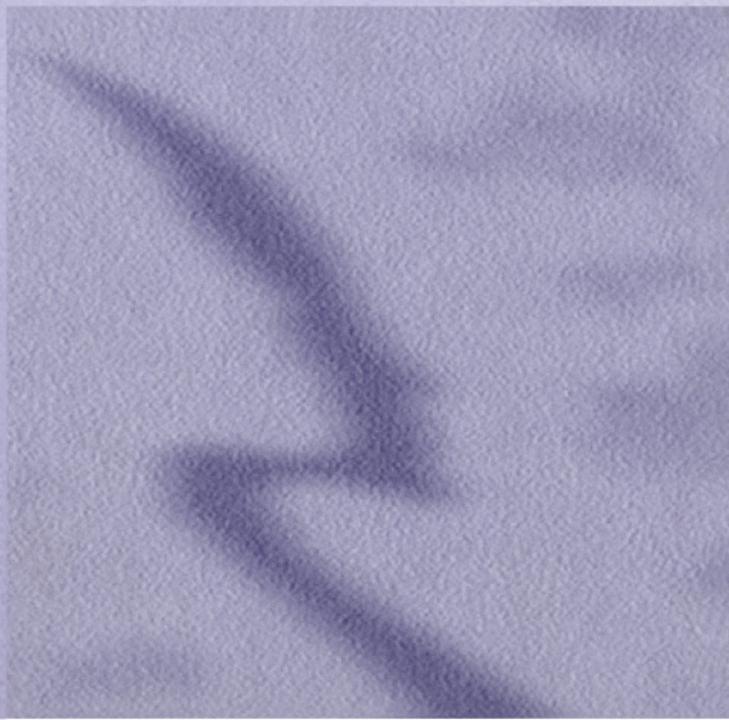


# **Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule 1517-1798**

Michael Winter



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## **Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 1517–1798**

Michael Winter's book presents a panoramic view of Ottoman Egypt from the overthrow of the Mamluk Sultanate in 1517 to Bonaparte's invasion of 1798 and the beginning of Egypt's modern period.

Drawing on archive material, chronicles and travel accounts from Turkish, Arabic, Hebrew and European sources as well as up-to-date research, this comprehensive social history looks at the dynamics of the Egyptian-Ottoman relationship and the ethnic and cultural tensions which characterized the period. The conflict and accommodation between Ottoman pashas and their Egyptian subjects and between Bedouin Arabs and the more sedentary population is presented as is the role of women in this period and the importance of the nuances within Islam (orthodoxy versus Sufism) and Muslims' relationship with the Christian and Jewish minorities.

Winter's broad survey of a complex and dynamic society draws out the central theme of the emergence from a period of ethnic and religious tension of an Egyptian consciousness fundamental to Egypt's later development.

This book is intended for scholars and students of the politics and history of the Middle East and all those with an interest in the Ottoman Empire and in Egypt.

**Michael Winter** is Associate Professor of Middle Eastern History at Tel Aviv University, Israel.

## **The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, The Shiloah Institute**



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The Moshe Dayan Center, through the Shiloah Research Institute and its other constituent units, seeks to contribute by research, documentation, and publication to the study and understanding of the modern history and current affairs of the Middle East and Africa. The Center, with the Department of Middle Eastern and African History, is part of the School of History at Tel Aviv University. This study appears in the Center's Studies in Islamic Culture and History.

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# Preface

My work on the social history of Ottoman Egypt has extended intermittently over a long period—since I wrote my MA thesis on Egyptian popular religion at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem under the supervision of the late Professor Gabriel Baer through recent research in the Turkish archives. Therefore, some of the material included in four chapters of the present volume was published as separate articles, although the greater part of the book appears here for the first time. Those chapters, or parts of chapters, that are based on earlier published versions, have been revised and brought up to date with current research.

The following is a list of my published articles that have been used as material for chapters or parts of chapters of the present book:

‘Turks, Arabs and Mamluks in the Army of Ottoman Egypt,’ *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. 72 (1980), 97–122; ‘The Islamic Profile and Religious Policy of the Ruling Class in Ottoman Egypt,’ *Israel Oriental Studies*, vol. 10 (1980), 132–45—for [Chapter 2](#).

‘The Egyptian *Mawlid*s (Saints’-days): 1700–1950,’ in G.Baer (ed.), *The 'Ulama and Religion in the Muslim World: Studies in Memory of Professor Uriel Heyd* (Jerusalem, 1971), pp. 79–103 (in Hebrew) —for [Chapter 6](#).

‘The *Ashraf* and *Niqabat al-Ashraf* in Egypt in Ottoman and Modern Times,’ *Hamizrah Hehadash*, vol. 25 (1975), 293–310 (in Hebrew); idem, *Asian and African Studies*, vol. 19 (March 1985), 17–41—for [Chapter 7](#).

The Relations of Egyptian Jews with the Authorities and with the Non-Jewish Society,’ in J.M.Landau (ed.), *The Jews in Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1914* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 371–420 (in Hebrew)—for [Chapter 8](#).

It is a pleasant duty to express my thanks to the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel Aviv University for assisting me in the preparation of this book. Special gratitude is due to Dr Asher Susser, Head of the Center, and to Professor Itamar Rabinovich, his predecessor, and currently Rector of Tel Aviv University, as well as to Edna Liftman, Lydia Gareh and Maggie Mahlab. The Faculty of Humanities at Tel Aviv University also gave me financial support to publish the book.

My gratitude is due to Ursula Woköck for carefully reading the manuscript and for her helpful comments.

My wife Hannah invested much devotion and energy to help prepare the manuscript for publication.

Michael Winter  
Ithaca, New York, 1991

## List of Abbreviations

'Abdülkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman Ahmad Shalabi	<i>Tevārīh-i Mişr-i Qāhire</i> . Ms. Add. 7878, the British Library
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
Diyarbakri	'Abd al-Şamad al-Diyārbakrī, <i>Dhikr al- khulafā' wa'l-mulūk al-mişriyya</i> . Ms. Add. 7846, the British Library
<i>EI</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , First Edition
<i>EP<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , Second Edition
Evliya	Evliya Çelebi, <i>Seyahatname</i> . Vol. X
Hallaq	Hallāq, <i>Tarih-i Mişr-i Qāhire</i> . Ms. T.Y. 628, Istanbul University Library
<i>IJMES</i>	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
Iyas	Ibn Iyās, <i>Badā'i' al-zuhūr fī wāqa'i' al-duhūr</i> . Vol. V. Cairo, 1380/1961.
Jabarti	'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jabartī, <i>'Ajā'ib al- āthār fī'l-tarājim wa'l-akhbār</i> . Cairo, 1297/ 1880.
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
Lane	E.W.Lane, <i>The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians</i>
<i>MD</i>	<i>Mühimme Defteri</i> , Prime Minister's Archive, Istanbul
<i>MM</i>	<i>Mühimme-i Mişir</i> , Prime Minister's Archive, Istanbul

- Mubarak 'Alī Bāshā Mubārak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfiqiyya al-jadīda*
- Mustafa 'Ali A.Tietze, *Muṣṭafā 'Āli's Description of Cairo of 1599*
- Qanun-name-i Misir* Ö.L.Barkan, *XV ve XVI nci asirlarda Osmanli İmparatorluğunda zirai, ekonominin hukuki ve mali esaslari*, vol. I, pp. 355–87. Istanbul, 1943
- Raymond, Artisans et commerçants A.Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire*
- Winter, Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt M.Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt*
- WZKM *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*

# Introduction

The history of Egypt under Ottoman rule is one of the least studied chapters of the history of that country in the Muslim era. Egypt was ruled by the Mamluk sultans for 267 years (1250–1517); it was an Ottoman province for 281 years (from the overthrow of the Mamluk Sultanate by Selim I in 1517 until the French invasion in 1798; formally, Egypt remained a part of the Ottoman Empire until World War I). Nevertheless, the Mamluk period has been more thoroughly studied than the Ottoman period. The reasons seem obvious. In the former, Egypt was the center of an empire; in the following three centuries, it was a province. This change in Egypt's status may account, at least partially, for the wealth of historical sources—primarily chronicles and biographical dictionaries—for the Mamluk period in comparison with the Ottoman period. Nevertheless, the study of the history of Ottoman Egypt is a challenging and rewarding task. For these three centuries we have archival source materials—Turkish, Arabic and European (primarily French)—which are almost totally absent for Mamluk times. The travel accounts describing Ottoman Egypt written by Turkish, North African and European visitors are superior in quantity and quality to what is extant from the Mamluk Sultanate.

The study of the social history of Ottoman Egypt is attractive from another point of view. Historians have been fascinated by the uniqueness of the Mamluk phenomenon. It was inhuman in some respects (for example, Mamluks being denied the opportunity to bequeath their positions and privileges to their sons), yet it provided Islam with a superb military force and a sophisticated political system. The social order in the Mamluk state was rigid and hierarchical. Egyptian society under the Ottomans was more fluid: the sharp lines dividing the Mamluk elite from other segments of society, especially within the army, became less distinct. From the late sixteenth century, when Istanbul's grip on the province weakened, one can speak of greater

social mobility: local social elements, such as bedouin Arabs, ulama, Sufis and *ashraf* came to the fore, achieving influence and power to a degree which would have been impossible under the Mamluk sultans. Therefore, the rigid social structures of the Mamluk Sultanate provide a convenient framework of comparison for historians of Ottoman Egypt.

As mentioned, Ottoman Egypt has been a long-neglected field of study. Interest in it began to grow with the recent impressive progress of Ottoman studies generally. The extensive use of Ottoman archives, starting with Stanford J. Shaw's studies on Ottoman Egypt, has opened up new research opportunities. Egypt between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries (and in the nineteenth century as well) ought to be studied against its Ottoman background, taking into account, of course, the special characteristics of Egyptian history and society.

The three centuries of Ottoman rule in Egypt are not equally well-documented and chronicled: much more is known about the eighteenth century than about the preceding 200 years. For the eighteenth century, there are several basic studies: A. Raymond's work on Cairo; D. Ayalon's articles comparing Mamluk military society with the same society under the Mamluk sultans; P. Gran's book on social and intellectual life; D. Crecelius's study of the reigns of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir and Muhammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab, two outstanding Mamluk rulers; and 'Abd al-Rahim 'Abd al-Rahman's study of the countryside.

Much work remains to be done on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although the military elite in the seventeenth century has been described by P. M. Holt and the judicial system by G. H. El-Nahal.

It is hoped that the present book contributes to research on the social history of Ottoman Egypt by presenting my own findings from the archives, the chronicles and other sources, and by integrating them into the body of existing research. It will be understood that for the later period my presentation relies on the solid foundations laid down by other scholars, whereas for the earlier period more spadework has to be done before the general outlines of Egypt's social history emerge more clearly. The present study tries to follow the development of the central social groups throughout the period, describing and interpreting the changes. I am fully aware of the pitfalls of this method. The span of time covered is too long to exhaust the subject. The available information is often scarce, incomplete and sometimes sporadic and episodic. The nature of the information and of the sources has determined the way the different topics have been dealt with. For some social groups, such as the army, the bedouin Arabs and the Jews, the archival materials are the main sources. On the other hand, it was

necessary to rely almost exclusively on chronicles and biographies for such topics as the ulama, Sufis and *ashraf*. The ideal situation—when the official documents, chronicles and travel accounts complement one another—unfortunately does not occur frequently. Most of the archival sources used for this study are located in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul. These have the strengths and limitations of official documents issued by a centralist bureaucracy in charge of the administration of a province. The chronicles were composed by Egyptians writing in Arabic or Turkish, and these represent the local view of events and personalities.

I could not devote a separate chapter to that social class which formed the majority of the Egyptian population in the Ottoman period, namely the fellahin. To do the subject any measure of justice would have required much more information than is available to me at present.

The transliteration adopted for the book is simple, without the diacritical signs, except for the *'ayn* (') and the *hamza* ('). I have used the full transliteration system only in the bibliography and the index. Many of the names and terms in this book are Ottoman, that is, of Arabic derivation as used in the Ottoman-Turkish language. I have adopted a method according to which words designating Ottoman terms or names are spelled as they are pronounced in Turkish. Names of Egyptians, including Mamluks, appear in their Arabic form. Thus: Mehmet Pasha but Muhammad Bey, Abu'l-Dhahab, *vali* (Ottoman governor) and not *wali*.

Dates are given according to the Western calendar, with the Muslim (*hijri*) date often added.

# 1

## Historical Background

### THE MAMLUK SULTANATE (1250–1517)

After a long period of decline and passivity under the later Fatimid caliphs, Egypt once again became the center of a vigorous empire ruled by Salah al-Din (Saladin) and his Ayyubid successors (1171–1250). Around Egypt clustered a rather loose federation of Syrian and Mesopotamian emirates, each governed by a prince of the Ayyubid dynasty, who usually acknowledged the ruler of Egypt as their sultan because of the country's obvious geopolitical and economic resources.

The Ayyubid empire was harassed by the crusaders, who, although much weakened by their crushing defeat by Saladin's forces at Hittin in Palestine (1187), still held on stubbornly to the Syrian-Palestinian littoral and occasionally received reinforcements from overseas. Realizing that it was to Egypt, rather than to Syria, that efforts should be directed, Christian Europe launched two major attacks against Egypt (1219, 1249). These failed, but the crusaders were repulsed only with great difficulty.

The latter crusade, led by Louis IX, plunged the Ayyubid empire into a crisis when al-Malik al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, the last effective sultan, died in camp while fierce battles raged between his troops and the crusaders. After the Franks took the port of Damietta (Dimyat) in 1249, they advanced to al-Mansura, 50 miles to the south, where they were defeated by the Muslims, primarily by al-Salih's regiment of the Bahriyya Mamluks (February 1250). This victory paved the way for the Mamluks' usurpation of power and the establishment of their sultanate, which was to last for over two and a half centuries.

The Mamluk state was a unique political creation.<sup>1</sup> Generally, it was not ruled by a dynasty, but by an oligarchy of soldiers, Mamluks, or enfranchised military slaves. The Mamluks were white slaves who were

bought, raised, and then trained as elite troops. They were born outside the Islamic domain, usually in the Euro-Asian steppe, north of the lands of Islam or in the Caucasus, to non-Muslim parents preferably of Turkish stock, and were imported when still boys or adolescents by the slave traders. The system of Mamluk military slavery had been practised from early times in Islam; it entrenched itself during the reign of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tasim (833–42) and then spread throughout the Islamic lands.

Al-Malik al-Salih purchased Mamluks in large numbers, a policy which prepared the ground for the eventual Mamluk takeover of the state. The phenomenon of former slaves replacing their masters was unprecedented and left the Mamluks vulnerable. They needed to legitimize their rule and eliminate the remaining Ayyubids. Their chance came after they trounced the seemingly invincible Mongols at 'Ayn Jalut in Palestine (1260). Al-Malik al-Zahir Baybars (1260–77) then brought to Cairo a scion of the 'Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad, after that dynasty had almost been wiped out during the devastating Mongol occupation of the city in 1258, thus giving to his rule an aura of legitimacy.

Baybars, the founder of the Mamluk Sultanate, was an exceptionally able ruler and general. He transformed Egypt, Syria and the Hijaz into a stronger and more cohesive unit. This vigorous regime later put an end to the presence of the Franks in the east (the reconquest of Acre, 1291) and pushed the Mongols back beyond the Euphrates. Defended by the superb Mamluk horsemen, the new Sultanate constructed social and religious life on the principles of Sunni orthodoxy, continuing the religious policy of the Ayyubid dynasty. It patronized learning and piety, organized and protected the annual caravan of pilgrims to Mecca and Medina, and erected magnificent monuments in the major Egyptian and Syrian cities. These and other achievements were financed by the revenue from agriculture and international commerce, primarily the lucrative Eastern spice trade that passed through the Sultanate en route to Europe.

The Mamluks made a sharp distinction between the rulers and the ruled. Political power rested exclusively with the Mamluks. During the first half of the Sultanate (1250–1382) most of them were of Turkish Qipchak stock. After this and until 1517, they came from the Caucasus and were Circassians. The indigenous Arabic-speaking population and the Arabic sources called all Mamluks 'Turks,' whether they were Turks, Circassians or of other origins, because they all had Turkish names and spoke Turkish. This 'Turkishness' set the Mamluk rulers apart

from their subjects, who spoke Arabic and had Arabic names. Despite all these differences between the Mamluks and their subjects, by then Mamluk rule was considered completely legitimate since the Mamluks were orthodox Muslims who proved their ability to defend Islam and maintain internal security. The young Mamluks were converted to Islam, trained as soldiers and given their freedom. The most talented and ambitious made their way up through the military hierarchy to become officers, emirs of 10, 40, or 100 men. The sultan was chosen from among the highest ranking emirs, often after fierce factional struggles. In the period when the Mamluks were of Turkish stock (the 'Turkish' or 'Bahri' period) the Qala'un family established itself as a line of rulers, but during the Circassian supremacy (the 'Burji' period), the dynastic principle was dropped, with the strongest and most ambitious 'emirs of 100' contending for the sultanate.

Membership in the ruling class was not hereditary. A Mamluk's sons could neither enter the military elite nor assume political office. Those who joined the army were called 'the sons of the (distinguished) people' (*awlad al-nas*), but they were limited to serving as low-ranking, modestly paid soldiers with no chance of promotion. The only other career open to them was as *ulama*, learned men of religion, with their fathers providing for their future by appointing them directors or trustees of religious foundations (*waqfs*) which the fathers had established. The principle that Mamluk status was not heritable was based on the conviction, which proved itself for centuries, that in order to preserve the vitality and high standards of the Mamluk military society it was essential to import continuously new Mamluks from outside Islamic domain. The sons of Mamluks, already born in Egypt or Syria, were believed to be too 'soft' to make good mounted soldiers like the young newcomers from the steppe. Besides, it was feared that inevitable family preferences and connections would weaken the military structure and discipline of Mamluk society.

The Mamluks went outside their class when appointing agents necessary for rule. For this purpose, they chose Egyptian-born Arabic-speaking bureaucrats, financiers, wealthy merchants and clerics. Although prosperous and influential, these intermediaries lacked political power. A strong-willed sultan could throw a high-ranking bureaucrat into prison without a proper trial and confiscate his property. One sultan, it is reported, was so angered by the refusal of the four chief *qadis* to pass a death sentence on an official found guilty of adultery that he dismissed all of them and appointed others in their stead.

Most of the bureaucrats were Muslims, but Christians and Jews played vital roles in the fiscal administration as tax collectors, accountants, money-changers and masters of the mint. In return for paying the poll-tax (*jizya* or *jawali*), these non-Muslim minorities (*dhimmis*) were allowed to live securely and practise their religion, but at times they were subject to discrimination, persecution and extortion.

Most of the population lived in villages and small towns and were peasants (*fellahin*) who tilled the fertile soil in the Nile Valley. Ruthlessly taxed and oppressed, their harsh living conditions and exploitation were appalling even by the standards of contemporary Muslim or European countries. A significant element in the village and desert population were the Arab tribes, some nomads, but others semi-nomads who lived part of the year in villages. The ‘Arabs,’ a term which in pre-modern times designated the bedouins, were the only other group besides the army that rode horses and carried weapons. They were numerous, had a reputation for bravery and often rose in revolt against the Mamluks. But lacking unity, discipline and training, they never became a serious threat to Mamluk dominance.

Most city dwellers—the reference is primarily to Damascus and Aleppo in Syria, and Cairo, which dwarfed all other Egyptian towns — were artisans and shopkeepers organized by their professions and trades for the purpose of government supervision and taxation.<sup>2</sup> The artisans and shopkeepers did not have guilds to protect their members’ rights and interests; the emirs’ greed and exploitation of the urban classes were restrained only by ad hoc arrangements or intercessions, not by law.

At the bottom of the urban social pyramid was the lumpen proletariat, the poorest people who performed the most disagreeable menial jobs. They were prone to violence against religious minorities and looted the homes of fallen emirs when given the opportunity; among the dregs of society were organized groups of toughs (*zu’ar*) and beggars (*harafish*).

Islam gave cohesion to a society consisting of clans, tribes and urban quarters. An important element in society were the ulama, or religious scholars and legists, who influenced all layers of society, acting as the exponents, interpreters, and teachers of religion. The wealthiest and most distinguished among them often maintained contacts with the rulers and received appointments as *qadis*, state officials and teachers. The Sufis, or mystics, represented another important element in religious life who had a particularly strong appeal to the lower classes, although not exclusively to them. In the later Middle Ages, the

influence of normative Islam, as represented by the ulama, on the Egyptian countryside was practically nil. While, in the cities, the Sufis vied with the ulama in influencing the Muslim community, in the countryside they replaced them.

The period of Circassian, or Burji, rule is considered one of decline in comparison with that of the Bahri Turks. The Sultanate no longer had dangerous enemies; the Franks had been expelled in 1291, and by the beginning of the fifteenth century, after Timur Leng's withdrawal from Syria, the Mongols were no threat either. The army did not develop new tactics or adopt new military technologies. The Mamluks refused to use firearms, the modern weaponry of the time, considering them unchivalrous, unmanly and unIslamic. The guns could not be used from horseback and so were out of the question for the Mamluks, whose military skill and ethos were based on horsemanship (*furusiyya*).<sup>3</sup> As a result, the Mamluk army went through a long period of stagnation and hardly brought new territories under Mamluk control, leaving the geographical extent of the Sultanate scarcely different from what it had been under Baybars in the thirteenth century.

While the Mamluk Sultanate declined, its northern neighbor, the Ottoman state, made quick progress.<sup>4</sup> The Ottoman Empire developed from a small principality established at the beginning of the fourteenth century in the northwestern corner of Anatolia as one of the numerous Turkish emirates engaged in the holy war against the Byzantines. Expanding steadily at the expense of Christian rulers in the fragmented Balkans and of other Turkish principalities in Anatolia, the Ottomans became a formidable force under Sultan Mehmet II (1451–81), who realized the age-old Muslim dream of conquering Constantinople, which was soon renamed Istanbul (1453). Until then, there had been little contact between the Ottomans and the Mamluks, apart from occasional minor diplomatic disputes mainly related to the pilgrimage to Mecca. After the Ottoman capture of Constantinople, however, the Mamluks became increasingly apprehensive about Ottoman expansion. Toward the end of the fifteenth century (1485–91), the situation became more tense and exploded into a military struggle for control of Turcoman principalities in Anatolia, which were in the border region between the two empires. Another cause of friction was the asylum that Mamluk sultans gave to Ottoman princes who had fled from Istanbul.

At the turn of the century international relations in the Middle East suddenly became more complex. The Portuguese discovery of the Cape route to India deprived Egypt of the revenues of the spice trade, and

contributed to the state's already severe economic difficulties. Portugal's combined mercantile and military activity in the Indian Ocean threatened the Red Sea and the holy places of Islam in the Hijaz. Unable to take a stand against Portugal because they had no navy, the Mamluks turned to the Ottomans for naval assistance and received it.

Another complicating factor was the rise to power of the Shi'i Safavid dynasty in Persia. After centuries of endemic instability and fragmentation, the country was united by Isma'il Shah who made the Twelver version of the Shi'a the state religion. Their territories in eastern Anatolia being inhabited by Turcoman tribes susceptible to the Shi'i-'Alawi propaganda of the Safavid ruler, himself of Turcoman stock, the Ottomans felt threatened. The Ottoman Sultan Selim, nicknamed 'Yavuz' ('the Grim'), massacred the Safavid sympathizers in Anatolia. Then, in 1514, Selim defeated Isma'il in the battle of Chaldiran in Azerbaijan, but the Safavids, although weakened, were not finished. The Ottomans feared the possibility of a Mamluk-Safavid treaty, but considered the Safavids as the more serious threat. When Selim led a strong army toward northern Syria, it was not clear whether he aimed at the Mamluks or the Persians. The advance of the Mamluk army under Sultan Qansawh al-Ghawri toward the Syrian-Ottoman border was an unusual step, even if only defensive, and Selim justifiably regarded it as an act of war.<sup>5</sup>

In a short battle fought in August 1516 on the plain of Marj Dabiq, north of Aleppo, the Mamluks were defeated, and the aged sultan died in the field, probably of a stroke. The Ottoman firearms gave them complete superiority over the demoralized and disunited Mamluks who were outnumbered probably by three to one (about 60,000 to 20,000). The Ottoman victory was aided by the treachery of Kha'ir Bey, governor of the strategically located province of Aleppo, who, commanding an entire flank of the Mamluk army, went over to the Ottomans at a crucial moment during the battle, as previously agreed.

The Ottomans easily seized all of Syria. The Mamluks had not endeared themselves there, having always considered Egypt as the center of their sultanate, in which Syria was only a buffer zone. The final decades of Mamluk rule in Syria were troubled by civil war and economic decline. No wonder that the local population looked on indifferently as the remnants of the Mamluk army retreated toward Egypt.

In Cairo, the chief emirs forced Tuman Bay, al-Ghawri's deputy, to assume the sultanate. Honest and brave, he tried to reorganize the surviving Mamluk and bedouin auxiliaries, although his treasury was

empty. Meanwhile Selim started marching across the Sinai desert against Egypt. He made a few tentative overtures to negotiate a settlement rather than try to conquer Egypt. He proposed that Tuman Bay continued ruling Egypt after acknowledging Selim's sovereignty, an arrangement by no means contrary to general Ottoman policy. When the negotiations failed because of Kha'ir Bey's insistence that the Mamluks be crushed, or because Selim's diplomatic moves were insincere, or because Tuman Bay's advisers killed Selim's envoys, the overthrow of the Mamluk Sultanate became inevitable.<sup>6</sup>

In January 1517, the Ottomans defeated the Mamluks at Raydaniyya, just north of Cairo. Tuman Bay's efforts to continue the struggle were useless. He escaped to the Buhayra province where he took refuge in the house of Hasan ibn Mar'i, a bedouin shaykh who was indebted to him. The Arab shaykh swore seven times on the Koran that he would not hand Tuman Bay over to the Ottomans, but he immediately broke his oath and betrayed Tuman Bay to Selim. The Mamluk sultan was hanged like a common criminal at Cairo's Zuwayla Gate. Putting a sultan to death in this way was unprecedented and the scene, as described by Ibn Iyas, an eyewitness to the conquest, is touching. Selim, for his part, achieved his purpose: he scotched the rumors that Tuman Bay was still resisting the Ottomans; the people of Cairo now knew that the Mamluk Sultanate had come to an end.<sup>7</sup>

### THE OTTOMAN OCCUPATION

Like any other military occupation, the Ottoman conquest of Cairo was traumatic for its inhabitants. Ibn Iyas, who reports the events in detail, compares it to the conquests of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar in antiquity, who supposedly laid the whole country waste, and to the destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, which symbolized for every historically conscious Muslim a disaster of immense magnitude.<sup>8</sup> While such comparisons are gross exaggerations, they reveal the chronicler's attitude toward the Ottomans. Ibn Iyas belonged to the *awlad al-nas* class, and the fall of the Mamluks affected him personally. Nevertheless, he was generally a fair-minded observer of his society and did not hesitate to direct his criticism at the Mamluk emirs and soldiers. The fifth part of his chronicle is a vehement, outspoken denunciation of the Ottomans, presenting the Mamluk regime in a nostalgic light. There can be little doubt that Ibn Iyas spoke for Cairene public opinion. Their shortcomings notwithstanding, the Mamluks were thoroughly known to the Egyptians after a reign of more than two and a half centuries. The

Ottoman conquest, therefore, cannot be described as one Turkish master replacing another.

According to Ibn Iyas, the Ottoman occupation was not bloodless, even though it followed a war between two Sunni Muslim states and the civilian population should not have been harmed at all. The Ottoman soldiers pillaged Cairo for three days until stopped by the sultan's order. The Mamluks were systematically massacred, and many civilians suspected of hiding or helping them were put to death, although Ibn Iyas's figure of 10,000 killed is certainly grossly inflated.

Ibn Iyas describes several times how the Mamluks were put to death, sometimes in spite of promises of quarter given them by Selim personally. It is of utmost importance for the political and social history of Egypt under Ottoman rule that the Ottoman massacre of the Mamluks soon stopped and that they remained in Egypt, and were integrated into the Ottoman garrison. The sources do not state explicitly why the executions stopped. There is some evidence that Kha'ir Bey interceded on the Mamluks' behalf, and that the Ottomans thought it wise to spare such superb soldiers, who like themselves were Turkish-speaking and Sunnis.

In September 1517, just before Selim's departure from Egypt, the Mamluks were pardoned. They came out of their hiding wearing fellahin's clothes; they were destitute and without horses. The Ottomans apparently could not make up their minds how to treat them. At first, the Mamluks were forbidden to wear Ottoman dress, and were ordered to wear red *zamt* and *maluta*, the traditional Mamluk costume. But in 1521 the order was reversed. The Mamluks were warned on pain of death not to wear their customary garments and they were ordered to wear Ottoman dress. The clearest distinction between the two groups was that the Ottomans were clean-shaven while the Mamluks were bearded. On one occasion, when Kha'ir Bey, the Ottoman governor of Egypt, reviewed the troops, he reportedly cut off half of every Mamluk's beard, handed it to him and said: 'You must abide by the Ottoman law, shave your beards, wear tight sleeves, and do everything like the Ottomans.'

The sources do not give the reasons for these changes, but they must have been related to the constant quarreling and bloody brawls between the Mamluks and the Ottomans. Cases were reported of Mamluks and Ottomans going out at night to commit crimes disguised as the other. The Mamluks suffered discrimination; their salaries were paid seven months in arrears and their social decline was evident, among others, in the fact that bureaucrats now dared to marry Mamluk widows or

daughters. The custom of military bands playing outside the doors of ranking Mamluk emirs was abandoned after the Ottoman conquest.

With time, however, the Mamluks' situation improved. Once again Mamluk emirs were being appointed governors of provinces (*kashifs*). A Mamluk emir was even sent to discipline rebellious Ottoman troops only 16 months after the conquest. Mamluk morale rose considerably after the death of Sultan Selim, when his son Süleyman—later known as the Lawgiver (*Qanuni*), or the Magnificent, in European sources—succeeded him in September 1520. Kha'ir Bey, who had called the Mamluks 'old shoes,' now addressed them respectfully as masters ('*aghas*'). A Mamluk unit, of several hundred soldiers whom Selim had exiled to Istanbul, helped conquer the island of Rhodes in 1522. When Süleyman saw their performance in combat, he expressed his astonishment that 'such fine Mamluks' had been put to death during his father's reign.<sup>9</sup> The Mamluks were thus, finally, accepted by the sultan and his representatives as an integral part of the imperial army, but their scores with the Ottoman units were far from settled.

Ibn Iyas is shocked by the brutality of the Ottomans in Egypt, because 'they had a reputation of being just rulers in their own country.' He portrays Selim as an unsavory, nervous, cruel, blood-thirsty man, who did not keep his word, did not dispense justice to the people, who also drank and was a pederast; he had neither the dignity nor the etiquette of kings. The chronicler says that the Ottoman soldiers generally were drinkers, hashish addicts and pederasts; they did not fast during Ramadan, most of them did not even pray, and they desecrated shrines and sanctuaries.<sup>10</sup> The soldiers often stole food from the shopkeepers or did not pay the right price. People were forced to pull heavy cannons and to load huge stone pillars, which the Ottomans had torn out of some palaces, onto ships bound for Istanbul. Marble was also stripped from buildings and shipped to the Ottoman capital. Ottoman soldiers often molested women and boys in the streets. An Ottoman *qadi* forbade Cairene women to go out in the streets and ride on donkeys, so that 'they would not corrupt soldiers.' The Ottomans were also warned on pain of death not to marry Egyptian women.

The Ottoman occupation also changed urban festivities. During Mamluk times, the Egyptian people had witnessed splendid celebrations and colorful ceremonies at which Mamluk horsemen displayed their superb skills in war games and parades. Now, the Egyptians were displeased by the apparently egalitarian spirit in the Ottoman army, which 'was a rabble, and one could not tell an emir from an ordinary soldier.' It did not occur to Ibn Iyas, who laments the disappearance of

all these shows, that Mamluk pomp and circumstance were symptomatic of the degeneration of their military skills. The efficient and thrifty Ottoman army, by contrast, did not waste time and money on glittering ceremonies, certainly not in Egypt, which was far from the Ottoman capital.

Ibn Iyas sorrowfully reports that the first annual celebration of the Prophet's birthday under the Ottomans passed almost unnoticed. The traditional meeting of the four chief *qadis* and the emirs in the sultan's court did not take place, and the distribution of food to the public was abolished. The Ottomans sold the large tent used in the celebration, which had cost the Mamluk Sultan Qa'it Bay 30,000 dinars, to Maghribi merchants for 400 dinars. It had been one of the marvels of the world. Five hundred servants were needed to set it up. 'The tent,' says Ibn Iyas, 'was one of the symbols of the kingdom and was sold for the lowest price. The Ottomans did not understand its value and later kings had to forgo its use. They [the Ottomans] caused great damage and it was one of their bad deeds in Egypt.'<sup>11</sup>

The people of Cairo were shocked when they learned of the Ottoman practice of *sürgün*, deportation, to Istanbul. Groups of notables, artisans needed for construction work in Istanbul, officials, Christians and Jews were deported. The most distinguished exile was the last 'Abbasid caliph, al-Mutawakkil ibn al-Mustamsik Ya'qub, a respected, though politically powerless figure, who had been captured at Marj Dabiq, and had been forced to go to Cairo with the Ottomans. Selim treated him respectfully and gave him a sense of importance and influence he had never had. While everyone was aware that the caliphate was powerless, it still had symbolic importance. The exile of the caliph signaled that Egypt had ceased being a caliphate, the center of an empire, and had become a province administered from a distant capital.<sup>12</sup>

The *sürgün* caused the exiles and their families, who remained behind, much suffering. Some exiles were lost at sea and others were lonely and suffered hardship in Istanbul. The exiles were allowed to go home for short visits, after the authorities had taken precautions to ensure their return to Istanbul. When Süleyman came to power, his benevolence replaced his father Selim's harshness and most of the exiles were permitted to return to Egypt.<sup>13</sup>

The first years after the conquest were also accompanied by economic distress. Ottoman control of their subjects' property, including private estates, income from *waqf* trusteeships, and pensions was strict; those who did not satisfy the supervisor of the *waqf s*, or failed to follow bureaucratic procedures, lost their rights. Shopkeepers

were ordered to replace Egyptian weights and measures with those used in Istanbul. New coins were put into circulation, but being debased, caused the public to lose up to a third of the value of its money. Treasury officials and agents, including those who had served under the Mamluks, oppressed the people more severely than ever. An Ottoman official called the 'divider' (*qassam*) was appointed to collect inheritance taxes, another innovation which seemed unjust and was regarded as contrary to Islamic law. Regulations concerning exchange rates and prices were issued frequently, resulting in inflation, the closing of markets, and general dissatisfaction and uneasiness.<sup>14</sup>

Nothing the Ottomans did provoked as much anger as their legal innovations, particularly in the sensitive area of personal law. There was much resentment against, though little information about, the non-Shar'i sources of Ottoman law, the *qanun*, or administrative law. The most offensive legal change was a tax on marriage contracts called *yasaq*: virgins were required to pay twice as much as women who had been previously married. The Cairene ulama denounced the tax as a violation of the Prophet's custom (*sunna*), and for a while the number of marriages decreased. A Maghribi 'alim—the Maghribis were always the most uncompromising and fearless when religion was at stake—was reported to have cried into the governor's face: 'This is the infidels' law (*yasaq*)!'<sup>15</sup>

Another Ottoman measure seemed insensitive to the professional pride of the Egyptian *qadi s*, and directly affected their interests. Aiming at greater economy and centralization, the Ottomans dismissed many *qadi s* and deputy-*qadis* (*nuwwab*). All litigation and other legal business were restricted to the al-Madrasa al-Salihyya college, the *qadi s* no longer being permitted to hear cases in their residences. The chief *qadi s*, who headed the four law schools (*madhhab s*), were subordinate to a Turkish judge who, according to Ibn Iyas, 'was more ignorant than an ass, and had no understanding of the religious law.' He imposed various payments and limited the authority of local judges; he also made himself the guardian of women's morality by limiting their freedom to leave their homes and move around the city.<sup>16</sup>

The notions of Ottoman justice were different from those with which the Egyptians were familiar. In one case, for example, a Jew sued a Mamluk emir for a sum of money. When the emir refused to come to court, the Turkish judge sent a Janissary to fetch him. The emir remained in custody until he satisfied the Jew's demands. Under the Mamluks, it would have been unthinkable for a Jew to sue an emir. The same Turkish judge also decided in favor of a woman who had sued her

husband, an influential emir. Diyarbakri, a Turkish chronicler who was a *qadi* and had come to Egypt with Selim's army, says that the people were pleased that everyone was equal before the Ottoman court,<sup>17</sup> but it seems that Ibn Iyas's hostility to the judge and to the Ottoman judicial system in general reflects the people's attitude more faithfully. There was a feeling that the standing of Islam and the *Shari'a* had weakened since the Ottoman conquest.<sup>18</sup> In reality, the Ottoman Empire was no less Islamic than the Mamluk Sultanate, and the *Shari'a* was a cornerstone of public life. Eventually, the Egyptians realized this basic fact, but a series of blunders and a measure of insensitivity on the part of the Ottomans contributed to their initial negative response. In time, the Ottomans corrected many of their early mistakes, and they and the Egyptians became accustomed to each other. The interference of Istanbul in the Egyptian way of life diminished and a *modus vivendi* emerged. Occasionally, however, tension and friction did develop during the three centuries of Ottoman rule in Egypt, as will be shown below.

