abdullāh Ibn al-Kaḥīla, requested permission from the qadi to exchange a house in Bayyāḍa quarter for a shop (*dukkān*) in the Dākhil Bāb Banqūsa quarter. 'Alī testified, on the one hand, that the house was dilapidated and was assessed at one-half *ḥāne*, and that its rental income of four *ghurūsh asadī* was insufficient for house repair and payment of *'avārīz* obligations. On the other, he added that Zayn al-'Ābidīn Efendi al-Daftarī, the chief financial official of Aleppo, was willing to exchange the aforementioned shop property, which he said would yield a larger revenue, for the house property, which directly adjoined the property of Zayn al-'Ābidīn Efendi and could be used to extend his residential compound. Five witnesses reported that the situation was as 'Alī had testified and that such an exchange would be beneficial to the *waqf*; accordingly, the qadi sanctioned the exchange, and the house passed

⁷³ SMS 3:936, 26 J 1066/21 April 1656. See also SMS 23:449, 8 B 1055/30 August 1645; SMS 30:339, 24 D 1074/18 July 1664; SMS 31:366b, 9 L 1076/14 April 1666; SMS 31:383b, 14 M 1077/17 July 1666; SMS 32:80, 22 RA 1083/18 July 1672; SMS 32:200, 27 D 1083/15 April 1673; SMS 32:242, 26 RA 1084/11 July 1673; and SMS 34:175, 23 S 1090/5 April 1679.

into the ownership of the official.⁷⁴ Although this exchange could simply be an instance in which a powerful government official was able to wrestle a questionable proceeding through the court, the fact that ‘Alī attributed his financial hardship partly to *‘avārīz* taxation suggests that it was viewed in the court as a plausible, if not valid, explanation, and that the exchange was justifiable on those grounds.

Collective Action and Mutual Assistance

To this point we have been concerned with how individuals or single families, in their attempts to obtain tax relief, either appealed directly to the state, or unilaterally took action. Taxpayers had one additional option, and that was, naturally enough, to seek assistance from other taxpayers. But to whom did they apply? The court records yield no example of organized mutual assistance among the members of military units or the *ashrāf*.⁷⁵ Non-Muslim religious communities, most notably Jews, did organize poor relief, but it is unclear how much these efforts specifically addressed the burden of taxation for homeowners.⁷⁶ Rather, it was their neighbors, grouped collectively in the residential

⁷⁴ SMS 24:381, 10 J 1055/3 August 1645; and SMS 35:77, 29 J 1095/13 June 1684.

⁷⁵ It is possible that the pious foundation of the *ashrāf*, the Waqf al-Sadāt al-Ashrāf, may have contributed funds toward the tax obligations of *ashrāf* poor, but no evidence exists for this assertion.

⁷⁶ For examples of mutual assistance among the non-Muslim communities in Aleppo pertaining to *cizye* (*jizya*) and other poll tax obligations in the seventeenth century, see SMS 3:799, 6 R 1066/2 February 1656; and SMS 34:139, 8 M 1090/19 February 1679. The survey of 1678 furthermore records properties in the joint ownership of certain Christian denominations in the Christian quarter of Judayda; presumably, church authorities used the rents from these properties in part to provide support to the indigent. In a listing that probably reflects the wealth of each denomination, the survey records two *evsaṭ* and one *a’lā* properties in the hands of the Maronites (*Mārūniyān*); two *ednā*, two *evsaṭ*, and one *a’lā* properties for the Armenian Orthodox (*Ermeniyān*); one *evsaṭ* property for the Syrian Orthodox (*Sūryāniyān*); and three *ednā* and one *a’lā* properties for the Greek Orthodox (*Rūmiyān*). See MM 8467:59a–60b. On the institutionalization of poor relief among non-Muslim communities in eighteenth-century Aleppo, see Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 215–217; idem, “Poverty and Poor Relief in Eighteenth-Century Aleppo,” *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 55–56 (1990), 171–179, esp. 176. For comparative perspectives see Miriam Hoexter, “Charity, the Poor, and Distribution of Alms in Ottoman Algiers,” in Michael Bonner, Mine Ener, and Amy Singer, eds., *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 145–161; and Eyal Ginio, “Living on the Margins: Coping with Poverty in an Ottoman Provincial City,” in Bonner et al., *Poverty and Charity*, 165–184.

quarter, to whom homeowners most frequently applied, and who, in return, organized distributions to the neediest of them.

As is the case with many urban social customs, evidence of mutual assistance in local court records emerges not when the custom is observed but rather when it is breached. Individual homeowners, when they contributed to the tax obligations of the quarter beyond what was assessed on their property, were said to do so “by way of assistance,” (*bi-ṭarīq al-mu’āwana*) or more simply, to render aid (*musā’ada*), to their neighbors. The limited number of relevant cases suggest that at least from time to time wealthier taxpayers made voluntary contributions to the tax burden of the quarter above and beyond their own personal tax obligations. Even tax-exempt homeowners voluntarily contributed funds. Some quarter officials, however, must have viewed such acts of charity as potentially binding precedents, and sought to have the court enforce the continuation or resumption of such contributions, especially when tax levies became heavy. In 1687, eight tax-liable residents of Suwayqat Ḥātīm quarter, among them prominent administrative and military officials and merchants, sued all tax-exempt homeowners in the quarter for assistance in the payment of the *beldār* extraordinary tax. The plaintiffs acknowledged that although the defendants—among them members of the *ashrāf* and the ulama, officials in the financial administration, *waqf* administrators, and others—were exempt from payment of ‘*avārız-ı sultāniyye*, *bedel-i nüzül*, and other customary exactions (*tekālif-i ‘örfiyye*), they had nevertheless urged them to pay, as they themselves did, some part of the *beldār* tax as a means of assistance (*bi-ṭarīq al-mu’āwana*) to quarter residents. The defendants had rejected their request, pointing out that the 1678 survey register declared their houses exempt from all such taxes and that an additional imperial order reiterated the exemption. Having reviewed the order, the qadi ruled in favor of the defendants and informed the plaintiffs that owners of tax-exempt houses were not obliged to provide assistance to payers of the *beldār* tax.⁷⁷ In similar cases, the court authorities also adhered to the letter of the survey

⁷⁷ SMS 36:158, 12 DA 1098/19 September 1687. The 1687 listing of tax-exempt properties in Suwayqat Ḥātīm quarter found in the court registers accords exactly with the listing in the 1678–79 survey as recorded in MM 8467: 32b–33b. Other cases survive, however, in which the *beldār* tax was to be collected from both tax-exempt and tax-liable persons (*al-mu’āf wa ghayr al-mu’āf*). See SMS 28:496, 15 S 1073/29 September 1662 and SMS 28:492, 23 S 1073/7 October 1662. In one case, leading members of the quarter agreed that, if current income was insufficient to meet tax

records and upheld the rule that tax-exempt homeowners were under no obligation to make contributions to the quarter's tax burden.⁷⁸ We would expect, however, that in general the social pressure taxpayers could apply collectively on tax-exempt neighbors was considerable, and that tax-exempt neighbors often saw it as in their best interest to make some meaningful contribution.

Lest one think that voluntary contributions were made only periodically, it is instructive to consider the case of Ḥājj Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Bāqī, a homeowner in Baḥsita quarter. In 1662 five officials from the quarter, led by the imam, sued Ḥājj Muḥammad, charging that he had failed to make any payment toward the *'avārız* obligations on his house. They testified that *each year* in the past he had paid the equivalent of one *hāne* in taxes, of which one-half was the assessment on his property, and the remaining half assistance to the quarter. Ḥājj Muḥammad countered that he was no longer under any obligation to pay taxes on the property because, as he testified, he had recently obtained exemption for the one-half *hāne* assessed on his property, and he had also decided to cease paying the remaining one-half *hāne* he had been paying *each year* as assistance (*bi-ṭarīq al-mu'awana*) to the quarter. In the end, the qādi followed administrative procedure and consulted the imperial tax register, finding that Ḥājj Muḥammad remained liable for one-half *hāne*, despite his statement to the contrary, and ordered him to pay the appropriate taxes to the quarter officials. What is important here, however, is not only that Ḥājj Muḥammad admitted to making annual contributions for mutual assistance, but also that he regarded the contribution of assistance as voluntary and

obligations, the shortfall should be made up by distributing the taxes among all residents, regardless of tax status. See SMS 3:677, 19 L 1065/22 August 1655.

⁷⁸ SMS 25:19, 24 RA 1058/16 April 1648; and SMS 34:73, 2 N 1089/18 October 1678. The apparent fact that quarter officials with some frequency sued tax-exempt owners for tax payment based on an earlier precedent of non-obligatory contributions suggests quarter officials may have gotten their way more than part of the time. See also SMS 34:197, 22 RA 1090/3 May 1679. It is unclear whether tax-exempt homeowners were also exempt from forced loans, which were commonly collected from merchants. In 1687 a group of prominent local merchants sued Fakhr al-Tujjār Ḥājj 'Abd al-Qādir Çelebi Jawbīzāde for putting the burden of a forced loan disproportionately on their shoulders. Government authorities had apparently appointed him with distributing the burden of the loan. A large number of *ashrāf* and ulama provided character witness testimony, and the qādi ruled in favor of 'Abd al-Qādir Çelebi. See SMS 36:267, 5 M 1099/11 November 1687.

therefore subject to withdrawal at his discretion.⁷⁹ Again, it is not so much the credibility of his statements, as it is their being accepted in a court of law as plausible explanations of his behavior, that offers an insight into the unwritten customs of tax administration.

The behavior of the wealthier taxpayers as depicted in the foregoing examples also complicates the conventional view of their role in tax collection. The urban notables (*a'yān*) have been portrayed as eager in times of crisis to advance cash on behalf of the poorer neighbors as a way of making the latter (and the central government) dependent on them. The ensuing influence, so the argument goes, that the urban notables were able to extend over the assessment and collection of the *'avārīz* by the late seventeenth century is characterized as one of the bases on which they could assert more general political power in the eighteenth century.⁸⁰ That the urban notables were embroiled in internal disputes as to whether they should contribute voluntarily to tax collection, is suggestive of how heavily taxes fell on them, even with their considerable resources. Still, substantial numbers of urban notables do seem to have made voluntary contributions, and in return they may have expected from the poorer residents some form of gratitude or other acknowledgement of their magnanimous action.

As voluntary contributions became part of the routine of tax collection, quarter officials, in order to secure quarter interests, may have even become involved in the negotiations for sale of tax-exempt real estate. We have already seen how quarter officials bargained with prospective buyers over the price of, and rate of taxes on, officially taxable properties. In 1666, Aḥmad b. Shihāb al-Dīn purchased a large house in Shamisātiyya, a northeastern extramural quarter, from an individual

⁷⁹ SMS 28:417, 22 D 1072/13 August 1662. See also 28:436, 9 M 1073/24 August 1662. One other document in which tax assistance is mentioned involves a petition in 1660 by the Jewish community of Aleppo to renovate a shrine, the shrine of 'Uzayr (linked with the Hebrew prophet Hosea) in the village of Tādif northeast of Aleppo. Muslim witnesses reported to the qadi that a renovation funded by the Jews would be beneficial to the village of Tādif because the Jews had assisted the villagers in making their *'avārīz* tax payments by contributing 40–50 *ghurūsh* annually. See SMS 28:49, 1 M 1071/6 September 1660 and SMS 28:335, 7 B 1071/8 March 1661.

⁸⁰ Inalcik, "Military and Fiscal Transformation," 315–317; see also idem, "Centralization and Decentralization," 31ff. Cf. Rafeq, "Changes in the Relationship between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Syrian Provinces from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries," in Thomas Naff and Roger Owen, eds., *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History* (Carbondale, Ill.: Souther Illinois University Press, 1977), 53–73, esp. 59ff.

resident for the considerable sum of 270 *ghurūsh asadī*. Aḥmad stated that the house was exempt from extraordinary taxes but then pledged (*ta'ahhada*) to pay the equivalent of one-fourth *ḥāne* to the residents of the quarter each year, a pledge which the residents found satisfactory.⁸¹ That this pledge was found embedded in the sales deed suggests that it was one of the conditions for the sale of the property.

With time the residents of the quarter, both rich and poor, had become accustomed to combining their resources annually for tax purposes, and so organized they ordinarily had the means to offer financial assistance to homeowners who needed it on a continuing basis. Some quarters provided tax subsidies to homeowners unable to make full tax payments. Thus in 1662 ten officials representing the eastern extramural quarter of Farrā'in acknowledged in court that the tax assessment on the home of two women, Raḥma bt. Darwīsh and her daughter Umhān bt. Ṣadaqa, was one *ḥāne*, but that they would collect from the women only one-half *ḥāne* in *'avāriẓ* and other extraordinary taxes due to the women's poverty.⁸²

Using the same resources, quarter officials became involved in the management of residential and commercial properties after the owners no longer desired to own them or began having difficulty maintaining them and making tax payments. Indeed, the large number of documents found in the court registers relating to the joint purchase, sale, and rental of quarter properties by quarter residents, as well as lists of commonly-held properties in survey records, indicate that property management was a major preoccupation of quarter officials. Typical was the sale by Aḥmad b. Riḍwān and 'Ubayd b. Muḥammad of a large seven-room house in the extramural quarter of Shukr Agha in 1666. The buyers, the imam of the quarter and six other persons, acknowledged that for this purchase they were representing themselves and the remaining members of the quarter, and were furthermore using the funds of the group in its own interest. The remarkably low sales price of 10 *ghurūsh asadī* also typifies this kind of transaction, pointing to both the declining condition of the property and the stagnant market for taxable properties.⁸³ Conversely, as an example of a joint

⁸¹ SMS 31:393a, 21 S 1077/23 August 1666.

⁸² SMS 27:377, 27 R 1072/20 December 1661. See also SMS 23:6 (#268), 10 R 1052/6 July 1642.

⁸³ SMS 31:356b, 17 Ṣ 1076/22 February 1666. See also SMS 28:517, 12 RA 1073/25 October 1662; SMS 28:584, 27 R 1073/9 December 1662; SMS 31:380b, 4 M 1077/7 July 1666; SMS 31:390a, 12 S 1077/14 August 1666; SMS 32:119, *Ghurrat* B 1083/23

sale, in 1700 ten residents representing the quarter of Mashāriqa sold two ruined *qayşariyyas* to a locally prominent teacher (*mudarris*) and *sharif*, Mawlānā Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qādir Efendi Baylūnizāde. They did so after the qadi had determined that the properties were neglected, the quarter residents were unable to make use of them, and ownership of such properties, in fact, was positively injurious to them. The last point probably referred to the weight of continuing tax obligations.⁸⁴

Management of real estate properties by quarter officials may be seen as a proactive attempt to arrest the deterioration of houses, and thus to maximize the rental value of such properties in the face of undiminished levels of taxation. Yet joint ownership does not appear to have been able to reverse such a decline, at least not on a wide scale. Comparing different districts in the city, Table 2.4 shows a strong correlation between numbers of ruined houses and houses owned jointly by quarter residents. We note in particular the relatively high number of ruined houses in the intramural and extramural eastern neighborhoods, and the correspondingly high number of commonly held houses in the same areas. Concentrated in these neighborhoods were populations engaged in providing caravan services, which may have suffered some decline in demand as international trade carrying commodities such as silk shifted to other regional routes.⁸⁵ In any case, what seems likely is that joint ownership was one stage in the cycle of urban real estate tenure: that period after individual owners were no

October 1672; SMS 32:164, 22 L 1083/10 February 1673; SMS 32:194, 26 DA 1083/15 March 1673; SMS 32:235, 5 R 1084/20 June 1673; SMS 32:237, 21 RA 1084/6 July 1673; SMS 32:396, 21 R 1085/25 July 1674; SMS 2:762, 27 JA 1085/29 August 1674; SMS 34:53, 24 B 1089/11 September 1678; SMS 35:75, 18 B 1095/1 July 1684; and SMS 41:312, 10 R 1112/24 September 1700.

⁸⁴ SMS 41:183, 17 Ş 1111/7 February 1700. In the same document the teacher pledged to donate (*tabarra’a*) a sum annually to the *waqf* of the quarter mosque as part of the payment for the *qayşariyya* properties. See also SMS 3:703, 8 DA 1065/9 September 1655; SMS 28:502, 28 S 1073/12 October 1662; SMS 31:333a, 20 JA 1076/12 December 1665; SMS 32:96, 28 R 1083/23 August 1672; SMS 32:404, 4 J 1085/5 September 1674; SMS 32:407, 9 J 1085/10 September 1674; SMS 37:68, *Ghurra* B 1098/13 May 1687; SMS 41:312, 9 R 1112/23 September 1700. In a separate transaction, residents of Sāhat Biza quarter sold stones from a ruined house to help pay their *avāriż* obligations. See SMS 27:471, 15 DA 1073/21 June 1663.

⁸⁵ For a summation of past discussion on the shifts in trade routes and commercial activity more generally, see Halil Inalcik, “The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600,” in Inalcik with Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History*, 243–246; and Suraiya Faroqhi, “Crisis and Change,” in Inalcik with Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History*, 499–502.

Table 2.4. Indices of Social Stratification and Economic Conditions in Aleppo in 1678 According to MM 8467

District	Dist. of House Assessments*		Assessments by Percentage (A/Ev/Ed)	'Avârîz Tax Status Exempt	Tax Status (E/L)	Ruined Houses (Ĥarâb)	Kaşarlıks		Jointly Owned Houses	Konağ Paşa Quarters	Fakîrs		
	A'lâ	Evsat Ednâ					One Storey	Two Storeys					
<i>Intramural City</i>													
Eastern	110	420	1739	5/19/76	377	1892	17/83	217	31	1	70	8	38
Western	173	516	1429	8/24/68	244	1874	12/88	192	66	1	71	13	41
Subtotal	283	936	3168	6/22/72	621	3766	14/86	409	97	2	141	21	79
<i>Extramural City</i>													
Northern	84	348	821	7/28/65	54	1199	4/96	14	26	0	5	1	5
Khârij Bâb al-Naşr	70	341	687	6/31/63	51	1047	5/95	14	40	4	8	1	5
Northeastern	24	188	871	2/17/81	56	1027	5/95	57	9	1	9	9	11
Eastern	17	202	1022	1/16/83	73	1168	6/94	348	1	0	49	4	14
Southern and Western	13	181	913	1/16/83	84	1023	7/93	63	8	0	15	1	17
Subtotal	208	1260	4314	4/22/74	318	5464	5/95	496	84	5	86	16	52
Total	491	2196	7482	5/22/73	939	9230	9/91	905	181	7	227	37	131

* Tax rates (a'lâ, evsat, and ednâ) are assessed only on inhabited houses (beys and kaşarlıks); ruined houses (ĥarâb) are excluded. Jointly owned houses (described as "der yed-i mahalle") refer to those residential properties held in common ownership by residents of the quarter. Konağ Paşa quarters refer to facilities for the quartering of administrative officials and soldiers staying temporarily in the city. Fakîrs refer to apparently indigent homeowners whom the surveyors in 1678 selectively granted tax exemption, perhaps also because of their local reputation for piety.

longer able to pay taxes on and maintain a house, and before the next tax survey could be undertaken and taxes appropriately readjusted.⁸⁶

One can see evidence of such a cycle before and after the survey of 1678. The survey not only enabled a fairer reapportioning of taxes among religious communities (as seen in Chapter 1) but also saw to the updating of individual homeowner assessments, bringing them in line with the actual condition of the properties. One court register that was completed during and just after the survey contains several cases of individuals attempting to retake possession of properties they had surrendered to quarter officials years earlier when they could no longer pay their tax obligations. Significantly, a substantial proportion of these individuals were Jewish. The individual's attempts at repossession imply a recognition that the tax assessment was once again tolerable. In all cases the quarter officials were able to show that the individual either sold the property outright to them (and thus the quarter officials were under no obligation to relinquish the property without fair compensation), or the amount of investment put into the property by the officials for renovation and maintenance in the intervening period was such that the individual had to reimburse them a substantial sum.⁸⁷

As alluded to above, one common strategy by which quarter officials sought to maintain or restore the productivity of jointly-owned properties was to rent out the properties on both short- and long-term leases, and they did this using legal devices similar to those of pious foundations (*waqfs*). Quarter officials rented out properties in good condition for shorter periods, usually for the legally sanctioned period of three years, and collected the rent in yearly installments (*taqsit*), perhaps to coincide with the yearly *'avārız* tax commitments.⁸⁸ For dilapidated houses, quarter officials would ordinarily use an extended lease contract, usually of three consecutive rental periods totaling nine years, and offer to the tenant material incentives, notably limited rights of ownership (*ruqba*), over any improvements he made to

⁸⁶ The cycle of building construction, deterioration and renovation is briefly sketched for a later period: Anette Gangler and Heinz Gaube, "A Quarter of Aleppo in the 19th and 20th Centuries: Some Socio-Economical and Architectural Aspects," *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* (hereafter *REMMM*) 62 (1991–1994): 159–168, esp. 159–163.

⁸⁷ SMS 34:77, 6 N 1089/22 October 1678; SMS 34:215, 8 RA 1090/19 April 1679; SMS 34:188, 12 RA 1090/23 April 1679; and SMS 34:206, 3 R 1090/14 May 1679.

⁸⁸ SMS 27:A527, 22 L 1077/17 April 1667.

the property. When in 1663 officials of Suwayqat 'Alī quarter rented a house to the Jewish woman Marḥaba bt. Bayram, they agreed to accept a low annual rent of 3 *ghurūsh asadī*, giving her permission to undertake any improvements with her own funds and recognizing the resultant *ruqba* rights she would secure over the property.⁸⁹ Quarter residents also had legal sanction to rent out land. In 1666 officials from Jabīla Quarter, acting as representatives of the quarter, leased a vacant plot of land (*qit'at al-arḍ*) to Aḥmad b. Bākīr, charging him an annual rent of 2 *ghurūsh asadī* and granting him the right to build on and develop the land as he saw fit. The contract was struck after a group of witnesses reported that rental of this land was of clear benefit to the interests of the quarter.⁹⁰ The tenants themselves, once having invested in the repair or improvement of the property, went to court to notarize their expenditures in order to safeguard their rights.⁹¹

Quarter officials also assumed duties as property managers when owners were absent from the city, sometimes in agreement with these owners, sometimes unilaterally. In 1665 officials from Bāb Qinnasrīn reported to the qadī that two homeowners were absent from the city for some time and had left their houses empty. Such an action, the officials stated, was injurious to the quarter since each house was assessed with 'avārīz taxes and other obligations. They therefore requested permission from the qadī to rent out the two houses and spend the rental revenues on the tax obligations of the same. The qadī granted their request.⁹² Disputes could arise, however, from these arrangements. In 1655, after he had been gone from Aleppo for fourteen years, a janisary officer sued the officials of Dūdū quarter for payment of fourteen years' rent accruing from his house. He claimed that he had voluntarily handed over the property for their management, but when he returned, they disputed what was owed him, the quarter officials arguing that much of the rent had been consumed by 'avārīz tax obligations. The two sides eventually came to a settlement (*ṣulḥ*), the managers pay-

⁸⁹ SMS 30:186, 11 S 1074/14 September 1663. The renewal of this contract with the same tenant, with similar conditions, is SMS 32:338, 14 L 1084/22 January 1674. See also SMS 27:A497, 10 M 1077/13 July 1666; and SMS 32:253, 17 R 1084/1 August 1673.

⁹⁰ SMS 31:399b, 22 RA 1077/22 October 1666. The rental action was undertaken in the common *isti'jār* arrangement.

⁹¹ SMS 28:580, 26 R 1073/8 December 1662. See also SMS 32:557, 4 R 1086/28 June 1675, and the related case of SMS 32:558, 4 R 1086/28 June 1675.

⁹² SMS 31:341a, 20 J 1076/28 December 1665.

ing the janissary officer 35 *ghurūsh asadī*—a small sum that suggests that tax obligations did indeed claim much of the rent revenues.⁹³ In another case, the qadi granted permission to officials in Khān al-Sabīl quarter to take control of and rent out the large house belonging to the heirs of Murtaẓā Pasha, probably a former governor, after the court determined that the property was idle and abandoned, that no agent (*wakīl*) had been appointed to look after it, and that quarter residents were suffering manifest harm because they were having to cover the tax obligations of the property. Rental proceeds were to pay, in the first place, the tax obligations of the house, and any surplus was to be held for the owners.⁹⁴ It should be noted here that the management of tax-liable properties, involving purchase, maintenance, rental, and sale, necessitated in some quarters the appointment of specialized officials. In quarters such as Baḥsīta, which had a relatively large number of jointly-held properties, the residents appointed an individual as *lammām* (literally, “one who collects”) expressly for the purpose of collecting rents on such properties.⁹⁵

In the event that tax payments, voluntary contributions, and rental revenues—in short the entirety of regular income sources—were insufficient to meet tax obligations, the quarter resorted to borrowing money collectively from a wealthy individual. Judging from the limited number of documents at hand, the format and conditions of the moneylending contract were similar to those of contracts made by villagers and by members of trade organizations. In these, a representation of prominent members, led by a shaykh or imam, acknowledged a debt to a single individual, recognized that they themselves were to be held collectively and mutually accountable (*mutaḍāminūn wa mutakāfilūn*) for any and all delinquent taxpayers among them, and agreed to exacting terms of repayment.⁹⁶ Collective moneylending

⁹³ SMS 3:713, 12 DA 1065/13 September 1655. According to the court document, the *ḥāne* assessment for the house of the janissary Officer, a certain ‘Abd al-Jalīl Agha, was designated in the detailed tax register as the combined houses of “Muḥammad Beşe” and “al-Jibrīnī”, both of which in fact appear in the extant copy of the survey register of 1616. See MM 3400:48–50.

⁹⁴ SMS 36:60, 4 B 1098/16 May 1687. The tax assessment of the house, called a *sarāy*, or palace, in the ‘*avārīzḥāne taḥrīr*’ register of 1678–79, was at the highest rate, *a’lā kaḍīm*, amounting to two-thirds of a *ḥāne*. See MM 8467:1b, 105b–106a.

⁹⁵ SMS 2:573, 22 M 1087/6 April 1676. Such an official was called either a *lammām* or *jābī*. According to the tax survey of 1678–79, Baḥsīta had 19 jointly-held houses.

⁹⁶ See, for example, SMS 26:366, 10 DA 1070/7 July 1661; SMS 26:375, 7 D 1071/3 August 1661; and SMS 2:688, 11 M 1085/17 April 1674.

contracts involving residential quarters more closely resemble those of trade organizations in that repayment tends to be carried out in installment (*taqṣīṭ*) form, whereas villagers are required to repay the debt in one or two lump sums, usually after a fixed number of months. Such a difference, of course, reflects the productive rhythms of their livelihood, one predominantly manufacturing/marketing, one predominantly agricultural. From these instances it becomes clear that the shari‘a court could and did treat residential quarters as any other defined social collectivity when it came to financial liability. Such an observation is all the more remarkable given that residents of a given quarter had professional and economic interests that were considerably more heterogeneous than other frequently occurring debtor groups, such as villagers living in the same village, and artisans who were members of the same craft organization.

One case illustrating the collective financial responsibility of the quarter residents relates to the socially diverse, extramural quarter of Shari‘atli. In 1663 fifteen Muslims and eleven Christians representing the residents of the quarter reported to the court that they had some time earlier collectively borrowed from Ḥamza Agha, perhaps a janissary officer, 520 *ghurūsh riyālī*, a sizeable sum, to meet the obligations (*maṣāliḥ*) of the quarter, and that now Ḥamza Agha was seeking repayment. They added that a current tax obligation equal to five *ḥānes* could not be collected from certain homeowners. They therefore sought permission from the qadi to collect, in a single operation, money from financially able residents, both for the debt to Ḥamza Agha and for the tax arrears. This request effectively meant, among other things, the distribution of five *ḥānes* of taxes on top of the individual tax assessments the remaining taxpayers were to pay. For this the qadi gave permission.⁹⁷ It is unclear why exactly the deputized persons sought permission from the qadi but the reason may have had to do with the issue of collecting from quarter residents money above and beyond their prescribed tax assessments.

Finally, with respect to credit relations, a few documents suggest that quarters could compensate creditors by serving as marketing agents, or perhaps as targeted markets themselves, for commodities in which

⁹⁷ SMS 28:600, 18 J 1073/28 January 1663. Five *‘avārūzḥānes* was equivalent to roughly 1/24th of the total quarter tax burden of 120 *ḥānes*. See MM 3400:74–76, and MM 8467:75b–81a. Cf. SMS 3:677, 18 L 1065/21 August 1655; and SMS 30:325, 5 D 1074/29 June 1664.

the creditor was trading. A document dating from 1663 describes the receipt by quarter officials of a payment of 25 *ghurūsh riyālī* from Ibrāhīm Çelebi b. Ḥājj Ḥasan Ibn al-Khawwām for taxes on his house in Zuqāq al-Misk, a Western extramural quarter. Another document with the same date records a reciprocal action, a receipt by Ibrāhīm Çelebi of 200 *ghurūsh riyālī* from the officials of the same quarter, the money being the value of one *qinṭār* of coffee beans that he had handed over to them in the form of a loan (*bi-ṭariq al-dayn al-sharʿī*).⁹⁸ Putting these two documents together, we might conclude that Ibrāhīm Çelebi consigned a quantity of coffee beans to the residents of Zuqāq al-Misk for marketing, perhaps in neighborhood coffeehouses or in the streets, and agreed to let them keep a portion of the profits for payment of taxes due on his residential property. If this is indeed the case, Ibrahim Çelebi had effectively mobilized the labor of a residential quarter for his own business interests, and the residents of the quarter in turn met their tax obligations through joint action. The commodity would have been easily marketed, as Zuqāq al Misk was part of Khārij Bāb al-Jinān quarter, which included coffeehouses that sat along the banks of the Quwayq River.⁹⁹ Two other documents record the debt of quarter residents to a soldier for quantities of rice they had received from him; in these cases, it is less clear whether the rice was to be marketed or consumed by the residents.¹⁰⁰ The debt was, in both cases, to be repaid in currency on an installment basis. The broad features of these agreements are suggestive of the Islamic *muḍāraba* contract, in which one person puts up the capital and the other uses the capital

⁹⁸ SMS 30:150, 5 S 1074/8 September 1663.

⁹⁹ Michel Tuchscherer, "Le café à Alep au temps des Ottomans: Entre le souk et le quartier," in Héléne Desmet-Grégoire and François Georgeon, eds., *Cafés d'Orient revistés* (Paris: CNRS, 1997), 113–126. That coffee was used as a loan is suggestive of its high commercial value and the importance of as a trade commodity. For analyses of the popular demand for coffee and related trade patterns, see the various articles in Michel Tuchscherer, ed., *Le Commerce du café avant l'ère des plantations coloniales* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 2001).

¹⁰⁰ SMS 26:366, 10 DA 1071/7 July 1661; and SMS 26:375, 7 DA 1071/3 August 1661. While rice is considered a bulk foodstuff, it maintained a relatively high commercial value due in part to the intensive nature of its cultivation and the strong demand for it, especially in Ottoman cities. See Feridun Emecen, "Çeltik," *IA*²; Inalcik, "Rice Cultivation and the Çeltükci-Re'âyâ System in the Ottoman Empire," *Turcica* XIV (1982): 67–141, esp. 72, 126–28; and Rhoads Murphey, *Regional Structure in the Ottoman Economy: A Sultanic Memorandum of 1636 A. D. Concerning the Sources and Uses of the Tax-Farm Revenues of Anatolia and the Coastal and Northern Portions of Syria* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1987), 224, 228.

to buy and sell goods, with both sharing the profits.¹⁰¹ In general, the frequency of collective borrowing by residential quarters cannot be estimated given the limited number of available documents recording such transactions. Nevertheless, the substantial sums involved suggest the potential volume of money being transferred in years when the tax burden was heavy.

Taxpayers in some quarters also had access to assistance from pious foundations (*waqfs*) established by quarter residents specifically to defray the costs of property tax payments. Most quarter-based *waqfs* were endowments of cash that were invested in commercial enterprises or moneylending, and a small number of *waqfs* took the form of real estate.¹⁰² Typical of cash *waqfs* was that established in 1655 by three brothers, Eyüp Beşe, Hayder Beşe, and İbrâhîm Beşe, sons of Receb Beşe, and members of the imperial janissary corps. They established a fund of 150 *ghurûsh riyâlî* to defray the tax obligations of their house, assessed at a high rate of 2.75 *hânes*, in the quarter of Bâb Qinnasrîn, with the surplus revenue going to benefit the poor of the quarter. They handed over the sum to Shaykh ‘Abd al-Karîm b. Shaykh Muḥammad, both the imam of the quarter and the administrator (*mutawallî*) of the cash *waqf* already established in the quarter, and stipulated that he invest the sum in legally sanctioned loan contracts with reputable persons, obtaining a rate of return of 20 percent.¹⁰³ Administrators of cash *waqfs* sometimes converted the capital to stock, such as olive oil or soap, in the declared belief that ownership of stock was more profitable and a sounder investment.¹⁰⁴ How the administrator was compensated is not well documented. According to one of the few

¹⁰¹ Avram Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit in Medieval Islam* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970), 166–248; Jeanette Wakin, “Muḍâraba,” *EP*.

¹⁰² On the debate revolving around cash *waqfs*, see Murat Çizakça, “Cash *Waqfs* of Bursa, 1555–1823,” *JESHO* 38, 3 (1995): 312–54; Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 161–163; Jon Mandeville, “Usurious Piety: The cash waqf controversy in the Ottoman Empire,” *IJMES* 10 (1979):289–308; Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 149–150; Rifat Özdemir, “Ankara Hatuni Mahallasi Nakit Avarız Vakfının Kredi Kaynağı Açısından Önemi (1785–1802),” in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarihi Kongresi: Tebliğler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1990), 733–748; and Canbakal, “Ayntab,” 245–248, 268–269.

¹⁰³ SMS 3:720, 7 DA 1065/8 September 1655. The *waqfiyyas* found in the Aleppo registers in the period under study stipulate that the loans be contracted in a *mu‘âqada* arrangement at a rate of 20 percent return. See also SMS 22:402, 18 DA 1050/1 March 1641; and SMS 24:185, 23 S 1053/13 May 1643.

¹⁰⁴ SMS 3:872, 5 JA 1066/1 March 1656; and SMS 28:367, Awâkhir DA 1072/17 July 1662.

surviving agreements, in 1656 the *mutawallī* of the cash *waqf* in Jubb Asadullāh quarter agreed to the terms that he receive one quarter of the profits (*rubḥ al-māl*), the remaining three quarters going to defray the expenses of the quarter.¹⁰⁵ That such a substantial portion of the profits went to the administrator suggests the lucrative nature of the position.

Those taxpayers living in the intramural city appear to have benefited from a larger number of quarter-based funds, though such *waqfs* were to be found in virtually all districts of the city. A survey of court records between 1640 and 1700 yields mention of seven cash *waqfs* in the intramural eastern city (Bayyāḍa, Dākhil Bāb al-Naṣr, Dākhil Bāb al-Nayrab, Jabīla, Firāfira, Ughulbay, and Sāḥat Biza) and six in the intramural western city (Bāb Qinnasrīn, Baḥsīta, Jubb Asadullāh, Maṣābin, Qal'at al-Sharīf, and Suwayqat Ḥātīm). Other cash *waqfs* were found in the extramural northern (Almājī), northeastern (Mushāṭiyya, Shamīsāṭiyya, Ḥamza Bey), and Eastern (Qāḍī 'Askar) quarters. The western intramural quarters of Suwayqat Ḥātīm and Jubb Asadullāh also had foundations deriving revenue from investments in soap (*ṣābūn*). Finally, Suwayqat Ḥātīm and the western extramural quarter of Zuqāq al-'Aynayn had foundations deriving revenue from real estate. This listing should not be viewed as comprehensive and stable since it reflects the mention of such institutions in a variety of documents in different years, not a single inventory. An analysis by Murat Çizakça of cash *waqfs* in the Anatolian town of Bursa over a 268-year period has shown that only roughly 20 percent of such institutions survived longer than a century.¹⁰⁶

A comparison with a single accounting register of quarter-based *waqfs* in Aleppo in the years 1165–70 (1751–57) indicates that there was both significant change and continuity in those quarters organizing financial assistance.¹⁰⁷ If we assume that the eighteenth-century list is comprehensive, then what is most remarkable is the absolute decline in the number of such institutions, falling from at least sixteen in the seventeenth century to only seven in the mid-eighteenth century. One possible explanation is that more investments in the eighteenth century

¹⁰⁵ SMS 3:639, 22 D 1066/11 October 1656.

¹⁰⁶ See Çizakça, "Cash *Waqfs* of Bursa," 317–20.

¹⁰⁷ SMS 39, AH 1165–70 (1751–1757 CE). For a tabulation of revenues and expenditures of these *waqfs* in the eighteenth century, see Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 306, 308–9.

were tied up in land rather than in urban commerce.¹⁰⁸ The later listing nonetheless includes quarters found in the earlier survey, namely Ughulbay and Suwayqat Ḥātīm in the intramural city and Mushāṭiyya and Qāḍī ‘Askar in the extramural city. New quarters appearing are Altūn Būghā in the eastern intramural city and Ḥajjāj and Akrād al-Balāṭ in the extramural eastern district. In any case, the survival of such endowments, which dedicated a substantial part of their revenues to tax relief, indicates the ability of urban quarters to organize mutual assistance over the long term. It may be, as Çizakça argues, that supplemental contributions to the initial endowment, made by concerned residents of the quarter, were what made the difference between short- and long-lived cash endowments.¹⁰⁹ That quarter residents held the appointed administrators of quarter *waqfs* accountable with periodic audits, and sued them when they thought they were negligent, suggests that such endowments were viewed as akin to communal property that benefited the neighborhood in its entirety.¹¹⁰

Closely related to *waqfs* dedicated specifically to tax relief were *waqfs* established by quarter residents to endow mosques, fountains, and other charitable institutions found within the quarter. Charitable works such as these, gathering the local population in rituals of worship or offering basic human necessities to all, no doubt provided at least limited material relief to poorer taxpayers at the discretion of the imam or other mosque functionary. As an illustration, in 1648 Fāṭīma bt. Aḥmad, a resident of Akrād al-Balāṭ Quarter in the extramural eastern district, endowed the mosque of her quarter, Jāmi‘ Balāṭ, with the revenues from one-half of a house in the same quarter and appointed the trustee of the mosque, Mawlānā Shaykh Aḥmad Ibn

¹⁰⁸ If we compare the residential real estate holdings of the wealthiest homeowners as recorded in the survey register of 1678 (MM 8467) with a sampling of presumably the wealthiest urban landowners in the 18th century, our observation (at this point impressionistic) is that real estate *did* become a more important form of investment. Whereas residential property ownership as reflected in 1678 survey tended to be localized in the quarter where the person lived, in the eighteenth century, one finds in the foundation deeds of major *waqfs* (those of the Aḥmad Efendi Ibn Ṭāhā, Ḥājj Mūsā al-Amīrī and ‘Uthmān Pasha) a dispersal of residential properties throughout the city.

¹⁰⁹ Çizakça, “Cash *Waqfs* of Bursa,” 323–325.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, SMS 3:942, 4 JA 1066/29 February 1656; SMS 28:59, 6 S 1071/11 October 1660; SMS 28:153, 7 RA 1071/10 November 1660; and SMS 34:112, 8 DA 1089/22 December 1678.

Balāt, to administer the endowment.¹¹¹ The personal decision to endow a local religious or charitable institution sprang from any number of motivations, among them an urge to strengthen the moral ties that bound the residents of a quarter in a living community, and the desire to create relations of dependence and gratitude that could be exploited to the benefactor's advantage.

Residential Quarters and the Question of "Positive Loyalties"

To summarize, as extraordinary taxes became more frequent and regular over the course of the seventeenth century, the inhabitants of Aleppo resorted to various strategies to obtain relief, both as individuals and as collectivities. Outright exemption from taxation was a privilege only for a small minority of the population, namely, military-administrative officials, functionaries in religious and educational institutions, and the *ashrāf*, and, as we have shown, only a part of any of these groups actually obtained exemptions in a recognized tax survey. Chances of obtaining a tax-exempt house were likewise slim.

The overwhelming majority of Aleppans, then, were confronted with a steady routine of tax collection. Forgiveness of taxes was an unlikely event except in the most extreme circumstances, such as when a quarter, having suffered depopulation, had been saddled with an onerous tax burden. To thwart tax collectors—and to send an indirect message of complaint to the authorities—individual taxpayers at times resorted to resistance and evasion, involving such tactics as slander, physical assault, and flight. In some cases, despair replaced defiance, and the taxpayer, being unable to pay taxes and meet the costs of maintaining his home, sold his property in order to bring an end to his tax obligations. Tax obligations could likewise have a decisive effect on the disposition of decaying *waqf* properties.

¹¹¹ SMS 25:98, 8 § 1058/28 August 1648. See also SMS 27:346, 20 DA 1071/17 July 1661; SMS 28:701, 11 DA 1073/17 June 1663; SMS 30:1, 27 R 1073/9 December 1662; SMS 35:136, 6 L 1095/16 September 1684; and SMS 38:230, 23 R 1101/3 February 1690. See also Ruth Roded, "Great Mosques, Zawiyas, and Neighborhood Mosques: Popular Beneficiaries of Waqf Endowments in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Aleppo," *JAOS* 110 (1990): 32–38; and Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Azbakiyya and Its Environs From Azbak to Isma'il, 1476–1879* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1985), 53–58.

Taxpayers, recognizing that collective action and mutual assistance could alleviate the hardships of poorer homeowners, undertook and sustained various initiatives, principally within the framework of the residential quarter. It was natural that, living in close proximity to one another and feeling both the internal impulse of generosity and the external pressures of social custom, residents within the same quarter provided informal financial assistance gratis to their less fortunate neighbors. Such acts of charity may have become increasingly formal in nature as quarter officials responsible for collecting taxes came to view “voluntary” contributions as semi-obligatory for the wealthier residents of the neighborhood. Instances of opposition to such involuntary contributions suggest that the more fortunate, too, were feeling the pinch of a heavier tax burden. Meanwhile, quarter officials did what they could to maintain the tax base by rationalizing the use of still profitable real estate properties and giving limited incentives for redevelopment. In concrete terms, they offered tax subsidies to homeowners who were struggling to make payments, and bought and sold properties that homeowners could no longer maintain. They rented out properties on long-term lease, ceding virtual ownership to tenants who redeveloped dilapidated structures and continued to pay their property taxes.

When the financial resources of the quarter as a whole were challenged, quarter officials could borrow on behalf of all quarter residents, and the court enforced their collective responsibility for repayment. On the other hand, some quarters managed to establish and sustain endowments—whether in cash, stock, or real estate—that defrayed the tax obligations of the poorer residents. The majority of such endowments were to be found among the more affluent intramural quarters, yet there were others in the poorer extramural suburbs. *Waqfs* endowing neighborhood religious and charitable institutions also must have provided the wherewithal to minister to residents in financial straits.

To return to the question with which this inquiry began—how cohesive quarters were in the face of state taxation—several conclusions emerge from a study of local court records and state fiscal documents. First, it was primarily within the framework of the residential quarter, not another urban institution, that Aleppans organized a broad range of joint initiatives to meet the fiscal demands of the central government. Status groups, such as the *ashrāf* and various military units, were, like residential quarters, divided into tax-exempt and tax-liable members, but they appear not to have built up any institutions paral-

lel in scope and cohesion to the quarter. Membership in such status groups was a privilege that, narrowly conceived, benefited exclusive, well-defined categories of people, yet none of these collectivities could develop sufficient solidarity to promote the interests of the group as a whole. The reasons for this are many and complex, but no doubt relate to the efforts of state authorities to limit tax privileges and the inability of group leaders to define and control membership in a period of considerable social and geographical mobility.

Residential quarters, on the other hand, were in many ways natural administrative units and as such had considerable advantage when it came to organizing collective action. Living in close proximity to one another, residents of the same neighborhood could be mobilized rapidly for self-defense. They had common concerns of security, morality, and economic welfare, and these concerns no doubt were reinforced by kinship ties as immigrants from one part of the countryside tended to congregate in one area of the city, and as neighbors intermarried. No less important, persons appointed to office within the quarter administration had the essential benefit of social knowledge, of long-term contact with residents of the quarter and familiarity with their habits and customs, their material conditions and attitudes to authority. For these reasons quarter officials must have been reasonably efficient not only in the assessment and collection of taxes, but also in managing the resources of the quarter, both human and material, to maintain its tax base.

Yet to what extent did the common interests and concerns of quarter residents constitute, in the words of Roy Mottahedeh, "positive loyalties"? That is, was the residential quarter, as we have described it, a focus of active loyalty for its residents, a "means for sustained and predictable local cooperation"?¹¹² Or was the elaboration of quarter organization in the seventeenth century merely a defense mechanism responding to state intervention, specifically the regime of extraordinary taxation? It seems to have been both. The taking over of decaying properties and their joint management by quarter officials probably was a stopgap measure to maintain a tax base in the face of undiminished tax levels. The sale and purchase, and the short- and long-term leases, of properties indicate the scramble of officials to be effective stewards of property that was marginal but still taxable. The resort

¹¹² Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 4.

of quarter residents to collective borrowing, specifically to meet tax commitments, and the resulting joint liability, furthermore point to a negative form of incorporation. Practices such as these constitute a reaction, direct or indirect, to a demanding regime of extraordinary taxation.

On the other hand, there are clear signs that Aleppans were invested materially and morally in the quarters of their residence, in ways that transcended the exigencies of taxation. The informal practice of financial assistance, *mu'āwana*, in the many cases in which it was voluntary, suggests the spontaneous acts that wealthier residents could undertake in the interests of the quarter. Those quarter institutions whose establishment and maintenance expressed the will of individual residents, notably *waqfs*—be they cash, commodity, or real estate—perhaps best illustrate the active loyalty that quarters could engender. These were acts of charity meant to last in perpetuity, to offer benefit long after the founder had passed away. Real estate *waqfs* benefiting the quarter, in particular, were institutions that had deep roots in the urban experience of Aleppo preceding the seventeenth century and that accordingly met the enduring social, political, and cultural needs of its inhabitants. On balance, one can argue that residential quarters constituted a vital part of what we might call “civil society” in seventeenth-century Aleppo.¹¹³

¹¹³ Cash *waqfs* present an historical problem that merits brief reflection. An economic and legal innovation that seems to have originated under Ottoman rule, cash endowments flourished in many cities, especially in Anatolia, and are generally linked to efforts to underwrite social, educational, infrastructural, and fiscal needs. Did the development of cash endowments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries receive indirect impetus from the implementation of an *'avārīz* tax system, which was theoretically a regime of taxation based on assessments of *real estate* property? Certainly, as we have argued above, cash endowments were intended to defray the collective tax and other commitments imposed on a given quarter, and that alone may have been sufficient for the development of such institutions. But it is also reasonable to suppose that cash endowments also constituted a kind of tax shelter, an alternative form of investment that enabled the founder to avoid additional tax liability by placing his money in non-real-estate instruments. His benefits were both material and moral: he had established in perpetuity a fund to cover the tax obligations of his property in an arrangement similar to a low-risk mutual fund, and he likewise gained social stature from his contribution to the greater good of the quarter. In this way at least, the *'avārīz* tax regime, being a system of taxes assessed on real estate, may have had the unintentional effect of encouraging investment in non-real estate sectors of the economy and contributed to capital accumulation on an appreciable scale.

PART II

CHAPTER THREE

MILITARY UNITS: ELEMENTS OF SOLIDARITY AND DIVISION

The foregoing investigation of residential quarters has tried to show the ways in which taxation and the requisitioning of human and material resources exerted a direct and immediate impact on Aleppan society. More gradual but no less important was the diffusion throughout provincial society of military cadres, including both regular and irregular troops. It is perhaps best to start with the observations of Ogier Ghislen de Busbecq, the Habsburg ambassador to Istanbul in the sixteenth century. In a 1560 report to his superiors, he drew a striking contrast between Habsburg and Ottoman soldiers, remarking,

I tremble when I think of what the future must bring when I compare the Turkish system with our own; one army must prevail and the other be destroyed, for certainly both cannot remain unscathed. On their side are the resources of a mighty empire, strength unimpaired, experience and practice in fighting, a veteran soldiery, habituation to victory, endurance of toil, unity, order, discipline, frugality, and watchfulness. On our side is public poverty, private luxury, impaired strength, broken spirit, lack of endurance and training; the soldiers are insubordinate, the officers avaricious; there is contempt for discipline; licence, recklessness, drunkenness, and debauchery are rife; and, worst of all, the enemy is accustomed to victory, and we to defeat. Can we doubt what the result will be?¹

Busbecq indeed represents a generation of sixteenth-century European observers who, if they did not admire Ottoman armies for their prowess, at least strove to warn their countrymen of the danger that these armies posed to Europe. At the core of the Ottoman military establishment was the standing infantry corps, the janissaries, who were recruited from among the Christian population of the empire, converted, and trained in warfare.² They had proven themselves in suc-

¹ Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq*, trans. Edward Seymour Forster (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 111–112.

² On the janissaries (*yeniçeris*), see Rhoads Murphey, “Yeni Çeri,” *EI*²; Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, 76–85; idem, “The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600,” in Inalcik with Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History*, 88–93; Ismail

cessive Ottoman campaigns into southeastern Europe and had by Busbecq's time attained legendary status among the population of Western European nations as a superior fighting force.

Some two hundred years later, European consuls living in Aleppo regularly reported on the janissaries stationed in that city, but they hardly did so in tones of awe or admiration. In their eyes, the janissaries had ceased to be a disciplined military unit by the late eighteenth century, having become instead an armed political party that conspired to extend its control over the city and its hinterland.³ In the words of one resident European consul, the janissaries "chiefly exercise[d] their power with a view to the filling of their purses."⁴ If the prominence of the janissaries in the public affairs of Aleppo was somewhat exceptional, their situation still reflected a thoroughgoing trend in Ottoman society, one in which the principal armed corps of the central state were assimilating to peaceful civilian occupations and allowing civilians to join their ranks. At the same time, such corps maintained the ability to resort to arms in pursuit of their narrow social and political interests.⁵ Indeed, only after the janissary corps had been destroyed in 1826 was the Ottoman sultan Maḥmūd II able to move forward with the Tanzimat, his program of Westernizing reforms.⁶

The story of the transformation of the janissaries and associated corps from elite imperial infantry to local armed power groups constitutes one of the central narrative threads of Ottoman history. According to the prevailing interpretation, the Ottoman state from its beginnings

Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapukulu Ocakları*, 2 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1943).

³ On political and social life of Aleppo in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with emphasis on the role of the janissaries, see Bodman, *Political Factions*, 55–78, 103–39, passim; Jean-Pierre Thieck, "Décentralisation ottomane et affirmation urbaine," 113–76, esp. 119–122, 165–171; Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 58–59, 73–74, 86–101; and Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 20–29, 48–49.

⁴ The English consul B. B. Barker, *Syria and Egypt under the last Five Sultans of Turkey* (London: Tinsley, 1876), 2 vols, I:26, as quoted in Bodman, *Political Factions*, 60.

⁵ For surveys of how the stationing of Ottoman military units affected life in the Syrian provinces, see Rafeq, "The Local Forces in Syria," 277–281, 302–307, passim; idem, "Changes in the Relationship," 58–59, 65–68, passim; and Nūfān Rajā al-Ḥammūd, *Al-'Askar fī Bilād al-Shām fī al-qarnayn al-sādīs 'ashar wa'l-sābi' 'ashar al-milādiyyayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, 1981), esp. 185–211.

⁶ On attempts of reform by Ottoman sultans, see Stanford Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789–1807* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); and idem, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, II: 20–28.

until the eighteenth century preserved its nature as a conquest state led by an elite warrior class; thus, any decline in the constitution of the central military units was bound to affect the general health of the government.⁷ Recent studies have done much to refine our understanding of this transformation, in part by delimiting the scope and depth of organizational changes, and in part by identifying the social forces and groups that displaced or supplemented the older military institutions. Among these studies are ones showing that janissaries engaged in civilian occupations as early as the early sixteenth century, thereby debunking the myth that the elite janissaries were kept strictly separate from civilian society even at the height of Ottoman military power.⁸ Other works have focused on the elite household, with its multiple ties of clientage and alliance, as a highly flexible organizational strategy that military cadres (and others) appropriated for mobilizing and sustaining political and economic resources in a time of weakening bureaucratic authority.⁹

The present chapter seeks to contribute to this literature by assessing the cohesion of military units in Aleppo in the intervening period of the seventeenth century. It attempts to trace changes in military organization and relate them to broader trends unfolding in provincial society at the time. Making use primarily of local Islamic legal court registers and central fiscal records, the present study focuses on the military corps stationed in the city of Aleppo itself.¹⁰ Significant in this discussion is the fact that the politics of Aleppo by the late eighteenth century had come to be defined by a pronounced factionalism between military units led by janissary cadres and the *ashrāf*, a status group

⁷ On the formation of the early Ottoman state and on debates surrounding this topic see Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁸ Cemal Kafadar, "On the Purity and Corruption of the janissaries," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 15, 2 (September 1991), 273–80; and André Raymond, "Soldiers in Trade: The Case of Ottoman Cairo," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 18, 1 (1991): 16–37.

⁹ Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 17–31. For other studies of households on a variety of social levels, see Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*; and Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

¹⁰ On the economic role of Aleppo in the Ottoman and international economy, see Alfred Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935); Ralph Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square* (London: MacMillan, 1967); and Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*.

claiming descent from the family of the prophet Muḥammad.¹¹ The chapter begins with a survey of the major military units to be found in Aleppo, then proceeds to examine aspects of their cohesion. After examining residence patterns, it will turn to patterns of engagement in civilian occupations, processes of mobilization and demobilization, and tendencies toward collective action.

Survey of Military Cadres

The constellation of the major military forces in Aleppo in the second half of the seventeenth century was the product of a complex history of power struggles from the inception of Ottoman rule. Defending the city in the decades following the 1516 conquest were three groups, the first of which was the *müstaḥfiẓān* (sing. *müstaḥfiẓ*), or citadel guards, who were infantry commanded by a warden with the title of agha and charged with defending the walls of the city and the citadel (*qalʿa*) located at its geographical center.¹² Much less is known about the second group, the *gönüllüiyān* or “volunteers,” whose responsibilities of defense appear to have extended beyond the city to the surrounding countryside.¹³ The third group was a contingent of janissaries (sing. *kapıkulu yeniçeri*) from the citadel of Damascus who were responsible not only for defense but also for collecting taxes under the auspices of the chief financial officer (*defterdār*) of the city.

One historian suggests that the unusual arrangement of having a foreign force, the Damascus janissaries, serve as administrative agents became central state policy after a number of governors of Aleppo had used local armed forces to intervene in the affairs of the *defterdār*.¹⁴

¹¹ On the *ashrāf* (sing. *sharīf*) in Aleppo, see Bodman, *Political Factions*, 79–102; Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 20, 41–48, passim; and Salati, *Ascesa e caduta*. A general work on the role of the *ashrāf* in Muslim history has yet to be written; but see C. van Arendonk and W. A. Graham, “*Ashrāf*,” *EI*².

¹² MM 8467: 3a (1678 CE). The status of the garrison can be traced over the course of the seventeenth century in a series of salary registers: Bab-i Defteri, Büyük Kalʿe (DBKL) Classification 32201, 32222, 32231, 32243.

¹³ Local Arabic-language court records dating from the 1540s and 1550s mention a force known as the *Günüllüyan al-Halab*. See SMS 4:270 and SMS 4:277, L 956/October–November 1549; and SMS 1:64, J 962/April–May 1555.

¹⁴ ʿAbd al-Rahim Abu Husayn, “Janissary Insubordination in the Province of Aleppo at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century as Depicted in Ottoman Documents,” in Abdeljelil Temimi, ed., *Acts du VI Congrès du CIEPO tenu à Cambridge sur: Les provinces Arabes à l’époque ottomane* (Zaghouan: CEROMA, 1987), 33–38, esp. 35.

But this supposed policy had its own drawbacks. Abuses committed by the Damascus contingent against the Aleppan civilians and ongoing factionalism between the former and the forces of sitting governors culminated in the early 1600s in a series of violent clashes. Local Aleppan units were decimated, but military forces under the governor Naṣūḥ Pasha (r. 1603–1604) decisively defeated an army of Damascene janissaries, and the majority finally withdrew to that city.¹⁵ Ottoman administrative correspondence, however, chronicles their continuing presence and occasional lawlessness, and the survey of 1616 records the residence of four large-scale households headed by their members, all in the area of the city historically associated with soldiers—the extramural northeastern quarters.¹⁶ One might argue that the absence of a countervailing local force after 1604 encouraged Canpuladoğlu ‘Alī Pasha to launch his extensive rebellion against the Empire in 1605–1607.¹⁷

In the aftermath of the highly disruptive Canpuladoğlu rebellion, and in the context of an ongoing instability in the countryside generally termed the Jelali revolts, it seems likely that the central Ottoman authorities would strive to re-establish order in the strategically important city and hinterland of Aleppo. The tax survey taken in 1616, as well as a contemporaneous military inspection/reorganization recorded in a salary register, can be viewed as reflecting that reassertion of central authority, with their systematic and evidently comprehensive listings of homeowners and garrisoned soldiers, respectively.¹⁸ The listing in

Cf. Adnan Bakhit, “Aleppo and the Ottoman Military in the 16th Century (Two Case Studies),” *Al-Abhath* 27 (1978/1979), 27–38.

¹⁵ Local chroniclers cover these events in some detail. See Abū’l-Wafā’ b. ‘Umar al-‘Urḍī (1585–1660), *Ma‘ādin al-dhahab fi’l-a’yān al-musharraf bi-him Ḥalab*, ed. ‘Isā Sulaymān Abū Salīm (Amman: al-Jāmi‘a al-Urdunniyya, 1992), 265–271; al-Burīnī, *Tarājim al-a’yān*, I: 320, II:155–158; and Muḥammad al-Ghazzī (d. 1650), *Luṭf al-samar wa qaf al-thamar min tarājim al-ṭabaqāt al-ūlā min al-qarn al-hādī ‘ashar*, ed. Maḥmūd al-Shaykh (Damascus: n.p., 1981–1982), II:680–688. The Ottoman imperial chronicler Muṣṭafā Na‘īmā, himself a native of Aleppo, briefly describes a campaign of suppression against the janissaries by a governor of Aleppo, Ḥāccī Ibrāhīm Pasha. See *Tārīḥ-i Na‘īmā* I: 229–230.

¹⁶ The assessments of the households were 3, 2.5, 2, and 0.5 *ḥānes*, on average much higher than the average assessment of all Aleppan homes (between 0.25 and 0.5 *ḥānes*). The neighborhoods were Malindī, Mushāṭiyya, Sachlikhān al-Fawqānī, and Tātārlar. See MM 3400: 51–52, 56, 59–60.

¹⁷ Cf. Rafeq, “The Revolt of ‘Alī Pasha Janbulad,” 1515–22.