Egypt's transition from Mamluk to Ottoman rule was eased by the fact that the first governor was not an Ottoman pasha, but Kha'ir Bey, the Mamluk emir who had defected to the Ottomans during the battle of Marj Dabiq.<sup>19</sup> The appointment of a member of the former ruling elite accorded with the Ottoman principles of the administration of conquered territories. Kha'ir Bey maintained several customs and ceremonies of the Mamluk Sultanate. His official title was *malik al-umara*, 'the king of emirs,' which was meant to be a translation of the Ottoman-Turkish *beylerbeyi*, a rank held by a governor of a province. He could not bear a title denoting independence, such as sultan; neither was he a pasha, since he did not come from the Ottoman ruling establishment as his successors did. As already mentioned, he helped save the Mamluks and employed them in various capacities, primarily in provincial administration, where their familiarity with the irrigation system and the bedouins was indispensable. Nevertheless, Kha'ir Bey remained faithful to his Ottoman masters until his death in October 1522. Fearing that he would not be reappointed at the end of each annual term, he loyally obeyed commands and regulations from Istanbul. He solicited the ulama to report favorably to Istanbul about his conduct as governor; he also gave huge gifts of money to Ottoman envoys to strengthen his position.

Kha'ir Bey's background casts light on his unusual career. He reached the Mamluk high command even though he was born in Georgia, not in Circassia, like the majority of the Mamluks, and had

never been a slave. Ibn Iyas believes that he hated Circassian Mamluks, but this is not credible since many Mamluks owed him their lives. He was a shrewd, self-seeking man, who assessed situations correctly and adroitly maneuvered to his personal advantage among often conflicting Egyptian forces. Both the Mamluks and the Ottoman soldiers complained that he ill-treated them. He was a notorious miser, and payments due to soldiers and officials were always in arrears while he continued to enrich himself. Only on his death bed did he display generosity and support for religious institutions and for individuals.

Ibn Iyas characterizes Kha'ir Bey as bad-tempered, often drunk, and cruel. He was capable of sentencing people to death because of a trifle or out of caprice. He once ordered a man hanged whose only crime was that he had picked a few cucumbers, *khiyar shanbar*, which was a government monopoly (the vegetable was used as laxative). He also gave the Jewish master of the mint authority over the Muslims' (i.e. public) money, authority which was abused. A Christian official was put in charge of the central government offices. On the other hand, Kha'ir Bey overthrew the great bureaucratic family of Banu al-Ji'an, which had been in charge of the fiscal apparatus for over a century.

Kha'ir Bey demonstrated his prudence when he turned a deaf ear to the the governor of Syria, Janbardi al-Ghazali, who tried to incite him to fight the Ottomans. Al-Ghazali was a Mamluk emir, who like Kha'ir Bey had gone over to Selim, but unlike him, cherished his independence; he thought that Selim's death and the succession of his inexperienced son offered him his opportunity. Kha'ir Bey sentenced to death Mamluks who only attempted to join the rebels, including several Cairo commoners who gossiped about the possibility that Kha'ir Bey might join the revolt.<sup>20</sup>

Kha'ir Bey was also clever and able, and if not for the injustices he committed he could have been a great ruler, Ibn Iyas wrote. When he died, the Ottomans chose more direct rule: they sent Mustafa Pasha, Sultan Süleyman's brother-in-law, to succeed Kha'ir Bey. In Cairo's Citadel, the seat of the government, Turks even replaced Egyptians as warehouse guards and as cooks.

It was perhaps characteristic of the transition period that those appointed to high positions were not Mamluk emirs, but *awlad al-nas*, or bureaucrats. Such a man was al-Zayni Barakat ibn Musa, who was an inspector of the markets (*muhtasib*). He was appointed commander of the annual pilgrims' caravan to Mecca and Medina (*amir al-hajj*), a responsible and prestigious post. Under the Mamluks it had been held exclusively by emirs with the rank of 'emir of 100' (*amir mi'a*), the

highest in the Mamluk army. Cairene public opinion regarded this appointment as demonstrating disrespect by the Ottomans for the pilgrimage. Ibn Musa later became one of the most influential Egyptian leaders. Another man who became prominent during early Ottoman rule in Egypt was Janim al-Hamzawi, an emir, but not a Mamluk. He was a liaison officer with Istanbul, and played an important role in political developments.

### MAMLUK REVOLTS AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF OTTOMAN RULE IN EGYPT

Janim al-Sayfi and Inal, two provincial governors of Middle Egypt, led the first Mamluk revolt in May 1523. The time seemed appropriate for revolt: Selim and Kha'ir Bey had died and Mustafa Pasha was a weak governor. The rebellious emirs wanted to restore their sultanate and were supported in this by many Mamluks and Arabs. The powerful Arab ruler of Upper Egypt, 'Ali ibn 'Umar, was a passive supporter. In an attempt to strengthen the government, Barakat ibn Musa was given the military rank of emir, but he did not succeed in raising an Arab army. He was killed by the rebels as a traitor when he tried to negotiate with them. The revolt was finally crushed; Janim was killed and Inal disappeared. The rebellion added further strain to relations between the Mamluks and the Ottomans. Many Mamluks had joined the rebels and were killed; those who remained loyal reportedly marched against their former comrades with little enthusiasm.<sup>21</sup>

The revolt instigated by Ahmet Pasha, later known as *al-Kha'in*, 'the traitor,' was a more serious challenge to Ottoman rule.<sup>22</sup> Ahmet Pasha became the Ottoman governor in Egypt in September 1523 and soon began preparing his revolt. He confiscated the Janissaries' muskets, because he rightly concluded that of all the units in Egypt they would be the most loyal to the sultan. The 'Slaves of the Porte', the *Qapu Qullari*, or the sultan's soldiers, were pressured to return to Istanbul, Ahmet Pasha wooed the Mamluks, and even pardoned some who had been imprisoned for participating in the previous revolt. The pasha made much of his Circassian origin—whether true or false is a separate question—and hinted that the Mamluk Sultanate would be restored. He began to extort money from merchants, state officials and Jews. He requisitioned horses and other beasts of burden, and persons living near the Citadel were moved. He ordered the release of Arab shaykhs whom Kha'ir Bey had jailed for unruly conduct. Ahmad ibn al-Ji'an, who had

been poorly treated by Kha'ir Bey, was appointed treasurer (*defterdar*). The pasha ordered 'Ali ibn 'Umar, the governor of Upper Egypt, who had been raiding the Nubian territories, to supply him with a thousand black slaves; he intended training them in the use of firearms to replace the Janissaries. Black slaves were also taken from Cairo households and put into the army. Such an attempt had proved unsuccessful in the past in Egyptian history and was to prove unsuccessful again.

Ahmet Pasha chose new chief advisers. One of them was Ibrahim al-Marqabi, a bedouin who had found his way into the governor's court, but was exiled to Istanbul, where he became friendly with Ahmet Pasha. The latter made Ibrahim his adviser on bedouin affairs when he became governor of Egypt. Janim al-Hamzawi, a loyalist emir, also an expert on Arab tribes, was arrested and accused of enriching himself by fraudulent means.

The pasha rebelled against Istanbul in 1524: he assumed the title of sultan, and ordered coins bearing his name to be minted and decreed that his new title be recited publicly during the Friday services. To legitimize his position, Ahmet invited the four chief *qadis* and the 'Abbasid caliph to the Citadel at the beginning of each month to greet him as had been the custom under the Mamluk sultans. The Janissaries and the Jews were the hardest hit victims. Abraham Castro, the Jewish master of the mint, escaped to Istanbul where he reported Ahmet's treason. In February 1524, the rebels occupied the Citadel which the Janissaries were holding. Using a secret tunnel, Ahmet's forces surprised the Janissaries and massacred them.

Ahmet's rule lasted only a few months. When Janim al-Hamzawi and a group of emirs surprised him in his bathhouse, Ahmet Pasha escaped to the Sharqiyya province, where he took refuge with Ahmad ibn Baqar, a bedouin shaykh, but he was captured and beheaded on March 6, 1524, bringing to an end the last serious effort to separate Egypt from the Ottoman Empire until the rebellion of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir in 1760. Even though the rebellion of Ahmet Pasha 'the traitor' failed, Egypt remained unsettled, because the revolt had stirred up the Arabs throughout the country. The bedouin Arabs were under the illusion that the Ottomans in Egypt were exhausted and could be defeated easily. The Arabs, however, were disunited and their arms and discipline were inferior; fresh reinforcements arrived in Egypt and the province was finally subdued. On April 2, 1525, Süleyman's famous Grand Vizier, Ibrahim Pasha, came to Egypt and restored Ottoman authority. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the frequent quarrels between the Ottoman units and the Mamluks, and addressed them saying: 'Let us not call one another

Turcoman' or 'Circassian.' We are all the sultan's servants and brothers in Islam.' Arab shaykhs came to the Citadel to pay homage to him, but Ibrahim Pasha arrested them. Those implicated in Ahmet Pasha's rebellion were hanged, others were set free and reappointed in their provinces.

During Ibrahim's few weeks in Egypt, he promulgated the edict codifying the administrative practice of the province, the *Qanun-name-i Misir*. The document, whose text has come down to us in full, is of utmost importance, since it reflects conditions in Egypt shortly after the reconquest, and the principles of Ottoman administration.<sup>23</sup> In the first place, the *Qanun-name* laid the foundations of the military administration, which remained in force for the next three centuries.

The document casts light on the administration of the sub-provinces by the *kashifs*, who were responsible, as formerly, for keeping the irrigation system in working order, maintaining security (protecting villagers against marauding bedouins), and supervising tax-collection. In some provinces, these responsibilities were assigned to Arab shaykhs. Long passages are devoted to how the peasantry are to be treated and their taxes collected. Cadastral surveys, fallow land, land not reached by the Nile floods, *waqf* foundations, granaries, seaports and the mint are also treated in the code. The governing pasha, referred to as *malik al-umara'*, should hold regular meetings of the council of state (*Divan*) four times a week, like the imperial *Divan* in Istanbul.

One of the code's outstanding features is the principle of continuity from Mamluk times, even though the Ottomans had to suppress two serious Mamluk rebellions and put down bedouin disturbances. The *Qanun-name* expressly states that laws dealing with taxes, customs duties, and other fiscal and administrative matters promulgated by Qa'it Bay, the Mamluk sultan from 1468–96, who fought the Ottomans in Anatolia, were to remain in force. The code gave the Mamluks official recognition. Although the *Qanun-name* leaves little doubt that they were to be closely controlled by officers from Istanbul, nevertheless they were organized into a regiment. Even pensions and titles from Mamluk times were recognized. It is remarkable that despite the revolts, the Ottomans accepted the Mamluks. Some Mamluks were appointed as *kashifs* and commanders of the pilgrims' caravan (*umara' al-hajj*). At that time, the empire was strong and confident, and did not anticipate another Mamluk revolt.

Egypt did not become a regular Ottoman province; the *timar*, the military 'feudal' system, which marked the full integration of a province into the empire, was never applied there. The Ottomans were pragmatic

and realized that the special nature of the Egyptian economy favored minimal intervention in its administration. The governor received an annual salary (*salyane*), which he drew from the Egyptian treasury. The main sources of revenue were the land tax (*kharaj*), customs duties collected at seaports, tax farms (*muqa ta'as*) which were used to maintain the garrison and the administration, the Ottoman army and navy in Yemen, Habesh (Abyssinia), and the Red Sea, to support the two holy cities of Islam in the Hijaz, and to conduct the *hajj* caravan. Any surplus was sent annually to Istanbul.<sup>24</sup> Egypt's resources were exploited. In addition to the annual *irsaliyye-i khazine* (remittance sent by the governor of Egypt to Istanbul), the pasha was ordered to deliver large quantities of agricultural and other products to Istanbul.

As a result of Selim's campaign of 1516–17 and the territorial conquests by his son Süleyman, the central Arab lands passed into Ottoman hands. The great Arab cities, including the former caliphal capitals of Damascus, Cairo and Baghdad, as well as the holy sanctuaries in Jerusalem and Hebron were now theirs. Most important from the religious point of view was the title the Ottoman sultan took over from the Mamluks: *Khadim al-Haramayni al-Shari fayni*, the Servitor of the two Noble Sanctuaries, i.e. Mecca and Medina. Egypt was politically, strategically and economically one of the most important additions to the Empire. The Ottomans inherited from the Mamluks the control of the Red Sea and the Hijaz, which they did not rule directly, but through the autonomous rulers, *sharifs*, the Prophet's descendants. Egypt became an important logistic base for military operations in the turbulent provinces of Yemen, Abyssinia, and in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

## AN OUTLINE OF THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF OTTOMAN EGYPT

The political history of Ottoman Egypt<sup>25</sup> can be divided into four main periods:

- 1 The sixteenth century when Egypt is effectively governed by Istanbul-appointed pashas. The first disturbances start around 1590 with the soldiers' revolts. Mehmet Pasha (1607–11) quells the mutinous soldiers (many of them Mamluks), but after him the pashas steadily lose real power.
- 2 In the seventeenth century power shifts to leading emirs (beys).

- 3 In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, power shifts to the seven regiments (primarily to the Janissaries), which are then racked by internal rivalries.
- 4 For most of the eighteenth century, the supremacy belongs to the constantly feuding Mamluk beys, until 1798 when the French occupation brings an end to the Mamluk regime.

The chroniclers' detailed coverage of the political events stops at Ibrahim Pasha's pacification of Egypt and the promulgation of the *Qanun-name* in 1525. Ibn Iyas's excellent account in Arabic ends in November 1522. Diyarbakri's detailed Turkish chronicle does not go beyond the year 1525. The succeeding chronicles appeared in the seventeenth century and are few, sparse and far below the standards of the Egyptian historiographic tradition of which Ibn Iyas was the last great exponent. This abrupt break in a distinguished historiographic tradition is remarkable, and may indicate that during the Süleymanic era (1520–66) and later, no events considered of outstanding political significance or of interest took place, and that the province tranquilly and passively accepted Ottoman rule. Indeed, the archival material of the period shows that Istanbul was much more concerned with Yemen and the Hijaz than with Egypt. Most of the governors sent to Egypt were strong and efficient rulers, and the sparse chronological data recount their deeds and the impressions they left on their subjects. The decline of Egyptian historiography may also reflect the feeling of contemporaries that Egypt was no longer the center of events, but merely a province. The Egyptians for whom the chroniclers wrote, did not feel oppressed by Ottoman rule, but there are indications that morale was low in the literate circles, which certainly discouraged the writing of history. Besides, the pashas, whose terms of office were usually brief, and who could be recalled at any moment, did not extend patronage or even attention to chroniclers and writers to the extent that the Mamluk sultans had.<sup>26</sup>

As happened in other parts of the Empire, stability gave way to economic and financial decline. Hurt by inflation, the soldiers tried to compensate themselves by forcing artisans and tradesmen into partnerships, extorting protection money in the cities and imposing an illegal tax, the *tulba*, on the peasants. In 1586, the soldiers rose up against the ruling pasha. At first they attacked officials and officers, but later a pasha was physically attacked and in time, the soldiers became more rebellious. In September 1604, a mutiny resulted in the killing of Ibrahim Pasha (later known as *al-Maqtul*, 'the Slain'). His successor

arrested several rebels and executed them, but order was not fully restored until the rule of Mehmet Pasha (1607–11), whose resolute suppression of the unruly soldiers won him the epithet *Qul Qiran*, ‘the breaker of the [rebellious] soldiers.’ Upon his arrival in Egypt, he abolished the *tulba*, but the soldiers in the cavalry regiments that were deployed in the countryside, assembled in Tanta in the Delta at the sepulchre of the popular saint Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi and swore to resist that decision. Mehmet Pasha reacted swiftly by organizing a force of loyal troops and bedouin Arabs, which crushed the revolt. Many mutineers were killed; 300 were exiled to Yemen. It is not clear whether the uprising was much more than an attempt by angry soldiers to hold on to their illegal privileges in face of the pasha’s determination to restore order and justice. Modern historians try to regard the uprising as a Mamluk secessionist movement to restore the sultanate. Yet the available information does not warrant such a conclusion. There is no satisfactory evidence that all the rebels were Mamluks, although some certainly were. The account of Muhammad ibn Abi’l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, a contemporary observer, says that the rebels chose a sultan and a vizier from among themselves. If true, this piece of information would support the assumption of a political revolt against the Ottomans, but since Ibn Abi’l-Surur identified himself with the Ottomans, it is probable that he echoes their propaganda. However, it is strange that although the chronicler was familiar with the minutest details of the uprising, he does not give the name of the rebels’ sultan, if, that is, there really was one at all.<sup>27</sup>

Although he was an imposing figure, renowned for his public works, Mehmet Pasha did not reverse the trend of the sultan’s weakening hold on the provinces. During the next two centuries the pashas steadily lost power, and became legitimizing agents of the sultan’s authority. They spent all their time in the Citadel, as virtual prisoners in their own palace. More and more the leading emirs (beys) dismissed the governor if his policies did not please them, and informed the authorities in Istanbul. It became customary for one of the leading beys to be appointed a deputy or acting governor (*qa'im maqam*) by his peers and to carry on the business of government until the arrival of the new pasha. The realistic Ottomans put up with this seemingly odd arrangement, which limited the central government’s objectives in Egypt to:

- 1 Formal recognition of the sultan’s sovereignty by accepting the governor and other Ottoman dignitaries and envoys, proclaiming

the sultan's name in the Friday sermons (*khutba*) in the mosques, and minting coins bearing his name and title.

- 2 Sending the annual *khazina* (or *khazna*), or remittance.
- 3 The Egyptian army (officially, the Ottoman army stationed in Egypt) sending upon demand a contingent of soldiers—usually up to 3,000 men—to fight in the campaigns in Asia, Europe or the Mediterranean.

As long as these three objectives were achieved, Istanbul was satisfied, no matter how independent the local emirs in Egypt seemed.

The seventeenth century saw the advent of the beys, or high-ranking emirs, in Egypt. Formally, there were 24 beys who held some of the most important governmental positions. Holt has shown that these beys, or as he calls them, military grandees, were institutional successors of the Mamluk high command, which survived under Ottoman veneer, although not all of them were Mamluks. The functions performed by the *amir al-hajj*, the *defterdar* (treasurer), the *qa'im maqam* (acting governor), and the governor of the huge province of Jirja in Upper Egypt, had exact equivalents in the Mamluk Sultanate although under different names. What supports the assumption that the beylicate was, indeed, an institutional continuation or resurrection of Mamluk offices is that it was unique to Egypt. The Egyptian beys are often called *sanjaqs* (*sanajiq*) in the sources, but the rank of *sanjaq beyi*, which was standard in the Empire, was not used in Egypt. And while elsewhere in the Empire, the title was that of a bey, that is an emir in charge of an administrative and territorial unit called *sanjaq*, in Egypt the title *sanjaq*, or bey, never acquired a territorial connotation, nor was it related to the *timar* system which had not been applied to Egypt at all.<sup>28</sup> As will be elaborated in [Chapter 2](#), the beylicate conducted itself in accordance with the principles of Mamluk political culture, although these were changed in several significant aspects.

The military class was divided into two factions, the Faqariyya and the Qasimiyya, whose fierce and often bloody rivalries constitute the political history of the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries. A myth mentioned in the introduction of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's history of Ottoman Egypt, explains that the eponyms of these factions were two young Mamluks, whose competition as horsemen before Sultan Selim I developed into bitter strife.<sup>29</sup> In fact, the Qasimiyya and the Faqariyya are not mentioned before the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the appearance of the two factions and their rivalry is related to the advent of the beylicate. Each faction had its

bedouin allies: the Faqariyya, the Sa'd; the Qasimiyya, the Haram. Among the regiments, the 'Azab were traditionally Qasimis, whereas the majority of the Janissaries were Faqaris.

The most prominent representative of the beylicate in the seventeenth century was Ridwan Bey al-Faqari, who held the office of *amir al-hajj* for about a quarter of a century, until his death in 1656. Ridwan was a wealthy and powerful emir, who succeeded in thwarting the efforts of his Qasimi rivals and several governors to remove him from his position as *amir al-hajj*. They tried to have him appointed governor-general of the province of Habesh, a promotion that would have been akin to exile. His position was strengthened by his alliance with 'Ali Bey, the governor of Jirja, the province that supplied grain to Cairo. A genealogy written for Ridwan Bey connected him with the Mamluk sultans and claimed that he was a descendant of Quraysh, the Prophet's tribe. The assertion of Ridwan Bey's noble descent was a challenge to Ottoman authority. To quote the words of Holt: 'The genealogy implies that Ridwan Bey exercised his functions (as *amir al-hajj*) not as a delegate of the remote Ottoman sultan, but by a species of hereditary right derived from Mamluk and Qurayshi ancestors.'<sup>30</sup>

This did not mean that Ridwan or any other bey of his time plotted treason; the time was not yet ripe for that. To the contrary, when Ridwan's position in Egypt was in jeopardy, he rushed to Istanbul to proclaim his loyalty to the sultan's court and arranged that he be reinstated in Egypt as *amir al-hajj*.

After Ridwan's death, Faqari arrogance prompted a violent Qasimi reaction. The Ottoman pashas used the rivalry within the military to enhance their own interests. Although their power to act independently was gone, they could still play one faction against the other and side with the group whose interests happened to suit their own ends. Thus, a coalition was formed in 1660 of Mustafa Pasha, the Qasimi beys led by Ahmet Bey the Bosnian, and the 'Azab regiment. On October 27, a group of Faqari beys were massacred in Tarrana. Two years later, another governor, Ibrahim Pasha, had Ahmet Bey the Bosnian assassinated, which hastened the decline of the beylicate. The beys still held traditional offices, but they no longer played important roles. Istanbul attempted to reassert its control over the Egyptian administration. The Porte aimed to direct Egyptian finances by using clerks from the capital and to increase its revenues from 23 million *paras* per annum to 30 million. However, the Ottomans failed in this, because of the stubborn opposition of the Egyptian military, which had developed into a body with its own interests and *esprit de corps*.

The hour of the seven regiments of the Ottoman garrison, the *ojaqs*, had arrived, and it was there that the main political developments occurred. During the last quarter of the seventeenth and the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the center of political gravity shifted to the Janissaries, the largest, richest, and most powerful of the seven regiments. The quarrels between the Janissaries and the 'Azab, the second largest and strongest regiment, replaced the rivalries of the Mamluk houses in Egyptian annals. The office of the bey was no longer in demand; the pasha could not exact as much money from candidates to the beylicate as before. Most significantly, it became accepted practice to promote a regimental officer to the now powerless beylicate.

As had been the case among the beys, the struggles among and within the military gangs in the regiments had political and economic aspects, since the regiments controlled numerous lucrative tax farms. As the career of Küçük Muhammad a *başodabaşı*, or subaltern, in the Janissary regiment shows, a junior officer could for a while become the most influential man in Cairo. He could use his power to force down the price of wheat against the interests of the grain speculators and to abolish the payment of the illegal protection levies (*himayat*), thereby assuming the role of a popular tribune. Muhammad's career from 1676 when he seized control of the Janissary regiment until his assassination in 1694, reveals some of the complex political conditions in Egypt at the time. Muhammad's enemies attempted to oust him from his decisive position in the Janissary headquarters by banishing him to Cyprus or transferring him to other regiments, but he succeeded in establishing himself as the master of Cairo for two and a half years until his death.<sup>31</sup>

The next crisis also revolved around the Janissary regiment. The key figure was Ifranj Ahmad, another Janissary *başodabaşı*. A group of eight Janissary officers, supported by the 'Azab, attempted to remove him. Initially they were successful, and Ifranj Ahmad was forced to accept the rank of bey, but eventually he was able to return to his original position in the regiment. The military forces in Egypt split into two hostile camps, but Ifranj Ahmad was just an excuse for the strife. The main reason was the resentment of the other regiments, primarily the 'Azab, at the privileged position and the profits the Janissaries were enjoying. From March to June 1711, hostilities between the two camps culminated in armed battles. The composition of the camps gives an idea of the political and military complexities. Siding with Ifranj Ahmad were the majority of the Janissaries, the pasha, Muhamad Bey, the Faqari governor of Upper Egypt who brought with him reinforcements of the Hawwara bedouins, some elements of the other regiments, and

most of the Faqari beys and their Mamluk households. On the other side were almost all the 'Azab and the other regiments, 600 Janissary defectors, the Qasimiyya beys, and Qaytas Bey, a Faqari grandee who had quarrelled with Ayyub Bey, the Faqari leader, and had joined the Qasimiyya. Fierce battles raged in and around Cairo during the fighting, in which the Citadel was bombarded. Iwaz Bey, an important Qasimi leader, was killed, which perpetuated the feud among the Mamluk factions. Finally, the Faqaris were defeated, two of the chief Qasimi leaders, Ayyub Bey and Muhammad Bey, the above-mentioned governor of Upper Egypt, left the country for Istanbul, and Ifranj Ahmad was captured and put to death (June 22, 1711). The 1711 'civil war' marked not only the defeat of the Janissary regiment and the Faqariyya, but more significantly, the eventual decline of the regiments and the ascendancy of the beylicate, which lasted until the French occupation in 1798. The Janissaries and the other regiments were enfeebled after decades of incessant strife; even during the conflict itself, the beylicate re-emerged as a central military and political force.<sup>32</sup> Henceforth, the factional strife within the Mamluk society was the political story of eighteenth-century Egypt. The Qasimiyya-Faqariyya rivalry became more vicious and bloody, the ultimate goal being total annihilation of the other side. The assassination of beys by opponents who were jealous of their power and wealth became increasingly frequent.

After the armed conflict, the leadership of the victorious Qasimiyya passed to Isma'il Bey, the 16-year-old son of Iwaz Bey, who had been killed. After murdering the emirs who competed with him for supremacy, Isma'il himself was assassinated in 1724. The next leading contender was Muhammad Bey Cherkes, the chief of another branch within the Qasimiyya. This extremely autocratic, unscrupulous emir had the distinction of being the first person to hold the title of *shaykh al-balad*, 'the elder of the city,' which was bestowed on the senior bey, who was also the most powerful figure in Cairo. In several official documents, the Ottoman government calls this title 'a devilish innovation,' the source of all the trouble in Egypt.<sup>33</sup> But Istanbul, grudgingly, had to put up with the new title, which was an invention of the beys and expressed their dominance and the governor's impotence. At first, Muhammad Cherkes allied himself with Dhu'l-Faqar, Isma'il ibn Iwaz's assassin, but soon the two were vying for supremacy. Dhu'l-Faqar was supported by the pasha and forced Cherkes into exile in North Africa. The latter infiltrated back into Egypt with his followers and organized an opposition to the rulers of Cairo. He was defeated in

battle and drowned in the Nile on April 12, 1730, while trying to escape. Dhu'l-Faqar was murdered in Cairo two days later by Cherkes's supporters.

The fall of Muhammad Bey Cherkes marked the rise of the Faqariyya. The Mamluk factions, however, tended to split into smaller, competing subdivisions that nullified the victory of the beys and offered the regimental commanders an opportunity to revive some of their past influence. Political power passed to a triumvirate: two regimental officers, 'Uthman Ketkhuda al-Qazdughli (Janissary), and Yusuf Ketkhuda ('Azab), and a bey, Muhammad Bey Qatamish. All three later perished in a massacre masterminded by Bakir Pasha in November 1736, which was one of the worst bloodlettings in the annals of Ottoman Egypt and cost the lives of eleven emirs, beys and regimental commanders. A new triumvirate emerged, also consisting of two officers, one Janissary and the other an 'Azab, with the rank of *ketkhuda*. This triumvirate was challenged by another Janissary officer, Ibrahim Chavush, more commonly known as Ibrahim Ketkhuda, whose strong personality dominated the Egyptian scene for ten years (1743–54). His partner was Ridwan Ketkhuda who, as an officer of the 'Azab, also led the small Julfiyya faction and had helped Ibrahim chase 'Uthman Bey, the Mamluk and successor of Dhu'l-Faqar, out of the country. Ridwan Ketkhuda posed no threat to Ibrahim, since he devoted his time and energy to building magnificent dwellings and to patronizing poets. Ibrahim Ketkhuda was the head of the Qazdughliyya, a powerful clan allied with the Faqariyya. It is important to note that he himself was not a bey and that he wielded power by virtue of his position in the Janissary regiment; many of his Mamluks were to become beys. The duumvirate of Ibrahim and Ridwan is the last stage of transition from the rule of the regiments, primarily the Janissaries, to that of the Mamluk beylicate. After Ibrahim's death in November 1754, his Mamluk murdered Ridwan and the Julfiyya disappeared as a political force. From then on the Qazdughliyya monopolized political power in Egypt until the French occupation. The struggles did not cease, however, as factional rivalries were replaced by personal ones among the Qazdughli beys.

After several years of instability, 'Ali Bey al-Kabir, or *Bulut Kapan*, 'the Cloud Catcher' (he won that nickname for his ambition and arrogance) became *Shaykh al-balad* after overthrowing 'Ali al-'Azzawi, also called *al-Kabir*, which caused later historians to confuse the two. Al-'Azzawi had been a Mamluk of Ibrahim Ket-khuda, like 'Ali *Bulut Kapan* himself. 'Ali's two terms of office as *Shaykh al-balad* (1760–66,

1767–72) were a turning point in the history of Ottoman Egypt. Tyrannical and extremely ambitious, he was the first ruler since Ahmet Pasha al-Kha'in, two and a half centuries earlier, to try to separate Egypt from the Ottoman Empire and to restore the Mamluk Sultanate. He made his preparations with unprecedented thoroughness and ruthlessness. He disrupted the old equilibrium between the local forces in order to achieve his goals. By assassination and banishment, he eliminated many beys and Mamluk factions including his former allies. One of 'Ali Bey's aides, whom he nominated as a bey, was a Bosnian called Ahmet Pasha al-Jazzar. He left Egypt in time to save himself from 'Ali's tyranny, and later became famous as the governor of Sidon. Whatever was left of the independence of the Janissary regiment was wiped out by 'Ali Bey, who totally emasculated it by executing or banishing its chief officers. After that the regiments existed merely as legal fictions, whose main function was to supply official immunity to artisans and merchants, or to enable the beys' Mamluks to draw salaries from the Treasury by registering them as members of the regiments. 'Ali Bey raised a large army including his numerous Mamluks and North African mercenaries, Druzes, bedouins, Shi'is and Christians.

By 1770, he destroyed the autonomous position of the bedouin federations in Upper Egypt and the Delta. The Hawwara bedouins in Upper Egypt under the rich and powerful Shaykh Humam had taken advantage of the continuous political conflicts in Cairo and gained virtual autonomy in the territory between Asyut and Aswan. Many rebellious emirs and refugees from the frequent battles and purges in the capital had escaped to the south; some waited for better circumstances, while others settled among the Hawwara. Determined to extend his rule over the entire country, 'Ali Bey defeated Humam, who died shortly afterwards (1769). The same year, Shaykh Suwaylim, the most important Arab shaykh of Lower Egypt, was captured and put to death.

'Ali Bey embarked upon a policy of financial extortion of extraordinary harshness. He frequently imposed illegal taxes (*avaniyas*) on the European merchants in Egypt, on the Copts, and other wealthy people. The Jewish community, which for centuries had been in charge of the customs houses, the mint, money-changing and various tax farms, was hit hardest by 'Ali's policies. 'Ali Bey arrested several Jewish customs officials, extorted their money and put them to death. He gave their positions to the newly-arrived Syrian Christians; 'Ali Bey's rule was certainly the severest blow to Egyptian Jews in many centuries.

‘Ali began challenging Ottoman suzerainty directly. In 1768 and 1769, he dismissed the governors, a move which was not unusual in itself, but he also did not permit the arrival of new ones. He assumed the prerogatives of an independent ruler, had his name proclaimed in the Friday sermon and inscribed on coins.

In foreign affairs, ‘Ali pursued an expansionist policy aiming at the annexation of the Hijaz and Syria, territories which had been parts of the Mamluk Sultanate. His intervention in the Hijaz in 1770 was not extraordinary; the rulers in Cairo had often been authorized by the Ottoman sultan to act there on his behalf in the frequent dynastic conflicts among the Meccan *sharifs*. At one point, ‘Ali Bey replaced the Ottoman governor of Jedda with an Egyptian bey. ‘Ali Bey’s Syrian campaign in 1771 was in open defiance of the sultan, and was in fact directed against the Ottoman officeholders in Syria. In his bold moves, ‘Ali Bey was relying on two forces: Shaykh Zahir al-‘Umar, the ruler of Galilee, who like himself was bent on attaining independence, and the Russians, who were then at war with the sultan and were seeking allies in the eastern Mediterranean. During the Syrian campaign, ‘Ali Bey’s power began to crumble. Although his lieutenants, Isma‘il Bey and Muhammad Bey Abu’l-Dhahab, defeated the sultan’s forces and were about to take Damascus, they stopped short of declaring open revolt against the sultan in agreement with the Russians. They suddenly interrupted the campaign and returned to Egypt in the autumn of 1771. In the eventual struggle with ‘Ali they had the upper hand, and ‘Ali escaped to his friend, Zahir al-‘Umar, with whom he remained for about a year. Then, enticed back to Egypt by forged letters from his supporters there promising to restore him to power, his small force was routed by Muhammad Abu’l-Dhahab. Injured, he was captured by his former Mamluk, and died a week later, probably of poisoning (May 1773).

When Abu’l-Dhahab became *Shaykh al-balad*, he reversed ‘Ali Bey’s policies vis-à-vis the Ottomans. He demonstrated his loyalty to them by accepting a governor; contrary to ‘Ali Bey’s reputed non-Islamic line, Abu’l-Dhahab displayed his religious sentiments by showing respect to ulama and generously supporting Muslim institutions. His term of office was short, because he died suddenly in 1775 during a campaign in Syria, undertaken on behalf of the Ottomans against Zahir al-‘Umar. Crecelius, who wrote a comprehensive study about ‘Ali Bey and Muhammad Abu’l-Dhahab, says that during their rule Egypt enjoyed a strong government which enforced law and order, in comparison with the anarchy and the arbitrary tyranny that oppressed

the country during the rule of their immediate predecessors and successors.<sup>34</sup>

Years of internal difficulties followed Abu'l-Dhahab's death as the Qazdughli beys contested for supremacy. From the struggles emerged the duumvirate of Ibrahim Bey and Murad Bey, two Mamluks of Muhammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab. They did not openly rebel against the Porte, but did stop sending the annual remittance to the sultan. Ibrahim became *Shaykh al-balad*, but he consulted his partner, although they quarreled and were reconciled. The incessant domestic political strife and a series of natural calamities—epidemics of the plague, a low Nile and a murrain of the cattle—combined to cause the people terrible economic hardship. The oppressive and exploitative rule of the duumvirs was harsher than was usual under Mamluk beys.

At this point, Istanbul attempted to impose direct Ottoman rule on Egypt. The admiral, Jaza'irli Hasan Pasha, invaded Egypt in August 1786 and combined his military moves against Ibrahim and Murad with declarations promising the restoration of just rule founded on Süleyman's *Qanun-name* and the principles of Islam. At first, the desperate populace paid heed to him, but as time went on, Hasan Pasha lost his popularity. His handling of the peasants and the urban population was as oppressive as the Mamluks'; Isma'il Bey, whom Hasan had named *Shaykh al-balad*, advised the pasha to extort money as the beys had. Meanwhile, Ibrahim and Murad retreated to Upper Egypt and Hasan Pasha was unable to dislodge them from there. In October 1787, Hasan was recalled, because the Empire was on the brink of war with Russia. In 1791, the plague took a terrible toll; among the victims was Isma'il Bey, who had ruled Cairo after Hasan Pasha's departure. Ibrahim and Murad reentered Cairo and reassumed control in July. Although their regime was essentially unchallenged, conditions deteriorated further due to prolonged economic and political crises.

On July 1, 1798, the French expeditionary force arrived in Alexandria to usher in a new era in Egyptian and Middle Eastern history. Ibrahim and Murad were unprepared to confront the French and were unaware of the significance of the events, which put an end to the Mamluk regime and society.

## The Vicissitudes of the Ruling Class

### EGYPTIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD THE OTTOMANS—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

As the title of this book indicates, it investigates and assesses Egyptian attitudes toward the Ottomans. The historian undertaking such a task is faced with complicated methodological problems. To what extent were the writers of the chronicles representative of their society? We have seen that Ibn Iyas expresses the pain of the fallen Mamluks. Many of the latter chroniclers were ulama and bureaucrats, who spoke for specific sectors of society and who were dependent on the goodwill of Ottoman rulers. One should also beware of the pitfall of anachronistic interpretations of premodern sentiments. Although ethnic tensions did exist in Ottoman times, they had nothing to do with nationalistic ideologies, which emerged only in the second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the Ottomans as they appear in the writings of Arab chroniclers, biographers, mystics and travellers are not necessarily the Ottomans of objective truth, if indeed it exists at all in the matters with which we are concerned.<sup>1</sup>

As seen in the preceding chapter, Ibn Iyas regarded the Ottoman occupation of Egypt as a catastrophe. Muhammad ibn Tulun (d. 1546), a Syrian writer, who also witnessed the conquest, was also very critical of the new regime, although he expressed himself in a much less bitter and impassioned tone than his Egyptian contemporary.<sup>2</sup> Arab writers of the next generation give the Ottomans a better image. The Egyptian Sufi, 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani (d. 1565),<sup>3</sup> the jurist Ibn Nujaym (d. 1563),<sup>4</sup> the Egyptian 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jaziri (d. 1553), who was secretary to several commanders of the *hajj* caravan,<sup>5</sup> the Meccan historian Qutb al-Din al-Nahrawali (d. 1582),<sup>6</sup> and in the seventeenth century the chroniclers Mar'i ibn Yusuf al-Hanbali and Muhammad ibn

Abi'lSurur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi,<sup>7</sup> all praise the Ottoman Empire, and especially its ruling dynasty, as impeccably Islamic. In his important writings, al-Nahrawali extols the Ottomans as orthodox, just and strong rulers. He is particularly grateful for their support of ulama and Sufis. As a Meccan, he appreciates the religious aspects of Ottoman rule: the efficient organization of the *hajj*, the generosity toward the residents of Mecca and Medina, and the construction of buildings for sacred and secular use in the holy city.<sup>8</sup> None of this was new, but the thorough, continuous manner in which this was being done was considered unique. Selim is praised for recognizing the *waqf* deeds of his defeated enemies. He is described as a talented poet in Turkish and Persian, possibly in Arabic as well, and generally as an ideal sultan. But the highest praise goes to Süleyman: he is called 'the renovator of Islam (*mujaddid al-din*) in the tenth (*hijri*) century,'<sup>9</sup> and Sha'rani, the mystic, calls him 'the visible Axis' (*al-qutb al-zahir*), a most significant Sufi term.<sup>10</sup> Mar'i ibn Yusuf al-Karmi al-Hanbali wrote a detailed panegyric of the Ottoman dynasty entitled *Qala'id al-'iqyan fi fada'il Al 'Uthman* ('The Golden Necklaces on the Virtues of the Ottoman House'). The author was an 'alim, born in Palestine, but socially and culturally, he could be considered an Egyptian, having spent most of his life and all his creative years in Egypt.<sup>11</sup>

What caused this change of heart by the Arab writers? Flattery cannot be ruled out, but it cannot be the whole answer. The writers of the pro-Ottoman treatises, who were mostly ulama and Sufis, had little to complain about Ottoman rule. They also had to admit that the Ottoman ulama were not ignorant, as had been previously believed; many were serious scholars, some the best in Islam.<sup>12</sup>

Another explanation for the Egyptians' and other Arabs' acceptance of Ottoman domination lies in their political and social experience. For centuries they had been ruled by foreigners, mostly of Turkish or Circassian extraction. Islamic political theory and practice taught that once a Muslim ruler takes power and proves his ability to rule, his government becomes legitimate. He does not have to share language or origin with the ruled.

This basic acceptance did not preclude Egyptian-Turkish tensions and antipathies. Temperamental differences were too great to be overlooked; negative images and stereotypes were created on both sides. The Egyptians often felt that the Turks were bad Muslims. The Turks questioned the Egyptians' ability to rule and fight; they used pejorative terms, such as 'fellahin,' 'Tat,' or 'Miqlaji,' in referring to the Egyptians and considered them socially inferior.<sup>13</sup>

The absorption of the Arab lands into the empire forced the Egyptians and other Arabic-speaking people to revise their self-image. Under the Mamluks, they defined themselves solely in religious terms. The Mamluks were called Turks, yet their Turkishness was more functional than a birthright; it differentiated them from their subjects. Arab historians, primarily Ibn Iyas, refer to the Mamluks as Turks (*Atrak*), whereas the Ottomans are called Rumis (*Arwam*), Turcomans (*Tarakima*), or Ottomans (*'Atham ina*).<sup>14</sup> Only the Mamluk elite could use Turkish names, and only they spoke Turkish, although it had not been the mother tongue of the Circassians, who came to power in the Mamluk Sultanate in 1382. Egypt had been undisputedly Arab both in language and culture, and Arabic was the language of government. But after the Ottomans conquered Egypt, even though the new rulers were identified not as Turks but as Muslims, the Turkish presence in Egypt was overwhelming and was felt in many strata of society. Turkish became the language of government and the *qadis* and other bureaucrats, at least those in the upper echelons, spoke it. A new term appears in the sources to designate the local Arabic-speaking population: *awlad 'Arab*, or *evlad-i 'Arab* in Turkish. Obviously, the Mamluks, who survived under Ottoman rule, could no longer be called Turks and were now referred to as Circassians (*Charakisa*), Mamluks, or Ghuzz.<sup>15</sup> In time, the social and linguistic gaps between them and the Arabic-speaking population narrowed, while the gap between them and the Turks widened.

The Egyptians felt that even though Egypt was relegated to the status of a province in the Ottoman Empire, it still remained a separate country. Politically, the Ottoman state is called *al-dawla*; the state or the dynasty, *al-saltana*, the Sultanate, sometimes *al-dawla al-Rumiyya*, the Rumi or Turkish state. The Empire's Turkish-speaking provinces are referred to as *as-diyar al-Rumiyya*, that is, the Turkish lands. Egypt, however, was referred to as *al-diyar al-Misriyya*, 'the land of Egypt,' a separate country, although integrated into the Ottoman Empire.

Selim I was the only Ottoman sultan who went to Egypt. The regarded his successors as distant, though generally benevolent figures.<sup>16</sup> noted their accession to the throne and their death, but little else. In Cairo, the celebration of the birth of a sultan's son in Istanbul, or an Ottoman victory on the battlefield, was limited to decorating the shops and houses, and firing cannons.

It should be emphasized that before the end of the eighteenth century the Ottoman sultan did not claim the title of caliph, but by then political conditions had changed. When the Empire was at its zenith in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the sultanate was strong enough

and did not need to adopt the historically loaded title of caliph for the sultan. Historians have already shown that the claim that the last 'Abbasid caliph of Cairo had transferred his 'rights' to Selim I after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, was a myth created in the late eighteenth century. Sometimes Arab panegyrists and others call the Ottomans 'the inheritors of royalty and the caliphate,' but this is an honorary title devoid of political or religious significance.<sup>17</sup>

### THE PASHA

Ottoman Egypt was ruled by senior army officers. Ottoman linguistic usage, which divided the population into two basic categories, '*askeri*, 'the military class,' and *re'aya*, subjects (literally, the sultan's flock), reflects this social reality. The ruling class often used its power to enrich itself, legally or illegally. Some civilians, mostly merchants, were often in a precarious position and could be exploited and blackmailed by soldiers and emirs.

In Egypt, as in most Ottoman provinces, the governor was the highest-ranking official, who as the Sultan's representative administered the province and was responsible for protecting the central government's interests, including collection and delivery of revenues, the maintenance of law and order, and safeguarding the empire's strategic interests in Egypt and the regions belonging to its geopolitical sphere: the Red Sea, the Hijaz, Yemen and Abyssinia. One of the governor's chief responsibilities was organizing and protecting the *hajj* caravan to Mecca, and providing Mecca and Medina with grain from Egypt. He carried out his administrative duties through the Divan, or council of state, which convened four times a week and was modelled on the sultan's Divan in Istanbul. There, the most important matters of state were discussed and decided, and imperial decrees were read out.

The governor was the supreme commander of the Ottoman troops in Egypt, with the rank of pasha; several pashas also held the rank of vizier.<sup>18</sup> In the sultan's decrees during the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries, the pasha was addressed usually as *Misir beylerbeyi*. In later times, he was addressed as the *vali* of Egypt. The pasha's power can be regarded as a useful indicator of Istanbul's strength in Egypt. During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, he was Egypt's de facto ruler, and although sometimes challenged by rebellious troops, his power was supreme; the central Ottoman government gave him complete authority, which is reflected even in the structure and phrasing of imperial edicts. Although formally the edicts

express the sultan's personal wish concerning even the most trifling matters, such as a raise in the pay of a common soldier, the decrees in fact confirm the pasha's proposals. By the second half of the eighteenth century, the pasha's power had declined to that of a mere representative of the sultan's authority.

In the sparsely chronicled sixteenth century,<sup>19</sup> the pashas easily overshadowed all other officeholders in Egypt. The chroniclers carefully record the dates of their arrival and dismissal; these dates are the only precise ones for that century. Much attention is paid to their personalities, policies and deeds. As Egypt was one of the most important provinces, its pashas were chosen from among the best administrators and those closest to the sultan to whom they were sometimes related. Often, the pasha was promoted to the Grand Vizierate after completing his term in Egypt, while others, less fortunate, were imprisoned or beheaded as soon as they reached the sultan's court. Many pashas came to Egypt after serving as governors in other major provinces. In the sixteenth century, no fewer than six pashas were given the title of *Hadim* (Arabic: *Khadim*) 'servant,' a euphemism for eunuch, i.e., they were eunuchs who started their careers in the sultan's household. Mustafa 'Ali, a well-known Ottoman historian, writer and poet who visited Egypt at the end of the sixteenth century explains: 'It was the custom at the time...that the governorship of Egypt was given to persons of the eunuch class whenever it became vacant, because they are free of the care for wives and children, and all their possessions revert in the end to the sultan.'<sup>20</sup>

The pasha's appointment was for one year, but it was usually renewed for another two or three. During the 281 years of the Ottoman rule in Egypt, 110 pashas served as governors of the province, thus making two and a half years the average term. In the early eighteenth century, Rami Mehmet Pasha won the distinction of being appointed for five years. In the sixteenth century, the famous Süleyman Pasha had held his office for ten years (1525–35), and after being sent on a naval expedition in the Indian Ocean, he resumed the office for another two years (1536–8). Da'ud Pasha, served from 1538 until his death in office eleven years later. These were exceptions, just as it also happened that a pasha was sometimes recalled after only a few months in office.

When a pasha was dismissed, an acting governor (*qa'im maqam*), carried out his duties until a messenger (*müsellim* or *mütesellim*) arrived from Istanbul with a decree appointing the next pasha. Those pashas who came by sea spent a few days at the river-port of Bulaq; a governor who came by land stayed at the al-'Adiliyya quarter, north of Cairo.

When he arrived, the new governor was welcomed by the leading emirs, army officers and bureaucrats upon whom he bestowed robes of honor. Upon the arrival of the new pasha, the army expected a bonus (*teraqqi*), similar to the raise the Istanbul Janissaries received when a new sultan ascended the throne.<sup>21</sup>

A few days later, the pasha would move through Cairo in a procession with great pomp on his way to his residence in the Citadel, the center of government, where the Divan, the mint and the central bureaus were located. The pashas rarely left the Citadel; in the latter half of Ottoman rule in Egypt, they were virtually prisoners there. In the sixteenth century, however, pashas still moved about the country. Da'ud Pasha personally fought against many bedouins. Ibrahim Pasha (1583–4) toured the remotest provinces of Upper Egypt where he inspected emerald mines; he also visited the pyramids, hoping to find treasures of ancient Egypt. At al-Mahalla al-Kubra, he ordered the destruction of a church built on the site of a mosque. He also made a pilgrimage to Tanta, where the sepulchre of Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi, the most popular Egyptian saint, is located. On the few occasions when the pashas left the Citadel, they attended parties given in their honor by emirs in palaces and pavilions outside the city, like Qasr al-'Ayni or the Miqyas, the Nilometer on the island of al-Rawda. The pasha also led the two most important public ceremonies of the year: the cutting of the dike of the canal in early August when the Nile rose (*kasr al-khalij*) and the departure of the pilgrims' caravan for Mecca in the month of Shawwal. But otherwise, the pashas were confined to the Citadel. Several times during the eighteenth century, although a pasha expressed the wish to personally lead a campaign against bedouin tribes or a rebellious bey, it was only a gesture made to emphasize the seriousness of the situation, and the emirs had little difficulty in dissuading him from going.<sup>22</sup>

Since the pashas' terms of office were normally short, they often tried to enrich themselves quickly and were not interested in sponsoring projects whose fruits they would not reap because they required much time, effort and money. They did not want to die in Egypt unlike the Mamluk sultans who had magnificent mausoleums erected there. The pashas were recipients of annual salaries (*saly ane*); they were not military fief holders, since Egypt was not administered through the *timar* system. In addition, they benefited from various sources of revenue called *muqata'as*.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the pashas' general lack of motivation to initiate costly enterprises, many pashas endowed funds for charity and for the construction of public works and religious buildings. A. Raymond has

shown convincingly that while the Ottomans certainly did not enrich Cairo with magnificent monuments as the Mamluks had, the Ottoman period can, nevertheless, be considered one of vigorous urban development.<sup>24</sup> The pashas—and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the beys—constructed or repaired water installations, caravanserais, public baths, markets, gardens and palaces. They erected many religious buildings including mosques, religious colleges (*madrasas*), Sufi cloisters (*tekkes*), Koran schools for children and sacred tombs. Pashas also contributed funds to provide pilgrims to Mecca with facilities for water, food, comfort and safety. In this, the pashas were sometimes influenced by their religious inclinations. For example, Sherif Mehmet Pasha was a patron of the sanctuary of Husayn ibn ‘Ali, the Prophet’s grandson, where Husayn’s head was believed interred. A former governor of the Yemen endowed the Yemeni hostel (*riwaq*) at al-Azhar mosque; yet another pasha patronized a cloister for Turkish Sufis.<sup>25</sup> Several pashas took a special interest in social welfare, undertaking to feed a certain number of the poor in times of famine, and compelling the leading emirs to follow suit.<sup>26</sup>

Chroniclers usually distinguish popular and good rulers from oppressive and hated ones.<sup>27</sup> Some were generous and benevolent, but many were selfish, oppressive and rapacious. Hasan Pasha, who was dismissed in 1583, was a particularly grasping and oppressive governor. In a few cases, the chronicler blames the pasha’s deputy (*ketkhuda*) for unpopular policies. Forced sales of commodities (copper, in one well-known instance) to merchants on the pasha’s order caused much dissatisfaction. Some pashas failed to deal efficiently with gangs of criminals, while others were notorious for the ease with which they put people to death for the slightest offence.

In the Middle Ages and Ottoman times, the ruler’s religious attitudes were of immense importance in shaping his public image. Two governors, Üveys Pasha (1587–91) and Ibrahim Pasha (1604), had been *qadis*, who were appointed treasurers (*defterdars*). Such a career would have been out of the question in the Mamluk Sultanate, when the gap between ‘the men of the sword’ and ‘the men of the pen’ was unbridgeable. Several pashas were known by epithets which indicated their religious inclination. *Hadim Hafiz* Ahmet Pasha (1591–5) knew the Koran by heart and read it through each week after the Friday communal prayers. Iskandar Pasha (appointed in 1568) was known as *al-Faqih*, the jurisconsult. Mehmet Pasha (1652–6) was *Abu’l-Nur*, ‘the man of light,’ because he had ordered that all of Cairo’s mosques and shrines be whitewashed, and had supplied them with candles. Another,

Mehmet Pasha, was called *Ghazi* after he suppressed the rebellion of Muhammad Bey, the Mamluk governor of Jirja in Upper Egypt in 1659. Since Mehmet Pasha knew that other beys supported the rebel, he called his military expedition a *ghaza* (holy war), a term normally used only when fighting infidels and heretics. The governor obtained a *fatwa* from the ulama declaring Muhammad Bey a rebel and a traitor. The military parade before the expedition included dervishes who carried the Prophet's standard and performed their *dhikr* ritual, and descendants of the Prophet (*ashraf*), led by their marshal (*Naqib al-ashraf*).

At least three pashas were known as 'the Sufi,' a particularly interesting religious name: Sufi 'Ali Pasha (1563–5) was an ascetic who wore only coarse, woollen clothes and paid many visits to tombs of saints in the Qarafa cemetery; Sufi Ibrahim Pasha (killed in 1604 by rebellious soldiers) had been a Mevlevi dervish in Qonya; the third was Mehmet Pasha (1611–15). In the Mamluk Sultanate there had been sultans who revered Sufis, but no Mamluk sultan was known as 'the Sufi,' a change indicating the progress Sufism achieved under the Ottomans.

Most of the pashas were reported to be pious men who adhered to the *Shari'a*. However, there were exceptions: Dukagin-Ođlu Mehmet Pasha (1554–6) was described as a wanton man, because he used to go to the bank of the Nile where he sang in public accompanying himself on a guitar-like instrument. He was recalled at Sultan Süleyman's order on charges of violating the *Shari'a* and executed, Bayram Pasha was executed in 1628 by order of the Sultan, reportedly for disregarding the *Shari'a*.

The pashas demonstrated their piety both in their personal and public lives. As already indicated, one of the pasha's main duties was to organize the pilgrimage to Mecca and to be responsible for the pilgrims' safety and welfare. Every newly-appointed governor customarily visited the sepulchre of al-Imam al-Shafi'i in Cairo. Many pashas visited other holy tombs and repaired dilapidated ones. The pashas participated in special public prayers when the Nile was too low or too high.

Perhaps the most impressive mixture of a governor's religious sentiments and official business is the following pious formula which opened all the firmans issued by Hadim Mesih Pasha (1575–80):

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the world. And prayer and peace be on our Prophet (lit.:Lord) Muhammad, his whole family and companions. The believers (i.e., Muslims) are brothers so make peace among your

brothers. Fear Allah so that you will be pitied. Oh, ye servants of Allah, act by the Law of Allah!

Usually the pashas preferred not to die in Egypt, if they could help it. Those pashas who knew they were about to die in Cairo, either because of a fatal illness or because they had been sentenced to death, chose their place of burial near a holy tomb, such as al-Shafi'i's shrine or the grave of Layth ibn Sa'd.<sup>28</sup>

## THE EGYPTIAN ARMY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

### The Army in the *Qanun-name-i Misir*

The basis of the Ottoman army was Selim's garrison with several later additions. Ibrahim Pasha's *Qanun-name-i Misir* of 1525 laid down its administrative and legal framework.<sup>29</sup>

The army was made up of seven units, two infantry regiments (*ojaqs*), and five cavalry regiments. The infantry regiments were the *Mustahfizan-i Qal'a-i Misir* (the Guardians of the Citadel) known as Janissaries, and the '*Azeban* or '*Azab*; The mounted regiments (the Sipahi) included two elite units, the *Müteferriqa* and *Chavu shes*, who were the best paid, and the *Cherakise ojaği* (a Circassian unit), the *Gönüllüyan* (volunteers) and the *Tüfenkjiyan* (musketeers).

The *Qanun-name* reveals the principles of the Ottoman policy toward Egypt in general and the army in particular. It is significant that the authors of this interesting document foresaw at the height of Ottoman power the transgressions that would weaken the discipline of the Egyptian army within a few decades. The document's most salient feature is the government's effort not to lose control of the army, understandably so, because of the Mamluk revolts that had just been put down, and the general centralized nature of the Ottoman state. No appointments, even of the lowest-ranking soldiers, were allowed without confirmation from Istanbul. Discipline was extremely strict and insubordination was punishable by dismissal from service or death. Soldiers who were dismissed had to report immediately to the Turkish provinces. The Ottoman thriftiness is also evident: the document specifies the maximum number of soldiers in each regiment, and a stern warning is given against enlisting men before a vacancy occurs. Even then, no appointments are to be made until there is a certain number of

vacancies, fifty in the larger *ojaqs*. Only then would the matter be reported to Istanbul, and a request made for filling them.

Due attention is paid to the need of keeping the troops at the ready and capable of performing their duties. Thus, the *Gönüllüyan* should be able to use a javelin from horseback and shoot an arrow with either hand. The *Tüfenkjiyan* had to be skillful in firing their muskets from horseback. (On pain of death, regulations prohibit the production, sale, or storage of muskets and gunpowder by civilians.)

The main duty of the cavalry regiments was to help the regional governors or administrators (*kashifs*) collect taxes from the villagers, maintain order and keep the bedouin tribesmen in check. The soldiers are warned not to mistreat the fellahin and not to take food from them without payment. Likewise, the Ottoman authorities understood at this early date that troops stationed in the city as guards and policemen were liable to infringe on the artisans' and shopkeepers' livelihoods by meddling in commercial activities or extorting protection money. Soldiers guilty of this offence were to forfeit their pay.

The duty of the two large infantry regiments, the *Mustahfizan* and 'Azab, was to guard the Citadel and all soldiers without exception (including those who were married) had to live inside the huge complex. The former unit policed the river-ports of Old Cairo (Misr al-'Atiqa) and Bulaq; the latter guarded the Citadel's Bab al-Silsila, or the Gate of the Chain. These two regiments were made up entirely of Turks (*Rumlu*), and Circassians or bedouins were expressly excluded.<sup>30</sup> The *Qanun-name* specifies that soldiers' sons, *qul oghullari* (literally, sons of the [sultan's] slaves), in those corps were allowed to enlist in the army, even during their fathers' lifetime. It is significant that already in the early sixteenth century the Ottoman army diverted from the principle that Janissaries should not marry when on active duty and that the only way to enlist soldiers was through the *devşirme* system, which consisted of Islamic and military education at the sultan's palace, or in Anatolia for Christian-born recruits taken away from their homes in the Balkan provinces of the Empire.

Of special interest is the regiment of the Circassian Mamluks. Through this regiment the Mamluks were integrated into the imperial army, but the regimental command—the *agha* (commander), the *kahya* (or *kethuda*, deputy commander) and the *katib* (clerk)—had to be Turkish (*Rumlu*), evidence that the Circassians were not completely trusted. The need to maintain discipline in their ranks is expressed in very strong terms. By contrast with the other regiments, vacant positions were not to be manned, but reverted to the Treasury.<sup>31</sup> Similar

suspicion of the Mamluks is also evident in the passage discussing the *Chavush* regiment—the pasha’s envoys and pursuivants, aides and messengers—which consisted of 40 men. Vacancies were to be filled only from the ranks of the cavalry regiments of the *Gönüllüyan* and *Tüfenkjiyan*. It is expressly stated that no soldier’s salary (*‘ulufe*) was to be paid in any of the regiments to Circassians’ sons, fellahin, i.e. native Egyptians (not necessarily peasants), or bedouins. An *agha* could be dismissed for disobeying this order, while his deputy and clerk could face the death penalty.<sup>32</sup> This policy of excluding anyone not of Turkish origin from the army was not unique to Egypt; contemporary documents show that this was also the rule in Syria.<sup>33</sup> What was unusual was the inclusion of the Circassian Mamluks, all the suspicions and tensions notwithstanding. The Ottomans decided that the Turkish-speaking Sunni Mamluks, with their long tradition of administering Egypt, were too valuable to be dispensed with. This deviation from the general principles of the Ottoman military organization and recruitment had the most far-reaching repercussions on the social and political history of Egypt.

### First Cracks in the Military System

During the reign of Süleyman *Qanuni* (the Magnificent) and in the following decades, the Egyptian army was a typical Ottoman garrison, although a particularly large, strong force of approximately 10,000 men—about 8,800 ‘Egyptians’ and the balance from the Turkish provinces.<sup>34</sup> Its responsibilities were numerous and varied: collecting taxes, keeping law and order, guarding the *hajj* caravan, and protecting the countryside against marauding bedouins. A large force of some 1,000 troops—one-tenth of the army—was stationed in Upper Egypt alone.<sup>35</sup> In the sixteenth century, the Egyptian army had to replace, or reinforce, the permanently understaffed Syrian units and assume the onerous task of establishing the sultan’s authority in Yemen and to a lesser degree in Abyssinia. The nomenclature and structure of the Egyptian army were similar to that in garrisons throughout the Empire. The central command in Istanbul exercised control over the Egyptian army down to the smallest details in accordance with the *Qanun-name*. Egyptian troops and units were moved north to Syria or south to Yemen according to the orders received from the Ottoman government.<sup>36</sup> Officers from the sultan’s guard were given positions of command in Egypt, and alternatively, soldiers stationed in Egypt were transferred to Istanbul. The governor of Egypt petitioned the sultan to grant

promotions or salary increases to soldiers who had proved their skill and loyalty.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, Egypt's budget had to cover the heavy expenses of the continuous Ottoman struggle against the rebellious Arab tribes in Yemen, whether the governor of Egypt and the military establishment approved it or not.<sup>38</sup> The governor often sent troops to Yemen without sufficient provisions and salaries, passing the responsibility to the Ottoman pasha of Yemen, with the result that the Egyptian soldiers suffered.<sup>39</sup>

During the sixteenth century, however, a territorial army with an *esprit de corps* and interests of its own began to emerge. The term *Misir qullari*, or 'the soldiers of Egypt,' appears as early as 975/ 1568 in an official document dealing with clashes between them and the *Qapu qullari*, the soldiers (lit. slaves) of the Porte, who had been sent to Egypt to assist the pasha.<sup>40</sup> As in Syria and Palestine, Egyptian soldiers served under their own officers, called *aghas* or beys. Egyptian beys were commanders-in-chief (*serdars*) guarding the province and maintaining law and order there and were sometimes appointed *sanjaq beyis* (commanders of *sanjaqs*, or sub-provinces) in Palestine. The *sanjaqs* at this time were Gaza, Jerusalem and Safed. The Egyptian beys served in Palestine not under the command of the *beylerbeyi* of Damascus, in whose jurisdiction their *sanjaqs* lay, but under the *beylerbeyi* of Egypt, who remained their direct superior officer and commander. As soon as their term of office in Palestine was over, they were ordered to return to Egypt to be employed as the governor ordered.<sup>41</sup>

Military service in Egypt was considered safer, easier, pleasanter, and more lucrative than elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire, which gave rise to envy of the *Misir qullari*.<sup>42</sup> This feeling, and an attempt to refute the allegations made by the *Qapu qullari* against the Egyptians, is the subject of an extremely interesting treatise written in the middle of the seventeenth century by 'Ali Efendi, an obscure scribe in the Egyptian military bureaucracy. Writing in Turkish, he describes a high-ranking official of the Ottoman court, who stops off in Egypt during a pilgrimage to Mecca. He repays the hospitality extended to him by the chief army officers in Cairo with diatribe about the soft life of the Egyptian soldiers in contrast to the harsh conditions of their Ottoman comrades. He contends that the Egyptians draw their monthly salaries without having to go to war, while the Ottoman soldiers, the *Qapu qullari*, have to campaign every year. Nevertheless, 'Ali Efendi defends the Egyptian army for the various services it renders to the Empire. More important, although the Egyptians are not worse or less-dedicated

fighters than the *Qapu qullari*, they far excel them in their religious and ethical behavior. The Egyptian army is also highly disciplined, loyal and never infringes upon the authority of the pasha and other rulers.<sup>43</sup>

Although the treatise was written in the seventeenth century, the arguments concerning the Egyptian army were also applicable to the sixteenth. The treatise is partisan, possibly even a work of fiction, but it reflects real issues. There is sufficient evidence that Egypt was, indeed, considered a safe place to do one's military service, even a refuge for shirkers from the Empire's constant wars. An imperial decree dated 1013/1605 states openly that soldiers desiring to avoid fighting in a military campaign, acquire an imperial edict (*emr-i sherif*) 'by certain means' and then go to Egypt under the pretext of conducting official business. The pasha of Egypt is ordered to ignore these ill-gotten edicts and send the men to the front.<sup>44</sup> Worse still, the phrasing of several of the sultan's edicts reveals that, contrary to Istanbul's almost absolute control over Egyptian affairs at the beginning of the Ottoman conquest, by the late sixteenth century the Ottoman high command had lost confidence in its own orderliness and integrity. Edicts dated 999/1591 and 1003/1595 inform the *beylerbeyi* of Egypt that certain individuals obtain official appointments in Egypt's administration through their connections in Istanbul. The governor is ordered to ignore the decrees and the appointments (*berat*), not to appoint anyone before a position is vacated (*mahlul*), and to rely on his own sound judgment so as not to overburden the Treasury. At the same time, Istanbul admits that the situation in Egypt is extremely 'disorderly and muddled,' and tries to determine the exact number of soldiers, their salaries and ranks.<sup>45</sup>

The relatively good life in Egypt and its remoteness from Istanbul contributed to the growth of the Egyptian bureaucracy and army, which the imperial edicts frequently criticize. One decree dated 975/ 1568 states that there were more *Chavush* and *Müteferriqa* soldiers in Egypt than in Istanbul itself.<sup>46</sup> It further adds that the numbers should not exceed those specified in the *Qanun-name* (where only 40 *Chavushes* are allowed). In 981/1573, there were 450 *Chavushes*, although only 180 (and 180 *Müteferriqa*) were allowed at the time. There were considerable increases in other units also: in 973/1565 there were 1,400 Janissaries instead of the 1,000 allowed, and 700 *'Azab* soldiers instead of 500.<sup>47</sup>

Numerous edicts show that the military and fiscal order deteriorated during the second half of the sixteenth century. A soldier's income consisted of his basic pay (*ibtida*) according to his regiment and rank, plus bonuses (*teraqqi*). A soldier was entitled to additional pay if he

went on a campaign or was especially recommended. Also, when a new pasha took up his appointment, the troops demanded, and usually received, a special payment. In 1014/ 1605–6, when a pasha refused to make this increase, the rebellious soldiers collapsed his tent over his head.<sup>48</sup> In addition to their regular salary (*ulufe*), soldiers were entitled to grain rations from the imperial granaries in Cairo and fodder for their animals. Retired soldiers, orphans and widows of dead soldiers were also paid from the Treasury. Pay differences were considerable. According to one mid-seventeenth century source, the basic pay was as follows: for a *Müteferriqa* soldier 12 *aqches* daily (an *aqche* was a small silver coin, the smallest Ottoman unit of currency); for a *Chavush*, 11; a *Gönüllü* 10; a *Tüfenkji* 9; a Circassian 8; a Janissary 7; and an *'Azab* 6.<sup>49</sup> Yet by the sixteenth century the actual pay was much higher, with a *Müteferriqa* soldier being able to get from 50 to 68 *aqches* daily, in addition to grain rations and other bonuses.<sup>50</sup> The *Qapu qullari* complained that they only received their pay two or three times a year, whereas the Egyptians got theirs each month.<sup>51</sup> The emirs' or beys' salaries were extremely high compared with their men's pay. A *sanjaq beyi* in the sixteenth century normally received 200,000 *aqches* annually and his bonuses amounted to 20,000 more. The most important, and also the best paid, emir in that period was the *defterdar*, or the director of the Treasury, whose annual income was 300,000 *aqches* plus bonuses of 30,000 *aqches*.<sup>52</sup>

The *Chavush* and *Müteferriqa* soldiers were elite units whose members were neither emirs nor regular soldiers. The government trusted them even as general discipline declined. An edict orders the pasha to refrain from employing *sanjaq beyis* and *aghas* (emirs and regimental commanders) in matters concerning the granaries, and to use only the *Müteferriqa* and *Chavush*. Soldiers of these two regiments were often appointed as provincial governors and financial superintendents (*kashifs* and *emins*) and thus greatly increased their chances of promotion to the beylicate. They also added to their income by serving as directors or trustees of *waqf* foundations, or by tax-farming.<sup>53</sup>

### Eunuchs

The black *aghas*, eunuchs, sent from the sultan's palace to Egypt to act as directors of *waqfs* were a special group that was paid salaries and pensions in Egypt. The Egyptian soldiers resented them bitterly and were jealous of their high income and connections in Istanbul.<sup>54</sup> It was

primarily from Egypt and through Egypt that the black *aghas* were sent to the imperial harem in Istanbul. Since the beginning of Ottoman rule, the pasha of Egypt was required to send ‘black, nice-looking foreign (*‘ajemi*) *aghas* who do not understand Turkish.’<sup>55</sup> At least twice in the eighteenth century the Porte sent out strongly worded circulars forbidding the mutilation of young boys destined to become eunuchs in the harems. In 1127/1715 an imperial edict was sent to the *vali* and the *qadi* of Egypt declaring that castrating young boys to turn them into eunuchs was inhuman and violated the *Shari‘a* law and the sultan’s orders. The decree stated that the boys were castrated in ‘terrible places, resembling slaughterhouses, in Jirja, Fayyum, and Cairo itself.’ The edict cited the *fatwa* issued by Sheyhül-Islam ‘Abdürrahim, the Grand Mufti of Istanbul, who declared this kind of mutilation a forbidden innovation (*bid‘a*). He said that many of the unfortunate boys died after castration; the survivors were doomed to be deprived of progeny and had to spend their lives in the company of women. The edict should be made public and the original kept in the Citadel of Cairo.<sup>56</sup>

This impressive edict would have been more convincing had the Porte not kept demanding a fresh supply of eunuchs from Egypt a short time before and *after* the document was issued. We have at least three edicts, dated 1124/1712, 1133/1722 and 1150/1737 addressed to the governor of Egypt urgently requesting *aghas* for the sultan’s harem. The pasha was ordered to send some 30 or 40 young and comely eunuchs, ten from his own harem and the rest from households of other rich people.<sup>57</sup> It is true that the edict of 1150/1737 stated explicitly that the eunuchs should be taken from households of emirs who had died, and made no mention of producing new eunuchs, but faced by this kind of imperial demand, the supply had to be forthcoming as well.