¹⁸ For the tax survey, see MM 3400; as for the salary register, see MM 6467. The systematic and detailed nature of MM 6467 makes it a valuable source for analyzing

the salary register of a sizeable 325-man *gönüllüyân* corps, consisting of both infantry and cavalry, may well signal the high point of repeated efforts by central authorities to augment a force that could, in coordination with the *müstahfizân*, check the ambition of the Damascus janissaries and other *kapıkulu* forces that settled there.¹⁹ Yet even this force was not sufficient to deter janissaries from interfering occasionally in subsequent decades. In 1658–1659, Damascene janissaries supported the revolt of the renegade governor Abāza Ḥasan Pasha in and around Aleppo. This act of rebellion prompted the grand vizier Köprülüzade Meḥmed Pasha to deploy hundreds of *kapıkulu* forces to Damascus, an initiative that incidentally led to the formation of a persistent intra-military factionalism that dominated local politics in that city into the nineteenth century.²⁰

The recurrence of rebellion by imperial (*kapıkulu*) janissaries (from Damascus in particular) in and around Aleppo may also have influenced Ottoman state authorities to take the unusual step of *not* establishing in Aleppo a separate and fully organized battalion (*orta*) of janissaries. While central state authorities regularly stipulated salaries (in the form of *mevâcib* or *esâmî* registers) for the *kapıkulu yeniçeriyân* in other cities of the Arab provinces (Damascus, Tripoli, Jerusalem, Urfa, Baghdad), evidence of a similar practice for Aleppo has not yet been found.²¹ An extant series of official salary registers tracing the citadel guards (*müstahfizân*) over the course of the seventeenth century suggests this anomaly is not the result of missing records. Neither the *müstahfizân* nor the *gönüllüyân* were ever described as *kapıkulu* or *yeniçeri* in the court records, suggesting that by the early seventeenth

military organization; Halil Inalcik chose it as the document to illustrate the organization and rank system of the empire-wide *gönüllü* corps in his article “Gönüllü,” *EI*².

¹⁹ According to local chroniclers, in 1600/1601 the governor Ḥaccî İbrâhîm Pasha proposed to central authorities that a new armed force (called in Arabic a “*qûl*”) be created in Aleppo. His successor ‘Alî Pasha is said to have realized this proposal, organizing a force along the lines of one in Damascus, but it was later decimated in battle with the Damascene janissaries. See ‘Urḏî, *Ma‘âdin al-dhahab*, 269; and Ghazzî, *Nahr al-Dhahab* III: 210.

²⁰ Rafeq, *Province of Damascus*, 30–36; and Gökbilgin and Repp, “Köprülü,” *EI*².

²¹ Bodman came to such a conclusion based on Ahmed Djevad Bey, *État militaire ottoman depuis la fondation de l’empire jusqu’à nos jours*, trans. Georges Macrides (Constantinople: Journal La Turquie, 1882), 166, 168, and 171; see Bodman, *Political Factions*, 74. This researcher surveyed the Maliyeden Müdevver and Büyük ve Küçük Kale Kalemleri classifications and likewise came to a similar conclusion. For a general description of the fortress garrison series, see *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi* (Istanbul: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2000), 295.

century they were being recruited from the local provincial population or, with the passing of generations, had become thoroughly localized.²² Although the citadel guards of the rank-and-file shared the military title of “*beşe*” with imperial janissaries, the citadel guards are usually described simply as “*al-Qal‘i*,” or “of the Citadel.” Examination of an array of sources, including salary registers, tax surveys, and mass petitions, indicates that very few citadel guards possessed the patronymic ‘Abdullāh, meaning that the overwhelming majority were freeborn Muslims, though their geographical origins remain obscure.²³ The exact duties of the *gönüllüyān*, literally “volunteers,” are unknown. We do know, however, that their counterparts in Cairo were given the duty of policing the rural hinterland and approaches to the city and could also be sent on remote imperial campaigns.²⁴ Seventeenth-century sources in Aleppo indicate that the title of *gönüllü* was synonymous with *yerlü*, or “local,” suggesting that, like the *müstaḥfiẓān*, the *gönüllüyān* were of local origin, or at least had been localized over some generations.²⁵

The relative decline in the political activity of Damascus janissaries in Aleppo in the middle decades of the seventeenth century did not mean that *kaḥiḥkulu* forces had ceased to settle in the city, or that such forces would refrain from intervention in such affairs. We find members of the imperial janissary (infantry) corps (sing. *kaḥiḥkulu yeniçeri*) and imperial cavalymen (sing. *kaḥiḥkulu sipāhī*) as homeowners and participants in commercial and public life in the city. Although little information on the organization of each force has emerged, each did

²² The Aleppo court records, which are overwhelmingly Arabic in language, would have rendered these Turkish terms as *qābī qūlī*; *rājil sulṭānī*; and *inkishārī*, *yankishārī* or *yankijārī*, as they are for the Damascus court records.

²³ A tabulation of soldiers’ names drawn from survey of 1678 (MM 8467), selected salary registers (MM 6467, DBKL 32201, and DBKL 32222), and a mass petition recorded in the shari’a court records (SMS 34:228) yielded a database of 1677 names, and of these only 120 (or 7%), had the patronymic ‘Abdullah.

²⁴ On the *gönüllüyān*, see Halil Inalcik, “Gönüllü,” *EI*²; Bodman, *Political Factions*, 72; Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 196–197; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 11, 38, 40–41. The division of geographical responsibility between the *müstaḥfiẓān* and the *gönüllüyān* may be reflected in the qualifiers attached to each on some documents: the *müstaḥfiẓān-i enderūn* (the “*müstaḥfiẓān* of the inside”) and the *gönüllüyān-i bīrūn* (the “*gönüllüyān* of the outside”). See MM 3134:195, 8 JA 1112/21 October 1700.

²⁵ MM 6467 (1616 CE); MM 8467 (1678 CE): 3b–5b, 29a–29b, 49a–52b, *passim*. Of the 214 *gönüllüyān* listed in the salary register of 1616 (MM 6467), 37 (or 17%) have the patronymic ‘Abdullāh, suggesting, at least in comparison to the *müstaḥfiẓān*, that a greater proportion of them were of slave origin and presumably not from the area of Aleppo.

have a commander, the janissaries having a *serdār*, and the *sipāhīs* a *kethüda yeri*, both of whom wielded considerable power and influence.²⁶ The Köprülü vizierate may well have sent contingents of *kapıkulu* troops to Aleppo as it had to Damascus in and after 1659, but this does not seem to have generated the intra-military factionalization that characterized relations between local and imperial janissaries in Damascus.²⁷

Three other distinct groups formed important components of the military population: the *çavuşān*, the *tīmār*-holders, and the *subaşı*s. As used in tax surveys, the term *çavuş* is ambiguous in that it could refer to two different military groups. The first were persons holding the rank of *çavuş*, which fell below that of agha and *kethüda* in various units such as the imperial janissaries and *sipāhīs*.²⁸ Alternatively, it could refer to all members of a specialized unit, the *çavuşān* or *çavuşıyye*, which consisted of combined cavalry and infantry attached to the governor's council, or *dīvān*. This was the case in Ottoman Egypt.²⁹ Originally formed from the retainers of the defeated Mamluk army who declared their loyalty to the Ottoman state, the *çavuşān* served as sergeants-at-arms at state ceremonies and as couriers, carrying orders and putting awards and dismissals into effect. The large, geographically concentrated number of affluent homeowners with the title of *çavuş* in Aleppo suggests that a specialized unit of the *çavuşān* is the most likely explanation.³⁰

Holders of *tīmārs*, which were fief-like assignments of villages and productive agricultural land issued by the central government, played an arguably greater role in city life in the seventeenth century. Originally intended as compensation for cavalymen (*sipāhīs*) who participated in imperial campaigns, *tīmārs* by the seventeenth century were being granted on an empire-wide scale to a wide range of palace and

²⁶ On the *serdār*, see SMS 28:483, 8 S 1073/22 September 1662; on the *kethüda yeri*, see SMS 23:153, 15 N 1083/4 January 1673; and ES 1:75, *Awāsiṭ* R 1102/11–20 January 1691. The second document is an order appointing a man as commander (*kethüda yeri*) over the *sipāhīs* in Aleppo.

²⁷ Rafeq, *Province of Damascus*, 30–36; and Gökbilgin and Repp, “Köprülü,” *EI*².

²⁸ Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 37–38.

²⁹ Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. I, part 1, pp. 117–119, 349–50; Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 194–96; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 38–39.

³⁰ On the long-term presence of this unit in Aleppo, at least since the middle of the sixteenth century, see Çakar, *XVI. Yüzyılda Haleb Sancağı*, 84–85.

government officials, many having no military function.³¹ Detailed fiscal surveys of Aleppo from the second half of the seventeenth century indicate that among the *tīmār*-holding homeowners in Aleppo the vast majority were still military, though some of these seem to have been upwardly mobile janissary officers, usually holding the title of agha, rather than cavalrymen from the older *tīmār*-holding class, who held the title of bey.³² Those holding smaller assignments were called *tīmāris*, and those with larger assignments, *za'ims*.

*Subaşı*s were officials whose precise responsibilities in Aleppo are difficult to determine. In the early sixteenth century, when the *tīmār* system was at its height, *subaşı*s typically held a large assignment called a *ze'āmet*, commanded a unit of *tīmār*-holding *sipāhis* in the army, and were held responsible for the maintenance of public order in their districts.³³ By the turn of the seventeenth century, if not earlier, *subaşı*s came to be charged primarily with policing responsibilities both in the countryside and in towns and worked closely with judges in the execution of justice. In Cairo, the *subaşı* was the janissary officer who acted as the city's chief of police.³⁴ In Aleppo, the status and responsibility of the official seems to have undergone a certain change over the course of the seventeenth century, a change that will be discussed below.

Mention should be made of elite military groups whose status and influence were based on a tradition of military and administrative service or family service. High state officials who settled in Aleppo were frequently able to leave their offspring in highly advantageous economic and political positions as administrators of *waqfs*. Their sons, usually given the title of bey, could head households that deployed

³¹ Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, 113–116; and Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System," 176–82.

³² MM 8467, especially the military cadres with homes in the residential quarters of Sāhat Biza (5b–9b), Bayyāda (40b–43b), Jabīla (38a–40b), Dākhil Bāb al-Nayrab (49b–52a), and Altūn Būghā (45b–48b)

³³ Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, 108–9, 117–118. This kind of *subaşı* Gibb and Bowen have identified as *ehl-i tīmār subaşıları*, or those who hold *tīmārs*. There were also *miri subaşıları* who drew their compensation from the imperial treasury and worked in districts that lacked *tīmār* assignments. Both carried out police responsibilities. See Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. 1, part 1, pp. 51, 146–55; and Mücteba Ilgürel, "Subaşılık Müessesesi," in *The Journal of Turkish Studies* 7 (1983), *Orhan Şaik Gökyay Armağanı* II, 251–61. For how *subaşı*s functioned in an Anatolian town, see R. C. Jennings, "Kadi, Court, and Legal Procedure in 17th C. Ottoman Kayseri," *Studia Islamica* 48 (1978), 133–172, esp. 165–168.

³⁴ Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 97, 105, 178; and Mantran, *Istanbul*, 128–129, 134, 148–160. See also Inalcik, "Military and Fiscal Transformation," 327–333.

soldiers on military campaigns and wield considerable political influence.³⁵ Families who had originated in the hinterland of Aleppo and had provided military commanders in the service of the state, such as the famous, ethnically Kurdish Canpuladoğlu chieftains, also had long established residence in Aleppo.³⁶

The military cadres described to this point were persons who had settled in Aleppo and purchased homes there. But there were also a large number of Ottoman functionaries holding offices in Aleppo on a short-term basis who may not have purchased houses locally: these included the governor, the chief judge (qadi), the chief financial officer (*defterdâr*), and lesser officials in their services. Many of the higher-ranking officials maintained households with military retainers and thus exerted their own authority and influence. Aleppo's location along principal routes of communication between Istanbul and frontier regions also made it a staging point for military campaigns; accordingly, significant numbers of soldiers providing support to these operations also established residence of varying length in the city. Quartering these officials and their households required sizable facilities, which consisted of a palace (*sarây*) for the governor, and with an extensive network of official residences officially designated as *konak paşa* (Ar. *manzil*) for the remaining officials and their retainers. According to the 1678 survey, thirty-seven houses across the city were set aside for this purpose.³⁷

This survey of military groups concludes with the *sekbân*, who had played an important role in the rise of Canpuladoğlu 'Alî Pasha. Emerging with the state demand for mobile, firearm-equipped soldiers, they were auxiliary mercenary forces consisting of mounted soldiers armed with muskets. When not employed on military campaign, these ele-

³⁵ For examples of such residences registered in fiscal surveys, see MM 3400: 2 ("Aḥmed Paşa Munāvırzâde"), 26 ("Celâli 'Alî Paşa"), MM 8467: 40a ("Alî Bey Vezîrzâde b. Meḥmed Pasha el-Vezîr"), and 29b–31a ("Ḥüseyin Paşa Cānpülâdzâde el-Vezîr"), among others.

³⁶ For examples of residences maintained by members of this clan, see MM 3400: 26 ("Celâli 'Alî Paşa") and MM 8467: 29b–31a ("Ḥüseyin Paşa Cānpülâdzâde el-Vezîr").

³⁷ See MM 8467, *passim*. One supposes that this *konak* arrangement, which ostensibly set aside certain houses for use by officials and their households, was established to reduce tensions between soldiers and the local population, who likely had chafed under the constant burden of housing soldiers in their own homes. The 1676 tax survey of Damascus, which was the counterpart of the 1678 survey of Aleppo, also records the existence of these facilities. See Sahillioğlu, *Şam Şehrinin XVII. Asırda Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı*, 64, 72, 78.

ments were regarded as rebellious and destabilizing forces in provincial society, and were the objects of popular contempt. Recruited from among the peasantry, the *sekbān* do not appear frequently in our sources. It seems that few *sekbān* owned real estate and were thus less likely to use the Islamic legal courts to protect their material interests and to figure in its records.³⁸

Considering the wide range of military groups living in Aleppo, we are led to ask what their aggregate numbers were, what proportion of the total urban population they made up, and how these figures might compare with other Ottoman cities of the time. While they must be used with caution, salary registers provide an official tally of soldiers serving the needs of local defense and security: the *gönüllüyan*, the citadel guards (*müstaḥfizān*), the city gatekeepers (*bevvābān*), and guards for the palace of the governor (*sarāydārān*).³⁹ Since two of the three registers considered appear to have been coordinated with large scale *‘avārız* surveys (those of 1616 and 1678), one might argue that they are reasonably reliable.⁴⁰ The salary register of 1616, the most detailed of the three sample registers considered, indicates the strength of the mounted *gönüllüyan* at 214 soldiers and its infantry component at 110, the citadel guards at 286, gatekeepers at 40, and the palace guards at 14, altogether totaling 665 soldiers.⁴¹ The second salary register, dated 1678, records only two categories, those of an undifferentiated

³⁸ Inalcik, "Military and Fiscal Transformation," 292–303; idem, "The Socio-Political Effects of the Diffusion of Firearms in the Middle East," in Parry and Yapp, eds., *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, 195–217, esp. 200–201; Rafeq, "Local Forces in Syria," 283–285; and Ḥammūd, *Al-‘Askar fī Bilād al-Shām*, 147–184. On the low status of the *sekbān* in Aleppo, see a suit brought against a *sekbān* in the court records, SMS 35:79, 24 B 1095/7 July 1684. On the successful reintegration of *sekbān* into an urban neighborhood in Aleppo, see SMS 34:242–45, 4–9 J 1090/13–18 July 1679.

³⁹ On the problematics of salary registers (*mevācib defterleri*), see Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 39; and Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 209–210.

⁴⁰ Both the tax surveys of 1616 (MM 3400) and 1678 (MM 8467) coincide with the preparation of a new salary register for the troops stationed in Aleppo (MM 6467 in 1616 and DBKL 32201 in 1678). Registers were drawn up with the purpose of updating the enrollment of unit personnel and combing out those who died, retired, or failed to meet training standards. This process was summed up in Ottoman Turkish as *yoklama*. In 1616, the units enumerated were the *müstaḥfizān* and the *gönüllüyan*, and in 1678, only the *müstaḥfizān*. This coincidence and the circumstance that no salary registers have been found dating from the period 1616–1678 state archives suggest that the tax surveys and the drawing up of new salary registers were coordinated actions.

⁴¹ MM 6467 (AH 1025/1616 CE).

gönüllüyân corps and of the citadel guards, the former falling to 89 soldiers, and the later rising to 351.⁴² Unit strengths again rise according to a register dated to 1700, the *gönüllüyân* reaching 216 soldiers and the citadel guards, 423, for a total of 639.⁴³ The dip in unit strength noted by the 1678 salary register may reflect attempts by the surveyors and inspecting officials to curtail unit rolls and retain only the most qualified soldiers.⁴⁴ These figures roughly compare to that of the other major Syrian city, Damascus, which, according to Koçu Bey, had roughly six hundred *kapıkulu* soldiers stationed there for defense.⁴⁵ If we accept Raymond's observation that the population of Aleppo grew from 80,000 inhabitants in 1537 to 115,000 in 1683, then an estimate of the population during those years of surveys might fall between 100,000 and 115,000, recognizing at the same time the irregularity of this growth.⁴⁶ Solders assigned to the citadel guards and *gönüllüyân* then would have constituted roughly 0.5 percent of the total urban population.

A more comprehensive accounting of military cadres present in Aleppo would have to include not only soldiers who were not assigned to these defense units but also soldiers who had come to reside in Aleppo. Made up of imperial infantrymen and cavalrymen, *tīmār*-holders, specialized units, irregular forces, and localized military households, the numbers of these cadres are rather difficult to measure, given their variable status and degree of military readiness. The tax surveys of 1616 and 1678, used earlier to study patterns of taxation and general demographics, offer a means to chart the number of homeowners recognized officially as soldiers over much of the seventeenth century. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 present information based on each survey in turn.

Comparisons between the two surveys are limited by the peculiarities of each. The survey of 1616 does not identify a separate citadel precinct, where most citadel guards lived; the reason for this may be that citadel guard homeowners were at that time automatically tax-

⁴² DBKL 32201 (AH 1090/1679–1680 CE).

⁴³ DBKL 32273 (AH 1111/1700 CE).

⁴⁴ On the reforming tendencies of the surveyors of 1678, see Chapter One.

⁴⁵ Koçu Bey, "Teşkilat Mecmuası," p. 5, manuscript in possession of Uzunçarşılı, cited in *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I: 329.

⁴⁶ Raymond, "The Population of Aleppo," 458; and Chapter One.

Table 3.1. Military Cadres Owning Homes in the City of Aleppo according to the Survey of 1616 (MM 3400)

Area of City	Bey	Sipāhī	Subaşı	Agha	Kethüda	Çavuş	Bölükbaşı	janissary*	Müstaḥfız†	Other‡	Total
Intramural	26	15	21	29	13	40	5	28	4	15	196
Extramural	18	12	6	3	15	39	8	61	8	2	172
Total	44	27	27	32	28	79	13	89	12	17	368

Table 3.2. Military Cadres Owning Homes in the City of Aleppo according to the Survey of 1678 (MM 8467)

Area of City	Yeniçeri	Sipāhī	Zā'im	Gönüllü	Beşe	Müstaḥfız§	Other Military**	Konağ	Total
Intramural	13	32	15	21	77	165	58	21	402
Extramural	3	3	2	9	57	n/a	34	16	124
Total	16	35	17	30	134	165	92	37	526

* Lower-ranking janissary soldiers (*kapıcı*, *beşe*, *yeniçeri*, *çorbacı*).

† *Müstaḥfız* (or *merd-i kal'e* or *kal'i*); note that the Survey of 1616 does not identify a separate citadel precinct.

‡ Other titles or qualifiers included *‘azebān*, *bayrakdār*, emir, *jundī*, pasha, *serḥadli* and *ıtopçu*, of which the *serḥadlis* predominated.

§ Title given to all citadel guards owning homes in the citadel precinct; title was not granted to any soldier living *outside* the citadel.

** Includes (a) those persons of elite administrative-military status, mostly with rank of agha, bey, or pasha, and (b) a range of primarily military cadres, among them *çavuş*, *cebeci*, *kapıcı*, and *ıtopçu*.

exempt and thus left off the tax survey register.⁴⁷ The proportion of homeowners who were military (368 of 5791, or approximately 6%) should therefore be considered a lower limit that excludes a force numbering, according to salary registers, 286 soldiers. Apparently more comprehensive, the survey of 1678 lists homeowners of the citadel guard (*müstahfizān*) force separately from the other homeowners, both *re'āyā* and *'askerī*, and then adds the totals to reach an aggregate city-wide figure. Table 3.2 thus indicates that 526 of a total of 10,538 inhabitable houses were owned by soldiers, giving us a percentage (5%) close to that of 1616. Using the multiplier of eight persons per household as used by the early twentieth-century Aleppo historian Ghazzī, and adopted by Raymond, we obtain a figure of 4,208 persons living in 1678 as family members, servants, and retainers within households headed by soldiers.⁴⁸

These figures, of course, are only suggestive, as they ignore what was undoubtedly a significant military population who lived as tenants under civilian landlords and in other situations that the surveys do not assess. The inclusion of *ḵonaḵs* in Table 3.2 is meant to address this discrepancy, if only partially, as it may well have been the *ḵonaḵs* that served as barracks for the military retainers of the governor.⁴⁹ Judging from their tax assessments, which were mostly in the lowest category (*ednā*), *ḵonaḵs* were not large in size, but due to their sheer number (37), they could have added hundreds of soldiers to the mix of the urban population. *Qayṣariyyas*, which the survey of 1678 includes in the *ḵayṣarlık* category and which numbered at that time 181 buildings, probably housed a substantial number of soldiers, but the survey does not specify what social groups occupied the buildings.⁵⁰ The total military population of the city might be estimated by combining soldier-homeowners, their retainers, and residents of *ḵonaḵs*. Assuming that each homeowner soldier had at least one retainer (*rafīq*), one might double their numbers to reach around 1,000. Add to this those soldiers quartered in 37 *ḵonaḵs*, roughly 300, and we arrive at a conservative estimate of 1,300 soldiers, which would then constitute approximately

⁴⁷ See Chapter One on the principles of inclusion and exclusion for the survey of 1616. The possibility that this survey has omitted significant tax-exempt populations entirely from its purview clearly limits its usefulness for demographic analysis.

⁴⁸ Ghazzī, *Nahr al-dhahab*, II, cited in Raymond, "The Population of Aleppo," 452.

⁴⁹ See Table 2.4 for the geographical distribution of these facilities throughout the city.

⁵⁰ Russell, *Natural History of Aleppo*, II: 36–37.

one percent of the population. Again, this figure should be viewed as a lower limit, as it does not take into account those soldiers housed in other locations offering their services, perhaps on an irregular basis, to a variety of government officials. These figures seem plausible if we compare them with later deployments of soldiers, specifically in the eighteenth century. European consuls noted that the city sent 2,500 soldiers to fight Russia in 1769, and a 1777 estimate places their number at three to four thousand.⁵¹

The question of whether the city of Aleppo was exceptional in the number of military cadres living among its civilian population is made difficult by the dearth of corresponding studies on other provincial cities of the empire. Cairo is one of the few cities for which we possess information, and from a variety of sources.⁵² In 1634, a credible European observer reported that the total membership of the seven regiments living in Cairo reached 12,000; some thirty years later, in 1671, an Ottoman salary register indicated a total soldier enrollment of approximately 16,000, which in all likelihood underestimated actual soldier strength. When related to the estimated total urban population of 200,000, soldiers thus constituted between 6 and 8 percent of the city's inhabitants.⁵³ The elevated level of military cadres living in that city is reflected in the prominent role that soldiers came to play in

⁵¹ These figures may have constituted but a part of the deployable men; the war with Russia (1768–1774) may have greatly increased soldiers on the rolls. See Bodman, *Political Factions*, 61–62.

⁵² Istanbul is not included in this comparison since, as the capital city, it garrisoned large numbers of troops serving the central state administration. For recent studies on the prominent role that soldiers there played in the politics of the capital, especially succession crises, see Baki Tezcan, "Searching for Osman: A Reassessment of the Deposition of Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618–1622)," Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 2002; idem, "The 1622 Military Rebellion in Istanbul: A Historiographical Journey," *IJTS*, ed. Jane Hathaway, 8, 1–2 (2002), 25–43; and Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley: University of California, 2003).

⁵³ The European observer was Jacques Albert, author of *Etat de l'Égypte... décrit par la sieur Jacques Albert*, in *Trois Relations d'Égypte* (Paris: n.p., 1651), 52–82, cited in Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 659–660. For the salary registers, see Stanford Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 210. Writing in 1599, an Ottoman bureaucrat, Muṣṭafā 'Alī, observed the military population in Cairo to be not greater than 10,000; see *Mustafā 'Alī's Description of Cairo of 1599*, ed. and trans. Andreas Tietze (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975), 57. On the estimate of total population in Cairo, see André Raymond, "La Population du Caire de l'Égypte à l'époque ottomane et sous Muhammad 'Alī," in *Mémorial Ōmer Lutfi Barkan* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien Maissonneuve, 1980), 169–178, esp. 172.

the politics of Egypt as recorded by local historians.⁵⁴ Smaller towns seem also to have been subject to varying concentrations of soldiers. Describing the later seventeenth century, Canbakal contrasts the large rank-and-file soldier (*kul*) population of 'Ayntab, a town just fifty miles to the north of Aleppo, with those of other cities in Anatolia, namely, Konya, Bursa, and Trabzon. She suggests that the disparity is most closely linked to the enrollment into military units of tribal populations, who in the regions of northern Syria and southeastern Anatolia were marked by their political assertiveness and demographic strength.⁵⁵ In her study of early modern Crete, Greene shows that after its conquest by the Ottomans in 1669 the city of Candia became home to a large number of soldiers, as much as 3,000 out of a total population of slightly more than 10,000. She attributes this primarily to the conversion of Christian Cretans and their ready acceptance into military units.⁵⁶ Judging from salary registers and fiscal surveys, then, the ratio of military cadres to the total urban population in Aleppo does not appear to have been elevated relative to other cities of the empire. Proximity of the city to large nomadic populations, however, made it a likely site of recruitment for men seeking state service and social mobility.

Residence Patterns

Having identified the principal military groups in Aleppo, we now turn to the question of their group solidarity and the related question of their social integration with the local population. The surveys of 1616 and 1678, which are represented graphically in Maps 3.1 and 3.2,

⁵⁴ For an assessment of Ottoman Egyptian historiography, see Jane Hathaway, "Sultans, Pashas, *Taqwims* and *Mühimmes*: A Reconsideration of Chronicle-Writing in Eighteenth Century Ottoman Egypt," in Daniel Crecelius, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Egypt: The Arabic Manuscript Sources* (Claremont, CA: Regina, 1999), 51–78; and idem, *Politics of Households*, 27–31, 171–173.

⁵⁵ Canbakal, "Ayntab," 73–77. See also Yusuf Oğuzoğlu, "Osmanlı Şehirlerindeki Askerilerin Ekonomik Durumuna İlişkin Bazı Bilgiler," in *Birinci Askeri Tarih Semineri, Bildiriler*, 2 Vols. (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1983), II: 169–178, esp. 172; McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 119–120; Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 12–14; Thieck, "Décentralisation ottomane et affirmation urbaine," 120–122, 158–160; and Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *XVIII Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İskan Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirelmesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988), 33–39, 41–42, 132–141.

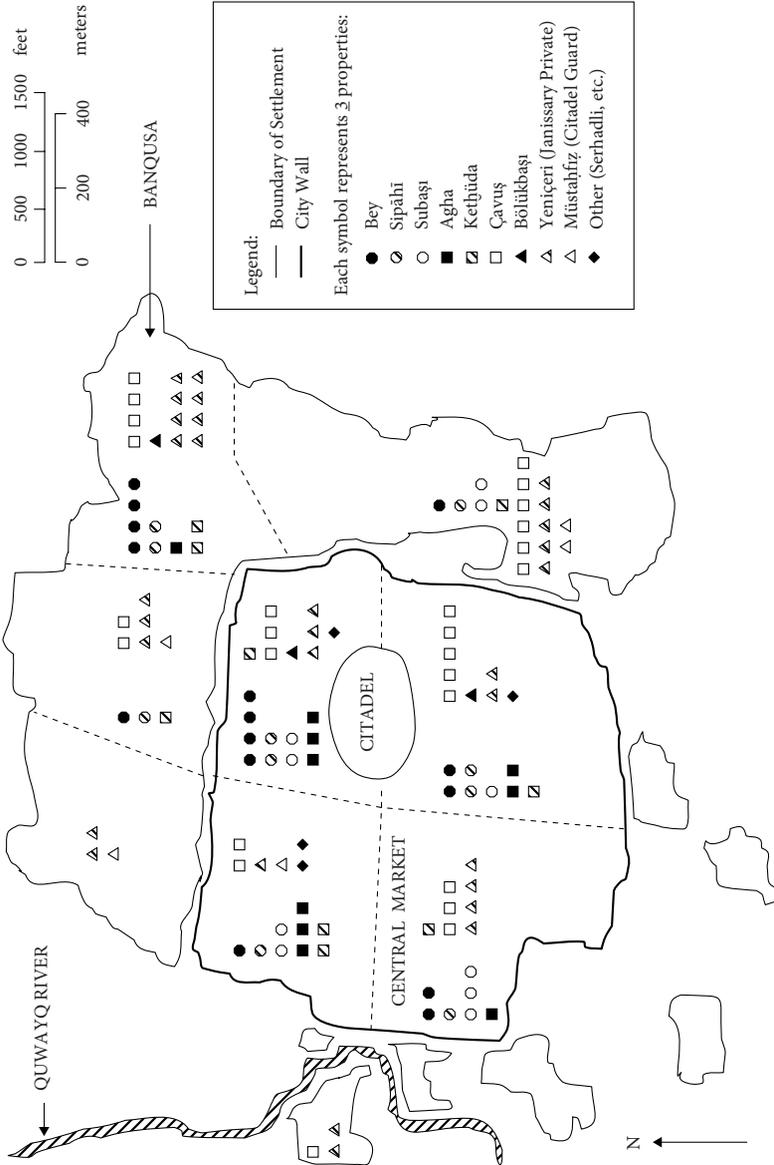
⁵⁶ Greene, *A Shared World*, 36–39, 87–95.

enable us to chart, in varying degrees of detail, the residence patterns of the administrative and military elite of Aleppo in the seventeenth century and thereby to obtain some idea of their spatial cohesion. It should be reiterated that these two surveys, called *‘avāriẓhāne taḥrīr* surveys, are of a different category from the *ṭapu taḥrīr* surveys most common in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Whereas the earlier surveys assessed the taxes to be collected in a given district from revenues accrued in agriculture, industry, and commerce, the *‘avāriẓhāne taḥrīr* surveys assessed taxes on homeowners on the basis of the size and condition of residential real estate holdings.⁵⁷ While the *‘avāriẓhāne taḥrīr* surveys are less comprehensive in the *kinds* of wealth they assess, for the purposes of this study they have the advantage of identifying by name most if not all residential property owners in the city.

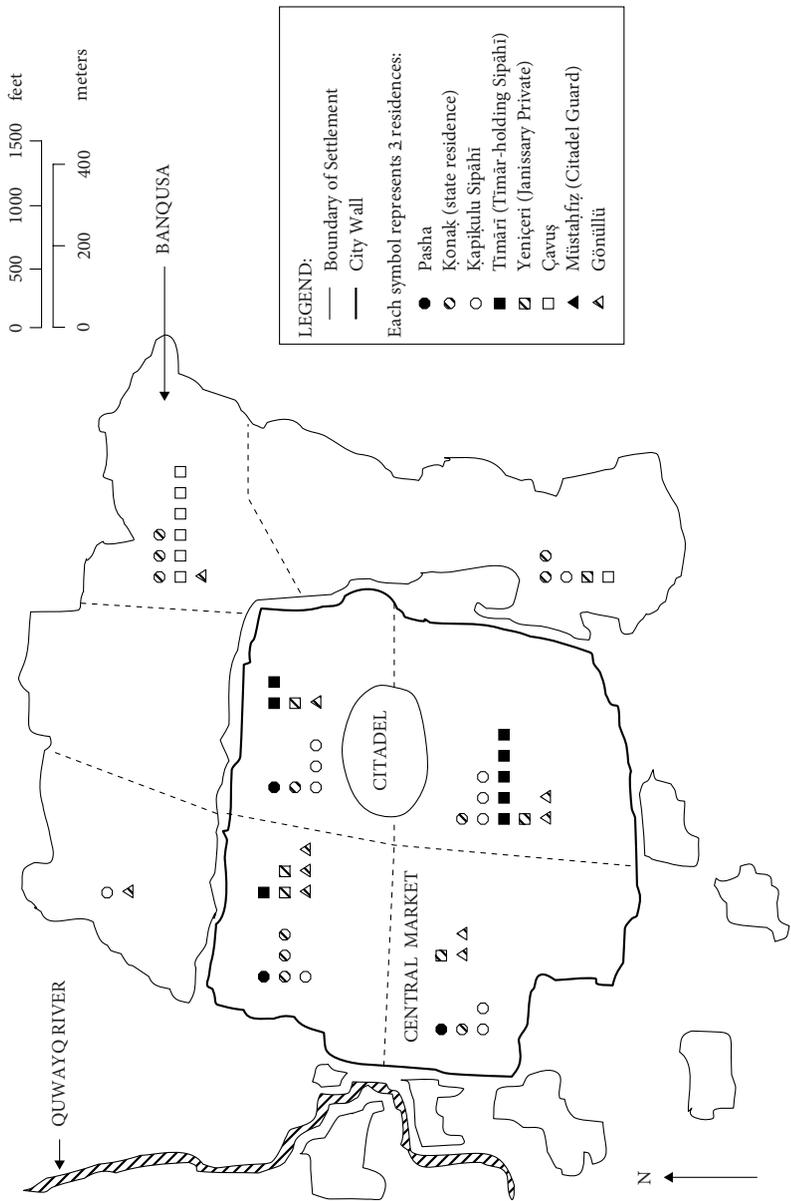
It should be further stated that our ability to trace changes in residence patterns from the tax survey of 1616 to that of 1678 is limited by a shift in 1678 to the collection of more exact and systematic information, as well as the use of different occupational categories. Primary among these differences is that whereas the 1616 survey identifies the owner of a given property, the 1678 survey in addition indicates whether the owner resides on the property. The geographic distribution of properties in Map 3.1 thus more precisely represents ownership than residence. Still, instances of one soldier owning multiple distinct properties are relatively few, approximately ten percent of the total soldier population.⁵⁸ Even if we cannot precisely determine the

⁵⁷ On the *ṭapu taḥrīr* registers, see Inalcik, “Defter-i Khaqani,” *EI*², Heath Lowry, “The Ottoman *tahrir* defters as a Source for Urban Demographic History: The Case Study of Trabzon (ca. 1486–1583),” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Los Angeles, 1977. For an introduction to the *‘avāriẓ* tax system, see Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Avariz,” *İA*. Linda Darling in her book *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy* studies the system of extraordinary taxation from the perspective of the central Ottoman administration, 87–118, passim. See also Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 105–120; and idem, “Osmanlı Avarız-Nüzül Teşekkülü, 1600–1830,” *VIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildiriler*, 3 Vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1981), II: 1327–1391. On developments with late Ottoman *tahrirs*, see Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, “The Defter-i Mufassal of Kamanice from Ca. 1681—An Example of Late Ottoman Tahrir: Reliability, Function, Principles of Publication,” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 13 (1993): 91–98.

⁵⁸ The precise number of soldiers holding multiple properties is difficult to determine given that certain Muslim names are quite common among soldiers (Meḥmed, Aḥmed, Muṣṭafā, etc.) Examples of soldiers owning multiple properties include: “Mustedām Bey” (Jabila, Firāfira); “Ḥasan Bey Sipāhī” (Firāfira, Suwayqat ‘Alī); “Kurd Bey Sipāhī” (Tātārlar, Qal‘at al-Sharīf); “Ömer Kethüda” (Zuqāq Başātina, Jisr al-Zalāḥif); “Nāṣir Kethüda” (Bayyāda, Aqyül); “Piyāle Beşe” (Jallūm al-Kubrā, Altūn



Map 3.1 Residential Properties in Aleppo Owned by Soldiers According to the Survey of 1616 (MM 3400)



Map 3.2 Residences of Soldiers in Aleppo according to the Survey of 1678 (MM 8467)

residences of individual soldiers in the 1616 survey, the concentration of properties owned by members of the same military group in a certain area seems to be a good rough indicator of their residence there.

Three general patterns quickly emerge when comparing Maps 3.1 and 3.2. First, the number of properties owned by soldiers sharply declined, falling by 53 percent between 1616 and 1678. This can be partly explained by the fact that, whereas the survey of 1616 counted all properties owned by military cadres, the survey of 1678 counted only those properties that were both owned and occupied by military cadres, or that were officially set aside for military use (the *konaks*). An additional factor may be that officials in the process of surveying in 1678 eliminated from military rolls those persons who claimed military status but did not meet qualifications of combat readiness. Given these reservations, it is difficult to determine whether there was an actual reduction in the number of soldiers residing or staying in Aleppo. It is entirely plausible to view the number of soldiers in Aleppo at the time of the survey of 1616 as an elevated presence, given that the Ottoman central authority sought to consolidate its hold over northern Syria after the revolt of Canpuladoğlu 'Alī Pasha in the years 1605–07. This revolt, in which 'Alī Pasha asserted his right to rule as an independent power, constituted a major threat to Ottoman authority.⁵⁹

Evidence on the evolving strength of the citadel guards and *gönüllü-yân*, however, may suggest broader trends. A series of salary registers enables us to chart, from an official point of view, the changes in the strength of the *müstaḥfiẓân* and *gönüllü-yân* who were assigned to garrisons across the province of Aleppo and whose salaries were financed by the Aleppo treasury (see Table 3.3). In examining the salary registers, we should bear in mind that they may not be a precise and reliable indicator of operational strength. Studies of Egypt for roughly the same period indicate that persons inscribed in the military rolls constituted only a fraction of the total combatant force, and it was the habit of even those persons so inscribed to send proxies to the battlefield.⁶⁰ The pay records remain useful, however, for suggesting general

Būghā); “Maṣūr Çavuş” (Jabīla, Almāji). Many of these soldiers held properties in districts contiguous or near to one another.

⁵⁹ On the Canpuladoğlu rebellion see Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion*; Rafeq, “The Revolt of ‘Alī Pasha Janbulad”; Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 18–24; Parry, “The Successors of Sulayman, 1566–1617,” 130–132; and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, I: 188–89.

⁶⁰ Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 39–40.

Table 3.3. Personnel Strength (St), Total Daily Fiscal Assignment (A) in Nominal Akçes, and Average Daily Individual Salary (Sa) in Nominal Akçes for Military Units subordinate to the Treasury of Aleppo (*Hazine-i Haleb*)

Name of Military Unit	1616			1654			1679/80			1693			1700			1703			
	St	A	Sa	St	A	Sa	St	A	Sa	St	A	Sa	St	A	Sa	St	A	Sa	
Gönüllüyan-i Süväri-i Haleb	214	2288	10.7	216	2293	10.6	89	897	8.5	—	—	—	216	2292	10.6	216	2294	10.6	—
Gönüllüyan-i Piyade-i Haleb	110	572	5.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Haleb*	286	1663	5.8	—	—	—	351	2138	6.1	326	2589	7.9	423	2511	5.9	423	2513	5.9	—
Bevvâbân-i Sür-i Haleb	40	180	4.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sarâydârân-i Gökmezdân	14	82	5.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Mar'aş	54	366	6.8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	56	356	6.4	53	365	6.9	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Himântü	23	108	4.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	109	4.7	—	—	—	23	109	4.7	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Adana	28	157	5.6	—	—	—	—	—	—	46	258	5.6	—	—	—	46	258	5.6	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Ayas	66	362	5.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	106	543	5.1	—	—	—	101	550	5.4	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Payas	68	446	6.6	—	—	—	—	—	—	69	354	5.1	—	—	—	69	354	5.1	—
Müstaḥfiżân-i Ka'le-i Merkez	35	220	6.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	35	224	6.4	—	—	—	35	224	6.4	—
Total	938	6444	6.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Sources: MM 6467 (1616); MM 9839 (1654); DBKL 32201 (1679/80); DBKL 32243 (1693); DBKL 32273 (1700); and DBKL 32290 (1703).

* Does not include the citadel guards (*müstaḥfiżân*) of Khân Tūmân.

trends in unit organization. Manning levels remain stable throughout much of the century with the exceptions of the *müstaḥfiẓān* of Aleppo, who increase 48 percent between 1616 and 1678, and the *müstaḥfiẓān* of Ayās and of Adana, who in the same interval increase 64 and 53 percent, respectively. The selective augmentation of these garrisons, and not a general swelling of ranks across the board, points to greater security needs—and perhaps growing population—of these localities. If the augmentation in *müstaḥfiẓān* is indicative of other units, then it may well be that the overall number of soldiers was increasing toward the end of the century. A simple explanation that reconciles a falling number of soldier homeowners with a growing number of officially garrisoned soldiers is that the soldier population was expanding but soldiers were on average less affluent relative to the general population. An alternative explanation is that the soldiers needed to be kept fully ready for mobilization, indicating increased military activity against threats both within and outside the empire.

The second general pattern is, in both surveys, the broad dispersal of many military groups throughout the city. In the 1616 survey, we note how, for example, cavalry forces, represented by the beys and *sipāhīs*, and janissary forces, represented by the ranks of agha, *kethüda* and *bölükbaşı* and private soldiers, were found in practically all urban districts. Likewise, in the 1678 survey, we find a wide though less impressive representation of imperial *sipāhīs* (*kaḫıkuḫulu sipāhīs*) and janissaries (*yeniçeris*) both inside and outside the walled city. An equalizing factor may have been the presence in many districts of *koḫaḫs*, which quartered officials and armed retainers on a regular basis. One immediate observation that can be made, then, is that military cadres were not segregated in any one district of the city, but rather were dispersed in a way that enabled considerable interaction with the civilian population.⁶¹

It has already been noted that some citadel guards (the *müstaḥfiẓān*) lived among Aleppans in the ordinary quarters of the city despite the tax incentives that Ottoman authorities offered to soldiers to maintain

⁶¹ This observation is consistent with the “non-segregative” character of Syrian urban demography as argued by Antoine Abdel Nour, *Introduction à l’histoire urbaine de la Syrie ottomane* (Beirut: Librairie Orientale, 1982), 165. Cf. Raymond, “Groups sociaux,” 157–160.

their residence within the citadel.⁶² Alarmed at the migration and the fact that the citadel was partially vacant and unused, imperial authorities in 1667 ordered the violating citadel guards to return, threatening that if they did not, their salaries would be awarded to others who applied for them.⁶³ A second order from 1690, however, states that some citadel guards were “by necessity” having to reside outside the citadel, suggesting that the number of citadel guards had increased and the citadel precinct could no longer accommodate them.⁶⁴ Comparing the survey records of 1678 with a salary register dating from 1678, we can observe the residence patterns of high-ranking citadel guard officers, the *bölükbaşıs*. The 1679 salary register indicates that the *müstahfizân* corps had thirty *bölüks*, over which thirty *bölükbaşıs* were appointed, to which must be added nineteen *bölükbaşıs* assigned to the *bölük-i ağa*, for a total of forty-nine *bölükbaşıs*. By contrast, the 1678 survey names only twenty-four *bölükbaşıs* as owning homes within the citadel. It may be that some *bölükbaşıs* were renting houses in the citadel, but since, according the survey, known *bölükbaşıs* typically owned grand residences, and there were only a limited number of large houses within the citadel, it seems more likely that many were living in large houses outside the citadel walls.⁶⁵

As a third general pattern, we find that a greater number of soldiers owned homes within the city walls. This may be attributed to two interrelated factors. Property-holding military cadres were among the social elite of the city and accordingly many chose to live in the generally more affluent, prestigious, and secure intramural neighborhoods.⁶⁶ The concentration in the walled city of high-ranking officers such as

⁶² MM 8467:3a (1678–79) discussed in Chapter Two.

⁶³ AŞ 6:170, *Awā'il* N 1078/14–23 February 1668.

⁶⁴ ES 1:106, probably *Rabī' al-Thānī* 1100/January or February 1689. Moreover, non-soldiers owned houses in the citadel at the time of the 1678 survey. Of 165 houses recorded in the survey, 12 were owned by women, and of these women, only three were relatives (daughters) of soldiers; others may also have been family members of soldiers, but the record does not specify these relations. See MM 8467.

⁶⁵ Since the 1678 survey purports to list *all* homeowners in the city, we might anticipate that the 1678 survey identifies *bölükbaşıs* who are homeowners outside the citadel as well. The surveying authorities in fact only rarely recognized persons living outside the citadel as citadel guards, and even in those cases did so indirectly. An example was a certain Durmuş Çorbacı b. Kâsım. Registered as both owner and resident of a large house (assessed in the highest tax bracket) in the extramural quarter of Farrā'in in 1678, Durmuş Çorbacı also appeared as a *bölükbaşısı* in the 1679 salary register and held the title of *çavuş*. See MM 8467 (p. 102a) and DBKL 32201.

⁶⁶ On the socio-economic differentiation of the urban population, see Chapter Two.

beys, *subaşı*s, and aghas in the 1616 survey, and a similar pattern of pashas and *sipāhīs* in the 1678 survey bear this out. Conversely, the large number of rank-and file janissaries living outside of the walled city, especially in the northeastern district of Banqūsa, suggests something of a middle stratum of janissaries who could afford housing, but not in the walled city. There were also practical considerations. It may have been necessary for soldiers to live close to the citadel or to the residences of their commanders so that in times of military mobilization, they could be assembled rapidly. On the subject of factional activity, proximity of residence made it easier for military cadres to assemble and protect their collective interests. If there were already significant numbers of soldiers living within the walled city, this was an encouragement for other soldiers settling in the city to live in proximity to them. Finally, linguistic and commercial ties among soldiers may also have been a significant factor in grouping them in clusters.⁶⁷

These general patterns having been noted, there are other, more specific patterns and developments that merit attention. First, the complete absence of the members of *gönüllüyan* unit as homeowners in the 1616 survey and their strong appearance in the 1678 survey probably is the result of a change in surveying procedure, and not a shift in their actual numbers.⁶⁸ Members of the *gönüllüyan* unit most likely appear in the 1616 survey as persons with the ranks of agha and *kethüda*. A similar problem is encountered with the police officials known as *subaşı*s, of whom thirty appear as homeowners in the 1616 survey, but who dwindle to a single official in the 1678 survey.⁶⁹ We know from other sources, principally the court records, that a single city-wide *subaşı* was serving in the second half of the seventeenth century.⁷⁰ One possible explanation, which remains conjectural, is a reform in official administrative practice in which the central state increasingly restricted the use of the term *subaşı* to a single official, who then appointed persons to assist him; multiple *subaşı*s continued to serve, however, in rural subdistricts (sing. *każā'*) outside Aleppo.⁷¹

⁶⁷ MM 8467:5b–9b. There were “hubs” of elite residence in Cairo from the seventeenth century. See Raymond, “Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique,” 90–97.

⁶⁸ A salary register from 1616 records the garrisoning in Aleppo of over 200 *gönüllüyan*, including high-ranking officers. See MM 6467 and Inalcık, “Gönüllü,” *EI*².

⁶⁹ The *subaşı*, a certain Mehmed b. ‘Ali, was recognized as a homeowner, but did not receive status as a member of the official (*‘askerī*) class. See MM 8467:25b–29a.

⁷⁰ SMS 36:253, 30 S 1099/26 December 1687.

⁷¹ SMS 28:132, 18 RA 1071/21 November 1660.

In trying to discern major changes in the residence patterns of specific military cadres between the two surveys, we can make two significant points—points that may be interrelated. The first is the preponderant movement of *sipāhīs*, primarily those holding *tīmārs*, to the southeastern quadrant of the walled city, specifically to the quarters of Sāḥat Biza, Altūn Būghā and Dākhil Bāb al-Nayrab. This movement reinforced what was already a strong concentration of military cadres in that district, signaling a growing solidarity among a composite group of janissary officers and feudal cavalry beys based on common interest as *tīmār*-holders and tax farmers.⁷² The location to the south-southeast of the Citadel of the military training field, the *meydān*, which would have been the site of cavalry exercises, may help explain this concentration.

Concurrent with this is the second movement, the removal of *çavuşes* from many districts of the city to one extramural district, that of Banqūsa. If we accept the proposition that the *çavuş* homeowners were members of a distinct unit, the *çavuşān*, then this movement represents perhaps the most dramatic example of unit solidarity as evinced by the surveys. In Egypt, the *çavuşān* unit was one of seven corps. While it never attained the numbers or wealth of other corps such as the janissaries and *‘azebān*, it established a symbiosis with the governor, who until the middle of the seventeenth century assigned it important tasks and whose political position in turn was effectively supported by them against other corps.⁷³ The position of the *çavuşān* in Aleppo may have been similar. The *çavuşān* were attached to the governor’s council and may have served as an important instrument of the governor’s control over the northeastern suburb of Banqūsa,

⁷² For a comparable movement of elite soldiers, see Raymond, “Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique,” 78–90.

⁷³ The *‘azebān* were “an infantry regiment of Ottoman soldiery... second in size to the janissaries by the eighteenth century; [they] typically guarded the gates of Cairo and manned various frontier fortresses.” See Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 174. In this connection it is also worth mentioning the *müteferrika* corps. In Egypt the *müteferrika* were, according to Hathaway, “an infantry regiment... created in 1554 and initially filled from the imperial palace; [they were] until the mid-seventeenth century the wealthiest and most influential regiment in Egypt.” See *Politics of Households*, 177. In Aleppo, several members of the *müteferrika* corps, which in the 1678 survey were classified as *tīmār* holders (*erbāb-i tīmār*), may have supported the position of the governor against other local power groups, just as the *müteferrika* in Egypt did. Like the *çavuşān*, the *müteferrika* were attached to the governor’s divan. It is significant that the residence of all registered *müteferrika* homeowners was in Sāḥat Biza. See Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 194–197; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 38–40, 65.

which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was notorious for the lawlessness of tribal and mercenary elements that settled there.⁷⁴ The houses of the *çavuşân*, which were among the largest homes in Banqūsa district, mark members of the unit as power brokers and dispensers of patronage.⁷⁵ The *çavuşân* were natural allies to the frequently rotating governors, who found it necessary to counteract the local power of the *paşazades* and the *sipāhīs*. The latter groups lived within the walled city and owned houses that, according to the survey of 1678, were on average larger than those of the *çavuşes*.⁷⁶

We can obtain some idea of the position of these two groups among the constellation of political forces in Aleppo by the way in which the survey of 1678 was conducted. In order to obtain complete information on the assets of the urban elite, the surveyors relied on selected notables. Of the two soldiers selected to assist the surveyors, one was a large *tīmār*-holder from the southeastern quadrant, and the second was an eminent member of the *çavuş* corps resident in the neighborhood of Qāḍī 'Askar in the Banqūsa district.⁷⁷ One suspects that these persons were selected for their loyalty to the state and that they were employed to fully uncover the material interests of the leading local political elite, who could be expected to obstruct a thorough survey of their properties.

By way of conclusion, an investigation of the residence patterns of the military propertyowners yields limited but useful information on their spatial cohesion. The dominant observation taken from a mapping

⁷⁴ J.-G. Barbié du Bocage, *Notice sur la Carte générale des paschaliks de Baghdad, Orfa et Hhaleb, et sur le plan d'Hhaleb* (Everat: n.p., 1825), 35, 41–43; Jean Sauvaget, *Alep: essai sur le développement d'une grande ville syrienne, des origines au milieu du XIX^e siècle* (Paris: P. Geunther, 1941), 230–231; Bodman, *Political Factions*, 57–58; Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 42; and Raymond, "Groups sociaux," 156–160.

⁷⁵ Within the district of Banqūsa, the *Çavuşân* members were concentrated in the neighborhoods of Ḥamza Bey, Farrā'in, Qāḍī 'Askar, Dallālīn, Qārliq and Tātārlar.

⁷⁶ According to the 1678 survey, of 26 *tīmār*-holders, 6 had houses in the highest tax bracket (*a'lā*), 7 in the medium tax bracket (*evsaṭ*), and 13 in the lowest tax bracket (*ednā*). Of 22 *çavuşes*, none was in the highest tax bracket, 10 were in the medium tax bracket, and 12 were in the lowest tax bracket. To get some sense of the wealth of these groups relative to all homeowners in their districts: within the northeastern districts, 2 percent of all homes were assessed at *a'lā* and 17 at *evsaṭ*; within the eastern (both northeastern and southeastern) districts of the walled city, 5 percent were assessed at *a'lā* and 19 at *evsaṭ*. Thus, the vast majority of houses in each district, ranging between 75 and 81 percent, were assessed at the lowest tax bracket, *ednā*. See MM 8467.

⁷⁷ The first was Aḥmed Agha b. 'Abdullāh el-Za'im from the quarter of Dakhil Bab al-Nayrab (MM 8467: 49b–52a), and the second, Ḥüseyn Çavuş b. Bayezid Çavuş-i Dīvān-i Ḥaleb from the quarter of Qāḍī 'Askar (103a–104a).

of residences is the relative degree of integration with the local civilian population. Living among and interacting with other members of the social and political elite, high-ranking military officials within the city walls apparently came to share more interests with their civilian counterparts than with other soldiers. Their civilian counterparts, primarily members of the ulama, the judicial and the educational establishment, and certain bureaucrats appointed to the fiscal administration of the province of Aleppo, were also concentrated in the walled city. There was a significant clustering of military elites in eastern districts of the walled city, but they coexisted with other members of the social elite. Outside the walled city, and specifically in the northeastern district of Banqūsa and certain eastern neighborhoods, the character of the political elite was primarily military—an expression of which may have been a greater frequency of public disturbance and violent crime. Here we locate the relative solidarity of the *çavuşân*.⁷⁸

Mindful of eighteenth century events, in which the city's politics was dominated by factionalism between the armed political parties called the janissaries and *ashrāf*, we see no marked spatial polarization of social forces in the survey of 1678. Though the *ashrāf* appear in greatest numbers within the walled city, they are represented in virtually every district of the city and its suburbs, marking them as a status group that enjoyed broad acceptance by the Muslim majority inhabitants. Theirs was a diverse and stratified social group, including wealthy members congregating in the walled city, and the middle and lower strata tending to find homes outside the walls. For their part, homeowners who were members of the janissary corps were even more evenly distributed than some other military groups. The spatial distribution of both military and *ashrāf* homeowners in the seventeenth century thus does not presage in any marked way the divisive conflicts between the political parties of the janissaries and *ashrāf* in the eighteenth century. This leads us to conclude that the changes necessary and sufficient to bring about urban conflict in the late eighteenth century, as witnessed by European observers, occurred preponderantly in the eighteenth century.

⁷⁸ We might liken the spatial cohesion of the *çavuşân* to that of the beys and high-ranking janissary officers in eighteenth-century Cairo, though this comparison should be taken only so far. The wealth of Egyptian beys was much greater, and the ostentation of their residences was a defining element of their power. See Raymond, "Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique," 83–87.

Compensation of Troops

Units assigned to the city of Aleppo for its defense generally received their salaries through the *ocaqlık* mechanism. *Ocaqlık*, which attained widespread usage throughout the empire in the seventeenth century, was an administrative practice whereby military units were assigned a specific source of tax revenue for their salaries and were charged with collecting revenues directly from that source.⁷⁹ Typically one (or more) of the unit's personnel was appointed as a salaried official (*emîn* or *zâbiî*) to collect the tax revenues from a designated local economic sector (*mukâta'a*) and then distribute the proceeds to each soldier in accordance with the salary registers. In another local instance of *ocaqlık*, soldiers from the distant garrison at Kars in eastern Anatolia enjoyed extensive tax farm collection privileges in and around Aleppo.⁸⁰ In theory, the *ocaqlık* mechanism was not a tax farm, but, as we shall see, agents employed certain practices that had consequences similar to those of tax farms. The citadel guards seem most frequently to have been assigned the *mukâta'a* of the sheep market, where taxes were assessed on the sale of livestock, mutton, skins, and other sheep products to outside buyers.⁸¹ Revenues from the slave market (*pâzâr-i esîr*) and a separate sheep marketing tax (*bâc-i aġnâm*) were added to the guards' salary by the end of the century, perhaps to meet the increasing numbers of soldiers assigned to the garrison.⁸² Table 3.4 demonstrates the expansion of the garrison.

⁷⁹ The *ocaqlık* mechanism had the practical advantage of speeding salaries to recipients since the funds did not pass through the central treasury; on the other hand, oversight by the central fiscal administration was constrained by distance. See Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion*, 86–88, 96; Rhoads Murphey, "The Functioning of the Ottoman Army under Murad IV (1623–1639/1032–1049): Key to the Understanding of the Relationship between Center and Periphery in Seventeenth-Century Turkey," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1979, Vol. I, 180–203; Dror Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 145–54; and Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 175–176. On the operation of *ocaqlık* in the European provinces, see Michael Robert Hickok, *Ottoman Military Administration in Eighteenth-Century Bosnia* (Brill: Leiden, 1997), 42–53, passim; and Moaçanin, *Town and Country*, 131–41.

⁸⁰ See the discussion on the Kars garrison below. Agents from the Kars garrison exercised long-term control over various tax sectors in the urban economy. See SMS 25:185, 14 L 1058/1 November 1648; MM 4887:56, 1 S 1072/26 September 1661; AŞ 5:121, *Awâ'il* M 1078/29 June–2 July 1667; and AŞ 15:28, L 1101/July–August 1690.

⁸¹ The sheep market was referred to as *dâr al-ghanam* (Arabic) or *hân-i aġnâm* (Ottoman Turkish). See SMS 25:42, 22 JA 1058/14 June 1648; SMS 28:219, 2 JA 1071/3 January 1661; and SMS 36:90, *Awâ'il* Ş 1098/12–22 June 1687.

⁸² MM 3134:195, 8 JA 1112/21 October 1700.

Table 3.4. Organization of Citadel Guards (*Müstahfizân*) Corps assigned to Aleppo in the 17th Century

Subunit	1616		1678/79		1689/90	
	Strength (<i>nefers</i>)	Salary* (<i>ağçes</i>)	Strength (<i>nefers</i>)	Salary (<i>ağçes</i>)	Strength (<i>nefers</i>)	Salary (<i>ağçes</i>)
<i>Headquarters Company</i>						
Bölük -i Ağa	23	215	38	413.5	38	413.5
<i>Line Companies</i>						
Bölük-i Evvel	9	60.5	16	88.5	16	88.5
Bölük 2	10	62	9	53	9	48
Bölük 3	10	55	9	51.5	9	46.5
Bölük 4	9	55	8	53	8	53
Bölük 5	10	60	10	46	10	49
Bölük 6	9	67	13	70	14	70
Bölük 7	9	56	10	55	10	55
Bölük 8	7	42	12	85	12	84
Bölük 9	8	49.5	10	60.5	10	60.5
Bölük 10	10	58	9	46	9	46
Bölük 11	8	51	7	39	7	44
Bölük 12	7	48.5	8	49.5	8	50
Bölük 13	9	46	8	43	9	43
Bölük 14	8	42	10	55	10	52
Bölük 15	8	40	8	45	8	45
Bölük 16	10	65	6	50	6	50
Bölük 17	8	37	7	33.5	7	33.5
Bölük 18	8	51	8	45.5	9	45.5
Bölük 19	9	45	9	47	9	47
Bölük 20	9	53	7	42	7	42
Bölük 21**	9	58	11	66	11	72
Bölük 22	8	35	6	31	6	31
Bölük 23	5	22	7	42	7	42
Bölük 24	—	—	7	43	7	43
Bölük 25	—	—	7	42.5	7	42.5
Bölük 26	—	—	7	36.5	7	36.5
Bölük 27	—	—	7	44.5	7	39.5
Bölük 28	—	—	9	41	9	41
Bölük 29	—	—	7	43	7	43
Bölük 30	—	—	7	34	7	34
<i>Combat Support/Logistics Company</i>						
Bölük-i Müteferriğa	32	217	45	270	46	237

Table 3.4 (cont.)

Subunit	1616		1678/79		1689/90	
	Strength (<i>nefers</i>)	Salary* (<i>aḳçe</i> s)	Strength (<i>nefers</i>)	Salary (<i>aḳçe</i> s)	Strength (<i>nefers</i>)	Salary (<i>aḳçe</i> s)
<i>Attachments of Youths and Retirees</i>						
Cemāʿat-i Vildān-i Ḳul	12	33	5	11	5	10
Cemāʿat-i Mūteḳāʿidin	14	39.5	5	10	5	10
Total	286	1663	351	2138	355	2158

* Represents the aggregate salary of the subunit on a daily basis

** Discrepancy noted between recorded company total and total calculated from individual salaries in 1616.

Sources: MM 6467 (1616), DBKL 32201 (1679/80), and DBKL 32222 (1688–89).

How well paid were the citadel guards? The volatility of currency values and the fragmentary evidence for the seventeenth century make any estimate tentative.⁸³ Military salaries as stipulated in *aḳçe* (an official unit of account) in specialized fiscal registers remained stagnant throughout the second half of the seventeenth century. Moreover, according to other primary sources, the purchasing power of salaries generally declined as the *aḳçe* lost value relative to other currencies, the most important of which in Aleppo was the Dutch leventhaler, known as the *ghirsh asadī*.⁸⁴ Şevket Pamuk has documented the sharply fluctuating but generally falling value of the *aḳçe* against not only the *ghirsh asadī*, but also other major European currencies, the Spanish eight-real (*ghirsh riyālī*), and the Venetian ducat (*bunduḳī*), as they were exchanged in a number of Ottoman cities, primarily Istanbul and Edirne.⁸⁵ Checking these numbers against the very limited evidence we for Aleppo, we find strong correlations.⁸⁶ Using conversion rates from

⁸³ See Pamuk, "Evolution of the Ottoman Monetary System," 961–970; idem, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*, 131–158; cf. idem, "Prices in the Ottoman Empire," 454–456.

⁸⁴ Mantran, *Istanbul*, 271–79; and Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I: 17–52.

⁸⁵ Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*, 144 (Table 8.3).

⁸⁶ Shariʿa court records provide the bulk of information on local economic conditions. A receipt dating from 1640 indicates an equivalence of 120 *aḳçe*s to one *ghirsh riyālī* (SMS 22:64, 5 Ş 1050/20 November 1640), which corresponds to the spike in the value of the *ghirsh riyālī* noted by Pamuk. Both the summary of a loan settlement dating from 1662 and a receipt document from 1674 record that one *ghirsh riyālī* equals 1.117 *ghirsh asadī*, roughly equivalent to the 1659, 1668 and 1672 figures given in Pamuk (SMS 2:281, 2 JA 1073/12 December 1662 and SMS 32:435, 25 Ş 1085/24

Pamuk's study, we find that the average annual share of the individual citadel guard in *ocaqlık* revenues fell from roughly 20 *ghurūsh* in 1647 to 13 *ghurūsh* in 1687, and then remained on that level throughout the 1690s.⁸⁷ To assess the relative value of this compensation, we observe that 20 percent of houses whose sale was recorded in a register in 1675 in Aleppo ranged in value from 5 to 20 *ghurūsh*.⁸⁸ This range of value, however, is the lowest range recorded, and suggests the resources of an impoverished lower class. It is expected, then, that many citadel guards would have sought additional sources of income in civilian occupations.

The guards of the Khān Ṭümān citadel, who at some point in the first half of the seventeenth century were administratively detached from the guards in Aleppo city, were also compensated by means of *ocaqlık*.⁸⁹ According to central fiscal records dating from the 1640 and 1650s, this unit received its compensation primarily from a *mukāṭa'a* that grouped together a diverse set of economic activities: the marketing of grain (*'arṣa-yi daḳīk*) and of horses (*pāzār-i esp*), the sale of a certain textiles (*bāc-i siyāh*), and the taxes imposed on shops in a certain market in Aleppo (*dükākīn-i Ḥayder Bey*) and on other commercial properties.⁹⁰ In the 1660s, the revenue source appears to have included the *bāc-i aḥmal*, translated roughly as "payload tax," by which they were entitled to collect transit taxes, perhaps at their citadel, which

September 1674); and the summary of a court suit dating from 1687 determines that 1 *bunduqī* is equal in value to 2.5 *ghurūsh asadī*, an equivalence that is consistent with what Pamuk gives for 1691 and 1698 (SMS 36:132, 6 L 1098/15 August 1687).

⁸⁷ These figures were obtained by taking the total annual *dār al-ghanam* revenues, which are available for the years 1647/1648, 1655/1656, 1658/1659, 1661/1662, and 1700 (all of which are stipulated in the *mukāṭa'a* or *aḥkām* registers as salary (*ocaqlık*) for the citadel guards) and dividing them by the total number of soldiers assigned to the garrison according to salary registers that correspond roughly in time. For the relevant *mukāṭa'a* registers, see MM 4402:40 (1647/1648), MM 9839:41,43, and MM 9840:42, 43 (1655/1656); MM 2519:45 (1658/1659); MM 4887:49 (1661/1662); and MM 3134 (1700). An entry from the local court records provides evidence of the actual receipt of these revenues by citadel guards: SMS 36:141, 25 Ş 1098/9 July 1687. Annual *ocaqlık* revenues were determined using conversion figures given by Pamuk, *Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*, 144.

⁸⁸ See Table 2.2.

⁸⁹ The term used to describe the administrative detachment of the *müstahfizān* of Khān Ṭümān from the *müstahfizān* of Aleppo was *ifrāz*, literally "separation." See MM 8467:145b (1678). Seventeenth-century salary registers (*esāmī* or *mevācib defter*s) never recognize the *müstahfizān* of Khān Ṭümān as a distinct unit even while the *mukāṭa'a* registers recognize them as distinct and grant them revenues.

⁹⁰ For example, see MM 9840:43 (AH 1066/1655–56 CE).

guarded the southern approaches to Aleppo, and at other locations in the province.⁹¹ Evidence indicates that the compensation of these guards, whose number remained fairly constant,⁹² was significantly higher than that of their counterparts in the urban citadel of Aleppo and may have even increased over time. Court records contain receipts of compensation by unit representatives, the annual individual share in these revenues ranging in mid-century between 34 *ghurūsh* (1640) and 40 *ghurūsh* (1663).⁹³ The relatively high per capita compensation of the Khān Tūmān guards may reflect two separate possibilities. The first is the use by the guards of mounts, the upkeep of which would have been substantial, to police the countryside more effectively. Consistent with this pattern, the mounted *gönüllüyān* force was paid on average twice that of infantry units.⁹⁴ The second possibility was the recognition by state officials that the guards at Khān Ṭūmān did not have the same commercial opportunities as their counterparts in Aleppo and therefore had to be granted additional compensation.

Like the citadel guards in Aleppo and Khān Ṭūmān, the mounted *gönüllüyān* force derived their compensation from the *ocaqlık* institution, and, in fact, shared revenues from many of the same sources as the Khān Ṭūmān unit: the grain and horse markets (*‘arṣa-yi daḳıḳ ve pāzār-i esp*) and taxes on the shops of Hayder Bey (*dükākīn-i Ḥayder Bey*) and other commercial properties. Assuming the number of *gönüllüyān* remained reasonably constant, we find that the average annual share of a *gönüllü* soldier in these revenues dropped from 37 *ghurūsh* in 1644/1645 to 33 *ghurūsh* in 1655/1656, and finally to 19 *ghurūsh* in 1700.⁹⁵ If the ranks of the *gönüllüyān* swelled, following trends among the *müstahfizān*, these figures would represent, at best, upper limits of compensation. Given that they were mounted troops, it is expected that the level of compensation would exceed that of the *müstahfizān* infantry.

⁹¹ SMS 22:230, 10 DA 1050/21 February 1641.

⁹² The number of guards at Khān Ṭūmān citadel was recorded at 43 persons (*nefer*) throughout the period under study. See MM 8467: 145b–146a.

⁹³ SMS 22:64, 5 § 1050/20 November 1640; and SMS 27:469, 13 DA 1073/19 June 1663. Cf. the following *muḳāṭa‘a* registers: MM 4402:40 (1647/1648) and MM 2519:45 (1659/1660).

⁹⁴ See the differences in salary between the *müstahfizān* and the *gönüllüyān* as recorded in MM 6467 (1616 CE).

⁹⁵ MM 2475:58 (22 RA 1054/29 May 1644); MM 9840:43 (1066/1655–1656); and MM 3134:195 (8 JA 1112/21 October 1700).

The final local unit receiving salary by means of *ocaklık* was a small contingent of guards (*sarāydarān*) assigned to defend the “old palace” (*sarāy-i ‘atīk*). The palace, the official residence of the provincial governor, was located in the intramural neighborhood of Sāḥat Biza to the southwest of the citadel.⁹⁶ In the 1640s and 1650s, these guards received an average annual share of 21–24 *ghurūsh*, which was roughly comparable to the salaries of the citadel guards.⁹⁷

The *ocaklık* mechanism also facilitated payment of a military unit that was distinctly not local in origin: the guards of the citadel of Kars. Located in northeastern Anatolia, the citadel was on the front line of conflict between the Ottoman and Safavid empires.⁹⁸ The importance of this fiscal link with Kars should not be underestimated. In the decades for which figures exist—the 1640s and 1650s—revenues assigned to the garrison from urban tax sectors of Aleppo amounted annually to roughly 50,000 *ghurūsh*, five-times the annual *ocaklık* revenues of the *müstahfizān* of Aleppo and Khān Ṭümān and of the *gönüllüyān* combined.⁹⁹ The range of economic activity over which agents of the garrison exercised tax authority was correspondingly greater: textile weaving and dyeing, coffee processing, the manufacture of Moroccan leather, and the marketing of fruit, among others.¹⁰⁰ The men appointed to collect these revenues, they themselves soldiers from the Kars garrison, appeared frequently in the records of the shari‘a courts of Aleppo, and were engaged in a wide range of activities.¹⁰¹

Compensation for imperial (*kapıkulu*) troops residing in Aleppo is not as well documented. No documentary evidence could be found that the central state authorities regularly assigned income, specifically from local sources, to resident janissary foot soldiers (*yeniçeri*) who were

⁹⁶ MM 8467:5b–9b (1678).

⁹⁷ MM 4402:40 (1057/1647–8); MM 9839:41, 43 (1066/1655–6); MM 9840:42–43 (1066/1655–6); and MM 2519:45 (1070/1659–60)

⁹⁸ W. Barthold, “Kars,” *EI*²; and Murphey, “Functioning of the Ottoman Army,” 171–208, esp. 189–190.

⁹⁹ MM 4402:39–42, 46 (1057/1647–48); MM 9839:41–43 (1066/1655–56); MM 9839:42–43 (1066/1655–56); and MM 2519:45–46 (1070/1659–60). The Kars garrison was not the only non-local military unit to receive revenues from the Aleppo treasury. janissary garrisons in Kirkuk and Baghdad also received funds from this source; see MM 2475:15 (23 M 1054/1 April 1644) and SMS 3:722 (21 DA 1065/22 September 1655), respectively. For an assessment of the importance of the Aleppo treasury to broader regional fiscal administration, see Murphey, *Regional Structure in the Ottoman Economy*, 13–36, 162–183.

¹⁰⁰ MM 4402:39–42, 46.

¹⁰¹ The commercial activities of the Kars soldiers will be discussed below.

not members of the *müstahfizân* or the *gönüllüiyân* units.¹⁰² Imperial cavalry troops (*kapıkulu süvâri*), on the other hand, seem to have enjoyed income from the lucrative *dîmûs* tax-farm. Commanded by a *kethüda yeri* and referred to as a *zümre* or *ṭā'ife*, this unit was composed of 90 soldiers in 1655.¹⁰³ The *dîmûs* tax sector, which according to mid-seventeenth century *muḳāṭa'a* registers comprised a set of mostly agricultural taxes, was not administered by *ocaḳlık*; rather, the provincial finance administration, headed by the *defterdâr*, usually collected the taxes.¹⁰⁴ In the 1650s and 1660s, the *defterdâr* paid out to imperial cavalry troops stationed in Aleppo salaries at levels ranging from roughly 30 to 140 *ghurûsh asadî*, with the average soldier's share in these disbursements falling in the 80–90 *ghurûsh asadî* range.¹⁰⁵ Drawing on information from provincial registers around 1640, Evliya Çelebi indicates that the *kethüda yeri* was given a large prebendal assignment in the form of a *ze'âmet*.¹⁰⁶ It is clear that the imperial cavalry enjoyed a larger average share of revenues than did other units.

Reckoning the compensation of *tîmâr*-holders is complicated by the fact that prebendal allotments (*dirliks*) varied greatly according to the size and productivity of the holding; moreover, the *tîmâr* institution

¹⁰² The tax surveys of both 1616 and 1678 draw a distinction between homeowners who were citadel guards (sing. *müstahfiz*, *kal'î*, or *merd-i kal'e*) and janissaries (sing. *yeniçeri*). Janissaries nevertheless appear to have extended control over certain sources of economic production, as we shall see below.

¹⁰³ According to a salary receipt document dating from 1655, this corps was comprised of 90 soldiers. See SMS 3:889, 14 D 1065/15 October 1655.

¹⁰⁴ On *dîmûs*, Canbakal gives a concise definition: It was "derived from the Byzantine *dêmosion* (public impost). As an agricultural tax, it referred to the tithe and was assessed on the basis of acreage rather than the yield. Like the regular tithe, it could be split between the state, religious endowments and *mülk*-holders. In relation to both agricultural and urban revenues, it implied a lump-sum cash payment." See *Society and Politics*, 54. See also Margaret Venzke, "Special Use of the Tithe as a Revenue-Raising Measure in the Sixteenth-Century *Sanjaq* of Aleppo," *JESHO* 29 (1986), 260–61; and Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Fiscalité et formes de possession de la terre arable dans l'Anatolie préottomane," *JESHO* 19 (1976): 233–322.

¹⁰⁵ SMS 3:889, 25 D 1065/15 Oct 1655 (four documents); SMS 28:147, 26 RA 1071/29 December 1660; and SMS 2:237, 15 JA 1661/16 January 1661. The assignment of *dîmûs* revenues to compensate members of the cavalry may have been at the discretion of the local administration; central tax farm records (*muḳāṭa'a defterleri*) do not annotate this arrangement. See MM 4402:33–44 (1647/48), MM 9839:46 (1655/56); MM 9840:46 (1655/56); and MM 2519:49 (1658/59). Canbakal also notes the setting aside of *dîmûs* revenues for local military units in the *livâ'* of 'Ayntab, which bordered the province of Aleppo. See her "'Ayntab," 72, fn. 193.

¹⁰⁶ Bağdat 306, 169b.

itself had been undergoing important changes since the second half of the sixteenth century. As part of an empire-wide process in which taxation became increasingly centralized, *tīmārs*, especially smaller ones, were being either converted to tax farms, directly administered by state agents, or incorporated into larger assignments.¹⁰⁷ Significantly, if seventeenth-century treatises on the *kānūnnāme* model provide accurate figures, the province of Aleppo seems to have witnessed a significant increase in the number of *tīmārs* throughout the century. From the first decade of the seventeenth century to the 1670s, the number of the larger *ze'āmet* assignments in the province (*vilāyet*) of Aleppo held steady at 104, but many of these were apparently transferred from outlying districts to the central *district* (*livā'*) of Aleppo, perhaps reflecting the growth of power of the governor (*beylerbeyi*) at the expense of district governors, a recognized trend in that century.¹⁰⁸ At the same time, the number of the smaller *tīmār* assignments grew from a provincial total of 799 to 861, but augmentation was exclusive to the *livā'* of Kilis to the north of Aleppo.¹⁰⁹ It is difficult, however, to assess the monetary value of these assignments relative to other income sources; moreover, we do not know the extent to which these *tīmārs* were assigned to

¹⁰⁷ Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi (XVIII. yy dan Tanzimat'a Mali Tarih* (Istanbul: Alan, 1986), 34–40. See also Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System," esp. 219–224; and Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 60–76.

¹⁰⁸ For figures from the first decade of the seventeenth century, see 'Ayn-ı 'Ali, *Kavânin-i Âl-i Osmân der hülâsa-i mezâmin-i defter-i divân*, edited by M. Tayyib Gökbilgin (Istanbul: Enderun, 1979), 55; for the 1670s, see Hezârfen Hüseyn Çelebi, *Telhîsü'l-beyân fi kavânin-i Âl-i Osmân*, ed. Sevim İlgürel (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1998), 136. The province of Aleppo is somewhat exceptional in that the progressive numerical concentration of *ze'āmet*s in the capital *livā'* over the seventeenth century does not occur in the neighboring provinces of Damascus, Mar'ash, Raqqa, or Tripoli. See 'Ayn-ı 'Ali, *Kavânin*, 53–56; and Hezârfen Hüseyn, *Telhîs*, 127, 131–132, 136–138. On the increasing power of the provincial governors, see Inalcik, "Centralization and Decentralization," 27–29; and Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 95–99, passim.

¹⁰⁹ For the differences between a *ze'āmet* and *tīmār*, see Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 12–13. Evliya Çelebi, as part of his description of Aleppo province from his visit there in 1671–1672, provides information on fiscal assignments and claims some degree of authority, though his information was by that time dated. Evliya writes that while in the service of Melek Ahmed Paşa during the latter's governorship of Aleppo, he consulted and recorded provincial fiscal regulations (Bağdat 306, 169b). According to a list of governors of Aleppo compiled by an eighteenth-century historian, "Malik [Melek] Aḥmad Pasha" was governor of Aleppo province from 1637/38 to 1641/42. See A. Mingana, "List of the Turkish Governors and High Judges of Aleppo from the Ottoman Conquest to A.D. 1747," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 10, 2 (1926): 518. This item suggests that Evliya Çelebi may have lived in Aleppo for as long as four years in the earlier part of his career.

non-military persons or inactive soldiers, though it is clear that this process had been taking place since the sixteenth century.¹¹⁰

Judging from the survey of 1678, which presumably would have entailed an inspection of military readiness among *tīmār*-holders, military cadres continued to derive substantial revenues from prebendal assignments (*ze'āmets* and *tīmārs*). Of the 115 villages in the judicial district (*każā'*) of Aleppo, which at the time included the four rural subdistricts (*nāḥīyes*) of Jabal Sam'an, Madikh, Jabbūl, and Bāb, 33 (29%) were classified as either *tīmārs*, *ze'āmets*, or *ḥāṣṣ* assignments, the last type being allotted to the governor (*mīrmīrān*) or district governor (*mīrlivā'*).¹¹¹ Of the remaining villages, 57 (49%) were royal estates (*ḥāṣṣ-i ḥümāyun*), 16 (14%) were *waqf*, and 9 (8%) were combinations of royal estates, *waqfs* and *tīmārs*. These proportions confirm the strong position of the central state in administering rural lands in close proximity to Aleppo and the continuing operation of prebendal assignments.

As servants of the state, soldiers not only received salaries but also enjoyed privileges commensurate with their status. Privileges could take a wide variety of forms, including exemptions or discounts in the payment of taxes and fees, legal autonomy, and ritual and sartorial rights.¹¹² The granting of privileges was far from being comprehensive and universal: we have already seen in Chapter 2 that many soldiers who owned homes were, in the eyes of official surveyors, still subject to property taxes. Soldiers may have sought to override these impositions by exploiting disadvantaged groups, as in the case of a

¹¹⁰ On the assignment of timars to non-military personnel and the conversion of timars to tax farms (*iltizām*), see Inalcik, "Military and Fiscal Transformation," 330–333; and idem, "Centralization and Decentralization," 29. On the subletting of *tīmārs* to non-military personnel, see Howard, "Ottoman *Timar* System," 21–22; Suraiya Faroqhi, "Town Officials, *Timar*-Holders and Taxation: The Late Sixteenth-Century Crisis as Seen from Çorum," *Turcica* 18 (1986): 53–82; Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 60–62; and Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century*, 135–139.

¹¹¹ Of the 33 prebend assignments, 9 were *ḥāṣṣ*, 9 were *ze'āmets*, and 15 were *tīmārs*. Note, in the *każā'* of Aleppo, the high proportion of *ḥāṣṣes* and *ze'āmets* to *tīmārs* in the *każā'*, which suggests a consolidation of prebends in larger holdings. For a detailed listing of the villages, see MM 8467: 145a–213a. Information pertaining to the entire province will be found in the *mufaṣṣal taḥrīr defter*, MM 678, and the *icmāl taḥrīr defter*, KK 2684, to which this researcher had only limited access.

¹¹² For examples of orders exempting imperial *ḫuls* from taxes, see Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I:95–97, 109–112; on customs defining their legal autonomy, including the limited right to render punishment, see *ibid.*, I:355–363, II:179–180; and on sartorial rights, *ibid.*, I: 263–272.

soldier who purchased a ruined house in the Jewish quarter in 1655. In his presence, members of the Jewish community agreed in court to pay the tax burden assessed on the house and never to ask the soldier for tax obligations.¹¹³ Soldiers who were members of a guild could also enjoy substantial privileges vis-à-vis their fellow guild members, but it is difficult to assess the extent of this practice. In several cases, guild members jointly agreed that the soldiers among them were to pay only one-half of the taxes or other costs incurred by other members of the guild.¹¹⁴ In 1661, the tanners of cowhides (*künjiyya*) struck an agreement whereby three soldier-members were to enjoy the same tax privileges as the guild leader (*shaykh*), and, in addition, the guild leader was always to consult with the soldiers in matters concerning the guild.¹¹⁵

Coupled with tax privileges were legal rights that defined military units as self-regulating bodies, even if they were subject to regulations prescribed by the state. As we have seen, when taxes were collected from soldier homeowners, they were collected separately and by their commanding officers, not by civilian officials.¹¹⁶ According to imperial regulations, janissary units had their own systems of adjudication and could dispense punishment within certain limits.¹¹⁷ The *ocaklık* institution, which granted extensive fiscal autonomy to the Aleppo garrison, must have strengthened this status.¹¹⁸ Such autonomy had its limits and was contested, as illustrated by a dispute in 1659. A soldier employed as a bailiff (*yasaqî*) for the Şalâhiyya Islamic court reported to the qadi that a citadel guard refused to comply with a court summons, saying that he would go only if he were accompanied by his own “sergeant” (*jâwish*, Turkish *çavuş*). The citadel guard did eventually attend the court with his sergeant, who reiterated the explanation of his subordinate, stating further that this rule was their law (*qânûn*). Not satisfied with this, however, the court apparently requested a legal

¹¹³ SMS 3:703, 8 DA 1065/9 September 1655. See also SMS 3:434, 8 B 1065/14 May 1655.

¹¹⁴ SMS 28:616, 7 B 1073/15 February 1663; SMS 3:420, 26J 1065/3 May 1655; and SMS 27:120, 6 S 1069/3 November 1658.

¹¹⁵ SMS 27:273, 6 RA 1071/9 November 1660.

¹¹⁶ See Chapter Two. Specific documents relating to this administrative separation are SMS 28:143, 21 RA 1071/24 November 1660; and SMS 28:483, 8 S 1073/22 September 1662.

¹¹⁷ Murphey, “Yeni Çeri,” *EI*²; and Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları* 1:355–362.

¹¹⁸ Murphey, “Functioning of the Ottoman Army,” 187–189, 200–203.

opinion from the mufti, who responded, “One should fear for the person who is summoned to the Islamic court and, God forbid, refuses [to come], as [the act] is akin to blasphemy: he will be given severe discretionary punishment [*ta‘zīr*] with painful beating.”¹¹⁹ Although the outcome of the case is not recorded, the conflict between jurisdiction of the shari‘a court and that of military units is clearly illustrated.¹²⁰ In his study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Aleppo, Bodman argues that other, less formal privileges came to accrue to soldiers, specifically janissaries: a member of the corps would find hospitality among his cohort wherever he went in the empire, and could even find refuge from the law.¹²¹ Instances of this form of solidarity have not been found in the court records of seventeenth-century Aleppo.

Arising from soldiers’ elevated legal status and their association with state service was a presumption of social superiority, which may be illustrated by a dispute between two members of the spinner’s guild (*muzayyiks*) in 1662. A guildsman who apparently had become a soldier, Muḥammad Beşe b. Ustād ‘Alī, alleged before the court that a fellow guildsman, Ḥusayn b. ‘Umar, had insulted him, saying, “You’re nothing but a maker of cheap slippers (*bābūjī*)!” After Ḥusayn denied saying this, Muḥammad Beşe brought to court two members of the *ashrāf*, who then attested to his allegation, whereupon the judge administered discretionary punishment in accordance with Islamic law.¹²² It is significant that Muḥammad Beşe employed as witnesses two members of the *ashrāf*, whose testimony in court was highly regarded, and that in effect a soldier and *ashrāf* members collaborated to enforce respect for their status groups.¹²³ Soldiers could also become chronically abusive; such was the case with a soldier who in 1660 repented

¹¹⁹ Issuing the fatwa was the Shāfi‘ī mufti and noted historian of Aleppo, Abū’l-Wafā’ al-‘Urḍī (1585–1660). See SMS 27:154, 11 N 1069/2 June 1659. For a brief but suggestive discussion of how legal summons worked in seventeenth-century Kayseri, see Jennings, “Kadi, Court, and Legal Procedure,” 169–72.

¹²⁰ For a standard overview of complex relationship between shari‘a and *kānūn*, see Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, 70–75. For a more recent study, see Dina Rizk Khoury, “Administrative Practice between Religious Law (*Shari‘a*) and State Law (*Kanun*) on the Eastern Frontiers of the Ottoman Empire,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 5, 4 (2001), 305–330. For a study that counterposes interpretations of Islamic law on the part of Syrian Ulama with imperial Ottoman law, see Abdul-Karim Rafeq, “The Syrian Ulama, Ottoman Law and Islamic *Shari‘a*,” *Turcica* 27 (1994), 9–32.

¹²¹ Bodman, *Political Factions*, 66–67.

¹²² SMS 28:442, 11 M 1073/26 August 1662.

¹²³ Canbakal, *Society and Politics*, 123–149.

of his former behavior of assaulting townspeople while on the job. He had been in the habit, the document records, of drinking and, while standing guard at the gate of the governor (*bāb hākīm al-siyāsa*), of dragging passers-by off to the authorities, presumably to levy arbitrary fines on them; he also had been known to abuse residents of the Jewish quarter. In response, the qadi issued the warning that if he returned to any of these kinds of behavior, he would be banished from Aleppo altogether.¹²⁴

The status and power of soldiers was desirable enough for even Christians to risk punishment by impersonating them. In 1648 two men identified as Christians were brought before the provincial council wearing the uniforms of janissaries. According to the testimony of two soldiers, the two men had been claiming that they were janissaries and had been verbally and physically abusing ordinary townspeople. The townspeople, thinking that the two men were in fact janissaries, did not feel in a position to confront them.¹²⁵ The court document devotes considerable space to describing what exactly the two men were wearing, indicating the authorities' interest in fixing the details of the janissaries' uniform and in holding the accusers accountable.¹²⁶ In any event, finding the testimony sufficient, the qadi ordered discretionary punishment (*ta'zīr*) specifically for their wearing of the uniform.

Ocaklık and the Guards of the Kars Citadel

Ocaklık contracts granting revenues for the maintenance of the fortresses of Kars and Ardahan in the 1630s suggest the extent of fiscal autonomy that members of garrisoned military units in Aleppo

¹²⁴ SMS 28:41, 2 S 1071/7 October 1660.

¹²⁵ SMS 25:158, 22 N 1058/10 October 1648.

¹²⁶ The two Christians may have coordinated their dress so that they would appear as a natural pair, one being an officer and the other his retainer and subordinate. Dressed as the officer, the one Christian was wearing a blue *dolama* or long robe secured by a red silk *shadd* or belt; two red outercloaks (*jubba*); a *quntush* (shirt?) of blue broadcloth (*jukh*), among other garments; and on his head a honey-colored shawl (*shal 'asali*) and red tarbush in the Fez style. The other Christian wore, among other garments, a red outercloak (*jubba*), a *jallābiyya* or loose robe; and on his head a cap of fur (*qalbaq bi-farw*). According to Jane Hathaway, the *dolama* (English, "dolman") was in Egypt "a long-sleeved, open-fronted robe worn by regimental officers of the rank of *çavuş* and above, as well as by beys." There is little to distinguish the second Christian as a janissary except perhaps for his fur cap. See Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 39, 175; and Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I: 263–272.

enjoyed. According to these contracts, funds designated as *ocaqlık* were to form a separate and inviolable account (*mefrüzü'l-kalem*) from the provincial treasury, to be subject to a single annual audit by the proper authority, and to be protected from any and all interference on the part of local or central government officials.¹²⁷ Military units thus seemed to have had a wide range of action when it came to the collection and disposition of *ocaqlık* funds. Although, as we have seen, many military units enjoyed *ocaqlık* privileges in Aleppo, we will concentrate here on the Kars garrison, specifically the practical implications of their involvement in the local economy.

Both central state fiscal registers and local shari'a court records document the longstanding control that the Kars garrison exercised over certain tax sectors (*muḳāṭa'as*) in the Aleppan economy. Table 3.5 lists these *muḳāṭa'as* and the revenues that were forecast for each in the hijri year 1057 (1647–1648 CE), totaling some 45,500 *ghurūsh asadī*. It is clear that authorities did vary revenue assignments from time to time; hence, according to local court records, authority to collect taxes on olive oil and alkali (for soapmaking) was added in 1678.¹²⁸ A sampling of *muḳāṭa'a* registers from throughout the second half of the century, nevertheless, points to continuous control by the Kars garrison over these sectors with few interruptions.¹²⁹ The reassignment in 1683 of one tax unit, the *boyaḥāne*, or dyehouse, to the control of the *muḥaṣṣil* of Aleppo mentions that the Kars garrison had collected its revenues as *ocaqlık* for “thirty to forty years.”¹³⁰ There is one recorded instance, in 1645, of an unidentified individual receiving the right from Istanbul to administer the *ocaqlık* assignments in Aleppo in an apparent tax farm (*iltizām*) arrangement.¹³¹

The central challenges facing the Kars garrison with respect to its tax collection rights were twofold: one, how to supplement the revenues, which appear to have been insufficient for unit operations (and perhaps the personal ambitions of its members); and two, how to collect revenues when the military and policing duties of the unit, the

¹²⁷ MM 3458:96 and MM 7277:140, cited in Murphey, “Functioning of the Ottoman Army,” 188–189.

¹²⁸ SMS 34:138, 3 M 1090/14 February 1679.

¹²⁹ MM 4402 (1057/1647–1648); MM 9839 (1066/1655–1656); and MM 657 (1085/1674–1675).

¹³⁰ AŞ 14:28, L 1101/July–August 1690; and ES 1:27, *Awāsif* L 1101/Late July 1690.

¹³¹ MM 2765:86, 25 R1055/20 June 1645.

Table 3.5. Tax Units (*Muḳāta'āt*) Collected in Aleppo and Assigned as *Ocaḳlıḳ* to the Garrison of Kars in 1647–1648 According to MM 4402

Name	Activity	Projected revenue (<i>ghurūsh asadī</i>)
Ḳaşşābiyye (Aḳlām-i Gümrük)	Customs tax to finance meat provisioning*	7,700
Ḥān-i Ebrek ve Ḥarīr-i Şattī ve Beledī (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on local silk textiles marketed in Khan Abrak and elsewhere†	3,100
Dārü'l-Vekālet (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on bulk commodities in network of urban marketing facilities‡	14,600
Başhāne (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on sheep heads and trotters	4,400
Tahmīş-i Ḳahve (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on marketing of coffee	3,100
Pembe ve Saḥtiyān ve Ḥān-i Zübde (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on cotton and Moroccan-style leather marketed in Khan al-Zubda§	3,100
Bāc-i Şire (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on marketing of fruit juice**	2,700
Boyaḥāne (Aḳlām-i Ḥorde)	Tax on dye production††	1,480
Süruç ma' Bezzāzi ve Tevābi'hā (Muḳāta'at-i Müteferriḳa)	Tax on saddles, linen cloth**	4,562
Total		44,742

* Masters, *Origins of Economic Dominance*, 138; Faroḳhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 233; and Antony Greenwood, "Istanbul's Meat Provisioning," 212–217.

† On the Khān Abrak, see Khayr al-Dīn Asadī, *Aḥyā' Ḥalab wa aswāquhā* (Damascus: Dār Qutayba, 1990); and Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth, *Aleppo* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1984).

‡ On the Dārü'l-Vekālet, see Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 121.

§ On Khān al-Zubda, see Asadī, *Aḥyā' Ḥalab*; and Gaube and Wirth, *Aleppo*.

** According to Redhouse, *şire* is the "expressed fruit of any fruit or vegetable, especially of grapes."

† On the operation of dyehouses in Aleppo, see Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 206.

** On Linen drapers in Cairo, see Raymond, *Artisans et Commerçants*, I:319–320.

extensive size of the revenue assignment, and the remote distance of Kars from Aleppo may have combined to prevent members from collecting taxes on a regular or comprehensive basis. Agents identified as being from among the citadel guards (*müstaḥfiẓān*) of Kars did carry out their duties in Aleppo, though the absolute numbers may have been relatively small.¹³² Court authorities on a number of occasions ordered these agents to comply with imperial regulations (*qānūn*) in the collection of their taxes, suggesting that they were prone to infractions—or else competing military groups appealed to authorities to restrict their influence.¹³³ The physical duty of tax collection may have been delegated in large part to brokers (*dallāls*), who accompanied the agent on his rounds, and who were not necessarily soldiers.¹³⁴

Ocaḫlḫ assignments entailed certain responsibilities that brought Kars garrison members into deeper involvement in local administration. In 1678, a scholar (*‘ālim*) claimed in the shari‘a court that members of the Kars garrison owed him a daily allowance of four sheepheads since they were charged with collecting *başḫāne* taxes and fees. The qadi rejected the claim only because the *‘ālim* had not obtained a new certificate (*berat*).¹³⁵ Tax administrators thus were directed to distribute proceeds to local office holders. The next year, residents of a number of urban quarters complained that Kars garrison members, as administrators of two commercial khans, refused to pay extraordinary *sürṣat* taxes. The residents claimed that for the preceding eleven years the soldiers had been contributing “a few *ghurūsh*” with each levy, but the soldiers responded that they had done no such thing, and were entirely exempt from all exactions. The residents were unable to produce evidence, and the court upheld the position of the soldiers.¹³⁶

¹³² Arabic-language court records most frequently refer to these individuals as “Mustaḥfiẓān Qal‘at Qārṣ” or “Ghilmān Qal‘at Qārṣ.”

¹³³ A tax unit in which Kars garrison members were particularly active—and on which basis they sought to extend their influence elsewhere—was the Darū‘l-Vekālet (Ar. Dār al-Wikāla) *muḫāṭa‘a*, which, among the tax units they controlled, was the most lucrative and comprised the largest number of marketing facilities. See Table 3.5 above. See SMS 24:225, *Awā‘il* RA 1055/27 April 1645; SMS 25:185, 14 L 1058/1 November 1648; AŞ 5:121, *Awā‘il* M 1078/23 June 1667; and SMS 34:7, 3 J 1089/23 July 1678.

¹³⁴ See the stipulation in an agreement among *dallāls* of the Dār al-Ghanam tax unit that all must be from among the residents of Qārliq. See SMS 3:330c, 23 R 1065/31 January 1655. On *dallāls*, see Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 129–131.

¹³⁵ SMS 34:9, 5 J 1089/25 July 1678.

¹³⁶ SMS 34:197, 22 RA 1090/3 May 1679.

Kars soldiers also complained that other administrative and military groups strove to exact illegal taxes and fees on their revenue-yielding markets, complaints that the Sublime Porte and local court upheld.¹³⁷ These instances certainly suggest some erosion in the “separate and inviolable” status of the *ocaklık* contract.

Perhaps the strategy most frequently used by the Kars soldiers to manage their *ocaklık* assignments was to sub-contract tax units to local persons, though the fragmentary nature of the court records makes this question difficult to investigate in depth. We know that members of the Kars garrison could farm out tax units to janissaries and members of the ulama in explicit *iltizām* arrangements.¹³⁸ Another type of agreement by which tax collection authority was delegated was the lease (*isti'jār*). This form of agreement, along with the *iltizām*, seems to have been a particularly useful instrument for securing large sums of money in short periods of time, sums that went to pay the various obligations of the Kars garrison administration.¹³⁹ Over time, however, such arrangements were likely to weaken the financial standing of the garrison, as middlemen were likely to intercept a proportion of the revenues and perhaps subcontract revenue units even further.¹⁴⁰

While central fiscal records accord members of the Kars garrison very substantial *ocaklık* assignments and therefore what would be a prominent role in the urban economy of Aleppo, the financial position of the soldiers according to the court records was decidedly mixed. In seven of eight financial claims cases involving members of the Kars garrison found in the court records, the soldiers were sued for repayment of large sums, most frequently in connection with the financial obligations, literally “interests” (*maşālih*), of their unit, but sometimes

¹³⁷ In one suit, the court blocked an attempt by the *mutasallim*, the representative of the governor, to impose a *kaḫemiyye* tax on the various tax units administered by the Kars garrison; in another, the Kars garrison complained that other military-administrative cadres (*ehl-i 'örf*) were collecting tax revenues to which they were exclusively entitled. See respectively AŞ 8:303 (#1478), *Awā'il* D 1083/late March 1673; and AŞ 8:303 (#1479), *Awā'il* D 1083/late March 1673.

¹³⁸ For an example of an *iltizām* arrangements with janissaries and members of the ulama, see SMS 22:302, *Ghurra* D 1050/14 March 1641; and SMS 27:A500, 18 S 1077/20 August 1666.

¹³⁹ See the dispute over debts arising from an *isti'jār* agreement between members of the Kars garrison and the heirs of the scribe of the customs administration (*kātib al-jumruk*) SMS 34:138, 3 M 1090/14 February 1679; and SMS 34:177, 29 S 1090/15 March 1679.

¹⁴⁰ On the proliferation of subcontractors in other locales, see Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 612–618.

also in connection with assignments (sing. *ḥawāla*) of revenue to authorized recipients.¹⁴¹ To meet the demands of their creditors, and perhaps also to enhance their income, Kars garrison soldiers entered into commercial agreements, as illustrated by two court documents from 1679. It appears that in both cases, the soldiers accepted large quantities of merchandise, primarily textiles, to resell on consignment, both as a way of receiving advance payment from *ocaçlık* contractors and as a way of paying off debts and fiscal obligations.¹⁴² Not unlike members of residential quarters and of certain guilds, Kars garrison members appear to have served collectively as marketing agents to advance group interests.¹⁴³ The principal difference may have been that whereas quarter residents and guild members traded goods mostly in and around Aleppo, members of the Kars garrison may have engaged in regional trade connecting Aleppo with Kars and eastern Anatolia.

Soldiers, Market Regulation, and Moneylending

Building on their rights of tax collection over important sectors of the urban economy, soldiers appear to have played a number of different roles in the life of the local guilds. The process by which soldiers recently arrived in the city took up a craft or trade is important but remains difficult to identify in our sources. Raymond has written for Ottoman Cairo that one cannot be sure if an individual identified as both a soldier and as a guildsman was in origin a soldier except when the documents attribute to the individual “a position within a regiment... or a precise function,” such as *bölükbaşı* (head of section), *odabaşı* (head of a barracks of soldiers), or *topçu* (cannoneer).¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ On *ḥawāla* assignments as practiced in Ottoman finance, see Halil İnalcık, “Ḥawāla,” *EI*². For the financial claims cases, see SMS 24:215, 14 RA 1055/10 May 1645; SMS 24:415, 7 R 1055/2 June 1645; SMS 24:405, 11 J 1055/14 August 1645; and SMS 3:828, 27 R 1066/23 February 1656; SMS 28:449, 16 M 1073/31 August 1662; SMS 34:138, 3 M 1090/14 February 1679; SMS 34:202, 28 RA 1090/9 May 1679; and SMS 34:203, 28 RA 1090/9 May 1679.

¹⁴² SMS 34:138, 3 M 1090/14 February 1679; and SMS 34:203, 28 RA 1090/9 May 1679. The textiles being traded were *jūkh* (Turkish *çuha*) and *biza* (Turkish *bez*) (linen or cotton cloth). In another dispute case, the agent for the Dār al-Wikāla tax unit, a Kars garrison soldier, agreed to accept a quantity of broadcloth (*jukh*) as payment for a tax on pistachios a trader was transporting. See SMS 3:811, 17 R 1066/13 February 1656.

¹⁴³ See Chapters Two and Four.

¹⁴⁴ Raymond thus makes the assumption that in general few or no artisans or traders ever completed military training after they had affiliated with a military unit. This

When it comes to the participation of soldiers as artisans and traders in guild life in Aleppo, seventeenth-century court records mention with few exceptions only individuals with the title of *beşe*; other titles, such as *çorbacı* or *bölükbaşı*, appear only seldom. Based on information taken from the survey of 1678, we have already described *beşes* as an ambiguous social category, comprising individuals who made extensive investments in real estate property and yet whose residence patterns suggest they remained militarily active.

Tables 3.6 and 3.7 summarize information taken from the probate inventories (*mukhallafât*) of soldiers who died in Aleppo in 1676–1680. This type of source, while having some limitations, nevertheless sheds light on the consumption and investment habits of military groups.¹⁴⁵ The figure, with its admittedly small sampling, still suggests that the distribution of the *beşes*' wealth followed the general lines of those of agha and bey, with the important exception that the latter groups, with their typically larger fortunes, tended to divert a proportionally larger amount of wealth into moneylending. Aghas and beys correspondingly invested lesser proportions of their wealth in other activities (especially the purchase of livestock and slaves, household objects, and commercial goods), though the absolute value of outlays

study unfortunately cannot test the validity of this assumption and provisionally accepts it for the purposes of this discussion. See Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 671–673.

¹⁴⁵ The probate registers, known variously as *mukhallafât*, *qassâm*, or *tereke* registers, have several limitations. Among the most important, the qadi did not require heirs to register the estates with the court unless absent people or minor children were involved. Second, many people, especially the poor, avoided the court because it imposed substantial fees for the service. Third, the number of non-Muslims (*dhimmîs*) appearing in these records is very small in proportion to their demographic strength. For examples of non-Muslim estates, see Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Edirne askeri kassamına ait tereke defterleri, 1549–1659," *Belgeler* 3 (1966): 1–479, esp. 465, 469; and Said Öztürk, *Askeri Kassama ait Onyedinci Asır İstanbul Tereke Defterleri* (Istanbul: Cihan, 1995), 442, 444, 450, 486, 488, 490. As a result of these and other conditions, the persons appearing in the registers tend to be either wealthy Muslims, or those whose estates were disputed by their heirs or were left unclaimed. For a fuller discussion of these considerations, see James Grehan, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in 18th-Century Damascus* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), 14–17; Halil Inalcık, "Türkiye İktisadi ve İçtimai Tarihi Kaynaklar," [*İstanbul Üniversitesi*] *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 15 (1953): 51–75; Barkan, "Edirne tereke defterleri," 8; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I: xxiii; Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 165; and Karl Barbir, "Wealth, Privilege, and Family Structure: The 'Askeris of 18th Century Damascus according to the Qassam 'Askeri Inheritance Records,'" in Thomas Philipp, ed., *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century*, 179–195, esp. 180–185.

in these areas remained large.¹⁴⁶ From a developmental perspective, one might argue that individuals with the title of *beşe* may well have invested a greater proportion of their wealth in real estate, but they did so as the first phase of a long-term household financial strategy in which they established a fixed geographical site for their prestige and power. Rising in office and rank, they later expanded the scale of their moneylending (and control of tax farms).¹⁴⁷

Individuals with the title of *beşe* are mentioned as members of local guilds in a variety of actions recorded by the shari'a court, and it is possible to measure their involvement in rough terms. Abdul-Karim Rafeq, among others, has extensively documented the pluralistic nature of Syrian guilds with respect to religion, ethnicity, and geographical origin, and it is not surprising to find this pattern of coexistence in civilian/military terms.¹⁴⁸ Here we examine the identities of those guild members who were recorded in court registers, usually as elders (*ahālī*) representing their organization before the qadi in matters such as loans, petitions, and intra- or inter-guild agreements. Our sampling is admittedly arbitrary as we include all cases recorded from 1640 to 1700, giving special attention to guilds that appear more than once.

One of the first impressions gained from this investigation is the wide range of trades and crafts in which we find *beşes* engaged, even if their numbers within each craft remained relatively small. Of the thirty-two guilds found in the court records in these years, seventeen had individuals with the title of *beşe* among their membership.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Barkan, "Edirne Tereke Defterleri," 460–473; and Öztürk, *Istanbul Tereke Defterleri*, 147–155.

¹⁴⁷ In their analysis of the estates of *çorbacı*, Tables 3.6 and 3.7 also corroborate earlier observations that the title of *çorbacı* appears to have been an honorary title awarded to merchants or artisans who had affiliated with military units. In contrast to other individuals with military titles, *çorbacı*s on average invested substantial resources, both in absolute monetary value (1,405 *ghurūsh asadī*) and in proportional terms (39 percent of estate), in commercial goods.

¹⁴⁸ It is true that there were in Ottoman Syria guilds that were exclusively Muslim, Jewish, or Christian, and one can also find guilds dominated by certain ethnicities or geographical groups. What seems to have predominated, however, were guilds of mixed membership. This researcher has not found any incidence of a guild being composed exclusively of soldiers. See Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 507–508; and idem, "Law-Court Registers," 148–149.

¹⁴⁹ Most entries involving the guilds in the shari'a court registers were in SMS volumes 2–4, 10–11, 15, 23–25, 27–28, 32, and 35–36. Guilds in which persons with the title of *beşe* were found include, in no particular order, the butchers (*qaşşābūn*), millers (*taḥḥānūn*), grocers (*sammānūn*), tanners of water buffalo hides (*künjiyya*), coffee sellers (*tā'ifat al-qahwiyya*), workers in public baths (*ḥammāmiyyūn*), tanners (*dabbāghūn*), bakers (*khabbāzān*), vendors of nuts (*tā'ifat al-kirāma*), tobacconists

Questions to be asked are whether it is possible to trace the growth of military cadres as members of the guilds in these years; whether there were concentrations of soldiers in certain crafts or trades; and, given the later antagonism between “*ashrāf*” and “military” factions, whether there were significant correlations between the number of *beşes* and that of *ashrāf*, another status group, in the same guild.

Certain guilds—the butchers (sing. *qaşşāb*), tanners (sing. *dabbāgh*), millers (sing. *ṭaḥḥān*), bakers (sing. *khabbāz*), and grocers (sing. *sammān*)—provide perhaps the most detailed information on these questions as they are among the best documented in the court records. Some 31 documents relating to the butchers over the course of 25 years (1640–1665) enable us to trace changes in guild delegations and offer fuller glimpses of broader membership. On average, delegations to the court numbered roughly 18 butchers, of whom four (22%) possessed the title of *beşe*; of these four, frequently one was the *kaşapbaşı* (the provisioning officer), who sometimes was joined by a partner, also a soldier. The question of how representative these numbers were of the larger guild membership is fortunately addressed by a document dating from 1657 recording the distribution of a compulsory purchase of sheep among butchers of the four precincts of the city. Appearing before the court were 13 delegates, who represented themselves and an additional 64 butchers. Of the total 77 butchers named, 20 (26 percent) held the title of *beşe*, one (1 percent) the title of bey, and three (4 percent) were *ashrāf*.¹⁵⁰ If these figures are representative, then the butchers were the guild with the highest percentage of soldiers in their membership.

Curiously, in roughly the same period the number of *beşes* among tanners, which had day-to-day interaction with the butchers, was sharply lower. Twenty-six documents dating from the years between 1654 and 1678 indicate that, on average, delegations to court numbered roughly 13 tanners, of whom 4 (31 percent) were *ashrāf*, and of these 4, 2 were usually in leadership positions.¹⁵¹ *Beşes* appeared only occasionally in delegations, making up 5 percent of the total of 328 appearances by tanners. It is tempting to link the contrasting social

(*tā'ifat al-dukhāniyya*), brokers (*dallālūn*), truck farmers (*tā'ifat al-basātina*), meat streetvenders (*tā'ifat al-jārikjiyya*), and makers of velvet (*tā'ifat al-mukhmaljiyya*).

¹⁵⁰ SMS 27:28, 4 D 1067/13 September 1657.

¹⁵¹ The two leadership positions were the *akhī bābā* and the shaykh of the tanners, on which see Chapter Four.

compositions of the butchers and tanners in the seventeenth century with the recurrent factionalism between the “*ashrāf*” and “janissaries” as noted by European observers in the city in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.¹⁵² Rafeq has long argued that one of the main differences in political life between Aleppo and Damascus from the seventeenth century on was that in the former city, the *ashrāf* formed the “local” faction opposing the interests of recently settled soldiers, whereas in the latter, military forces themselves (and their clients) divided into factions.¹⁵³ The tanners, dominated by high-profile *ashrāf*, and the butchers, led more often than not by *beşes*, regularly renegotiated the prices of animal skins.¹⁵⁴ The circumstances were clearly marked by tension, as the tanners repeatedly complained to the qadi that the butchers were selling unprocessed hides not to the tanners as required by agreement but to third parties, thus depriving the tanners of their monopoly and livelihood.¹⁵⁵ The conjuncture of an ongoing guild dispute with intense competition among status groups, *ashrāf* and military, may have created a site of conflict that with time was reproduced in other guilds, especially given the concentration in Aleppo of *ashrāf* notables such as those leading and protecting the interests of the tanners and enjoying prestige among the guilds as a whole. Yet tension between soldiers and the *ashrāf* could have risen only so high in the seventeenth century; in other contexts, as we have noted, they could and still did cooperate to protect the privileges of their status.

¹⁵² Bodman, *Political Factions*, 55–102.

¹⁵³ The two factions in Damascus were the *yerliyya* and the *kapı kulu*. See Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus*, 26–36; idem, *Bilād al-Shām wa Misr*, 192–195; idem, “The Local Forces in Syria,” 277–281; and idem, “Changes in the Relationship,” 61–62, 64–65. Whereas Rafeq tends to attribute janissary-*ashrāf* factionalism to a naturally occurring conflict between Ottoman imperial interests and Syrian localism, Masters argues that factionalism was an ongoing political process in which rural migrants affiliated with military units as a means of identity formation and as a mechanism of defense against the domination of urban status groups, i.e., the *ashrāf*. Cf. Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 47. For a broader discussion of bilateral factionalism, see Jane Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions: Myth, Memory and Identity in Ottoman Egypt and Yemen* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 188–191.

¹⁵⁴ See Chapter Four.

¹⁵⁵ Prohibitions against selling unprocessed hides outside the tannery were registered 10 times over a 12-year period. See, for example, SMS 27:97, 7 L 1068/20 April 1658; SMS 27:495, 12 R 1074/10 August 1663; and SMS 27:A543, 2 S 1078/24 July 1667.

A second noteworthy pattern found in lists of the butchers, as well as the millers, was a significant downturn in the numbers of *ashrāf* after 1660, which can be used as a point of reference in studying soldiers engaged in trade. The presence of *ashrāf* among the butchers, never very large, dropped to one appearance by one *sharīf* among 311; and the proportion of *ashrāf* among the millers, for whom we have 21 documents over 32 years (1636–1668), dropped from 16 to 2 percent of all appearances. This may have been due to the revision in 1660 of *ashrāf* rolls by Ismaʿīl Pasha, who as visiting inspector carried out a series of measures aimed at reducing the size of tax-exempt status groups. For example, in 1663, when a qadi ruled on the tax exempt status of a number of grocers who claimed *sharīf* status, he based his ruling on the inspection conducted by Ismaʿīl Pasha.¹⁵⁶ The proportion of *ashrāf* in the guilds of grocers and tanners remained relatively stable before and after 1660, suggesting that those claiming *sharīf* status in those guilds were more successful in proving their lineages. Concurrently, the proportion of guildsmen with the title of *beşe* within the four major guilds either remained the same or rose in mid-century, the most significant growth taking place among the millers, where after 1660 they averaged 20 percent of the delegations appearing before the court. One is inclined, in the case of the millers, to correlate the numerical growth of the *beşes* with the decline of the *ashrāf* after 1660, the first political gaining ascendancy over the second. The lack of data over a longer period of time, however, makes any observation tentative. What is clear is that by the second half of the seventeenth century guildsmen with the title of *beşe*—whether they were soldiers who entered the craft or guildsmen who affiliated with a military unit—played important roles as decisionmakers within many guilds, both as formal leaders (provisioning officers) and as senior representatives (*ahālī*) of the guild in affairs involving the shariʿa court. And their numbers were significant, especially in large and geographically widespread guilds such as the butchers and millers.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ On the inspection tour of Ismaʿīl Paşa, see Canbakal, *Society and Politics*, 78ff; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin and R. C. Repp, “Köprülü,” *E*²; and Muştafâ Naʿimâ, *Târîh-i Naʿimâ*, VI:415–418. In lists of guild representatives drawn up by the shariʿa court, some individual members were found to have lost the title of sayyid that they had held before 1660. See SMS 28:455, 19 M 1073/3 September 1662.

¹⁵⁷ Raymond, “Soldiers in Trade,” 33; and idem, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 659–688.

Soldiers had an even more pronounced role in the life of the guilds as tax collectors, market regulators, and policemen. Already discussed is the *ocaklık* institution, which appears to have been designed primarily as a practical fiscal measure to facilitate the payment of military salaries. Another, much older institution, that of the *muhtasib*, offered an administrative framework within which soldiers came to exercise extensive control and influence over the urban economy, especially in trades and crafts. Based on the Islamic principle of “commanding the good and forbidding wrong,” this institution was envisioned in the early classical age of Islam as an instrument to maintain morality in public areas.¹⁵⁸ Under the Ottomans, the scope of the *muhtasib*’s authority narrowed so that the official became concerned primarily with regulating urban economic activity. He had within his purview the power to fix prices, standardize weights and measures, and inspect commercial products to ensure quality.¹⁵⁹ The practice of assigning the office of *muhtasib*, who had the authority to collect special fees, as a tax farm seems to have had the effect of broadening the range of social groups from which the *muhtasib* came. Thus *muhtasibs* were appointed not only from among the ulama, but also from among persons who typically were more intensively engaged in commerce: merchants and artisans—and soldiers.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ C. Cahen, M. Talbi, R. Mantran et al, “Hisba,” *EI*²; for an authoritative perspective on the evolution of the concept see Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000); and idem, *Forbidding Wrong in Islam: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

¹⁵⁹ Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 118–120; Mantran, *Istanbul*, 299–300; Raymond, *Artisans et Commerçants*, II: 588ff; Jennings, “Kadi, Court, and Legal Procedure,” 154–157; Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 103–109; and Mübahat Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda Narh Müessesesi ve 1640 Tarihli Narh Defteri* (Istanbul: Enderun, 1983).

¹⁶⁰ Amnon Cohen writes that in 16th Century Jerusalem merchants and wealthy artisans, especially members of the butchers’ guild, dominated the office of *muhtasib*; see *Economic Life in Ottoman Jerusalem*, 11–18. In the Anatolian towns of Ankara and Konya in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, merchants, soldiers, and non-titled persons held the office; see Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 103–104; cf. R. Jennings, “Kadi, Court, and Legal Procedure,” 154–57. In Cairo, the office was ordinarily assigned to a member of a specific group: the *çavuşân*, a military regiment of high status but small number; see Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 589. Writing on seventeenth-century Istanbul, Eunjeong Yi suggests that the *muhtasib* was more often than not an ex-military officer; see “The Istanbul Guilds in the seventeenth century: Leverage in changing times” (Ph.D., Harvard University, 2000), 263. On the *ihtisab* institution during the Mamluk-Ottoman transition in Damascus, see Bakhit, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus*, 158–160.

Since the responsibilities of the *muhtasib* overlapped with, or at least were related to, those of the other officials of the city, most notably the qadi (the chief judicial official of a given town), the *subaşı* (a soldier with wide law-enforcement powers), and the *serdār* (the commander of locally garrisoned imperial infantry forces), it is not surprising that his powers were regularly contested by them. Students of Ottoman Egypt have noted that by the eighteenth century the commander (*serdār* or agha) of the *müstaḥfiẓān* had taken over most of the duties of the *muhtasib*.¹⁶¹ Bruce Masters' study of economic life in Aleppo furthermore argues that the authority of the *muhtasib* declined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He does this by presenting documentary evidence that official registers fixing prices (*narḥ defterleri*), well known in Istanbul, were rarely mentioned in guild affairs, that guilds succeeded in manipulating the *muhtasib* to enforce policies in line with their own interests, and that the qadi was more often the arbitrator of inter-guild disputes than was the *muhtasib*.¹⁶² The present study largely confirms the conclusions of Masters but goes on to examine the evolving social basis of the *ihtisāb* institution.

Whereas the citadel guards and *gönüllüyān* in Aleppo were formally assigned revenue sectors by means of *ocaklık*, imperial janissaries apparently had to compete with other groups to secure revenues of the *ihtisāb* sector, usually as tax farms.¹⁶³ Documents from the 1660s and 1670s certainly show that soldiers dominated the office, but whether the soldiers were imperial janissaries remains unclear.¹⁶⁴ Only a few incumbents held the title of *al-Qal'ī* (or, "of the Citadel"), suggesting that members of the citadel guards did not play a major part. More

¹⁶¹ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 589–590; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 37.

¹⁶² Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 203–205.

¹⁶³ The mostly Arabic-language court records referred to janissaries as *yankishārī* or *rājil suṭānī*. The *ihtisāb* tax sector (*muḳāṭa'a*) underwent changes in its formal administration in the first centuries of Ottoman rule. According to the *tapu tahrīr* survey of 1578–59, *ihtisāb* was joined together with the *baṣḥāne* (sheep marketing) sector under a single *muḳāṭa'a*. In the *muḳāṭa'a* registers of the seventeenth century, the *ihtisāb* was joined to the slave market (*pāzār-i esīr*), the slaughterhouses (*salḥāne*), and other miscellaneous commercial sectors. See TT 493 (AH 978/1570–71 CE) and MM 4402 (AH 1056–57/1647–1648 CE). On the assignment of the revenues to janissaries, see SMS 25:298, 30 D 1048/3 May 1639; SMS 3:707, 12 DA 1065/13 September 1655; and MM 9839:42, 1 Ş 1066/25 May 1656).

¹⁶⁴ Only one incumbent has a title identifying as a janissary (*rājil suṭānī*). See, for example, SMS 27:2, 6 DA 1067/16 August 1657; SMS 27:483, 25 Ş 1076/2 March 1666; and SMS 34:4, 22 JA 1089/12 July 1678.

generally, it is puzzling why in general the *muhtasib* appears so infrequently in court documents dealing the affairs of the guilds.¹⁶⁵ A possible explanation may have to do with the relationship between the *muhtasib* and the group who in the Aleppo court records were referred to as *yasaqīs* (Turkish sing. *yasaqçı*), a corps of law enforcement officers. In his survey of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Ankara and Konya, Özer Ergenç contends that units of *yasaqçıs* were recruited in the late sixteenth century, usually from imperial (*kapıkulu*) troops, to deal with the general wave of lawlessness that accompanied the Jelali revolts; thereafter, the *yasaqçıs* were not disbanded but rather charged with a number of other public responsibilities. Headed by a *yasaqçıbaşı*, he writes, this corps was employed to secure public order in the towns in coordination with the *subaşı*, prosecute janissaries who oppressed the general population or who were otherwise corrupt, and to apprehend persons who impersonated janissaries.¹⁶⁶

Significantly, Ergenç treats the *yasaqçıs* and the *muhtasib* as two separate law-enforcement apparatuses, with no apparent operational link. In seventeenth-century Aleppo, on the other hand, the two were closely intertwined. The *yasaqī* authority is consistently mentioned in the court records as linked to the *muhtasib*, specifically in the recurring title of its chief officer, *ra'īs al-yasaqiyya bi'l-ihtisāb* or *yasaqbāshī al-ihtisāb*.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, the career of a certain Ḥasan Çelebi b. İbrāhīm corroborates the linkage: a 1661 court document describes him as the *dābiṭ al-ihtisāb*, most certainly the holder of the *ihtisāb* tax farm but possibly also the *muhtasib* himself; and court documents from 1663 to 1667 name him as the *ra'īs al-yasaqiyya bi'l-ihtisāb*.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Cases dealing with guilds can be found in most registers but are found in greatest number in SMS 27 and 28 (covering roughly 1655–1667 CE). See Chapter Four.