### **Infiltration of Irregulars into the Army**

The authorities in Istanbul and Cairo had to be constantly on guard to prevent soldiers from oppressing and mistreating the civilians. An edict of 987/1578 registers a complaint against emirs and *aghas* who are trading in food and other provisions and gaining a monopoly on some articles, which led to a food shortage in Istanbul.<sup>58</sup> Men in the service of emirs would come to the villages and extort money from the fellahin in exchange for illegal protection against the *kashifs* and Arab shaykhs, who were in charge of the provincial administration.<sup>59</sup> A decree, dated 981/1574, states that officers acting as *kashifs* and *emins* in the villages killed persons, without justification. The sultan’s order was

unequivocal: if the people had been killed in violation of the *Shari'a*, the killers must be punished in accordance with it, even if they were (Egyptian) Sipahis, or 'slaves of the Porte'; there was no need even to refer the matter to the central authorities.<sup>60</sup>

The Ottoman high command faced a basic problem of the constant infiltration of unauthorized elements into the army of Egypt and other provinces. The problem was anticipated by the author of the *Qanun-name-i Misir*, who provided that only real soldiers (*quls*) and not men in the service of pashas or emirs were to be appointed.<sup>61</sup> One can discern here the tendency of high-ranking officials from the pasha down to emirs and *aghas* to put their own slaves and retainers into the army in order to increase their own power and influence. The Porte was aware of this development and warned against it, but apparently to little avail. These 'substandard' soldiers, who had not been recruited or trained in the regular Ottoman *devşirme* system, were believed to cause disciplinary problems. It is reported that servants of beys, *aghas*, and *defterdars* were guilty of transgressions, and the Porte wanted every officeholder to be responsible for men in his service.<sup>62</sup> In the sixteenth century, several such parvenus rose to prominent positions, as the careers of two *umara' al-hajj* illustrate. Aydin ibn 'Abdallah acted as *amir al-hajj* in the year 952/1545. He was probably of Turkish origin, as his epithet 'al-Rumi' indicates. The name ibn 'Abdallah often suggests that the person's father was unknown or not mentioned, either because he was a local convert to Islam, or a Mamluk. It was said of him that he had started as a hawker at the Khan al-Khalili bazaar in Cairo. From these extremely humble origins, Aydin rose to become an officer, then a *kashif*, and finally *amir al-hajj*. The career of Mustafa, another ibn 'Abdallah al-Rumi, was even more spectacular. He, too, was very poor as a youngster. After serving as a saddler for the army, he became rich by looting the treasury of Ahmet Pasha 'the Traitor.' He managed to be appointed as *kashif* and later became *amir al-hajj*. As such, he earned the nickname *al-nashshar*, 'the sawer,' for executing bandits along the pilgrim route by sawing them in half. After serving as *amir al-hajj* for nine years from 938/1532, he was eventually made governor of Yemen and finally of Egypt itself (1561–4).<sup>63</sup>

One important reason for the breakdown of the army's recruitment system was the need to send thousands of soldiers to Yemen and, to a lesser extent, to Habesh (Abyssinia). Quelling the numerous, fierce insurrections of the Arab tribes led by Zaydi imams in Yemen was very costly in money and manpower for the Egyptian pashas. Service in the remote, mountainous and dangerous province of Yemen was extremely

unpopular; Ottoman soldiers sent from Istanbul, Syria, or Egypt abhorred serving there. From the numerous imperial edicts addressed to the governor of Egypt concerning Yemeni affairs it is clear that the Ottoman government did not have a true picture of how many soldiers actually had gone to Yemen, and how many remained there; the number of casualties and desertions must have been very high.<sup>64</sup> The Porte found it almost impossible to provide the hard-pressed and beleaguered governors of Yemen with sufficient reinforcements. Semiz ('the Fat') 'Ali Pasha, the *vali* of Egypt (1549–54), was ordered to send 500 men, but was able to provide only 220.<sup>65</sup> In 980/1572–3 only 500 men went to Yemen instead of the 3,000 that had been called up.<sup>66</sup> In order to solve this problem, at least partially, Istanbul took various measures to induce soldiers to serve in Yemen. Bonuses were promised to those who went; those who refused were threatened with dismissal from the army. The governors of Egypt were urged to encourage their soldiers to serve in Yemen. Egyptian soldiers served there on a rotation basis, usually for three years.<sup>67</sup> Yet this was insufficient, and the government had to recruit men from outside the regular army: soldiers' sons and brothers (*qul oghlu ve qarindashi*) were enlisted if they were Turks (*Rumlu, Rumoghlani*); slaves and retainers of emirs and other prominent men were also taken, tempted by the prospect of being accepted as regular Egyptian soldiers.<sup>68</sup> In 1038/1628–9, when soldiers were enlisted for service in Yemen, many white and black slaves escaped from their owners to join the army; craftsmen and artisans, it is said, were also forcibly abducted from the streets of Cairo and put into the army.<sup>69</sup>

As a result, while the policy was to enlist only men of Turkish origin, Arabic-speaking people, *awlad 'Arab*, infiltrated into the army. Some were native Egyptians, others came from other Arab provinces of the Empire. The presence of *awlad 'Arab* in the Egyptian army is first mentioned towards the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century when soldiers rebelled. These rebellions reflected the general deterioration of the political, social, and economic conditions in the Empire.<sup>70</sup> Inflation and other social and economic factors led to disturbances in Anatolia, the so-called 'Jelali revolts.'<sup>71</sup> The Arab provinces were not spared similar rebellions, which broke out in Yemen (in the 1560s), Syria (after 1574), and Egypt (1589–1609). The soldiers' pay, fixed decades earlier, was eroded by inflation and debased currency. The urban and provincial regiments extorted money from the population to increase their earnings, and when the central government and its *valis* attempted to stop them, the soldiers reacted violently.

When the soldiers rose in revolt for the first time during the incumbency of Üveys Pasha (governor of Egypt from 995/1587 to 999/1591), they proclaimed in the streets of Cairo that *awlad al- 'Arab* must not employ Turkish slaves or buy Mamluks.<sup>72</sup> The Sipahis, the cavalry, made an unsuccessful attempt on the pasha's life when he tried to restore order. A similar demand was raised by mutinous Sipahis during the incumbency of Sherif Mehmet Pasha (1004/1596 to 1006/1598), who announced that he would adhere strictly to the injunctions of the *Qanun-name*. He declared bluntly: 'I will not give salaries to fellahin (i.e. to Arabic-speaking Egyptians, not necessarily peasants). Salaries are for the Turks (*Rum oghlani*).' The rebellious wave reached a new peak with the assassination in 1604 of Ibrahim Pasha, known as *al-Maqtul*, 'the Slain,' the first governor in Ottoman Egypt to be killed by his troops.<sup>73</sup> As mentioned above, the rebellious Sipahis were punished in 1609 by *Qul Qiran* Mehmet Pasha, who abolished the *tulba* illegal tax they had imposed on the villagers. In times of hardship, the Turkish-speaking soldiers did not want to share their shrinking incomes with outsiders and the struggle to oust the *awlad 'Arab* from the army continued into the next century.

### **The Survival of the Mamluks under the Ottomans**

The most obscure, but intriguing question in the social history of the Egyptian army is the survival of the Mamluks. One obstacle to tracing their history is the scarcity of source material dating to the first decades of the Ottoman conquest. As David Ayalon established in a study about the transformation of Mamluk society under Ottoman rule, the distinguishing trait of the Mamluks, their Turkish names, disappeared because members of the ruling class of which they were a part, including the sultans, were called by Arabic names. This basic change not only poses difficulty for the historian, but also reflects a new social and political reality. The dividing line between Mamluks and non-Mamluks was no longer as distinct as before. Social mobility among the Mamluk class, the non-Mamluk soldiers and civilians became increasingly possible. The second major change emphasized by Ayalon was the abandonment of the all-important principle in the Sultanate that the status of a Mamluk was not inheritable. In Ottoman Egypt, the children of Mamluks very often inherited their fathers' rank, wealth and social standing.<sup>74</sup>

The integration of the Mamluks into the army through the *Cherakise Ojađi*, or Circassian regiment, has already been discussed in relation to

the *Qanun-name*. It was Istanbul's intention to reduce the Mamluks to a force of secondary importance and to place them under strict surveillance. Indeed, this particular corps never assumed a significant role, and was just one of the three cavalry *ojaqs*, but the Mamluks were found not only in the Circassian regiment, but also in other units, particularly among the Circassian beys (*Cherakise beyleri*), which became prominent in the seventeenth century. While the authors of the imperial decrees were clearly reluctant to refer to any ethnic group, except the Turks, a revealing document, dated 994/1586, orders that 'able soldiers from among the Turks and Circassians' (*yarar qul Rumlu ve Cherkes qulundan*) be sent to Yemen.<sup>75</sup> The ethnic emphasis is unmistakable: Turks and Circassians are the two races that supply the kind of manpower the Ottoman high command sought. However, the frequency of official references to the Turks is far greater than to the Circassians, itself highly significant.

Another military term that could have a Mamluk referent is *jundi* (cavalryman). Writing a few years after the Ottoman conquest, Diyarbakri translates the well-known Arabic term *awlad al-nas*, 'sons of the Mamluks,' as *jundi oghlanlari* ('sons of *jundis*'), in Turkish.<sup>76</sup> Mustafa 'Ali, the Ottoman writer and traveller, devotes long, detailed passages to the Egyptian *jundis*, and the term also appears occasionally in official documents. *Jundi* may be simply the Egyptian equivalent of the Ottoman Sipahi.<sup>77</sup> It has been noted that the cavalry and horses of Egypt enjoyed prestige, and sometimes the sultan sent for a certain number of trained Egyptian horsemen and horses.<sup>78</sup> It would seem that Mamluks made up at least a part of the Egyptian cavalry (*jund*) but, again, it is impossible to mark the limits of either the *jund* or the Mamluk entities, since both were not official, clearly defined entities like the seven regiments.

The backbone of the Mamluk Circassian element were the Circassian beys. The military rank of *bey* or *sanjaq beyi* existed in all the Ottoman forces. In the army hierarchy, it was one rank above that of *agha*, or regimental commander, and an *agha* who distinguished himself in battle or service could be recommended for promotion to bey. It was the intention of the government that the number of beys in Egypt should not exceed twelve, yet it is obvious from numerous decrees that, contrary to the sultan's wish, the number reached at least thirty by the end of the sixteenth century, and by mid-seventeenth was about forty. The Porte's insistence in the sixteenth century that there be no more than twelve beys (and in the seventeenth century twenty-four), and that no one be made bey before there was a vacant post, obviously went

unheeded.<sup>79</sup> When *Qul Qiran* Mehmet Pasha reorganized the army after crushing the Sipahi rebellion in 1609, he dismissed all but twelve of the ablest beys; the other seventeen were banished to Istanbul. But like some of his other reforms, this measure was too soon abandoned.<sup>80</sup>

In principle, the beys and all other high-ranking officeholders in Egypt should have come from the sultan's household, as Mustafa 'Ali observed when he visited Cairo in 1599. During his visit in 1568, he had said that most of them had been trained in the sultan's palace, but in 1599, of the thirty beys in the country only three met this requirement; the rest were foreigners and upstarts who had reached their high position by various, and often suspect, means.<sup>81</sup> A bey's commission, or a *sanjaq*, was sometimes given to a pasha's son, a Meccan *sharif*, or even to an Arab chief. As Holt has emphasized, contrary to the usual Ottoman usage, a *sanjaq* (a flag) in Egypt did not signify a district under a bey's jurisdiction, but rather indicated the rank of a bey. Often beys fulfilled administrative posts such as *defterdars*, *kashifs*, *umara' hajj*, or heads of a special task force (*serdar*). It seems, however, that standing outside and above the *ojaq* system, they became hard to control.<sup>82</sup> In the sixteenth century, Istanbul was already worried that the Egyptian beys had many followers capable of causing trouble. There is evidence that beys tended to oppress the subjects, and it was preferred that lower and more dependent officers, such as *emins* and *subaŝis* deal with the civilian population.<sup>83</sup>

It is important to stress that while not all the beys were Mamluks, a considerable number of them certainly were. Even the official parlance of the sixteenth century distinguishes between beys and Circassian beys. The edicts speak of *umera-i Misir* and *umera-i Cherakise*, or *muhafaza beyleri* (defender beys) and *Cherakise beyleri*.<sup>84</sup> It is to this latter group that we must turn.

## THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The Sipahi revolt and its suppression by *Qul Qiran* Mehmet Pasha in 1609 and the Great Insurrection, the armed struggle within the Egyptian army in Cairo in 1711, provide a convenient framework for a discussion of the political and social developments of the Ottoman army in Egypt in the seventeenth century, a period when the earlier trends were greatly accelerated. The pashas' decline became more evident, and the beylicate emerged as the central, nearly independent force. During the final decades of the seventeenth century and the first of the eighteenth

century, the Janissary regiment was impressively strengthened economically and politically.

During the seventeenth century, the pasha, as representative of the sultan's authority, was generally respected and still able to impose his will. Yet he had to treat other forces not as subordinates but almost as partners. In 1623, for the first time, the army refused to accept a new pasha. Their demand was met and when the governor-designate arrived in Alexandria, the garrison chased him away. In 1631, another serious clash developed between the pasha and the army. Musa Pasha, the governor, decided to get rid of Qaytas, a leading bey who had challenged his authority. When Qaytas came to greet the pasha at a feast, the pasha ordered that Qaytas be assassinated. The beys retaliated for the murder of their comrade by deposing the pasha and appointing one of themselves as *qa'im maqam*, or acting governor, and reported the event to Istanbul. A precedent had been created: the pasha's suspension by the military grandees and the Porte's acceptance of the *fait accompli* by sending a replacement became routine in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For example, in 1086/1676 the chief army commanders dismissed Ahmet Pasha for imposing extraordinary taxes and reducing the income of certain army units. The suspended pasha was treated with due deference, and was temporarily accommodated either at a pavilion within the Citadel or in a house in the city until his departure.<sup>85</sup>

In most cases, the pasha's differences with the army and with the Egyptian and imperial bureaucracy were financial, not political. It became established procedure for each new pasha to check his predecessor's accounts before permitting him to leave Egypt; his debts to the Treasury had to be settled. In 1029/1620, Hüseyin Pasha arrested the previous governor before he could leave, but the latter managed to escape in the midst of the investigation. (A cannonball shot at his boat in the port of Alexandria missed him.) Shah Sivar-Oghlu Ghazi Mehmet Pasha (1657–9), a strong governor, who suppressed a rebellion of the governor of Upper Egypt, was accused of embezzling a huge sum of money—the equivalent of a *khazina*, the annual remittance to Istanbul—for which he was executed in Cairo. Shortly afterwards, a second edict arrived, but too late, from the Porte demanding that he be sent unharmed to the Ottoman capital.<sup>86</sup>

Even a weak pasha in the seventeenth century could make his will prevail if he acted with determination. For several moments of crisis during a military rebellion, the pasha flew an imperial banner and ordered all the sultan's loyal servants to assemble under it; those failing

to do so were threatened with expulsion from the army, or worse. The first to enlist the support of the army in this manner was *Qul Qiran* Mehmet Pasha; this dramatic manner of addressing the loyalists and isolating the rebels was repeated several times by later pashas.<sup>87</sup>

The most important development in seventeenth century Egypt was perhaps the emergence of the beylicate as a major political force. It signified not only an effort by the powerful military chiefs to establish their privileges vis-à-vis a weakened central government and its representative, the pasha, but also and more important, the reassertion of Mamluk traditions and ambitions. One expression of Mamluk political culture was the emergence of factionalism, namely, the continual feuds between the Faqariyya and the Qasimiyya. A myth connects the two parties with the time of Sultan Selim I, when a fight between two brothers named Dhu'l-Faqar and Qasim gave birth to the factions bearing their names; but the historical origin is obscure.<sup>88</sup> The chroniclers' first reference to the parties dates to the Sipahi revolt of 1609. The context in which one of the factions is mentioned suggests that it had already established a claim for governing certain provinces.<sup>89</sup> For the next two centuries, the factional strife remained a central theme in Ottoman Egypt's political life although the intensity and the participants (beys, regimental officers and soldiers, Arab tribesmen) varied from time to time. These struggles were characterized by confrontations between alliances that were often based on informal, client-patron relationships on the Mamluk pattern that superseded the *ojaqs*, which remained formally intact though weakened, until the end of the Ottoman period in Egypt. The struggles were fierce and bloody: personal, political, and primarily economic interests were at stake because beys virtually monopolized all positions of power and sources of revenue during a good part of the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries. By mid-seventeenth century at the latest, beys filled the the most powerful and lucrative offices. They were named as *qa'im maqams*, acting governors, when the pasha was absent or had been dismissed. Many of these beys had Mamluks and other retainers, and used their wealth to win the support of the Porte, the pasha of Egypt, or the *ojaqs*, as the complexities of the political situation warranted.<sup>90</sup>

A typical struggle took place in 1647 between the Qasimiyya and the Faqariyya, involving the above-mentioned Ridwan Bey al-Faqari, the *amir al-hajj*, and his ally, 'Ali Bey, the ruler of Upper Egypt,<sup>91</sup> whose positions were coveted by two Qasimi emirs, Qansawh Bey and Mamay Bey, who had the pasha's support. Both sides attempted to win the

support of the Porte, and the Faqaris' success may have weighted the scales in their favor. But the backing of the *ojaqs* in Cairo was crucial. Ridwan Bey summoned 'Ali Bey from Jirja, whose appearance below the Citadel of Cairo at the head of a huge army of his regular and irregular soldiers and bedouins decided the struggle. This show of force, accompanied by the distribution of generous presents of money and food among the *ojaqs*, made 'Ali Bey the arbiter of the situation. With the general acclaim of the assembled troops, he was nominated to investigate the charges that Qansawh and Mamay had embezzled money from the Treasury. The supporters of the two Qasimi beys urged them to refuse to be taken inside the Citadel for questioning, but they did not take heed, perhaps out of misplaced trust in the pasha. At night, they were strangled and the next day their coffins were brought down from the Citadel. Similar incidents occurred at least twice: during the revolt of Muhammad Bey, another governor of Upper Egypt in 1659, and during the Great Insurrection of 1711.<sup>92</sup>

Throughout the conflict, 'Ali Bey demonstrated an impudent attitude toward the pasha by refusing to pay his respects to him at the Citadel (he may also have suspected a trap), and by trying to gain control of the Citadel. 'Ali was very slow in obeying the pasha's order to return to his province. When the pasha's patience ran out, he attempted to send an expeditionary force against the slowly retreating bey, but the army disobeyed the pasha. The Janissaries said: 'Our duty is to guard the Citadel.' The Chavush and Mütferriqa said: 'Our duty is to collect taxes.' The Sipahi regiments, though admitting that military expeditions of this kind were their responsibility, sided with 'Ali Bey, who thus did not have to account for his insubordination. The *ojaqs* were thoroughly purged of the fallen beys' supporters and Ridwan and 'Ali were assured of their offices for life.

Twelve years later, 'Ali Bey's successor as governor of Upper Egypt, Muhammad Bey, demonstrated a similar independence, when he challenged the pasha's authority by a show of force below the Citadel. He was unusually brash, but he encountered a strong-minded, determined governor, Ghazi Mehmet Pasha. Since the army did not support Muhammad Bey, the pasha faced little resistance in declaring him a rebel and organizing a punitive expedition against him. This time, the attitude of the Porte, too, was different. Influenced by an expert on Egyptian affairs who understood that Muhammad Bey hoped to become an independent ruler, the sultan made him governor of Abyssinia. But when Muhammad Bey spurned the appointment, a large military force

marched on his headquarters at Manfalut and crushed the revolt; Muhammad Bey was put to death on March 8, 1659.

Muhammad Bey's revolt was an extraordinary event, because although the beys, sometimes challenged the pasha's authority, they usually took great pains to demonstrate their loyalty to the sultan and the Empire. Even Ridwan Bey, the great *amir al-hajj*, who claimed descent from the Circassian Mamluk sultans Barquq and Barsbay, and to be of Qurayshi origin (thus establishing a relationship to the Prophet's tribe), was very careful to maintain good ties with the Porte, realizing that his career would not survive the sultan's displeasure.

Ridwan's spurious pedigree shows that Mamluk political consciousness and memories were very much alive in the seventeenth century, more than one hundred years after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt.<sup>93</sup> It is our contention that the chief exponents of this 'Mamluk identity' were Circassian Mamluks and their descendants, although admittedly this consciousness was not limited to them; many beys were neither Circassians nor Mamluks. And as Evliya Çelebi, the famous traveler who visited Egypt during the 1670s, tells us, Mamluks came from various regions and ethnic groups. Although the Circassians seem to have been the outstanding element, there were Abaza, Georgians, Russians, Imeretians, Mingrelians and others.<sup>94</sup>

Nevertheless, the phenomenon of a clear Circassian element in the army, noted above for the sixteenth century, becomes clearer and more pronounced in the seventeenth century. It is not the Circassian *ojaq* that merits special attention, but rather the Circassian beys who are referred to as a separate body, clearly distinguished from the other beys who are called simply beys or *sanjaq beyleri*. In festive processions, the *Cherakise beyleri* marched under their own flags, separately from the other beys.<sup>95</sup> When describing an Egyptian force sent to crush a rebellion in the Hijaz in 1631–2, the chronicler makes a clear distinction between Egyptian (i.e. regular) beys and Circassian ones.<sup>96</sup> In another text, reference is made in passing (the best evidence is unintentional) to 'Circassians and other *Misirli* (i.e. Egyptian) soldiers.' Additional evidence can be found in imperial edicts, which while demanding that Egyptian contingents join the main body of the Ottoman army, order that a certain number of Circassian beys join the soldiers.<sup>97</sup>

Evliya Çelebi provides us with valuable observations about the Mamluks. His evidence is of particular interest, since he was, despite his well-known inaccuracies, a keen observer, interested in social, cultural and linguistic matters. Being an Ottoman Turk, he sees Egypt as an outsider, but not exactly as a stranger. He compares the Mamluks

to the biblical Joseph, who was raised in Egypt and eventually became the master of that land. Similarly, the Mamluks were imported from various regions, were sent to homes where they received a good education, and flourished until they became '*Aziz Misr*, a Koranic epithet for Joseph, meaning the governor of Egypt.

These Mamluks, says Evliya, renounce their native Circassian or Abaza languages and speak Arabic mixed with Turkish, hereby creating a dialect peculiar to Egypt, which is Turkish with a very large percentage of Arabic-Egyptian words. (It should be noted, of course, that standard Ottoman Turkish contained many Arabic words.)<sup>98</sup>

Evliya also reveals the Mamluks' attitude towards the Ottoman Empire. He writes that whenever Circassians passed by the mosque and mausoleum of Kha'ir Bey, they looked away, because they recalled that the ruler who had established them had given Egypt to the Ottomans. On the other hand, the tomb of Tuman Bay, the last Mamluk sultan, whom Selim had executed, was much venerated, as was the tomb of a Circassian emir, Qurt Bay, who had fought valiantly against Selim's army and killed Sinan Pasha, Sultan Selim's Grand Vizier.<sup>99</sup>

In describing the city of Minuf, Evliya dwells on its unruly inhabitants. If they were united, he says, they could drive the Turks away and even occupy the Hijaz. Yet 'God in His mercy' made them live under a specially tyrannical breed of Mamluks who have no mercy on them. He makes a special point of saying that these *jundis*, or Mamluks, do not speak Turkish (!) and that their names are unlike those of the Turks. They use such names as Özbek, Timurtash, Temris, Qansawh, Ghawri, Lajin, Qurt Bay, Shahin, Janverdi and Janbulad and are Abaza, Circassians, Georgians and black Abyssinians.<sup>100</sup> Unfortunately, the information in this passage is not verifiable by other sources.<sup>101</sup> It suggests that the transformation of Mamluk names from Turkish to Arabic under the Ottomans, although generally true, especially for the eighteenth century, was less than complete in the seventeenth. Almost all the names in the above-mentioned passage are Turkish and date from the Mamluk Sultanate.

In the seventeenth century, the *ojaq* soldiers were the bulk of the army. In theory, a line still divided 'the *padishah*'s (or sultan's) slaves,' that is regular soldiers, from 'the slaves of the grandees' (i.e. Mamluks and other retainers). The Ottoman government was trying to maintain that division, although its success was limited.<sup>102</sup> The army's social composition underwent continuous change, gradually losing its 'pure' Turkish Ottoman character and becoming more ethnically mixed. It is hard to measure the extent of these changes, but the main developments

seem clear. The majority of the soldiers must still have been Turks or Turkish-speakers, but the percentage of Arabic-speakers, or *awlad 'Arab*, rose considerably, a change that created tension. Ultimately, the Arabs were ousted from the regiments. A subtler kind of friction developed between the *Misir qullari*, or regular Egyptian soldiers, and the *Rum oghlani*, or Turks, which was actually a struggle between two groups of Turkish speakers. The *Misir qullari* were 'domesticated' Egyptians who had perhaps been born in Egypt and were strongly attached to it. The *Rum oghlani* were Turkish newcomers whose roots were elsewhere. They manned less organic formations in the Egyptian army; many of them served as irregular musketeers (*sekban*), with individual military grandees, such as the governor of Upper Egypt. While the ethnic division between *awlad 'Arab* and the others is rather clear-cut, the differences between the *Rum oghlani* and the Egyptian regulars are much more blurred.<sup>103</sup>

It will be recalled that the reaction of the regular soldiers against the *awlad 'Arab* started in the sixteenth century. The available evidence suggests that the struggle was limited, being directed against high-ranking Arab bureaucrats, who employed Turkish-speaking slaves and retainers. In the seventeenth century, however, Arabs flooded the regiments. The above-mentioned struggle between Ridwan Bey and 'Ali Bey against Qansawh Bey and Mamay Bey in 1647 had a significant anti-Arab aspect. 'Ali Bey, the governor of Upper Egypt, headed a large army and entered Cairo to assist his ally. At 'Ali's initiative, it was proclaimed that all the *awlad 'Arab* in the regiments, 'whether they are Egyptians, or natives of Damascus, Aleppo, Baghdad, or Özbeks,' must sell their positions in the army by a specified date. This decree, however, was applied only to the *Müteferriqa* and *Chavush* cavalry regiments, not to the large infantry corps of the Janissaries and the 'Azab. The officers of these two corps claimed that their comrades were in the Cretan campaign; it turned out that the majority of the Janissaries were *awlad 'Arab*! It was natural that the Egyptian residents of Cairo would find it easier to enter the urban and infantry regiments of the Janissaries and 'Azab, which were stationed in the city, rather than the Sipahi units, the mounted troops in the countryside.

The officers of the Janissaries and the 'Azab asked: 'If the *awlad 'Arab* are expelled from the regiments, who will go to war in the sultan's service?' 'Ali Bey retorted: 'I have many Turkish (*Rum oghlani*) irregular musketeers. I will appoint them as Janissaries instead of *awlad 'Arab*.' 'Ali Bey also expressed his wish to repair at his own expense dilapidated rooms of residential quarters in the Citadel of Cairo,

and settle these new Janissaries there with the secret aim of taking over the Citadel. In this particular case, the army united against 'Ali Bey and forced him to return to his post in Jirja.

Ten years later, Muhammad Bey, another ambitious governor of Jirja, who was to rise in revolt against the pasha of Egypt, also employed Anatolian (*Rum oghlani*) soldiers in his private army. The governors of Jirja were Mamluks, but recruited Turkish *sekban*, who were not Mamluks, for their private armies. Muhammad Bey planned to purge the corps of his opponents and prepared lists of the persons to be annihilated. He distributed money and food vouchers to bribe potential supporters.<sup>104</sup>

In 1056/1646–7, the anti-Arab drive reached the Janissary regiment. A roughneck (*zorba*) called Bayram, who was probably a Turk, demanded and attained the expulsion of *awlad al-'Arab* from the regiment, asking that 'able men' be appointed in their stead. The chronicler writes: 'From that time the Janissaries became unruly.' On the same day, the *Chavush* regiment, too, petitioned for the expulsion of *awlad al-'Arab* 'and those who are Copts, Damascenes, and natives of Aleppo' from their midst. The authorities gave their blessing to these anti-Arab measures. Mustafa Pasha, the governor, decreed that no *awlad 'Arab* could serve in the army, and five years later, in 1071, an imperial decree from Istanbul ordered that their salaries not be paid.<sup>105</sup>

In 1110/1698, the bedouins of the Hawwara were reported to have refused to pay their taxes in cash and kind, claiming to be Janissaries and 'Azab. Although in the ensuing investigation the officers of the regiment denied the claim, the fact that semi-nomads of Upper Egypt could make such a claim suggests the extent to which the barriers had dropped to the entrance of *re'aya* (subjects) into the army.<sup>106</sup>

At the end of the seventeenth century, the term *gharib yiğit*, 'young men from the country,' appears in the historical sources. In 1094/1682–3, 2,000 *gharib yiğit* were sent on a campaign, attached to the Janissaries and the 'Azab corps. Again in 1111/1699–70, 500 volunteers (*serdengeçti*) were sent on a campaign alongside 2,000 regular soldiers (*qullar*).<sup>107</sup>

The absorption of various irregular elements into the Ottoman army was not unique to Egypt. Although it had economic, social, organizational and technological causes common to other provinces, including the Turkish parts of the Empire, in Egypt the phenomenon had local causes as well. The frequency of the imperial orders demanding Egyptian contingents for campaigns was greater in the seventeenth century than in the sixteenth. In addition, growing numbers of soldiers

were required each time; the usual number that the Porte demanded from the pasha of Egypt was 3,000 in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To meet these demands, many irregular soldiers were recruited as *gharib yiğit* or as volunteers who eventually were admitted into the army, although it was in the interest of the military, and the firm belief of the Porte, that the Turks (and Circassians) of whatever origin or region should always be preferred to the Arabic-speaking soldiers.<sup>108</sup>

As the seventeenth century waned, the *ojaqs*, primarily the Janissary or *Mustahfizan* regiments, increased their power for a few decades prior to the domination of the beylicate. The power of the Janissaries was both political and economic. The large infantry regiments of the *Mustahfizan* and 'Azab also prospered relative to the other *ojaqs*. Again, Evliya offers an insightful observation when he says that it pays to be a member of either of these two *ojaqs*, and that soldiers of the *Müteferriqa* and *Chavush* cavalry regiments (whose nominal salary was much higher) were joining the Janissaries and the 'Azab.<sup>109</sup> In the seventeenth century, regimental officers started to buy villages and became *multazims*, tax farmers, like the beys. Another indication of their increased influence is that trusteeships of *waqf* foundations, which had previously been given to black *aghas* (eunuchs) were passing to regimental commanders. (In the eighteenth century, they would be transferred almost exclusively to the beys.)<sup>110</sup> As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the central figures in Egyptian politics were for a while not beys, but junior officers in the Janissary *ojaq*, like Küçük Muhammad or Ifranĵ Ahmad.

De Maillet, the French consul in Cairo, provides a useful contemporary summary of the Egyptian situation at the close of the seventeenth century. In a report dated the summer of 1692, supplemented by correspondence extending over a decade, de Maillet presents a lucid picture with interesting assessments by an informed and intelligent observer. The consul acknowledged the pashas' weakness; nevertheless, he believed that it was better to negotiate with them than with other dignitaries because as a rule they were more reliable than army officers. Although a pasha remained in office for about only three years, the regimental commanders kept changing all the time.

De Maillet estimated the number of salaried soldiers in Egypt at 12,000 men. His report confirms the information provided by the Arabic and Turkish sources that the Janissary regiment was by far the largest, strongest, and richest military unit in Egypt. The *agha* of the Janissaries, who was also chief of police, was an influential and dreaded figure in Cairo; the consuls often complained of his arbitrary and

oppressive ways. However, the regiment's actual commander was the *agha's* deputy, a *ketkhuda* (or *kahya*). Without the *ketkhuda's* consent, even the pasha could not put a Janissary to death. De Maillet notes a trend that became even more dominant in the eighteenth century: that many *gens du pays* (i.e. the *awlad al-'Arab*) are joining the *Mustahfizan* and the 'Azab regiment even though they are not real soldiers, having acquired their military appointment for the sake of the protection it afforded them. In another report, de Maillet says that the majority of the rich Egyptian merchants are either Janissaries or 'Azab, or under their protection.<sup>111</sup> Such members of the regiments were distinguished terminologically from the *awlad 'Arab* who joined the army as real soldiers: They were called *yoldaş*, or 'comrade,' and the *yoldaş* never saw combat.<sup>112</sup>

The consul goes on to survey other units such as the 'Azab and the Sipahi regiments, and the decline of the beylicate in this period is evident. In the consul's report, the beys appear only as tax farmers in charge of the countryside; they do not seem to impress him as particularly influential. On the contrary, he says: 'If a bey fears for his life, he seeks the protection of the Janissaries.'

De Maillet says that the division of the people of Egypt, and especially the ruling class, into two parties (de Maillet calls them Sa'd and Haram, not Qasimiyya and Faqariyya, though he also knew the latter terms) enables the pasha to rule the country by maneuvering and playing one against the other. Only in this way was it possible to prevent a revolt against the sultan, since Egypt was a populous country and its people were prone to rise against their rulers. According to de Maillet, the Egyptian army was the smallest of all the Ottoman garrisons, relative to the size of the country. It was also quite easy to defend the country against external attack, since it is surrounded by deserts and water.<sup>113</sup>

### **TOWARD THE ASCENDANCY OF THE MAMLUK BEYS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

In the eighteenth century, there is a comparative wealth of source material for understanding Egyptian society, particularly the ruling class. This has made the eighteenth century better studied and researched than the preceding two. In addition to official documents, there are some travelers' accounts, some of higher quality than before, and also consular reports. Yet it is 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's

monumental work, *'Aja'ib al-athar fi'l-tarajim wa'l- akhbar* that is a mine of information on the history of Egypt from 1100/1688–9 until the rule of Mehmet 'Ali (which is outside the scope of our study).<sup>114</sup> This great work proves again that in social history there is no substitute for a local historian who is both a fair-minded reporter and a man who wholly identifies with his society. Al-Jabarti—who was born in 1167/1753—wrote an account which is particularly informative for the years whose events he witnessed. His coverage of the earlier period is not as detailed, because he had to rely in part on fragmentary and second-rate information. Although earlier Arabic chronicles, notably Ahmad Shalabi's important *Awdah al-isharat*, which survey Egyptian events up to 1150/1737, add much to our understanding of eighteenth century Egypt, they fall short of al-Jabarti's history.

To sum up the relations between Istanbul and Egypt in the eighteenth century: the Porte's three objectives in Egypt (as mentioned in the first chapter)—recognition of the sultan, payment of the *khazina* tribute, and dispatch of Egyptian contingents to the Ottoman wars—were attained in the eighteenth century. But the fulfillment of each of these objectives underwent considerable erosion. At the beginning of the century, the *ojaqs* were the most powerful bodies within the Egyptian ruling class. The Janissaries and the 'Azab used their functions as policemen and guardians of the capital to exploit the most lucrative sources of revenue. Likewise, Sipahis oppressed the countryside. Moreover, there is ample evidence that Janissary and 'Azab officers were extending their economic activities to the villages as well. The control of the Janissary regiment was the key to political power, and the ambitious beys had to have the *ojaqs* on their side to obtain supremacy. The conflicts in Ottoman Egypt were usually among *ojaqs* (most commonly between the Janissaries and the other six regiments that envied their wealth and power) or factions of beys. Divisions between the warring parties cut across *ojaqs* and the beylicate; there were officers and soldiers of *ojaqs* and beys on both sides.

### **The Decline of the Ottoman *Vali***

The deterioration of Ottoman authority in eighteenth century Egypt becomes evident when one observes the waning of the pashas' influence within the political system. During the first three decades of the century, the pashas were still central figures in the violent dramas being enacted in Cairo. They took sides in the factional strife, including the civil war of 1711, trying to manipulate different forces for their own

political and financial gain. A pasha benefited substantially from the extensive purges in the ranks of the warring military grandees, because all newly appointed officeholders—*kashifs*, *multazims* and the like—had to pay him a tax, the *hulwan*.<sup>115</sup> This emerges clearly in the words of Bakir Pasha (1728–9), concerning the accounts of Mehmet Pasha, his predecessor. The latter claimed that his balance was merely 275 purses (*kises*), but Bakir refused to give him a receipt in full, saying: ‘This man was the governor of Egypt for seven years, and has killed 40 *sanjaq beyis* and 12 *ketkhudas*, *aghas*, and other officers [meaning that these men were killed during his term of office, not that the pasha personally was responsible for their deaths]. Now, Isma’il Pasha was the *vali* of Egypt for only two years (1695–6), including half a year during which he was suspended. He also gave a grand feast which cost 900 purses and after all this he still had 2,000 purses left.’<sup>116</sup> Bakir Pasha was implying that it was improbable that Mehmet Pasha had earned so little from the properties that had been confiscated and from the *hulwan* of the new appointees. Mehmet Pasha tried to bribe the army with 600 purses to induce it to enable him to leave for Jeddah or dismiss Bakir Pasha.

In the upheavals during which many emirs were executed, assassinated, or fled the country, Istanbul was keen to get hold of their possessions. Numerous decrees were dispatched to Egypt, warning against neglecting this matter, and special agents of the central Treasury were sent to make certain that Istanbul got its share.<sup>117</sup> Despite such warnings, the Egyptian Treasury was deprived of the *hulwan* payments, and the sultan did not receive the *khazina* annual tribute regularly, particularly during the second half of the century. These deprivations were a principal cause of Hasan Pasha’s campaign of 1786–7 to reconquer the province.