¹⁶⁶ Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 72–76. Ergenç also identifies reasons for the later function of *yasaqçı* corps as guards for European diplomatic officials and merchants. See also “Yasaqçı,” *Redhouse Yeni Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlüğü*; Mantran, *Istanbul*, 548–549; and Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin merkez ve bahriye teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1947), 278.

¹⁶⁷ The fusion of Arabic and Turkish terms and endings recorded in SMS 27 and 28, which in general are nonetheless Arabic in language, sometimes result in hybrid linguistic constructions such as *yasaqliqiyya al-ihtisāb* and *yasaqbāshī al-ihtisāb*. See SMS 27:3, 20 D 1067/29 September 1657; and SMS 27:37, 23 M 1068/31 October 1657.

¹⁶⁸ Yi's suggestion that *ihtisāb* officials, especially the *muhtasib*, tended to be retired military officers, is corroborated by the career of Ḥasan b. İbrāhīm; mentioned as an agha in 1661, he thereafter is mentioned exclusively with the title Çelebi. See SMS 27:331, 16 N 1071/15 May 1661; and SMS 27:603, 5 S 1077/7 August 1666.

One is inclined to believe that the person holding the tax farm of *ihtisāb* (the *ḍābiṭ al-ihtisāb*) usually exercised control over the position of *ra'īs al-yasaqiyya*, the chief of the *yasaqīs*, and possibly that of *muhtasib*, either by occupying the offices himself or by placing clients in them. Extrapolating from the histories of Ankara and Konya, we might conclude that, in the case of Aleppo, soldiers in their capacity as *yasaqīs* had penetrated the *ihtisāb* institution, forming by the middle of the seventeenth century a hybrid or compound institution whose offices they dominated.¹⁶⁹ That the Aleppo court records do not mention the *kol oğlanları*, who in seventeenth-century Istanbul served as the officially designated assistants of the *muhtasib*, further corroborates this observation.¹⁷⁰

As *yasaqīs* or as functionaries working separately under the *muhtasib* (the *kol oğlanları*), soldiers were given authority to collect certain taxes, and it is in relation to this function that they appear frequently in official sources, the court records and imperial complaint registers (*'atīk şikāyet defterleri*). The question of the extent to which soldiers imposed unfair or new taxes on merchants and artisans is difficult to evaluate. Since tax assessment and collection were inherently processes of negotiation, the periodic complaints lodged by people of the marketplace regarding official abuses might be viewed as selective applications of leverage/influence through which local interests could be protected; in short, such complaints may not always reflect significant

¹⁶⁹ It is worth noting that law-enforcement cadres under the control of the *ra'īs al-yasaqiyya* and *muhtasib* may have been quartered in two *konaks* that are recorded in the 1678 survey as under the administration of the *muhtasib*. Their locations, in the quarters of 'Aqaba and Qārliq, would have placed in them in close proximity to the major commercial areas of the Madina and Banqūsa, respectively. See MM 8467:17b–19a and 99b.

¹⁷⁰ There is record of a dispute in 1696 between *yasaqçıs* and “*kollukçus*,” who were apparently charged with collecting a “shoe tax” (*postal bahası*) in certain khans of the Aleppo: both contingents were claiming the exclusive right to collect this tax. No mention is made, however, of the *muhtasib*, who would have theoretical control over this matter; rather, the *sekbānbaşı* was the witnessing commander. See AŞ 22:41, *Awākhir* D 1107/21 July 1696. Writing on 18th Century Aleppo, Bodman does note the presence of the “*qulluqjis*,” who served as bodyguards to foreign consuls; see *Political Factions*, 68. Cf. Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I:196–197, 321–322. The *yasaqçıs* in seventeenth-century Istanbul seem to have been soldiers working either as bailiffs under the qadi or as guards to European ambassadors. See Mantran, *Istanbul*, 190, 540n, 548. Ergenç makes no mention of *kol oğlanları* in the cities of Ankara and Konya, the reason perhaps being that the small size of Konya and Ankara relative to Aleppo and Istanbul did not require an elaborate enforcement apparatus under the control of the *muhtasib*.

changes in the burden of taxation.¹⁷¹ The qadi did act to adjust rates of *iḥtisāb* taxes in cases of apparent hardship, such as in 1677 when members of the millers' guild reported that the number of their mills (sing. *ṭāḥūna*, pl. *ṭawāḥīn*) had dropped sharply from 30 to 15 and some of the remaining mills had ceased to operate. The qadi reduced the rate of taxation, but only by a third, which suggests that the production of the remaining mills was higher than before, perhaps due to a larger scale of operation in each.¹⁷² But there were also signs of longer-term changes in the burden of *iḥtisāb* taxes. In 1662 members of the gardeners' guild (*tā'ifat al-basātina*) petitioned the qadi to prevent the *muḥtasib* from collecting what they considered unprecedented taxes on their produce. Assembling an impressive set of orders, including one from the imperial inspector Isma'īl Pasha in 1661, the gardeners charged that the governors of the preceding 15 years (1647–1662) had effectively sanctioned the *muḥtasib*'s "invention" of new taxes and impositions, a claim that the qadi upheld.¹⁷³ The frequency of *iḥtisāb* tax collection may have also increased over a much longer time period, as the monthly collections (*mushāhara*, from Ar. *shahr*, or month) practiced under the late Mamluk Sultanate, which were themselves resisted, appear to have been supplemented by weekly and daily collections respectively under the Ottomans.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ For examples of general complaints, see SMS 28:525, 16 JA 1073/27 December 1662; SMS 34:4, 22 JA 1089/12 July 1678; and AŞ 11:294, *Awākhīr* B 1099/21–30 May 1688. For documents detailing the taxation abuses of *yasaqçıs*, see ES 1:41, *Awāsiḥ* B 1101/19–28 April 1690; AŞ 8:391, *Awā'il* M 1084/18 April 1683; and AŞ 22:41, *Awākhīr* J 1107/26 January 1696. On the taxation as a process of negotiation, see Amy Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials*, 89–118; and Beshara Doumani, "The Political Economy of Population Counts in Ottoman Palestine: Nablus, Circa 1850," *IJMES* 26, 1 (1994): 1–17.

¹⁷² SMS 27:A539, *Awā'il* M 1078/23 June–2 July 1667. Taken together the substantial drop in the number of mills and the rate of taxation might indicate a demographic contraction to which the *muḥtasib* and other tax officials had to respond. It is difficult, however, to draw a firm conclusion, as another report from 1672 suggests that members of the ulama and soldiers (*askarīs*) were extending control over the operation of certain mills in the area of Aleppo, a process that may have removed those mills from the purview of the guild. See AŞ 7:78, *Awā'il* B 1082/3 November 1671.

¹⁷³ SMS 28:585, 27 R 1073/9 December 1662. The gardeners acknowledged the right of the *muḥtasib* to collect the *sājūr* tax, but firmly rejected additional impositions given such names as *sanawiyya*, perhaps an annual tax (from Ar. *sana*, year); and *tas'ira*, a fee associated with the fixing of prices. The petitioners mentioned other "innovations," including the abuse of blood money (*diya*) customs to assess large fines on the guild, and the uncompensated requisitioning of firewood and destruction of fruit trees.

¹⁷⁴ Bakhit, *The Province of Damascus*, 159. In Aleppo, the more frequent tax collections were given names such as *haftalık* or *hafta akçesi*, from Tr. *hafta*, week; *jum'iyya*,

Taking the varied forms of *tīmār*, *ocaklık*, and *ihtisāb-yasaqçılık*, the state's devolution of authority to collect taxes opened to soldiers of varying ranks considerable commercial and financial opportunities, which they did not fail to notice. From the perspective of the shari'a court, the most salient aspect of soldiers' engagement in the local economy was moneylending; indeed, we find that the volume of moneylending on the part of soldiers was large both in absolute terms and in relation to the activities of non-military populations. Table 3.8 presents in summary form data gathered from 933 individual cases involving loans, taken from the court records of Aleppo in the 1650s and 1660s. To facilitate comparison, the layout of the table is similar to that of Bruce Masters, who has already shown important patterns of credit relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁷⁵ In order to obtain a representative sample, Masters selected volumes at random and included all cases therein involving loans; in this study, we pursue a similar method but have chosen two court registers from the Şalāhiyya court, an institution that, as is argued elsewhere, had strong ties to the urban guilds.¹⁷⁶ We do so with the aim of examining comparatively the moneylending practices of military cadres with respect to villagers and different groups of townspeople.

The social categories analyzed in the table are defined in such a way as to be mutually exclusive, though there are a few unavoidable exceptions. The term “*askerī*” refers to persons identified in the court records as being male members of the government service class, including military, civil administrative, religious, judicial and educational cadres. The term, however, excludes male members of that group claiming descent from the prophet (“sayyid”), who are placed in a separate category. The term “Muslim” refers to Muslim males who in the court records lack any additional qualifier indicating membership in the *askerī* class, the sayyid status group, or professional guild organizations, or residence in a village. Likewise, “guild members” designates male members of guild organizations, who in their makeup were predominantly Muslim. “*Dhimmi*” refers to either Christian or Jewish

from the Ar. *al-Jum'a*, Friday, presumably referring to the Friday market; and *günlük* from Tr. *gün*, day; and these in addition to a host of other names. Cf. Mantran, *Istanbul*, 310–311. See SMS 27:57, 24 R 1068/29 January 1658; ES 1:65, 15 L 1099/14 June 1688; AŞ 11:507, 13 DA 1099/9 September 1688; and ES 1:15, 4 N 1101/11 June 1690.

¹⁷⁵ Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 153–164.

¹⁷⁶ See Chapter Four.

Table 3.8. Summary of Court Cases Involving Loans According to Aleppo Court Register Nos. 27 (1657–1667) and 28 (1660–1663)

Lenders/ Borrowers	Number of Cases	Percentage of Total	Average Amount (<i>ghurūsh asadī</i>)	No. with Multiple Borrowers
' <i>Askerīs</i> to Villagers	247	26	732	181
' <i>Askerīs</i> to Guild Members	181	19	127	148
' <i>Askerīs</i> to Muslims	35	4	124	8
' <i>Askerīs</i> to <i>Dhimmīs</i>	16	2	79	4
' <i>Askerīs</i> to ' <i>Askerīs</i>	17	2	222	2
' <i>Askerīs</i> to Other Groups	3	—	369	1
Sayyids to Villagers	53	6	391	32
Sayyids to Muslims	12	1	181	4
Sayyids to Guild Members	8	1	157	4
Sayyids to Other Groups	6	1	139	1
Muslims to Villagers	81	9	163	40
Muslims to Muslims	51	5	102	8
Muslims to Guild Members	40	4	115	10
Muslims to <i>Dhimmīs</i>	28	3	97	2
Muslims to ' <i>Askerīs</i>	7	1	114	1
Muslims to Provisioning Officer	1	—	51	0
<i>Dhimmīs</i> to <i>Dhimmīs</i>	27	3	141	1
<i>Dhimmīs</i> to Muslims	9	1	54	2
<i>Dhimmīs</i> to Other Groups	6	1	628	2
Guild Members to Guild Members	20	2	100	2
Provisioning Officers to Guild Members	17	2	117	7
Guild Shaykh to Guild Members	10	1	76	8
Guild Members to Other Groups	9	1	42	2
Provisioning Officers to Other Groups*	7	1	311	3
Guild Shaykh to Other Groups†	2	—	13	0
Women to Muslims	21	2	184	2
Women to <i>Dhimmīs</i>	5	—	239	1
Women to Other Groups	4	—	454	1
Villagers to Villagers	9	1	61	1
Villagers to Muslims	1	—	32	1
Total	933	100	—	—

* Loans were to the military (300 and 112 *ghurūsh*); Muslims (41, 400, 709, and 115 *ghurūsh*); and villagers (500 *ghurūsh*).† Loans were to a *Dhimmī* (18 *ghurūsh*); and villager (75 *ghurūsh*).

males not identified as members of guilds; there were no recorded instances of guilds made up entirely of *dhimmīs* borrowing money.

The most striking feature of Table 3.8 is surely the large volume of loans made by wealthy townspeople to villagers, with respect to both the number of contracts and the average value of the loan. The pattern of single wealthy urban creditors, especially from among the *‘askerī* class, lending money to multiple villagers is by now a well-established observation among students of Ottoman agrarian relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and is often brought forward as evidence of chronic financial exploitation by urban classes. Most historians have concluded that such debt relations developed primarily because wealthy townspeople arranged to pay taxes on behalf of villagers, who chronically lacked specie to pay such taxes; indeed, in Aleppo, the court records frequently specify fiscal commitments as the predominant component of the villagers’ financial burden.¹⁷⁷ The participation of multiple debtors in a single contract (as indicated in the last column) indicates a collective indebtedness that could encompass an entire village.

While the table merely corroborates the findings of other scholars on the question of urban-rural credit relations, it does shed new light on the credit relations between guilds and other urban groups. After villagers, guildsmen were the social group most frequently named as debtors. Of the total number of loan contracts, 38 percent specified villagers as debtors, and 26 percent specified guildsmen as debtors. It perhaps should not be surprising that guildsmen figured prominently as debtors since their membership formed a substantial part of the total urban population. More interesting is the remarkably large number of contracts in which wealthy individuals, especially members of the *‘askerī* class, served as creditors to multiple artisans or to guilds, and did so repeatedly. Bruce Masters has shown that wealthy individuals

¹⁷⁷ Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 155–159; Meriwether, “Urban Notables and Rural Resources,” *passim*; Rafeq, “City and Countryside in a Traditional Setting,” 325–329; James Reilly, *A Small Town in Syria: Ottoman Hama in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 102–104; Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, 117–118; Suraiya Faroqhi, “Wealth and Power in the Land of Olives: Economic and Political Activities of Mürīdzade Hacı Mehmed Agha, Notable of Edremit,” in Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak, eds., *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 79–96, esp. 85–86. See also Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 138–139. On the *salam* contracts, which seem to have facilitated such relations in some areas, see Doumani, *Re-discovering Palestine*, 135–151; Faroqhi, *ibid.*; and Hanna, *Making Big Money*, 81–88.

could and did establish credit relationships with both villagers and artisans, but this was, as he argued, “to supply the craftsmen with the necessary capital to buy the materials of the trade.”¹⁷⁸ Loan cases from the Şalāhiyya court, whose registers Masters did not include in his sampling for the seventeenth century, indicate that individuals with means, primarily soldiers, regularly lent money to guildsmen for payment of taxes and for the consignment of goods that appear unrelated to their craft. In this group of transactions, the procurement of raw materials for specialized production was relatively less important.

To indicate which groups among the military cadres were involved in these activities, we present Table 3.9, which analyzes the money-lending practices of the non-sayyid, *‘askerī* class as a whole. The table divides this large class into military and non-military functionaries, the first group being categorized according to rank or title (pasha, agha, bey, *beşe*, and other) and to whether they were employed in the market regulation apparatus (*yasaqī-ihtisāb*); the second (non-military group) is kept whole, except to point out the lending patterns of the head of the long-distance merchant corporation, the *shāhbandar*. The lending practices of the pashas, aghas, beys, and the non-military *‘askerīs* as presented in the table generally conform to the pattern of wealthy urbanites whereby single individuals extended credit primarily to groups of villagers, and in a distant second place, to groups of artisans.

The rank/title of agha admittedly applies to a wide variety of positions and offices. Ninety loans were contracted by forty-six aghas, and of these only twenty-three had their offices or status indicated in the court records. Among them were the head of the provincial *çavuş* contingent, commanders (*serdārs*) of the janissary corps, officers discharging the administration of villages (sing. *ḍābiṭ qariya*) and of tax revenues (*ḍābiṭ al-dimūs* and *ḍābiṭ imānat al-gumruk*), the acting governor (*qā’immaqām*), administrators (*mutawallīs*) of public waqfs, and the broad designation *jundī sulṭānī*, which judging by context seems to refer to *tīmār*-holders. Bey also applies to a range of officeholders. Seventy-two loans were contracted by forty beys, and of these only ten could be further described by position. Among them were officers discharging the administration of villages (*ḍābiṭ qariya*), members of the gardeners’ corps (sing. *bustānjī*), descendants of pashas, and, once again, persons with the qualifier, *jundī sulṭānī*. Given the lower average

¹⁷⁸ Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 159.

Table 3.9. Summary of Court Cases Involving Members of the 'Askerī Class as Moneylenders According to Aleppo Court Register Nos. 27 (1657–1667) and 28 (1660–1663)

Lenders/Borrowers	Number of Cases	Percentage of Total	Average Amount (<i>ghurūsh asadī</i>)	No. with Multiple Borrowers
Pashas as lenders*	5	1	615	1
Aghas to Villagers	75	15	1256	69
Aghas to Guild Members	5	1	123	4
Aghas to Other Groups	7	1	224	1
Beys to Villagers	64	13	346	53
Beys to Guild Members	6	1	191	6
Beys to Other Groups	5	1	172	1
<i>Beşes</i> to Villagers	32	6	196	15
<i>Beşes</i> to Guild Members	99	20	103	77
<i>Beşes</i> to Muslims	17	3	117	2
<i>Beşes</i> to <i>Dhimmīs</i>	11	2	54	2
<i>Beşes</i> to Other Groups [†]	6	1	116	1
Other Military 'Askerīs [‡] to Villagers	22	5	392	13
Other Military 'Askerīs to Guild Members	12	3	106	9
Other Military 'Askerīs to Other Groups	4	1	182	0
<i>Yasaqī</i> Officials to Guild Members	52	10	117	48
<i>Yasaqī</i> Officials to Same	8	2	92	0
<i>Yasaqī</i> Officials to Other Groups [§]	10	2	298	3
Non-military 'Askerīs** to Villagers	38	8	830	37
Non-military 'Askerīs to Guild Members	5	1	223	3
Non-military 'Askerīs to Other Groups	6	1	360	2
<i>Shahbandar</i> to Villagers	9	2	1568	9
<i>Shahbandar</i> to Guild Members	1	—	600	1
Total	499	100	—	—

* Borrowers were provisioning officers, guild members, and villagers.

† Other members of the 'askerī class (5) and one sayyid.

‡ Appearing in small numbers in the court records were persons with the title/rank of *odabaşı*, *bölükbaşı*, *çorbacı*, *çelebi*, or *çavuş*.

§ Borrowers included *Dhimmīs*, Muslims, and villagers; one loan to villagers amounted to 2350 *ghurūsh*.

** Members of the scribal service (*defterdars*, *kātibs*, etc.) and the religio-judicial class (*qadis*, *muftis*, *mudarrises*); and heads of mystical orders (*şulaḥā'*).

loan amount, we might conclude persons with the title of bey were, in general, from lower-ranking echelons within the *tīmār*-holding class and the regimental janissary officers. Officers with the title of *müteferrika* were also found among both aghas and beys. Soldiers with other military ranks and titles, encompassing *odabaşı*,¹⁷⁹ *bölükbaşı*,¹⁸⁰ *çorbaçı*,¹⁸¹ *çelebi*,¹⁸² and *çavuş*,¹⁸³ extended loans less frequently to groups of creditors, both artisan and villager, suggesting that these groups were nearer in socio-economic status to their debtors than were the aghas or beys.

Non-military members of the *‘askerī* class such as the members of the scribal service and the ulama, as well as the *shāhbandar*, did not fundamentally differ from the higher-ranking aghas and beys in their lending practices; while constituting a small proportion of the total loans contracted, their moneylending was marked by very large average transactions, signaling their extensive access to rural wealth. Figuring prominently as originators of the largest loans were the *shāhbandar*, the chief financial officer of the province (*defterdār*), a retired qadi, and the shaykh of a Sufi convent situated in the heart of the city’s commercial district.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Commander of an *oda* within a regiment; *oda* (literally, “room”) was the smallest subdivision within a regiment. On the duties of the *odabaşı*, see Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I: 151–153, 234–235, 355–356, passim; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 20, 26, 37–42.

¹⁸⁰ Commander of a *bölük* within a regiment; in Cairo, a *bölük* (literally, “division”) was a subdivision of an Ottoman regiment larger than an *oda*; the term could also refer to an entire regiment. See Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I: 46, 214–218, passim; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 38–42.

¹⁸¹ Literally “soup-maker,” this term refers to an officer of middling rank. See Uzunçarşılı, *Kapıkulları Ocakları*, I: 167–71, 234–7, 254–9. For a longer discussion of this rank, see p. 161.

¹⁸² According to Gustav Bayerle, “from the 17th century on [çelebi] designated men of letters, indicating respect.” See *Pashas, Begg, and Effendis: A Historical Dictionary of Titles and Terms in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: Isis, 1997), 37; and W. Barthold and B. Spuler, “Çelebi,” *IE*². In 17th century Aleppo the title was sometimes used by the *serdār* of the janissaries and the *shāhbandar*, among other socially and politically prominent men.

¹⁸³ See the discussion on the *çavuşān* earlier in this chapter.

¹⁸⁴ The office of *shāhbandar* in Aleppo the 1650s and 1660s was dominated by Ḥājj Muṣṭafā Çelebi b. ‘Umar, from a local merchant family. On the office of *shāhbandar* in different Ottoman cities, see Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 157–160; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 578–582; and Mantran, *Istanbul*, 147–148. The Sufi convent was the *tekke* of Aslān Dede, located in Sūq al-Saqātiyya, in the central commercial district of the city; see Ghazzi, *Nahr al-dhahab*, II: 147; and Wirth and Gaube, *Aleppo*, 361.

When compared with higher-ranking military officers and members of the scribal service and ulama, the rank-and-file soldiers, who carried the title of *beşe*, made small-sized loans and, more significantly, directed their business to a more diverse clientele, who were, however, primarily urban artisans. Table 3.9 shows that 165 loans were contracted by 64 *beşes*, of whom 22 were parties to more than one contract. Of the 123 contacts signed by the 22 soldiers striking multiple contracts, 84 (68%) were with multiple guildsmen, suggesting the formation of a moneylending group that enjoyed intensive and advantageous financial relations with artisans.¹⁸⁵ The reasons for borrowing seem to have been tied most closely to the fiscal obligations imposed on the guilds, specifically a set of taxes and fees that were collected by officials of the *ihtisāb* institution. Forty-eight of the 99 loan cases contracted between *beşes* and guildsmen fortunately provide reasons. Of these 48, 15 cite the obligations of the guild (*lawāzim ħirfatihim*) to the *ihtisāb* tax institution; 12 cite debts (*duyūn*), many of which were owed to soldiers and probably were indirectly related to *ihtisāb* taxes; and 8 cite a combination of fiscal obligations and debts to individuals, suggesting a long-standing pattern of indebtedness. In the remaining 10 loan cases, artisans purchased on credit from the soldiers bulk quantities of certain commodities (mostly rice, but also coffee and woven silk) and promised to repay their obligation in installments of currency; this was, in effect, a consignment arrangement that employed members of the guild as marketing agents. That the guildsmen were agreeing to market items that were usually not within their occupational specialty suggests the presence of considerable financial pressure.¹⁸⁶ It seems

¹⁸⁵ Soldier-creditors do not seem to have tied themselves financially to single guilds but rather extended loans to a diverse set of guilds. For example, from 1658 to 1663 Amīrzā Beşe b. ‘Abdullāh extended 12 loans in roughly equal distribution to the guilds of the *dukhāniyya* (tobacconists), the *khibāza al-ḥasawiyya* (specialized bakers), and the *khudariyya* (green grocers). See SMS 27 and 28.

¹⁸⁶ While the contract of the grocers (*sammānūn*) to market rice could be expected, there were other guilds, such as the bakers of *ḥaṣawī* bread (*tāʾifat al-ḥaṣawiyya*), sheep marketeers (*tāʾifat al-ghināma*), and tanners (*dabbāghūn*) who also apparently agreed to market rice, usually measured in multiple *qinṭārs*. The *dukhāniyya* guild, ordinarily associated with tobacco products, was given a consignment of silk, and the *ḥaṣawī* bakers, in addition to rice, accepted consignments of coffee. For examples of these cases, see SMS 27:120, 7 S 1069/4 November 1658 and SMS 27:163, 1 DA 1069/21 July 1659.

certain that some members of these guilds specialized in, or had links with, itinerant trading networks, both inside and outside Aleppo.¹⁸⁷

The moneylending practices of the members of the *yasakçı* corps, most of whom also carried the title of *beşe*, generally reflect those of the rank-and-file soldiery. Seventy loans were extended by 15 *yasakçı* officers, of whom 11 were heavily invested in the guilds: these struck multiple contracts, overwhelmingly with groups of guild members. Reasons for the loans to the guilds are given in 26 of 52 cases: payment of taxes to the *ihtisāb* institution (16), the repayment of debts to individual creditors (5), and a combination of *ihtisāb* taxes and loans (5). Leading the *yasakçı* corps in moneylending were Ḥasan Çelebi b. İbrāhīm and Muḥammad Beşe b. Aḥmad, persons who consecutively served as the head of the corps (*rā'īs*) in the late 1650s and throughout the 1660s.¹⁸⁸ More even than *beşes* as a group, members of the *yasakçı* corps specialized in extending credit to artisans.¹⁸⁹ In turn, guilds undertook heavy loads of debt, pledging to repay creditors in daily or weekly installments. In 1661, for example, members of the *dukhāniyya* (tobacconist) guild acknowledged that over the previous six years they had accrued a substantial debt of 602 *ghurūsh*, consisting of multiple loans extended by a variety of groups: the chief of the *yasakçı* corps and his subordinates, soldiers who participated in the rice trade (*razzāz*), and merchants with no apparent link to the military.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ On fairs and itinerant trading, see Faroqhi, "Crisis and Change," 489–493.

¹⁸⁸ See, for example, loans by these individuals in SMS 27:264, 27 M 1071/2 October 1660; and SMS 27:461, 8 S 1076/10 August 1655.

¹⁸⁹ Our sampling of court records indicates that *yasakçıs* lent little money, in terms of both number of loans and size of loans, to either villagers or to the category we are calling "Muslims." Yet we found no instances of members of the *yasakçı* corps consigning goods to guild members, suggesting perhaps that the shari'a court, which had some regulatory authority over the *yasakçı* corps, prohibited certain kinds of commercial exchange between *yasakçıs* and artisans. This does not mean, however, that entrepreneurial exchanges did not exist, they just were not recorded in the registers of the court.

¹⁹⁰ Among the creditors to whom members of the *dukhāniyya* owed money were Ḥaydar Çelebi al-Razzāz (100 *ghurūsh riyālī*), Ayüb Çelebi al-Razzāz (100 *ghurūsh asadī*), five members of the *yasakçı* rank-and-file (in amounts ranking between 4 and 13 *ghurūsh asadī*), and the chief of the *yasakçı* corps, Muḥammad Çelebi b. Aḥmad Çelebi (10,000 *aḳçe* or about 128 *ghurūsh asadī*). Two documents chronicle the rising debt of the guild: SMS 27:234, 28 L 1070/7 July 1660; and SMS 27:339, 22 L 1071/20 June 1661. For the contract of a large debt between soldiers and the tanners, see SMS 3:918, 20 J 1066/15 April 1656. For an example of an agreement struck between the *rā'īs al-yasaqiyya* (or *yasakçıbaşı* in this case) and another guild over the daily payment of taxes, see SMS 27:A411, 10 § 1074/8 March 1664.

Such findings contribute to the debate over whether the intervention of soldiers in urban economies had a negative effect on artisans' material interests. Faroqhi argues that in Cairo in the second half of the seventeenth century the janissaries' protection of merchants and artisans enabled the latter groups to withstand impositions by the beys and Ottoman governors and to enjoy a period of economic prosperity.¹⁹¹ A similar view is espoused by Quataert, who argues that alliances between janissaries and artisans, primarily in Istanbul and Anatolian cities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, prevented financial exploitation of artisans by state authorities.¹⁹² McGowan offers an alternative view, contending that the costs of protection (*himāye*) itself, as practiced in Cairo in the eighteenth century, were so heavy as to contribute to a decline in the average incomes of artisans over the course of that century.¹⁹³ The finding documented above, that in seventeenth-century Aleppo the same soldiers who collected taxes from artisans also regularly extended loans to them to facilitate tax payments, points to a chronic financial dependency that soldiers were likely to exploit. Thus one can scarcely regard the situation in Aleppo as advantageous for the artisans. Jane Hathaway suggests, in the case of seventeenth-century Cairo, that artisans were subject to exploitation at once by grandees and by sub-grandee military groups, and therefore that neither group possessed the power to restrict the other's actions.¹⁹⁴

Drawing on information about moneylending practices in Tables 3.8 and 3.9, we can make some more general observations regarding the relative wealth and resources of soldiers and non-military populations. The starting point might be the apparent contradiction between the financial dependence of guildsmen, who made up a large proportion of the urban population, and the considerable financial resources of "Muslims," who extended loans to villagers and guildsmen alike. In other words, one might suppose that there was considerable overlap between the two groups. The average value of loans made by Muslims

¹⁹¹ Faroqhi, "Crisis and Change," 593–595.

¹⁹² Donald Quataert, "janissaries, Artisans, and the Question of Ottoman Decline, 1730–1826," in idem, *Workers, Peasants, and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730–1914* (Istanbul: Isis, 1993), 197–203.

¹⁹³ Bruce McGowan, "The Age of the Ayans, 1699–1812," in Halil Inalick with Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, II: 705–706*.

¹⁹⁴ Personal written communication with the author, 31 January 2005.

to all groups (128 *ghurūsh asadī*), indeed, exceeded that of *beşes* (120 *ghurūsh asadī*) and was not far from the average amount lent by *yasakçıs* (140 *ghurūsh asadī*). The situation may become clearer if we accept the idea that only propertied people (even those without titles) made regular use of the shari‘a court and if we recognize that the category of “Muslims” as defined by this study, by excluding guildsmen, members of the ‘*askerī* class, and *ashrāf*, may have delimited a segment of the population that included a large number of merchants with substantial assets.¹⁹⁵ The title of ḥājj denotes those who have accomplished the Ḥajj pilgrimage and may also connote substantial merchant activity, and in fact there are many moneylenders in the court record sampling with this title.¹⁹⁶ The general inconsistency with which it is used in the Aleppo court records, however, makes it a problematic marker of status or occupation. In any case, it seems likely that many in the “Muslim” category, by virtue of their capital accumulation and prominent participation in moneylending markets, played an important role in commerce. We might then liken the economic position of many rank-and-file soldiers (*beşes*) in Aleppo to that of merchants of modest to middling wealth—even if their patterns of moneylending differed from the other considerably, the former directing the largest portion of their investment to guilds, while the latter distributed their investment more equitably to multiple social groups.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ On the court as an institution of the propertied classes, see Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, 10–11.

¹⁹⁶ Abdul-Karim Rafeq, “Al-Bunya al-ijtimā‘iyya wa’l-iqtisādiyya li-Maḥalla Bāb al-Muṣallā (al-Midān) bi-Dimashq,” and “Al-‘Alāqāt al-zirā‘iyya fī wilāyat al-Shām fī al-‘ahd al-‘uthmānī,” both in idem, *Dirāsāt iqtisādiyya wa al-ijtimā‘iyya fī-tārīkh Bilād al-Shām al-hadīth* (Damascus: Nawbal, 2002). Cf. Jean-Paul Pascual and Colette Establet, *Familles et fortunes à Damas: 450 foyers damascains en 1700* (Damascus: Institut Français d’Études Arabes, 1994), 170–76.

¹⁹⁷ The massive flow of credit from soldiers and others to guildsmen should not obscure the fact, however, that individual guildsmen themselves could be moneylenders of means. Many loans in this sample (Vols. 27 and 28) were made by provisioning officers showcased in Chapter Four: Ḥājj Muṣṭafā Çorbacı b. Nāsir al-Dīn Silāhī, the *Uncubaşı*, and Ni‘ma Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn, the *Çaşapbaşı*. When we include the loans of the guild leaders, the average value of all loans made by guild members (112 *ghurūsh asadī*) is comparable to rank-and-file soldiers, but when we exclude the loans of the guild leaders, the average falls to 76 *ghurūsh asadī*, significantly below that of soldiers.

Mobilization and Unit Solidarity

Soldiers in seventeenth-century Aleppo were clearly invested in the urban economy, owning homes throughout the city, serving as tax collection officers, and extending loans on a regular and frequent basis to guild members and villagers. The question naturally arises as to how socially and professionally cohesive these soldiers were, given the level of their engagement in local affairs. Information on the sociability of soldiers for the most part can be gleaned only indirectly, as through study of residential patterns. We have already noted that homeownership was dispersed geographically throughout the city, with the exceptions of the citadel guards, most of whom were quartered within the citadel, and moderate concentrations of *kaḥḥūlu* soldiers and *tīmār*-holders to the east and south of the citadel precinct.

More direct evidence of social interaction between military cadres in Aleppo is at best fragmentary. The social, religious, and cultural rituals among soldiers that are described so vividly by the Egyptian chronicler al-Damurdāshī, such as reception ceremonies, feasts and picnics, may well have occurred in Aleppo, but the lack of first-hand narratives prevent us from making any comparisons.¹⁹⁸ Perhaps the most significant finding in Aleppo in this regard, and the finding itself is subject to interpretation, is the possible collective Sufi practices of the citadel guards. A tax document preserved in the Ottoman central administration archives mentions the “*ḥalvet*” of the citadel guards as taking place seven to eight days out of each month. The term *ḥalvet* has an intriguing ambiguity: on the one hand, it could mean that the citadel guards were simply absent from duty; on the other hand, it suggests that the citadel guards had regular religious retreats, presumably to practice mysticism.¹⁹⁹ Challenging the argument that soldiers were merely absent is the existence of a close linkage in Cairo between the ‘*azeb* and *mūstahfīzān* military corps and the Khalwatī Sufis, specifically the Gulshāniyya branch; moreover, there was in the immediate vicinity of the Aleppo Citadel a Gulshāniyya Sufi lodge, for which soldiers periodically established pious foundations.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ See Damurdāshī, *Chronicle of Egypt*, 22–23, 26 fn. 38, 33, 79, passim.

¹⁹⁹ The tax document mentions this practice because the unavailability of the soldiers was affecting the collection of tax revenues for which they were responsible, and which the state authorities were auditing. See MM 4402:40, *Ghurrat* R 1057/6 May 1647.

²⁰⁰ On the connection between the two Cairo military corps and the Khalwatī Sufis,

The only other piece of documentary evidence describing the cultural practices of soldiers relates to the practice of holding feasts. In a court document dating from 1660, heads of several guilds acknowledged receipt of payment for products they supplied to the garrisons of Khān Ṭūmān and Hīlān on the occasion of a feast (Ar. *diyāfa*), apparently hosted by the governor. The range of products included rice, meat, butter, vegetables, bread, honey, hummus, ice, spices, sugar, tallow, and soap, suggesting something of the sumptuousness of the banquet.²⁰¹ The occasion is unfortunately not specified.

Levels of mobilization can also provide some index of how cohesive and disciplined soldiers were. Ongoing imperial campaigns in Crete (1645–1669) and the Balkan Peninsula (1683–1699), as well as expeditions to maintain public order in neighboring areas exerted steady pressures on Aleppo units. Since space does not allow a full discussion of this issue, we present here only an outline of developments. Based on documents he consulted while in the service of the governor of Aleppo (ca. 1640), Evliya Çelebi wrote that the province of Aleppo was required by sultanic regulation (*kānūn-i pādīshāhī*) to marshal a force of 904 “swords” (sing. *ķılıç*), referring to the number of *tīmār*-holders and certain other mounted officers; of these, the *alaybeyi* (a *sipāhī* commander) would command 2,800 troops, the governor (pasha) 2,000 troops, and five *sancakbeyis* 5,000 troops.²⁰² In addition to these 9,800 troops, members of other, resident *ķapıkulu* units might also be mobilized. It appears, however, that in the seventeenth century many *tīmār*-holders never left the province go on campaign, as documents survive indicating that central state authorities began to impose

see Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions*, 55–56; B. G. Martin, “Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes,” in Nikki Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East Since 1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 275–305, esp. 296–99; Gabriel Baer, “Popular Revolt in Ottoman Cairo,” *Der Islam* 54, 2 (October 1977), 213–242; and idem, “Patrons and Clients in Ottoman Cairo,” *Memorial Omer Lutfi Barkan*, 11–18. Evliya Çelebi himself reports on the extensive number of *tekkes* around the Aleppo citadel; see *Seyahatname*, Bağdat 306:174a–b. For *waqfs* established by the soldiers or their heirs, see SMS 25:111, 14 Ş 1058/3 September 1648; and SMS 28:222–223, 4 RA 1071/7 November 1660. Another lodge in which soldiers practiced Sufism was the Takiyya Ikhlaşiyya, which was also a part of the Khalwatıyya order—another connection between soldiers and the Khalwati order in Aleppo; see Watenpaugh, *Image of an Ottoman City*, 148–151.

²⁰¹ SMS 28:295, 7 M 1071/12 September 1660.

²⁰² *Seyahatname*, Bağdat 306:169b. Curiously, Evliya Çelebi sums these figures to equal 11,000 troops. The actual sum is 9,800 troops. One wonders if this discrepancy is the result of omitting a certain contingent, such as *ķapıkulu* troops stationed in the town of Aleppo.

a cash tax (*bedel akçesi*) on non-compliant *tîmâr*-holders. The earliest recorded instance of this practice in Aleppo was in 1650, when the state collected the *bedel* from 120 *tîmâr*-holders who did not participate in the campaign against the Venetians in Crete.²⁰³ While Tabakoğlu indicates that the tax was introduced in 1689, the seventeenth-century historian Katib Çelebi states that authorities introduced the tax in 1650, evidently to alleviate budgetary difficulties in connection with the war.²⁰⁴ In the neighboring district of ‘Ayntab, in southern Anatolia, the tax was collected as early as the 1670s.²⁰⁵ As Canbakal suggests, the tax may have been collected irregularly until the war between the Ottomans and the Hapsburg Empire.²⁰⁶

The rates at which *bedel* taxes were assessed suggest that authorities were concerned more to collect revenues than to induce *tîmâr*-holders, through calibrated actions, to comply with military orders. While Katib Çelebi states that the *bedel* in 1650 was set at 50 percent of the annual value of the *tîmâr* assignment, the rate in Aleppo in the same year was 80 percent; in ‘Ayntab, it was collected at the rate of 100 percent in 1661–1662 and 80 percent in 1686.²⁰⁷ The effect was to sharply reduce compensation to the *tîmâr*-holder and give little financial incentive for efforts to comply in the future. Seen from another perspective, imposition of the *bedel* may be regarded as official recognition of the status quo, in which most *tîmâr*-holders managed to avoid military service. A document dating from 1655, also relating to the war in Crete, records that in the province of Aleppo only 26 of 130 *tîmâr*-holders, or 20 percent, went on campaign.²⁰⁸ Official resignation to this state of affairs was not complete, however, as central state records document instances of *tîmâr*-holders losing their assignments when they did not deploy.²⁰⁹

²⁰³ MM 6497:4–9.

²⁰⁴ Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı Maliyesi*, 272–273; and Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke* (Ceride-i Havâdis Maṭba‘ası, AH 1287/1870 CE), II: 358–361.

²⁰⁵ Canbakal, “‘Ayntab,” 80.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ *Fezleke*, II: 359; Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı Maliyesi*, 272; MM 6497:9; and Canbakal, “‘Ayntab,” 81. State authorities also demanded lump sum payments without specifying the rate of taxation. See ES 1:5, 3 L 1101/10 July 1690.

²⁰⁸ TT 786: 212–213 (AH 1065/1654–1655 CE). Three *za‘îms* and 23 *tîmârîs* were identified as going on the campaign, and 17 *za‘îms* and 87 *tîmârîs* were identified as remaining at their wintering quarters (*kışla*).

²⁰⁹ SMS 25:258, 23 DA 1058/9 December 1648. For a reassignment of a *tîmâr* relating to a Western campaign (*Ġarb seferi*), see İE Askeriye 1875, 10 R 1074/11 November

Mobilization of *kaþıķulu* infantry and cavalry stationed in Aleppo seems to have been no less difficult. Even a contingent of the citadel guards could deploy on major campaigns, although with some difficulty.²¹⁰ Repeated orders for these soldiers to assemble at staging points, especially during the war against the Hapsburg Empire (1683–1699), chronicle the frustration of central state authorities. Various imperial orders threatened punishments, such as removal from unit payrolls, and offered incentives, such as exemption from certain extraordinary taxes.²¹¹ Under-mobilization of organized units compelled state authorities to issue periodic calls for the recruitment of soldiers directly from the general population.²¹² One such event took place in February 1689, when a certain Aħmed Paŗa, acting in agreement with neighborhood officials, levied on Aleppo a deployable force of 341 men.²¹³

One can gain an impression of the general social effects of deployment on the population of Aleppo from cases recorded in the local shari'a courts. Soldiers abandoned houses, leaving the remaining residents

1663. For a series of reassignments relating to *tımār*-holders who did not go on the campaign against Russia, see İE Askeriye 1203/a, 16 L 1089/1 December 1678; İE Askeriye 1203/d, 20 N 1089/5 November 1678; and İE Askeriye 1203/f, 2 N 1089/18 October 1678. On the campaign against Russia, see Defterdār Şarı Mehmed Paŗa, *Zübde-i Vekaiyat, Tahlil ve Metin (1066–1116/1656–1704)*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995), 97–106.

²¹⁰ Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 80.

²¹¹ AŞ 5:125, #727, *Awā'il* S 1078/23 July–1 August 1663; ES 1:4, *Awāsiť* N 1101/17 June 1690; ES 1:88, *Awā'il* J 1102/31 January–9 February 1691; ES 1:78–80, 12 JA 1102/11 February 1691; ES 1:87, *Awā'ħir* JA 1102/19–28 February 1691; and ES 1:89, *Awāsiť* J 1102/11 March 1691.

²¹² This kind of recruitment was called *nefir-i 'ām*. See Inalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation," 300–311.

²¹³ See ES 1:108–118, 22 R 1100/13 February 1689. André Raymond argues that the 341 individuals listed in this document were artisans or merchants who had been enrolled on military pay registers but who never discharged their military duties. Of this number 260 managed to find replacements to deploy in their stead. Since the names of the original individuals do not correspond with those found in salary registers for the Aleppo citadel guards in the same year (see DBKL 32222), it would seem that they had affiliated with other *kaþıķulu* units living in the city. On this document, see Raymond, "Groupes sociaux," 158. It is worth noting that of the 260 individuals who did find replacements, 10 were replaced by their sons, 5 by their brothers, 3 by their slaves (*mamlüks*), 2 by their fathers, 1 by his freedman (*ma'tūq*) and 1 by his servant (*ħizmetkār*). The plurality of sons stepping forward suggests that age may have been the most important factor in the decision to find a replacement. To receive exemption due to poor health, individuals sent to the central government petitions, of which one (relating to this particular recruitment) is fortunately preserved in the Atik Şikayet series in the Prime Ministry Archives. See AŞ 13:283, *Awā'il* Ş 1100/21 May 1689; and ES 1: 110.

of their neighborhood to administer the property and pay taxes. So complained residents of Jallūm al-Kubrā quarter in 1662.²¹⁴ The death of soldiers in battle furthermore set into motion legal and financial actions involving their heirs. Court testimony verifying the death of local soldiers on such distant battlefields as Uyvar, Timișoara, and Sofia confirm the reality of war for Aleppans, as when two soldiers, residents of the Malindī quarter, reported to the qadi that they had witnessed the death of a *tīmār*-holder; present at the court was his widow.²¹⁵ In itself the long absence of men from their homes may have created social problems on a wide scale. The Shāfi'i court in the seventeenth century granted a substantial number of marriage annulments (sing. *faskh*) to Muslim women who claimed abandonment, though we lack sufficient comparative studies to determine whether the volume of cases was exceptional. The circumstances of the annulment (i.e., absence due to long-distance trading, participation in military campaigns) are unfortunately never cited. Since the Shāfi'i school of law is recognized to have been more lenient than the Ḥanafī in accepting grounds for annulment, this pattern might be expected; nevertheless, the impressionistically large number of annulments suggests a significant pattern in social practices.²¹⁶ In her study of nineteenth-century

²¹⁴ SMS 28:483–484, 8 S 1073/22 September 1662; see also SMS 28:702, 24 DA 1073/30 June 1663.

²¹⁵ Upon verification of the *tīmār*-holder's death, the *tīmār* was promptly reassigned to another soldier. See SMS 31:78, 4 L 1076/9 April 1666 and SMS 37:102 (n.d.). On other similar reassignments, see ĪE Dahiliye 559, 10 M 1099/16 November 1687. Orphans of soldiers received maintenance as witnessed in SMS 28:673, 18 N 1073/26 April 1663. Disputes could arise over the property of the soldier who had died in action; such was the case recorded in SMS 38:181, 27 S 1101/10 December 1689. See also SMS 3:355, 29 R 1065/8 March 1655.

²¹⁶ For registers drawn up by the Shāfi'i court in the seventeenth century, see SMS 30, 32, 35, and 37. The act of annulment appears to have required a fatwa when the woman seeking the action had been a Christian and had recently converted to Islam. Conversion may have been an attractive option for women seeking to escape from marriages in which they were abandoned. See, for example, SMS 30:244, 25 J 1074/24 January 1664; and SMS 30:245, 26 J 1074/25 January 1665. In general, the social context of marriage annulment needs to be further investigated. The presence in the residential quarter of women unchaperoned by husbands for long periods of time may have created a certain social instability that quarter residents sought to end, perhaps through annulment and remarriage. Elders (*ahālī*) of the neighborhood are frequently witnesses in cases of annulment. On the opportunistic use of courts applying different schools of law, see Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Relations between the Syrian 'Ulama' and the Ottoman State in the Eighteenth Century," *Oriente Moderno* 18, 1 (1999), 67–95; on broader questions of litigant strategies, see Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice*, 115–123; 142–169.

Egypt, Judith Tucker observes that as men were forcibly recruited into military and corvée labor, many women effectively lost their husbands, and the women in turn increasingly applied for *faskh* divorce in the courts.²¹⁷

This section concludes with two case studies that illustrate the various challenges faced by military units in their attempts to maintain cohesion in the second half of the seventeenth century. Using both local court records and central state fiscal documents, these case studies focus on the careers of unit officers, one from the guards (*müstahfizân*) assigned to the Khân Ṭümân fortress, and the second from the guards of the Aleppo citadel. They are not described in the biographical dictionaries of the period; consequently, an account of their careers offers some insights into the lived experience of local soldiers.²¹⁸

The Career of ‘Alī b. Shabīb (d. ca. 1678)

For a soldier associated with Khân Ṭümân, a fortress lying some half-day’s journey from the city of Aleppo, ‘Alī b. Shabīb’s career is well documented. Khân Ṭümân was an important fortress that protected the vulnerable southern approaches to the city and was the subject of popular lore.²¹⁹ ‘Alī b. Shabīb first appears in the court registers in the early 1640s already as the *kethüda*, the second-ranking officer of the garrison. One forms an impression of him as an enterprising officer. He had taken the initiative to rent a nearby water mill, the Ṭāhūna Qarmīda, from the administrator of a local *waqf*.²²⁰ Yet documents

²¹⁷ *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 53–54; for the social effects of the war economy on World War I-era Istanbul, see Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage Family and Fertility, 1880–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 41–47.

²¹⁸ Muḥibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*; and al-‘Urḏī, *Ma‘ādin al-dhahab*.

²¹⁹ According to the survey of 1678, forty-three guards (*müstahfizân*) were assigned to Khân Ṭümân, and interestingly, two of these were *ashrāf*. The village of Khân Ṭümân itself, located in the vicinity of the fortress, numbered 13 adult males, one of whom was a *sharīf*. See MM 8467: 145b–146a. Evliya Çelebi’s description of the village generally corroborates this information, as he notes that the khan had between 40 and 50 rooms (presumably one for each soldier) and that some of the local population claimed descent from the Abbasid clan, who were *ashrāf*. Evliya Çelebi (Bağdat 306:176a) playfully refers to a folk etymology linking Khân Ṭümân to the site where a now-defunct orphanage once stood (“Khân Yatimân”). Contradicting this etymology is the stylistic evidence adduced by Creswell, “Two Khans at Khan Tuman,” 134–139, who identifies the structure as a fortress built by a twelfth-century emir, Ṭümân.

²²⁰ SMS 4:144, 20 R 1052/18 July 1642.

indicate that he struggled to meet his rental obligations and was at times deeply in debt.²²¹ His last name, “Shabīb,” which is derived from an Arabic root meaning “young,” suggests that he was of Arab background.²²²

According to later documents, ‘Alī b. Shabīb became the warden (*dizdār*) of the fortress around 1650.²²³ One measure of his increased authority was his exercise of the privilege to collect *jā’iza* fees, though not always without dispute. Stanford Shaw writes that in Egypt when a tax farmer (*multazim*) assigned an administrative agent to handle the practical affairs of his office, the latter was expected to pay a special annual fee, called the *jā’iza* (“gift”), to the *vālī*, the principal police officer of the city and also a janissary commander.²²⁴ In Aleppo, soldiers of the Khān Ṭūmān garrison were paying *jā’iza* fees to ‘Alī b. Shabīb in order to administer the *qara bāc* tax sector, an arrangement implying that ‘Alī was the tax farmer and powerbroker within the unit.²²⁵ Disputes did arise over the tax farmer’s retention of *jā’iza* fees in certain circumstances, specifically when the tax revenues were not realized. In at least one instance, the administrative agent presented a fatwa and was able to recoup his *jā’iza* payment.²²⁶

At some point in the late 1650s ‘Alī b. Shabīb appears to have reverted to holding the position of *kethüda*, but this does not mark a real decline in his influence. In 1655, he was part of a group of senior officers, among them the *dizdār*, to call for the expulsion of a number of Khān Ṭūmān soldiers, claiming that they were failing to perform

²²¹ SMS 23:457 (#139), 14 B 1055/5 September 1645; and SMS 23:457 (#141), 14 B 1055/5 September 1645.

²²² A court document dating from 1617 does mention a certain Ḥājj Shabīb b. al-Shaykh Badr al-Dīn as the renter of the Şalda’ water mill in the vicinity of Khān Ṭūmān and the father of another Shabīb. It is possible but purely speculative at this point that these men may have been direct ancestors of ‘Alī b. Shabīb. See SMS 11:86, *Ghurrat* S 1027/28 January 1618 and SMS 11:88, 11 M 1027/8 January 1618.

²²³ On the office of *dizdār*, see Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I:3; and Pakalin, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, I:469; and Çakar, *XVI. Yüzyılda Halep Sancağı*, 87–89.

²²⁴ Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 100, 321–322. The tax farmer himself would also pay various fees, called *ilbāsiyya* and *kushūfiyya*, to the *vālī*. The *vālī* in Cairo was the equivalent of the *subaşı* in other Ottoman cities, but ‘Alī b. Shabīb is never mentioned in the court records as the *subaşı*.

²²⁵ SMS 3:385, 26 JA 1065/3 April 1655.

²²⁶ SMS 27:269, 17 S 1071/22 October 1660; and SMS 28:44, 5 S 1071/10 October 1660.

their duties.²²⁷ The growing commercial success of ‘Alī b. Shabīb is suggested by an appointment order in 1657, in which he is identified both as *kethüda* and as one of the members of the water miller’s guild.²²⁸ In 1660, ‘Alī b. Shabīb continued to control a water mill in the vicinity of Khān Tūmān. That the 1660 document mentions him not only as the *kethüda* of the garrison but also with the title of agha indicates his high status and seniority.²²⁹

The contested nature of ‘Alī b. Shabīb’s actions as *dizdār* and *kethüda* came out dramatically in a court case later in 1660. Six high-ranking officers of the garrison, among them *bölükbaşıs* and *çorbacıs*, complained about the *kethüda*’s conduct to the qadi, who subsequently convened a court session in the presence of the governor—a clear signal of the seriousness of their charges.²³⁰ They alleged that ‘Alī b. Shabīb had repeatedly abused his authority, describing in chronological order six actions that are worth summarizing here. First, while serving as *dizdār* some ten years earlier (ca. 1650), they claimed, ‘Alī b. Shabīb had failed to pay the garrison their monthly salaries and thus owed them 1,500 *ghurüş*. Second, during the governorship of İbşir Muştafa Pasha (1652–1655), he as *kethüda* had unjustly taken 500 *ghurüş* from them, claiming that an imperial order had been issued against some of them, apparently for misconduct, and they were to be held collectively responsible.²³¹ Two later incidents took place under the administration of “Ḥammāncioğlu,” whom the historian Na‘īmā describes as the deputy (*mütesellim*) of Abāza Ḥasan Pasha, the governor of Aleppo in 1656–1657. The unsettled conditions of this governorship, which was violently disputed by power groups within the Ottoman elite, are corroborated by the Khān Tūmān testimony.²³² During this time

²²⁷ SMS 3:337, 29 R 1065/8 March 1655.

²²⁸ SMS 27:5, 24 B 1067/8 May 1657.

²²⁹ SMS 27:269, 17 S 1071/22 October 1660.

²³⁰ SMS 28:252, 22 JA 1071/23 January 1661. This document, as well as one other related document (SMS 28:351, 22 J 1071/22 February 1661), are written entirely in Ottoman Turkish, perhaps because the governor or his representative was present for the proceedings.

²³¹ Mingana, “Turkish Governors and High Judges of Aleppo,” 518. Presumably the soldiers served as guarantors for one another’s conduct and could be held accountable in a court of law.

²³² For narratives of the revolt led by Abāza Ḥasan Pasha (1657–1659), see *Tārīḥ-i Na‘īmā*, VI: 341–352, 374–396; and Silāhdār Fındıklılı Mehmed Agha, *Silāhdār Tārīḥi* (Istanbul: Devlet Maṭba‘ası, 1928), 148–155. See also Mingana, “Turkish Governors and High Judges of Aleppo,” 518; Rafeq, “The Revolt of ‘Alī Pasha Janbulad,” 1532;

members of the garrison were held financially liable for the death of one local inhabitant and the disappearance of two others in the vicinity of the citadel—a practice which was prescribed by Ottoman law—but ‘Alī b. Shabīb took advantage of this situation, so the plaintiffs alleged, to extract additional fines, amounting to 900 *ghurūsh*.²³³

The final two actions had occurred in the immediate past and seem to have precipitated the petition. In the first, an officer acting on behalf of ‘Alī Pasha, the governor of Aleppo in 1659–1660, found during an inspection that the garrison was undermanned but the unit was still collecting salaries as if at full strength.²³⁴ For this violation, he imposed a fine of 800 *ghurūsh* on ‘Alī b. Shabīb, who, in turn, according to the plaintiffs, compelled the garrison to pay it. Subsequently, under the same governor, and perhaps in reaction to the growing dissatisfaction of Khān Ṭūmān personnel, ‘Alī b. Shabīb pledged in an official court document that he would no longer seek the office of *kethūda*, yet at the time of the petition he had managed to secure official recognition for occupying the office.²³⁵

When asked about these various charges, the defendant ‘Alī b. Shabīb had a ready defense, producing documents indicating that the soldiers had already settled with him on the debts, a defense that the petitioners rejected. Persisting in his complaints, Bākū Bölükbaşı b. Kurdī argued that ‘Alī b. Shabīb had usurped the office of *kethūda* by erasing Bākū’s name in the patent of appointment and entering his own; indeed, the qadi examined the patent and found evidence of erasure but could not confirm if Bākū Bölükbaşı was the intended recipient. When the

and Masters, “Power and Society in Aleppo,” 153. The revolt was known locally as the Revolt of Ibn al-Ḥammāmji, after the deputy of Abāza Ḥasan Pasha.

²³³ The plaintiffs claimed in one case that a woman and her daughter from the village of Khān Ṭūmān had gone out looking for firewood and were never seen again. As for the financial liability of Khān Ṭūmān, see, for example, a well-documented 1645 case in which a woman and her daughter sue the soldiers for the murder of their relative on the threshing ground (*arḍ al-baydar*) at Khān Ṭūmān. The qadi orders that the members pay the blood money (*diyya*) penalty. For the investigator’s report, see SMS 23:475, 19 J 1055/12 August 1645. For a summary of court proceedings, see SMS 23:424, 28 J 1055/21 August 1645. For the payment of the *diyya* (300 *ghurūsh*) to the plaintiffs, see SMS 23:427, *Ghurrat* B 1055/23 August 1645.

²³⁴ This is, in all likelihood, Tutsaḳ ‘Alī Pasha, whom Mīngana lists as the governor of Aleppo in AH 1070. See his “Governors and High Judges of Aleppo,” 518. See also Na’ima, *Tārīḥ-i Na’imā*, VI: 382.

²³⁵ On pledges and oaths, see James P. Grehan, “The Mysterious Power of Words: Language, Law, and Culture in Ottoman Damascus (17th–18th Centuries),” *Journal of Social History* 37, 4 (2004): 991–1015.

qadi asked the plaintiffs for further evidence, they brought before the court high-ranking officers, the commander (*serdār*) and *kethüda* of the *gönüllüiyân* force in Aleppo, who then testified to the veracity of one of the claims, that ‘Alī b. Shabīb had unjustly imposed a fine on the soldiers during the governorship of Ibşir Muştāfā Pasha.

The summary of this case ends with the qadi rendering no decision and allowing the contesting parties to pursue additional evidence in support of their claims, but two court documents dated roughly a month later indicate that the plaintiffs had won a legal victory. Not only was ‘Alī b. Shabīb replaced by Bākū Bölükbaşı as the *kethüda*; he also paid 500 *ghurūsh* to the soldiers of the garrison, who acknowledged receipt.²³⁶ A second document records a mutual release of all financial claims between the soldiers and ‘Alī b. Shabīb, suggesting that the latter made further payments of undisclosed amounts.²³⁷ Only one day following the settlement, not the *kethüda* alone, but he and six other officers of the unit together rented out administration of the *qara bāc* tax sector, doing so perhaps as a reaction to the abuses to which individual officeholding patterns could give rise.²³⁸

The removal of ‘Alī b. Shabīb from office and his evident dismissal from the unit did not spell the end of his involvement with the garrison at Khān Ṭūmān, nor does it seem to have impoverished him in any way. Once the principal administrator of the Qarmida water mill and the *qara bāc* tax sector, after 1661 he appears as an administrative agent and subcontractor, renting with a partner these revenue sources from the new garrison commander and paying *jā’iza* fees to him, then re-renting those sources to another individual, who was a member of the garrison.²³⁹ This particular arrangement recalls the classic Islamic *muḍāraba* contract, as ‘Alī b. Shabīb and his partner acted as the dominant investors, putting up the large initial rent payment as the capital outlay and in turn delegating the practical management of the revenue sources to a third party, who was to earn one-third of the profits, as was stipulated in the document.²⁴⁰ As another sign of his wealth, ‘Alī b. Shabīb rented from the commander of the Aleppo Citadel in 1666

²³⁶ SMS 27:302, 11 J 1071/11 February 1661.

²³⁷ SMS 28:351, 22 J 1071/22 February 1661.

²³⁸ SMS 27:305, 23 J 1071/23 February 1661. See also SMS 41:203, 24 DA 1111/13 May 1700.

²³⁹ SMS 27:A408, 22 B 1074/19 February 1664.

²⁴⁰ On the *muḍāraba* contract, see pp. 105–6.

a *ze'āmet* consisting of a village and outlying fields, the rental payment being assessed at a substantial sum of 400 *ghurūsh* every three years.²⁴¹

It is not difficult to discover why 'Alī b. Shabīb was so seemingly indispensable to the soldiers at Khān Ṭūmān. With time, he had become their financier, providing them with salaries and paying their various obligations, whether he was their commander or not. 'Alī b. Shabīb's shifting role coincides, one might argue, with more momentous transformations taking place in the function of the garrison; indeed, one might make the case that he presided over a partial "demilitarization" of the garrison, though the early stages of this process probably preceded him. One aspect of this process was what one might call "peasantification." As early as the 1640s, there is evidence of members of the garrison engaging in agriculture.²⁴² Furthermore, members of the garrison after 1660 repeatedly borrowed money from 'Alī b. Shabīb and from other individuals in arrangements that differed little from those contracted between villagers and wealthy urban creditors.²⁴³ Just as soldiers in urban settlements turned to the practice of trades and crafts, so too did soldiers stationed in villages take up farming, and as they cultivated land they became subject to taxes on those resources as was any other farmer.²⁴⁴

A second aspect of this process was commercialization. During his tenure as governor (1652–1655), Ibṣīr Muṣṭafā Pasha built a large *waqf* complex in the city of Aleppo, consisting of khans, shops, a mosque, and a coffeehouse, among other facilities.²⁴⁵ Less well known is the fact that as part of the *waqf* the governor extensively restored and expanded facilities at Khān Ṭūmān, including building a coffeehouse (*qahwa*) and two shops in the fortress of Khān Ṭūmān, all of which

²⁴¹ SMS 27:506, 17 RA 1077/17 September 1666.

²⁴² According to this document a man, a soldier stationed at Khān Ṭūmān garrison, and his son borrowed 80 *ghurūsh*, which was the value of agricultural land (*jaddān*), cattle (*baqr*), and a quantity of wheat they had received from the creditor. See SMS 23:312, 17 N 1052/9 December 1642.

²⁴³ See, for example, SMS 32:169, 5 DA 1083/22 February 1673; SMS 32:406, 8 J 1085/9 September 1674; and SMS 37:12, 4 S 1098/20 December 1686.

²⁴⁴ A debt contract dated to 1686 mentions the various commitments owed by the members of the garrison: government taxes (*miri*), payments owed to *waqfs* whose lands they cultivated, obligations of the citadel (*lawāzīm al-khān*), and prior debts owed to their creditor, a rice merchant named Ḥājī Haydar Çelebi b. Rajab Agha al-Razzāz. See SMS 35:382, 29 L 1096/28 September 1685.

²⁴⁵ For a study of this foundation, see Jean-Claude David, *Le waqf d'Ipṣir Paşa à Alep (1063/1653): Étude d'urbanisme historique* (Damascus: Institut Français d'Études Arabes, 1982); and Watenpaugh, *Image of an Ottoman City*, 155–74.

operated at least through the end of the century and would themselves have presented commercial opportunities to soldiers.²⁴⁶ One loan contract dated to 1675 is particularly informative on the changing occupation of the Khān Ṭūmān guards. The principal reason for the loan was the imposition of a fee (*bedel*) on the garrison for non-participation in a military campaign, thus raising the question of their military preparedness. The means by which the guards chose to repay the loan is equally illuminating. As part of the contract, they purchased on credit 25 *qintārs* of rice, a very large amount, which they probably intended to market in the local area. Similar to consignment agreements, the proceeds were to be remitted in monthly installments. The soldiers at Khān Ṭūmān thus appear to have replicated marketing networks we have found among residential quarters.²⁴⁷ Taken together, the presence of shops and the borrowing and marketing activities of the soldiers highlight the occupational hybridity of the garrison in the second half of the century.

‘Alī b. Shabīb seems to have been a major beneficiary of these and other developments. We know little about the final years of his life, but the survey of 1678 and documents in the local court registers offer important information on the size of his estate at the time of his death, shortly before the survey. As evidence of his affluence, we find in the survey three houses under the name of “the heirs of ‘Alī b. Shabīb,” which are located in ‘Aynayn Alley, within Khārij Bāb al-Jinān, a western extramural quarter. Moreover, all three houses were assessed at *evsaṭ*, indicating that they were larger than average; only 60 of the 260 houses in the quarter were assessed at that level.²⁴⁸ According to court

²⁴⁶ SMS 41:130, 10 J 1111/3 December 1699, a document in which the administrator of the *waqf* rents these properties. These properties in all likelihood comprise “Khan No. 2” as described in Creswell, “Two Khans at Khan Tuman,” especially since Creswell dates the structure, ruined at the time of his visiting it in the early 20th century, to the mid-sixteenth century. Using *waqf* documents housed today in Ankara, Heghnar Watenpaugh reveals that the renovation and expansion of Khān Ṭūmān by Ibşir Muştafâ Pasha was more extensive than previously thought; see her *Image of an Ottoman City*, 156–158.

²⁴⁷ The campaign for which the soldiers paid the *bedel* was known as “Safar al-Turkmāni,” suggesting that the campaign would have been against Turcoman tribes in Syria and/or Anatolia. The other financial commitments of the garrison were to pay taxes (*māl al-sultana*) on lands of the khan (*mazāri‘ al-khān wa-arāḍihi*) and taxes on lands jointly worked by them and by the neighboring village of Zaytān. See SMS 32:516, 6 S 1086/2 May 1675. For a probate inventory of a military officer who died on another Turcoman campaign, see SMS 33:63–64, 6 L 1088/2 December 1677.

²⁴⁸ MM 8467:131b.

documents dating from 1685, ‘Alī b. Shabīb may have also possessed a *qayṣariyya*: the “Qayṣariyya of ‘Alī al-Shabīb,” a large building in the same quarter with courtyard, well, and nine residences (sing. *maskan*), was sold that year by a female heir.²⁴⁹ It is probably no accident that the properties of ‘Alī b. Shabīb were found at the western edge of the city of Aleppo, as this siting would have put him closer to Khān Ṭūmān and to other properties that he administered, such as the *ze‘āmet* in the village of Kafr ‘Urūq and the Qarmīda water mill.²⁵⁰ The size and accumulation of several houses in Aleppo further suggests that he had long lived in the city and had delegated the day-to-day administration of the Khan to others; this arrangement would also explain why his life is so well documented in the shari‘a courts of Aleppo.

The career of ‘Alī b. Shabīb exemplifies how soldiers could straddle military and civilian occupations. One might conjecture that his removal from military responsibilities was a sign of his material success. His growing wealth may have caused resentment and disaffection among the members of the garrison which, given its rural location and record of discipline, was probably more egalitarian than hierarchical in its ethos. His story also adds to the variety of ways in which Ottoman officials entered and found a place in Aleppan society.²⁵¹

The Episode of ‘Alī Agha b. ‘Abdullāh

One should not assume that all high-ranking military officers were uniformly successful in enriching themselves. Indeed, the story of a certain ‘Alī Agha b. ‘Abdullāh, *kethüda* of the Aleppo citadel guards, may serve as a counterpoint to that of ‘Alī b. Shabīb. Government records, specifically salary registers (*mevācib defterleri*), indicate a more articulated leadership for the citadel guards of Aleppo, and we will focus here on the *dizdār* and *kethüda*. If Evliya Çelebi’s report is

²⁴⁹ SMS 35:248, 6 S 1096/12 January 1685; and SMS 35:249, 16 S 1096/22 January 1096. One large house in Baḥsita quarter, also in the Western side of the city, is also identified as being formerly owned by ‘Alī b. Shabīb. See SMS 32:242, 26 RA 1084/11 July 1673.

²⁵⁰ Administering the *ze‘āmet* in Kafr ‘Urūq apparently enabled ‘Alī b. Shabīb to acquire, at least by the 1670s, extensive olive groves in that village. See SMS 32:242 cited above.

²⁵¹ For a discussion of this social pattern relating to Damascus, see Karl K. Barbir, “From Pasha to Efendi: The Assimilation of Ottomans into Damascene Society, 1516–1783,” *IJTS* 1 (1979–1980), 68–83.

accurate, the *dizdār* (warden) of the Aleppo citadel was burdened with exceptional legal liabilities. As with other *dizdār*s, he was charged with the physical security of his fortress, but perhaps because the Aleppo treasury (*Ḥazīne-yi Ḥaleb*) that was stored within was exceptionally large and important for regional fiscal administration, the *dizdār* there was subject to certain restrictions. Sultanic law prohibited the *dizdār* from leaving the citadel, and were he to do so, Evliya explains, he could be executed; indeed, the qadi on one occasion excused the *dizdār* from obeying a court summons because sultanic law (*kānūn*) had ordered it.²⁵²

That the *dizdār* may have been physically restricted to the citadel certainly does not necessarily mean that his interests stopped there. When the *dizdār* Meḥmed Agha b. Maḥmūd Agha died in 1676, he left to his heirs not only a large home in the citadel (valued at 2000 *ghurūsh*) but also a *qayşariyya* in Sāḥat Biza, a neighborhood to the south of the citadel, as well as agricultural lands outside the walls of the city. At the time of his death he was also renting a village as well as a *çiftlik* and house (*dār*) in its vicinity. No less illustrative of his outside activities were the debts that were owed to him by villagers from a number of different villages. If Meḥmed Agha was indeed confined in his personal movements, he must have found agents through whom he worked.²⁵³

The *dizdār*'s superior rank was reflected in his salary, which, according to salary registers maintained in Aleppo, was roughly two times

²⁵² SMS 28:451, 13 M 1073/28 August 1662. Writing in the mid-seventeenth century, Evliya Çelebi thus adds that the *dizdār* lived "like a prisoner" inside the Aleppo citadel. See the *Seyahatname*, Bağdat 306, folio 171a. Officers of the garrison were called upon to guarantee the presence of the *dizdār* in cases when the physical security of the citadel was violated. In 1660, the officers of the citadel guard unit in Aleppo guaranteed the presence of the *dizdār* Meḥmed Agha in a court of law after a certain Aḥmed Beşe escaped from the citadel prison. See SMS 28:67, 27 S 1071/1 November 1660. Eighteenth-century observers in Ottoman lands more generally noted that the *dizdār* possessed the attributes of a civil governor over the residential quarter that was within the walls of a citadel. See Bodman, *Political Factions*, 77–78; Yusuf Oğuzoğlu, "Osmanlı Şehirlerindeki Askerilerin Ekonomik Durumuna İlişin Bazı Bilgiler," in *Birinci Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildiriler*, 2 Vols. (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1983), 2:169–178, esp. 173–174; and Eftal Şükrü Batmaz, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kale Teşkilatı'na Genel Bir Bakış," *OTAM* 7 (1996): 1–10, esp. 3–5.

²⁵³ SMS 33:10–12, 10 JA 1087/21 July 1676. The *dizdār* may have also enjoyed income from *tīmār* or *ze'āmet* assignments, which he would have administered through agents. See SMS 27:506, 17 RA 1077/17 September 1666.

as much as that of the next highest-ranking officer.²⁵⁴ It seems likely, however, that the *dizdār* shared power with his nominal deputy, the *kethüda*, or even ceded most of his authority to him, an arrangement that is consistent with the pattern of leadership in military units in Cairo.²⁵⁵ Records of the 1678 survey, only two years after the death of Mehmed Agha described above, indicate that the only property owned by the *dizdār* in the citadel precinct, the presumed domain of his authority and influence, was a house assessed in the lowest tax bracket (*ednā*). At this time, nine citadel guard officers who were theoretically subordinate to the *dizdār*, including the *kethüda*, owned houses in the largest tax bracket (*a'lā*).²⁵⁶ The evident swings in the wealth of the *dizdār* and the large properties of subordinate unit officers together suggest the fluidity of relations among them. Rank-and-file soldiers might also check the power of the *dizdār*, submitting petitions of complaint against him. In 1673 they claimed he had failed to distribute salaries and had unlawfully seized the privately-owned homes of some soldiers and annexed them to his own residence; it is unclear, however, whether the *dizdār* was disciplined.²⁵⁷

The *kethüda* of the garrison could also acquire considerable wealth, as shown not only by his ownership of a large house (assessed at the highest tax level), but also by his administrative control over tax sectors (*mukāṭa'as*) that were assigned as revenue sources for the citadel guards. Owning a large home and serving as the tax officer in 1678, a certain *kethüda*, 'Alī Agha b. 'Abdullāh, seems to have enjoyed a dominant position among the citadel guards.²⁵⁸ His management of the tax sector was to prove his undoing. Later that year, after settling accounts with citadel guard representatives, including the *dizdār*, he was found to owe them the very large sum of 3,050 *ghurūsh*, close

²⁵⁴ Batmaz writes that *dizdār*s in Anatolia were typically assigned a *serbest timār*, a source of revenue derived from tax collection. See "Kale Teşkilatına Genel Bir Bakış," 4–5; and Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Timar," *İA*.

²⁵⁵ Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 38, 86–87, 176. More on persons who occupied the office of *kethüda* will be discussed below.

²⁵⁶ MM 8467:1b–3a (1678). The *dizdār* at that time may well have resided in the keep, a grand fortified structure located in the southwestern quadrant of the citadel hill. It is hard to say who, between the *kethüda* and the *dizdār*, would have controlled the large 36-room building with courtyard (*qayşariyya*) recorded in 1678 as a *dizdārlik* and located in a northern extramural quarter. See MM 8467:84b.

²⁵⁷ AŞ 8:266, #1291, *Awāsiṭ* DA 1083/27 February–7 March 1673.

²⁵⁸ He was one of the nine unit officers owning homes assessed at *a'lā* in the survey of 1678. See MM 8467:1b–3a.

to an entire year's revenues for the *dār al-ghanam* (sheep marketing facility) sector.²⁵⁹ The evident inability or unwillingness of 'Alī Agha to pay this amount provoked a strong reaction. Five days later, no fewer than 90 citadel guards testified before the qadi that 'Alī Agha was unfit for the office of *kethüda*, saying that he had a corrupting and harmful influence on the unit and was a "stranger" (*ecnebi*) to them.²⁶⁰ The litany of his alleged abuses and moral failings, including consumption of alcohol and being an excessive gossip, recalls other cases recorded in the court registers against people who were considered a menace by a specific group. Rather than accept these characterizations at face value, we should see them as part of a broad political strategy by which the plaintiffs sought to unseat, and if possible, discipline 'Alī Agha.²⁶¹

'Alī Agha did receive punishment, according to a document dated 60 days later. The qadi issued a report stating that the *kethüda* had been detained in the imperial prison (*al-sijn al-sultānī*) for 80 days for his failure to pay off his debt to citadel guards, and that, according to nine witnesses, he was "a poor man who possessed nothing to sell to pay off his debt," and that "he owned nothing except the clothes on his back." If this dating was correct, 'Alī Agha had been imprisoned even before the litigation began, perhaps because he was viewed as a flight risk. Thereupon the qadi granted him freedom.²⁶² The concrete description of 'Alī Agha as indigent should not necessarily be taken as literal fact, as such phrases were formulas frequently used in reports releasing debtors from jail.²⁶³ Still, this debt appears to have caused acute financial hardship for 'Alī Agha's family after his death. Remarkably,

²⁵⁹ The projected annual revenue of this sector was 4,500 *ghurūsh*. See SMS 34:222:3, 30 R 1090/9 June 1679.

²⁶⁰ There is some evidence to suggest that the term "*ecnebi*" marked an ethno-regional difference. See Julius Káldy-Nagy, "The 'Strangers' (*Ecnebil*) in the 16th Century Ottoman Military Organization," in György Kara, ed., *Between the Danube and the Caucasus* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), 165–169.

²⁶¹ SMS 34:228, 5 JA 1090/14 June 1679. The determination of the soldiers to recover their salaries was demonstrated by their concurrent lawsuit against a former partner of 'Alī Agha, Ibrāhīm Çelebi b. Durmuş Çorbacı, in the administration of the *dār al-ghanam* tax sector. Arguing that Ibrāhīm Çelebi had served as a financial guarantor (*kafil*) for 'Alī Agha and therefore was liable for revenue shortfalls, the soldiers demanded Ibrāhīm Çelebi meet his commitment. See SMS 34:229, 5 JA 1090/14 June 1679.

²⁶² See SMS 34:267, 16 B 1090/23 August 1679.

²⁶³ See, for example, SMS 34:164, 19 N 1089/4 November 1678. Claims by other creditors on persons who had allegedly served as guarantors for 'Alī Agha include SMS 34:235, 17 JA 1090/26 June 1690.

a similar kind of document dated more than eight years later records that Muḥammad and Qāsim, the sons of the then-deceased ‘Alī Agha, were released from prison after a period of time for a debt that their father had incurred, and which they had guaranteed.²⁶⁴

* * *

The disciplining of soldiers for failure to meet obligations to their unit, whether those obligations be material or ethical, should not be viewed as particularly remarkable. Hence, in 1655 members of the *kaḫı̄kulu* infantry force in Aleppo declared before the qadi that they found one soldier affiliated with their unit, Kurd Beṣe Ibn al-Dūlānjī, to be “wicked,” “corrupt” and “not on the righteous path.”²⁶⁵ Such pronouncements were likely a prelude to expulsion. In a separate case later in the century, members of the same corps requested that the qadi order a subunit commander, an *odabaşı*, to be removed from his position after he had committed abuses against them. After the qadi assented to their request and ordered the *odabaşı*’s removal, the defendant pledged that he would not seek the office in the future, and agreed to pay a fine of 500 *ghurūsh* if he were caught doing so.²⁶⁶

What is more significant for our purposes is that rank-and-file soldiers could and did act collectively to remove commanders and in ways that are remarkably similar to those of guild leaders. Just as guild leaders were held accountable for their financial management, so were commanders and other top-ranking officers measured by their ability to collect and equitably redistribute salaries within the framework of the *ocaḫlık* system. One reason for this was the decentralization of some components of the state fiscal apparatus. As military commanders became, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, more directly involved in the payment of salaries through the mechanism of *ocaḫlık*, they were held more responsible by the rank-and-file, and the authority they exercised was made more explicitly conditional on the success of their financial management. This is not to say that command authority in general was ever independent of fiscal matters, as witnessed,

²⁶⁴ SMS 36:26 20 JA 1098/3 April 1687.

²⁶⁵ SMS 3:727, 24 DA 1065/25 September 1655. The document refers to the moral failings of the soldier and not to any professional incompetence, characterizing him as “shaḫī ‘alā ghayr al-ṭarīq al-mustaḫīm wa annahu sa‘a fi’l-arḫ bi’l-fasād wa yuḍı̄r al-‘ibād wa’l-bilād....”

²⁶⁶ SMS 2:257, 11 DA 1090/14 December 1679.

for example, by the financial crises associated with *siviş* years, which had periodically erupted in the empire since the early sixteenth century.²⁶⁷ The difference in the seventeenth century seems to have been the echelon of command (or authority) at which financial responsibility was placed: then, individual garrison commanders, rather than central state officials, were orchestrating the mechanisms of compensation.

An equally important factor, but one more difficult to assess, was the likelihood that soldiers, as they took up trades and crafts, absorbed the cultural norms of their non-military colleagues, thereby displacing or weakening concepts of hierarchical command authority. This process was probably more important than the reverse, of merchants and artisans adopting military norms, since many of these made no pretense of pursuing military training and merely sent proxies when called to serve on campaigns.²⁶⁸ The circumstances of each of these two case studies, then, suggest the repertory of actions available to soldiers to redress grievances within a moral framework informed both by the traditions of military service and by guild norms. When these mechanisms failed to work, open mutiny could result; indeed, one can argue, on the basis of a model developed by Palmira Brummett, that these two case studies fall just below the threshold of mutiny, but in different ways.²⁶⁹

The similarity of the two cases, namely, the centrality of financial obligations in the relationship between the rank-and-file and leadership, serves as a basis upon which we can examine the more interesting differences. Most significant among these were the identity of those soldiers opposing the leadership, the nature of the grievances, the way in which grievances were legitimized, and the outcome of the confrontation.²⁷⁰ Considering these elements together, we might conclude

²⁶⁷ Halil Sahillioğlu, “*Siviş* [sic] Year Crises in the Ottoman Empire,” in Michael A. Cook, ed., *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 230–252. According to the *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*, a *siviş yıl* is “the year in thirty-three of the lunar calendar not counted in numbering subsequent years, to keep harmony with the solar year.” This fiscal practice had important political and social implications.

²⁶⁸ See, for example, the mobilization ordered in ES 1:108–118, 22 R 1100/13 February 1689, and discussed earlier in this chapter.

²⁶⁹ Palmira Brummett, “Classifying Ottoman Mutiny,” *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 22, 1 (Spring 1998), 91–107.

²⁷⁰ Brummett establishes a framework for analyzing mutiny around seven sets of questions: the intensity, duration, and private/public nature of the event; its location (on the battlefield or in peacetime); the targets of the mutiny; the mechanism of the

that the opposition to ‘Alī b. Shabīb in the first case was primarily of a factional nature and more limited in its objectives. The plaintiffs were a group of middle-ranking officers (*çorbaçıs* and *bölükbaşıs*), whose interests were probably different from those of the unit personnel as a whole. As for the grievances themselves, they were serious abuses, but none of them apparently egregious enough to demand radical action; the last one, reneging on a promise not to seek office, affected the political interests of the officers more than the rank-and-file and may have precipitated the latter group’s litigation. The language used by the plaintiffs is generally neutral and restrained, saying only that ‘Alī b. Shabīb had “unlawfully” acted, or acted without proper documentation.²⁷¹ Resolution of the tension seems to have been achieved through the stepping down of ‘Alī b. Shabīb from office, and, perhaps more importantly, his payment of debts to the plaintiffs. In a document recorded days after the removal, the original plaintiffs are exercising control of the tax sectors assigned to Khān Ṭümān.

The case of ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh communicates a more urgent and explosive situation. The attendance of 90 citadel guards at the shari‘a court, the largest group of plaintiffs ever to appear before the qadi in all of the cases reviewed by this researcher, suggests deliberate action to forcefully persuade, and possibly intimidate, the qadi. Indeed, the implicit threat posed by this group to the maintenance of public order was arguably a mutinous situation as defined by Brummett.²⁷² Citadel guards of various ranks and positions, from untitled soldiers and *beşes* to *çorbacıs* and the *topçubaşı*, appeared in unison to denounce ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh. The defendant’s inability to distribute salaries, as evinced by his subsequent imprisonment for indebtedness, produced a situation that was intolerable for the soldiers and necessitated his removal. It was not his actions, as in the case of ‘Alī b. Shabīb, but rather his person, that was assailed, through a rhetorical recitation of moral failings

mutiny, specifically how it was carried out (violence, burning, stoning, destruction); the objectives of the mutiny (the redress of grievances or opportunistic putsch); the method by which the mutiny was legitimized; and the outcome. See Brummett, “Classifying Ottoman Mutiny,” 97. See also Hathaway, *Mutiny and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire*.

²⁷¹ SMS 28:252, 22 JA 1071/23 January 1661.

²⁷² According to Brummett, a mutiny “ordinarily includes at least the threat of violence, and that what might appear to be sponaneous mutiny tends, on closer inspection, to be linked to a long history of contention or grievance.” See “Classifying Ottoman Mutiny,” 94–95.

unrelated to his financial mismanagement. Why the soldiers found it necessary to vilify ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh to have him removed from office, when ‘Alī b. Shabīb left with no apparent *ad hominem* attacks, is not clear. Any number of circumstances could have come into play, but we suspect that ritual vilification of the defendant served as a prelude to and legitimating mechanism for shari‘a-based punishment, in this case imprisonment. By this reasoning, had ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh been able to make the salary payments, as did ‘Alī b. Shabīb, his “moral failings” would never have been mentioned, though he may have still been removed from office for lesser abuses. The collective participation by 90 soldiers in the denunciation of ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh conveys the persistent sense of solidarity that could operate even when the military discipline of the unit may have weakened.

Limits on Unit Discipline and Solidarity

Any generalization about the military population of seventeenth-century Aleppo must be preceded by the acknowledgment that they were a set of cadres marked by a high degree of social and economic differentiation. While grandees in the intramural city occupied mansions (*sarāys* and networks of *konaks*) capable of accommodating scores if not hundreds of retainers, other soldiers, enjoying only irregular employment in military operations, owned no property and rented rooms in *qayşariyyas* on the fringes of the city, mostly in the northeastern and eastern suburbs. Between these two extremes was a relatively large, middle stratum of soldiery, holding positions in officially recognized garrisoned units such as the *müstahfizān* and the *gönüllüyān*, owning homes of varying size, and actively engaged in the defense of the city and in periodic campaigns both inside and outside the province.

One obtains an overall picture of a soldier population integrated into the larger social fabric of the city. Homeownership, tax collection, and moneylending, as well as habits of collective action, all describe military cadres whose cohesion and discipline were compromised by lengthening interaction with civilian populations. Residence patterns suggest that by no means did military cadres overwhelm other status groups in the city, as they may have done in ‘Ayntab and the newly conquered city of Candia. Their dispersion as homeowners throughout Aleppo reflected their willingness to mingle with other groups, and the preponderant settling of homeownership soldiers in the intramural

city, with its concentration of non-military elites, reflects an affinity to their refined interests and tastes. The significant concentration in the northeast quarters of the *çavuşân*, who were attached to the provincial council, suggests ties between members of that corps and guilds engaged in the supply and servicing of caravans, for which that part of the city was well known. The weakening of this corps (in other cities as well as Aleppo) in the eighteenth century gave openings to rival groups.²⁷³ The noticeable settlement of *tîmâr*-holders and *çapıkulu* soldiers to the south and east of the citadel can be seen as the result of their need to conduct training on the *meydân* in that vicinity, as well as marshal rapidly in times of crisis. The polarization that we might anticipate in patterns of residence between soldiers (specifically the janissaries) and the *ashrâf*, given the later factionalization of the eighteenth century, is not borne out by the evidence, specifically the tax surveys of 1616 and 1678.

Even while soldiers were not numerically dominant, they exerted decisive influence in day-to-day, especially economic, affairs of the city. As their official salaries (valued in *ağçes*) declined in purchasing power, they exploited both their authority as administrators of designated tax sectors and their superior legal status and privilege to exercise influence, if not control, over certain urban institutions and thereby supplement their income. The military units' rights of tax collection and expenditure, as provided for under the *ocaklık* regime, gave openings for the citadel guards to intervene in commercial exchanges. Similarly, it appears that the soldiers within the *yasakçı* corps, primarily *çapıkulu* infantry, extended their activity to the *ihtisâb* market regulation apparatus by colonizing its offices and taking over tax collection responsibilities. In both situations, the *müstahfızân* and the *çapıkulu* infantry extended loans, and probably rackets of protection, that created relations of dependence through which they could expand their influence. Long-term moneylending relations between soldiers and guildsmen were routinized through the development of soldier-directed marketing networks, in which soldiers consigned goods to artisans for sale in their workplace. The obverse side of this process, one might argue, was an incipient factionalism among status groups, such as between soldiers within the butchers' guild and the *ashrâf* within the tanners', over the division of profits.

²⁷³ Bodman, *Political Factions*, 34; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 32–37.

The effect on unit cohesion of the soldiers' settlement among civilian populations, administration of tax sectors, and sustained involvement in commercial affairs is perhaps mostly clearly illustrated, within the court records, by the two case studies of citadel guard officers. The guards of the Aleppo citadel and those at the Khān Ṭūmān preserved a certain solidarity but increasingly took on characteristics of an interest group primarily concerned with protecting their sources of income. The *ocaklık* institution had granted these units a remarkable degree of fiscal autonomy, but at the same time, left with a minimal level of regulation, it created conditions in which effective leadership was increasingly based on financial management, probably at the expense of the military command attributes of the position.

PART III

CHAPTER FOUR

SOLIDARITY AND LEADERSHIP IN THE GUILDS

In comparison with residential quarters and military units, the story of the guilds, comprising both trade and craft organizations, perhaps best captures the complexity of the state-society interactions in the seventeenth century. While the study of residential quarters illustrates the pressures of taxation, and the study of the military garrisons the problematic diffusion of soldiers in civil society, the study of guilds illustrates the combination of these developments in a single institution. The struggle between entrepreneurial and egalitarian impulses among guild membership, the remaking of leadership structures under the stresses of war provisioning, the contested distribution of taxes on an inter-guild level, and challenges to guild discipline all highlight the profound changes that guilds were undergoing in the seventeenth century.

An exploration of the guilds of Aleppo should start with a definition of terms. In 1663 a guild of porters (*ḥammālūn*) who specialized in the provisioning of Turkish yogurt (*laban Turkī*) went to court to prevent an outsider, whom they charged had a “sinful nature,” from joining the guild. The qadi upheld their claim but only after inquiring into the nature of the porters’ organization. Eleven members testified in court that for a long time the guild had consisted of twenty-five members, each of whom had a share (*ḥiṣṣa*) in the collective income. If a member was absent or sick, they added, he would lose his share during the time of his sickness, but if a member died, the group would pay the proceeds of his share to his son (assuming he was practicing the same trade), and even if his son were of minor age, they would pay a share to the son until he became an adult.¹ The points of the testimony that thus seem to have substantiated the group’s claim to exclusivity in the eyes of the qadi were (1) limited and known membership, (2) fixed shares of the combined income, earned through personal

¹ SMS 28:645, 25 B 1073/5 March 1663. It is worth noting that the guild in this case left the door open to guild expansion since they rejected the outsider not because of size constraints but rather because of his “sinful nature” (*sharratahu*).

participation in production, (3) a fixed mechanism of succession, in this case hereditary succession, and (4) a custom of mutual aid. While formal exclusion from a guild seldom appears in the court records of seventeenth-century Aleppo, the case nevertheless suggests a set of elements by which one qadi defined a self-regulating corporation.

Not that all trade and craft organizations in Aleppo possessed these characteristics uniformly; far from it. The demographic fluidity of the Aleppan population in the seventeenth century prevented the establishment of stable membership levels for many guilds, and other group identities and loyalties had the variable effects of strengthening or weakening the solidarity of guild membership. Rather we may view this set of elements as comprising an ideal model that the court sought to uphold in order to ensure an equitable and just corporate life. By ideal model we mean a set of elements that in their entirety were rarely realized in a single guild but which encompass the range of norms embraced by guilds as a general phenomenon. Making use of local court records, this chapter explores the practical working out of this model. Focusing on forms of leadership and collective action, the chapter examines key features of the internal dynamics of guilds in the seventeenth century and relates these changes to the foregoing ideal elements as well as to the processes of extraordinary taxation and militarization. We will consider, in order, collective agreements among guild members; the functioning of guild leadership, with emphasis on provisioning officers; the working of the inter-guild relationship known as *yamak*; and finally, collective action among multiple guilds.

The wider significance of this inquiry lies in its attempt to illuminate the nature of relations between state authorities and what have been called the elements of “civil society,” of which the guilds formed a part.² Within this framework, two broad goals motivate this study. First, re-examining the interactions between state authorities, represented locally by the governor and qadi, and the guilds, in a limited but sharply focused way may enable us to break down this dichotomy into a set of actors, both individuals or groups, that are defined less by how they fit within categories of “state” or “society” and more by how

² For an overview on the concept of civil society and the debates surrounding it, see John Keane, ed., *Civil Society and the State* (London: Verso, 1988); idem, *Civil Society: Old Images, New Visions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); and Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992).

each actor pursued its historically specific social and political interests. Second, a close study of the autonomy exercised by guilds and of the role of custom in determining guild norms and rules may contribute to ongoing debates on the characterization of the Ottoman polity particularly relating to the opposing Weberian concepts of sultanism and bureaucracy. Determining how free guilds were to regulate themselves and to defend their interests against government authorities and other groups sheds light on our understanding of their role in Ottoman society and their position vis-à-vis state power. We link both of these goals with the basic argument that political authority in this period was contested on a variety of levels and by various means.

A word about the sources used in this chapter is in order. The majority of documents are taken from two court registers of the shari'a court of Şalâhiyya: SMS 27 (1657–1667) and SMS 28 (1660–63). Since the court, which was one of five in the city, was located in the central commercial district, it is not surprising that its records contain much information about guild life. It appears, however, that the Şalâhiyya Court may have specialized in adjudicating guild affairs, at least during the period covered by Registers 27 and 28. We have found no administrative orders stating this explicitly, but the evidence is suggestive. Not only do these two registers have, in absolute terms, a large number of documents recording transactions directly involving guilds; other registers expressly prepared by the other courts in the city and dating from the same period—the Şâfiî Court, No. 32, and Banqûsa Court, Nos. 29 and 31—have virtually no such documents. Add to this the fact that the Şâfiî court was also located in the central commercial district of the city. The incomplete coverage of the court records makes generalization difficult, but we may hypothesize that a process of court specialization, which had short-lived precedents in the 1630s, went forward under the reformist Köprülü administration starting in 1656, specifically during the tenure of Köprülüzade Meḥmed Pasha (1656–61) and his son Fazıl Aḥmed Pasha (1661–76). In this time, documents are more readily identifiable as belonging to a specific court, and whole registers exclusive to one court increase in number.³ In this regard it is noteworthy that supplementing SMS 27 and 28

³ It is in this period that whole registers special to the Banqûsa district appear for the first time; and that whole registers special to the Şalâhiyya and Şâfiî Court appear with regularity. In the period 1657–1667 alone there are three Banqûsa court registers, two Şalâhiyya court registers, and one Şâfiî court registers—the greatest

are sections from the mixed register SMS 3, which while spanning the long period 1548 to 1707, have significant concentrations of documents dating to 1656, at the very beginning of the Köprülü administration, and of considerable value to the study of guilds. It may be that the pertinent sections of SMS 3 constituted the initial product of deliberate court specialization, but they did not make it into dedicated registers. In any event, the specialization of courts has been noted for the Anatolian towns of Çankırı and Kastamonu in a later period.⁴

The richness of documentation for the years 1656–67 presents a problem of interpretation, however, as the observations drawn from these years may to some extent reflect practices that arose from government reforms but not practice that preceded the reforms. Additionally, the absence of records surviving from the Şalâhiyya court in the subsequent years of the seventeenth century makes it difficult to determine whether various reforms, including court specialization, advanced or continued; records from the eighteenth century, however, confirm that some level of specialization was maintained, though the Şalâhiyya court seems to have lost its unique relationship with the guilds.⁵ Whatever administrative and legal reforms may have taken place in the years 1656–67, the practices of the guilds evidently did not change radically, so that many of the observations taken from these years generally hold true for the remainder of the period of study (1640–1700). We will, however, point out instances in which reforms had a substantial impact on guild practices.

Guild Self-Government

One of the most significant revisions to the scholarly depiction of Ottoman guilds in recent years has been that the guilds enjoyed a substantial degree of autonomy, and that they did so despite interventions by outside actors, whether merchants, soldiers, or state authorities. Earlier studies, principally those of Gabriel Baer and Robert Mantran on Istanbul, argue that the state played the dominant role in

concentration of court documentation in the seventeenth century. See Marino and Okawara, *Dalil sijillât al-mahâkim al-shar'iyya*, 157–67.

⁴ Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice*, 32–56.

⁵ Marino and Okawara, *Dalil sijillât al-mahâkim al-shar'iyya*, 164–176; and Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 155–94.

shaping urban institutions and that guilds were no exception in their acquiescence to state intervention.⁶ Likewise the early work of André Raymond on Cairo regarded the guilds primarily as administrative instruments through which the government or other powerful groups could collect taxes and maintain social control.⁷ The work of Haim Gerber on Bursa and of Abdul-Karim Rafeq and Bruce Masters on Syrian cities, principally Aleppo and Damascus, first demonstrated the wide-ranging freedom of action that guilds enjoyed within their organizations.⁸ Most recently, Eunjeong Yi, in her study of the guilds of seventeenth-century Istanbul, seeks to move beyond the binary opposition of state control and guild autonomy. She examines “leverage,” that is, the ability of guilds to pursue defined group interests within a framework of constraints imposed by the state and state-like actors. She argues that this concept more fully comprehends the role of guilds in the social and political practices of Ottoman society.⁹

The study of guild autonomy in comparative perspective has yielded intriguing results. Drawing on his work on seventeenth-century Bursa and on studies of other Ottoman cities, Haim Gerber has argued that geographical distance between the city in which a guild was located and the imperial center, Istanbul, was decisive in shaping state-guild relations. In areas closer to Istanbul, especially the core areas of Anatolia and eastern Rumelia, government authority was strong and therefore

⁶ Gabriel Baer, “The Administrative, Economic, and Social Functions of Turkish Guilds,” *IJMES* 1 (1970):1–23; and idem, “Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds,” *JESHO* 13 (1970):145–65. Baer later revised some of his views; see his “Ottoman Guilds: A Reassessment,” in Halil Inalcik and Osman Okyar, eds., *Social and Economic History of Turkey* (Ankara: Meteksan, 1980), 95–102. For Mantran’s interpretation, see his *Istanbul*, 349–94. For a fuller discussion of the historiography, see Eunjeong Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 4–16; idem, “The Istanbul Guilds in the Seventeenth Century: Leverage in Changing Times,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2000, pp. 1–24; and Suraiya Faroqhi, “Understanding Ottoman Guilds,” in Suraiya Faroqhi and Randi Deghilhem, eds., *Crafts and Craftsmen of the Middle East: Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005), 3–40, esp. 8–10.

⁷ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 503–85.

⁸ On Bursa, see Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 33–60; idem, “Guilds in Seventeenth Century Anatolian Bursa,” *Asian and African Studies* 11:59–86. On Syrian cities, see Abdul-Karim Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change”; idem, “The Law Court Registers of Damascus with special reference to craft-corporations during the second half of the 18th century,” in J. Berque and D. Chevallier, eds., *Les Arabes par leurs archives: XVI^e–XX^e siècles* (Paris: Centre National de Recherche Scientifique, 1976), 141–59; idem, “Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī”; and Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 186–215.

⁹ Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, 15; see also idem, “Istanbul Guilds,” 19.

more bureaucratic and benign; by contrast, in those areas more distant from Istanbul government authority was weaker and therefore more authoritarian and interventionist. What emerges, then, is a picture in which urban institutions located in remote and frontier areas were less autonomous and more subject to state action. However, Gerber's arguments are, in the case of guild-state relations, more hypothetical than substantive since he provides only one comparison, between Bursa and Jerusalem, as illustration. Still, his hypothesis is suggestive because he observes similar patterns in the way Ottomans employed various components of law—the imperial code of regulations (*qānūn*), Islamic law (*shari'a*), and custom (*'urf* or *'āda*)—throughout the empire.¹⁰ Where along this continuum of government authority we may place Aleppo is not entirely clear. Although the city was comparatively distant from the imperial center and bordered the Arab desert frontier, it was also of great strategic importance as a major administrative center supporting overland lines of communication with the Hijaz and the eastern borders with the Safavids. We might, then, deduce that Aleppo guilds of the seventeenth century enjoyed as much autonomy as their Anatolian counterparts. The local court records, not surprisingly, present a more complicated picture.

The chief criteria by which Gerber measures guild autonomy are the existence of internal guild agreements and the independence of guild leadership; the first criterion will be considered here, and the second, in the following section. Guild agreements (sing. *ittifāq*) were the outcome, both written and oral, of formal consensus among the senior members of the guild on a wide range of matters. Guild agreements formalized both guild customs (*'āda*), which were the broad norms by which guilds operated, and guild regulations, which fixed prices, quantities of supply, and standards of production, among other things, usually on a short term basis.¹¹

Within this context, we examine here a set of remarkable guild agreements that arguably represent how guilds managed human and material resources. In 1662, the qadi warned many members of the tanners' guild in Aleppo to comply with the "ancient custom" (*'āda qadīma*) of the guild, which had been originally expressed in the form of an agreement (*ittifāq*) and recorded in a legal document (*ḥujja*)

¹⁰ Gerber, *State, Society and Law in Islam*, 110–11.

¹¹ Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 42–45.

dating to 1642. The elements of the custom are fortunately recorded in some detail, though it is difficult to determine if they are a verbatim restatement of the 1642 agreement, which does not survive. The substance of the custom can be divided into six parts, and it is worth recounting them in order here. The first part provides for the distribution of shares (sing. *ḥiṣṣa*) of raw materials, principally sheep- and goatskins, to members of the guild. The shaykh, the agreement stipulates, is to distribute to a *married* member (*mutazawwij*) an entire share, and to a *bachelor* capable of practicing the craft (*aʿzab qādir ʿala ḥirfatihī*), one-half share. Exceptions to this rule are the *naqīb* and *shaykh al-thiyāb* who, presumably even if they are bachelors, are each to receive a full share in exchange for their service.¹² The second part sets forth a geographical restriction, requiring that all tanners practice their craft in the rooms (pl. *ḥujarāt*) of a designated tannery; this was the tannery built by the governor and later grand vizier Ḥānzāde Meḥmed Pasha circa 1574.¹³ The third part returns to the first, modifying it by stipulating that if a guildsman, presumably either married or single, is a master craftsman (*ustād muʿallim*), he is also allotted a full share. Hired apprentices (*ajīr*), on the other hand, are “in need of” a teacher (*muʿallim*) who can teach them the craft; the agreement provides no share for them. In the fourth part, rules governing the workplace are set forth, enjoining each master (*muʿallim*) to practice his craft in person and to personally receive his share of raw materials in his workshop (*kārkhāna*) within the tannery; to abstain from delegating these responsibilities to anyone else; and to sell his products only in the tannery. The enforcement of these rules is embodied in the fifth part, which provides that if a guildsman does not practice his craft in person in the tannery, or if he sets up a workplace outside the tannery, he will not be given his share and will suffer the contempt and abuse (*ḥaqāra wa ihāna*) of his peers. The sixth and final part

¹² The *naqīb* was a guild official with both administrative and ceremonial duties; he appears in court records most frequently as a tax collector. The duties of the *shaykh al-thiyāb* are not clear; this is the only instance where this position appears. We suspect, however, this was an extended title for the *shaykh*, who held pre-eminent authority in most guilds. The term *thiyāb*, literally “clothing,” may refer to a ritual function that the shaykh may have exclusively practiced, namely, that he girded guild initiates with articles of clothing. For a fuller discussion of these positions, see below.

¹³ André Raymond, “Le déplacement des tanneries à Alep, au Caire et à Tunis à l’époque ottomane: Un ‘indicateur’ de croissance urbaine,” *REMMM* 55–56, 1–2 (1990): 34–43, esp. 35–37.

provides for mutual aid, specifying that if a bachelor is suffering financial loss, he may receive an additional quarter share, and if a married man is prosperous, his allotment share may be reduced by a quarter share, contingent on approval by the guild.¹⁴

Many of the provisions are similar to guild norms that are invoked individually in guild disputes found elsewhere in the court records of Aleppo and in other cities: these are a system of distribution of raw materials among individuals according to shares; the prohibitions on work and sale of products outside a designated area, and the promise of punishment involving abuse and censure by one's peers.¹⁵ The 1662 agreement goes beyond this, however, and articulates guild rules that shed light on guild ethos. Most significant is a relatively complex dual system of qualification for shares, based on a combination of marital status and professional skill. According to this system, if persons were qualified to practice the craft, they were granted a full share if married and a half share if single; those persons identified as masters were granted a full share regardless of their marital status; apprentices, presumably all single, receive no share. In these statements, however, there are ambiguities and contradictions that the text itself cannot immediately resolve.¹⁶ It is possible to resolve some of these problems by arguing that guild members followed parallel career and social progressions, so that training (and non-entitlement to guild shares) coincided with bachelorhood, and professional qualification and entitlement coincided with marriage and support of a family. Consistent with this line of thought, professionally qualified guildsmen who were not yet married would receive a half share—as the agreement indeed states. Outsiders, however, who were married and sought entrance to

¹⁴ The summary of the case is recorded in a single paragraph of text, SMS 27:417, 22 S 1073/6 October 1662.

¹⁵ On the distribution of shares, see, for example, SMS 24:275, 20 R 1055/15 June 1645. On the prohibition of work outside a designated area, see Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 499, 506; and Amnon Cohen, *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001), 87. For an example of punishment, see SMS 27:A539, 18 M 1078/10 July 1667.

¹⁶ Most of these questions concern the dual system of share distribution itself. If an outsider who was married sought entrance to the guild but was not trained, what would be his entitlement? The first part of the agreement states that married members would have received a full share, but that hired apprentices would receive no share at all. A second question revolves around the relationship between the qualified married members (*mutazawwij*) and the masters (*ustād mu'allim*): could a master be unmarried and still receive a full share, and did the masters form a distinct class within the body of guild membership?

the guild may have faced a formidable obstacle, namely, to undergo training with no access to guild entitlements while also trying to support a family. Such an obstacle may well have been intended to protect the guild against an uncontrolled influx of outsiders.

Also significant are the stipulations that guildsmen practice their craft in the tannery *in person* and that they receive their raw materials in like manner. Just as the system of share distribution aimed to equalize access to material resources, so did these stipulations on personal engagement aim to equalize social relations. Clearly one of the apprehensions of the guildsmen was the emergence of wealthy tanners who could hire other tanners to perform their work. The resulting social disparities and the absence of members from the workplace could undermine the solidarity of the guild and threaten its traditions. This ethic of egalitarianism is further reflected in the provisions for modifying the shares of poor and wealthy members.¹⁷

The invocation in 1662 of guild customs was indeed an attempt to discipline members of the tanners' guild who had transgressed its ethic of equality. Those members whom the qadi warned, however, were not rank-and-file guildsmen seeking to circumvent regulations here and there, but rather many of the leading figures of the organization. We find among those warned the *akhī bābā*, the traditional head of the guild, and other guildsmen whose frequent appearance in court as representatives of the tanners attests to their influence and power.¹⁸ Conspicuous by his absence from this list is a person known to have been the *shaykh* of the tanners at this time; it may be he who in concert with other disgruntled members complained to the qadi. Other cities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries certainly witnessed social disparity and similar disputes among tanners. Gerber writes of some guildsmen in Bursa who each owned as many as five or six workshops,

¹⁷ Another form of wealth distribution was the institution of cash *waqfs*. These common funds, to which many craftsmen contributed, provided aid to guildsmen in need. Given that residential neighborhoods in Aleppo established cash *waqfs* (see Chapter 2) to assist poorer members, it seems likely that Aleppan guilds did the same for their counterparts. No direct evidence, however, has yet been found of guild *waqfs* in Aleppo. Cash *waqfs* are known to have operated on an extensive scale in Istanbul in the seventeenth century. See Mantran, *Istanbul*, 379–80; Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, 87; and idem, "Istanbul Guilds," 83–84.

¹⁸ Among the eleven men warned were Sayyid Muḥammad b. Aḥmad the *akhī bābā*, Sayyid Ibrāhīm b. Sayyid Rajab, who at the time probably occupied the prestigious office of *shaykh al-sab'a*, and two other members of the *ashrāf*. For a description of the duties of these offices, see the case study of the tanners' leadership below.

and Mübahat Kütükoğlu notes a dispute in Istanbul in which the leading officials of the tanners guild were replaced after several members complained that they had formed an exclusive partnership harmful to the guild's interest.¹⁹ It is tempting to link the ambition of some tanners, at least in the case of Aleppo, to an apparently lucrative trade in leather. High levels of tax revenue were generated in Aleppo from trade in leather around 1600, and a German merchant who was resident in Aleppo in the years 1656–1663 notes the export of varieties of leather to France and Holland.²⁰

Principles of equality also suffused other guilds that were closely related to the tanners. In 1664, members of the *künjiyya* guild, who tanned the hides of buffalo (*jāmūs*), cattle (*baqr*), and camels (*jimāl*), made an agreement with their shaykh stipulating that he divide incoming shipments of animal skins into parts (sing. *qism*, pl. *aqsām*) with equality (*bi'l-sawīyya*) and according to marital status. Similar to the formula devised by the tanners, married men were to receive one part and bachelors one-half, but unlike the tanners, there was no secondary criterion of professional skill. This formula, the document notes, was based on ancient custom (*'awā'id qadīma*), but no original dated agreement is mentioned. The agreement of the *künjiyya* differs from that of the tanners in another respect: it places more emphasis on the authority of the shaykh and the qadi. Guildsmen should not, the agreement

¹⁹ Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 62; and Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnafında Oto-kontrol Müessesesi," in *Ahilik ve Esnaf: Konferanslar ve Seminer* (Istanbul: Yaylacık, 1986), 62. Gerber notes the consolidation of shops in a few hands in 1039/1629. In the Istanbul dispute (1726) studied by Kütükoğlu, the leaders accused of the harmful partnership were none other than the *kethüda* and the *akhī bābā*.

²⁰ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, crafts and food production in an urban setting, 1520–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 167; Wolfgang Aigen, *Sieben Jahre in Aleppo (1656–1663)*, ed. Andreas Tietze (Vienna: Verband der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs, 1980), 17, 79, 80, cited in Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 167. Occasionally one finds traders attempting to purchase hides directly from slaughterhouses in Aleppo without going through the tanners, thereby incurring the censure of the qadi. The merchants were clearly trying to sell the hides in other areas. See SMS 27:A421, *Awākhīr* M 1075/14–25 August 1664; and SMS 2:267, 22 *DA* 1090/25 December 1679. The profitability of leather in regional trade and international trade is clear. Undressed hides were exported in this period from the Balkan provinces, notably Sofia, to European destinations through Dubrovnik; see Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400–1900* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1983), 116–18. In eighteenth-century Egypt, one member of the politically dominant Kazdağlı household, 'Abdullāh Kāhya, had a monopoly on importing skins. I am grateful to Jane Hathaway for the Egyptian example.

continues, become insolent with the shaykh by requesting more than their share, and they should not dispute the distribution with him. By violating guild customs, they may incur some form of contempt (*ḥaqāra*) after the ruling of the qadi.²¹ A third and final agreement is found embedded in the order of appointment for an administrative official, a *yīğitbaşı*, over tanners specializing in the working of cowhide in 1666. Significantly, requesting this appointment were not only members of this organization but also the head officials of the tanners' guild, the *akhī bābā* and the shaykh. The agreement, which the candidate may have demanded before accepting the position, stipulates that guildsmen who are bachelors will each receive three-quarters of a part (*qism*) of incoming shipments of hides, and those who are married will each receive one entire part.²² In this agreement, a married man is further defined as he who has "a wife" (*zawja*), as if this needed clarification.

Marital status played a role in defining membership and its benefits in other guilds as well, but the evidence attesting to this is limited to single document. The guild known as *ta'ifat al-tarāsa*, which is defined in the document as the grain transporters (*hammaliy al-ghilal*), registered an agreement in which the members would adhere to the distribution of a full share of business to married men, and a half share to unmarried men, "as had been their ancient custom."²³ One might speculate that guilds may have been more inclined to strictly define shares of business if, in the case of the transporters of grain and of yoghurt (cited at the beginning of this chapter), they provided services where quantities of well-defined commodities were simply handled and not processed.

Maintained most visibly by tanners and other related guilds, the criterion of marital status for the distribution of raw materials is a striking feature of guild organization in Aleppo for which no comparison in other Ottoman cities has yet been found, at least by this researcher. In agreements concluded by these groups, rights are based primarily or entirely on the material *need* of the guildsman, that is, whom he must support as a husband and father, and only secondarily or not at all on his professional qualification. If we admit that tanning did not require

²¹ SMS 27:A433, 29 R 1075/19 November 1664.

²² SMS 27:A480, 22 B 1076/28 January 1666.

²³ SMS 27:272, 4 RA 1071/7 November 1660.

as much training and skill as many other crafts, it seems that such a distribution of resources may have been in the best interests of internal guild harmony. If shares or parts had been based on professional qualification and the actual period of training was short, there may have been insufficient raw material and space in the tannery to accommodate a rapid influx of qualified candidates. Tension may have arisen even more alarmingly among practicing tanners when skills were not highly differentiated. In this context, marriage and the attendant costs of supporting a family may have proven a more compelling reason for entitlement than any other. One may conversely draw the hypothesis that in Aleppo guilds where skills were more highly differentiated, as in jewelry making and some textile production, marital status played less of a part in the distribution of raw materials.²⁴ There remains the question of whether the celebration of marriage itself formed some kind of rite of passage for guildsmen.²⁵

Another feature of the three guild agreements is the threat of punishment. If the guild organizations punished their own members, this would indeed indicate a high degree of autonomy. On this point, the agreements vary in level of detail and in language. The wording of the tanners' agreement is perhaps most common in instances where punishment is mentioned in court records; according to this formula, violators will simply suffer contempt (*ḥaḳāra*) and abuse (*ihāna*) with

²⁴ In cases involving other guilds in Aleppo that were surveyed by this researcher, marital status apparently played no role in the distribution of raw materials. Among the fullers of cloth (*qaṣṣārūn*), criteria for entitlement were professional qualification (being an *ustād*), descent from an *ustād*, trustworthiness, and active production in the craft. See SMS 15:239, *Salkh* M 1037/12 September 1627, cited in Rafeq, "Mazāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafi," 173. For a dispute between the masters (*mu'allims*) and journeyman (*ṣāni's*) in the guild specializing in cotton work (*'amal al-quṭuniyyāt*) over the fixing of wages for the latter, see SMS 6:166, 3 S 996/3 January 1588, cited in Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 502; on the training of Jewish apprentices of a silver embroidery guild (*ṣirmājiyya*), see SMS 28:111, 8 RA 1071/11 November 1660; on the exchange of service for training of apprentices (*ajirs*) among Jewish barbers (*ḥallāqūn*), see SMS 24:363, 28 J 1055/21 August 1645; and on the fixing of pay levels for *ṣunnā'* among the members of the silver embroidery guild, see SMS 35:519, 5 S 1097/1 January 1686.

²⁵ We note here in corroboration of this hypothesis that guild members in 16th-century Jerusalem were required to divorce their wives if they violated certain guild regulations and customs. See Amnon Cohen, *Economic Life in Ottoman Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), 20. In the case of Aleppo, one document has been found recording the vow (*nadhr*) of a soldier that he would divorce his wife (and also pay financial penalties) if he interfered in the affairs of a certain guild, the *kirāma* (pistachio vendors). See SMS 36:198, 20 D 1098/27 October 1687.

no further qualifiers, and we are left to wonder who administered the punishment and whether the local court was involved.²⁶ The second agreement, concluded by the *kūnjiyya*, is a little more specific in that it sets forth the requirement that the qadi offer a decision (*ra'y*) in the case.²⁷ The guild thus relied on an outside authority to render judgment, and its autonomy was accordingly limited. The third case mentions no punishment at all, invoking only a common religious phrase that can be translated as “knowledge precludes ignorance,” meaning in this context that the full exchange of information between the parties will prevent misunderstanding and future dispute.²⁸

The chief difficulty here, however, is with the sources since in theory if a guild was autonomous, it may have punished offenders without seeking the involvement of the court, and so no court record was generated.²⁹ The court in Aleppo did record instances of guilds requesting the punishment of members for violations, but these are, in the case of Aleppo, rather infrequent given the likelihood that violations, both minor and major, took place often in such a large city.³⁰ It seems probable that informal social pressure in the form of criticism and admonishment by a guildsman's peers would prevent most transgressions of guild customs and rules. If these failed to produce the desired effect, the guild would have the qadi issue a warning (*tanbīh*), which to present-day observers might seem light, but to seventeenth-century

²⁶ This particular formula of punishment is commonly used in agreements between the tanners and the butchers on raw material prices. See, for example, SMS 27:84, 27 B 1068/30 April 1658; and SMS 27:A543, 2 S 1078/24 July 1667. See also Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change,” 499.

²⁷ Cf. Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 56–57.

²⁸ The accusative phrase is rendered, “... ‘ilman nāfiyan li'l-jihāla...,” literally, “as knowledge refutes ignorance.” It is as if the court is admonishing the parties to declare all pertinent facts of their interaction and at the same time absolving itself from any responsibility if a future misunderstanding arises.

²⁹ As was the case with Bursa in the seventeenth century, the *muhtasib* in Aleppo appears to have had a minimal role in enforcing guild customs and regulations. According to the court records, his principal duties were as tax farmer for a number of urban economic sectors. See Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 56–57.

³⁰ Concerning the expulsion of two members of the goldsmiths' market (*ahālī suq al-ṣiyāgha*) for, among other things, questionable business practices, see SMS 25:124, 19 Ş 1058/8 September 1648, quoted in Rafeq, “Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī,” 179; on the threat of corporal punishment and public destruction of merchandise for weavers who made nonstandard cloth, see SMS 27:A539, 18 M 1078/10 July 1667; on the expulsion of Maghribi nightguards (*tā'ifat al-Maghārība al-ḥurrās*) for indolence, see SMS 34:180, 3 RA 1090/14 April 1679; and on the payment of a fine in the case of non-payment of taxes among bakers of the *ma'rūk* bread, see SMS 27:18, 26 L 1067/7 August 1657.

guildsmen may well have been an intimidating and transforming experience. Viewed in this light, the warning issued to the leaders of the tanners' guild invoking the first agreement should be regarded as a serious action after all attempts at internal guild reconciliation failed. When a guildsman was judged a menace to society, the qadi could give the severest punishment. According to the court records of Tripoli, the qadi in 1668 meted out a death sentence to a tanner after fellow tanners found him to be "wicked" and "harmful" to society.³¹

Just as the foregoing agreements among tanners and related groups reveal how guilds managed their internal resources, other agreements reveal how guilds fulfilled their obligations to outside parties. State authorities collectively imposed on guilds a wide array of taxes, which can be divided into two kinds, regular and irregular.³² Regular taxes consisted of (1) levies on different sectors of the local economy regularly assessed by the central state and collected by agents and tax farmers, and (2) fees collected by guild leaders for services rendered.³³ Irregular taxes were a set of taxes, in cash or in kind, that had been originally levied only on the occasion of military campaigns, but which were in the seventeenth century increasingly regularized. Referred to in the Arabic-language court records variously as *takālīf 'urfīyya* (customary exactions), *'awāriḍ* (Tr. *'avāriḍ*, extraordinary taxes), or *māl al-urdū* (army tax), irregular taxes seem to have merged, at least to some extent, with arbitrary impositions that administrative-military cadres collected for the expenses of local administration.³⁴

The variety of arrangements that guildsmen set up to distribute taxes among their members strongly suggests that the qadi delegated most responsibility for apportioning tax within the guilds to the guilds-

³¹ See Nahdī Ṣubḥī al-Ḥimsī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus min khilāl wathā'iq al-mahkama al-shar'īyya fi'l-nisf al-thānī min al-qarn al-sābi' 'ashar al-milādī* (Tripoli: Dār al-Īmān, 1986), 266–69. In 1663 members of the pistachio vendors' guild used similar language in their testimony against a fellow guildsman, charging him with malicious collusion with state officials against the guild. No sentence is rendered, but one suspects a comparable outcome. See SMS 28:611, 16 J 1073/26 January 1663.

³² See Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 507.

³³ These sectors included the dyehouse (*boyaḥāne*), the livestock marketing facility (*baṣḥāne*), the horse market (*sūq al-khayl*), coffee processing (*taḥmīṣ al-qahwa*) and many others. For a list of these tax sectors, which were in large part farmed out, see, for example, MM 657: 80–101 (AH 1074–93/1663–1682 CE).