Until the rebellion of ‘Ali Bey al-Kabir, the Mamluk emirs were wary of openly defying the sultan and his representatives. Nevertheless, the frequency with which the army rejected pashas from office, already referred to regarding the previous century, greatly increased. In quite a few cases, the pashas were threatened, and their living quarters or retainers attacked. In July 1724, under the pressure of Muhammad Cherkes, the pasha was forced to resign and to vacate the Citadel. He sacrificed seven sheep to thank God that he had succeeded in getting away unharmed. A petition against him was drawn up and signed by representatives of all the regiments as well as by the leading ulama and Sufis. The army complained to the Porte that the pasha’s intrigues had provoked quarrels among the people and that he had been guilty of corruption and misgovernment. Public opinion usually held pashas

responsible for economic hardships, mainly the debasement of the currency, although their ability to improve conditions was constantly shrinking. Once, as a pasha was leaving his residence at the Citadel after his dismissal by the army, the mob followed him, chanting: *Basha, basha ya wajh al-qamla, min qillat 'aqlak ya basha ti'mal di'l-'amla*, 'Pasha, Oh pasha, you louse-face, you have done this deed because of your stupidity.'<sup>118</sup>

The creation in the early eighteenth century of the office of *Shaykh al-balad* for Cairo's strongest emir understandably angered the Porte, which did not fail to view this act an encroachment on its authority. With their accustomed flexibility, however, the Ottomans eventually put up with this Egyptian show of semi-independence. An edict dated 1143/1730–1 threatens with death whoever uses the title, but another edict issued fifteen years later names 'Uthman Bey, a former *amir al-hajj* as *Shaykh al-balad*.<sup>119</sup> The Porte was fully aware of the limitations of its power in Egypt. Its accommodation to that reality is reflected in how imperial decrees are addressed to Egyptian dignitaries. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the edicts (*emr-i sherif*) were directed only to the *beylerbeyi* of Egypt; only if one of the pasha's subordinates, such as the *defterdar* or a *qadi*, had to have knowledge of the matter or take action on it was he mentioned in the heading of the document after the pasha. A common formula of addressing the pasha was: 'Vizier X Pasha, who guards Egypt (*Misir muhafazas inda olan*).' In the eighteenth century, however, the imperial decrees are routinely addressed to the *vali* of Egypt, the chief *qadi*, the emirs (i.e. beys) and the officers and *ikhtiyariyya* ('veterans' or 'elders') of the regiments. Sometimes other addressees are added: 'the muftis of the four law schools, and other ulama.' By making these changes the Ottomans were admitting that their *vali* had to share his power with several local forces.<sup>120</sup> The pashas themselves were aware of this situation. When Nishanji Mehmet Pasha came to Egypt in 1721 to begin his five-year term as governor, he presented the usual fur coats to the beys and said: 'I am merely your guest, you are the authorized representatives (*umana*) of the sultan.'<sup>121</sup>

### The Decline of the *Ojaqs*

It has been mentioned that there was a well-established, though illegal, network of *himayat*, or arrangements for 'protection' that the *ojaqs* spread over the activities of merchants and artisans. In 1120/1708, the six *ojaqs* united against the Janissaries in an attempt to put an end to their

privileges. The former presented the pasha with a petition listing their demands. This document reveals the extent to which the Janissaries had gained control of the economy. The main points of that petition were: the employees of the mint, the slaughterhouses and the customs houses should not be members of the military class, nor should they be affiliated with the *ojaqs*; merchants should not seek protection from the *ojaqs*; only the *muhtasib* (market inspector) and the *qadi* are to determine the weights and measures; the boats which carry grain from Upper Egypt to Cairo should not belong to the *ojaqs* and should not be interfered with; all the grain should be stored in the imperial granaries and coffee beans must not be sold to European merchants. The last-mentioned item was particularly important, because the Janissaries traded with the Europeans in violation of the Porte's explicit prohibition, thus raising the retail prices of the commodities in the Egyptian market and creating a scarcity in Istanbul. For their part, the Janissaries also drew up a list of complaints accusing the other *ojaqs* of various offences.<sup>122</sup>

The Ottoman government sided with the six *ojaqs*. It ordered that all *himayat*, illegal taxes and tolls be abolished; that the mint and the gunpowder magazine be removed from the Janissary headquarters to the Divan. The *qadi* informed the artisans that being civilians, they must not associate with the *ojaqs*. The artisans, however, insisted that they were '*askeri* (soldiers) and sons of '*askeri*, and even threatened the *qadi*. The repeated efforts of the Porte to separate the army from the civilians did not succeed.<sup>123</sup> The Ottoman government tried to keep the army out of economic activity not only for problems of military discipline, but also for economic reasons. By associating themselves with the *ojaqs*, the merchants and artisans protected their profits from taxation during their lifetime and their estates after their death.

The deterioration of military discipline inevitably affected the performance of Egyptian units sent to reinforce the Ottoman army on various fronts. At one time, the Egyptians were reputed to be splendid fighters, in some cases even better than soldiers from the old Ottoman provinces,<sup>124</sup> but in the 1720s and 1730s, numerous imperial edicts complaining of the decline in the standards of the Egyptian troops were addressed to Egyptian pashas. These edicts show that the Egyptians' performance was particularly shameful during campaigns on the Persian front in 1114/1731 and 1149/ 1736–7. The Porte had demanded 3,000 men, the usual number at that time, but less than 1,000 reported for duty. On the way to the Kurdish regions (today's northern Iraq), the Egyptians mistreated the Muslim population and stayed behind the main

body of the army; many soldiers deserted and disappeared. Several officers were arrested in Kirkuk for cowardice and insubordination, and one Janissary officer was executed.<sup>125</sup>

It was required that the soldiers sent from Egypt be well educated and trained according to the high Egyptian standards (*Misir terbi yesi*), and must not be the private trainees (*chiraq*) of beys; they should come from prosperous provinces such as Gharbiyya, Mansura, Sharqiyya and Buhayra, rather than from poor ones, like Qalyubiyya, Jiza, Minya, Manfalut and Fayyum, so as not to suffer materially, and that they receive high salaries (*aghir 'ulufeli*), be well-mannered and religious.<sup>126</sup>

To judge from the language of the edicts, the troubles were endemic and were caused by the replacement of 'true Egyptians' (*sahih Misirli*) by 'a nameless, rootless bunch of Kurds, fellahin, and Turks.' They are described as new recruits, whose names did not appear in the official pay lists; instead of veterans, who were entitled to high pay for their experience in combat, the Egyptians were sending low-paid soldiers, whose salaries amounted to merely two *aqches* with no campaign bonus. A favorite device used by the wealthier soldiers to evade battlefield duty was to send a substitute (*bedel*); the decrees repeat again and again that those called up must appear personally (*bi'l-nafs*). Some members of the *ojaqs* seem to have used another trick: they had their names switched from combat units to other departments. A phrase which appears often in the edicts says that the Egyptian contingent should not have Arabs (*'Arab ta'ifesile makhlut olmayip*). The reference apparently is to bedouins primarily, because one document specifically warns against the enrollment of Arabs in mounted regiments.<sup>127</sup>

Egyptian troops were regularly sent to guard cities in the Hijaz where they were guilty of similar transgressions. They sent representatives (*vekils*) instead of going personally, and many Arabs are believed to have infiltrated into Egyptian contingents. A typical complaint against the soldiers sent to the Hijaz was that many were engaging in trade. The temptation of trading in Mecca and the other cities of the Hijaz—trade was always combined with the pilgrimage—was apparently too strong for many soldiers and officers. Their infringement on the domain of the merchants caused complications. For example, in 1167/1754 the Sharif of Mecca complained to the sultan that Egyptian soldiers had seized inheritances of deceased merchants, claiming that these merchants had belonged to the military and had been enrolled in their regiments.<sup>128</sup>

The Ottoman government also failed in its efforts to prevent the beys from meddling in the affairs of the *ojaqs*. An imperial decree dated 1138/1726 forbids the soldiers to assemble for consultations in the

beys' residences. Realizing that assemblies in the houses of ambitious beys could lead to sedition and strife, the government permitted them to meet only at the headquarters of the Janissaries, the *Gönüllüyan*, or the houses of the *defterdar* or *amir al-hajj*.<sup>129</sup>

Two parallel developments weakened the *ojaqs*, eventually depriving them of their military character. The first was the 'Mamlukization' of the army, the increasing percentage of Mamluks in key positions within the *ojaqs*. The second was the demilitarization of the *ojaqs* by the influx of non-combatant, civilian elements. In the long run, the former development had the greater effect. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, leading beys, such as Isma'il ibn 'Iwaz, Muhammad Cherkes and Dhu'l- Faqar, tried to win supremacy by obtaining support from *ojaq* officers and their men. It became usual for Mamluk emirs to place their own Mamluks in positions of influence within the *ojaqs*. The members of the seven regiments still marched under their banners in military campaigns, and were thus differentiated from the beys' private armies,<sup>130</sup> but the distinction disappeared later in the century. The regiments became powerless, and only the Mamluk houses were significant militarily and politically. The degenerated regiments, having lost their military capabilities and political ambitions, were no match for the well-organized Mamluks with their militant political culture.<sup>131</sup> It is hard to determine precisely when this trend evolved, but it is clear that the decline of the *ojaqs* was nearly complete after the reign of Ibrahim Ketkhuda and Ridwan Ketkhuda (1743–54). 'Ali Bey's rule gave *ojaqs* their *coup de grace*.

A document dated Sha'ban 10, 1172/April 8, 1759 may indicate that the Mamluks already dominated the highest regimental command by then.<sup>132</sup> The document contains the minutes of a meeting of the Divan of Egypt with the pasha and the sultan's envoy, convened for the solemn reading of an imperial edict reminding the emirs and the army chiefs of their duties. The meeting was apparently important enough for the entire high command to be present, since the document names all those attending. Significantly, the majority of the names are Ibn 'Abdallah, that is, men whose fathers were unidentified. Since a convert was usually named Ibn 'Abdallah, it is probable that most of these men were Mamluks. Of the 14 beys, eight were called Ibn 'Abdallah. The percentage of regimental commanders whose fathers' names are given as Ibn 'Abdallah is even higher. Of the corp's 68 officers, 43 were Ibn 'Abdallah.

There is no single explanation for the decline of the regiments and the rise of the Mamluks. Richard Pococke, an Englishman who visited

Egypt in 1737 and wrote a detailed, sensitive description of the country, observed the transfer of power from 'the military bodies' (i.e. the *ojaqs*) to the Mamluks. At this early date, he noted, 'it is really a Mamelouke government thro' every part.' Explaining the transfer of power from the *ojaqs* to the beys, Pococke says that the former were buying land 'which obliged them to be submissive to the beys that they may not ruin their villages, where as the military bodies were rich, had a treasure and an estate mostly in Cairo.... When the officers of the Janissaries and the 'Azab were rich, individual soldiers were poor so they could not afford to buy villages. The soldiers were not submissive to the beys then and did not have to go to their houses.'<sup>133</sup> Pococke's explanation implies that as soon as the Cairo-based regiments started buying land from the beys who controlled the countryside, the former became liable to extortion by the latter.

No doubt the English traveler put his finger on an important economic cause, but there were others. The weakening of Ottoman authority encouraged this proliferation of Mamluks at the expense of the *ojaqs*. The Egyptian political system was becoming decentralized, and any individual or group that wished to prevail had to look after its own interests and build up its own power. This could be done by establishing private armies of Mamluks and other retainers. The career of Ibrahim Ketkhuda (d. 1168/1754) is an example. Although he was a regimental commander and not a bey, he built up an independent force of some 2,000 Mamluks to acquire supremacy (*ri'asa*). He established a powerful Mamluk house that dominated Egyptian political life until the downfall of the Mamluks following Bonaparte's invasion and Mehmet 'Ali's massacre.<sup>134</sup>

## MAMLUK SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

### Loyalties and Factions

At the beginning of the century the chronicler Ahmad Shalabi sometimes makes a clear distinction between Mamluk and non-Mamluk beys.<sup>135</sup> No such nuances are mentioned by al-Jabarti for the second half of the century. By then, the ruling class consisted solely of Mamluk emirs. Ayalon has described and analyzed the Mamluk military society under Ottoman rule, comparing it with the Mamluks of the Sultanate. While differences between the two were considerable, much remained

unchanged.<sup>136</sup> Like their predecessors of the later Middle Ages, the Mamluks were imported into Egypt at the age of 12 to 14 by slave traders and sold to the military grandees. Their lands of origin were the same, mainly the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, and their military education made them superb cavalymen. The basic ideal of military slavery—the Mamluk's total loyalty to his master who had bought, trained, maintained and freed him—was a pillar of Mamluk society in Ottoman Egypt, as it had been in the Mamluk Sultanate. When the master decided that his Mamluk had reached maturity and was ready to assume an office, he set him free, and 'allowed him to grow his beard.' He was now a free man, no longer dependent. The master often appointed these former slaves to army posts, to the beylicate, or to the regimental command. Very often, the master decided whom his former slave would marry, a decision which could advance the Mamluk socially and financially.

A passage in al-Jabarti's chronicle gives us an idea of the discipline among the Mamluks and its deterioration. On Dhu'l-Qa'da 6, 1201/ August 20, 1786 it was proclaimed that Mamluks must not ride in town alone. In the past, Mamluks never went out without their masters, but this rule had been neglected. Now, the Mamluks married, owned houses and servants, went out freely and smoked in public, all this before their manumission.<sup>137</sup>

Another kind of loyalty expected of a Mamluk was solidarity with the other slaves of his master, who are called *kushdashin* or 'brothers' (*khushdash* in the singular, a Persian-Mamluk term from the days of the Sultanate). These 'brothers' united against external enemies to form the Mamluk faction, or house, which included the master, his comrades and allies. While such loyalty could be strong, it was more fragile than the master-slave bond. When a Mamluk faction overcame its rivals, the *khushdashin* quite often turned against each other in their struggle for power and wealth.<sup>138</sup> The Mamluk factions—Faqariyya, Qasimiyya, Julfiyya, Qazdughliyya, and others—were compact organizations based on patronage, servitude, loyalty and common social and economic interests. Yet toward the end of the eighteenth century, from 'Ali Bey's rule onward, the struggles became less factional and more personal.

The master-Mamluk bond was the strongest in military society, but there were also other forms of service. We hear much of the emir's *sarrajs*, literally 'saddlers,' who were mounted guards who often assassinated their masters' enemies. They were ruffians who terrorized civilians by attacking them and stealing from them, as well as molesting women and boys. Muhammad Cherkes, for example, had numerous

*sarrajs* to whom he gave a free hand to tyrannize and plunder the Cairene. According to the chronicles, his chief *sarraj*, al-Sayfi, was 'the worst of God's creatures.' The *sarrajs* were said to be uncircumcised Christians masquerading as Muslims, since real Muslims, it was said, would not be so cruel to their coreligionists. With the fall of Muhammad Cherkes, the *sarrajs*' reign of terror came to an end, at least temporarily. A regulation was enacted limiting to two the number of *sarrajs* a bey might keep; lower-ranking officers were permitted only one *sarraj*. Many *sarrajs* and other foreigners in the service of emirs were driven out of Egypt (1138/1726).<sup>139</sup>

Another kind of relationship was that between a master and his *chirraq* (in the Arabic sources, this Turkish word is spelled *ishraq*), a trainee who was also a favorite or protégé. This was a weaker bond, but an important one in Egyptian society and politics. Another relationship is that of master and follower, or retainer, (*tabi'*, plural *atba'*). This is a more general expression, and could be synonymous with Mamluk or *chirraq*, but might also denote simply a man in the service of a grandee or one who is his supporter.<sup>140</sup>

Ayalon notes that factional struggles in the Sultanate were brief and did not last more than one generation, but the Mamluk houses in Ottoman Egypt carried on their murderous feuds for longer periods, sometimes for generations. The principal cause for this difference was that in the Sultanate the Mamluks' sons (*awlad al-nas*) were excluded from the military elite, which necessarily shortened the duration of the strife. In Ottoman Egypt, however, when the biological family merged with the Mamluk clans, the feuds dragged on for long periods of time. Sometimes rivalries developed between an emir's sons and his Mamluks, as was the case with Muhammad Bey, a son of Ibrahim Bey Abu Shanab, and Muhammad Cherkes, his Mamluk. The close association of the Mamluk military society with the Arab bedouin tribes, which have always practised blood revenge, may have also influenced it in this direction.

An important cause of the fall of the Mamluk Sultanate was the refusal of the Mamluk army to adopt muskets, which would have compelled the horsemen to become foot soldiers.<sup>141</sup> What changed in Ottoman Egypt was not the Mamluks' disdain for fighting on foot, but the technology of firearms: the short carbine and the pistol could be used on horseback, which the Mamluks did effectively. The result, as Ayalon points out, was the very high number of casualties in the battles and skirmishes between the Mamluk groups, much higher than those of the Mamluk Sultanate.<sup>142</sup>

The struggles within the Mamluk society in Ottoman times aimed relentlessly at obliterating rivals. Sometimes defeated soldiers and emirs were banished to Syria, the Hijaz, Istanbul and Cyprus, or to Alexandria and lesser outposts in Upper Egypt, and the Red Sea and the Mediterranean shores.<sup>143</sup> Sometimes an emir was exiled to the village or region which fell under his jurisdiction as tax farmer. Since Cairo was the center of all important activity, being removed from the capital was tantamount to being rendered politically insignificant. The chronicles and biographies are full of emirs who were put to death, usually beheaded, by their enemies, or killed in battle. Hatreds and suspicions were so deep that pardon and reconciliation were rarely considered. The percentage of emirs who suffered violent death was so high, that al-Jabarti notes in the obituaries of those who died a natural death that ‘he died in his bed.’<sup>144</sup> Generosity to opponents was unusual. When the party of Isma‘il ibn Iwaz was victorious over Muhammad Cherkes, the latter escaped and was caught by bedouin Arabs who turned him over to Isma‘il who spared Cherkes’s life and banished him to Cyprus. He lived to regret this chivalrous act. Muhammad Cherkes returned secretly to Cairo, had Isma‘il murdered and completely destroyed his faction.<sup>145</sup>

In the struggles among the Mamluk factions, the headquarters of the leader of a Mamluk clan or group deserves special attention. The faction prepared for battle by planning strategies and distributing arms and money to supporters in the bey’s residence (called *qonaq* in Turkish and simply *bayt*, house, in Arabic). Al-Jabarti frequently writes of the vitalness of ‘the open house’ (*bayt mafuh*) to the faction’s organization and the opening of hostilities against its enemies. After the death of a leader, his chief Mamluk or another prominent emir was expected ‘to open his master’s house.’ This required so much wealth that an emir was given financial aid by other members of the faction to enable him to do so.

### **Mamluks in the Possession of Civilians**

Ayalon points out another major difference between the classical Mamluk system and Ottoman Egypt. While in the Mamluk Sultanate it was unthinkable that a civilian could own Mamluks, in Ottoman Egypt it could happen. In the sixteenth century, the *awlad al-‘Arab* who owned Mamluks were attacked by the army. The frequent repetition of the regulation that forbade civilians to keep white slaves shows that it was not obeyed. As late as 1736, it was proclaimed in Cairo that civilians, ‘Maghribis, bureaucrats and merchants must not buy white Mamluks

and slave girls.’ Those who owned them were ordered to sell them.<sup>146</sup> Civilians continued to buy Mamluks, however. For example, al-Jabarti’s father was a wealthy man with many Mamluks. Another famous example concerns a faction called ‘the fellah’s party’ (*jama’at al-fallah*), whose founder was a simple fellah called al-Hajj Salih (died c. 1755). He started his career as an orphan from a village in the Minufiyya province. His master pawned him for a debt he owed the *multazim*, an officer in one of the *ojaqs*. However, when the master paid his debt, the boy refused to return to the village, and remained in the emir’s household. In time, he prospered and bought Mamluks, and young slaves of both sexes. He arranged marriages among them, bought them homes and provided them with sources of income. He bribed and tricked influential people to help get his Mamluks enlisted in the *ojaqs* where they were promoted and acquired houses, retainers and Mamluks of their own and formed a very powerful faction. Al-Hajj Salih lent money at interest to Ibrahim Ketkhuda and his Qazdughli emirs. Even at the height of his power the aged Salih rode a donkey followed by one servant. The fellah’s party was finally reduced to poverty, because of these loans, which apparently were not repaid.<sup>147</sup> Another example of the establishment of a Mamluk house by a man of an extremely modest non-military origin is that of the Julfiyya, a well-known faction that originated from a Mamluk of a merchant from the village of Julf. Cases of Mamluks owned by a haberdasher or goldsmith are also recorded.<sup>148</sup> Even ulama could own Mamluks, although this was rare. Shaykh Muhammad Shanani, who was the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, the chief religious scholar of al-Azhar college-mosque, was a wealthy man with Mamluks, one of whom reached the rank of bey.<sup>149</sup>

Arab tribal chiefs did not usually own Mamluks, although some of them had the wealth and power to do so. An important exception was Humam, the chief of the Hawwara federation of Upper Egypt, who was a special case, because the chiefs of the Hawwara were regarded more as regional governors than as bedouin shaykhs. The Hawwara territory also provided refuge to Mamluks who had escaped the massacres and purges in the capital. They settled in the region, eventually merged with the local population and lost their social distinction as Mamluks.<sup>150</sup>

### **Mamluk Households and Families**

The Mamluk emirs were among Egypt’s richest people. They owned magnificent houses in the most beautiful and expensive parts of Cairo, such as on the shores of the lakes Birkat al-Ratli, Birkat al-Fil and Birkat

al-Azbakiyya. For pleasure, they sailed on the lakes or rode in the parks nearby. The *kashifs*, who remained in their provinces most of the year, also lived in palaces. Many of the emirs were keen builders who put up structures for ulama, Sufis, and Koran schools, and sponsored public works. Primarily, they built their own mansions and palaces where they kept their harems, slaves and treasures. It is reported that a certain 'Ali Bey, who was put to death in 1727, had 84 Mamluks, 7 eunuchs, and 48 *sarrajs*. His harem had 60 white, black and Abyssinian slave girls and concubines. The leading emirs had many more Mamluks; Ibrahim Ketkhuda owned some 2,000, Ibrahim Bey 600 and Murad Bey 400. In the second half of the eighteenth century, less prominent beys each had 50 to 200 Mamluks.<sup>151</sup>

Given the rivalries and upheavals in Cairo, the emir's residence was understandably vulnerable to attacks by his enemies. An emir's mansion was often stormed and destroyed, and his entire property, including his wives, concubines and slave girls carried off. When the above-mentioned 'Uthman Bey fled Egypt, the army entered and looted his houses. Al-Jabarti says that it contained such precious treasures that many of the looters became merchants and distinguished people. Even the marble and wood were pulled out before the house was set on fire. After the defeat of the tyrannical Muhammad Bey Cherkes, his house was completely razed. Cherkes had built the house with unpaid forced labor and the workers hired to destroy it so relished taking vengeance, that they said: 'We built it without pay, now, thank God, we are destroying it for pay.'<sup>152</sup> Emirs and other rich men sometimes hid their most valuable possessions elsewhere: a second structure for the valuables was put up in the vicinity of al-Azhar mosque and the Husayni shrine, because these areas were sacrosanct and therefore relatively safe in times of trouble.

Marriage in Mamluk society in Ottoman Egypt was a common means of acquiring wealth or prestige. As already mentioned, the masters sometimes arranged their Mamluks' marriages. Al-Jabarti writes that upon the death of a distinguished man, the Mamluk would hurry to his master the emir, kiss his hand and ask to be allowed to take the widow of the deceased. After permission had been given, the Mamluk would ride immediately to the dead man's house, sometimes before the funeral procession left, and take over both the property and wife. This often pleased the widow, says al-Jabarti since the Mamluk was young and good-looking, unlike her late husband. She would give him all her husband's possessions, including that which had been concealed. Thus, the Mamluk could take a shortcut to becoming an emir.<sup>153</sup> Often

Mamluks married slave women of similar ethnic background, namely, Circassian, Georgian, or Turkish. Several Mamluks married daughters of rich merchants, ulama, and leading Sufis and as we have seen above, it was not unusual for Mamluks to marry the widow of their masters or of another powerful emir.

Because of the high incidence of untimely death among the Mamluks, the women in Mamluk society often remarried several times. The case of the daughter of Iwaz Bey, the Qasimi leader who was killed in the 1711 civil war, is extreme, but by no means an isolated one. She lost four brothers, all of whom were emirs, and two husbands by assassination. She died shortly after her third marriage, also to a Mamluk bey. One of her brothers was Isma'il Bey ibn Iwaz, and she plotted against Muhammad Bey Cherkes to avenge her brother's murder by offering huge sums of money—500 purses to Isma'il's faction and 300 to the Porte—but to no avail.<sup>154</sup> Cases such as this show that although women were considered almost as chattels to be looted and transferred at will, a Mamluk woman was not necessarily a passive figure. The chronicles touchingly describe the devotion of wives, sisters and mothers, who concealed and supported their men when they were being hunted, or pleaded (always in vain) for their lives when they fell into their enemies' hands. After a Mamluk emir had been put to death, his female relatives usually tried to retrieve his body and bury him properly.<sup>155</sup>

### Mamluk Emirs as Rulers

Although Mamluk rule in Egypt was generally an exploitative and oppressive military dictatorship, historians were fully aware of the differences between individual emirs, and many of them are presented favorably as rulers and individuals. When Isma'il Bey ibn Iwaz assumed supremacy among the emirs of Cairo, he was only sixteen years old, and his beard had hardly begun to grow. The women affectionately called him Qishta Bey, or 'Cream Bey.' Despite his tender age he was a clever, just ruler with a generous and forgiving nature. He often left Cairo, including six times as *amir al-hajj*. Few beys dared to do so for fear of a coup against them in their absence.<sup>156</sup> Another able and benevolent ruler was 'Uthman Bey Dhu'l-Faqar, whom al-Jabarti knew personally, since he had been a close friend of the historian's father. Al-Jabarti writes that in his house 'Uthman heard cases and claims of common people and held special sessions to hear women's cases. He maintained tight security and the bedouins were afraid of him

and they did not cause trouble. When he was an inspector of the markets (*muhtasib*), he protected the poor. He strictly adhered to the prescriptions of the *Shari'a* and refrained from taking inheritances illegally, as many emirs were wont to do.<sup>157</sup> Several highhanded despots like Ibrahim Ketkhuda and 'Ali Bey al-Kabir have been commended for preserving public security. The days of Ibrahim Ketkhuda were remembered as a time of general economic well-being, when food was cheap.<sup>158</sup>

The Mamluk emirs ruled primarily by coercion, but many of them also exercised influence through various means of patronage, forming clienteles of ulama, Sufis, merchants and commoners. Ibrahim Bey Abu Shanab, who died in 1717 or 1718 at the age of 92, was a benevolent and moderate ruler. His speciality was patronizing the beggars of Cairo.<sup>159</sup>

The bey's house, which was the headquarters of a Mamluk faction, was also the center from which he exercised his influence and maintained ties with civilians. Al-Jabarti describes the incredibly generous hospitality the grandees extended to all kinds of applicants. If anyone came to see the emir about some problem during a meal, he was also served food. On holidays, the grandees distributed food and presents to the poor. While the historian's words may be somewhat nostalgic and idealized, it is certain that his description reflects a real situation and atmosphere. By giving away 'alms and presents to the needy ones who are under their protection,' as he puts it, the emirs were not acting only out of charity, but with the purpose of nurturing their clientele and rewarding their supporters.<sup>160</sup>

### **Mamluk Characteristics and Consciousness**

The Mamluks wore distinctive wide red trousers called *shalvar*. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the *shalvar* had become part of the uniform of the Sipahis, who in Egypt were to a large degree identical with the Mamluks. This fact emerges in the clash between the governor Ibrahim Pasha (1604) and the Sipahis, many of whom he put to death. One fellah was hanged and his body was dressed in a *shalvar* to demonstrate the pasha's hatred of the *jundis* (i.e. the Sipahis and the Mamluks). A jar was attached to the body of the condemned man, probably as a cruel allusion to the fellah class to which he had belonged. The pasha was later killed by his mutinous Sipahis.<sup>161</sup>

Later in the seventeenth century, Evliya Çelebi also stresses that 'the red Egyptian trousers called *shalvar*' were worn by soldiers of the

mounted units but not by the Janissaries.<sup>162</sup> In the early eighteenth century, Pococke writes: 'The Mamluk dress is the short garment put into their great trousers which are tied round the leg at each ankle, the foot being left bare; and they wear the sort of shoes used by the Arabs when they ride. In other respects they dress like the Turks.'<sup>163</sup>

To conclude the survey of the Mamluk elite, it is necessary to discuss its cultural and linguistic orientation, its racial and ethnic composition and consciousness, its religious outlook and its ethos. Unfortunately, the sources provide us with less information about the spoken and written language of Mamluks than one might wish. We know that they spoke Turkish. There are indications that even their Arabic names were pronounced in the Turkish way: Al-Jabarti expressly says that the Arabic name 'Awad was pronounced Iwaz 'due to its corruption by the Turkish language.'<sup>164</sup>

Turkish-Arabic bilingualism was prevalent among the Mamluks. There are references to emirs who spoke, read and wrote Arabic in addition to Turkish. It is said in passing of Muhammad Bey Cherkas that he uses the feminine form for the masculine gender. This, however, is presented as an individual mannerism, and proves that he spoke Arabic.<sup>165</sup> Another bey is said to have written and spoken Arabic and Turkish well.<sup>166</sup> Even Kha'ir Bey at the beginning of the Ottoman period was fluent in Arabic.<sup>167</sup> This bilingualism should not surprise us if we keep in mind that a Mamluk society, which included men born in Egypt, could not be a stranger to Arabic like the Mamluk society of the Sultanate. The passage of Evliya Çelebi, that has been cited above on the language of the Mamluks, also strengthens this impression.<sup>168</sup>

Moreover, the Mamluks were relatively well-educated. Pococke notes: 'The best education is among the slaves, who understand Arabic and Turkish, and often write both.'<sup>169</sup> The obituary of Ibrahim Ketkhuda al-Barkawi (who died in 1783 or 1784 and is not identical with his more famous namesake) serves as an example. He bought Mamluks and trained them in reading, writing and calligraphy. Educated men and calligraphers frequented his house. Like some other emirs he was an ardent bibliophile and purchased books on many arts and sciences; some of the rarest books were found in his library.<sup>170</sup> Finally, the close association of the Mamluks with ulama and Sufis must have improved their Arabic enormously.

This last point brings us to the question of the Mamluks' religiosity, which has already been referred to. Islam was the channel for Mamluk acculturation in Egypt. They would not have been regarded as aristocracy and elite without adhering to the values of Egyptian society,

among which Islam was paramount. Numerous biographies of the Mamluks and references to them as a group portray them as devout Muslims. Their personal piety, the respect shown to men of religion, their establishment and support of religious institutions, and the attempts by some of them to stamp out alcoholic beverages and prostitution—all attest to impeccable religiosity. Many instances are recorded of emirs who venerated mosques and religious shrines. Of particular interest is their reverence of specifically Egyptian sanctuaries. The sepulchres of al-Imam al-Shafi'i, founder of the most widespread and influential *madhhab* of Egypt and the only founder of a *madhhab* who is buried in that country, and of Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi, Egypt's most popular saint, are two examples.<sup>171</sup>

A small number of emirs contravened the laws and spirit of Islam, but these instances prove the general rule. One of these emirs was Khalil Bey Qatamish, *amir al-hajj*, who placed his Mamluks along the narrow passages near 'Aqaba as beggars to pester the pilgrims and rob them. The sultan of the Maghrib complained and was assured that the evildoer had been put to death (1747).<sup>172</sup>

Another, more interesting case, is that of Yusuf Bey al-Kabir, a Mamluk of Muhamamd Abu'l-Dhahab, whom al-Jabarti describes as impulsive, and erratic. Al-Jabarti expressly says: 'He hated the *fuqaha*' (jurists) and the turbaned (ulama).' He dismissed Shaykh Hasan al-Kafrawi from the office of mufti and teacher, because he considered the shaykh superstitious. Indeed, al-Kafrawi believed in a santon who kept in his house phallic amulets which he gave to slave girls to help them attract their masters' attention. Yusuf Bey ordered the holy man drowned and then showed the amulets to other emirs and together they made fun of the shaykhs. In a third incident, he blamed an '*alim*' for a certain decision he had made to dissolve a marriage. The emir had the shaykh jailed in a prison for fellahin who defaulted on their debts. Only when 'Ali al-Sa'idi, an influential shaykh, intervened, shouting and cursing him, did the latter have the '*alim*' released.<sup>173</sup>

The Mamluks' religiosity was all the more evident when compared with the Ottoman soldiers, who were notorious for their religious laxness. The Mamluks also adhered to a version of Islam upheld by the Egyptian ulama, as is evidenced by an incident in 1711, when a Turkish preacher, appeared in the mosque of Sultan Mu'ayyad in Cairo and fiercely attacked the Egyptian cult of saints. While the Turkish soldiers of the Seven Corps of the Ottoman garrison supported the preacher, the Mamluk emirs sided with the Egyptian ulama, and finally sent the preacher into exile.<sup>174</sup>

To what extent were race and racial consciousness (*jinsiyya*) important in Mamluk society? At the present state of our knowledge, an assessment of the racial composition of Mamluk society can be only very general. The sources often give the race or origin of an emir. Most of the Mamluks were Circassians, Georgians, Kurds, Bosnians, and Albanians. Several Anatolians (*Rumis*) and Armenians, and even two converted Jews are mentioned.<sup>175</sup> In the eighteenth century, it became harder to define the Mamluks in ethnic or racial terms. Nevertheless, they were expected to be of certain races and not of others, as al-Jabarti's following report clarifies: When Hasan Pasha invaded Egypt in 1786 to reestablish Ottoman authority, he was not successful in gaining control over Upper Egypt, where Ibrahim and Murad resisted him. After Hasan's sudden departure, his ally, Isma'il Bey, was compelled to urge the slave traders to supply Mamluks. For lack of time he gave these Mamluks only military training, and neglected their Islamic education. Al-Jabarti criticizes him for this, and adds that they were bad-mannered Mamluks of 'unaccustomed races' from the mountains of Rumeli and Albania.<sup>176</sup>

The term racial solidarity (*jinsiyya*) appears in al-Jabarti's chronicle, but rarely with regard to relationships within Mamluk society itself. The conflicts among the Mamluks were invariably factional in nature. Sometimes the Mamluks favored people of certain racial affinity. Thus, in a serious quarrel which broke out at al-Azhar in April 1799 among the Syrian and Turkish students and ulama, the emirs supported the Turks because of *jinsiyya*. The same sentiment is given as a reason for the respect shown by Mamluks toward a Bosnian preacher.<sup>177</sup>

The strongest cohesive force holding the Mamluks together was of course self-interest. Nevertheless, a clear ethos can be discerned in their collective attitudes and actions. First and foremost was their pride as a warrior elite and their loyalty to the Mamluk house. Second, the Mamluks' attachment to Egypt was very strong, and motivated many of their actions. Unlike the Ottoman troops, the Mamluks did not have roots outside Egypt, which was their only home. Emirs always preferred to stay in Egypt rather than accept a promotion elsewhere, because leaving Egypt was considered going into exile. Even in Istanbul, a Mamluk bey felt uprooted and lonely.<sup>178</sup> Third, there was in the Mamluk collective consciousness a latent hostility toward the Ottomans, which rarely came to the surface. It was made explicit only by 'Ali Bey al-Kabir, who aspired to restore the Mamluk Sultanate. Yet the mutual antipathy and mistrust are obvious from numerous incidents and references.<sup>179</sup>

The Mamluks' racial consciousness was not explicit. The 'Circassian identity,' weakened considerably in the eighteenth century to be replaced by a more general Mamluk identity. Yet the social gap between the Mamluks (of all extractions) and the Ottoman Turks deepened. Nobody describes it better than al-Jabarti. The following passage from his chronicle clearly shows how attractive the Mamluks were to Egyptian women. (The attitudes of women are always a useful social indicator.) It is obvious that the Mamluks were not regarded by the Egyptians as foreign exploiters of the people as some modern scholars believe, but as a purely Egyptian, respected aristocracy, almost an integral part of *awlad al-'Arab*, as opposed to the Turks.