³⁴ A typical listing of taxes to which guildsmen were subject as rendered in Arabic court records: *kharj ma'qūl*, *takālīf 'urfīyya*, *badal al-nuzul*, *'awāriḍ sultāniyya*, *urdū*, and *tarḥ al-milḥ wā'l-hinta*. See SMS 27:186, 21 S 1070/2 November 1659. For a fuller discussion of extraordinary taxes, see Chapter One.

men themselves. If the guild's membership were dispersed throughout the city, as the butchers and bakers were, guild leaders would first divide the tax burdens among administrative districts (*ṣāyih*, pl. *sawāyih*) located in different parts of the city.³⁵ When apportioning tax, some guilds agreed to do so "with equality" (*bi'l-sawiyya*), but it is not clear whether they meant this in a literal or a figurative sense, namely, whether each member paid the same amount or, in the interests of fairness, each paid according to his ability.³⁶ More common among guilds registering tax agreements was apportionment based on the quantity of raw material an individual guildsman received. Hence, the guild of millers specializing in the production of sesame seed oil and paste (*taḥīnī*) distributed taxes according to the quantity of sesame seeds a miller took and, in the case of the tanners of cowhide, the number of undressed hides a tanner took.³⁷ Other guilds set up a tiered tax assessment system not unlike that for real estate, in which a guild member paid a high (*a'lā*), medium (*awsaṭ*), or low (*adnā*) rate according to his circumstances and ability to pay.³⁸ In circumstances where taxation placed the guild in debt, members agreed to collect a surcharge based on the quantity of products an individual guildsman sold.³⁹ Guilds could and did modify systems of internal tax distribution at will. Hence in 1673 the fullers (*daqqāqūn*) abolished a system of raw material and tax distribution structured with two rates (*awsaṭ* and *adnā*) and returned to an arrangement in which the individual

³⁵ See, for example, SMS 15:852, 2 N 1046/28 January 1637; and SMS 27:144, 16 B 1069/9 April 1659.

³⁶ SMS 28:474, 4 S 1073/18 September 1662; and SMS 28:497, 6 S 1073/20 September 1662.

³⁷ For the agreement between millers of sesame oil (*tā'ifat al-mi'sārāniyya*), see SMS 15:734, 27 § 1044/15 February 1635; on the tanners of cowhide (*tā'ifat al-kūnjiyya*), see SMS 15:838, 15 J 1046/14 November 1636; on the retail vendors of leather (*bā'i'ū al-ḥawar wa'l-sakhtiyān*), see SMS 27:342, 6 D̲A 1071/3 July 1661. For comparison, see a facsimile and transcription of a similar document relating to Tripoli in Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 295–97.

³⁸ On real estate taxes, see Chapter One. For an agreement among the greengrocers (*khuḍariyya*), see SMS 27:337, 18 L 1071/16 June 1661. In another agreement, the confectioners (*ḥalwāniyya*) quantify the tiered rates, stipulating that members assessed at *a'lā* will pay a full share, members at *awsaṭ* will pay one-half share, and members at *adnā* will pay one-fourth share. See SMS 27:431, 22 R 1073/4 December 1662.

³⁹ For an agreement of the tobacconist guild (*dukhāniyya*), see SMS 27:373, 10 R 1072/3 December 1661; for the tanners, SMS 27:377, 28 R 1072/21 December 1661; for the purveyors of green cheese (*jallābī al-jibn al-akhḍar*), SMS 27:411, 10 § 1074/8 March 1664; and for the guild of pistachio vendors (*tā'iifat al-kirāma*), SMS 27:A500, 18 S 1077/20 August 1666.

guildsman was assessed a tax according to his circumstances (*ḥasaba ḥālihi*).⁴⁰

Such agreements provide only a partial picture of taxation arrangements, however, as guildsmen who were also members of status groups may have enjoyed certain tax reductions. In 1662, for example, the tanners' guild agreed to finance payment of some tax obligations by collecting a surcharge on leather pieces they sold. In this agreement the surcharge was discounted for those members who were *ashrāf*.⁴¹ In a possibly related pattern, guild-wide tax distribution systems were sometimes subject to negotiation between guild officials and individual guildsmen. In the resulting arrangements, guild officials, primarily the shaykh, agreed that they would not collect more than a certain amount in taxes each month from the guildsmen. The social identity of those guildsmen who were able to extract such agreements is significant. Most of them were either members of the *ashrāf*, soldiers (with the title *beṣe*), or persons described with the title "*ḥājj*," indicating that they had made the pilgrimage to Mecca; some persons could be identified as belonging to the senior membership of the guild, who had appeared in other documents as representatives of the guild in court.⁴² We gather, then, that such individual agreements benefited those guildsmen with social status and influence, though it is difficult to say on what scale such agreements occurred.

The variety of tax distribution arrangements illustrated above suggests the wide range of options that guild members exercised in apportioning the weight of outside obligations. This fact, and the tradition of self-regulation found in elaborate guild agreements, demonstrate the

⁴⁰ See SMS 32:290:2, 4 B 1084/15 October 1673.

⁴¹ The surcharge was also discounted by the same amount for tanners owning shops outside the central tannery. The *ashrāf* received a surcharge discount of between one-third and one-half, depending on the product sold. See SMS 27:409, 12 M 1073/27 August 1662. See also SMS 3:918, 20 J 1066/15 April 1656, which records a similar financing plan but for a loan owed to military cadres; it is probable that this loan was taken out to meet tax obligations. According to a third document, two grocers (sing. *sammān*) were exempted from paying customary taxes (*takālīf 'urfiyya*) on the basis of their *sharīf* status. See SMS 28:455, 19 M 1073/3 September 1662.

⁴² For agreements involving members of the *ashrāf*, see SMS 27:176, 18 M 1070/5 October 1659 and SMS 27:231, 17 Ṣ 1070/28 April 1660. For agreements involving soldiers, see SMS 27:273, 6 RA 1071/9 November 1660; SMS 27:348, 24 DA 1071/21 July 1661; and SMS 28:616, 7 B 1073/15 February 1663. For agreements involving persons with the title of *ḥājj*, see SMS 27:246, 27 L 1070/6 July 1660; and SMS 27:A527, 22 L 1077/17 April 1667. For agreements involving untitled guild members, see SMS 27:349, 5 D 1071/1 August 1661.

extensive autonomy that state authorities allowed guilds in Aleppo and corroborate the findings of other scholars for cities in Ottoman Anatolia and Syria. Equally important, they shed light on the egalitarian and socially conservative values of a major guild. The re-affirmation of these values strongly suggests, however, that they were being challenged by specific social and economic forces. The following section explores in a comparative manner the various ways in which guild leaders, particularly appointed officials, could exercise power over their organizations, and in some cases, undermine the ethic of egalitarianism.

The Leadership of the Guilds: Two Case Studies

A comparison of selected guilds in the middle of the seventeenth century yields significant differences as well as commonalities in the structure, composition, and dynamics of guild leadership. One significant factor in the shaping of guild leadership was the degree of state interest in the product or service that a guild provided. This section will accordingly examine guild leadership with close attention to the interplay between the material demands of Ottoman authorities and the local interests of urban guilds. The principal source for this comparison, the shari'a court records of Aleppo, contain appointment orders of guild officials as well as lists of senior guild members representing the guild in a variety of transactions. As such, the court records provide an official perspective on guild activity and therefore possess only limited insight into internal guild practices. Still, many appointment orders do offer clues to leadership dynamics and, drawing connections between various features of guild membership lists in court documents, we can make useful distinctions in the representation of guilds at the court, and therefore in the nature of leadership and the patterns of change in different guilds. Some features include the designation in court lists of guild members as guild officers (provisioning officer, shaykh, *naqīb*, *kethüda*, *yiğitbaşı*, etc.) and the plurality of such designations within a single guild; and the recurrent appearance of certain guild members in court lists over time. Considering these and other factors together, we can draw some conclusions on the nature of guild cohesion and the degree of centralization in the decision-making process.

Since the structure, composition, and dynamics of leadership within a guild are closely related and interdependent, the discussion will consider each guild in turn. The guilds chosen are the butchers (*qaşşābūn*)

and the tanners (*dabbāghūn*). In choosing these guilds, we examine those sectors of the urban economy that were among the most active and that produced commodities consumed by the vast majority of the urban population.⁴³ The first guild illustrates the various ways in which Ottoman authorities intervened in the management of guilds; by way of contrast, the case study of the tanners illustrates limited state intervention.⁴⁴

Before examining the institutions of leadership within each of these guilds, it is worth considering the motivations that lead guildsmen—or others—to undertake guild leadership. In his recent study of guilds in Ottoman Jerusalem, Amnon Cohen compares the rate of turnover in guild leadership to the circulation of money in an economy, concluding that just as frequent monetary exchanges reflect a heated economy, a high guild leader turnover rate reflects the guild's "dynamism." Although he does not define the term precisely, Cohen seems to mean by dynamism the tension between guild leadership, which may include not only appointed officials but also the richer members, and the rank-and-file members of the guild. Tension arises principally from suspicion by the rank-and-file that their interests are not being given sufficient attention and, in the most dynamic guilds, results in frequent leadership changes.⁴⁵ Yet many factors could explain the rapid changes in guild leadership, including intervention by state officials on behalf of both public and private interests. Changes in leadership thus can signal, for example, a strong egalitarian impulse in the body of guild membership, or contention among multiple parties and factions having connections with outside forces.

Reasons for turnover of leadership can be offered with special reference to the wartime conditions of the seventeenth century. We may surmise two different sets of hypothetical situations. The first conceives of the head of the guild as an official whose primary function

⁴³ Given that these guilds were the largest and most widespread in Aleppo, it is not surprising that documentation of their activities in the court records is so plentiful. This was an important practical consideration in the design of this study. My principles of selection largely follow those of Amnon Cohen in his study *Economic Life*, 9–10.

⁴⁴ The dissertation on which this book is based also included case studies of the millers (*taḥḥānūn*) and grocers (*sammānūn*), which as guilds subject to extensive state intervention corroborate the patterns found for the butchers. See Wilkins, "Neighborhoods, Guilds and Households," 205–34, 262–67.

⁴⁵ Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 27–28.

was service: to mediate the administrative requirements of the state (mostly cash taxes and material supplies) by distributing the burden among guild members and collecting what was due. Guild members would have considered this office an onerous duty, and state authorities therefore may have been compelled to appoint guild members—or even persons from outside the guild—to leadership positions against their will, doing so based on an assessment of personal liquid wealth. After all, such individuals could make up the shortfall when the guild collectively could not meet its obligations. The same guildsmen in some cases may have voluntarily taken up this office because, in addition to their wealth, their family had a tradition of leadership within the guild and because they viewed the duty partly as a service to their fellow guildsmen. In this set of circumstances, the turnover of leadership reflects the appointed leader's inability to extract the necessary taxes or supplies from the guild membership, even when supplemented with his own resources.

This model of leadership could be called that of the reluctant servant, since the duties of the guild leader revolved around the challenges of state service, in particular ensuring the regular supply of essential commodities to state officials and urban populations and collecting cash taxes that financed such services. This interpretation of guild dynamics squares with the prevailing characterization of imperial meat provisioning systems in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In a study focusing on Ottoman Anatolia, Suraiya Faroqhi has shown that in the sixteenth century central state authorities forcibly appointed wealthy provincial men, especially those accused of usury, to the position of butcher (*kaşap*) in Istanbul, and that the most important criterion for appointment was personal wealth. The wealth of these appointees was subsequently appropriated through various means to finance the importation of meat to the capital.⁴⁶ Going beyond the work of Faroqhi, Greenwood demonstrates in his monograph on the *celepkeşân*, or meat provisioners, that Ottoman authorities were compelled to devise an array of procurement and tax-raising strategies aimed at ensuring long-term and regular provisioning of Istanbul. Greenwood further traces the shift of the *celepkeşân* system in the early seventeenth century from an in-kind payment to a money tax, and to this shift he links the creation of the office of *kaşapbaşı*. Holders of this office,

⁴⁶ Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 228–240.

according to Greenwood, were given “responsibility for ensuring that sufficient numbers of sheep were brought to the city,” and were specifically charged with providing sheep to three groups: “the general population, . . . the dependent populations, that is the Palace and janisseries, and . . . the army on campaign.”⁴⁷ If the level of state demands in the provinces were similar to those in Istanbul, then the imperative of imperial provisioning may have given rise to the formation of similar offices throughout the empire, dominating the duties of guild leaders and largely shaping their relations with the rank-and-file guildsmen.

Such an interpretation of internal guild relations, however, characterized as it is by a top-down dynamic, neglects the real possibility that leadership offices were sustained in part from below. According to this conception, the guild head was an ambitious guildsman or entrepreneur who saw guild leadership as an opportunity to acquire power and wealth by means both legal and illegal. The imperial state was still requisitioning supplies and imposing taxes, but the large scale of these demands increased the potential for large profits and attracted guildsmen—or non-guildsmen—to seek this office. The guild head profited in at least three ways. First, he may have benefited from the difference between the price at which he purchased basic commodities, such as sheep and grain, and the price at which he distributed them either to guildsmen or to other state officials, principally the provincial governor and the qadi. This process was closely regulated, however, and he may have had difficulty obtaining substantial profits. Second, since the guild head exerted some measure of control over the access to commodities brought to the city, he may have taken bribes or kickbacks as compensation for giving advantages to certain guild members in the distribution of commodities of varying quality. Finally, if a man of liquid wealth, the guild head could have made considerable profit through lending money to guild members as tax obligations came to outweigh their immediate resources. A similar process is documented for Aleppo in the eighteenth century, when local urban elites used their tenure as tax farmers of rural lands as a means to establish long-

⁴⁷ Antony Greenwood, “Istanbul’s Meat Provisioning: A Study of the *Celepkeşan* System,” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1988, pp. 40–43. On the importance of meat-provisioning in the Balkan economy, see Bistra Cvetkova, “Les *Celep* et leur Rôle dans la Vie Economique des Balkans à l’Époque Ottomane (Xve-XVIIes),” in M.A. Cook, ed., *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 172–92, esp. 187–88.

term, profitable credit relations with village populations and to secure continuous access to their agricultural produce.⁴⁸ The conception of the guild head as an enterprising businessman with organizational skills and commercial acumen finds corroboration in a study of Mosul which shows that Ottoman armies regularly awarded lucrative, highly-sought-after contracts for military supplies and services to persons, either merchants or soldiers, who could marshal such resources rapidly and efficiently in urgent wartime situations.⁴⁹ Although the guild head thus conceived can be in some ways regarded as a war profiteer, the urgency of state demands and threat of military defeat also meant that persons of great organizational talent and ability were needed, and in such fluid environments these persons could rise to positions of responsibility and leadership. Relations between guild leadership and the rank-and-file are in this context largely determined by the parity of economic status among guild members and by more personal factors such as the ambition of the guild head. The turnover of persons occupying the positions of guild leadership may thus reflect vigorous competition for the opportunities of wealth and power the office offered. As a corollary to this, in times of reduced state demand, less ambitious men sought the post, and the guild head exerted less influence. While this dynamic was most evident in “frontier” cities such as Mosul, it could also develop in major administrative centers of the empire.

The two hypothetical situations as set forth above describe what may be called ideal types of guild leadership; neither was ever realized in pure form, but such types are useful because they illustrate certain tendencies in guild dynamics. Persons occupying the office of *kaşapbaşı* and other provisioning agents were neither compliant instruments of the state, as suggested in the first set of circumstances, nor entrepreneurs driven solely by ambition, as in the second. Rather, our evidence indicates that the conduct of the provisioning officers combined some of both of these types of behavior—in certain patterns that merit closer investigation.

⁴⁸ Margaret Meriwether, “Urban Notables and Rural Resources,” 69–72; and idem, “The Notable Families of Aleppo,” 179–97. See also Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, passim.

⁴⁹ Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, Chapter 3, “War and Provincial Society,” 44–74. Her analysis of state-society relations is based in part on the theory of state formation developed by Charles Tilly in his book, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A. D. 990–1990* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

The Butchers

Abdul-Karim Rafeq has noted that Ottoman authorities in the Syrian provinces sought early on to control certain guilds whose products and services were “of public and private interest.” State authorities did this in part, he argues, by appointing an official with the title of *baş* (head) over the guild; hence, a *kaşapbaşı* was appointed over the butchers’ guild (*ta’ifat al-qaşşābīn*). Similarly, authorities appointed a *mi’marbaşı* over guilds of builders (*ta’ifat al-mi’māriyya*), an *uncubaşı* over the millers and bakers, and a *bazarbaşı* over the grocers and a number of vendors of other foodstuffs.⁵⁰ It is clear, in the cases of the *kaşapbaşı*, *uncubaşı*, and *bazarbaşı* that Ottoman authorities, primarily the governor and qadi, were acting to supervise the regular supply of vital foodstuffs and other essential commodities to the local population, to locally assigned officials, and when necessary, to armies on campaign.

The story of the leadership of the butchers in Aleppo in the seventeenth century is largely the story of the *kaşapbaşı* and his domination of the rank-and-file membership, specifically in the external affairs of the guild. It appears that in the sixteenth century a *shaykh al-qaşşābīn* was ordinarily appointed over all districts (*şawāyiḥ*) of the city, and each district had its own *shaykh*.⁵¹ Surveying court documents in the years 1640–1700, however, we find mention of the office of *shaykh al-qaşşābīn*, the traditional leadership position of this city-wide guild, only once, in 1640, and at that time it and the office of *kaşapbaşı* were occupied by two different people.⁵² This does not seem to be simply a substitution of a Turkish term for an Arabic one, that is, a process in which court usage shifted from *shaykh al-qaşşābīn* to *kaşapbaşı*.⁵³

⁵⁰ Rafeq, “Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī,” 139–140; idem, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and Strains of Change” 497, 501; and idem, “Law-Court Registers,” 141–159, esp. 151–52.

⁵¹ SMS 6:280, *Awāsiḥ* RA 996/8–17 February 1588, cited in Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and Strains of Change,” 500.

⁵² SMS 22:21, 4 B 1050/20 October 1640. In this document, the *kaşapbaşı*, the *shaykh al-qaşşābīn*, and ranking members of the butchers’ guild provide expert testimony in a dispute between brokers (*dallālīn*) and sheepdrivers (*jallābū al-ghanam*) over sale of sheep in urban markets.

⁵³ Cf. ‘Abd al-Ghānī ‘Imād, *al-Sulṭa fi Bilād al-Shām fi al-qarn al-thāmin ‘ashar* (Beirut: Dār al-Nafā‘is, 1993), 247; and Khālid Ziyāda, *al-Şūra al-taqlīdiyya li’l-mujtama’ al-madīnī: qira’a minhājiyya fi sijillāt maḥkama Tarābulus al-shar’iyya fi al-qarn al-sābi’ ‘ashar wa bidāyat al-qarn al-thāmin ‘ashar* (Tripoli: al-Jāmi’a al-Lubnāniyya,

First, the language of the overwhelming majority of court documents in which this term appears is Arabic, so the use of the Turkish term *kaşapbaşı* was clearly intentional and specific. Second, the court continued to use the title of shaykh for the rest of the century to refer to the chief administrative officer of the vast majority of the guilds.⁵⁴ Finally, court records provide other important contemporaneous cases in which the office of the provisioning officer and the office of the shaykh were kept separate. Rafeq observes that in seventeenth-century Damascus there were two separate offices, *kaşapbaşı* and *shaykh al-qaşşābīn*, which were occupied by two different people; in Aleppo, also, the millers' guild (*ta'ifat al-taḥḥānīn*) had both a *shaykh al-taḥḥānīn* and *uncubaşı*, occupied by different persons, for decades.⁵⁵ Members of the butchers' guild in Aleppo may still have chosen a person they addressed as shaykh, but in the period under study he ceased to figure in any court actions and therefore would have had relatively fewer official intermediary functions than shaykhs of many other guilds. His functions would have been largely internal and probably ceremonial.

The *kaşapbaşı* wielded broad powers equivalent to any guild shaykh. Many documents record the *kaşapbaşı* acknowledging receipt of payment for supplies or services rendered from representatives of the governor or qadi.⁵⁶ Curiously, we have in hand no explicit statement of the responsibility of the butchers and their leadership in Aleppo for the

1983), 142–51. In his study of power relations in the Syrian provinces during the eighteenth century, Imād asserts without citing his source that the terms *kaşapbaşı* and *shaykh al-qaşşābīn* were interchangeable. He does not attempt to explain the appearance of the suffix *-baş* and seems to accept its coupling with a noun denoting profession as simply another designation for a guild head. Curiously, most of his citations of the court records in this discussion date to the *seventeenth* century. Ziyāda in his study of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Tripoli uses documents in which the *kaşapbaşı* is a major player, but he omits any explanation for the appearance of the office.

⁵⁴ “Shaykh” was also ordinarily used in Cairo and Damascus to refer to the chief administrative officer of a guild. See Rafeq, “Craft Organizations, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change,” *passim*; and Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 551–78. In contrast, in seventeenth-century Istanbul the office of shaykh (*şeyh*) was, according to Mantran, largely ceremonial and religious in function; see *Istanbul*, 360–67. Yi does not challenge this view; see her “Istanbul Guilds,” 97–112; and *idem*, *Guild Dynamics*, 72–74.

⁵⁵ Rafeq, “Law-Court Registers,” 151–52.

⁵⁶ For examples of documents recording receipt of payment, see SMS 24:142, 2 S 1055/30 March 1645; SMS 27:28, 4 D 1067/13 September 1657; and SMS 27:178, 26 M 1070/19 September 1659.

regular and sufficient provisioning of the urban population at large; comparative evidence from neighboring provinces, however, suggests that such public duties were common. In seventeenth-century Tripoli, a *kaşapbaşı* was appointed with the stipulation that he ensure the provision of meat both to official households and to the population of the city.⁵⁷ From other court documents we learn that the *kaşapbaşı* directly purchased livestock from rural providers for resale to the butchers' guild,⁵⁸ distributed and collected various taxes among the butcher's guild and associated guilds;⁵⁹ assisted in the fixing of prices for sheepskins sold to the tanners' guild;⁶⁰ represented the butchers in the contracting of collective loans with creditors;⁶¹ enforced restrictions on the procurement of meat by butchers;⁶² and rented slaughtering facilities for the use by butchers.⁶³

Ordinarily appearing in court with the *kaşapbaşı* were the *yiğitbaşıs*, who represented branches of the guild in different districts of the city and assisted or deputized for the *kaşapbaşı* in the fulfillment of his duties.⁶⁴ With respect to district leadership, the title of *yiğitbaşı* seems to have displaced that of shaykh, which was in use in the late sixteenth century, though there are a few instances in the seventeenth century in which *yiğitbaşı* and shaykh were used interchangeably.⁶⁵ In either

⁵⁷ Ziyāda, *al-Şūra al-taqlidiyya*, 149–50. In Jerusalem in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, the qadi expressly ordered the head of the butchers' guild (*shaykh al-qaşşābīn*, or *shaykh al-lahhāmīn*) to ensure meat was available for local inhabitants, and the qadi himself was involved in the procurement of meat in both routine and urgent situations. A separate *kaşapbaşı* office was not established in Jerusalem, perhaps reflecting the smaller scale of public and state demand in this town. See Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 14–15. For observations on Anatolian towns, see Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 239–40.

⁵⁸ SMS 28:32, 28 M 1071/3 October 1660; and SMS 28:20, 24 M 1071/29 September 1660.

⁵⁹ SMS 3:423, B 1065/May–June 1655.

⁶⁰ SMS 27:1, 25 J 1067/10 April 1657.

⁶¹ SMS 27:54, 17 R 1068/22 January 1658.

⁶² SMS 27:160, 13 L 1069/4 July 1659.

⁶³ SMS 27:A497, 10 M 1077/13 July 1666.

⁶⁴ Curiously, the title of *yiğitbaşı* does not appear in the court records of Damascus in the same period. See Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 501. The four districts represented were: al-Saqāṭiyya, the central intramural market area west of the citadel; Khārīj Bāb al-Naşr, the suburbs north of the walled town; Banqūsa, the suburbs east and northeast of the walled town; and Bāb al-Nayrab, the suburbs south and southeast of the walled town.

⁶⁵ SMS 6:280, *Awasiṭ* RA 996/8–17 February 1588. On the interchangeability of the titles of shaykh and *yiğitbaşı*, see the titles used by one butcher, Naşr al-Dīn b. Nūr al-Dīn al-Qubba in the following documents: SMS 27:348, 24 DA 1071/21 July 1661;

case, the division of the city's butchers into a set of equally-ranked districts and the appointment over each district of an administrative chief point to the systematic and centralized administration of this sector of the urban economy. The social status of *yiğitbaşı*s was typically high; some were *ashrāf*, others had family names, and still others possessed the title, "*hāj*j." Yet the authority of the *yiğitbaşı* within his district was clearly checked and based on regular consultation with his constituents. In those cases in which the entirety of the city's butchers were represented in court—where one might suppose that the *kaşapbaşı* and the assembled *yiğitbaşı*s would constitute sufficient representation—the *yiğitbaşı* was invariably accompanied by a number of other butchers from his district.⁶⁶ The precise nature of power relations between the *kaşapbaşı* and the *yiğitbaşı*s remains obscure. One final official, the *shaykh al-jubb*, appears only once in the records, on the occasion of a price-fixing agreement.⁶⁷ The nature of his office can only be surmised, but it seems likely that, given that *jubb* means "water well," he had some sort of responsibility for the water source where the butchers cleaned meat products.

The Kasapbaşı: Compensation and Social Background

The *kasapbaşı* appears to have been compensated for his services through the combination of an officially recognized partnership (*sharika*) and a package of commercial concessions and tax privileges. With regard to the *sharika*, the number of partners varied between two and four in our sources, but the constituent elements of the partnership were the same: a dominant partner, who was titled *kaşapbaşı*, and one or more of his subordinate partners (*sharīk*, pl. *shurakā*²; or *rafīq*, pl. *rufaqa*³). The partnership, which in our survey is mentioned only in Arabic documents, was collectively called the *qassābbāshīyya*, which as an Arabic term of mixed Turkish origin testifies to the hybrid nature

SMS 28:655, 5 § 1073/15 March 1663; and SMS 27:501, 29 JA 1074/29 December 1663.

⁶⁶ On the social status of the butchers and the plurality of their representatives in court, see the following documents: SMS 27:54, 17 R 1068/22 January 1658; SMS 27:113, 11 M 1069/9 October 1658; and SMS 27:144, 16 B 1069/9 April 1659.

⁶⁷ The person occupying the office of *shaykh al-jubb*, a certain Nāsir [al-Dīn] Beşe [b. Nūr al-Dīn al-Qubba], was also for a time the *yiğitbaşı* of the central city district (*Şāyih al-Saqāṭīyya*). See SMS 27:A438, 17 J 1075/5 January 1665.

and the local currency of the institution. Some idea of how the office operated is indicated by a document dating from 1661. In it, Ḥājj ‘Izz al-Dīn b. Ḥājj Fattāḥ the *kaṣapbaşı* and his two partners (*rafiqāhu*) Ḥājj ‘Umar b. Ḥasan and Ḥājj Ḥamāda b. Ḥājj Shams al-Dīn, all described as exercising the rights of the office of the *kaṣapbaşı*, freely chose a butcher with military status, Ni‘ma Beşe b. Muḥyi al-Dīn al-Qaṣṣāb, to be a partner (*sharik*) with them in the office. They agreed, the document continues, “that jointly and on the basis of their own reputations (*bi-wujūhihim*) they will purchase sheep and sell the meat; whatever profit (*riḥ*) is gained is to be divided between them four ways, each receiving a quarter, and this only after excluding the principal (*ra’s al-māl*), which is a legal obligation incumbent on them; and whatever loss they incur of the principal invested in this partnership will be borne in four parts equally among them.”⁶⁸ Triggering this agreement was the investment by Ni‘ma Beşe of 100 *ghurūsh asadī*, a substantial sum roughly equivalent to the value of a mid-sized house in Aleppo, in the partnership. We might conclude from this example that generally the partnership structure of the *kaṣapbaşı* office joined financial means, sometimes from extra-guild resources, with guildsmen who had the trust of their colleagues.

This agreement clearly supports the interpretation that persons occupying the office of *kaṣapbaşı*, who were the *de facto* leaders of the butchers’ guild, could expect profit (or loss) in the exercise of their authority. The type of partnership into which they entered cannot be determined with certainty. One possibility is that it is a *sharikat al-wujūh*, or credit partnership, but given that we do not know the initial financial investments of the original three partners, we cannot determine whether the division of profits (or losses) corresponds to the proportions of all individual investments, which is an essential feature of this type of partnership. Under this arrangement, also called the partnership of the penniless (*sharikat al-mafālis*), partners lacking sufficient capital of their own but enjoying good reputation (*wajh*, pl. *wujūh*) seek financing from external sources, in effect borrowing the capital.⁶⁹ The fact, however, that the 1661 agreement does not expressly stipulate this principle of correspondence between investment and profit does not aid us in our judgment; indeed, the division

⁶⁸ SMS 27:333, 5 L 1071/3 June 1661.

⁶⁹ Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, 80–82.

of profits (or losses) without reference to this principle may suggest a second possibility, the *sharikat al-'inān*, or limited investment partnership. Under this flexible, legally-sanctioned arrangement, the parties involved could jointly agree to vary the contribution of each partner to the principal, the share of the profit and liability apportioned to each, as well as the categories of commerce and goods to which the arrangement applies. An important feature of both types of partnership was limited liability: partners were not compelled to invest their entire property.⁷⁰ The use of the phrase "*bi-wujūhihim*," literally "[relying] on their faces" in the agreement may suggest the *wujūh* partnership, but given the lack of comparative material from the Ottoman period, the usage is not decisive. A recent study of guild life in seventeenth-century Istanbul documents the existence of *'inān* and other kinds of legal partnerships, but not the *wujūh* relationship; another study, which surveys business partnerships in Islamic societies, notes the limited use of the *wujūh* in business contracts in Ottoman Istanbul.⁷¹

The partnership arrangement nevertheless entailed considerable risk for the incumbent. Any number of factors were at play, including uncertainty as to whether the governor or qadi would pay for supplies, the irregularity of livestock supply from the hinterland, and the garrisoning of a large number of troops in the vicinity of the city, which entailed a heightened demand for meat and possibly the imposition of arbitrary taxes. It is not surprising, then, that the *kaşapbaşı* was also able to obtain regular compensation from the rank-and-file guild membership. Having an interest in attracting and keeping a stable and effective leadership, the rank-and-file membership may have acceded to the *kaşapbaşı*'s requests after losses sustained by the office in previous years. Indeed, the regular subsidy to the *kaşapbaşı*, fully documented in the court records, constituted official recognition that the governor and other state officials assigned to the province were unable or unwilling to pay market prices for their supplies.

Tracing the form that the compensation took over time may suggest not only the degree of risk undertaken by the *kaşapbaşı* but also the extent of power and influence the *kaşapbaşı* could exert over the rank-and-file. In the period of our study, compensation initially took

⁷⁰ Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, 119–41.

⁷¹ See, respectively, Yi, "Istanbul Guilds," 138–40; and Murat Çizakça, *A Comparative Evolution of Business Partnerships: The Islamic World and Europe, with Specific Reference to the Ottoman Archives* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 82–83.

the form of a package of commercial concessions and tax privileges. In 1649, the *kaşapbaşı* agreed to supply 50 *raṭls*⁷² of meat daily to the kitchen of the governor. The butchers would in exchange remit to him the profits (*fā'ida*) from the sale of meat of six head of sheep each day, these sheep being sold according to the current fixed price (*al-narkh al-jārī*) in markets of the city. Additionally, the butchers would defray a certain tax (*kharj ma'qūl*) assessed on the shops owned by the *kaşapbaşı* and grant him the exclusive right to profits from the sale of meat in the Jewish quarter (Maḥallat al-Yahūd) of the city.⁷³ This was no mean compensation: the marketing of the six head of sheep seems to have been direct and equivalent reimbursement for the costs of the sheep provided to the governor, while the tax privileges and commercial concession were a form of salary. The profits from sales to the Jewish community, which were reaffirmed in an agreement ten years later, must have been considerable over the long term. According to the records of a property tax survey taken in 1678, there were 94 registered households (*beyts*) in the Jewish quarter.⁷⁴ The *kaşapbaşı* also appears to have enjoyed the right to collect taxes from certain guilds in what was called a *yamaḵ* relationship—an arrangement from which he may have personally profited.⁷⁵ In Damascus, the *kaşapbaşı* seems to have been given more limited compensation; according to one agreement in 1690, he was assigned the tax revenue (*'awā'id*) of four shops, which were probably owned by butchers.⁷⁶

Documents from the years 1658–67 indicate that compensation of the *kaşapbaşı* in Aleppo took the form of a more regulated commer-

⁷² The *raṭl* was a unit of weight equal to one-hundredth of a *qintār*, which was considered to be the equivalent of a standard camel load, roughly 200–300 kg. European sources record that the *raṭl* was the equivalent of 1.984 to 2.040 kilograms. Therefore, 50 *raṭls* would have been equal to a range of between 99.2 and 100.2 kg. See Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, xvii; and Inalcik, *An Economic and Social History*, xlii. Cf. Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500–1700* (London: University College London, 1999), Appendix IV, 203.

⁷³ SMS 25:225, 16 M 1059/30 January 1649. The *kaşapbaşı*, a certain Muḥammad 'Alī Beşe b. Muḥyi al-Dīn, struck this agreement apparently after a *kaşapbaşı* partnership involving him and two other persons collapsed only days before. See SMS 25:222, 11 M 1059/25 January 1649.

⁷⁴ For the second agreement, see SMS 27:160, 13 L 1069/4 July 1659. For household information produced by the 1678 survey, see MM 8467:29b–31a. For a discussion of population figures relating to the total Jewish population in Aleppo, see Masters, "Patterns of Migration," 89; and idem, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 89.

⁷⁵ See the section below on the *yamaḵ* relationship.

⁷⁶ Rafeq, "Law-Court Registers," 151–52.

cial concession. Every three months, according to a mutually acknowledged custom, the guilds of the butchers and tanners were to set prices jointly on sheepskins that the butchers would sell to the tanners for tanning; available records indicate that such joint agreements actually took place once or twice on average each year. Two standard categories of prices were established, one for the sheepskins sold by the rank-and-file butchers, and one for the sheepskins sold by the *kaşapbaşı*; in every case, the *kaşapbaşı* received a higher price for his products, usually ten percent more.⁷⁷ The higher price, we contend, did not reflect an arbitrary tax on the tanners but rather the higher quality of sheepskin. Since the *kaşapbaşı* played a central role in the procurement and distribution of sheep among the butchers, he could select the healthiest and finest breed of sheep for processing in his own shop(s); and this was an arrangement to which the rank-and-file guild members of both the tanners and butchers consented in court. That commodity prices and the *kaşapbaşı*'s concession were regularly renegotiated in court suggests a resurgence in the court's supervision of guild affairs. As the court registers cover only parts of the second half of the century, it is difficult to say whether this level of supervision continued, but the fact that not a single other joint agreement between butchers and tanners is found points to a relapse in administrative practice. We might conclude that the administrative vigor of the court in these years is due to the reforms of the Köprülü grand viziers.

It appears that towards the end of this period the *kaşapbaşı* obtained greater leverage vis-a-vis the rank-and-file, though not without opposition. In 1663, Ni'ma Beşe b. Muhyi al-Din, the same as described above, complained that while performing the duties of that office he had suffered fraud (*ghadr*) and sustained heavy losses, and he now threatened to resign. Senior members of the butcher's guild responded with an agreement that augmented the compensation of the *kaşapbaşı*. The agreement stipulated that Ni'ma Beşe was to purchase 1,500 head

⁷⁷ Agreements between butchers and tanners on sheepskin prices can be found only for the years 1656–67. These agreements arguably reflect a well-established practice that was instituted many years, perhaps decades, earlier. The considerable number and regularity of these agreements in these years are persuasive in this regard; that they were recorded only in these years points to the strong possibility that it was a period when the court gave increased attention to such matters. See Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 42–45. For similar price-fixing agreements between tanners and butchers, but without advantageous prices for the administrative head of the butchers, see Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 95.

of sheep in the month of *Shawwāl* of that year, then slaughter them and distribute them to the butchers, who would in turn sell them at market prices and return any profit to him. This was, they stated, to reimburse him for his losses; members of the guild of itinerant meat-sellers (*tā'ifat al-jārikjiyya*) at the same time agreed not to slaughter or sell, which would have had the effect of increasing the scarcity of meat and thereby raising prices.⁷⁸ A sign that this was not universally accepted among the guild members was an agreement secured one week later in which some butchers acknowledged that if any of them opposed the *kaşapbaşı* in this arrangement, the offending member would pay a fine of 500 *ghurūsh asadī*, a large sum.⁷⁹ Ni'ma Beşe's power seems to have held, as he was able to extract a similar agreement from the butchers eleven months later.⁸⁰ From these documents is obtained some sense of the socio-economic gap between Ni'ma Beşe, who still had the liquidity or credit to purchase 1,500 head of sheep, and the members of the butchers' guild at large, who had to pool their resources and make substantial additional sales concessions for an entire month. Ni'ma Beşe was hardly in a situation of personal bankruptcy, yet his complaints were clearly heeded by guildsmen, suggesting the influence that he had over the guild as a whole. In the arrangement above, the guild had become, in effect, a marketing network, albeit temporary, for the *kaşapbaşı*, in which he consigned commodities for sale and recouped the entire profit.⁸¹ This arrangement recalls the strategy by which wealthy neighborhood residents paid their property taxes—and perhaps the taxes of their poorer neighbors: they consigned other kinds of commodities, notably rice and coffee, to quarter residents for marketing and allotted a share of the profits to their fiscal obligations.⁸²

⁷⁸ SMS 28:616, 27 J 1073/6 February 1663.

⁷⁹ SMS 28:662, 5 B 1073/13 February 1663. The threat of punishment against guild members for opposition to guild leadership, including shaykhs, was not unprecedented. See SMS 15:352, 28 M 1038/27 September 1628; SMS 27:A433, 29 R 1075/19 November 1664; and Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 498–99.

⁸⁰ SMS 27:501, 29 JA 1074/29 December 1663.

⁸¹ If the case of Tripoli is representative, the *kaşapbaşı* could also exert power outside the butchers' guild. In this port city in the 1680s, the *kaşapbaşı* tried to impose a forced sale of buffalo hides (*julūd al-jāmūs*) on the slippermakers (*tā'ifat al-asākifa*), an action which the guild successfully resisted. See Ziyāda, *al-Şūra al-taqlīdiyya*, 146; and the section on *yamaḳ* relationship, below.

⁸² On neighborhood strategies to defray property taxes, see Chapter Two.

The fragmentary coverage of the local court records after 1667 does not permit us to follow changes in the compensation of the *kaşapbaşı* as closely in the final third of the century. We know that the partnership arrangement, through which those occupying the office of *kaşapbaşı* divided profits and losses, was maintained at least through the first decade of the eighteenth century, which itself suggests some continuity in the fortunes of the office. Evidence does, however, point to worsening conditions for the *kaşapbaşı*. In 1672 the *kaşapbaşı* submitted a formal complaint to the Sublime Porte reporting that the customary fees (*awā'id*) that he had paid to past governors, qadis and other officials had increased, and seeking an order that would return fee levels to those prescribed by the law (*shar'*).⁸³ Again in 1681, the *kaşapbaşı* complained to central authorities that the janissary commander stationed in Aleppo refused to pay for a substantial amount of meat he was receiving daily for his own subsistence.⁸⁴

Perhaps because of the greater demands imposed by high officials, the office of *kaşapbaşı* had become less remunerative and desirable. The document, dating from 1706, suggests that appointment to the office could be compulsory and necessitate the intervention of court authorities. A certain Hâjj Murâd Beşe b. Muhyi al-Dîn, in all likelihood the brother of the aforementioned Ni'ma, testified before the local court that Mu'allim (Master) Muhannâ b. Ahmad and Muştafâ Çorbacı b. Muḥammad Çorbacı had jointly occupied the office of *kaşapbaşı* previously but resigned, and he had been appointed in their place. He reported, however, that now he was unable (*âjiz*) to fulfil the duties of the office, and when he requested that they return and join him in the *qaşşâbbâshiyya*, they refused. In an intriguing response, Master Muhannâ and Muştafâ Çorbacı countered that when they resigned from the post, they made an solemn oath (*nadhr*) that if either of them sought the office of *kaşapbaşı* or meddled in its affairs ever again, each of them would pay a fine of 1,000 *ghurûsh*, a very large sum, to the state treasury, and for that reason they refused to join a partnership (*sharika*). The qadi, however, ruled that this oath

⁸³ AŞ 8:52, *Awâ'il* S 1083/29 May–7 June 1672.

⁸⁴ AŞ 9:18, *Awâsiḥ* M 1092/31 January–9 February 1681. The janissary commander was demanding seven *baṭmâns* of meat from the *kaşapbaşı* daily. A *baṭmân* varied according to region, weighing anywhere from 2.309 kg (Urfa, 19th century) to 9.236 kg (Mosul, 19th century). According to Inalcik, the standard *baṭmân* was equal to 23.094 kg. See Halil Inalcik, *An Economic and Social History*, xxxvii; and idem, "Ottoman Metrology," 312–313, 326–340.

was unlawful (*ghayr mashrūʿ*) and he immediately appointed them to the office and gave them permission to form a partnership with Ḥājj Murād.⁸⁵ If the “inability” of Ḥājj Murād to serve in his office refers to insufficient financial resources, then this situation is not unlike that in 1661, when the then-current *kaşapbaşı* officers chose his brother Niʿma Beşe as a partner in the *kaşapbaşı* office. The difference between the two events would be the more prominent element of compulsion in 1706, suggesting a more urgent state demand for supplies. That Master Muhannā and Muştafā Çorbacı put forward a previous oath as a valid impediment in a court of law suggests that such oaths had some force, but in this context their defense should be viewed as a ruse to avoid being named to the post and incur financial obligations.⁸⁶ Clearly the state, represented here by the qadi, took an active interest in ensuring that a *kaşapbaşı* was appointed so that a regular supply of meat reached the population and state servants; when financial incentives were insufficiently attractive, the state could and did intervene.

Returning to the question of partnership formation, we note that partnerships of two or more persons in the *kaşapbaşı* office are documented in Aleppo for most decades in the period of our study (1640–1700); significantly, no evidence has yet come to light indicating that provisioning officers in Damascus and Tripoli, the other major Syrian cities, also formed partnerships in a like manner.⁸⁷ The regular appearance of partnerships in Aleppo seems to be at odds with court attitudes toward economic organization as evinced by other court documents. On the basis of documents drawn from the court records of both Damascus and Aleppo, Abdul-Karim Rafeq argues that “workshops were usually small and were run mostly by individuals.” “The tendency toward individual work within the *ṭāʾifa* [guild],” Rafeq goes on, “was maintained by internal regulations and was supported by the qadi.”⁸⁸ The partnership practices of the *kaşapbaşı* and, as we shall see

⁸⁵ SMS 2:101, 22 R 1119/23 July 1707.

⁸⁶ That Master Muhannā and Muştafā Çorbacı claimed the oath as a defense suggests that such an act was customary in the process of resignation (*farāgh*). In any case, one suspects that the earlier injunction against their “interference” in guild affairs was to prevent them from collecting on monetary losses they had incurred while serving in the office previously.

⁸⁷ Ziyāda, *al-Şūra al-taqlīdiyya*, 142–51, esp. 149–50; and Rafeq, “Law-Court Registers,” 151–52.

⁸⁸ On the tendency of guild members toward individual work and enterprise, see Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change,” 504.

below, other provisioning officers, thus constitute a notable exception to this general pattern.

In trying to understand the rise of partnerships in Aleppo, we might relate such arrangements to another flourishing contemporaneous institution: the tax farm. Indeed, the use of business partnerships to finance provisioning for the general population and for state officials can be considered a more informal manifestation of the tax farm administrative mechanism. The relationship between the tax farmer (*multazim*) and his guarantors (*kafil*, pl. *kufalā'*), or between equal partners in a multiple tax farm arrangement, operated much as a business partnership in which the investors pooled private capital both to meet state needs and to make profit (and distribute risk). Similarly, the *kaşapbaşı* organized partnerships with the aim of deriving profit while supplying local populations.⁸⁹ One key difference was the degree of centralization: whereas the central state administration controlled the competition for tax farms by having persons submit formal bids to Istanbul, local court authorities, notably the *qadi*, watched over and sometimes intervened in financing the supply of basic commodities by offering financial incentives to would-be agents. The *qadi* was essentially contracting out the duty of provisioning; and he arranged for compensation of the agent not through direct transfers of cash but rather through the sanction of commercial concessions and privileges. The second key difference was, in the case of the *kaşapbaşı*, the greater imperative of public subsistence. The *qadi* would not tolerate an interruption in public supply and could forcibly appoint a *kaşapbaşı* and mobilize his capital for public welfare. On the other hand, when there was no one bidding for a conventional tax farm, according to central state records, the bidding threshold would drop considerably or the office would go vacant. The quasi-tax farm arrangement that the *kaşapbaşı* institution represented was, in essence, a replication of the formal tax farm institution introduced by the *qadi* and taken up either by soldiers who presumably had come to exert influence on the guild as tax collectors, or by guildsmen, many of whom had themselves become clients of soldiers.

By inquiring into the social status and professional background of persons occupying the office of *kaşapbaşı*, we can account for the

⁸⁹ For a discussion of partnerships in the *iltizām* system, see Çizakça, *Business Partnerships*, 146–59.

degree of influence that these persons enjoyed among the butchers. A principal theme in the social history of Ottoman Arab lands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the increasing participation of imperial military-administrative cadres in the economic life of the provinces. For Ottoman Egypt, one pioneering study has shown in depth the mechanics by which soldiers exploited urban craft organizations,⁹⁰ and another has systematically elaborated an institutional model, the patrimonial household, to explain how Ottoman military and other elites organized themselves to obtain and maintain power in urban and rural economies.⁹¹ Studies of the Fertile Crescent have tended to follow those of Egypt. Still, works by Bodman, Holt and Rafeq have established the standard chronology of state military interventions in Bilad al-Sham and identified the major ramifications and features of such processes.⁹² Within this context, one project has been to determine whether there were seventeenth-century precedents to the markedly increased involvement of military-administrative cadres in provincial society and economy in the following century. By way of comparison, as part of his study of economic life in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Aleppo, Bruce Masters traces the social makeup of those occupying the office of *shāhbandar* (the head of long-distance merchants). His conclusion that these merchants were still able at the end of the seventeenth century to check the encroachment of military-administrative elites on their professional sphere supports his more general contention that decisive militarization of commercial life took place only in the eighteenth century.⁹³

A survey of those who held the office of *kaşapbaşı* in the seventeenth century suggests that soldiers were able to attain positions of leadership in guilds more quickly than in the corporation of long-distance merchants. Listing the holders of the *kaşapbaşı* office by name, Table 4.1 clearly shows the domination of the office by military cadres in the second half of the seventeenth century. The frequent appearance of the military title “*beşe*” indicates that the incumbents were members of

⁹⁰ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 587–657.

⁹¹ Hathaway, *Politics of households*, 17–31, 165–170, passim.

⁹² Bodman, *Political Factions*, 103–139; P.M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516–1922* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966); Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *Bilād al-Shām wa Mişr min al-faṭḥ al-Uṭhmānī ila ḥamlat Nābilyūn Būnābirt 1516–1798* (Damascus: n.p., 1967); idem, “Changes in the Relationship” and idem, “The Local Forces in Syria.”

⁹³ Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 57–60.

locally assigned army units. It is more difficult to determine precisely the units from which the officer-holders came. The title “*beşe*” was held not only by citadel guards (*müstaḥfizān*) but also locally assigned cavalry (*gönüllüyān*) and imperial janissaries (*yeniçeris*) residing in the city.⁹⁴ Only one incumbent, holding the additional title “*rājil*,” can be confidently identified as an imperial janissary, and that was in 1642.⁹⁵

Table 4.1. *Kaşapbaşıs* of Aleppo, 1640–1707

1640	Ḥājj Ṭāhā b. Ḥājj Maʿtūq
1642	Muṣṭafā Beşe b. Muḥammad Ibn Dūlānjī al-Rājil
1645	Ḥājj Ṭāhā b. Ḥājj Maʿtūq and his partner (<i>sharik</i>) Ḥājj Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Qaşşāb
1648	Ḥājj Muḥammad ʿAlī b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn
1649	Ḥājj Muḥammad [ʿAlī] Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn, Ḥājj Muḥammad b. Ḥājj Muḥammad, and Ḥājj Shaʿbān b. ʿAlī <i>al-Qaşşābbāshiyya</i>
1655	Ḥājj Muḥammad [ʿAlī] Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn
1657	Ḥājj Muḥammad ʿAlī Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn
1658	Ḥājj Murād Beşe b. Wahiba and his partner Muḥammad ʿAlī Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn
1659	Ḥājj Muḥammad ʿAlī Beşe b. Muḥyi al-Dīn and his partner Ḥājj Murād b. Wahiba
1660	Muḥammad Shāh Beşe b. ʿAlī
1661	Ḥājj Muḥammad ʿAlī Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn
1661	Ḥājj ʿIzz al-Dīn b. Ḥājj Fattūḥ and partners Ḥājj ʿUmar b. Ḥasan and Ḥājj Ḥammūda b. Ḥājj Shams al-Dīn <i>al-Mutaşarrifūn fiʿl-Qaşşābbāshiyya</i>
1661	Ḥājj Muḥammad ʿAlī Beşe b. Muḥyi al-Dīn and his partner Murād Beşe b. ʿAbdullāh
1661	Niʿma Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn

⁹⁴ See Chapter Three for a discussion of the title “*beşe*.”

⁹⁵ SMS 23:231, 15 B 1052/9 October 1642.

Table 4.1. (*cont.*)

1662	Ni'ma Beşe b. Hâjj Muhyi al-Dîn
1663	Ni'ma Beşe b. Hâjj Muhyi al-Dîn
1664	Ni'ma Beşe b. Hâjj Muhyi al-Dîn
1665	'Abd al-Karîm b. Muḥammad 'Alî Beşe
1666	Hâjj Muḥammad 'Ali Beşe b. Muhyi al-Dîn
1667	Hâjj Muḥammad 'Ali Beşe b. Muhyi al-Dîn
1672	[Sayyid?] 'Ali [b. Sayyid Nūh?]
1673	Hâjj Muḥammad 'Ali Beşe b. Muhyi al-Dîn and his partner Sayyid 'Ali b. Sayyid Nūh
1679	Hâjj Murād [Beşe b. Hâjj Muhyi al-Dîn]
1681	Hâjj Murād [Beşe b. Hâjj Muhyi al-Dîn]
1684	Master (Mu'allim) Hâjj Murād Beşe b. Hâjj Muhyi al-Dîn
1685	Hâjj Murād Beşe b. Muhyi al-Dîn
1707	Hâjj Murād Beşe b. Muhyi al-Dîn

Sources: Damascus, Center for Historical Documents (Dâr al-Wathâ'iq al-Târikhiyya), Sijillât al-Mahâkim al-Shar'iyya and Evâmir-i Sulţâniyye; and Istanbul, Prime Ministry Archives, Atik Şikayet Defterleri.

There is, however, some suggestive documentary evidence linking the citadel guards with the office of *kaşapbaşı* and the butchers' guild. It appears that in the 1640s and probably earlier, the office of the *kaşapbaşı* was held jointly by three or four members of the local guard force in the Aleppo citadel, the *müstahfizân*. The incumbents were empowered, in an *ocaklık* arrangement, to collect taxes for the tax farm (*muḳāṭa'a*) of Dâr al-Ghanam, the city's wholesale sheep marketing facility, and to distribute the proceeds to the guard force as salary.⁹⁶ Presumably, the access that the office gave the incumbents enabled them also to ensure a regular supply of meat to the soldiery. Soldiers who occupied the office of *kaşapbaşı* in 1640s may have used their powers as tax collectors to extend their control over the purchase and sale of sheep in the facility and thence to exert their influence over the butchers' guild itself. Tax farm documents and court records

⁹⁶ MM 4402:40, *Ghurrat* R 1057/6 May 1647.

show that the Dār al-Ghanam revenues were consistently assigned to the citadel guards at least until the end of the 1680s.⁹⁷ Yet even if the citadel guards no longer had exclusive rights over the *kaşapbaşı* office after the 1640s, their control over the Dār al-Ghanam tax farm meant that they could exert influence in the guild's affairs.

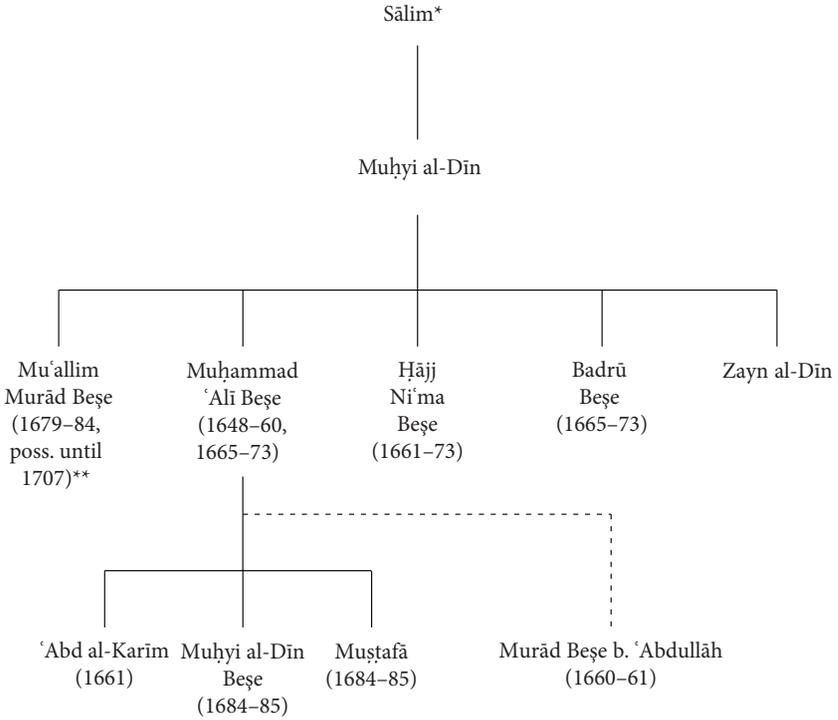
Domination of the office by military cadres, however, should not be ascribed solely to evolving state practice of *ocaklık* but rather to a combination, or sequence, of *ocaklık* and the rise of influential households that were military in origin or by assimilation. More specifically, one can argue that in Aleppo certain fiscal mechanisms, most notably the *ocaklık* system, served as a vehicle by which soldiers either entered guilds and subsequently attained positions of leadership or, alternatively, developed influence over guildsmen from outside the guild by means of clientage. A closer inspection of court records reveals that a majority of the incumbents listed in Table 4.1 were members of the same family, that of Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn b. Sālīm; indeed, the family dominated the office over the course of at least two generations (See Figure 4.1). Court documents suggest that the first person in this family to hold the office of *kaşapbaşı*, Ḥājj Muḥammad 'Alī Beşe b. Muḥyi al-Dīn, was a guildsman of means who by the late 1640s had both affiliated with a military unit and secured the office.⁹⁸ His commercial activities were diverse and extensive: the earliest surviving document records that as a butcher he was providing meat directly to military units and receiving in payment consignments of rice; and as the *kaşapbaşı* he remained active as a moneylender, not only to guildsmen but also to villagers.⁹⁹ Settlements of accounts with government officials toward the end of his career reveal that he also traded in slaves, horses, and Moroccan leather (*sakhtiyān*).¹⁰⁰ Joining Muḥammad 'Alī Beşe in office and sometimes alternating with him was his brother, Nī'ma Beşe b. Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn, who, while having a shorter tenure of some twelve years (1661–73), exerted, as we have already noted in a

⁹⁷ The tax farm was also known in Turkish as “Ḥān-i Ağnām.” MM 4402:40, 1058/1647–48; MM 9840:42, 1065/1654–55; MM 2519:45, 1 M 1070/18 September 1659; MM 657:81, 1085/1674–75; SMS 34:229, 5 JA 1090/14 June 1679; and SMS 36:141, 25 Ş 1098/6 July 1687.

⁹⁸ SMS 24:353, 21 S 1055/18 April 1645; and SMS 25:81, 7 B 1058/28 July 1648.

⁹⁹ SMS 24:353, 21 S 1055/18 April 1645; SMS 27:35, 14 M 1068/22 October 1657; and SMS 27:128, 2 R 1069/28 December 1658.

¹⁰⁰ SMS 32:160, 13 L 1083/1 February 1673; and SMS 32:201, 2 M 1084/19 April 1673.

Figure 4.1. Family of Muḥyi al-Dīn b. Sālīm, Butchers and *Ḳaṣapbaşı*s

* A solid line denotes a biological relationship and a dotted line denotes a patron-client relationship.

** Years given in parenthesis indicate the span of time during which the person was the *ḳaṣapbaşı* or a partner in that office.

Sources: Damascus, Center for Historical Documents, *Sijillāt al-Maḥākīm al-Shar'iyya* and *Evāmir-i Sulṭāniyye*; Istanbul, Prime Ministry Archives, *Atik Şikāyet Defterleri*.

preceding discussion, a powerful influence over the guild rank-and-file; his moneylending activities to guildsmen, furthermore, corroborate his influence.¹⁰¹ Muḥammad 'Alī Beşe's tenure in office, spanning twenty-five years (1648-73, with some interruptions), was exceeded only by that of his brother Master Murād Beşe, who served for at least 28 years (1679-84, with breaks, until at least 1707). We know relatively little about his economic activities, other than that he acted in some form of cooperation with his nephews, the sons of Muḥammad 'Alī

¹⁰¹ SMS 27:380, 20 JA 1072/11 January 1662; SMS 28:515, 3 R 1073/15 November 1662; SMS 27:457, 29 Ş 1073/8 April 1663; and SMS 30:289, 8 Ş 1074/6 March 1664.

Beşe, Muḥyi al-Dīn Beşe and Muṣṭafā.¹⁰² Yet another brother, Badr (sometimes “Badrū”) Beşe was a partner in the *kaşapbaşı* office, but the records otherwise remain silent on this person. A fifth brother, Zayn al-Dīn, is mentioned as a member of the butchers’ guild, but apparently held no leadership position.

A second generation of this family also figured in the office of *kaşapbaşı*. Two sons of Muḥammad ‘Alī Beşe, Muḥyi al-Dīn Beşe and Muṣṭafā, appear either independently or in tandem with their uncle Master Murād Beşe. Alliances of this kind point to the economic cohesion of this extended family. Indeed, the few instances of mutual cooperation and assistance among family members recorded in the court documents suggest that these ties may have been key to the family’s ability to maintain their hold on the *kaşapbaşı* office over a number of decades.¹⁰³ We are disadvantaged in determining more precisely the nature and extent of this cooperation since family members may have entered into internal agreements that were not recorded before the authorities. Significantly, the court records do not mention any explicit partnership (*sharika*) among members of this family; indeed, whenever a member of the family is mentioned in a *kaşapbaşı* partnership, it is invariably with someone outside the genealogy given in Figure 4.1. Formal partnerships between members of the family of Muḥyi al-Dīn, where they existed, remain hidden.

Our sources reveal even less about the social strategies by which the family may have preserved their wealth. Studies of family life in the Ottoman Arab lands have shown that upwardly mobile merchant families, to whom we may compare the family of Muḥyi al-Dīn, were more likely to marry outside the family, “since they needed to establish alliances with as many families as they could.”¹⁰⁴ Another strategies included the acquisition of slaves. Murād Beşe b. ‘Abdullāh, the *kaşapbaşı* for a short period in 1660, may have been the freedman of Muḥammad ‘Alī Beşe, since the patronymic “Ibn ‘Abdullāh” suggests a slave background, and Murād Beşe was for at least a time the partner

¹⁰² The less complete coverage of the court records in the 1680s and 1690s no doubt account in part for the paucity of documents relating to Mu‘allim Murād Beşe. See SMS 35:95, 13 § 1095/26 July 1684; and ES 1:61, *Awāsiṭ* L 1096/10–20 September 1685.

¹⁰³ SMS 27:151, 26 § 1069/19 May 1659; and SMS 27:223, 4 § 1070/15 April 1660.

¹⁰⁴ Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 138; Raymond, *Artisans et Commerçants*, II:411–15; and Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, 66–67.

(*sharīk*) of Muḥammad ‘Ali Beṣe. We have already noted Muḥammad ‘Ali Beṣe’s engagement in slavetrading.¹⁰⁵ One study has described how wealthy merchants and artisans in Cairo in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries “placed” freedman in local military units as a means of extending their influence.¹⁰⁶ Given Murād’s military title of *beṣe*, Muhammad ‘Ali Beṣe may have placed Murād Beṣe in a position to advance his standing with the citadel guards or other unit.

Historians have also drawn attention to the geographical and architectural aspects of household formation and maintenance. Focusing on Cairo, André Raymond has noted how military-administrative elites, in part bending to fashion, formed aristocratic neighborhoods, while Jane Hathaway has suggested that military-administrative household sites could range from spacious mansions, in the case to high-ranking officers, to middling houses and military barracks for lower-ranking soldiers.¹⁰⁷ Fortunately, the records of the cadastral survey of 1678, discussed in Part I, enable us to determine with some confidence where some members of the Muḥyi al-Dīn family resided, the degree of affluence they had attained (judging from the size of their houses), and, with somewhat less confidence, their military status. It is not altogether surprising to find the family residences concentrated in and around the southeastern, extramural quarter of Muḥammad Bey, where Dār al-Ghanam, the sheep marketing facility, was located.¹⁰⁸ One house (*beyt*), in the name of “Ḥājj Murād b. Muḥyi al-Dīn,” was classified as belonging to a member of the *re‘āyā* and therefore taxable (*kadīm*), and was assessed in the highest tax bracket, *a‘lā*, indicating that it was a large-scale property. A second house nearby, in the name of “Muḥammad ‘Ali b. Muḥyi al-Dīn,” was also classified as belonging to a member of the *re‘āyā*, and was assessed at *evsaṭ* which, although literally meaning “medium,” constituted only a small proportion of the city’s total houses, indicating that the house was larger than the average dwelling. In the adjacent extramural quarter of Ṣafṣāfa, Muḥammad

¹⁰⁵ See SMS 28:20, 24 M 1071/29 September 1660; SMS 28:32, 28 M 1071/3 October 1660; and SMS 28:29, 29 RA 1071/2 December 1660.

¹⁰⁶ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II: 678–80.

¹⁰⁷ Raymond, “Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique,” esp. 90–97; and Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, 26–27.

¹⁰⁸ There were, in fact, institutional links between the Dār al-Ghanam tax farm and the Muḥammad Bey quarter. According to one document, tax farm administrators paid neighborhood residents to maintain the water system and make changes to the facility. See SMS 28:219, 2 J 1071/2 February 1661.

‘Alī owned a second house also classified as belonging to a member of the *re‘āyā*, and assessed at *evsaṭ*.¹⁰⁹ It is worth noting that the house of Ḥājj Murād, whom the records refer to as Ḥājj or Master Murād Beşe, was one of only three houses assessed at *a‘lā* of the 225 houses in the quarter; only five percent of the houses in the entire city were assessed at *a‘lā*. With reference to the houses of Muḥammad ‘Alī, to whom the court records refer as Muḥammad ‘Alī Beşe, only 35 houses in the quarter (or 13 percent) were assessed at *evsaṭ*, the vast majority being assessed at the lowest category (*ednā*).¹¹⁰ Clearly, the proximity of the residential properties signifies the social cohesion of the family, specifically the two brothers Ḥājj Murād and Muḥammad ‘Alī, and the size of the properties indicates their elevated socio-economic status and their capacity to maintain large households. On the other hand, the decision of the Muḥyi al-Dīn family household(s) to locate in the poorer neighborhoods of the eastern extramural district, as opposed to the generally more affluent neighborhoods of the intramural western districts, points to the strength of their professional and social ties to the guilds of the butchers and related crafts.

It is puzzling, on the other hand, why the survey of 1678 does not confer the military title of *beşe* on Muḥammad ‘Alī and his brother Ḥājj Murād, while the court records, both before and after the survey, do. We have argued in Chapter One that one of the principal aims of the surveyors in 1678 was to limit the number of persons with *‘askerī* (military-administrative) status: members of the family may have lost their titles and perhaps other military privileges, if only temporarily, following the survey. Taking up the question of whether members of the Muḥyi al-Dīn family belonged to the citadel guards, we find no names of family members (as listed in Figure 4.1) owning homes on Citadel Hill, the precinct of the citadel guards, according to the records of the survey of 1678, nor do any of these names appear in

¹⁰⁹ MM 8467: 117a–118b, 120a. For an explanation of tax classification and assessment terms, see Chapter One. Records of the survey of 1616 also yield interesting but inconclusive evidence of the residence of this family in the quarter of Muḥammad Bey: one house in the name of Ḥājj Muḥyi al-Dīn valued at one *ḥāne*, and two houses in the name of Sālim Qaşşāb (“Sālim the Butcher”), each valued at one-half *ḥāne*. See MM 3400:42–43. There was in any case a clear concentration of butchers in the quarter at that time.

¹¹⁰ See Table 2.5 for a presentation of the tax assessment patterns across the city.

a salary register of the citadel guards dated to 1679.¹¹¹ Such findings corroborate earlier court records suggesting that Muḥammad ‘Ali, and by extension the other members of his family, were originally local guildsmen and traders who obtained military privileges but who had no military training and did not participate in military campaigns. Inspections that the survey would have occasioned may have weeded out ineffectual soldiers, but with only short-term effect.

The attainment of military privileges by members of the Muḥyi al-Dīn family should be related to broader social patterns. First, securing military privileges was one pragmatic strategy by which upwardly mobile persons sought to elevate their station and reduce their tax burden. Another strategy was to fabricate a genealogy and claim descent from the family of Muḥammad, or marry into a family who had such a lineage; by doing so, one was entered on the rolls of the socially elevated *ashrāf* and enjoyed fiscal and judicial privileges.¹¹² Second, in their role as long-term provisioners to the official households of Aleppo, members of the Muḥyi al-Dīn family may have become associated with the official establishment in the city and thereby acquired military status; in this regard, they may have differed from others who had shorter terms in office. The payment of customary fees by one member of the family, Master Murād Beşe, to the governor corresponded to similar relations of exchange between military cadres and their superiors noted in Aleppo, thus suggesting that he also had obtained formal affiliation with the military-administrative establishment.¹¹³ Finally, the considerable wealth of the Muḥyi al-Dīn family, as demonstrated by their property holdings and trading activities, illustrates the broad range of social-economic groups that guilds could encompass; studies of other cities in the empire corroborate this finding.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Istanbul, Prime Ministry Archives, Bab-i Defteri Section, Büyük Kale Kalemî (DBKL) 32201, 17 Ş 1090/23 September 1679; and MM 8467.

¹¹² Canbakal, “‘Ayntab,” 154–96; and idem, *Society and Politics*, 77–83.

¹¹³ These fees were called *‘awā’id*. See, for example, SMS 3:385, 26 JA 1065/3 April 1655. Those soldiers who undertook the collection of tax farms on behalf of their military garrisons also paid *jā’iza* fees to the military commanders—fees that with time may have become regularized and detached from the tax farm itself. See SMS 28:361, 12 DA 1072/29 June 1662; and SMS 28:44, 5 S 1071/10 October 1660. For *jā’iza* fees in Egypt, see Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 100, 325, 347.

¹¹⁴ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I: 373–98; Cohen, *Economic Life*, Chapter 1, especially pp. 33–34, 102–5, passim; idem, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 19–20, 38–39; and Yi, “The Istanbul Guilds,” 83–84.

The Tanners

We have seen how, in the case of the butchers, Ottoman authorities appointed officials to guide the affairs of guilds in matters of public or state interest, and how these officials could displace or alter pre-existing structures of leadership. By way of contrast, we consider here the case of the tanners and related organizations, whose leadership was, according to our sources, relatively unaffected by state action. This case study will survey the various offices of leadership within the tanners' guild and present a biographical sketch of a prominent leader.

Among those guilds that were subject to less intervention, the tanners' guild was selected for study for two principal reasons, the first being that the scale of production and membership were roughly comparable to those of the butchers. The tanners' guild defined here includes not only *dabbāghūn* (sing. *dabbāgh*), who tanned the skins of sheep and goats, but also those artisans who specialized in the tanning of hides of cattle, oxen, camels and wild hoofed animals (*ṭā'ifat al-kūnjiyya* and *ṭā'ifat 'ammālī al-ṣighir*), and others who marketed leather products throughout the city (*bā'i'ū al-ḥawar wa'l-sakhtiyān*). As such, the tanners constituted one of the largest guilds in the city, and the tanneries that were built to house operations were likewise among the most spacious facilities in the urban area.¹¹⁵ The second reason for selecting the tanners is practical: their frequent appearance in court as parties to agreements, litigants, and debtors generated a large number of documents, thus providing a picture of their activities more comprehensive than that for most guilds.

The Akhī Bābā and Shaykh al-Sab'a

Employing primarily court records, scholars have found that in a number of different cities in the Balkans, Anatolia and Syria, the tanners' guild had an exceptional leadership structure. The administrative head of the guild, known in Syria as the shaykh and in Anatolia and the

¹¹⁵ In seventeenth-century Jerusalem, for which we have comprehensive lists of guild members, the tanners made up the second-largest guild. See Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 85. On the large scale of the tanning facilities in Aleppo and other Arab cities, see André Raymond, "Déplacement des tanneries," 34–43; and idem, *Artisans et commerçants*, I: 326–29.

Balkans as the *kethüda*, had been replaced by, or coexisted with, an official with the title of *akhî bābā* or simply “*bābā*.”¹¹⁶ The office of *akhî bābā* is probably connected with the *akhî* organization, which was founded on an older ethical code of “manly” behavior, the *futuwwa*, and arose among the urban artisans of Anatolia towns in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹¹⁷ According to Franz Taeschner, the *akhî bābā* was the shaykh of the dervish lodge of Akhî Evrân in the Anatolian town of Kırşehir, and his delegates, also called *akhî bābās*, in many parts of the Ottoman Empire established themselves in the guilds of tanners and other leather workers or were recruited from among these groups. Originally charged with initiating apprentices to these guilds by the ceremony of girding (Tk. *kuşak* or *peştemal kuşatmak*), these delegates managed to extend their control over other guilds, so that they held sway over the entirety of the Turkish guild organization. This state of affairs is said to have continued until the intervention of European commercial systems in the modern era.¹¹⁸ Recent scholarship has corrected and refined much of Taeschner’s work, showing that guild officials called *akhî bābās* worked in a much wider area of the empire, including the Arab provinces, but were highly variable in the extent of their influence over the guilds as a whole. These contributions will be considered in more detail below.

¹¹⁶ Zija Shkodra, “Les esnaf au Corporations dans la vie urbaine balkanique des XVII–XVIII^e siècle, *Studia Albanica* (Tirana) 12, 2 (1975): 47–76, and “Statuti ma i vjetër i esnafeve në krahinat e ballkanit nën sundimin turk,” *Studime Historike* (Tirana) 19, 2 (1965):119–48, which appends a facsimile of a 17th-Century Ottoman language document concerning the organization of the tanners’ guild of Elbasan; Robert Mantran, *Istanbul*, 113, 377; Yi, “Istanbul Guilds,” 99–100; and Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change,” 498. Cf. Ergenç’s study, *Ankara ve Konya*, which, while documenting the activity of a local *akhî bābā*, does not link this official with the tanners; see pp. 90–103, 198–200.

¹¹⁷ It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the concept and institution of *futuwwa* as well as the emergence of the *akhî* organization. On the concept and institution of *futuwwa*, see the article under the same name by Claude Cahen and Franz Taeschner in *EI*².

¹¹⁸ On the *akhî* organization, see the articles, “*Akhi*,” “*Akhi Baba*,” and “*Akhi Ewrân*,” all by Franz Taeschner in *EI*². There are other contemporary scholars, primarily Turkish, who argue that the *akhî* ethic imbued the entire guild structure and formed the primary basis for guild solidarity. There is little firm evidence, however, to substantiate their arguments. See Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu olan Ahilik* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1974); Yusuf Ekinci, *Ahilik ve Meslek Eğitimi* (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1989); and Adnan Gülerman and Sevda Teştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerindeki Etkileri* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1993). The Turkish terms *kuşak* or *peştemal kuşatmak* correspond to the Arabic *shadd* and the Persian *kamar bastan*; see “Shadd,” in *EI*².

For the towns of the Arab provinces in particular, the responsibilities of the *akhī bābā* and his relation to other officials of the tanners' guild varied from place to place. In Cairo, the largest of the Arab urban centers, no record of an official called the *akhī bābā* has yet come to light despite the survival of *futuwwa* traditions and the apparent veneration of "Sulṭān Akhī Bābā" as a patron saint.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile, Abdul-Karim Rafeq notes that in Damascus by the early eighteenth century an official with the title of *akhī bābā* had come to replace the shaykh as the administrative head of the tanners' guilds.¹²⁰ Rafeq observes that in the eighteenth century the *akhī bābā* could, in his resolution of disputes, exercise influence beyond the tanners, particularly among related guilds such as the tanners of cowhides (*baqqārūn*) and water-oxen (*sāghirjiyya*), but cautions that evidence does not support a comparison with the supreme shaykh, the *shaykh al-mashāyikh*, in the extent of his authority.¹²¹ At the same time, Rafeq adds, the *akhī bābā* was expected to be proficient in the craft of tanning, and could be removed from office if he failed to exhibit the proper degree of skill.¹²²

Studies of guilds in other Syrian cities indicate significant variations in the leadership role of the *akhī bābā*. A number of monographs on Tripoli in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries together tentatively suggest a certain configuration of power at the highest levels of citywide guild leadership. In this configuration, the local office of the *akhī bābā* could merge with another office, that of the *shaykh al-sab'a*, with the result that the incumbent exercised limited authority over all guilds in the city. This authority appears to have been limited to resolving conflicts that arose *between* guilds or members thereof; in other words, the *akhī bābā* acted as an officially recognized arbitrator.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Gabriel Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times* (Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society 1964), 116–26; and Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II:529–44. Baer notes that while there were ramified connections between the guilds and Sufi orders, these tended to occur on the individual level. In Baer's view, "an all-embracing system of connection between the guilds and the *tarikas*" did not exist (p. 125). Raymond records "Sultan Ahi Baba" as one saint mentioned in a list of revered figures within a *futuwwa* manual of local provenance (p. 541).

¹²⁰ Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 498.

¹²¹ Rafeq, "Law-Court Registers," 150–51.

¹²² Rafeq cites a case in which the tanners removed the *akhī bābā* from office after they found him unqualified to practice the craft of tanning, with no mention of how moral qualifications bore on the matter. See "Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī," 163–64.

¹²³ See Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 131–33, 304–7, 345–47. Mehmet Genç, writing on general relations between Ottoman guilds and state authorities, asserts that in a

Although the term “*shaykh al-sab‘a*” literally means “shaykh of the seven,” and “seven” presumably refers to the number of guilds, the documents offer few clues as to which guilds fell under the authority of this shaykh, if indeed the term was still descriptive.¹²⁴ *Akhī bābā* or *bābā*, however, seems to have remained the primary title for persons occupying this conjoined office, suggesting that this office was the more important.¹²⁵ Complementing the authority of the *akhī bābā/shaykh al-sab‘a* was the *shaykh al-mashāyikh*, who appears to have been charged with mediating relations between the guilds and state authorities. According to one document, persons were nominated to this office by the *akhī bābā* and the *shaykh al-sab‘a* as well as other senior leaders of the city’s guilds, recognized by the *naqīb al-ashrāf* (head of the *ashrāf*), and confirmed by the qadi.¹²⁶ We must point out, however, that there likely was no sharp line dividing the powers of the *akhī bābā/shaykh al-sab‘a* and the *shaykh al-mashāyikh*, and mutual cooperation was frequently necessary.¹²⁷

Jerusalem, too, was an urban center where an *akhī bābā* was active. A specialized study of the guilds of Jerusalem shows that court author-

given town either a *shaykh al-sab‘a* or *akhī bābā* exercised control, not both jointly. Unfortunately, Genç does not provide a source for this assertion. See “Osmanlı Esnafı ve Devletle İlişkileri,” in *Ahilik ve Esnaf*, 113–30, esp. 115.

¹²⁴ In one document dated 14 RA 1690/25 April 1679, representatives of a large number of guilds in Tripoli nominated, and the qadi confirmed, a man for reappointment to the offices of *akhī bābā* and *shaykh al-sab‘a*. The eight guilds (*hīrfas*) in attendance were, in order of listing, those of the merchants (*tujjār*), sandalmakers (*bawābijjiyya*), tailors (*khayyātūn*), makers of cords, braid, and tassels (*‘aqqādūn*), barbers (*hallāqūn*), shoemakers (*asākifa*), bakers (*khabbāzūn*), and tanners (*dabbāghūn*); other guilds, referred to collectively as the remaining guilds of the town (“*bāqī al-hīrfa wa’l-ṣinā‘a*”) were also present. The second document, dated 1 JA 1098/15 March 1687, similarly records the appointment of one man to both offices after nomination, this time by eleven guilds, in order of listing: tanners, merchants, apothecaries (*attārūn*), butter merchants (*sammānūn*), tailors, sandalmakers, saddlemakers (*sarrājūn*), carpenters (*najjārūn*), weavers (*ḥayyākūn*), ironsmiths (*ḥaddādūn*), and *‘aqqādūn*; and the remaining guilds (“*bāqī mashāyikh al-hīraf wa arbābuhā*”). Only five guilds appear in both lists, and of these the tanners take a prominent place; but the only craft related in production to the tanners in this subset is that of the sandalmakers. See Hımşı, *Tārīkh Tarābulus*, 131–33, 304–7, 345–47.

¹²⁵ Hımşı, *Tārīkh Tarābulus*, 131–33, 266–69, 295–97, 304–7, 345–47.

¹²⁶ Ziyāda, *al-Şūra al-taqlīdiyya*, 146–47, 175. The citation specifies only the court register (*sijill*) number (4), and the inclusive dates of the register, AH 1127–36/1715–1723 CE.

¹²⁷ For example, affairs of state, such as taxation and military requisitions, which clearly required the attention of the *shaykh al-mashāyikh*, entailed the distribution of state demands among the guilds, which itself would probably have resulted in inter-guild disputes involving the *akhī bābā/shaykh al-sab‘a*.

ities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries recognized the supervisory role of the *akhī bābā* over all guilds and observes the prominence of the *akhī bābā* in the tanners' relations with other guilds, most notably the butchers. The study furthermore argues that in the same period the tanners under the leadership of the *akhī bābā* became increasingly powerful vis-a-vis other guilds.¹²⁸ In sixteenth-century Hama, a town of roughly the same size as Jerusalem, however, no *akhī bābā* appears to have been active, though the tanners' guild was well-organized and sizable.¹²⁹

The case of seventeenth-century Aleppo offers minor variations that nevertheless corroborate the broad outlines of the tanners' leadership structure in Ottoman Syria. The *akhī bābā* occupied a pre-eminent position among the tanners, a position whose influence was checked by the *shaykh al-dabbāghīn* and the *shaykh al-sab'a*. Although we have no explicit statement of his duties, such as might be found in an appointment document, the province of the *akhī bābā* appears to have been extra-guild relations. He invariably appeared before the court in cases concerning disputes that the tanners had with other guilds while the *shaykh al-dabbāghīn* and *shaykh al-sab'a* appear less regularly, and in the documents reviewed the name and title of the *akhī bābā* always come before those of every other senior member and official in the list of representatives.¹³⁰ The role of the *akhī bābā* as regulator of inter-guild affairs confirms the findings for other cities in the Arab provinces and challenges the older conclusion that in the seventeenth century the *akhī bābā* had only religious duties.¹³¹ In this regard Suraiya Faroqhi advances the hypothesis that Ottoman administration in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries sought to counterbalance the power of increasingly assertive provincial administrators by promoting the interests of informal organizations such as guilds and

¹²⁸ Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 91–93, 192–6, 270–77.

¹²⁹ 'Abd al-Wadūd Muḥammad Yūsuf [Barghūth], "Ṭawā'if al-ḥiraf wa'l-sinā'āt aw ṭawā'if al-aṣnāf fī Hamāt fī'l-qarn al-sādis 'ashar," *al-Ḥawliyyat al-athāriyya al-sūriyya* (Damascus) 19 (1969): 85–102, esp. 96–97.

¹³⁰ For examples of agreements between the tanners and butchers on the price of sheepskins sold to the tanners, see SMS 6:165, *Awā'il* S 996/1–10 January 1588; SMS 27:186, 21 S 1070/7 November 1659; SMS 28:638, 13 B 1073/21 February 1663; and SMS 28:597, 4 J 1073/14 January 1663.

¹³¹ Mantran, *Istanbul*, 113, 377. Yi more directly challenges Mantran's argument since her study focuses on Istanbul; see "Istanbul Guilds," 100.

dervish orders.¹³² The *akhī bābā* may have secured greater privileges as a result of this policy, though no direct evidence has been found of this in the Syrian provinces.

The exact scope of authority that the *akhī bābā* in Aleppo enjoyed beyond the guild of the tanners is only sparsely documented in the court records. An order dated to 1588 appointed the *akhī bābā* over the following nine guilds: the tanners; weavers (*ḥuyyak*); makers of light shoes (*khaffāfūn*), which were divided into two subgroups, Arabs (*abnā' al-ʿArab*) and Turkish-speaking Anatolians (*Arwām*); sellers of pull-on shoes (*bā'i'ū al-na'āl al-musammā bi'l-chakma*); swordmakers (*suyūfiyya*); sellers of bark-tanned sheepskin (*bā'i'ū al-ḥawar*); tailors (*khayyātūn*); vegetable vendors (*khudariyya*); surgeons (*jarrāḥūn*), makers of felt skullcaps (*labābidiyya*); and the sellers of horse leather (*bā'i'ū ajlād al-khayl*).¹³³ Appointment orders that follow in the seventeenth century list only the members of the tanners' guild as approving the appointment. Other documents incidentally name guilds subordinated to the tanners in what was called the *yamaḳ* relationship, but there is no explicit statement that the *akhī bābā* himself enjoyed authority over them; these guilds include the tobacconists (*dukhāniyya*), in addition to a number of guilds that are related to the tanners in the products they manufacture, most notably the oxhide tanners (*ṣighirjiyya*).¹³⁴ The prominent role of the *akhī bābā* in agreements between the tanners and butchers, described above, nevertheless attests to the inter-guild influence of the *akhī bābā*. The influence of the *akhī bābā* in seventeenth-century Aleppo, then, seems to be roughly comparable to his influence in Damascus and to differ somewhat from the configurations of power among the tanners in Tripoli, where the offices of the *akhī bābā* and *shaykh al-sab'a* could be conjoined to exercise authority over a broad range of guilds, and Jerusalem, where the *akhī bābā* alone appears to have exercised authority over the same group of guilds.

¹³² Faroḳhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 156–57. Faroḳhi writes, “During [the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries] the *Ṣeyḥs* of the Bektashi order of dervishes...received support from the Ottoman administration in their attempts to strengthen centralized authority over *zāviyes* which until then had only been quite loosely affiliated with the order” (156).

¹³³ SMS 6:165, *Awā'il* S 996/1–10 January 1588, cited in Rafeq, “Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī,” 173.

¹³⁴ SMS 15:386, 25 J 1038/19 February 1629; and SMS 28:638, 13 B 1073/21 February 1663.

What can be learned of the qualifications of the *akhī bābā* in Aleppo further suggests that he was a socially prominent man who was nevertheless held fully accountable by the guild rank-and-file. Taeschner observes that the *akhī bābā* in each locality was chosen by members of the tanners' guild, but was not necessarily a tanner himself.¹³⁵ Like his counterparts in many other Syrian cities, the *akhī bābā* in Aleppo was frequently a member of the *ashrāf*, a status group who claimed descent from the family of Muhammad and used the title of sayyid.¹³⁶ Table 4.2 clearly shows the domination of the office of *akhī bābā* by members of the *ashrāf* in the seventeenth century.¹³⁷ It is worth noting that while documents from Damascus and Aleppo draw a clear but indirect connection between the office of *akhī bābā* and *sharīf* status, documents from Tripoli go further and stipulate the requirement that the *akhī bābā* be from among the *ashrāf*.¹³⁸ Given the attachment of office to social status, it is not unusual to find the office passed from father to son.¹³⁹ More significantly, the *akhī bābā* could hold a high

¹³⁵ Taeschner, "Akhī Baba," *EP*².

¹³⁶ Documents cited in the following works uniformly record the *akhī bābā* with the title of sayyid: Rafeq, "Law-Court Registers," 150–51; Himṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 131–33; and Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 270–77. Cf. Maḥmūd 'Alī 'Ataullāh, *Wathā'iq al-ṭawā'if al-hirāfiyya fi'l-Quds fi'l-qarn al-sābi 'ashar al-milādī* (Nablus: Jāmi'at al-Najā al-Waṭaniyya, 1992), 147–49. A remarkable imperial order (*firmān*) recorded in the court records of Konya in 1630 indicates that a condition for appointment to the position of *akhī* within a given guild was that he be a certified descendant of the Abbasid dynasty (750–1258 CE). It follows from this claim that the *akhī bābā* would have ordinarily been of *sharīf* lineage and could claim sayyid status. The Abbasids officially claimed descent from 'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the half-brother of Muhammad's father. See Ergenç, *Ankara ve Konya*, 199.

¹³⁷ According to court lists of guild representatives, the senior members of the tanners' guild included a substantial number of persons of *sharīf* status, in addition to the *akhī bābā*. The strong links between the tanners' guild and the *ashrāf* as indicated by the court records are at odds with Bruce Masters' distinction between the trades that were "janissary-dominated" and those controlled by the *ashrāf*: the janissary-dominated trades "had links to the tribes, such as butchers, renderers of sheep fat, workers of wool, and tentmakers, while the [*ashrāf*-controlled guilds] included the more established and respected trades, such as silk weavers and dyers." Given that the craft of tanning entailed interaction with tribal elements to procure raw materials, etc., and that the process of tanning produced disagreeable odors, one would hardly expect it to be considered among the more respected trades; yet the *ashrāf* made up a substantial part of the tanners' membership. See Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 47. For an extended discussion on how Muslim writers conceived of hierarchy among occupations, see Louis Marlow, *Hierarchy and Egalitarianism in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 156–173.

¹³⁸ Himṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 133.

¹³⁹ SMS 6:165, *Awā'il* S 996/1–10 January 1588; and SMS 28:436, 11 M 1073/16 August 1662.

rank within the *ashrāf* status group itself. When in 1660 the *ashrāf* of Aleppo agreed to commit a portion of revenues from the endowment in their name, the Waqf al-Sādāt al-Ashrāf, to the lodging of a traveler of high *sharīf* status, among the fifteen *ashrāf* representing the city in court was the *akhī bābā*.¹⁴⁰

Table 4.2. Persons holding the office of *Akhī Bābā* in Aleppo, 1642–1690

[1588]	[Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Aziz b. Sayyid Muḥammad]
1642	Sayyid Abū Bakr
1655 (March)	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm
1655 (July)	Sayyid Ibrāhīm b. Sayyid Rajab
1656	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm
1657	Sayyid ‘Alī Çelebi b. Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn Qaḍīb al-Bān
1658 (July)	Sayyid ‘Alī Çelebi b. Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn Qaḍīb al-Bān
1658 (Oct)	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Muḥammad
1659	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Ibrāhīm
1660	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Ibrāhīm
1661	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Ibrāhīm
1662 (July)	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Ibrāhīm
1662 (August)	Sayyid Muḥammad Çelebi b. Sayyid Aḥmad
1663 (January)	Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Ibrāhīm
1663 (February)	Sayyid Muḥammad b. Sayyid Aḥmad
1664	Sayyid Muḥammad b. Sayyid Aḥmad
1665	Sayyid Muḥammad Çelebi b. Sayyid Aḥmad
1666	Sayyid Muḥammad b. Sayyid Aḥmad
1667	Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn
1672	Sayyid Ya‘qūb b. Sayyid Yāsīn
1672	Sayyid Ya‘qūb Çelebi [b. Sayyid Yāsīn]
1690	Sayyid Ya‘qūb [Çelebi b. Sayyid Yāsīn]

Sources: Damascus, Center for Historical Documents (Dār al-Wathā‘iq al-Tārīkhiyya), Sijillāt al-Maḥākīm al-Shar‘iyya; and Istanbul, Prime Ministry Archives, Atik Şikayet Defterleri.

¹⁴⁰ SMS 28:58, 12 S 1071/17 October 1660.

That the *akhī bābā* in some towns played a leadership role in the Sufi orders may be evidence of older institutional ties between the orders and the guilds. In 1687 the head of a local branch of the Khalwatiyya Sufi order in Tripoli, who incidentally was also a *sharīf*, was appointed to the office of *akhī bābā*.¹⁴¹ It is worth mentioning in this regard the career of the Damascene notable Sayyid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Kamāl al-Dīn b. ‘Ajlān (d. 1025/1616), who simultaneously held the three offices of the *naqīb al-ashrāf*, the *shaykh mashāyikh al-ḥiraf* (head of crafts), and head of the Rifā’iyya Sufi order.¹⁴² Both of these examples point to the likelihood that the leadership offices of the tanners’ guild rotated primarily among persons of social status, most notably the *ashrāf* and the shaykhs exercising influence over local Sufi orders.

Although the *akhī bābā* in Aleppo clearly enjoyed high social status, he remained an ordinary member of the guild and was still expected to maintain proficiency in the craft of tanning, which was considered one of the less clean occupations. Generally, persons occupying the office of *akhī bābā* came from among the members of the guild, although they were senior in rank. We see this most clearly in lists of guild members who were party to price-fixing agreements, where persons appear among the senior members years before and years after their tenure in office as the *akhī bābā*. Technical competency was also viewed as a prerequisite. In 1690, for example, the *akhī bābā* was removed from office after complaints that he was indolent. Replacing him was a man whom members of the tanners’ guild regarded as “skilled in his craft and in every way suitable and deserving.”¹⁴³ Significantly, the characterization in the Aleppo court records of the *akhī bābā* as a skilled craftsman coincides with that of the Damascus records and differs from

¹⁴¹ Himṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 345–7.

¹⁴² Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Būrīnī (d. 1024/1598), *Tarājīm al-a’yān min abnā’ al-zamān*, ed. Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid, 2 vols., (Damascus: al-Majma’ al-‘Ilmī al-‘Arabī, 1959), I:84–5; Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī (d. 1061/1650), *al-Kawākib al-sā’ira bi a’yān al-mi’a al-‘āshara*, ed. Jibrā’il Jabbūr, 3 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, 1945–59), III: 220; and Muḥammad Amīn b. Faḍlullāh al-Muḥibbī (1651–1699), *Khulāsat al-athar fi a’yān al-qarn al-ḥādī ‘ashar*, 4 vols. (Beirut: Maktabat Khayyāt, 1967), IV:144–45, 169; all cited in Muhammad Adnan Bakhit, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1982), 188. Incidentally, a member of the same family, Shaykh Ḥājj Aḥmad Manjik al-‘Ajlānī, occupied the office of *shaykh al-mashāyikh* at the time that Elias Qoudsi wrote his well-known ethnographic study of Damascene guilds in the 1880s, suggesting the remarkable longevity of the family’s influence among the guilds.

¹⁴³ ES 1:38, *Awākhir* N 1101/28 June–7 July 1690. Cf. SMS 28:436, 11 M 1073/26 August 1662.

that presented by the records of Tripoli and Jerusalem. In the last two cities, no mention is made in appointment orders of technical competency; rather, stress is laid on a vaguely expressed suitability of the candidate, but more importantly, his ability to arbitrate disputes within and among guilds.¹⁴⁴ From this and the preceding discussion, we may offer a tentative observation on local variation in the professional and political role of the *akhī bābā* within the Syrian lands: officeholders in Jerusalem and Tripoli demonstrated a broad, inter-guild administrative expertise focused on mediation and conflict resolution, whereas officeholders in Aleppo and Damascus demonstrated less breadth in administrative and arbitration powers and were expected to maintain specialized ability within the tanning trade. Such a difference, in the case of Damascus and Aleppo, may be due to the desire of the Ottoman state to exert more control over these pre-eminent administrative centers. One may argue that in these two large cities a larger corps of administrative and military officials may have competed with the *akhī bābā* for influence and control.

The level of wealth of the *akhī bābā* is not as evident as that for the provisioning officers of the butchers described above. Significantly, the cadastral survey of 1678 does not list any homeowner with the title of *akhī bābā*, and the names of the incumbents in Table 4.2 are not distinctive enough to identify probable homeowners.¹⁴⁵ There are signs, however, that some *akhī bābās* could mass considerable capital in certain ways. Two documents from 1663 record a partnership (*sharika*) between one *akhī bābā*, a certain Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Ibrāhīm, and two brothers, Muḥammad Çelebi and Jūdī Çelebi, sons of Ḥājj Ni‘matullāh Ibn Ariḥāwī and members of an upwardly mobile merchant family.¹⁴⁶ At one point Sayyid Aḥmad claimed and received from his partners a substantial sum of money, the value of commodities that he had previously delivered to them. Sayyid Aḥmad had agreed to purchase large numbers of Moroccan leather skins (*sakhtiyān*),

¹⁴⁴ On Damascus, see Rafeq, “Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafi,” 165; for the contrasting examples of Jerusalem and Tripoli, see Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 270–77, and Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Ṭarābulus*, 131–33, 304–7, 345–47.

¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it is tempting to identify Sayyid Muḥammad Çelebi b. Sayyid Aḥmad, who appears in the court records as the *akhī bābā* in 1662–1665, with a *sharīf* by the same name owning a home in the Dibāghat al-‘Atīq quarter (literally, “the Old Tannery”) and registered in the 1678 survey. See SMS 8467:23b-24b.

¹⁴⁶ SMS 28:609, 25 J 1073/4 February 1663; and SMS 30:124, 22 D 1073/28 July 1663.

which the brothers in turn would sell, and each partner was to receive a third of the profits. It seems likely that Sayyid Aḥmad, due to his position within the tanners' guild, could secure these skins at advantageous prices, and the merchant brothers could use their wide-flung trading networks to sell them at handsome profits. We know that in this period the Ariḥāwī family traded in Mecca and Cairo and, more generally, that Aleppan merchants were exporting varieties of leather to France and Holland.¹⁴⁷

*A Sketch of one Shaykh al-Sab'a: Sayyid Ibrāhīm b. Sayyid Rajab
al-Ḥanbalī (d. 1678)*

In comparison with the *akhī bābā*, the *shaykh al-sab'a* appears as an enigmatic figure. In the case of Tripoli, which offers the fullest picture of this office, the "seven" guilds over which the *shaykh al-sab'a* had authority do not seem to have comprised a fixed set of guilds, nor did their number remain at seven. An investigation of this office is complicated by the fact that it could be conjoined with the post of *akhī bābā* to create a position in which the boundaries of the constituent authorities were not specified. Cohen, in his study of Ottoman guilds, suggests a comparison with "the Six Corps" in France, a grouping that Braudel terms "the commercial aristocracy of Paris in 1625," yet Cohen points out that the guilds that composed it differed considerably from the guilds that were named in appointment orders for the *shaykh al-sab'a* in Tripoli.¹⁴⁸ We surmise that the *shaykh al-sab'a*, at least in the case of Tripoli, had at one point early on in Ottoman rule exercised administrative authority over a fixed set of seven guilds; with time, however, as the guilds themselves changed, the office evolved into a position possessing customary authority to rule on matters

¹⁴⁷ On the Ariḥāwī family, see Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 64–65. On the export of leather to European markets, see Aigen, *Sieben Jahre*, 17, 79, 80, quoted in Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 167. Drawing on official surveys of tax farms, Faroqhi notes the functioning of a separate scale for *sakhtiyān* leather in Aleppo in the late sixteenth century, suggesting its economic importance. She does not cite the source, but this researcher confirmed her statement; see TT 493: 98. On other activities of the *akhī bābā*, see SMS 32:100, 4 JA 1083/28 August 1672.

¹⁴⁸ Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life 1400–1800*, trans. Miriam Kochan (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 404, cited in Cohen, *Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem*, 85–93. Comprising the "The Six Corps" were the drapers, grocers, haberdashers, furriers, hosiers, and goldsmiths.

concerning the entire spectrum of guilds. The title of *shaykh al-sab'a* itself, then, was an archaicism that continued to be used actively in reference to the guidance of inter-guild affairs but ceased to have a literal meaning.

With regard to Aleppo, the title of *shaykh al-sab'a* appears in the court records for a short period of four years (1660–63) and only in connection with one individual, a certain Sayyid Ibrāhīm b. Sayyid Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (d. 1678). We can, however, document the career and activities of Sayyid Ibrāhīm before, during, and after this period and gain an impression of persons who may have typically occupied the office. Perhaps the most remarkable quality of Sayyid Ibrāhīm in the framework of a discussion of guilds is his status as a member of the *ulama*, those learned in the Islamic sciences, serving in the professions of teaching, jurisprudence, or law, and occupying offices within the bureaucracy of the Ottoman state. Sayyid Ibrāhīm first appears in the court records in 1648 as scribe of the slaughterhouse in Aleppo (*kātīb al-maslakh bi-Ḥalab*).¹⁴⁹ His duties would presumably have been to maintain written records of the purchase and sale of livestock and animal products by the slaughterers and to collect taxes and fees that went toward designated tax farms and *waqf* institutions. Mindful that he later was to occupy a position of prestige within the tanners' organization, we suppose that Sayyid Ibrāhīm at this time already had connections with the tanners, and in this position he may have also served as a kind of liaison between the slaughterers and tanners.

The next time we read of him, in 1655, Sayyid Ibrāhīm had clearly risen in social and political standing. His name prefixed with the honorific "*Fakhr al-Sādāt wa'l-Ashrāf*," literally "Pride of the *Ashraf*," Sayyid Ibrāhīm now was serving as the *akhī bābā* himself. The occasion was the qadi's receipt and confirmation of an imperial order exempting the house that Sayyid Ibrāhīm owned from all real estate taxes. No reason is given for the exemption, but it is likely that the exemption was secured through the political influence of his office.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ SMS 25:81, 7 B 1058/28 July 1648. The document in question records a mutual release of claims (*ibrā'*) between, on the one hand, a figure we have encountered earlier in this study, Muḥammad 'Alī Beşe b. Muḥyi al-Dīn, at the time the *kaşapbaşı*, and on the other, a group of butchers and Sayyid Ibrāhīm. The claims concerned a tax (*kharj ma'qūl*) and a quantity of meat that had been owed to the Muhammad 'Alī Beşe. Sayyid Ibrāhīm may have responsible for collecting the tax.

¹⁵⁰ SMS 10:520, 20 N 1065/24 July 1655. The document states that the house then owned by Sayyid Ibrāhīm was registered in the name of Muḥammad Najjār, who

Sayyid Ibrāhīm remained in office for less than a year, however, and his ambitions shifted elsewhere.¹⁵¹ A document dating from 1659 recognizes Sayyid Ibrāhīm as the mufti (jurisconsult) of the Ḥanbalī school of Islamic law in Aleppo, though it is difficult to determine how long he held the office.¹⁵² The wealth of court records surviving from the years 1657 to 1667 also document the frequent appearance of Sayyid Ibrāhīm at court as a prominent representative of the tanners. During these years and in the subsequent, less fully-documented period leading up to 1678, he possessed the title *mawlānā*, which was usually given to members of the ulama and may suggest the length of time he held the office of mufti. What is more, Sayyid Ibrāhīm may have inherited the office from a relative, perhaps his father. One historian has noted the existence of an ulama family having the name of Ḥanbalī as early as the 1570s.¹⁵³ It is this name, suffixed with the Persianate “-zāde,” literally “son of,” that Sayyid Ibrāhīm’s son ‘Abd al-Raḥmān used in a document from 1691. The Ḥanbalī family, presumably unique in Aleppo, had taken its name from the tradition of law that its members practiced and continued to practice throughout much of the Ottoman period. We know that Sayyid Ibrāhīm also held the positions of imam and preacher (Ar. *khaṭīb*) at Jāmi‘ al-Tawba, a mosque in Khārij Bāb al-Nayrab, a quarter in the southeastern extramural district of the city.¹⁵⁴ The positions at the mosque passed at his death to his son Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān.¹⁵⁵

Throughout the period for which we have documentation, Sayyid Ibrāhīm maintained a high level of participation in guild affairs. Before, during, and after the years 1660–63 (when he is described as *shaykh al-sab‘a*), Sayyid Ibrāhīm was one of the principal representatives of

presumably had been the owner of the property at the time of the survey of 1616. The survey register of 1616 does indeed list a property under a Muḥammad Najjār in the quarter of Altūn Būghā; see the discussion below.

¹⁵¹ See Table 4.2 for a listing of *akhī bābās*.

¹⁵² SMS 27:186, 21 S 1070/7 November 1659. In the surveys carried out by this researcher, this document constitutes the only evidence of there being a Ḥanbalī mufti practicing his profession in the city of Aleppo in the seventeenth century. Cf. SMS 25:19, 24 RA 1058/18 April 1648, which describes a well-known historian of Aleppo, Shaykh Abū’l-Wafā’ al-‘Urḍī, as “Muftī al-Sādāt al-Shāfi‘iyya,” the mufti of the Shāfi‘ī school of jurisprudence. For more on al-‘Urḍī and on Islamic legal education in seventeenth-century Aleppo, see the introduction by ‘Isā Sulaymān Abū Salīm to al-‘Urḍī, *Ma‘ādin al-dhahab*, 143–80.

¹⁵³ Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 214.

¹⁵⁴ On the mosque, see al-Ghazzī, *Nahr al-dhahab*, II:276–78.

¹⁵⁵ SMS 34:80, 22 N 1089/7 November 1678.

the tanners on an array of issues. He joined the *akhī bābā* and other senior members of the guild in negotiating the special tax status of guild members working in local *waqf* institutions, fixing *yamaḵ* relationships with other guilds, and contracting large debts to be shared by guild members. Sayyid Ibrāhīm also was involved in lodging complaints against other guilds for violation of trade agreements and customs, and fixing prices for raw materials with supplier guilds.¹⁵⁶ Significantly, in each of these actions, Sayyid Ibrāhīm was primarily concerned with guiding relations between the tanners' guild and outside actors, which is similar to the role played by the *shaykh al-sab'a* in Tripoli in the same period. Furthermore, we do not notice any significant change in the responsibilities undertaken by Sayyid Ibrāhīm in the period 1660–63, and we therefore tentatively conclude that Sayyid Ibrāhīm occupied the office of *shaykh al-sab'a* for a longer period of time, and the more detailed documents of 1660–63 simply reflect a greater official concern with and recognition of the office.¹⁵⁷

The court records also disclose some of the ways in which Sayyid Ibrāhīm invested his money. An intriguing document from 1661 indicates that members of the *dukhāniyya* guild, who were occupied primarily with the marketing of tobacco, purchased an amount of saffron and opium on credit from Sayyid Ibrāhīm.¹⁵⁸ The *dukhāniyya* were, at least for part of this period, an “assistant” (*yamaḵ*) guild to the tanners, an arrangement that entailed that they pay their taxes through the tanners. As one of the leaders of the tanners' guild, Sayyid Ibrāhīm

¹⁵⁶ For cases dealing with the tax status of guild members working in *waqfs*, see SMS 27:186, 21 S 1070/7 November 1659; for *yamaḵ* relationships, see SMS 28:638, 13 B 1073/21 February 1663; for the contracting of debt, see SMS 3:918, 20 J 1066/15 April 1656; for complaints against the butchers for violation of trade agreements, see SMS 27:416, 22 S 1072/17 October 1661; and for price-fixing agreements, see SMS 27:A543, 2 S 1078/24 July 1667.

¹⁵⁷ This development reflects a more active central state involvement in local affairs, which is consistent with the argument that the Köprülü grand viziers, specifically Meḥmed Pasha (1656–61) and his son Fāzil Aḥmed Pasha (1661–76), effected significant reforms in provincial administration. Two documents from the court records of Tripoli indicating the operation of the office of *shaykh al-sab'a* are dated 14 RA 1090/25 April 1679 and 1 JA 1098/15 March 1687. The full texts of these documents are provided in Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Tarābulus*, 131–33, 306–07, 345–47.

¹⁵⁸ SMS 27:339, 27 L 1071/25 June 1661. Interestingly, a person holding the office of *akhī bābā* in Tripoli at roughly the same time is also linked with narcotics. This person is appointed *akhī bābā* despite the acknowledgement by guild members that he “enters coffeehouses and consumes narcotics [*mukayyifāt*].” See Ḥimṣī, *Tārīkh Tarābulus*, 304–7.

may have collected taxes from the *dukhāniyya* by using them as a marketing network for commodities he wanted to sell, recouping repayment and profit from them in a continual arrangement. This strategy mirrors the practices of one provisioning officer, namely the *kaşapbaşı*, who employed guild members to peddle or sell in their own places of business specific commodities on consignment.

Where Sayyid Ibrāhīm lived and worked also bears significance. It has already been mentioned that he had obtained tax exemption in 1656 for a house he owned; this house was located in the intramural quarter of Altūn Būghā, southeast of the citadel, and was registered in the survey of 1616. The value of the house, assessed at 0.5 *hānes*, was slightly below the average for taxable houses in the quarter, and correspondingly the house may have been of smaller size.¹⁵⁹ Checking the survey of 1678, we find no property listed under the name of Sayyid Ibrāhīm in the quarter of Altūn Būghā, but we do find a piece of property under this name in the adjoining quarter of Ughulbay. Either Sayyid Ibrāhīm and his family had moved, or their property was located along the boundaries between the two quarters and they were able to transfer their residence for tax purposes to the quarter of Ughulbay. The latter option was ordinarily undertaken by Aleppans in the eighteenth century to reduce their property taxes.¹⁶⁰ The property in question was categorized as *kadīm*, that is, as having been previously recorded in the 1616 survey and therefore taxable, and assessed at *evsaṭ*, or one-third *hāne*. That the assessment was *evsaṭ* signaled a larger than average property according to the 1678 survey.¹⁶¹ Some years later, in 1691, the son of Sayyid Ibrāhīm, Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, obtained an imperial order exempting the same Ughulbay property from all taxation.¹⁶² In sum, the increase in the size of the house that Sayyid Ibrāhīm owned, based on a changing relative tax value, and the

¹⁵⁹ MM 3400:10–13.

¹⁶⁰ MM 8467:44a–45a. On the practice of transfer of residence between quarters, see Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 326–27.

¹⁶¹ A breakdown of houses in Ughulbay quarter by assessment is as follows: houses in the top tier (*a’lā*) numbered 7, those in the medium tier (*evsaṭ*), 31; and those in the third tier (*ednā*), 61. The decline in assessment from one-half *hāne* in 1616 to one-third *hāne* in 1678 for the house of Sayyid Ibrāhīm does not indicate a shrinking property but rather differing standards of assessment between the two surveys. See Chapter One.

¹⁶² ES 1:96, 3 B 1102/2 April 1691. This tax exemption presumably should have been annotated in the survey register of 1678 (MM 8467) but was not. See MM 8467:44a–45b.

ability of Sayyid Ibrāhīm and his son to secure tax exemptions for their houses, mark the family as upwardly mobile and having influence with state authorities. The adoption in the 1691 document of a Persianate family name, “Ḥanbalizāde” by Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, as noted above, further reflects the social pretensions of the family.

The location of the house of Sayyid Ibrāhīm, whether in the quarter of Altūn Būghā or in Ughulbay, merits further discussion. One wonders why the house was located in these intramural quarters, to the east and southeast of Citadel Hill, so far from the tanneries along the Quwayq River to the west of the city.¹⁶³ There were important reasons, however, for Sayyid Ibrāhīm to live where he did. Living in Altūn Būghā or Ughulbay, Sayyid Ibrahim needed to make only a short walk to the Dar al-Ghanam facility in Muḥammad Bey, in the southeastern extramural district, where he would have had an interest in monitoring the marketing of livestock being brought into the city. He also would have been close to some of the chief slaughterhouses of the city, including ones in Khārij Bāb al-Nayrab and in Banqūsa in the northeastern district, and not far from another slaughterhouse in Khārij Bāb al-Naṣr.¹⁶⁴ In short, Sayyid Ibrāhīm in his office as *shaykh al-sab’a* may have played a central role in negotiating the provisioning of animal skins to the tanners, and this required that he live close to these facilities. In addition, serving as the imam and preacher of the al-Tawba mosque, which was very close to Dār al-Ghanam, may have enhanced his local influence—*influence he needed to mediate affairs between the tanners and butchers living and working in the vicinity.*

The career of Sayyid Ibrāhīm, especially his service as *shaykh al-sab’a*, offers an example of how members of the ulama could become guild

¹⁶³ Raymond, “Déplacement des tanneries,” 35–37.

¹⁶⁴ At which slaughterhouse Sayyid Ibrāhīm served as scribe is not clear: the document only refers to “the slaughterhouse of Aleppo,” with no further qualification. This slaughterhouse may have been a single state facility intended to monopolize slaughtering activity. Marcus states that in the eighteenth century an imperial slaughterhouse (*maslakh sulṣānī*), designed to supervise all slaughtering in the locality, operated to the southeast of the city, though he notes that an older *maslakh* had at some time in the past operated in the southwestern quarter of Maghayir, nor far from the Quwayq where the tanneries were located (*Eve of Modernity*, 286, 379, fn. 17). Documents from the seventeenth century indicate, however, a wide dispersal of slaughtering activity, with *maslakhs* operating in Banqusa (‘Urḍī, *Ma’ādin al-dhahab*, ed. Abū Salīm, 33), Khārij Bāb al-Nayrab (SMS 27:A497, 10 M 1077/13 July 1666), and Khārij Bāb al-Naṣr (SMS 32:409, 19 J 1085/20 September 1674). Price-fixing agreements between the tanners and butchers in the mid-seventeenth century also typically mention “the slaughterhouses of Aleppo,” indicating that there was no consolidated facility.

members and, indeed, rise to positions of leadership over guilds. Studies of Ottoman Cairo have provided numerous examples of teachers, jurists, judges, and preachers who engaged in commerce, and the activities of Sayyid Muḥammad b. ‘Ajlān in Damascus, noted above, suggest the limits of power that the ulama could achieve in this sphere.¹⁶⁵ It is intriguing to consider the possible relationship of Sayyid Ibrāhīm’s practice of Ḥanbalī jurisprudence to his role as a prominent leader of the tanners’ guild. While biographical dictionaries of the period refer to a small circle of scholars maintaining Ḥanbalī traditions in Damascus, documented cases of persons practicing Ḥanbalī jurisprudence in Ottoman Aleppo are exceptionally rare.¹⁶⁶ Those of the Ḥanbalī rite in Damascus are described as immigrants from the Palestinian town of Nablus, where the Ḥanbalīs were relatively influential.¹⁶⁷ If Sayyid Ibrāhīm indeed served as such a religious authority among tanners and related groups, his influence would have been increased, and his ability to resolve disputes among guildsmen enhanced. More broadly, one can ask whether there was a sustained affinity and interaction lasting generations between persons occupying the office of Ḥanbalī muftī and the guildsmen engaged in marketing and processing animal products,

¹⁶⁵ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II:424–29; and Baer, “Patrons and Clients.”

¹⁶⁶ According to Jamīl al-Shaṭṭī, an authority on the Ḥanbalī tradition in Syria, the last prominent Ḥanbalī scholar with ties to Aleppo in the Ottoman period was a certain qadī named Niẓām al-Dīn Yahyā al-Tādifi al-Ḥalabī (d. 1551/52), who after the Ottoman conquest moved to Cairo. See his *Mukhtaṣar tabqāt al-Ḥanābila* (Damascus: Maṭba‘a al-Taraqqī, AH 1339/1920–21 CE), 83–84. See also Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Yūsuf Ibn al-Ḥanbalī al-Ḥalabī al-Tādifi (908–971/1502/2–1563), *Durr al-ḥabab fi tārikh a’yān Ḥalab*, 2 Vols., edited by by Maḥmūd Ḥamad al-Fakhkhūrī and Yahya Zakariyā ‘Abbāra (Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa, 1972), II:548–54. Drawing on biographical dictionaries, Adnan Bakhit surveys how frequently the office of mufti for each of the four Sunni Muslim schools is occupied in the sixteenth century. The offices of Mālikī and Ḥanbalī muftis in Damascus seem to have gone unfilled for considerable periods of time. See his *Ottoman Province of Damascus*, 119–42, esp. 121–22 and 133–34; see also Henri Laoust, “Ḥanābila,” and “Aḥmad b. Hanbal,” *EI*². On the importance of the Ḥanbalīs relative to other schools of law, see ‘Abdul-Karīm Rafeq, “Relations Between the Syrian ‘Ulama’ and the Ottoman State in the Eighteenth Century,” *Oriente Moderno* 18 (1999): 67–95; and John Voll, “The Non-Wahhabi Hanbalis of Eighteenth Century Syria,” *Der Islam* 49, 2 (1972): 277–91. For the Ḥanbalī school in Egypt, see Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 1517–1798* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 113–14.

¹⁶⁷ The Shuwayka family, described by Bakhit as dominating the post of mufti in Damascus and originating in the area of Nablus, were probably related to the Qāḍī-Shuwayka family that continued to be influential in Nablus into the nineteenth century. On the Ḥanbalī families of Nablus, see Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, esp. pp. 63, 67–68, 211–12, 275n.1.

most notably the slaughterers and the tanners.¹⁶⁸ For their part, members of the Ḥanbalī family of Aleppo, who seem to have dominated the office in the seventeenth century, may have seen guild leadership as an outlet for their ambition and a means of supplementing income through the collection of fees for arbitration services. Furthermore, belonging to the Ḥanbalī rite may have limited their ability to obtain appointment as administrators of public *waqfs*, for which positions state authorities may have favored persons of the Ḥanafī rite.¹⁶⁹

The Shaykh al-Dabbāghīn and Naqīb al-Dabbāghīn

In addition to the *akhī bābā* and *shaykh al-sabʿa*, whose leadership distinguishes the tanners from other guilds, we find the more ordinary offices of *shaykh* and *naqīb*. With regard to the *shaykh*, Abdul-Karim Rafeq reports that there were two *shaykhs* heading the tanners guild in the first quarter of the seventeenth century: one overseeing those members who were *ashraf*, and one overseeing those who were not.¹⁷⁰ This specific arrangement does not seem to have lasted long, as no other documents from among the many found in the second half of the century corroborate this. The arrangement may have evolved, however, into a less formal division, in which the *akhī bābā*, and perhaps the *shaykh al-sabʿa*, protected the interests of *sharif* tanners, and the *shaykh al-dabbāghīn* protected those of non-*sharif* tanners. The complete domination of the office of *akhī bābā* by the *ashraf* (Table 4.2), together with the complete absence of *ashraf* as holders of the office of *shaykh al-dabbāghīn* (Table 4.3) when their social prestige should have opened that office to them, suggest a certain separation of social spheres.¹⁷¹ That *sharif* guildsmen were required to pay taxes at half the

¹⁶⁸ On the relationship between schools of jurisprudence and Muslim society at large, see most recently Nimrod Hurvitz, "From Scholarly Circles to Mass Movements: The Formation of Legal Communities in Islamic Societies," *American Historical Review* 108, 4 (2003): 985–108.

¹⁶⁹ John Voll, "Old 'Ulama Families and Ottoman Influence in Eighteenth Century Damascus," *American Journal of Arabic Studies* 3 (1975): 48–59.

¹⁷⁰ Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 508.

¹⁷¹ A series of nineteen agreements stretching over ten years (1657–1667) involving representations of tanners enables us to estimate the proportions of *sharif* and non-*sharif* membership in that time. In these agreements, an average of ten representatives were present, of whom on average four were *sharif* and six were non-*sharif*. Of the *sharif* members, two were almost always the *akhī bābā* and Sayyid Ibrāhīm b. Sayyid

Table 4.3. Persons holding the office of *Shaykh al-Dabbāghīn* in Aleppo, 1629–67

1629	Shaykh Ḥusayn
1640	Ḥājj ʿUthmān b. Ḥājj Muḥammad
1655	Ḥājj Qāsim b. ʿAlī
1655	Ḥājj Muḥammad b. Yūsuf
1656	Muʿallim ʿUmar b. ʿAlī
1657	Shaykh ʿUmar b. Ḥājj ʿAlī
1658	Ḥājj ʿUmar b. ʿAlī
1659	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥājj Yūsuf
1660	ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. Ḥājj Yūsuf
1661	Ḥājj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥājj Yūsuf
1661	Ḥājj ʿUmar b. Muʿallim ʿAlī
1662	Shaykh ʿUmar b. ʿAlī
1663	Ḥājj ʿUmar b. ʿAlī
1664	Ḥājj ʿUmar b. Ḥājj ʿAlī
1666	Ḥājj ʿUmar b. ʿAlī
1667	Ḥājj ʿUmar b. ʿAlī

Source: Damascus, Center for Historical Documents (Dār al-Wathāʿiq al-Tārikhiyya), Sijillāt al-Maḥākīm al-Sharʿiyya.

rate of non-*sharīf* guildsmen may have required the appointment of separate tax collectors for the two groups and may have contributed to inter-group tensions.¹⁷²

Yet the authority of the shaykh transcended such a division in matters that came before the court. Indeed, he joined the *akhī bābā* and *shaykh al-sabʿa* in representing the tanners on most issues. These included the negotiation of *yamaḥ* relationships with other guilds, the contracting of debts to be shared by guild members, complaints against individual guild members and other guilds for violation of trade agreements and customs, and the fixing of prices of raw materials with supplier guilds.¹⁷³ The office of *shaykh al-dabbāghīn* seems to have exercised authority over a number of subordinate organizations. Two of these,

Rajab, who probably for much of the time held office of *shaykh al-sabʿa*. On this basis, one might argue that the proportion of tanners who were *sharīf* was roughly forty percent, and non-*sharīf*, sixty percent.

¹⁷² SMS 3:918, 20 J 1066/15 April 1656.

¹⁷³ For the negotiation of *yamaḥ* relationships, see SMS 28:27, 17 M 1071/22 September 1660; for the contracting of debts, see SMS 3:918, 20 J 1066/15 April 1656; for complaints against other guilds, see SMS 28:597, 4 J 1073/14 January 1663; and for the fixing of prices, see SMS 27:97, 7 L 1068/8 July 1658.

the producers of ordinary sheepskins (*ḥawar*) and the producers of Moroccan leather (*sakhtiyān*), were closely allied and cooperated in various matters, and the two organizations together, under the name of *ṭā'ifat al-dabbāghīn*, seem to have formed the core constituency of the shaykh.¹⁷⁴ Those guildsmen tanning the hides of larger animals such as buffalo, cattle, and camels (*ṣighirjiyya*, *ṣāghirjiyya*, or *kūnjiyya*) formed various separate organizations that nevertheless seem to have operated at times under the broad leadership of the *shaykh al-dabbāghīn* and *akhī bābā*, at least before state authorities.¹⁷⁵ Finally, there were organized groups of guildsmen who specialized in the marketing of guild products and who included not only street vendors but also shopowners (*bā'i'ū al-ḥawar wa'l-sakhtiyān*.)