Describing the massacre of the Mamluks by the soldiers of Mehmet 'Ali in 1811, al-Jabarti writes:

The army [of Mehmet 'Ali] exceeded all bounds in killing the Egyptians [*Misriyyin*, that is the Mamluk emirs] and in plundering their cloth, they did not pity anyone, thus revealing their hidden grudge... The Mamluks and the [Turkish] soldiers intermixed. They lived in proximity to one another in all the quarters and the districts... Many of the commanders of the army (*'askar*) were their neighbors in all the quarters, following them and knowing all their actions and whereabouts. They [the army commanders] mingled and associated with them [the Mamluks] and were their companions at night, showing them friendship and affection, while their hearts were full of hatred and rancor toward them [the Mamluks], nay toward all the Arabs.<sup>180</sup>

It cannot be put more clearly: according to al-Jabarti, the Mamluks were almost identical with *awlad al-'Arab* in contradistinction to the Turkish *'askar*. He continues:

And when this event [the massacre] happened they [the Turks] were quick to realize their hope and revealed what was concealed in their hearts. In particular they took their revenge in matters concerning the women: Because when [even] a distinguished man among them [the Turks] had tried to betroth in marriage the simplest woman, she refused with abhorrence, and despised his presence. If he had used pressure on her she would have sought refuge with a man who could protect her against him; or else she would have escaped from her home and hidden for a few months. All this is contrary to a case where the lowest man of Mamluk

extraction would have asked her hand in marriage; she would have accepted immediately. It so happened that when the Pasha [Mehmet 'Ali] made his peace with the Mamluks of the Alfiiya [faction], and they looked for their houses, many of the women who were hiding reappeared and competed for the privilege to marry them, preparing clothes for them, receiving presents and spending for the necessities of the household, which husbands usually give their wives. And all this took place in the view of the Turks, who kept it grudgingly in their breasts.<sup>181</sup>

To conclude the question of terminology: At the beginning of the Ottoman rule in Egypt the Mamluks were called 'Turks' and 'Circassians' by Arab and Turkish chroniclers, respectively. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there is no consistency in the Arabic sources and they are rarely referred to as Mamluks at all, but the term *jundis* in the Turkish sources, almost invariably indicates Mamluks. Sometimes it seems that, Mamluks are indicated by the expression *ta'ifat al-Charakisa*, the 'Circassians,' but it is never certain and explicit. In al-Jabarti's chronicle they are again called *jins al-Mamalik*, 'the Mamluk race' and the only territorial or ethnic reference for them is *Misriyya*, *Misirliyya* or *Misriyyun*, namely, Egyptians.

### 3

## The Bedouin Arabs and the State

### INTRODUCTION

Several modern historians have used Arabic and European sources to present a coherent picture of the main political events concerning the establishment of Ottoman rule in Egypt up to 1525. These accounts, however, omit almost entirely an element that played a central role in the stormy period following the conquest, namely the bedouins, or to use the term of the contemporary sources—Arabs (*Arab*, *Urban*, or *A'rab*). This lacuna, which the present chapter attempts to fill, was caused primarily by neglect of Turkish sources, which contain considerable information on the Arabs.

For the earlier period it is important to supplement the available accounts with the long known, but insufficiently studied, Turkish chronicle, *Dhikr al-khulafa' wa'l-muluk al-Misriyya* by 'Abd al-Samad al-Diyarbakri, a *qadi* who came to Egypt with Sultan Selim I and remained there as a judge and advisor. Diyarbakri had the advantage of being close to the center of Ottoman power in Egypt, which Ibn Iyas, who totally identified with the fallen Mamluk state, vehemently detested. Diyarbakri reports the decisions and mood of the Ottoman rulers in detail. His main contribution is that he continues where Ibn Iyas's chronicle leaves off and his report reaches to 947/1541, although his detailed report does not go beyond 931/1525. Diyarbakri's account shows that the role the bedouins played in those turbulent years was considerably greater than has been realized.

The gap in the detailed chronicles following Diyarbakri is filled in part by alien Arab writers (Syrian and Arabian) and by Ottoman archival material, particularly the collection of imperial edicts—the *Mühimme Defteri*—which are preserved in chronological order in Istanbul, starting from close to the end of the reign of Sultan Süleyman *Qanuni* (the

Magnificent, 1520–66).<sup>1</sup> These edicts can teach us a great deal about the Arab shaykhs, primarily their administrative and fiscal roles and their dealings with the state. The large number of edicts sent to Cairo and their contents demonstrate that in the sixteenth century the Arab shaykhs were a problem that occupied the local and central authorities more than any other domestic issue.

A few general preliminary observations about the Arab bedouins are in order. The term ‘Arab’ in Arabic sources of the later Middle Ages and the Ottoman period is used almost exclusively to denote bedouins. Yet because of Egypt’s special geographic and ecological conditions, caution is called for in applying the term bedouin to the country’s Arab tribes even though they were bedouin in their tribal organization, traditions and mentality. The Arabs were not ‘pure’ nomad bedouins; many of them subsisted on agriculture.

Bedouin Arab society in Ottoman Egypt consisted of a great and complex variety of tribes and clans, which sometimes had very little in common except tribal organization and a claim to Arabian origin. Generalizations concerning the Arabs, therefore, may easily be erroneous. For example, while some tribes or clans were notorious bandits and rebels, others were reputed to be obedient and submissive, rendering vital services to the government. Even the same family could have both loyal and rebellious shaykhs. Moreover, as will be shown below, the same tribe or leader could alternately support the government (or a certain emir or faction) and oppose it, depending on circumstances.

This pragmatism explains the apparent contradictions in the bedouins’ attitudes and policies. Despite hostility between them and the Mamluks, which had its roots in the inception of Mamluk rule in Egypt in the middle of the thirteenth century, there are numerous instances of close cooperation between these two warlike societies in Ottoman Egypt. Likewise, the Arabs’ behavior toward the Ottomans was also inconsistent. Nevertheless, a good rule of thumb, applicable to Egypt as to other countries, is that bedouin power is an index of the strength of the state: the stronger the government, the weaker the Arab tribes, and vice versa.

### **THE ARABS’ ROLE IN EGYPTIAN POLITICAL EVENTS, 1516–24**

In his desperate effort to prepare for the impending battle with Selim I, Qansawh al-Ghawri, the Mamluk sultan, trying to strengthen his forces

by enlisting Arab horsemen from all over Egypt, summoned the provincial governors (*kashifs*) and the Arab shaykhs and ordered them to recruit 20,000 Arab tribesmen. This effort, however, failed and merely benefited the *kashifs* and the shaykhs (Safar 922/March 1516), according to Ibn Iyas.

After the Mamluks' defeat in the battle of Marj Dabiq, the Ottomans occupied all of Syria and moved across the Sinai desert, where they were harassed by bedouins. The bedouins continued to rob and kill soldiers whom they captured after the battle of Raydaniyya outside Cairo (January 23, 1517). Ibn Iyas, who hated the bedouins intensely, writes that they would have plundered the whole country had it not been for God's mercy.<sup>2</sup>

In Safar 923/March 1517 reports came from the Sharqiyya province that the bedouins were not only attacking Ottoman soldiers, but also taking advantage of the unstable situation to raid, loot and burn villages and towns, among them the towns of Qalyub, Qalqashanda, and Shubra al-Minya (possibly al-Khayma), a few miles from Cairo. Selim had to send a force of 1,500 men to repulse them.<sup>3</sup>

Tuman Bay, the last Mamluk sultan, valiantly organized resistance, although the main body of his army had already been decimated in Marj Dabiq and Raydaniyya. He told Selim that he still had many bedouins and Mamluk fighters at his disposal. Indeed, after the last battle which Tuman waged and lost at al-Jiza (the battle of al-Munawat), the Ottomans paraded 300 heads of the slain Mamluks and bedouins in Cairo.<sup>4</sup> Tuman Bay escaped to Tarruga, located in a bedouin region of the Buhayra province, wearing the dress of the Hawwara tribe of Upper Egypt. There he found refuge with Hasan ibn Mar'i, the Arab shaykh of the province, and his brother Shukr. The shaykh owed the sultan a debt of gratitude for favors which Tuman Bay had done him when he had been the deputy (*dawadar*) of Sultan al-Ghawri. Nonetheless, Hasan Ibn Mar'i betrayed Tuman Bay to Selim, who ordered him hanged at the Zuwayla Gate in Cairo.<sup>5</sup>

This act of treachery only increased the mutual hatred and distrust between the Arabs and the Mamluks. Diyarbakri recounts that Hasan ibn Mar'i bragged that the Ottomans owed him their possession of Egypt. Had he not delivered Tuman to Selim, the Mamluk sultan would have driven the Ottomans out of Egypt. But Mar'i was overheard, and when he came to the Citadel in Rajab 923/August 1517, he and two other Arab shaykhs were arrested by order of Selim in spite of a promise of safe-conduct given to him. Ibn Iyas remarks that the people

rejoiced at Hasan ibn Mar'i's misfortune, since Tuman Bay had been a courageous, modest and just ruler.<sup>6</sup>

During that period the Sharqiyya was the country's most unruly province because of bedouin disturbances there. The chief troublemaker was Shaykh 'Abd al-Da'im ibn Baqar, who rebelled against both the Mamluks and the Ottomans. He pillaged villages, attacked and plundered the caravans coming from Syria during and after Selim's campaign. He also robbed Mamluks who sought refuge in his province, and unlawfully seized the revenues of villages that had been designated as *waqfs*.<sup>7</sup>

Kha'ir Bey, the first Ottoman governor of Egypt, tried to pacify the Sharqiyya by bestowing the office of Arab shaykh (*shaykh al-'Arab*) on Ahmad ibn Baqar, 'Abd al-Da'im's father, and by appointing Baybars, 'Abd al-Da'im's brother, as his deputy. The military assistance given to Ahmad ibn Baqar enabled him to drive 'Abd al-Da'im from his headquarters at Minyat al-Ghamr. At this point 'Abd al-Da'im tried to come to terms with the government. He appeared before Kha'ir Bey at the Citadel carrying the kerchief of safe conduct, which had been sent to him through the provincial *kashif*. He brought gifts of horses, camels and cattle, and left with a robe of honor.<sup>8</sup>

On Dhu'l-Qa'da 19, 923/December 3, 1517 the gates of the city and of its quarters were closed, and a hectic manhunt started for Hasan ibn Mar'i, who had escaped from prison by breaking his chains and letting himself down the wall of the Citadel by rope. The search for the shaykh developed into a military campaign out of fear that he might gather Arabs around him and cause trouble. His escape prompted Kha'ir Bey to send a letter to the sultan in Istanbul. The bedouin had been imprisoned by the sultan's order, and his escape was, therefore, particularly embarrassing for the governor. The letter reports that a force of 300 Ottoman troops and 500 Mamluks under the command of Qa'itbay, a Mamluk officer, had been sent against Hasan ibn Mar'i together with some 3,000–4,000 loyal Arabs as reinforcements. Armed with muskets and cannon, the troops marched toward al-Jiza to repulse bedouins who had invaded the region from the west at Hasan's instigation and were harassing the 'Azzala bedouins living there.<sup>9</sup>

What Kha'ir Bey failed to report, but which both chroniclers recount, was that the campaign ran into difficulties because of the constant quarrels between the Ottoman and the Mamluk soldiers, with the Ottoman soldiers even threatening to kill their Mamluk commander. Shaykh Hammad, the chief of the 'Azzala bedouins in al-Jiza, suggested to Kha'ir Bey that he recall his army, because he doubted whether the

disunited government forces would be able to overcome 20,000 bedouins.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, on Dhu'l-Hijja 9, 932/December 23, 1517, the army attacked the bedouins in the Buhayra province and drove them westwards. Hasan ibn Mar'i tried to convince the pasha that he did not plan to revolt and that he was motivated by his feud with Isma'il ibn Akhi'l-Juwayli, a rival Arab shaykh. Hasan sent his brother Shukr with a personal message from Kha'ir Bey. Qa'itbay, a Mamluk emir, suspecting a typical bedouin ruse, promptly arrested Shukr. Yet, Hasan ibn Mar'i himself still remained at large. Kha'ir Bey finally consented to grant the Arab shaykh safe conduct,<sup>11</sup> a clever move on the part of the governor, since the Sharqiyya was in upheaval again. 'Abd al-Da'im ibn Baqar resumed his mischief, cutting off all communication between the villages and raiding them. Qa'itbay, who was ordered to lead a force against 'Abd al-Da'im, reviewed his Circassian troops, but finding that they lacked horses and weapons, he called off the attack. However, the show of force itself deterred the bedouins. Baybars ibn Baqar, with the aid of a Sufi shaykh, Abu'l-Hasan ibn Abi'l-'Abbas al-Ghamri, tried to work out a compromise between his brother 'Abd al-Da'im, and his father Ahmad. It seems that the appearance on the scene of yet another bedouin tribe encouraged the Sharqiyya Arabs to end their feuds.<sup>12</sup>

The newcomers were 'Arab al-Sawalim, who came from the north and immediately clashed with the Banu Baqar. The Sawalim were also accompanied by Arabs from the Nablus mountain in Palestine, who had escaped from the oppressive rule of Janbardi al-Ghazali, the governor of Syria. When the Sawalim approached Birkat al-Hajj and al-Matariyya in the vicinity of Cairo, Qa'itbay drove them off.<sup>13</sup>

'Abd al-Da'im was invited once again by Kha'ir Bey to come to him, which he did wearing a kerchief of safe conduct. As soon as Ahmad ibn Baqar learned of this, he hurried to the Citadel and made a long speech before the governor, denouncing his son's misdeeds and saying that he knew him best. He warned Kha'ir Bey that if released, 'Abd al-Da'im would destroy the Sharqiyya province for which Kha'ir Bey would bear the moral responsibility. Using similar arguments, the commander of the Citadel and the other emirs convinced Kha'ir Bey to imprison 'Abd al-Da'im and some forty of his companions. 'Abd al-Da'im's money and property, including his waterwheels and livestock, were confiscated. In the following weeks, many of the shaykh's followers were put to death by hanging, impalement, and being cut in two, after which their bodies were displayed in various parts of Cairo.<sup>14</sup>

On Rabi' I 20, 925/March 22, 1519 Inal al-Sayfi Tarabay, the *kashif* of the Gharbiyya, killed Hasan ibn Mar'i and his brother Shukr, thus avenging their betrayal of Tuman Bay. The *kashif* had invited the two shaykhs to a party and when they were drunk, a number of Circassian Mamluks fell upon them and killed them. One of the killers, it was reported, even drank the shaykhs' blood and mutilated their bodies. It was also said that their heads were hung on the same horse on which Tuman Bay had been taken to Cairo after his betrayal. In the capital, the heads of the two shaykhs were displayed at the Nasr Gate. A third brother, who resided in Cairo, was also put to death. Understandably, the Circassians and Tuman Bay's family in particular relished their revenge.<sup>15</sup>

A short time later, 'Ali al-Asmar ibn Abi'l-Shawarib was murdered by the *kashif* of Qalyub by exactly the same ruse. At a meeting of the Arab shaykhs, Husam al-Din ibn Baghdad charged angrily that the Mamluks were killing the bedouins because they were loyal to the Ottomans. The shaykhs decided that if the *kashifs* continued to persecute them, they would stop cooperating with the *kashifs*. Wishing to calm the Arabs, Kha'ir Bey ordered the *kashifs* to leave them alone. When the family of the murdered shaykh charged the *kashif* with wrongfully killing him, the *kashif* protested his innocence, and one of his Mamluks, who had allegedly committed the crime, was hanged. Diyarbakri suspects that the Mamluk was made a scapegoat for his master.<sup>16</sup>

At the beginning of Safar 926/January 1520, the government acted brutally against the Sawalim, who were causing havoc in the Sharqiyya. Diyarbakri, who was in the retinue of Kha'ir Bey, writes that the governor traveled about the province, ostensibly to hunt, but actually to supervise the operations against the Sawalim. It was arranged that the *kashif* of the Bilbays area invite the chiefs of the Sawalim to a feast, and that the soldiers would then kill them. In this manner, the *kashif* killed 12 Sawalim shaykhs. Diyarbakri says that Kha'ir Bey's presence in the province caused the villagers great misery: the Arab shaykhs gave him money, 2,000 head of cattle, and horses which they had taken from the peasants.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the Arabs from the Bilbays area attacked the Sawalim tribesmen and carried away much booty and many women and children.

One of the planners of this operation was al-Zayni Barakat ibn Musa, a high-ranking official, who had been inspector of markets under both the Mamluk sultans and the Ottomans. In 924/1518–19, he was appointed the Egyptian *amir al-hajj* and was also entrusted with

sensitive tasks related to bedouin affairs, which he handled with disastrous results.<sup>18</sup> Ibn Musa raided the encampments of the Sawalim, destroyed their dwellings, and led away their children and women, including the 60 most prominent people in the tribe. On Safar 10, 926/January 31, 1520 Ibn Musa entered Cairo wearing a Hawwara bedouin outfit. In front of his horse, the heads of Sawalim shaykhs were carried on spears and behind him seated on horseback were six flayed corpses of Sawalim shaykhs stuffed with straw and dressed in bedouin clothes.<sup>19</sup>

Soon after Kha'ir Bey returned to the Citadel, it became known that the enraged Sawalim had plundered the town of al-Salihiyya and a few neighboring villages, setting them on fire, and had also surrounded the forces of Ayas, the *kashif* responsible for the ironfisted policy. Kha'ir Bey blamed Ayas, saying that he had wanted only to drive the Sawalim out of the country. Now, after the harsh treatment, they would fight furiously. Diyarbakri adds that a bedouin tribe whose shaykhs are in captivity will be quiet, but when they are killed and the women abducted, the bedouins are certain to fight.<sup>20</sup>

The Sharqiyya also had to be pacified because of Kha'ir Bey's fear that the rebellion of Janbardi al-Ghazali, the governor of Syria, might spread to Egypt. A force under the *kashif* of al-Buhayra, a sensible and moderate man, was sent to stop the bedouins' outrages. Telling the Sawalim that it was hopeless to resist the state, he promised that if they cooperated with the government, one of them would be invested with a robe of office and all would enjoy security. Kha'ir Bey then named several Sawalim chiefs as Arab shaykhs in lieu of their slain comrades and also set free Najm, shaykh of the 'Ayid Arabs, who had been imprisoned for his alliance with the Sawalim. Furthermore, Kha'ir Bey ordered the Arab shaykhs to prepare for a possible invasion by Janbardi al-Ghazali, and told them to attack his forces at strategic points.<sup>21</sup>

Tranquility did not return to the Sharqiyya, however. Bedouins ransacked Qatya in Sinai and Khattara on the eastern borders of the province, and were moving toward al-Salihiyya. Alarmed, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Baqar sent his women to Cairo and concealed his money, fabrics and livestock. Once again, Diyarbakri notes that the troops sent to repulse the bedouins caused more harm than the latter by taking the fellahin's property and occasionally their women and children.<sup>22</sup> All this was happening amidst reports of the imminent invasion by al-Ghazali. The Syrian rebel apparently did not plan to lead an attack on Egypt, but sent bedouins and Kurds as a reconnaissance force. Pro-Ghazali bedouin invaders fought with local Arabs on the eastern frontiers of Egypt. The Arabs launched a night attack on the bedouins of

the Nablus region, led by Tarabay ibn Qaraja, and took their camels and horses as booty.<sup>23</sup>

Only one Arab shaykh in Egypt is known to have made the fatal mistake of supporting al-Ghazali. Ahmad ibn Qasim Abu'l-Shawarib of the Banu Baqar tribe contacted the rebel, hoping that he would be made head of the bedouins in his region. When the Ottomans crushed Ghazali's revolt in February 1521, the shaykh repented and was pardoned by Kha'ir Bey. The governor, however, was on his watch for the shaykh's first slip, and when this occurred, he ordered the *kashif* of the Sharqiyya to put him to death.<sup>24</sup>

As usual, bedouin unrest was a perfect index of political instability and now the bedouins were in a state of constant agitation. Baybars ibn Baqar escaped to Sinai, because he was afraid that he might be blamed for the disturbances. Ahmad ibn Baqar became the chief spokesman for the Sharqiyya Arabs. Ibn Musa again led a force into the region to quell the bedouins and to try to put an end to their intertribal fighting. In the west, Arabs from al-Jabal al-Akhdar ('the Green Mountain,' the northern uplands of Cyrenaica) invaded the Buhayra province and harassed the local population.<sup>25</sup>

It will be recalled that after Kha'ir Bey's death, Janim al-Sayfi and Inal, two Mamluk emirs, revolted and many Circassians and Arabs joined them. The bedouin rebels reached Birkat al-Habash, about five miles south of Cairo and some were already camped at al-Jiza. Many fellahin fled to the city where panic gripped the population, who started hiding their property and closing their shops until the pasha threatened them with hanging unless they stopped.<sup>26</sup>

To strengthen the government's position, Barakat ibn Musa was given the military rank of emir (*sanjaq beyi*). He went to the Sharqiyya where he mobilized the Arabs of the Banu Haram and Banu Wa'il tribes whom he brought to the outskirts of the city, only increasing the townspeople's fear.<sup>27</sup> Diyarbakri records the Cairenes' amazement at the sight of a bedouin army. People commented sarcastically: 'We thought that the Ottomans were more sensible than to raise a bedouin army. The Arabs fight well only for their subsistence and the honor of their families. Otherwise, they stand by to see who the winner is, and then loot the property of the loser.'<sup>28</sup>

The commander of the loyalist troops was Janim al-Hamzawi, one of the most colorful and influential figures of the period. Although of Mamluk descent, he was totally assimilated into Ottoman society and culture, yet Diyarbakri believed that he secretly hated the Ottomans. Diyarbakri refers to him as the pasha's deputy (*ketkhuda*), and he made

many trips to Istanbul. He also served as *amir al-hajj*, and was considered an expert on Arab affairs, whom the Arab shaykhs approached frequently with their problems.<sup>29</sup>

When Janim realized how unprepared his troops were for battle, he ceased fighting. Ibn Musa was in a much worse condition. He had agreed with the Arabs that he would give them daily four head of cattle, 20,000 loaves of bread, and fodder for their horses. But he ran out of provisions after several days and kept his promise only to the prominent bedouins. Whereupon the others threatened to kill him.<sup>30</sup> Inal, who also was supported by numerous bedouins, was on his way to assist Janim. In al-Jiza, his belongings were stolen by Hammad, shaykh of the 'Azzala. All the prominent Arab shaykhs—Ahmad ibn Baqar and ten of his sons, Husam al-Din ibn Baghdad of al-Minufiyya, and Isma'il ibn Akhi'l-Juwayli—went to the governor to express their allegiance to him. All received robes of honor. Notable for his absence was 'Ali ibn 'Umar, chief of the Hawwara and governor of Upper Egypt.<sup>31</sup> Ibn Musa tried to negotiate with the rebels, and even hinted that he secretly identified with the Mamluks. Nevertheless, he was killed by the order of Janim al-Sayfi. It was believed that Ahmad ibn Baqar held a grudge against him and instigated his death on Rajab 27, 929/June 15, 1523.<sup>32</sup> The attack on the rebels could no longer be delayed. As became usual in Ottoman Egypt, cannons determined the outcome of the battle, because the bedouins, who dreaded the sound and destructive power of a cannon, disappeared as soon as it was fired, leaving the rebels' Mamluk supporters alone in the field. Soon after the rebellion was crushed, the Arabs hunted down the fleeing Mamluks and took the heads of 500 of them to the Ottomans, who displayed them at Cairo's gates.<sup>33</sup>

On Sha'ban 15, 929/June 29, 1523 a high-ranking official arrived from Istanbul with imperial edicts of investiture for Ahmad ibn Baqar and 'Ali ibn 'Umar. Clearly, the sultan had not yet learned about the latter's rebellious inclinations. The official stopped at Minyat al-Ghamr, where he was entertained lavishly by Ahmad ibn Baqar. Soon afterwards, the shaykh brought the pasha the taxes of the Sharqiyya in full. Diyarbakri says that although the shaykh had caused much trouble and was responsible for Ibn Musa's death, the pasha could not harm him because of the edicts and honors he had just received.<sup>34</sup> More bedouin disturbances were reported in the eastern and western provinces. Again, the Arab shaykh of the Buhayra province called for help against invaders from the west. In the Sharqiyya, the bedouins were dealt a severe blow by a *kashif*, who attacked them with cannons and killed more than 400 of them. The 'Azzala bedouins were moving away from

the vicinity of the capital toward Upper Egypt, pursued by a force of 600 men who were guided by the Arab shaykh Isma'il ibn Akhi'l-Juwayli.<sup>35</sup>

Historians have almost completely overlooked the important role of the bedouins in the rebellion of Ahmet Pasha al-Kha'in, 'the Traitor.' From the outset, Ahmet Pasha and several Arab shaykhs, 'Ali ibn 'Umar in particular, cooperated with each other. The bedouins had to show whether they sided with the high-handed pasha or not. 'Ali ibn 'Umar went to the capital to declare his support for Ahmet Pasha and, no doubt, to discuss their next move with him. Najm, the shaykh of al-'Ayid, who had fallen into disfavor with the previous regime, did likewise. The pasha released 'Abd al-Da'im ibn Baqar from prison, reinstated him in the Sharqiyya province, and promised him an advancement. He also reappointed Ahmad ibn Baqar as *shaykh 'Arab*.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, Isma'il ibn Akhi'l-Juwayli, the Arab shaykh of the Buhayra, who had been demonstratively loyal to the Ottomans, fled with his family westwards to the Maghrib.<sup>37</sup> Infuriated by the shaykh's escape, Ahmet Pasha put the blame on his two chief advisers on Arab affairs. One of Ahmet Pasha's first steps was to try to get rid of the Janissaries. Before he rose in open revolt, he sent 70 of them back to Istanbul. When the Janissaries reached the seaport of Rashid (Rosetta), they learned of the revolt and decided to return to help their comrades in the Citadel, which was under siege. The Janissaries attempted to return unobserved, but when they passed Qalyub, they were seen and trapped by Ibn Abi'l-Shawarib, the Arab shaykh of Qalyubiyya. The shaykh handed them over to Ahmet Pasha, who had them beheaded.<sup>38</sup>

After the successful counter coup by a group of loyalist emirs led by Janim al-Hamzawi and Mehmet Bey, Ahmet Pasha escaped to the Sharqiyya, where Ahmad ibn Baqar gave him hospitality and promised him support. When Mehmet Bey contacted the bedouin shaykh and warned him that he was sheltering a rebel, Ibn Baqar replied diplomatically that bedouin hospitality did not permit him to kill his guest or hand him over to his pursuers. If Mehmet Bey wanted to capture Ahmet Pasha, he said, he should come for him. Ibn Baqar thus ensured himself against all eventualities, at least for the time being.<sup>39</sup> Mehmet Bey sent Janim al-Hamzawi at the head of a force, but again Janim hesitated because of the tension among the Ottomans, the Mamluks and Ahmet Pasha's numerous supporters. Mehmet Bey appointed a *qadi* to replace him at the Citadel and led the army himself. Once again, the bedouins melted away when the cannons were fired.

Ahmet Pasha was captured and beheaded on March 6, 1524, after being among the Arabs in the Sharqiyya for 13 days.<sup>40</sup>

The fact that the Arab tribes continued to challenge the Ottoman state after Ahmet's revolt has usually been overlooked. Politically, their threat did not seem as serious as Ahmet Pasha's actions, but militarily the bedouins nearly exhausted the Ottoman forces in Egypt.<sup>41</sup> Diyarbakri describes the bedouins as being in a state of euphoria. The Arabs of the Fayyum and Upper Egypt assembled and swore to remain united until they captured first Cairo and then the rest of the country; they believed that it would be easy to overcome the few Ottoman troops still in Cairo. When the bedouins' vanguard reached al-Jiza, the indefatigable Janim al-Hamzawi marched against them. Once again, Shaykh Hammad, the clever chief of the 'Azzala, was not carried away by the hotheads. He contacted the *kashif* of al-Jiza and promised him to dissolve the bedouin coalition without bloodshed.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile, the units that had been sent to Upper Egypt demanded reinforcements. Qasim Pasha, who found himself in dire need of manpower, enlisted inferior soldiers—the sons of Mamluks and Turks (or Anatolians, *Ervam*). The pasha sent boats up the Nile carrying muskets and cannons to relieve the besieged units. Elsewhere, bedouins were interdicting communications in Sinai. In Rajab 930/May–June 1524, government troops were dispatched to six different locations to deal with the Arab insurrection. The Ottoman forces had spread themselves thinly.<sup>43</sup> Since the majority of the soldiers were fighting the bedouins in the provinces an insufficient number remained to police the capital where thieves and bandits were active.<sup>44</sup>

Diyarbakri is contemptuous of a *sanjaq beyi* who was sent to the Sharqiyya. After losing many of his men, he called for help, claiming that he did not know how to fight the bedouins. Finally, he returned crestfallen to Cairo<sup>45</sup> where the people were saying that the Ottomans lacked sufficient manpower to hold onto Egypt and that they were about to relinquish the province. To dispel these rumours, Qasim Pasha paraded an impressive force in the streets of the capital.<sup>46</sup> In Sha'ban 930/June–July 1524, reports arrived that the army was beating back the Arabs in Upper Egypt<sup>47</sup>. In Dhu'l-Qa'da 930/September 1524, a reinforcement of Janissaries and guardians of forts (*hisar erleri*) arrived from Istanbul,<sup>48</sup> and three *sanjaq beyis* and their troops arrived from Anatolia. It was decided to replace the *kashifs* in the provinces with Ottoman *sanjaq beyis* in order to curb the Arabs more effectively.<sup>49</sup>

It became evident that Arab aspirations to control the country and drive the Ottomans out were idle dreams. Although outnumbering the

Ottomans, the bedouins did not stand a chance against the superior arms, better discipline and vast resources of the state. No one assessed the situation better than Mustafa 'Ali, the Ottoman historian, poet, and writer who has left a vivid description of Cairo; his words, written in 1599, are applicable to conditions prevailing in 1524:

Considering the overwhelming power of the Sultan of Rum and the fact that in Cairo and around the city there are certainly several hundred thousand disloyal bedouins, it is the strangest thing on earth that a minute number of soldiers produces a major effect of actual grandeur. Altogether there are not more than ten thousand salaried soldiers in Egypt. Although the despised bedouins around the country are more than several hundred thousand Arabs, God the exalted has changed their union into disunion. The various tribes have become enemies of each other and all have moved toward hostility and opposition. For instance, some tribes come and submit to the ruler of Egypt; with this backing they defeat their enemies and kill many of them. If this were not so, if their union had not turned into disunion and their agreement had not been broken up, the land of Egypt could not be ruled with less than a hundred thousand soldiers. This is another favor the Almighty has done to the sultans of the Ottoman house.<sup>50</sup>

In Dhu'l-Hijja 930/September 1524, the assessment in Istanbul was that the situation in Egypt was generally under control. The Janissaries and the *sanjaq beyis* were recalled from the provinces and ordered to return to the Turkish provinces of the Empire. Only Upper Egypt had not been completely pacified.<sup>51</sup> On Jumada II 9, 931/April 2, 1525, Ibrahim Pasha, the grand vizier, arrived in Egypt and fully restored Ottoman authority and prestige. All the bedouin chiefs came to Cairo to avow their loyalty and obedience to him. Ibrahim immediately arrested three prominent Arab shaykhs: 'Ali ibn 'Umar of Upper Egypt, Ahmad ibn Baqar of the Sharqiyya, and Husam al-Din ibn Baghdad of the Minufiyya province. A few days later, 'Ali ibn 'Umar, who had cherished the ambition of becoming an independent ruler, was hanged at the Zuwayla Gate for collaborating with Ahmet Pasha. Ahmad ibn Baqar, who, as noted above, had generally been loyal to the Ottomans, but who had made the fatal error of half-heartedly sheltering the rebel, suffered the same fate. Ibn Baghdad was set free, since Ibrahim Pasha was convinced that he had not been guilty of any anti-Ottoman activities.<sup>52</sup>

The *Qanun-name-i Misir*, promulgated by Ibrahim Pasha, devotes several paragraphs to the Arab shaykhs. Ottoman policy toward them was identical with that toward the Mamluks. Despite the Arabs' revolt, the Ottomans understood that they were indispensable for governing the countryside, and integrated them into the administrative structure according to the principles that had been in force under Qa'it Bay, the great Mamluk sultan. The *shaykh al-'Arab* is given the same functions and authority as a *kashif* (provincial governor). The *Qanun-name* states: *Bu meshayih-i 'Urban dahi kashifler gibidir*—'These Arab shaykhs are like *kash ifs*.'<sup>53</sup> The document mentions several well-known Arab shaykhs who may not be dismissed even by the *beylerbeyi* of Egypt. Should they do something amiss, the matter should be referred to Istanbul. The pasha is allowed to remove or punish other Arab shaykhs, but he is warned not to act out of caprice or unjustified motives.<sup>54</sup> The *Qanun-name* also expressly forbids the bedouins to keep or shelter military slaves (*qul*, i.e. Ottoman soldiers, or Mamluks).<sup>55</sup>

## THE OFFICIAL VIEW OF THE ARAB SHAYKHS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

### The Bedouin Tribes

The chief sources on the Arab shaykhs in the sixteenth century are the imperial edicts preserved in the *Mühimme Defteri* collection in the archives of the Prime Minister's Office in Istanbul. Arabic and Turkish chronicles add some details. Understandably, the archives provide much more information about Arab shaykhs, who held important administrative positions, than about Arab tribes. It should be remembered, however, that the shaykhs owed their positions as masters of much of Egypt's countryside to their tribesmen's arms.

The official documents refer to the Arabs, that is the bedouins, in general terms, and almost invariably they are mentioned as troublemakers and rebels, as a permanent source of harassment of the villagers and the state. Occasionally, they are bold enough to attack people in outlying quarters of the capital, such as Old Cairo and Bulaq.<sup>56</sup> Sometimes they caused real damage to agriculture. For example, on Ramadan 27, 928/August 20, 1522, Arabs destroyed the Jisr Khalfa' dam causing the Nile to fall by about 20 cm below its usual level for that time of the year, as a result of which the prices of grain immediately rose.<sup>57</sup>

The bedouins were considered the most serious threat to Egypt's internal security. Army officers were rewarded with promotions or much-desired transfers for fighting against them and beheading as many of them as possible. But the tribes could also direct their military power against anti-government rebels and rival tribes, as shown above. Arab emirs and their tribesmen were extremely important in the suppression of the Sipahi revolt of 1609 by Mehmet Pasha. Yet even in that case, care was taken to distinguish the Arabs from the regular Ottoman troops.<sup>58</sup>

It should be reiterated that many, or perhaps most, Arabs were not nomads, but rather semi-nomads or even sedentary peasants. For example, many of the Arabs of al-Jabal al-Akhdar came to the Buhayra province annually to cultivate the land there; they had to pay regular land taxes (*kharaj*) and for the privilege of pasturing their flocks.<sup>59</sup>

### The Functions of the Arab Shaykhs

The office of the Arab shaykh (*shaykh 'Arab*), literally and more precisely of the chief of the Arabs, which was a heritage from the Mamluk Sultanate, was vital for Ottoman Egypt's fiscal administration. In spite of the Arab uprising and disturbances, Ibrahim Pasha's *Qanun-name-i Misir* reaffirmed the shaykh's role in the administration of the countryside.<sup>60</sup> First and foremost, the Arab shaykh was a tax farmer (*multazim*), who collected the taxes in cash (in Upper Egypt, also in grain) from the province under his control.<sup>61</sup> He was responsible for public safety, agriculture and public works, particularly the all-important and sensitive irrigation system; he had to see to it that the canals and dams were in a good condition.<sup>62</sup> In Upper Egypt, the shaykhs also supervised the lending of seeds from government granaries to the fellahin.<sup>63</sup> They also reported unusual climatic changes, such as hailstorms and their effect on the harvest.<sup>64</sup> In the administration of their provinces, the shaykhs were assisted by clerks, accountants, and tax collectors, some of whom were *dhimmi*s, probably Copts. The shaykhs were responsible for keeping books, which were subject to inspection by local and central Ottoman authorities. In matters concerning land ownership or disputes over land, the shaykhs had to obey the decisions of the *topraq qadisi*, a *qadi* who specialized in land affairs.<sup>65</sup>

The imperial edicts always refer to Arab shaykhs as rulers of a region, never as leaders of their tribes. One document even uses the term *aqalim meshayihi*, 'shaykhs of the regions,' which expresses more accurately

the shaykh's function as seen by the government.<sup>66</sup> In a rather unusual case, the office of shaykh of the Buhayra province was given to an Ottoman officer of the *Müteferriqa* regiment who paid the sum of 10,000 *altuns* (gold coins) for it.<sup>67</sup> The Arabic sources for the period are more knowledgeable about bedouin society, and also name the Arab tribes.<sup>68</sup> It is obvious, however, that the authorities in Istanbul were not familiar with the Arab tribes of Egypt and probably were not interested in their names and genealogies.