While the shaykh participated in decision-making on an array of issues, it seems much of his attention was given to building and maintaining internal consensus on the distribution of resources and rights among guild members. Hence in 1655, when the tanners' guild nominated him to be the shaykh, Ḥājj Muḥammad b. Yūsuf agreed to accept the office only on certain conditions. If during his tenure members of the guild should abrogate the agreement they had made governing the distribution of skins, he would immediately resign.¹⁷⁶ The set of responsibilities that the shaykh shouldered, from mediation of issues between guild members and state authorities to the regulation of internal guild affairs, accords with the picture of the shaykh that has been presented in scholarly literature. What draws attention, in the case of Aleppo, is the presence of multiple figures of authority within the tanners' guild and their joint participation in a broad array of guild actions, suggesting a leadership group that was consultative and non-hierarchical in its dynamics, which contrasts with the leadership of the butchers.

Documents relating to the persons holding the office of *naqīb* in the tanners' guild support Abdul-Karim Rafeq's argument that the *naqīb* possessed more than just ceremonial duties. According to his account,

¹⁷⁴ SMS 3:918, 20 J 1066/15 April 1656; SMS 27:342, 6 DA 1071/3 July 1661; and SMS 27:377, 28 R 1072/21 December 1661.

¹⁷⁵ SMS 27:A433, 29 R 1075/19 November 1664; SMS 27:273, 6 RA 1071/9 November 1660; SMS 15:838, 15 J 1046/14 November 1636; and SMS 15:386, 25 J 1038/19 Feb 1629.

¹⁷⁶ SMS 3:356, 26 R 1065/5 March 1655. See also SMS 27:342, 6 DA 1071/3 July 1661.

the *naqīb*, who was nominated by the shaykh and confirmed by the qadi, served as a deputy to the shaykh in certain affairs, most notably tax collection, and when there was more than one *naqīb*, each seems to have had a specific geographical responsibility.¹⁷⁷ A joint agreement of the tanners in Aleppo, drawn up in 1662 and analyzed earlier in this study, assigned to the *naqīb* a full share (*hiṣṣa*), presumably of raw materials, in return for his efforts and service, whereas ordinary members received only half shares.¹⁷⁸ The considerable compensation of the *naqīb* suggests that his duties were indeed substantial. The *naqīb* also appeared in delegations of tanners who negotiated prices of sheepskins with the butchers.¹⁷⁹ Finally, we should mention the office of *yiğitbaşı*, on which only one document has been found. At the request of ranking members of the tanners' guild, including the *akhī bābā* and the *shaykh al-dabbāghīn*, the qadi appointed a man as *yiğitbaşı* and *mutakallim* over those guildsmen working cowhides (*tā'ifat ammālī al-ṣighir*). The use of the word *mutakallim*, literally "spokesman," suggests that *yiğitbaşı* here had a specialized meaning. Whereas *yiğitbaşı* had an administrative-geographical meaning in the leadership structures of the butchers and grocers, discussed above, here it refers to leadership over a professional sub-specialization. That the appointment is coupled with an agreement stipulating distribution of raw materials further suggests that that activity was the primary responsibility of the *yiğitbaşı*, though no direct relationship between the two is given.¹⁸⁰

The foregoing case studies of butchers and tanners illustrate in concrete terms different patterns of leadership in seventeenth-century Aleppo. Considering the case studies together, we can now make some broad comparative observations. As to general leadership structure, we note partial or full displacement of the shaykh by the provisioning officer in the management of public affairs of the guild, namely, in relations with other guilds and state authorities concerning the supply of raw materials from external sources, the marketing of finished or unfinished products, and the distribution of the tax burden, among

¹⁷⁷ Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 501.

¹⁷⁸ SMS 27:417, 22 S 1073/6 October 1662. Not only the *naqīb* but also the *shaykh al-thiyab*, which was perhaps the full ceremonial title of the *shaykh al-dabbāghīn*, received one full share.

¹⁷⁹ SMS 27:341, 30 L 1071/27 June 1661; and SMS 27:367, 10 RA 1072/3 November 1661.

¹⁸⁰ SMS 27:A480, 22 B 1076/28 January 1666.

other matters. In the case of the tanners, over whom no provisioning officer was appointed, we see the maintenance of an apparently pre-existing leadership structure, consisting not only of a shaykh but also of officials with broad supra-guild authority, the *akhī bābā* and the *shaykh al-sab'a*. It is important to recognize the possibility, however, that state authorities may have intervened in the tanners' guild in other ways; we have already mentioned one hypothesis that state authorities in this period may have sought to counterbalance the growing assertiveness of local administrators by promoting the interests of selected guilds, the tanners in particular. Nevertheless, the actions of state authorities, primarily the governor and qadi, to supervise the supply of basic foodstuffs through the appointment of a provisioning officer appear to have had a direct and forceful impact on guild life that would rival if not supersede the effects of a promotion of the tanners' leadership.

One of the remarkable features of guild leadership under the provisioning officer was the formation of for-profit partnerships. This is attributable to the function of the guild headship as a tax farm in which the governor or qadi granted rights of administration over certain economic sectors in exchange for financial investments that would defray state expenses in key supply areas. Significantly, this tax farm differed from most other tax farms in that the qadi and governor, not the central finance department in Istanbul, organized its operation. These local state authorities seemed to have relied on both incentive and compulsion to attract the necessary investment for this essential activity. On the whole, however, the incentive of profit seems to have been the driving force. The relatively high level of wealth, based on real estate properties, of the provisioning officer, indicates that such guild positions were remunerative and desirable and likely to draw the attention of ambitious guildsmen, as well as merchants and soldiers. That we find in guilds without provisioning officers no leadership structures organized on the basis of partnership and that such partnerships, where they did exist, were regulated by the shari'a court, strongly suggest that these partnerships were formed at the direction of state authorities. There is also limited evidence indicating that partnerships between provisioning officers had another objective: to curb abuses. Mutual accountability among multiple partners may have limited the temptations for would-be violators.

An element that was common to both guilds considered was the social prominence and wealth of the leadership, whether they were

provisioning officers or the *akhī bābā* or *shaykh al-sab'a* of the tanners. While the *akhī bābā* and *shaykh al-sab'a* appear to have been wealthier than the average tanner, what distinguishes them is their status: *sharīfs* of social distinction monopolized the office of *akhī bābā* throughout the period of study, and one holder of the office of *shaykh al-sab'a* was a mufti. For the butchers, the converse seems to have been true: we find that the wealth of persons filling the office of *kaşapbaşı* to have been a more notable fact than their status, even if we consider that toward the end of their careers they held military titles and privileges. One can argue that the key factor in the variable basis of guild leadership, at least in relative terms, was the consistent state demand for provisioning officers with substantial financial means.

When we relate the wealth and status of guild leaders to their places of residence, further significant patterns emerge. We note that persons who held the offices of *kaşapbaşı* and *shaykh al-sab'a* lived in areas of the city very close to or in the area where their respective professions were practiced. In the case of the *kaşapbaşı*, the guild leader seems to have had strong social and professional ties to his guild, given that he lived amidst his colleagues and in close proximity to major marketing and processing facilities. Such a pattern would be entirely consistent with his primary status as a guildsman. In the case of the *shaykh al-sab'a*, a member of the high-status ulama, we find what we might call a strategically selected location of residence: he lived in an area of the city not only relatively close to the major related centers of production and marketing but also roughly equidistant from each. Such a location facilitated his supervision and involvement in essential activities such as the supply of raw materials to his fellow guildsmen. What is more, his occupation as a functionary in a local religious institution reinforced social and professional networks.

The foregoing case studies also shed light on the process of militarization. We note that persons occupying the office of *kaşapbaşı* tended to have military titles in the years leading up to or around the survey of 1678, and that in the actual record of the survey the same persons had no such titles. This points to a process in which persons of a variety of social backgrounds, including guildsmen and merchants, sought affiliation with locally garrisoned military units. What is notable in this process is that those persons who did achieve leadership positions as provisioning officers were, with only a few exceptions, primarily of local origin and *not* soldiers who were very recently assigned to the area and who maintained their military rank and privileges. We might conclude

from such a pattern that guilds continued to exercise decisive influence in the selection of their leaders despite inroads made by locally garrisoned soldiers. The way in which local guildsmen and merchants preserved their hold over leadership positions may have been, as in the case of the *kaşapbaşı*, adaptation to the social and political strategies of state elites, that is, the formation of politically active households. The example of the Muhyi al-Dīn b. Sālim family suggests that those provisioning officer households that were most successful over the long term had large families and were rooted in particular neighborhoods that were closely connected with their respective industries.

Considering the case studies of leadership together with the guild agreements in the preceding section enables us to construct a complex picture of internal guild dynamics. Most notably, we see that growing social and economic differentiation could challenge the egalitarian ethic of guilds and elicit decisive action, as illustrated by the case of the tanners. Other guilds could be subject not only to these forces but also to the intervention of state authorities, whose material demands required the variable reorganization of leadership but preserved for the guilds considerable internal autonomy. Within each category of “state” and “society” we note multiple actors whose actions blurred definitions between public service and private interest. Through the provisioning officer system, qadis and governors created what were in effect local tax farm institutions and administered them entirely independent of central state supervision, ensuring regular public supply of basic foodstuffs but also investing in and drawing profit from such institutions. Provisioning officers, for their part, not only carried out government responsibilities but also defended the interests of the guilds whose products they supplied. They staked out the common ground of interest between government authorities and guildsmen, the former seeking the regular supply of vital commodities from a reliable source, and the latter, government sanction of a continually challenged commercial monopoly.

These interactions, however, are set at the guild level and do not cover the full range of actions in which guilds could engage. Guild organizations could exert control and influence over other guilds, and guilds could act jointly to defend their interests; it is to these questions that we now turn.

Relations among Guilds

Two aspects of inter-guild relations that appear with varying degrees of regularity in the court records of seventeenth-century Aleppo are (1) the formation of asymmetric power relations between “major” and “assistant” guilds, which we shall call here the *yamağ* relationship, and (2) the collective action of multiple guilds. This discussion aims not to be comprehensive but rather illustrative of key features of guild dynamics as guilds interacted with external forces characteristic of the period. Most notably, one notices that as levels of taxation varied over time, major and assistant guilds continually renegotiated the terms of *yamağ* relations. If tax levels rose sufficiently high, however, multiple guilds could act in concert to petition authorities for redress.

Literally “assistant” or “helper” in Turkish, the term *yamağ* was used by guildsmen and court officials in Aleppo to describe a guild that was in a specific kind of subordinate relationship to another guild.¹⁸¹ This usage was not limited to Aleppo but was common to many urban centers of the Ottoman empire. The usage may have had its origins in the state practice of assigning janissaries to garrison provincial fortresses. Artisans from the locality who affiliated with these janissaries were called *yamağ* since the artisans supported the janissaries either directly through military service or indirectly through payment of *ocaçlık* or *yurtluk* taxes that were assigned to the garrison’s upkeep.¹⁸² Guild officials, some of whom may have been of military status or background,

¹⁸¹ The word *yamağ* could be used to denote a hired assistant to a guildsman, but the usage seems to have been limited. In 1661 the *uncubaşı* hired as “*yamağ*” a certain ‘Assāf b. ‘Abdullāh, perhaps a slave or freedman, to produce a kind of bread in his milling facility. See SMS 27:356, 9 M 1072/4 September 1661.

¹⁸² See Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 192, citing J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Das osmanischen Reichs Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung*, 2 vols. (Vienna: In der Camesinaschen Buchhandlung, 1815), 216–17. Citing an imperial order from 1727/28 recorded in Çelebi Zade’s history (p. 489), Uzunçarşılı suggests that the term *yamağ* replaced the term *nöbetçi*, which referred to imperial soldiers who performed long-term service in military garrisons (*kal’e muhafızlığı*) in both peacetime and war. The order responded to complaints that persons serving in an assistant (*yamağ*) capacity to garrison soldiers (sing. *serhad*) throughout the empire had ceased to perform military service and observe military customs, leading to a breakdown in small unit discipline and to public disturbances. A *yamağ* would obtain membership in units through attaching himself, presumably in a client relationship, to one member of the garrison. See Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, I: 328–29; and *Tarih-i İsmā’il ‘Aşım Efendi (Küçük Çelebi Zâde)*, supplement (*zeyl*) to *Tarih-i Râşid* (Istanbul: Matba’a-yı ‘Âmire, 1272/1855–56), VI:489.

at some point seem to have appropriated the term, perhaps to instill an attitude of compliance with state demands. In any case, it is worth noting that historians have yet to find documentation of the *yamağ* relationship functioning among the guilds of Ottoman Egypt, where the *ocaklık* and *yurtluk* fiscal institutions also seem to have been absent.¹⁸³

The role of *yamağ* relationships in the life of guilds remains ill defined. Early social-historical studies of Ottoman guilds, relying in large part on the descriptions of the Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi, characterize *yamağ* relationships in very general terms as administrative arrangements by which several guilds were attached to a single major guild. On this question these works do little more than show that guilds that were related in the production process were grouped together.¹⁸⁴ Later studies by Halil Inalcik, Haim Gerber, and Suraiya Faroqhi on Bursa, and Abdul-Karim Rafeq on Syrian cities shed further light on *yamağ* guilds in several ways. Focusing on Bursa in the late fifteenth century, Halil Inalcik has offered suggestive evidence that the subordination of *yamağ* guilds to “dominant” guilds was not arbitrary but rather stemmed from the function of *yamağ* guilds as production and marketing agencies acting at the direction of the dominant guild.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, Gerber, who studied Bursa two centuries later, observes that a guild could claim another guild as *yamağ* when (1) the second guild obtained its raw materials from the first, (2) both guilds used the same commercial item, or (3) there was a longstanding traditional connection between the two guilds.¹⁸⁶ Basing his analysis principally on court records from Damascus and Aleppo in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Rafeq for his part stresses an entrepreneurial

¹⁸³ Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, especially II: 503–719. In Egypt the term *yamağ* may have taken on a much more specific meaning in military usage and thus may not have been used in a general sense to refer to relationships with guildsmen. Describing events in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Egyptian chronicler al-Damurdāshī uses the term to refer to the second-ranking *odabaşı* (a military officer) in a regiment (*ocak*) (see Chapter 3 for fuller definitions of these terms). See Damurdāshī, *Chronicle of Egypt*, 72n208.

¹⁸⁴ Mantran, *Istanbul*, 355–57; and Baer, *Egyptian Guilds*, 41. Baer does mention *yamağ* relationships but only on the basis of the traveller Evliya Çelebi, who may have imported the term for his description of Egyptian guilds. For illustrations of *yamağ* relationships in the text of Evliya Çelebi, see *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi: Topkapı Saray Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu-Dizini*, prepared by Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 1996), 239–248, 263–64, 283–84.

¹⁸⁵ “Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire,” *Journal of Economic History* 29, 1 (1969): 97–140, esp. 14; and idem, *Ottoman Empire*, 159.

¹⁸⁶ Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 45–46.

relationship between the major and *yamağ* guild in a dynamic market environment. “A *yamak* relationship,” Rafeq proposes, “could be considered an example of advanced economic organization, whereby the dependent [guild] either retailed products of the major [guild], reworked them and transformed them into marketable commodities, or supplied the major [guild] with raw materials.”¹⁸⁷ According to this model, major guilds competed with one another to secure as *yamağ* those guilds which either supplied common raw materials or served as marketing outlets.¹⁸⁸ The *yamağ* relationship, then, could be seen as a highly flexible device that the major guild used pragmatically to secure its material interests.

It appears that the *yamağ* guild formally acknowledged its subordination to the major guild by contributing funds to the major guild for the payment of taxes to the state.¹⁸⁹ Suraiya Faroqhi hypothesizes, at least in the case of eighteenth-century Bursa, that the *yamağ* relationship was the primary mechanism through which official tax agents collected taxes from guilds that were smaller or poorer, and perhaps not recognized officially.¹⁹⁰ *Yamağ* guilds, however, were far from pliant organizations. Evidence indicates that major guilds had to negotiate with the *yamağ* guild to fix the rate of taxation, indicating that the *yamağ* guild could have considerable leverage.¹⁹¹

The case of Aleppo confirms many of the recent findings concerning *yamağ* relationships. Given that the court records, which are the principal source for this study, provide an official government perspective, it is not surprising to find that the *yamağ* relationship is mentioned primarily in connection with taxation. Virtually all documents found

¹⁸⁷ Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change,” 505.

¹⁸⁸ A single document is suggestive of this model. In it there is the claim that the Shoemaker’s Guild (*tā’ifat al-bawābijjyya*) should contribute to the taxes paid by the Tanners because the Shoemakers “purchased from them what they needed of Moroccan leather,” suggesting the provision of raw materials. Yet in this document the Tanners never claim that the Shoemakers are *yamağ* to them as they do in comparable documents. See SMS 3:922, 24 J 1066/16 April 1656.

¹⁸⁹ Rafeq, “Law-Court Registers,” 154–55; idem, “Maẓāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī,” 171–72; and Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 35–36, 45–47.

¹⁹⁰ Suraiya Faroqhi, “Ottoman Guilds in the Later Eighteenth Century: The Bursa Case,” in *Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands 1480–1520* (Istanbul: Isis, 1995), 93–112, esp. 98.

¹⁹¹ Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 45–46. The more recent work of Eunjeong Yi on seventeenth-century Istanbul confirms the finding of Gerber that negotiation was central to the fixing of *yamağ* tax rates. See Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, 105–107; and idem, “Istanbul Guilds,” 150–51.

in this survey of the court records of Aleppo mentioning a *yamaḳ* relationship are either appointment orders in which a shaykh or other guild official is charged with collecting *yamaḳ* taxes, or agreements between major and assistant guilds on the form and rate of *yamaḳ* taxation. We might give as an example of the former case the judicial confirmation in 1649 of a certain Yūsuf b. ‘Abdullāh as shaykh of the tobacconist guild (*tā’ifat al-tūtünjiyya*). The qadi granted permission to Yūsuf to collect 40 *ghurūsh asadī* from members of his guild each month and remit this to the coffee guild (*tā’ifat al-qahwiyya*) “because his guild [the *tūtünjiyya*] was *yamaḳ* to the *qahwiyya*.”¹⁹² Tax agreements, which compose a large set of documents, will be considered in a later discussion.

In addition, it should be noted that the *yamaḳ* relationship could be replicated among merchants. In 1697 the guild of merchants (*tüccar ta’ifesi*) operating in the Kara Çumāş market of Aleppo complained to the Sublime Porte that a shaykh of a neighboring market, the Bāzāristān, was claiming them as *yamaḳ* and demanding taxes from them. The merchants reported that according to imperial orders they had been paying taxes (*tekālif*) to the Soap Market (*Şābūn Sūku*) for a long time. In the end, state authorities ordered the shaykh of the Bāzāristān to cease his interference.¹⁹³ Since the 1697 document is the only documented instance of the *yamaḳ* relationship appearing among merchants, it may be that other non-artisan groups employed it in a limited manner or used other terms. We have already noted the use of the term *mu’āwana* (assistance) by officials of neighborhoods to describe and justify the collection of additional real estate taxes.¹⁹⁴ In a limited sense at least, *yamaḳ* and *mu’āwana* practices could be considered as counterparts in the guild and neighborhood organizations, respectively.

The process of negotiation between guilds to fix *yamaḳ* rates deserves close attention, as it reflects how *yamaḳ* relationships varied over time and among different guilds. Agreements that fixed taxes between estab-

¹⁹² SMS 25:298, 21 M 1059/4 February 1649. See also SMS 15:805, 26 D 1045/1 June 1636, cited in Rafeq, “Mazāhir min al-tanzīm al-ḥirafī,” 172.

¹⁹³ AŞ 22:138, *Awāsīt* N 1108/3 April 1697. For a discussion of how merchants were taxed as individuals and as groups, see Masters, *Origins of Western Economic Dominance*, 56–57. The Bazaristan was one segment of the large market complex in the city center.

¹⁹⁴ See Chapter Two.

lished major and assistant guilds were the results of such negotiation. The question in each of these agreements was how much the assistant guild should pay as its share of the total levied on the major guild. The arrangements by which assistant guilds paid taxes varied considerably. Some guilds paid according to a fixed proportion of the total tax, while others paid regular and fixed lump sums; both of these arrangements, however, were subject to periodic renegotiation. A dispute in 1659 between the feltmakers (*ṭāʾifat al-labābidiyya*) and goat hair weavers (*ṭāʾifat al-muṭāfjiyya*) provides an example of the first arrangement. The feltmakers acknowledged that they were *yamaḵ* to the weavers, but they complained that their current share of the tax imposed on the weavers, which was “one-third,” was excessive. Remarkably, the feltmakers claimed that the weavers had taken this high proportion of tax only during the tenure of Ibn al-Ḥammāmī, the deputy of Abāza Ḥasan Pasha, who led a revolt against the Ottoman state earlier that year. To support their claim, the feltmakers brought to court members of the grocers’ guild, who, as knowledgeable witnesses, testified that *yamaḵ* guilds attached to the grocers *and to other guilds* were paying to the major guilds only one-fifth of the tax imposed on them, in concrete terms “one *ghirsh* of every five.” The qadi agreed with the testimony of the grocers and ordered the weavers to take only one-fifth.¹⁹⁵ The testimony of a third party on this issue supports the argument that one-fifth (*khums*) may indeed have constituted the norm for those guilds who apportioned taxes on this basis.¹⁹⁶ It is worth noting, however, that guild agreements selected by Haim Gerber in his study of seventeenth-century Bursa stipulate the division of taxes into thirds (tailors and related guilds) and halves (dressers and quiltmakers).¹⁹⁷

The mutability of such agreements is illustrated, however, by a series of agreements struck between tanners and other guilds over a five-year period. One agreement between the tanners and slippermakers (*khaffāfūn*) in 1660 stipulates that the tanners will bear one-fifth of the tax burden, and the slippermakers four-fifths, pointing to the

¹⁹⁵ SMS 27:194, 29 RA 1070/14 December 1659.

¹⁹⁶ One wonders if the customary apportioning of a fifth (*khums*) of taxes by major guilds is related to the canonical share of war spoils given to Muslim rulers. Such practice would have been consistent with the administrative subordination of the assistant guild to the major.

¹⁹⁷ Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 47.

likelihood that the tanners were *yamaḵ* to the other guild.¹⁹⁸ Three years later there appears to have been a crisis in the tax status of the tanners. On 21 February 1663 the tanners came to court complaining that the butchers' guild was demanding that they help them in the payment of the army tax (*rasm al-ūrdū*) and claiming that the tanners were *yamaḵ* to them. Testifying before the qadi, representatives of the tanners countered that for a long time they had not been *yamaḵ* to the butchers, and the qadi ordered the butchers to desist.¹⁹⁹ Apparently able to resist the designs of the butchers, the tanners on the same day struck an agreement with the tobacconist guild (*dukhāniyya*), whereby the tanners were the major guild, paying four-fifths of the tax burden, and the tobacconists were the assistant, paying one-fifth.²⁰⁰ We should not preclude the possibility, however, of a kind of multiple hierarchy in which a given guild was *yamaḵ* to a second guild but at the same time possessed other *yamaḵ* guilds of its own. Gerber notes that this arrangement developed in Bursa.²⁰¹

How the payment of taxes by assistant guilds to major guilds may have played out in practice is suggested by a claims case brought against the *bazarbaşı*, the provisioning officer of the grocers, in 1663. A group of grocers asserted that Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid 'Izz al-Dīn had collected a surplus of tax revenues from the four *yamaḵ* guilds attached to the grocers, and the plaintiffs wanted him to distribute those funds among the grocers (and not return them to the *yamaḵ* guilds!). Sayyid Aḥmad responded with a detailed report of his revenue collection and his expenses—a report which the qadi upheld. State authorities had levied on the grocers an army tax (*rasm al-ūrdū*) of 544.5 *ghurūsh asadī*, of which Sayyid Aḥmad assigned very close to an exact fifth (108 *ghurūsh*) to the *yamaḵ* guilds for payment. These guilds were the confectioners (*ḥalwāniyya*), who paid 38 *ghurūsh*; the oil-pressers (*mi'sārāniyya*), who paid 44 *ghurūsh*; the sellers of sweet beverages (*sharābjīyya*), who paid 14 *ghurūsh*; and the chandlers (*shammā'ūn*), who paid 12 *ghurūsh*. The balance of 436.5 *ghurūsh* was, according to

¹⁹⁸ The term *yamaḵ* is not used in this document, but the similarity in structure and phraseology between this and other documents explicitly setting forth *yamak* relationships, strongly suggests that this relationship was indeed *yamaḵ*. See SMS 28:27, 17 M 1071/22 September 1660.

¹⁹⁹ SMS 28:637, 13 B 1073/21 February 1663.

²⁰⁰ SMS 28:638, 13 B 1073/21 February 1663.

²⁰¹ Gerber, *Economy and Society*, 45–46.

Sayyid Aḥmad's report, augmented by several itemized administrative costs to equal 465 *ghurūsh*, which was borne equally by the four major districts (pl. *ṣawāyih*) of the grocers, but *not* by the *yamaḥ* guilds.²⁰²

If we accept this claims case as representative, we can make some observations on the mechanics of the typical *yamaḥ* relationship. First, this case indicates that from the court's perspective each guild in a *yamaḥ* relationship was to contribute not an entire fifth of the tax burden, but rather some proportion of that fifth, depending on how many other *yamaḥ* guilds there were to the major guild. Second, the apparent care that Sayyid Aḥmad took in taxing the *yamaḥ* guilds, demonstrated by his precise calculation of their tax share and his exempting them from bearing the burden of additional administrative costs, suggests that he may have been complying (or at least feigning compliance) with what may have been external guidelines that were recognized by state authorities, represented in this case by the qadi. That the grocers sought the distribution of surplus revenues, however, implies that such a demand was plausible if not customary, and this consideration would have brought a countervailing pressure on the *bazarbaşı* in his dealings with the *yamaḥ* guilds.

On a more speculative level, it seems that guilds would have had incentive to attract multiple *yamaḥ* guilds, even with a possible increase in tax assessment, because members of the major guild could expect distribution of surplus revenues from *yamaḥ* tax collections. Guilds that had no ambition to attain major guild status may have sought to attach themselves to major guilds that already had other *yamaḥ* guilds, so as to reduce their contributions. In this connection, Abdul-Karim Rafeq suggests that an example of advanced commercial organization among guilds is provided by the competition between the butchers and tanners in Damascus to have the slaughterers as *yamaḥ*, since both guilds, he reasons, would want to control their supply of raw material.²⁰³ This may well be true, but the foregoing case of the grocers supports the argument that both the butchers and tanners, as major guilds, may also have been seeking to expand their tax (or tributary) base without incurring additional taxes, and the slaughterers, for their part, may have played one major guild off the other in the interest of reducing their tax load. That major guilds may have

²⁰² SMS 28:664, 20 B 1073/28 February 1663.

²⁰³ Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 505.

been too aggressive in their pursuit of *yamaç* guilds is suggested by a case involving the silver embroiderers' guild (*şırmakeşân ta'ifesi*). They petitioned the Sublime Porte in 1667 that because the jewelers' guild (*kuyumcu ta'ifesi*) had made them *yamaç* and required that they pay various taxes (*tekâlif*), the embroiderers were unable to pay their full obligations to the Porte.²⁰⁴ While this particular claim of the embroiderers' guild may have been exaggerated or entirely false, that they presented it before state authorities suggests that the claim was, in light of general tax patterns, at least plausible.

Yamaç guilds remitted taxes to major guilds not only in fixed shares of occasional levies but also in more regularized lump sums. Whereas the first arrangement seems to have been used principally for extraordinary levies such as the army tax (*rasm al-ürdü*), the second arrangement seems to have been used for more regular taxes (*mîrî*) levied on specific economic sectors and institutions and administered by imperial tax agents and tax farmers. A series of six agreements and other documents over the years 1655–63 between the butchers and a *yamaç* guild, the *jârikjiyya*, who marketed meat in the streets of Aleppo, illustrates tax payment by lump sums and how these lump sums were renegotiated over time. In the first agreement in May 1655, the vendors acknowledged that they were *yamaç* to the *kaşapbaşı*, and they agreed to remit to him ten *ghurūsh asadî* on a monthly basis to meet their obligations.²⁰⁵ The vendors in 1658 confirmed their *yamaç* status to the *kaşapbaşı* and the same rate of taxation, but they added that they were also paying ten *ghurūsh* as assistance (*mu'āwana*) to tax collectors of one branch of the butchers, those working in the central market area of Aleppo (*Saqaṭiyya*) who, they said, were saddled with heavy taxes and debts. This second document seems to have been written to formalize an understanding that the *Saqaṭiyya* tax collectors would not request any more assistance.²⁰⁶ The third agreement marks a positive change for the vendors, as they and the butchers receive the report that various taxes collected under the market tax (*māl al-iḥtisāb*) are reduced, resulting in a discounting of the *yamaç* payment from ten to six *ghurūsh*. The reason for the reduction is not specified but it may be related to the cession of higher taxes after the departure of

²⁰⁴ MM 2745:42, 8 RA 1078/28 August 1667. See also Istanbul, Prime Ministry Archives, İbnülemin Dahiliye 1816, AH 1111/1699–1700 CE.

²⁰⁵ SMS 3:423, B 1065, May/June 1655.

²⁰⁶ SMS 27:86, 29 B 1068/2 May 1658.

Ibn Ḥammāmji, an associate of Abāza Ḥasan Pasha, noted above with respect to the grocers' guild.²⁰⁷

The final three agreements mark a continuing variation in the tax arrangements but also chronicle growing interference by the *wakīl al-kharj*, an officer charged by the governor to procure food for his household and army.²⁰⁸ An agreement between the butchers and vendors in May of 1659 returns the tax rate to ten *ghurūsh*, but the vendors warn that this agreement is contingent on the *wakīl al-kharj* being prevented from fiscal innovation (*bid'a*), that is, from inventing new taxes.²⁰⁹ A year later, however, another agreement reveals the still growing influence of the *wakīl al-kharj* vis-à-vis the *kaşapbaşı*. Of the ten *ghurūsh* that the vendors are paying, two *ghurūsh* are going to the *kaşapbaşı*, and eight are going to the *wakīl al-kharj*.²¹⁰ The final document, recorded in 1663, attests to the at least temporary assumption of tax collection activities by the *wakīl al-kharj*. Here the *kaşapbaşı* and butchers sued the vendors for payment of the monthly tax, which at this time had dropped to six *ghurūsh*. The vendors countered by saying that they had paid this amount directly to the *wakīl al-kharj*, because they owed a debt to him. Upholding the claim of the *kaşapbaşı*, the qadi ordered the vendors to make their payments in the future through the officers of the butchers' guild.²¹¹ Although the exact reasons for variations in *yamağ* payments are difficult to identify in many cases, it appears from these documents that the different taxation practices of individual governors and their subordinate officers were the chief factors; indeed, it seems that officials in the household of the governor could displace guild leaders as the collectors of *yamağ* revenues. The broader historical significance of the *wakīl al-kharj* is difficult to assess, as the limited base of documentary evidence is such that no long-term trends for Aleppo can be established.

The *yamağ* relationship constitutes only one aspect of inter-guild relations in seventeenth-century Aleppo. While the *yamağ* relationship illustrates how single guilds, both major and assistant, maneuvered

²⁰⁷ SMS 27:119, 28 M 1069/26 October 1658.

²⁰⁸ Pakalın, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, III: 586. Uzunçarşılı describes the *vekilharç* as a military officer at the *orta* or *bölük* level who arranges the supply of food and other necessities for his unit. See *Kapıkulu Ocakları*, I: 234–37.

²⁰⁹ SMS 27:147, 8 N 1069/30 May 1659.

²¹⁰ SMS 27:222, 2 Ş 1070/13 April 1660.

²¹¹ SMS 28:655, 5 Ş 1073/15 March 1663.

among others to secure narrowly defined material interests, other actions bespeak the ability of multiple guilds to act in concert. Such actions are most visible when they arise in opposition to an external force, such as invaders and state authorities, but we also find examples of collective action taken against perceived threats from within. Instances of collective action appear rarely in our sources, but when they do, they offer some clues to how guildsmen in daily life conceived of their broader interests beyond the organization of their respective guilds.

The matter that seemed to galvanize guildsmen across guild boundaries most effectively was any sustained challenge to their conception of just and equitable taxation. When their petitions failed to achieve the desired results, guildsmen in Aleppo could and did carry out resistance on a wide scale. In her study of the 1651 revolt in Istanbul, Eunjeong Yi concludes that guildsmen undertook resistance only after negotiations with a succession of state officials had been exhausted, and even at that point, the heterogeneity of guilds and allied groups left them vulnerable to division and co-optation.²¹² These conclusions would appear to apply also to the actions of guilds in Aleppo. Imperial orders from the years 1688–90 document a crisis in relations between guildsmen and tax authorities in the city. According to a Turkish-language imperial order dispatched in 1688, the representatives of the guilds of Aleppo (*eşnāf tā'ifesi*) complained to the Sublime Porte that the chief financial officer of the province (*muḥaṣṣıl*) and market regulator (*muḥtasib*) were collecting more than their due of *ihtisāb* (market regulation), *başhâne* (livestock facility), and other taxes, and this despite several previous orders forbidding them to do so. Some of the illegal taxes, the guildsmen reported, went under the names of *aylık* (“monthly”), *haftalık* (“weekly”), *gündelik* (“daily”), *meşihat* (“fee for the shaykh”), and *harc-ı ma'kûl* (“reasonable expense”). The Sublime Porte responded to the petitioners’ request for fair taxation by verifying the actual tax assessment and ordering the local Islamic court to investigate.²¹³

²¹² Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, 213–35; and idem, “Istanbul Guilds,” 321–32.

²¹³ A copy of this order is recorded in two places: Damascus, ES 1:65, 14 Ş 1099/14 June 1688; and in summary form, in Istanbul, AŞ 11:507, 13 DA 1099/9 September 1688. See another imperial order forbidding the *muḥtasib* from collecting *aylık*, *qudüm*, *hafta*, *mashyikha*, *salâmiyya*, *orta akçesi*, and other fees from the butchers’ guild, ES 1:15, 4 N 1101/11 June 1690.

Whether the court undertook immediate efforts to rectify the reported tax abuses is unclear; the documentary record in these years is far from complete. In the longer term, however, it is clear that the court did not succeed. A second Turkish-language order dated two years later describes attempts by state authorities to restore civil order in the city. The deputy governor of the province had reported to Istanbul that when he tried to collect the *meşihat* tax, a tax that he claimed had been levied on guilds for two hundred years, a number of guild leaders produced an imperial order forbidding the collection of the tax, and on that basis the guild leaders refused to pay.²¹⁴ Resistance then took a more confrontational turn. Remarkably, according to the deputy governor, these guild leaders formed certain “organizations” (sing. *cem’iyyet*) to shut down the markets, preventing the collection of revenues, despite the express prohibition of such organizations. The report continued that the agreements (sing. *ittifāk*) on which these organizations were founded were causing public disorder (*fitne*) and impeding the payment of taxes. The deputy governor thus requested that the Sublime Porte summon guild leaders and senior members to court and conduct an inquiry (*murāfa’a*) among the parties. In response, the Sublime Porte dispatched a commissioner (*mübāşir*) to examine the orders in the hands of the guild leaders and to adjudicate the dispute.²¹⁵ The outcome of the dispute is unfortunately unknown, but the 1690 order itself is enough to demonstrate the willingness and ability of multiple guilds to stage a large-scale strike and force state authorities to take notice.²¹⁶ The use of the term *cem’iyyet* by the deputy governor, which in this survey is found only rarely in administrative records, suggests an extraordinary development that threatened civil order.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ In his article-length survey of guilds in Ottoman Syria, Rafeq suggests the shaykhs of guilds profited from tax called *māl al-mashyakha*, which they collected from guildsmen and *yamağ* guilds. Documents discussed here suggest, however, that at least in the late seventeenth century, a tax by the same name was being collected, albeit with opposition, from the *shaykhs* by unspecified state officials. See Rafeq, “Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change,” 500.

²¹⁵ ES 1:54, 28 S 1102/1 Dec 1690.

²¹⁶ We note that in the second order the Sublime Porte addresses its instructions not to the qadi of Aleppo but rather to a deputy (*nā’ib*), a circumstance that suggests that no qadi was in the city. The absence of a qadi, who ordinarily would play a major role in resolving such conflicts, must have weakened the ability of local state authorities to settle the matter.

²¹⁷ SMS 25:149, 6 N 1058, 24 September 1648.

There is one other documented episode of resistance in the province that is comparable to the 1690 strike in Aleppo, but it is broader in the social groups that it involved. In 1648, representatives of the town of ‘Azāz, north of Aleppo, and of surrounding villages testified to the good character, just taxation practices, and even reforms, of a certain Ferīdūn Agha b. ‘Abdullāh, the governor (*voyvoda*) of the district of ‘Azāz to the north of Aleppo. According to this Arabic-language report, this testimony was taken after a group of people from ‘Azāz and surrounding villages gathered together following the accession of Mehmed IV and refused to pay accession taxes to the *aghawāt*, presumably regimental officers stationed in the area. The group of people formed an agreement (*ittifāq*) with the judge (*nā’ib*) of ‘Azāz, who in coordination with the group then closed the shops of the town until the governor agreed to accept a reduction in taxes. The resistance collapsed, however, and the resisters fled, because, according to the report, they feared the consequences of their “wicked actions” (*fasād*) and they did not want to pay their taxes. What is common to both of the foregoing episodes of resistance is the formation of agreements (*ittifāq*) among a broad range of parties and interests—agreements that state authorities considered conducive to disorder (Ar. *fitna*) and corruption (*fasād*).

Inter-guild collective action could also be directed toward guildsmen who broke ranks. In 1661 a large number of officials from various guilds gathered in Şalāhiyya Court, one of the Islamic courts in Aleppo, to testify in the case of a guildsman who had complained about court injustice. The scribe (*kātib*) and interpreter (*turjumān*) of the court, as well as the head scales official (*terāzbaşı*) for the *ihtisāb* tax sector, alleged that a certain Ḥājj ‘Umar, a member of the greengrocers’ guild, had slandered them, saying that they had invented new taxes to impose on all guildsmen. They challenged Ḥājj ‘Umar to identify what the fiscal innovation (*mubtada’*) was, and they summoned guild representatives to testify on their behalf. Leaders of thirteen guilds, including the *bazarbaşı*, *uncubaşı*, and *kaşapbaşı*, as well as senior members (*ahālî*) of each of these guilds, testified that the court had imposed no innovations (pl. *bida’*) on them and that the amount of taxes they were paying to the court and to *ihtisāb* officials each year was less than what it had been previously. The witnesses drew a strong contrast between the plaintiff and defendants, characterizing the officials as upright (*mustaqīm*) and Ḥājj ‘Umar as wicked, addicted to drink, and

prone to defame “what God almighty had put in order.”²¹⁸ It appears that Ḥājj ‘Umar had a history of criticizing local administration. In 1658 he had registered a complaint that the scalesman (*wazzān*) in his district, the official responsible for weighing his produce and collecting taxes, had been insolent and quarrelsome with him. In response, the *muḥtasib* had the *wazzān* replaced.²¹⁹ But over time tax and court officials may have grown weary of the combative behavior of Ḥājj ‘Umar, and the 1661 incident may have been the last straw. It is worth asking, however, whether Ḥājj ‘Umar’s complaint may have targeted real abuses. Officials of the court and the tax administration may have colluded with guild officials and other influential guild members in maintaining a regime of taxes and fees from which they both benefited materially. This web of interaction, if it existed, is largely hidden from the historical record.

Guilds: Patterns of Autonomy and Organizational Fluidity

The progression of this chapter from the discussion of the nature of guild solidarity, to leadership and finally to inter-guild relations is intended to illustrate the different forces that were acting within and on guilds in seventeenth-century Aleppo. From this discussion four broad themes that emerge clearly are (1) the extensive autonomy that guilds enjoyed, (2) the internal tensions that could divide them, (3) the dynamism of the *yamaḥ* relationship, and (4) the ability of multiple guilds to act in unison. This study largely confirms the findings of other works on the question of autonomy, specifically in matters of taxation and personal accountability. Its major contribution in this regard is to show that guilds could articulate elaborate agreements of self-regulation and that, in the distribution of the collective resources of the guild, these agreements could take into account not only professional qualifications but also marital status. While the tanners, whose agreements these were, may have been to some degree exceptional in their organization, their agreements nevertheless express an ideal that many guilds probably harbored and sought to fulfill.

²¹⁸ SMS 27:347, 22 DA 1071/19 July 1661.

²¹⁹ SMS 27:57, 24 R 1068/29 January 1658.

Acting against the values expressed by these agreements, however, were various social and economic forces that seem to have been more or less constant throughout the period of study. In this era of frequent warfare, the creation of offices charged with the provisioning of key foodstuffs for military purposes presented new opportunities for individual guildsmen and merchants to enrich themselves. Growing disparities in wealth between provisioning officers, who were charged with a wide array of leadership duties, and the rank-and-file guildsmen led to tensions that were not easily defused. Agreements between the two sides on the compensation of the provisioning officers illustrate the process of contestation and negotiation. Even the tanners, over whom no provisioning officer was appointed, and whose agreements serve as models of egalitarian values, experienced internal conflict that required the intervention of the court. In their case, it may have been strong regional or even foreign demand for their products that generated irresistible opportunities for profit—in amounts beyond those allowed by the egalitarian spirit of their organization.

On a broader level, the formation of asymmetric power relations between guilds, termed the *yamaḳ* relationship, seems to have been driven by a set of different forces. This study largely agrees with Suraiya Faroqhi in her thinking that the *yamaḳ* relationship sprang from the desire of local state authorities to make the collection of regular government taxes (*mīrī*) from guilds more comprehensive.²²⁰ According to this theory, state authorities encouraged recognized guilds to bring under their administration marginal or small groups of craftsmen and traders who would otherwise have escaped taxation. Recognized guilds may have acted on this encouragement more vigorously, however, in cases where the recognized guild sought to extend some form of control over groups that were either supplying raw materials to them or marketing their finished products. Securing regular (and potentially monopolized) access to raw materials would have reduced the prices for the recognized guild, and having a share in the proceeds of retail sales also would have been financially favorable for the recognized guild. The guilds' eagerness to secure *yamaḳ* guilds, then, may well have been driven also by rational commercial strategies.²²¹

²²⁰ Faroqhi, "The Bursa Case," 98.

²²¹ Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change," 505.

The *yamağ* relationship, furthermore, presents an intriguing historical question precisely because the clusters of guilds that could result from the formation of *yamağ* relationships occupied an intermediate form of fiscal, and potentially social and economic, organization between individual guilds and the entirety of guilds in the city. It is natural to ask whether the *yamağ* relationship could have served as a basis for political loyalty, resulting in the emergence of factions that could project power in certain areas of the city. We note that the political life of Aleppo and Damascus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was dominated by rivalry between geographically-based factions, these being the janissaries and *ashrāf* in Aleppo, and the “*yerliyya*” and “*kaḫı kulus*” in Damascus.²²² In looking for precedents of this kind of factionalism in seventeenth-century Aleppo, we should consider *yamağ* clusters as nuclei around which factions could form. We notice, for example, the differing social composition of persons representing the butchers and those representing the tanners in mutual price-fixing agreements, the butchers having a substantial component of soldiers and no *ashrāf*, and the tanners having a substantial component of *ashrāf* and relatively few soldiers. The limited time span covered by these agreements unfortunately does not allow us to trace changes in guild membership over time. Another study on the political elite of ‘Ayntab, an Anatolian city to the north of Aleppo, does show the progress in the seventeenth century of “*seyyidization*” and “*askerization*,” processes by which the urban population affiliated with one of two privileged status groups.²²³ The *yamağ* clusters could have formed the routes along which affiliation advanced, whether the affiliation was formal, that is, accomplished through actual enrollment in status group registers, or informal, as through coordinated political action only.

The narrow interests of individual guilds and of guilds brought together by *yamağ* relationships could be transcended, however, whenever guildsmen as a whole perceived a threat to their collective interests. Given the incomplete documentary record for the second half of the seventeenth century, it is difficult to estimate how frequently

²²² Bodman, *Political Factions*, 103–39, passim; Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus, 1723–1783* (Beirut: Khayats, 1966), 26–36; idem, *Bilād al-Shām wa Miṣr*, 192–195; idem, “Local Forces in Syria,” 277–281; and idem, “Changes in the Relationship,” 53–73, esp. 60–61, 64–65.

²²³ Canbakal, “‘Ayntab,” 133–96; and idem, *Society and Politics*, 61–89.

collective action such as guild strikes took place. Still, the one documented occasion in which guildsmen in Aleppo created organizations uniting multiple guilds in opposition to state practices is illustration enough of a professional solidarity and local identity underlying more day-to-day concerns. Such guild unity must have been relatively unstable, as smaller groups of guilds, perhaps based on *yamağ* relationships, may have made separate accommodations with state authorities. What remains salient in our view of guilds is the existence of the multiple levels on which guilds organized themselves, each brought into action by different challenges.

Each of the four themes described above aims to modify or refine how we view Ottoman guilds in the social and political context of the seventeenth-century. Guild agreements reflect not only broad institutional autonomy but also the corporate ideals of an urban society struggling to establish order in an era of social and demographic flux. For guilds whose products attracted sustained state intervention, state authorities called on local cadres to organize themselves in partnerships that might yield profit for state or private investors. In the instances studied here, profit incentive, not state compulsion, propelled guild leadership. In these ways, guilds functioned as an important component of what we call today civil society, asserting leadership in spheres of action that in effect limited state authority. Although guilds were too heterogeneous and dynamic a form of professional organization to allow permanent agreements among all of them, the demonstrated patterns of the *yamağ* relationship and inter-guild cooperation show that broad-based temporary agreements, founded on common interest, were possible. We should perhaps add to the vocabulary of Ottoman social and economic formations the *yamağ* cluster and consider more seriously the political efficacy of guild coalitions.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing survey of institutions in seventeenth-century Ottoman Aleppo has explored the complex interplay between a wartime state military apparatus and the social solidarities of a provincial city, many of which were tasked materially to support the war effort. As has been shown, the effects of warmaking were both direct and indirect. Taxation and the requisitioning of human and material resources exerted an immediate impact, while the diffusion of military cadres throughout society constituted a secondary but no less profound outgrowth of warmaking. In an effort to contain the effects of these developments, Ottoman authorities pursued various reforms, most notably under the Köprülü grand viziers in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Both a natural occurring formation of civil society and a defined administrative unit, residential quarters were important sites of contestation between state authorities and local populations. Quarters witnessed systematic efforts by state authorities to regularize the extraordinary tax system, specifically through the conduct of comprehensive property surveys, and were subject to a level and frequency of taxation that many homeowners struggled to pay. While residents were sometimes divided on the distribution of the tax burden, the overall picture is one of cooperation and joint initiative to maintain and even develop neighborhood resources to meet tax obligations. Long-term stewardship of neighborhood properties by community elders and the foundation of charitable endowments by wealthy individuals indicate the lengths to which members of the quarter would go to uphold the interests of their neighbors and the quarter at large.

State authorities, it is important to add, were in many ways responsive to complaints by residents of excessive tax burdens. The same property surveys that were designed to broaden the real estate tax base also redistributed the tax burden in ways that reduced discrimination against non-Muslim communities and in general brought individual tax assessments in line with the actual material condition of the properties. As shown in the inspection of Isma'îl Pasha in 1660–1661 and the tax survey of 1678, the Köprülü grand viziers and their associates recognized the need to legitimize their demands through the

implementation of a just and fair tax system.¹ As they raised revenue, state authorities sought to mitigate the social and political consequences of regularized taxation by limiting tax exemptions among status groups and balancing tax obligations among religious communities. The question of how long these practices remained in effect after 1678 is difficult to determine, given the fragmentary nature of local records at the end of the seventeenth century.

An examination of the military cadres, represented principally by the citadel guards (*müstahfizān*) and other units residing in the city, yields another perspective on social and political change occurring in Aleppo. Clearly an instrument of state authority, military cadres should not be considered a component of civil society. The dispersed residence patterns of the military population as well as the intensive nature of their moneylending to guildsmen and other urban social groups nevertheless suggest the degree to which they had become integrated into local society. Two case studies focusing on the citadel guards illustrate the practical implications of social integration, shedding light on the considerable extent to which soldiers put down their weapons for the implements of trades, crafts, and agriculture. This is not to say that their internal social bonds dissolved or even weakened. Although soldiers' professional skills and martial readiness may have diminished, some military units nonetheless preserved their identities as interest groups and continued to pursue the material benefits and privileges accruing to their status. The at least partial assimilation of military cadres to local society thus renders problematic the boundaries drawn between civil society and the state in this study. Not only neighborhoods and guilds but also military units paid their taxes and some debts by serving collectively as marketing networks on behalf of wealthy creditors who sought to sell goods locally.

Guilds were subject not only to taxes assessed for purposes of military campaigns but also to the social consequences of an expanding military population with only irregular employment. The twin processes of taxation and the entry of soldiers into the guilds were mutually reinforcing, as individual soldiers could exploit their position as

¹ The survey of 1616 may have addressed taxpayer grievances of a similar nature. The Canpuladóglu rebellion (1605–07) may have been only the most visible sign of popular dissatisfaction with imperial tax policies. Unfortunately, few court records and other local sources survive from that period.

tax collectors (and moneylenders) to entrench themselves as leaders in the guilds. While the inspection of Isma'îl Pasha in 1660–1661 may possibly have reduced the population with military status and curtailed opportunities for exploitation, the high level of indebtedness of artisans to soldiers during the ensuing years suggests that among the guilds the inspection had mixed results at best. Conversely, enterprising civilian artisans and merchants could obtain provisioning offices and, under the imperative of state interest, subordinate all guild members, military and civilian, to their authority. On a larger scale, intensified taxation appears to have given rise to the formation, or reinforcement, of networks of guilds connected by tributary *yamak* relationships, through which taxes could be extracted more fully from the crafts sector of the economy. The economic and social turbulence generated by taxation, the emergence of a stratum of rich guildsmen benefiting from provisioning, and the intermixing with soldiers seem to have led some guilds to hammer out internal agreements reaffirming their core values and institutional autonomy. While challenged by seventeenth-century developments, the social solidarity of the guilds nevertheless remained in place, even if somewhat attenuated by social disparities.

The study of elements of civil society such as residential neighborhoods and guilds as presented here points to the resilience and adaptability of these organizations to the material demands of war making and intermixing with military cadres. Most characteristic of the organizational responses is the persistence, if not expansion, of mechanisms for mutual aid (in the case of the neighborhoods, *waqfs*, and in the case of guilds, joint agreements, or *ittifâqs*) that represented both individual and collective commitments to the welfare of the group and to the public interest. One can rightly regard these actions as initiatives originating in local society and not emanating from state practices.

While stressing the force of collective solidarities, this study has also shown through the accounts of selected soldiers and guildsmen that individuals and their associated households charted their own careers and retained much historical agency. Indeed, persons who sought upward social mobility in the Ottoman service class (the *'askerî* class) were a recurring story in Ottoman society of the seventeenth century. In her study of 17th century 'Ayntab, Canbakal has analyzed the wide-scale pursuit of *'askerî* status, surveying not only those who attained it by performing military service, but also others who secured status by obtaining revenue grants or claiming descent from the Prophet

Muhammad.² The coalescence of these individuals into assertive status groups in competition for state offices and privileges would, in the eighteenth century, contribute to the divisiveness of provincial politics but would also give these groups a stake in the Ottoman state and bind them ever closer to it. For his part, Grehan, in his examination of consumption and material culture in eighteenth-century Damascus, likens such status elites to entitlement groups, whose state-sanctioned access to foodstuff commodities put peasants and common workers at economic disadvantage. In times of food shortage or war, when local demand for such commodities was further heightened, Ottoman society witnessed chronic factionalization, often erupting into public violence and disorder. One can make a strong case that the political struggles between the “janissaries” and “*ashrāf*” not only in Aleppo and but also in ‘Ayntab to the north in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, were partially the outcome of the growth of entitlement groups and their clients.³ Individual self-interest, linked to the expanding early modern state, generated new social formations that would be disruptive to the older social organizations we consider in the present study.

In closing, the present study underscores the importance of considering state administrative policy as a motor of historical change in early modern provincial society. Most notable are the reforms undertaken by the Köprülü grand viziers. It has been said that the Ottoman state could not have launched the military campaign to take Vienna in 1683 without the reforms of the preceding decades led by the Köprülüs. The tax survey of Aleppo in 1678, which according to local court documents was fully implemented, is an example of the state’s bureaucratic virtuosity and effective marshalling of resources. In his well-known study of eighteenth-century Aleppo, Abraham Marcus describes an urban society that had regular interaction with the Ottoman central state, but he does not attempt to show how that nature of that interaction may have evolved from an earlier Ottoman period.⁴ The present study offers one possible explanation of earlier historical change—an explanation in which state-society relations, in the seven-

² Canbakal, *Society and Politics*, 64.

³ Jim Grehan, *Everyday life and Consumer Culture*, 92–93, 230–31.

⁴ To be fair, Marcus concludes that his description of eighteenth-century Aleppo should not be understood to represent a “timeless continuity” with all of the city’s premodern history. See Marcus, *Eve of Modernity*, 329–36.

teenth-century, underwent dynamic transformation set in motion by the deliberate and systematic reforms of state elites.

The second, broader point to emphasize is the extent to which state-sponsored warmaking mobilized and transformed provincial society. The effects of war were limited neither to the immediate areas in which battles were waged, nor to just the soldiers who fought those battles; rather, the effects extended beyond them to the distant reaches of provincial society. We may not be able to term military conflict in the seventeenth century as “total” war in the sense that historians have used the phrase to characterize the world wars of the twentieth century, but we should not underestimate the impact that warmaking had in early modern societies, not least that of the Ottomans. In the broader trajectory of Ottoman history, we might see the warmaking of the seventeenth century as enabling real political and social integration, continuing a movement that had begun in the sixteenth century, but accelerating it as the material and human needs of the Ottoman state shifted, and as the social basis of Ottoman polity broadened. While having its own unique history, the Syrian city of Aleppo nevertheless illustrates many of these broader patterns. Constituting some of the basic organizations of urban social life, residential quarters, military units, and guilds witnessed, by the end of the century, a *consolidation* of the Ottoman social and political order that lasted until the Tanzimat reforms in the nineteenth century.

GLOSSARY

- agha**: the highest officer in an Ottoman regiment
- akhī bābā**: pre-eminent leader of the tanner's guild who specialized in inter-guild affairs; shared leadership with *shaykh al-dabbaghin* and *shaykh al-sab'a*
- a'lā'awsat/adnā** (Tk. *a'la/evsat/ednā*): high, middle, and low, respectively; categories used to assess property and other forms of taxes
- ashrāf**: (sing. *sharīf*) those claiming descent from the family of the Prophet Muhammad
- 'askerī**: tax-exempt service nobility
- 'avārīz**: extraordinary cash taxes that became regular in the seventeenth century
- awā'il**: the first third of a Muslim month
- awākhīr**: the final third of a Muslim month
- awāsiṭ**: the middle third of a Muslim month
- b./bt.**: abbreviations for *ibn* and *bint* ("son of" and "daughter of"); used in Muslim names
- bazarbaşı**: provisioning officer and leader of the grocers' guild (*sammānūn*)
- beyt**: in tax registers, a house, usually comprising a courtyard and surrounding rooms; corresponds to *dār* in Arabic court records
- bedel-i nüzül**: extraordinary tax usually alternating with or accompanying the 'avārīz tax
- beşe**: honorific title used by rank-and-file soldiers
- bölükbaşı**: commander of a *bölük*, a subdivision of an Ottoman regiment
- çorbacı**: literally, "soupmaker," a middle-ranking officer of a regiment; also, an honorary title given to persons who had enrolled in a unit but typically had no military training or experience
- dizdār**: officer in charge of a citadel's garrison
- ghirsh** (pl. *ghurūsh*): the prevailing currency in 17th-century Aleppo; usually the Dutch leuventhaler (*ghirsh asadī*)
- gönülluyān**: literally "volunteers," soldiers deployed both as infantry and cavalry to maintain security of the province
- ghurra**: first day (of the month)
- hājī**: title of person who had performed the Hajj pilgrimage
- hāne**: tax unit used to assess extraordinary levies; consisted of a variable number of households
- hāric**: literally "outside" or "excluded," a term applied to tax-exempt properties
- kadīm**: literally "old," a term applied to taxable properties
- kānūn** (Ar. *qānūn*): the body of decrees issued by the sultan and independent of the shari'a; enacted primarily in the spheres of public and administrative law
- kapıķulu** (pl. *kapıķulları*): literally "slave of the gate," refers to a soldier, either infantry (*janissary*) or cavalry (*sipahi*)
- kaşapbaşı**: provisioning officer for the butchers' guild (*qaşşābūn*)
- kaşariyye** (Ar. *qayşariyya*): building designed as a residence for merchants or a workplace for craftsmen
- każā'**: district, a subunit of a *vilāyet* corresponding to a qadi's jurisdiction in a province

- kethüda*: representative of a guild or neighborhood to a government; steward of army unit
- konak* (Ar. *manzil*): facility for quartering government officials or soldiers
- kul*: literally “slave,” a slave of the sultan and in the service of the state
- muḳāta’a*: tax sector
- muḍāraba*: partnership whereby an investor entrusted capital to an agent who traded with it; any profits were divided between them according to a prearranged formula
- müstahfiz* (pl. *müstahfizān*): soldier serving as a citadel guard
- nāhiye*: subdistrict, a subunit to a *ḳazā’*
- nā’ib*: deputy judge
- naqīb*: person acting as a deputy to the shaykh or other guild leader
- naqīb al-ashraf*: administrative head of the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad
- qirāt* (“carat”): a fraction equivalent to one twenty-fourth of a whole, used commonly to compute shares in property
- re’āyā*: tax-paying subjects
- salkh*: end of a Muslim month
- sayyid* (pl. *sādāt*): a descendant of the family of the Prophet Muhammad
- sekbān*: irregular military force equipped with muskets and organized as companies; usually mentioned together with a similar group called *ṣarica*
- sharika*: commercial partnership or company
- shaykh: conventionally the head of a guild or a residential unit (city, village); also title of respect for religious leaders
- shaykh al-dabbāghīn*: leader of the tanners’ guild with specialization in internal affairs; shared leadership with the *akhī bābā* and *shaykh al-sab’a*
- shaykh al-sab’a*: co-leader of the tanners’ guild; probably a member of the ulama
- shuf’a*: right of pre-emption, by which certain persons have rights to purchase a property before others
- sipāhī*: a mounted soldier, either a member of the cavalry divisions of the Porte (*ḳapıḳulu*) or a *tīmār*-holder in the provincial army
- sürsat*: form of extraordinary tax; subjects were required to bring and sell foodstuffs at government-fixed prices at pre-determined locations; converted to cash tax
- taḥrīr*: tax survey
- ṭā’ifa*: literally “group,” used by court to refer to guilds, tribes, and sects
- tekālīf*: extraordinary taxes, closely associated with impositions of local state officials,
- tīmār*: a prebend, the revenue of which was granted to a holder in return for regular military service; the amount paid was usually below 20,000 *aḳçe*
- ulama: members of the Muslim religious establishment, including judges, jurists, teachers, scholars, and preachers and other mosque functionaries
- vālī*: governor
- vilāyet*: province
- waqf* (Tk. *vakıf*): a pious foundation endowed in perpetuity to support a religious or charitable purpose; can be established for the public good (*khayri*) or for the benefit of the founder’s family (*ahli* or *dhurri*)
- yamaḳ*: literally, “assistant,” an assistant guild to another guild; the assistant guild paid taxes through it and was usually related to it in production and/or marketing
- yasaḳī* (Tk. *yasaḳçı*): law enforcement officer associated with the *muḥtasib*
- yiğitbaşı*: deputy to a guild or neighborhood leader
- ze’āmet*: a prebend granted to the commander of *tīmār*-holding *sipāhīs* in a district; the value was conventionally from 20,000 to 100,000 *aḳçes*

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