The only provinces whose Arab shaykhs the edicts mention are Upper Egypt, or Sa'id, al-Minufiyya, al-Buhayra, and al-Jiza (the latter appears much less frequently than the others). The office remained the preserve of leading clans: Banu Baghdad in the Minufiyya, Banu Khabir in al-Jiza, the family of 'Isa ibn 'Umar in the Buhayra. Upper Egypt was the domain of Banu 'Umar for such a long time that it became associated with them even in official usage. One decree calls Upper Egypt *'Umar Ođlu vilayeti*, 'the province of Banu 'Umar.'<sup>69</sup> As already seen, Banu Baqar were the leading family in the Sharqiyya and the office of the Arab shaykh was theirs. Yet, neither the Banu Baqar nor any other Arab shaykh of the Sharqiyya is mentioned in the *Mühimme Defteri* documents of the second half of the sixteenth century. The silence of this source does not prove that no Arab shaykh fulfilled fiscal functions in the Sharqiyya, since the edicts in the *Mühimme* are merely sporadic reactions of the central government to the affairs of the provinces. It is also possible that the Sharqiyya province was considered too unruly and fragmented to be entrusted to Arab shaykhs as tax farmers. Another possible reason for the absence of references to the Banu Baqar and other Arab shaykhs in the Sharqiyya is that Da'ud Pasha, the ruler of Egypt from 1538 to 1549, suppressed the bedouins, killing some 6,000 of them and driving the Banu Baqar, Banu Haram and Banu Qartabay out of the Sharqiyya.<sup>70</sup>

### Arab Shaykhs and *Kashifs*

In the imperial edicts, the offices of *shaykh 'Arab* and *kashif* (provincial governor) are virtually synonymous, with the same orders and rulings applying to both. The office of *kashif*, too, was inherited from the Mamluk Sultanate, and existed during the Ottoman regime only in Egypt. Like the Arab shaykh, the *kashif* had to supervise agriculture, public works and public security, and both played a role in the collection of taxes. What distinguished one from the other was that the *kashifs* were army officers, that is *emirs*,<sup>71</sup> whereas the shaykhs were not members of

the military class (*'askeri*). The identity between the two offices is exemplified in an edict that prohibits anyone acting in the name of the highest officials in Egypt, including the pasha himself, from extorting money (*himayet*) from the peasants in return for protecting them against the agents of the *kashifs* and the Arab shaykhs. The edict complains that this practice encouraged the villagers not to pay their taxes to the *kashifs* and the Arab shaykhs.<sup>72</sup>

The impression that the two offices were identical in many respects is strengthened by the striking fact that no *kashifs* are mentioned in provinces under the control of Arab shaykhs and vice versa. Where there are records of clashes between two or more Arab shaykhs, or between an Arab shaykh and a *kashif* of a neighboring province, no mention is made of conflicts between an Arab shaykh and a *kashif* within the *same* province. The following edicts illustrate this point:

Sulayman, the Arab shaykh of the Minufiyya province, claimed that 50 villages of the Gharbiyya province had been annexed to the Minufiyya tax farm, which was his domain, but the *kashif* of the Gharbiyya refused to acknowledge the claim. In order to emphasize his opposition to the annexation, the *kashif* and other senior officials, including the pasha, sent 60–70 horsemen to raid the disputed villages. Declaring that they had rights in those villages, the raiders carried off the fellahin's food and animals.<sup>73</sup> The same Arab shaykh charged the *kashif* with extorting money from the fellahin, claiming that while the *kashifs* had previously used the peasants' oxen for public works—to cut dikes—they now took cash from them for the same purpose. This injustice has caused the fellahin to leave their villages, which led to a decline in provincial revenue, the shaykh said.<sup>74</sup>

The authorities in Istanbul did not question the Arab shaykh's right to make an accusation against the *kashif*; they treated the petition as a conflict between governors of equal rank of neighboring districts. Besides the standard official term of *shaykh 'Arab* (and the office as *sheykhül-'Arablik*), the decrees also used the terms *multazim* (tax farmer), *hakim* (ruler or governor), emir, bey, and even *kashif*. Some of the Arab shaykhs were also given military honors and ranks, a fact reflected in the documents, where they are honored by the formulas of blessing reserved for men with official status, such as *qudvetül-emajid vül-a'yan*, 'the model of the distinguished people and the noblemen,' *zida qadruhu*, or *dama mejduhu*, 'may his esteem (or glory) endure (or increase).'<sup>75</sup>

### Appointing the Arab Shaykhs

Like other officeholders, an Arab shaykh received an imperial patent (*berat-i hümayun*) and a robe of honor (*hil'at*). He usually received his appointment from the pasha after it had been approved by the sultan. In some cases, however, shaykhs went directly to the sultan's palace in Istanbul and obtained their patent. In Rabi' II 981/August 1573, for example, Sulayman of the Minufiyya province and 'Umran of Upper Egypt went to Istanbul and convinced the sultan's advisers to dismiss the Arab shaykhs of these two provinces and to confer the offices on them. The imperial edict says that Sulayman told the sultan that the incumbents Mansur and 'Allam were corrupt and oppressive rulers, who had doubled their taxes, but instead of remitting the money to the Treasury, they and their clerks had embezzled a sum of 50 *kises* (purses; one *kise* equaled 25,000 *paras* or 50,000 *aqches* at the time). Sulayman promised that if appointed Arab shaykh, he would recover those 50 purses, but if he failed, he would pay the money himself. He also claimed that since his forefathers had been Arab shaykhs of the province, he had a stronger claim on the office. The sultan accepted Sulayman's offer.<sup>76</sup>

Along with imperial patents, newly appointed Arab shaykhs obtained edicts concerning various administrative matters in their districts, apparently behind the back of the pasha (*beylerbeyi*) of Egypt, who was merely notified of the appointments and arrangements by imperial edicts.<sup>77</sup>

It is not surprising that the sultan and his advisers were unfamiliar with the exact boundaries of the districts they were conferring upon the Arab shaykhs, which resulted in conflicts and bloody battles between contending shaykhs. Haylas Muhammad, the shaykh of the Buhayra province, brought a formal charge against another Arab called Hammad ibn Khabir, who had been given as a tax farm the district of al-Jabal al-Akhdar (in Cyrenaica, outside Egypt) and the territory of 'Urban Shu'ba, a name that indicates that it was inhabited by bedouins. Hammad's patent included a proviso that no one else's interests should be infringed upon. It was later learned that the bedouins of al-Jabal al-Akhdar came to Buhayra annually to till lands there, for which privilege they paid land taxes. Likewise, the district of 'Urban Shu'ba belonged to the Buhayra tax farm. This ambiguous situation resulted in an armed conflict in which more than 200 people were killed. It is hinted that the clash was instigated by Hammad (who was later removed to the al-Jiza district). The edict concludes that

Hammad's appointment was null and void since it included the condition that his patent was valid only if the regions were not part of an existing tax farm.<sup>78</sup>

In some cases, Istanbul expressly left the appointment of Arab shaykhs to the pasha, who was authorized to name one, two, or more candidates for the office.<sup>79</sup> In all lower-level decisions related to the administration of a remote province, such as Egypt, the sultan had to follow the advice of his representatives there. The pashas took advantage of this situation, and appointed whomever they pleased. A special strongly-worded decree in 982/1574 reminded them that they must obtain the sultan's approval for each appointment.<sup>80</sup>

### Arab Shaykhs as Army Commanders

One of the most salient features of Ottoman Egypt's social history was the rise of local elements and the narrowing of the gap between the rulers and the ruled that had existed in Mamluk times. The Arabs are perhaps the best example of this trend.<sup>81</sup> In Ottoman Egypt, Arab shaykhs sometimes became commanders and supervisors of Ottoman and Mamluk emirs. While this did not happen often, the fact that it happened at all bears witness to the vitality of the bedouins and to the military establishment's greater flexibility (or, as some might prefer, a weakening of discipline). A few instances will illustrate this point:

The above-mentioned Hammad ibn Khabir was given the rank of *sanjaq beyi*, and his name is mentioned along with the Ottoman emirs fighting rebels in Yemen.<sup>82</sup> 'Umran, an Arab shaykh of Upper Egypt, pointed out to the authorities in Istanbul that his predecessors had 50–60 Janissaries from Cairo under their command to assist the Arab ruler of the Sa'id to collect taxes. They had four cannons of the *zarbzen* type, but a pasha who had passed through Upper Egypt on his way to assume the governorship of Habesh had taken the Janissaries and the cannons. 'Umran petitioned the sultan to replace them and the request was granted in principle.<sup>83</sup>

The highest position achieved by Arab shaykhs in the sixteenth century was that of the rulers of the Buhayra province. At least two shaykhs were made *umara' al-hajj*, one of the most prestigious and lucrative positions in Egypt.<sup>84</sup> In the Mamluk Sultanate, only the highest ranking emirs (*amir mi'a*, *muqaddam alf*) could aspire to that office, and certainly no Arab shaykh could have attained it. 'Isa ibn Isma'il ibn 'Amir, the shaykh of the 'Awna Arabs of the Buhayra, was *amir al-hajj* in 963/1555–56 and from 970/1562–63 to 972/1564–65.

His son 'Umar, who succeeded him, was *amir al- hajj* in 999 and 1000/1590–92 and again in 1002/1593–94 and 1003/ 1594–95.<sup>85</sup>

In 933/1585, 'Umar ibn 'Isa was named commander of the Egyptian contingent in the Ottoman army fighting in Persia. Significantly, the edict refers to him as the governor (*hakim*) of the Buhayra, not as the Arab shaykh of the province. The edicts related to that campaign state expressly that he will command 'tribesmen, who are under his jurisdiction, bedouin shaykhs, *kashifs*, Circassian beys, and soldiers who receive salaries in Egypt'; yet the language of the edicts gives the impression that the emphasis was on enlisting Arab and Mamluk forces rather than regular Ottoman regiments.<sup>86</sup>

### The Arab Shaykhs' Finances

There is little doubt that Arab shaykhs were among the richest people in Egypt. A patent for a tax farm required a down payment of several hundred purses. Information scattered in the documents shows that some shaykhs possessed property worth between 50,000 and 250,000 gold pieces (*altuns*).<sup>87</sup> There were shaykhs who owned villages (as *mulk*, privately held land), plantations, agricultural equipment, livestock and slaves. Some shaykhs became wealthy by administering their provinces prudently.<sup>88</sup> One shaykh in Upper Egypt was granted the monopoly of exploiting the emerald mines as a tax farm for 15 purses annually.<sup>89</sup>

Nevertheless, the shaykhs were constantly in debt to the Treasury, compelling them to borrow money, mainly from the wealthy merchants of Cairo. The debts of the shaykhs of Upper Egypt were particularly heavy, sometimes exceeding 150,000 *altuns* and hundreds of thousands of *irdabbs* of grain.<sup>90</sup>

The official documents show clearly how often the shaykhs could not or would not meet their tax farm obligations. Some of them fled, others were arrested and imprisoned until they paid the debt due to the government. Quite often, shaykhs were exiled to Rhodes where they were kept in the citadel. A few shaykhs were put to death by the pashas, the official reason given was rebelliousness and sedition, but the chroniclers sometimes suspect that the pashas coveted the shaykhs' wealth.<sup>91</sup> Knowing that it was not easy to collect money from Arab shaykhs, who would conceal their property, the government created special armed units called *havvale*, or 'assignment,' empowered to seize a shaykh's property.<sup>92</sup>

The edicts summarized below give examples of these tax-related confrontations between shaykhs and the authorities and illustrate the complicated and unsatisfactory nature of the relations between the Arab shaykhs and the state.

Yunis, the shaykh of Upper Egypt, had been imprisoned because of unpaid debts to the Treasury. After his release and reinstatement in office, he borrowed money from Cairo merchants to purchase clothes, arms and equipment for himself and his retinue before leaving for Jirja. On the way, however, he was rearrested and all his money and belongings were confiscated to cover his old debt. He brought the matter before a religious authority; the details of his appeal are unknown, but he was probably imprisoned again.<sup>93</sup>

Ahmad, a fiscal inspector, while touring the Alexandria bay area to supervise the collection of taxes summoned Mansur ibn Baghdad, the Arab shaykh of the Minufiyya province, who owed the Treasury over 275 purses. Mansur claimed that he had had many justified expenses, but the decree asserted that he had mismanaged the agricultural production in his province, dikes had collapsed due to his negligence, and arable land had been left fallow. Worse still, he had gathered around him outlaws and fugitives from the Yemen wars and refused to hand them over to the authorities. To make matters worse, he did not obey *qadis'* orders to account for his crimes. Finally, he was dismissed and replaced by 'Allam, but 'Allam too, soon became indebted, and a *havvale* unit was sent to confiscate his property. The decree concludes bitterly that it was difficult to make the Arab shaykhs pay their debts, and that it would be preferable to rely on *kashifs*. The tax farmers, it claimed, were enriching themselves and building large houses for themselves at public expense. Those in debt to the Treasury should be imprisoned and 'not a single *aqche* or a single grain should be left on them,' which is a recurring formula in the edicts.<sup>94</sup>

It will be recalled that Sulayman of the Banu Baghdad clan went directly to the sultan's palace in Istanbul where he was given the office of the Arab shaykh of the Minufiyya, replacing the above-mentioned Mansur and 'Allam. An edict issued two years later reveals that Sulayman satisfied the demands of the Treasury for the year 981/1573–74, but did not pay all that was due for the following year. One night, he disappeared and his property, worth 19,084 *altuns*, was confiscated; 'Allam was again named *shaykh 'Arab*. It seems that Sulayman intended exercising his persuasive skill again, because the edict says that he was probably heading for Istanbul. The sultan assures the *beylerbeyi*

of Egypt, to whom the decree is addressed, that upon Sulayman's arrival in Istanbul he would be sent back to Egypt in shackles.<sup>95</sup>

The shaykhs also vied with each other by intrigue and even armed conflict for power and for the income from tax farming. It was by no means unusual for a shaykh, who had been imprisoned for debt and even charged with embezzlement, to be set free and reappointed. The career of the above-mentioned Mansur ibn Baghdad of the Minufiyya province provides an illuminating example. Mansur was a young and reckless man, who mismanaged his province and relied on influential friends in Istanbul. Nevertheless, he was dismissed by Sinan Pasha, the governor of Egypt, on Dhu'l-Qa'da 14, 979/March 29, 1572, and was replaced by 'Allam. Mansur remained in prison for two years until Hüseyin Pasha set him free and reappointed him, but eight years later Üveys Pasha dismissed him again.<sup>96</sup>

### Arab Shaykhs as Oppressive Rulers

There is ample evidence that Arab shaykhs were as oppressive and exploitative rulers as the *kashifs*. There are many instances of heavy taxes, embezzlement of public funds, and harsh treatment of villagers, of which the following decree, issued to the *beylerbeyi* and the *defterdar* of Egypt, is an example.

Two residents of two villages in the Minufiyya province went to the sultan's palace in Istanbul and presented a petition against Mansur and 'Allam, the Arab shaykhs of the province. The petition accused the shaykhs of killing men, abducting women and boys, attacking the villagers' homes and fields, causing damage to crops, and stealing camels. These depredations laid the villages waste and their inhabitants fled. The petitioners demanded that a religious court investigate the circumstances of the killings. The villagers further charged that the Arab shaykhs, who were the tax farmers, instead of being satisfied with the annual payment of 3–4 purses, extorted an additional two, which they did not hand over to the Treasury.

The petitioners proposed that they themselves pay their taxes directly to the Treasury, as they had once done. They also offered to pay an additional purse, either in advance or in installments, and to provide bondsmen in guarantee of payment. They added that they were capable of administering their villages by themselves and begged to be protected against the shaykhs.<sup>97</sup> Unfortunately, the government's decision in this matter is not known.

Some shaykhs tilled land owned by other people and took the crops. Another illegal act, already referred to regarding ‘Abd al-Da’im ibn Baqar, was the embezzlement of *waqf* money. An edict was prompted by the complaint of a eunuch (*agha*), from the imperial palace, who was the trustee of *waqfs* for the residents of Mecca and Medina. The *agha* accused an Arab shaykh of deceitfully removing Dashta in Upper Egypt from the list of the *waqf* villages whose income supported the people of the two holy cities. Although an imperial edict had been obtained to remedy this wrong, the shaykh repeated his crime.<sup>98</sup>

### Efforts to Replace the Arab Shaykhs by Emirs

The edict listing the misdeeds of Mansur ibn Baghdad shows that the government had for some time been considering the possibility of replacing the Arab shaykhs with *kashifs*. Later, during the relatively long incumbency of Mesih Pasha (982–988/1575–80), a serious effort was made to rid the state of the shaykhs’ services. It appears that what moved the authorities to action was the disappointing performance of the Arab rulers of Upper Egypt, a region which, owing to its remoteness and economic importance as Egypt’s main source of grain, was particularly important but also subject to misrule.

At the beginning of Muharram 982/April 1574, ‘Umran, who had recently been installed as the Arab shaykh of the Sa’id, was in jail for mismanaging the revenue, and the estate of Ahmad, a previous Arab shaykh, (described in an earlier document as ‘the most honest of the Arab shaykhs’) was under a *havv* unit assigned to collect his dues.

The pasha complains in a letter to his superiors in Istanbul that the remoteness of Upper Egypt from Cairo enables Arab shaykhs to ignore the *havv* officers and the messengers (*chavushes*) sent from the capital; the shaykhs pay their debts to private moneylenders rather than to the Treasury. In a decree, the sultan concluded that since the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, the shaykhs had never complied with the terms of their tax farms, and had often embezzled public money; they gave shelter to bandits and rebellious bedouins, instead of repressing them.<sup>99</sup>

This imperial decree shows that the pasha had asked the sultan to approve the dismissal of the Arab shaykhs and appoint in their place emirs (*sanjaq beyis*) whose annual salaries would be paid by the Egyptian Treasury; salaried agents (*ümen*) of the Treasury would collect taxes, and the emirs would be given authority to maintain law and order, including the power to impose death sentences (which the Arab shaykhs did not have). The pasha was ordered to specify how many *sanjaq beyis*

would be needed to subjugate the Sa'id, to send only able officers, all devout Muslims knowledgeable about conditions in the province, and that the number of soldiers assigned to those beys should be sufficient to keep the Arabs in check. Another edict of the same date emphasized the oppressiveness of the shaykhs which caused the fellahin to abandon their villages. It was decreed that all Egyptian provinces —not only the Sa'id—be placed under *sanjaq beyis* and the pasha was ordered to prepare a list of his candidates.<sup>100</sup> The only exception to the new arrangement was the Buhayra province, ruled by Haylas Muhammad. The Arab shaykhs of that province, as has already been shown, had a special status as *amir al-hajj* and *serdar*. Haylas Muhammad's loyalty, or the problematic nature of that sensitive border region which no outsider could have handled, may explain the government's special treatment of Buhayra.

One reason for the decision to go ahead with the important political and administrative reform may have been the lack of a candidate for the office of the Arab ruler of Upper Egypt in Muharram 983/April 1575. Shaykh Ahmad had escaped and 'Umran's candidacy had raised controversy. While the latter was supported by some members of the Cairo Divan, others backed Yunis, another shaykh of the Banu 'Umar clan, who was in prison for debt. After considering and rejecting Ibrahim Bey, a former *sanjaq beyi* of the province of Ibrim in the far south, the choice finally fell on Süleyman Bey, an officer who had previously served in Jerusalem.

According to the edict, the tax farms (*muqata'at*) in Upper Egypt were to be entrusted to officials of the Treasury (*ümena*) and tax farmers (*mültezims*), who were ordered to deliver the taxes directly to Cairo. Süleyman Bey would be responsible for public safety, and a sufficient number of troops would be assigned to assist him. This decree, too, reflects Istanbul's hesitation about the best course to be followed and explicitly leaves the final decision to the pasha, who made Süleyman the governor of Jirja in Dhu'l-Hijja 983/March 1576, responsible for collecting the revenues of the province (as tax farmer) and for public order.<sup>101</sup>

The new policy appeared extremely successful at first. On Rajab 25, 984/October 18, 1576, the sultan congratulated the pasha after receiving his report, which described Egypt as tranquil and prosperous. A special section of the report was devoted to the excellent manner in which Süleyman Bey was administering Upper Egypt, which 'has not enjoyed such a degree of security since the Ottoman conquest of Egypt.'<sup>102</sup> Another edict was devoted to Süleyman Bey's request for 15,000 *altuns*

to build a fort in Jirja. It argued that if soldiers were stationed there, the province's security would be much enhanced and merchants would be able to travel about more safely; the Arabs would be better held in check, since the fort would also be used to imprison hostages of tribes that refused to pay taxes. On another occasion, the bey asked that a rotating force of 1,000 soldiers be stationed in Jirja under his command. These requests were granted.<sup>103</sup>

At the end of 984/March 1577, Süleyman was promoted to pasha and appointed governor of Habesh.<sup>104</sup> However, a decree issued a few months later stated that he could not go there for lack of funds and that his brother had been sent instead. Since service in Habesh was very unpopular and often considered a form of banishment, it is possible that Süleyman's financial difficulties were only a pretext for evading the commission. Two months later, in Rabi' I, 985/May 1577, Süleyman was reappointed as the *sanjaq beyi* of Jirja at an annual salary of 500,000 *aqches* (which equalled 250,000 *paras* at that time).<sup>105</sup> It would seem, however, that the high command in Istanbul insisted on sending Süleyman to Habesh although he was needed in Egypt to suppress a bedouin revolt. Süleyman, who is called pasha in the decree, suppressed the revolt, beheading over 150 bedouins. After a sharp decline in the revenues of Upper Egypt because of the Arab revolt, 150 boats were needed to send over 100,000 *irdabbs* of grain to Cairo. The edict, however, reveals that the central government suspected Süleyman of withholding that part of the grain which he was obligated to send to the imperial granaries.<sup>106</sup>

In a short while, the suspicion was confirmed. Edicts issued in 987/1579 and 988/1580 to the *beylerbeyi* and *defterdar* of Egypt and to Süleyman Pasha, order him to pay the money he still owed the Egyptian Treasury. Just as Arab shaykhs had done before, Süleyman Pasha blamed his unpaid dues on the *sharaqi*, the unirrigated lands not reached by the Nile floods. The governor of Egypt was ordered not to let Süleyman leave for Habesh before paying his debt in full.<sup>107</sup> When Süleyman finally left Jirja, the authorities in Istanbul and Cairo came full circle to where they had been five or six years before: they returned to the original rulers of Upper Egypt—the Arab shaykhs of the Banu 'Umar clan. The *beylerbeyi* of Egypt was given the choice between 'Umran or 'Ali, both of whom were in exile in Rhodes when the edicts were issued in 987/1579.<sup>108</sup>

Banu 'Umar continued to rule the Sa'id until 1610, when an Ottoman emir was appointed in their stead. The government had clearly decided that it could not dispense with the services of the Arab shaykhs, the

promising beginning of Süleyman Bey's term of office notwithstanding. It is not known whether the decision to replace the Arab shaykhs with *kashifs* in other provinces was implemented as planned. Yet the language and contents of the decrees make it clear that the authorities considered Süleyman Bey's appointment in Upper Egypt the first step toward a new provincial policy, which, as it turned out, failed.<sup>109</sup>

## THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

We have seen that Arab shaykhs in their capacity as tax farmers and governors were important, albeit very problematic, instruments of the Ottoman administration of Egypt in the sixteenth century. Yet toward the end of the century, the Ottomans attempted to replace them by emirs of the regular army. *Sanjaq beyis* governed Upper Egypt from 1019/1610 until about 1660, when the dominance of the beys came to an end. This decline of the beys coincided with the renewed vigor of the Arab tribes in the Sa'id and elsewhere.<sup>110</sup>

The seventeenth century not only witnessed the emergence of the beylicate, but also the close cooperation between the Mamluk Faqari faction with the bedouin Sa'id groups against the Qasimi-Haram alliance. A strong interdependence between Mamluk and bedouin societies developed: Arab revolts could be suppressed, but the bedouin chiefs' influence and power in the villages from which the beys drew their economic strength could not be ignored. The shaykhs provided economic and military support, the Arab chiefs of Upper Egypt in particular sending shiploads of grain and other agricultural produce to their friends and allies in the capital. Military assistance was important to government troops as well as to Mamluk factions: Arab horsemen helped Mehmet Pasha suppress the Sipahi revolt in 1609,<sup>111</sup> they contributed to the victory of the Faqari duumvirate over the Qasimi emirs in 1647<sup>112</sup> and to the defeat of Muhammad Bey, the rebellious governor of Jirja, by government troops in 1659.<sup>113</sup> In these and other armed encounters, the Hawwara and other tribes of Upper Egypt were helpful, as were the warriors of the Banu Khabir, the Arab rulers of the district of al-Jiza, adjacent to Cairo, who are frequently mentioned in the sixteenth and seventeenth century sources. Ibn Khabir (or Habiroghlu in the Turkish sources) had been given the rank of *sanjaq beyi* in the sixteenth century and served in Yemen.<sup>114</sup>

The weakening of the pashas in the seventeenth century encouraged a massive migration of bedouins into Egypt from the west. Abu Salim al-'Ayyashi, a well-known North African traveler who visited Egypt in

the middle of the seventeenth century, attributes the influx of the bedouins from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica to the oppressive rule there and to economic need. The most important North African tribes, the Hanadi, the Bahja and the Afrad settled in the Buhayra province. Al-'Ayyashi reports that the rulers in Cairo played one tribe against the other.<sup>115</sup> The most turbulent nomadic element was the Maghribi Arab tribe of Banu Wafī who were creating havoc, particularly in the provinces of Buhayra and Bahansa, toward the end of the century. Several military expeditions were sent against them: in 1111/1699, an imperial edict ordered that a force of 1,000 troops under the command of the famous Iwaz Bey al-Faqari march on 'Abdallah ibn Wafi, the Maghribi outlaw, to drive his tribe out of Egypt. He was, indeed, killed and the tribe, which had been a threat to Cairo itself, was rendered harmless.<sup>116</sup>

Generally, the Arab tribes fulfilled several vital functions. They were responsible for the security of their areas for which the state paid them subsidies. The Arabs in charge of the duty called *darak* were particularly needed along the pilgrim routes which they had to inspect—among others for sources of water—and to warn against robbers.<sup>117</sup> Arab tribes also provided transportation to the pilgrims' caravan and carried the yearly supply of grain to Mecca and Medina.<sup>118</sup> Al-Jaziri, who was secretary of *amir al-hajj* for many years in the sixteenth century, reports that Arabs in charge of a *darak* would sometimes steal from the pilgrims in other shaykhs' *darak* territory. The 'Aqaba area was always particularly dangerous, since Arabs attacked pilgrims there who were returning from Mecca.<sup>119</sup> The Arabs often attacked caravans out of a feeling, justified or not, that they had been cheated of their subsidies. They were frequently cruel toward villagers or travelers and examples abound of the pashas, emirs, or officers treating them ferociously and dishonestly.<sup>120</sup>

### THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—THE ZENITH OF ARAB POWER

The continued decline of state authority and the intensification of factional rivalries in Cairo in the eighteenth century offered the Arab shaykhs new opportunities. Two clans in particular, the Habayiba in Lower Egypt and the Hawwara in Upper Egypt attained virtual autonomy and spectacular wealth and power. The shaykhs exploited the quarrels within the military society to their advantage, gaining influence with the Mamluk emirs, and even with the Ottoman regiments. Not only had

some Hawwara Arabs refused to pay their taxes on the ground that they were Janissaries and 'Azab,<sup>121</sup> but in the armed conflict of 1711 the Hawwara sided with the Faqariyya and the Janissaries, while their rival, the bedouin emir of Akhmim, supported the Qasimiyya and the 'Azab corps.<sup>122</sup>

The Mamluk bey of Jirja, the administrative center of the Sa'id, was the nominal governor of the south, but the real power was in the hands of the Arab shaykhs, who even interfered in the nomination of the bey of Jirja. In the 1730s, Pococke wrote: 'In Upper Egypt there were twenty-four districts, but many of them are now swallowed up by Arab sheikhs... These great sheikhs have often many Turks in their service, who having been on the vanquished side have been obliged to fly from Cairo in time of public insurrections, which frequently happen.'<sup>123</sup>

The seat of the Hawwara chiefs was Farshut, in the province of Qena, from which they controlled the west. Their interest clashed with those of other Arabs in the south, mainly in the bedouin province of Akhmim, and of another bedouin shaykh of Bardis who held the entire east bank of the Nile between Qena and Esna. Around 1740, the Hawwara, under the leadership of Shaykh Humam, decisively defeated the Bardisi emir and by mid-century, the Arab dynasty of Akhmim was extinct. Shaykh Humam's rise to power was impeded by the strong rule of Ibrahim Ketkhuda, but after his death in 1754, Humam's control of the Sa'id was undisturbed.<sup>124</sup>

Al-Jabarti's highly laudatory biography of Shaykh Humam merits recalling. Al-Jabarti's judgement of the shaykh is illuminating, since the historian was imbued with the values of his society and his assessment reflects Humam's immense prestige.<sup>125</sup> *Shaykh al-'Arab*, the great emir Humam ibn Yusuf ibn Ahmad al-Hawwari, was a patron of the rich and poor alike. His wealth, generosity and hospitality were without equal. He had over 300 slave girls, black slaves and Mamluks. His fields were plowed by 12,000 oxen. He had many mills, waterwheels, buffaloes and cattle. His crops included sugar cane. His large granaries were always full. The refugees of the Qasimi Mamluks, whom he sheltered, intermarried with his people and learned to speak Arabic. He employed many clerks to administer his estates. Humam was a deeply religious man. He extended his hospitality to many important ulama, and also supported ulama in Cairo.

The downfall of Humam and the Hawwara was a result of the tyrannical policies of 'Ali Bey, who probably could not tolerate a ruler as illustrious and independent as Humam. The shaykh's end was precipitated by the quarrel between 'Ali Bey and Salih Bey, Humam's

friend and ally who sought refuge with him in Farshut. Humam was betrayed by his cousin and left Farshut for Esna, where he died on December 7, 1769. The Hawwara chiefs then either surrendered to Muhammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab or went into exile. Humam's son Darwish succeeded his father in Farshut, but was a weak ruler. It was not long before the powerful people in Cairo extorted all his riches, leaving him to die penniless. Isma'il Abu 'Ali was another Hawwara shaykh who ruled the regions of Qus and Qena. He was killed in 1779 by Murad Bey, and his territories were divided among the *kashifs*. Eventually, the Hawwara lost their military power and became fellahin.

By contrast with the Hawwara who were an established and ancient bedouin federation that had arrived in Egypt from Tunisia in the sixteenth century, the Habayiba of Lower Egypt were upstarts of sorts, without an illustrious pedigree. Their meteoric rise in the early eighteenth century owed much to their valor and excellence as horsemen. They came from Shatab, a small village near Asyut in the south, and settled in the province of Qalyubiyya, just north of Cairo. Their center was Dijwa, a village of considerable size on the bank of the Nile. The Habayiba, named after Habib ibn Ahmad, their first prominent shaykh, became the leading clan among the Arabs of the Delta, the 'Arab al-Jazira. Politically, they were Sa'd and rivals of the bedouins of the Haram party, who lived nearer Alexandria. Like many other tribes, the Habayiba were not nomads or even semi-nomads, but sedentary Arabs, who made their living from agriculture or the exploitation of peasants.<sup>126</sup>

Habib and his sons, Salim and Suwaylim,<sup>127</sup> entered into an open feud with Isma'il ibn Iwaz, the strongest emir in Cairo, after the Qasimi victory in 1711. Upon the instigation of Qaytas, the Faqari bey who wanted to settle a score with the Qasimiyya, Salim attacked Isma'il's horses while they were in pasture, thereby initiating a prolonged warfare between Isma'il's aide-de-camp and the Arabs, in which cannons were fired and many people killed. Isma'il destroyed Dijwa and proclaimed to the whole country that no one should dare shelter Habib and his sons. He threatened to destroy any village that disobeyed that order. Ahmad Shalabi goes into great length about the strife between Isma'il and Salim ibn Habib; the latter demonstrated great audacity, surprising the bey below his palace, attacking his villages, carrying away his animals, and prohibiting traffic on river and by land.<sup>128</sup> The Habayiba were finally compelled to retreat to Gaza in Palestine, where Habib died. After some time, Salim returned to Qalyub and contacted Ibrahim Bey Abu Shanab, the aged and respected leader of the Qasimiyya. Ibrahim helped Salim

and his tribe by interceding on their behalf with the Banu Wafi, his protégés, who allowed the Habayiba to pitch tents in their territory in the west. Ibrahim also provided food and other provisions to the Habayiba from his own villages, but after Ibrahim's death, the Habayiba faced destitution. In despair, Salim presented himself before Isma'il ibn Iwaz whose mercy he sought, since he was too tired to move from place to place like the nomad bedouins, 'every day in another valley.' Isma'il forgave him and permitted Salim and his people to return to their former place in the Qalyubiyya province. There, Salim rebuilt his old center and resumed the extremely important task of guarding both banks of the Nile between Bulaq, the river port of Cairo, and Rashid (Rosetta) and Dimyat (Damyetta). Salim reestablished himself as a wealthy and powerful shaykh, who had many plantations and gardens cultivated by gardeners from Damascus and Rashid, and was the owner of white slave girls and black slaves (but not Mam luks). Salim also took an active part in the battles against Muhammad Bey Cherkes.

Salim died on August 6, 1736, and was succeeded by his youngest brother Suwaylim, who was also an efficient ruler. He controlled all the river traffic. Ruffians in his service would sail on boats, stop the ships on the Nile and demand illegal payments. Suwaylim's network of patronage extended over the majority of the villages of the Qalyubiyya and Sharqiyya provinces; *multazims*, officers, and village heads obeyed him. Suwaylim's close contacts with the Mamluk beys of Cairo thrust him into the power struggles there. First, 'Uthman Bey al-Faqari and then Ibrahim Ketkhuda attacked Dijwa, but in both cases the Arabs, having been warned, had sent away their women and property. Suwaylim finally reached an accord with Ibrahim to the effect that the former would give up the protection money he extorted from villages and from boats sailing on the two branches of the Nile Delta. Suwaylim's rule ended when 'Ali Bey's forces attacked him. Suwaylim escaped to the Hanadi bedouins in the Buhayra province, where he was captured and beheaded. The Hanadi, too, were broken. 'Ali Bey spared the other members of the Habayiba, but dispersed them. Murad Bey later allowed them to return to their villages. The next shaykh was Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn Suwaylim, whose rule was but a shadow of his grandfather's.<sup>129</sup>

Even after the great bedouin federations had been destroyed during the reign of 'Ali Bey, the bedouin Arabs did not cease their warlike activities. Sometimes they were easy prey to the unscrupulous emirs, especially Murad and Ibrahim. Yet they were capable of disturbing public order. In 1785, bedouins of the Buhayra asked the duumvirs for

help against other bedouins in their vicinity. Murad Bey went to Buhayra, ostensibly to assist them, but since he had been bribed by the other party, he led those whom he had promised his protection into a fatal ambush, and returned to Cairo with booty.<sup>130</sup> In another case, during Hasan Pasha's expedition to Egypt, the Arabs planned a night attack on the Mamluks' houses, but the Mamluks, having gotten wind of the plan, ambushed the attackers.<sup>131</sup> In another incident in 1787, Isma'il Bey, Hasan Pasha's *Shaykh al-balad*, was curiously forgiving toward the 'Ayid bedouins, who had attacked a trade caravan en route from Suez to Cairo. They had plundered large quantities of spices, coffee and cloth, and abducted the merchants' wives, intending to hold them for ransom. The governor and Isma'il Bey had little sympathy for the merchants, since they needed the services of the Arabs as carriers of the belongings of *amir al-hajj*.<sup>132</sup>

These and similar incidents indicate the extent to which public security and orderly government declined toward the end of the eighteenth century. The irresponsible and grasping policies of the beys who succeeded 'Ali Bey and Muhammad Abu'l-Dhahab, the French occupation, and the reign of Mehmet 'Ali Pasha greatly weakened the bedouin Arabs. They were never able to recover their autonomy and influence in Egyptian society.

## 4 The Ulama

### BETWEEN THE RULERS AND THE RULED

The Egyptian ulama enjoyed a high social, economic and professional status under the Mamluks. As already pointed out by contemporary writers, especially Ibn Iyas, but even Sha'rani, the Ottoman occupation deprived the ulama of many of their privileges. This judgment was justified at the outset of the occupation, but in time the ulama regained their influence and by the end of the Ottoman period had even increased it. Apart from the top judicial posts of which the Egyptian ulama were deprived for the next three centuries by the Turkish ulama, the Egyptians carried on almost undisturbed by the Ottoman government, which respected the prestige of Egyptian Islamic learning.<sup>1</sup> The ulama fulfilled their customary functions in a Muslim society: guardianship of religious norms, values, and traditions; maintenance of social stability and unity; bridging over many gaps and differences, which could tear the society apart, and providing a literate elite who served as spokesmen for the people and as intermediaries between them and their rulers.<sup>2</sup> None of this was new; ulama had fulfilled these roles in other times and places, but in the harsh and often chaotic circumstances of Ottoman Egypt, the role fulfilled by the ulama was particularly necessary, even though most of them were rigid conservatives, with only a few being endowed with the charisma that was characteristic of many Sufis.

In the brutal and exploitative military dictatorship that prevailed in Ottoman Egypt, the ulama were often the last recourse of the oppressed subjects. Likewise, they were also a necessary link between the ruling class and the common people. The ulama were able to give a semblance of legitimacy to the emirs' rule, and it was wise on the part of the men in power not to provoke the ulama and push them into active, outspoken opposition to the regime. Regarded cynically from the rulers'

viewpoint, the ulama were a useful tool. Following a long tradition of political theory and practice, the ulama objected to rebellion against the rulers, even oppressive ones, and preached the doctrine of obedience, since 'one day of civil strife (*fitna*) is worse than 40 years of tyranny,' as an old and well-known saying put it. The rulers, both the representatives of the Ottoman government and the Mamluk beys, generally demonstrated their respect toward the ulama and supported them in various ways. Many pashas and emirs were known to revere ulama and to consult them. The term of office of Muhammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab (1773–5) can be regarded as the highpoint of the ulama's influence on an Egyptian ruler. Abu'l-Dhahab respected them, supported them materially, enjoyed their company, and accepted their intercessions.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the eighteenth century Mamluk emir, Yusuf Bey was an unusual example of an emir who disliked ulama and had many clashes with them.<sup>4</sup>

As a general rule, those in power solicited the ulama for *fatwas* whenever an emir was declared a rebel or in similar political crises. The ulama rarely took a stand in such disputes, and it was not difficult for each side in a conflict to obtain a *fatwa* justifying its position and condemning its rival.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the signatures of the chief ulama were required on emirs' petitions addressed to the central government in Istanbul.<sup>6</sup> When they realized that an economic measure was so oppressive that even the usually docile ulama opposed it openly, the rulers were often ready to negotiate a compromise.<sup>7</sup>

The ulama enjoyed immunity of sorts from the harsh treatment meted out to other, less privileged subjects. To be sure, this immunity was by no means absolute and its degree greatly varied depending on the personality of the pasha or bey in power. As a rule, however, the emirs respected the ulama and we never read of an '*alim* who was executed, and only rarely of one who was really ill-treated. The few cases of punishment are exceptions. Once a group of ulama were temporarily exiled from Cairo to their villages in the aftermath of the 1711 fighting in which they had to take sides.<sup>8</sup> A minor '*alim*, a *shahid*, (a professional witness or notary) found guilty of falsifying a legal document had his beard shaved off and was led ignominiously on a camel through the streets of Cairo and then exiled to Tina.<sup>9</sup> In another case, a village *khatib* (preacher), was put to death by impalement for supposedly giving shelter to the bedouin chief, Salim ibn Habib, whom the government had proscribed.<sup>10</sup> It is obvious, however, that an obscure village *khatib* did not have the immunity enjoyed by an '*alim* from al-Azhar. Al-Jaziri, the well-known historian of the *hajj*, who was

a *qadi*, was beaten and humiliated by an emir,<sup>11</sup> but this case, too, is untypical. Moreover, al-Jaziri was an employee of the Treasury and in spite of his education as an *'alim*, was treated as a bureaucrat.

The ulama did not normally interfere in politics, caring little whether this or that emir or pasha would be their ruler. Yet occasionally they raised their voices in favor of a certain political move, such as the appointment of an emir or reconciliation among the beys, in order to avoid strife that could be detrimental to the people.<sup>12</sup> The ulama were torn between their own self-interest, which was usually reasonably satisfied even under oppressive rulers, and between their moral responsibility as spokesmen, although sometimes reluctant and timid ones, of the Muslim community at large. The doctrine of obedience to political power was their guide, which precluded any radical or violent action. However, much depended on the character of the individual *'alim*.

### ULAMA AS JUDGES

As already mentioned, the Egyptian ulama were adversely affected by the Ottoman occupation primarily in the sphere of the administration of justice. Ibn Iyas bitterly and repeatedly complains of the Ottomans' innovations or presumed intentions: the appointment of Turkish judges whom the Cairenes considered ignorant; the dismissal of local *qadis*; the fear that the *Shari'a* would be replaced by the Ottoman *qanun* or *yasaq*, the secular administrative code; illegal taxes on marriage contracts; rumors that except for the Hanafi *madhhab* the other schools of Muslim jurisprudence would be abolished.<sup>13</sup>

The picture that emerges from Ibn Iyas's report and other sources regarding the Ottoman administration of justice in Egypt is not entirely clear and indicates fluctuations in policy. Sultan Selim's first steps seemed to justify the Egyptians' worst suspicions. He appointed a judge to the position of *qadi'l-'Arab*, i.e. the *qadi* in charge of Arab (Egyptian) affairs whom Ibn Iyas describes as being 'more ignorant than a donkey.'<sup>14</sup> Later, in Rajab 928/May 1522, a Turkish chief *qadi* who served as *qadi'l-'askar* (in Turkish *qazi'as ker*), or military judge, was appointed.<sup>15</sup> Turkish *qadis* made an extremely bad impression on their Egyptian counterparts. It was obvious that the new regime wanted not only to subjugate the indigenous judiciary to the Ottoman *qadis*, but also wished to simplify and centralize the system—and thereby economize—by reducing the number of deputy *qadis* (*nuwwab*) and bailiffs (*rusul*). Ibn Iyas laments: '*Qadis*, notaries, and turbaned (ulama) are no longer seen at the Salihyya *madrassa*, which used to be the citadel

of the ulama.<sup>7</sup> He observes that the Egyptian *qadis* were afraid of losing their positions and dared not challenge the Turks.<sup>16</sup> Another unwelcome innovation was the appointment of *qassams*, officers in charge of dealing with inheritances, both *qisma 'askariyya*, estates of deceased military men, and *qisma 'Arabiyya*, civilians' estates.<sup>17</sup>

In spite of this policy, there is also evidence that at some point Selim appointed, or rather reinstated, four Egyptian Arabic-speaking *qadis* to head the four *madhhabs*. Their names are given by the chroniclers: Kamal al-Din al-Tawil for the Shafi'i *madhhab*, Nur al-Din al-Tarabulsi for the Hanafis, al-Damiri for the Malikis, and Ahamd ibn al-Najjar for the Hanbalis—all of them well-known historical figures.<sup>18</sup> In Jumada II, 928/June 1522, the four *qadis* were dismissed, but were reappointed in Shawwal 929/August 1523.<sup>19</sup> It seems certain that during Ahmet Pasha's rebellion there were four Egyptian chief *qadis*, each representing his *madhhab*; this arrangement accorded with the rebel's policy of reviving Mamluk institutions.<sup>20</sup>

Sultan Süleyman's *Qanun-name-i Misir* expressly strengthened the position of the *qadi*. It stipulates that the custom of bringing differences before the *wali* (chief of police) was to be abandoned, and that the *qadi*'s court was the only proper place for litigation.<sup>21</sup> This stipulation was in keeping with the general Ottoman policy of giving the *qadis* a central role both in the judicial and the administrative systems.

Ottoman Turks not only monopolized the post of Egypt's chief judge, but were also appointed to other judicial offices both in Egypt itself and in the Hijaz. Nevertheless, Arabic-speaking ulama, mostly Egyptians, but also some Syrians, were appointed *qadis*, although not to the highest posts; Egyptians were routinely appointed as *mahalle qadisi*, a city-quarter judge. The term of office by law was three years, but the incumbents remained longer, much to the displeasure of the central government in Istanbul.<sup>22</sup>

The office of *qazi'asker* paralleled that of the pasha to a large extent. During the sixteenth century, the Ottoman chief judge was a powerful officeholder, who remained in Egypt for a long period. The chroniclers noted carefully the date of his arrival and departure.<sup>23</sup> His term of office became shorter, lasting a year or two on the average and by the eighteenth century he had become a rather insignificant figure politically and socially, despite his high formal position. It is noteworthy that the principal eighteenth century chroniclers, Ahmad Shalabi and al-Jabarti, hardly mention the chief judge, and the rare instances when they do only underline how much he had become a subordinate figure. In 1711, during an incident involving 'the Turkish preacher' the Ottoman *qadi*

was drawn into the dispute against his will and proved himself a passive and frightened figure devoid of any religious or public authority.<sup>24</sup> Another *qazi'asker*, who had arrogantly declared upon his arrival in 1133/1720 that he would 'renovate' (i.e. reform) the Egyptians' religion, was later ridiculed by the people for his presumption, since he had accomplished nothing and was needlessly involved in political intrigues.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, it should be pointed out that the judicial system underwent a slow process of Egyptianization. The language of the records of the *qisma* (inheritance) became Arabic at the expense of Turkish, but more significantly, the number of Turkish *qadis* decreased; in 1798 only six *qadis* were Ottoman Turks, the rest being Arabs.<sup>26</sup>

### THE MADHHABS

The ulama studied and worked in the *madhhabs*, the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. Each *madhhab* had its own scholarly and legal tradition with textbooks and authorities. The *madhhabs* were also social units, and tension between students and ulama belonging to different *madhhabs* was not uncommon.<sup>27</sup>

The geographical distribution of the *madhhabs* in Egypt was quite simple. Cairo was predominantly Shafi'i, although it also had sizeable Hanafi and Maliki communities. The former drew much of its strength from the Ottoman government, whose official *madhhab* was Hanafi, and from the Turkish community. The Hanafi *madhhab* had always been the school of jurisprudence of most of the Turks and the Mamluks before and after the Ottoman conquest. Yet the Mamluks did not make their own Hanafi *madhhab* the predominant legal school of the Sultanate, as the Ottomans did. The Maliki *madhhab* in Egypt was an extension of the same *madhhab* in North Africa, where it was dominant. The map of Malikism in Egypt reflects the westward migrations of North African tribes into Egypt in the Middle Ages and the later Middle Ages. Thus, the Sharqiyya province, or the eastern Delta, was Shafi'i, the Gharbiyya province, the western Delta, was a mixture of Shafi'i and Maliki, whereas the Buhayra province, the westernmost part of the Delta on the Cyrenaican border, was entirely Maliki. Likewise, the region of Upper Egypt, al-Sa'id, was mostly Maliki, probably as a result of the migration of Arab tribes of North African origin from the Delta southwards. The Maliki *madhhab* in Egypt, therefore, was associated to a great extent with populations which were either foreign (the Maghribis) or lived in outlying provinces, (the Sa'a'ida, people of the

Sa'id) who were and are easily recognized in Cairo by their accent, appearance and temperament.<sup>28</sup> The Hanbali *madhhab*, which had had only a small following in Mamluk Egypt, all but disappeared during the Ottoman period.<sup>29</sup> In the sixteenth century, al-Sha'rani wrote biographies of a few Hanbali ulama whom he knew,<sup>30</sup> but there are no biographies of Egyptian Hanbalis in al-Jabarti's book. By the seventeenth century, the sources speak of three, not four, *madhhabs*.<sup>31</sup>

While the post of chief *qadis* of the *madhhabs* had gone out of existence with the Mamluk state, the office of the chief muftis of the three *madhhabs* was important in Ottoman Egypt, the muftis being invariably Egyptian ulama.

### EDUCATION AND LEARNING OF THE ULAMA

As already mentioned, the Ottoman period in Egypt was not a creative one. The arid intellectual atmosphere of al-Azhar did not escape the notice of contemporary observers. Hasan al-Hijazi, the eighteenth century poet and satirist, whose rhymes are often cited by al-Jabarti, writes of al-Azhar: 'A piece of rock, does it not have heaviness, dryness and rigidity? Its ulama make their turbans bigger and their sleeves wider in order to be masters (over the people).'<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, many ulama were dedicated lifelong students, who sought knowledge under various teachers and produced an impressive quantity of writing. Their erudition was limited to the traditional religious subjects, yet they showed little originality even in these. Still, al-Jabarti does mention a few ulama who were interested in algebra, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, logic and other sciences.<sup>33</sup>

An encounter, which took place in Shawwal 1160/October 1747 between Ahmet Pasha, an Ottoman vizier, and Cairo's leading ulama led by Shaykh al-Azhar al-Shubrawi, provides a rare insight into the intellectual world of the ulama and their self-perception. The vizier was disappointed upon learning that Egypt's leading ulama were unable to discuss the mathematical sciences with him. Al-Shubrawi explained: 'We are not the greatest ulama (of Egypt); we are only those who have taken upon themselves to serve them (i.e. the ulama) and to represent their needs to the men of the government and the rulers. Most of the people of al-Azhar don't occupy themselves with the mathematical sciences, except for arithmetic and measures which are necessary for the law of descent and distribution (of inheritances).' The shaykh added that the study of exact sciences required instruments and technical skills,

but most of the Azharites were poor, a collection of simple people from the villages and the provinces, among whom the aptitude for such sciences was very rare. When the vizier almost gave up on the Egyptians as being ignoramuses in science, he was referred to al-Jabarti's father, who excelled in this field and later greatly impressed the vizier.<sup>34</sup>

This short, and unfortunately isolated, anecdote reveals much truth. The ulama's general learning, except for religious studies, was indeed limited, as al-Shubrawi said. No less interesting is his reference to the social background of the ulama, both from al-Azhar and elsewhere. Al-Jabarti's obituaries clearly show that the majority of the ulama were, indeed, of village origin and had come to Cairo to study as utterly destitute young men. It is significant that not one of the *Shuyukh al-Azhar* in the eighteenth century (and also in the nineteenth century) was born in Cairo; all were from villages.<sup>35</sup> As al-Shirbini's seventeenth century satire shows, some ulama were ashamed of their rural origins and tried to conceal them.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, others maintained lifelong connections with their native village, even after having made a name for themselves in the capital. They would travel home once or twice a year, issue *fatwas* to villagers, settle disputes, arrange marriage contracts, and otherwise act as religious authorities in their villages.<sup>37</sup> The attraction that al-Azhar and other religious schools held for young villagers can be explained by the fact that before the nineteenth century villagers were forbidden to settle in Cairo. The only way to do so legally and thereby have an opportunity for social mobility, was through *talab al-'ilm*, the pursuit of knowledge, and the source of that knowledge was in the capital.

### THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE ULAMA

It should be emphasized that the ulama were not a homogeneous socio-economic class; a few were very rich, but most were poor. The government and individual donors provided for the well-being of the ulama, who were thus assured of a minimal subsistence at least, which was much more than the rest of the population could hope for.<sup>38</sup> A few lucky ulama received high and regular incomes as directors of *waqfs*. *Shuyukh al-Azhar* built spacious mansions in expensive and fashionable districts on the bank of the Nile, such as at Bulaq or on the Azbakiyya Pond. *Shaykh al-Azhar* Shanan had many slaves and slave girls, and even Mamluks, which was very unusual for a civilian.<sup>39</sup> The vast

majority, however, made their living by teaching. An *'alim* could increase his income by giving *fatwas*, copying manuscripts, and the like. Ample evidence shows that competition for teaching positions was very fierce. It often happened (probably more so in the sixteenth century than later) that Egyptian ulama went all the way to Istanbul to convince influential people there to appoint them to teaching and other positions in Egypt, which sometimes required dismissing the incumbents, who might be more qualified.<sup>40</sup> Some ulama occupied themselves with trade, at least part time. One pasha reduced ulama's pensions, claiming that they were really merchants.<sup>41</sup> An imperial edict, dated August 1734, makes it clear that ulama who were entrepreneurs received preferential treatment from the authorities: an Azhari shaykh, who had privately built a boat to take passengers to al-Badawi's *mawlid* in Tanta, obtained a special imperial edict exempting him from taxes or other payments.<sup>42</sup>

One of the ulama's permanent sources of income was the poll tax (*jawali*, or *jizya*) imposed on the local Christians and Jews, even though these sums were only a small part of the money paid to ulama and religious institutions.<sup>43</sup> Most of the ulama's income came from *waqf* foundations, whose revenues were the basis of their salaries and of the maintenance of religious institutions. *Waqf* properties could be villages, urban buildings and other revenue-yielding enterprises. Villages which belonged to a *waqf* were exempt from other regular taxes and payments. Imperial edicts sometimes complain that this principle was not observed.<sup>44</sup>

Frequently, a rich man—he could be a member of the ruling class—founded a *waqf* and named an *'alim* as the trustee. In many cases, however, the trustees of *waqfs* were members of the ruling class—emirs, army officers and state officials. The trustee of the al-Azhar *waqfs*, for example, was an emir rather than an *'alim*.<sup>45</sup> The administration of the *waqfs* was a cumbersome business, and ulama frequently complained that the *multazims* did not deliver their required allotments. The central government in Istanbul sometimes tried to solve the problem of *waqf* administration by centralizing it by appointing a supreme supervisor, usually one of the *aghas*, the eunuchs of the imperial harem. In the eighteenth century, the ulama themselves were entering the *multazim* class.<sup>46</sup>

Pensions were also paid to the children and the families (*evlad u 'iyal*) of ulama. Occasionally, the government tried to abolish these allowances. In 1147/1734–35 a confrontation took place between the *qazi'asker* and a spokesman for the ulama concerning the pensions for 'children and families.' An order had arrived from Istanbul declaring

that these allowances were to be discontinued. The chief *qadi* argued that since this was the sultan's order it had to be obeyed, but speaking for the ulama, Shaykh al-Mansuri said that these pensions had been established by former rulers. He claimed that the patents for the pensions had become negotiable and were financing the establishment of mosques, public fountains and other religious institutions. If the pensions were to be discontinued, religion would be damaged. Therefore, he concluded, a ruler's order that contravened the *Shari'a* should not be obeyed.<sup>47</sup>

### ETHNIC DIVISIONS

Ethnically, the ulama class in Egypt was quite homogeneous. The great majority were Arabic-speaking Egyptians, yet there was a continuous trickle of ulama, who came to Egypt to study or who stopped there on their way home from the *hajj* and enriched Egypt's intellectual and religious life. The largest group of foreign ulama were the Maghribis, who were assimilated in varying degrees into Egyptian society. The presence of a sizeable Maghribi community in Egypt at the time is well-documented. Al-Jabarti reports the cases of several Maghribi ulama who were integrated into the scholarly and social life of al-Azhar; some of them were officeholders in the powerful Maghribi student hostel (*riwaq*) at al-Azhar.<sup>48</sup> While Egyptians (ulama as well as others) were generally reluctant to travel abroad, Cairo welcomed numerous ulama from Syria and Arabia, some of whom made brilliant careers at al-Azhar.<sup>49</sup>

An interesting question concerns the existence and activities of Turkish ulama in Egypt. The Turks were Cairo's largest foreign community. Al-Azhar had a Turkish *riwaq*, and as the incident of 'the Turkish preacher' of 1711 shows, there were also Turkish students in other mosques. Evliya, who clearly favored the Turks against the Arabs, frequently notes the existence of mosques whose congregations were exclusively Turkish, such as the mosques of Mardan or Alti Parmak Efendi. He often notes the Turkish style of architecture of many mosques. He also speaks of Koran schools for children all of whom were Turks.<sup>50</sup>

Yet even Evliya, who paid so much attention to the Turkish presence in Egypt, does not mention Turkish ulama, except for a few *qadis*, while he does speak of Egyptian ulama. This complements the picture that emerges from other sources, primarily al-Jabarti, that Egypt's large Turkish community did not produce ulama of note, and if it did, the

ulama did not remain in Egypt or did not affect its scholarly and religious life. It is highly improbable that al-Jabarti did not include biographies of Turkish ulama in his work for lack of knowledge of them, because he wrote about foreigners, including some Turks, if they were in any way socially prominent.<sup>51</sup>

### THE GROWTH OF AL-AZHAR DURING THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

One of the most conspicuous developments in the cultural history of Ottoman Egypt was the immense growth of al-Azhar, the great college-mosque. By the time of the Ottoman occupation, al-Azhar was an old and well-established institution of religious learning. Since its foundation in 970 by the Fatimids as an Isma'ili center of learning and propaganda, and later its conversion by the Ayyubids into a Sunni college, it had acquired unique fame and prestige.

Yet it was only during the Ottoman period that al-Azhar attained an exclusive position, dwarfing all other Egyptian *madrasas* into relative insignificance. The growth of al-Azhar and its centrality under Ottoman rule should be seen as yet another expression of the assertiveness of Egyptian Islam during that period. At the beginning of Ottoman rule, al-Azhar was relatively unimportant. Ibn Iyas, for example, does not emphasize the centrality of al-Azhar; it is al-Salihiyya *madrasa* rather than al-Azhar that he calls 'the citadel of the ulama.' But it should be noted that it was al-Azhar which protested against the Ottoman marriage tax. Ibn Iyas reports that about 100 Azhari jurists appeared before Kha'ir Bey to voice their opposition.<sup>52</sup> According to Ibn Iyas, the Ottomans did harm to many Muslim institutions in Cairo, but al-Azhar is never mentioned as one of them. In Sha'rani's writings, several decades later, al-Azhar appears as the central institution to which some of the pashas who ruled Egypt contributed funds and at which they initiated good works for the benefit of its residents.<sup>53</sup>

During the Ottoman period, foreign Muslim travelers, such as Evliya Çelebi and Maghribi pilgrims, wrote with great admiration about al-Azhar, acknowledging that it was unrivaled in the world as a great, rich and respected center of religious learning and devotion. It was busy day and night with study, prayer, and *dhikr*. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, al-Azhar became completely identified with the ulama establishment.<sup>54</sup> There were other *madrasas* in Cairo, but in comparison with al-Azhar, they were insignificant, and in any case,

many of the teaching positions in the other institutions were held by Azhari shaykhs.<sup>55</sup>

### THE STRUCTURE OF AL-AZHAR

The student population at al-Azhar was between 3,000 and 5,000. They were taught by about 70 professors, in addition to assistants and instructors. An imperial edict dated 1141/1729 speaks of some 400 ulama and muftis who came to the Divan to complain about their allowances, while some 4,000 or 5,000 students convened at the mosque itself, demonstrating against the delay in their rations. The students were organized into *riwaqs* (*arwiqa*), or hostels and *haras*, or quarters, where they lived, studied and received their rations.<sup>56</sup> The *riwaqs* were divided ethnically or regionally. Thus, there were *riwaqs* of Turks (*Arwam*), Syrians, Maghribis, Upper Egyptians, natives of the Sharqiyya province and so on. Some *riwaqs*, such as the Maghribi, the Sa'idi, and the one for blind students, were notoriously turbulent. Tension and clashes among ethnic groups within al-Azhar were quite frequent, as will be shown below.<sup>57</sup>

Studies at al-Azhar were conducted in the manner of the medieval *madrasa*. They were informal, with almost everything being left to the diligence and choice of the student. The institution itself did not have any admission requirements, prescribed courses of study, examinations, and the like before the late nineteenth century. Students decided which lectures to attend. They obtained the *ijaza*, a license to teach a certain text studied under their shaykh, from him, not from al-Azhar as an institution. Unlike the Ottoman *madrasa* system, which was much more regulated and hierarchical, the teaching at al-Azhar was more individualized and less organized. A shaykh rose to professorship by his colleagues' consensus, although a formal confirmation by the Egyptian authorities was required.<sup>58</sup>

### THE OFFICE OF SHAYKH AL-AZHAR

The emergence of the position of *Shaykh al-Azhar* toward the end of the seventeenth century was an indication of the rise of al-Azhar. This position, like the transfer of the office of the chief of the *ashraf* (*niqabat al-ashraf*) to Egyptian families, was created in the eighteenth century, when Ottoman rule weakened and Egyptian Islam asserted itself.<sup>59</sup> Although the information about the internal structure of al-Azhar prior to the eighteenth century is scanty, it seems that one *'alim* was

recognized as superior to the others. Shaʿrani already mentions *raʿs al-mudarrisin* (the head teacher) at al-Azhar, although it is not clear what his functions were.<sup>60</sup> Other terms denoting supremacy, such as *shaykh mashaʾikh al-Azhar* (the shaykh of al-Azhar’s shaykhs) sometimes appear in the sources,<sup>61</sup> but none had the weight and authority of *Shaykh al-Azhar*, a post which has been given to the head of the Azhari ulama since the eighteenth century and has been frequently translated as ‘the rector of al-Azhar.’ From its inception, the post was extremely important, but no clear procedure was established for choosing the incumbent. Not surprisingly, therefore, the post became a bone of contention between factions and *madhhabs*, and the appointment of a new *Shaykh al-Azhar* was sometimes accompanied by violence. The struggles surrounding the office reveal a great deal about the tensions within the body of the ulama and al-Azhar community in general.

Out of the first six *Shuyukh al-Azhar* five were Malikis.<sup>62</sup> Only from the sixth shaykh onward did the Shafiʿis acquire their monopoly over the post. The first *Shaykh al-Azhar* was Muhammad ibn ʿAbdallah al-Khurashi, who died in 1101/1690 and was succeeded by Muhammad al-Nashrati.<sup>63</sup> After al-Nashrati’s death in 1120/1709, a violent conflict leading to the death by shooting of a number of people broke out between the followers of two shaykhs, al-Nafrawi and al-Qalini, over the post to which was added the teaching position at al-Madrassa al-Aqbughawiyya. After *Naqib al-ashraf* had rebuked the shaykhs in the Divan for their followers’ behavior, al-Qalini was finally appointed.<sup>64</sup> The next *Shaykh al-Azhar*, Muhammad Shanani (d. 1133/1721), was an extremely wealthy landowner. A businesslike man, he managed to convince the Porte to donate 50 purses for repairs at al-Azhar; Ismaʿil Bey, the strongman in Egypt at the time, then contributed another 13 purses. By contrast, Ibrahim ibn Musa al-Fayyumi, the next *Shaykh al-Azhar* (d. 1137/ 1724) was a man of otherworldly disposition who neglected the institution’s administration.<sup>65</sup>

Shaykh ʿAbdallah al-Shubrawi, who was on very good terms with the emirs, was the first Shafiʿi *Shaykh al-Azhar*. He was an important scholar and a poet, who compiled for ʿAli Pasha ibn al-Hakim a history of Egypt, which included a chapter on the governors up to his time. Under al-Shubrawi’s leadership, the ulama bore themselves with dignity and civility.<sup>66</sup> Al-Shubrawi died in 1171/1757 to be succeeded by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salim al-Hifni, or al-Hifnawi (d. 1181/1767), who was especially famous as a leading Khalwati Sufi.<sup>67</sup> He was followed by ʿAbd al-Raʿuf al-Sijini (d. 1182/1768–9). Ahmad ibn ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Damanhuri, the next *Shaykh al-Azhar*, was unusual in his

training, since he was not identified with any particular *madhhab*, but received *ijazas* from ulama of all the legal schools. He also gave *fatwas* according to the teachings of all *madhhabs*; for this reason he was nicknamed *al-Madhahibi*, ‘that of (all) the *madhhabs*.’ He was another example of a destitute orphan who arrived at al-Azhar and rose to fame, wealth and influence. Emirs gave him gifts, but also respected him for speaking his mind forcefully.<sup>68</sup>

Al-Damanhuri’s death on Rajab 10, 1192/August 4, 1778 was followed by a prolonged struggle for the office, which developed into a confrontation between the Shafi’is and the Hanafis with definite ‘nationalistic’ Egyptian overtones. The aspirant for the post was Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Umar al-‘Arishi, an unusually ambitious man. His chances seemed poor because the Cairo ulama considered him an outsider, being both a Hanafi and a native of al-‘Arish, a small town in northern Sinai. But he was also a Khalwati Sufi, which by that time had become almost a prerequisite for social acceptability among the senior ulama. When al-Damanhuri was on his deathbed, al-‘Arishi told Ibrahim Bey, *Shaykh al-balad*, that al-Damanhuri had named him as his deputy. Al-‘Arishi won the support of the emirs and of Shaykh al-Sadat, a leading Sufi, and was named *Shaykh al-Azhar* by the emirs. The appointment of al-‘Arishi infuriated the predominantly Shafi’i establishment of al-Azhar, which considered him a ‘carpetbagger.’ The ulama said that the office belonged to the Shafi’is and a Hanafi could not rightfully claim it, particularly not one ‘coming from a distant place.’ The Shafi’is, headed by Muhammad ibn al-Jawhari, a respected and independent shaykh, sent a petition to Ibrahim and Murad, the duumvirs of Egypt, demanding the appointment of Shaykh Ahmad al-‘Arusi, a Shafi’i, instead of al-‘Arishi. The beys, who were usually reluctant to be dragged into the ulama’s quarrels, regarded the petition as a challenge to their authority. Ibrahim Bey said: ‘It is impossible that the small ones will change what the high-ranking ones have done.’ He considered the objection to a Hanafi *Shaykh al-Azhar* both as unfair and unIslamic and said: ‘Are not the Hanafis Muslims, and is not this *madhhab* the oldest? The emirs, the *qadi* and the vizier (i.e. the pasha) are they not Hanafis; and the sultan himself, does he not belong to this *madhhab*?’ Ibrahim Bey’s arguments sound reasonable and fair, and again, it must be said that the ruling class, both Ottoman and Mamluk, had never imposed a candidate from its own *madhhab* on al-Azhar.

The ulama went to the shrine of al-Imam al-Shafi’i on Friday and spent the night there. Such an organized visit to the saint’s sepulchre amounted to a demonstration by the Shafi’i ulama and their lay

supporters against the intervention of the emirs in their internal affairs. The spokesman for the ulama was the above-mentioned Muhammad ibn al-Jawhari, whom the emirs respected, because unlike other ulama he did not seek their company and gifts. Ibn al-Jawhari told Murad Bey 'in the name of al-Imam al-Shafi'i, the master of the land' that he had to invest al-'Arusi with a robe of honor as the head of the Shafi'is, just as Shaykh al-Dardayr was the head of the Malikis. Indeed, al-'Arusi was invested and became prominent after that, says al-Jabarti. Apparently al-'Arusi officially replaced al-'Arishi as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, although al-Jabarti does not expressly say so.

The rivalry between the two religious leaders continued for seven months. Al-'Arishi was supported by the Hanafis, Shaykh al-Sadat, the Maghribis (owing to the attitude of their shaykh, Abu'l-Hasan al-Qal'i) and the emirs. It is obvious that all the non-Shafi'i forces rallied behind al-'Arishi against the Shafi'is' monopoly on the post. 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Arishi's fall came suddenly. It was sparked off by a violent brawl between two Hanafi *riwaqs* at al-Azhar, the Turkish and the Syrian, in which one Turk was killed and another wounded. The Turks complained to the Mamluk beys, who sympathized with them out of racial affinity (*jinsiyya*), says al-Jabarti. Al-'Arishi, who was in charge of the Syrians, was ordered to investigate the matter, but instead of submitting a list of the troublemakers as he had been ordered to do, he handed in a list with fictitious names, while the Syrian culprits escaped. He was then dismissed as the chief Hanafi mufti and died shortly afterwards in his home a broken man. The Syrian *riwaq* was boarded up. The natives of Majdal and Tiberias were not permitted to return to the *riwaq*, and the Syrians had to give 100 loaves of bread daily to the Turks in lieu of blood money.<sup>69</sup>

Ahmad al-'Arusi thus became the undisputed *Shaykh al-Azhar* and the Shafi'is retained their monopoly over the office. A scholar, a Khalwati Sufi and very close to the famous saintly Sufi shaykh Ahmad al-'Aryan, al-'Arusi was not to enjoy his position, however, because his term of office was a time of political instability and serious economic difficulties. He frequently came under pressure from groups outside al-Azhar to intervene with the emirs on their behalf. The Syrians and the Maghribis remained hostile and aggressive, and revolted against him, demanding their allowances.<sup>70</sup>

After al-'Arusi's death in 1208/1794 it was again Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Jawhari, who chose the successor. The last *Shaykh al-Azhar* in the Ottoman period was 'Abdallah al-Sharqawi. He was also a practising Khalwati Sufi, whose Sufism was evident in his works; he

also tried his hand at writing history. The French appointed him as the head of their Divan. During the French rule, he amassed wealth by taking possession of the property of people who had left Egypt because of the occupation.

Al-Jabarti did not have a good opinion of al-Sharqawi, yet he did not lack courage and in one famous case, which will be related below, defended the rights of fellahin against oppressive emirs. Al-Sharqawi died on Shawwal 1, 1227/October 9, 1812. After a struggle for the office Muhammad al-Shinwani was named as his successor.<sup>71</sup>

### AL-AZHAR IN PUBLIC LIFE

Al-Azhar was not only the largest mosque and the most important and universally revered institution of Islamic learning, but also served as a nerve center of Cairo's public opinion. Al-Azhar was often the focus of popular disturbances. These demonstrations were started by students, but sometimes by outside elements, who tried to express their resentment through the institution. A demonstration against the Citadel, the center of government, inevitably would have ended disastrously for the participants; they would have been ruthlessly cut down by the soldiers, as indeed happened several times. It made better sense to pressure the authorities through al-Azhar, which enjoyed an immunity of sorts.

The disturbances initiated by students and teachers of al-Azhar were triggered usually by economic distress when the allowances or rations were seriously reduced or delayed. The Azharis could confine their reaction to submitting a petition, but in more serious cases, the resident students would close the gates of al-Azhar and disrupt the lessons and prayers there and at the adjacent mosques, such as al-Husayni shrine and Muhammad Bey's *madrassa*.<sup>72</sup> More extreme measures included students climbing to the minarets, shouting and cursing the emirs. In such cases, shops in nearby areas would close down either in solidarity with the Azharis or as a precaution against possible clashes with the authorities. A typical incident of this sort occurred in Jumada I, 1191/June 1777, when the issue was *waqf* property claimed by the Maghribis. A quarrel broke out between them and Yusuf Bey, the emir who has already been mentioned as antagonistic to the ulama. Shaykh Dardayr, the well-known and strong-minded Maliki leader, sided with the Maghribis against Yusuf Bey. A strike at al-Azhar and the markets, and demonstrations ensued; violent clashes between the Maghribis and the bey's men broke out in which some Maghribis were killed and others

wounded. Isma' il Bey, the most powerful emir in Cairo, intervened on the side of the ulama and a compromise was reached.<sup>73</sup> In one demonstration caused by economic crisis at al-Azhar and in Cairo generally, Azhari students, particularly the blind ones, accompanied by the poor from nearby quarters, went out and snatched food from shops. The Azharis obtained a promise that their problem would be solved (1199/1785).<sup>74</sup>

Pressure could also be directed against the *Shaykh al-Azhar* himself. In 1202/1788, the Syrians and some Maghribis rose up against Shaykh Ahmad al-'Arusi, demanding their allowances. They locked the gates of the mosque and for some time did not let the shaykh leave it. For a while, al-'Arusi did not enter al-Azhar and taught only at al-Salihiyya *madrasa*. He went to Isma' il Bey to plead the case of the students, but was accused by the bey of inciting them. Finally, 'Ali Bey al-Defterdar, the superintendent (*nazir*) of al-Azhar, arranged that the students would get their bread rations.<sup>75</sup>

Disturbances also broke out when army or police officers encroached upon the peace or privacy of al-Azhar itself or the adjacent city quarters. In 1143/1730–31, the *agha* of the Janissaries, while pursuing three political fugitives, repeatedly harassed the residents of quarters in the neighborhood of al-Azhar. The people complained to the ulama and the gates of al-Azhar were closed in protest. The government feared that a popular uprising might result, and the *agha* was forbidden to approach the vicinity of al-Azhar.<sup>76</sup> In a similar case in 1205/1791, the chief of police of Cairo (the *wali*) harassed the people of the Husayniyya quarter. They closed down the shops, and came to al-Azhar with drums to demonstrate, forcing the ulama to cancel their lessons. After complicated negotiations with the emirs, the *wali* was dismissed, and his successor tried hard to placate the shaykhs.<sup>77</sup>

As already indicated, the ulama were considered as an address for individuals or groups wholly unrelated to al-Azhar, who felt they had suffered injustice. The ulama were the people's only spokesmen whom the rulers were likely to heed. Sometimes, however, the ulama were wary about how the rulers would react and were unwilling to confront the emirs on matters not strictly theirs. Only a few courageous ulama were willing to act as popular tribunes. Shaykh al-Dardayr, for example, led a demonstration against the emirs, and proclaimed his readiness to achieve justice or to die as a martyr; al-Sharqawi stood up for the rights of his tenants against an emir, as described below.<sup>78</sup> It also happened that the ulama themselves became targets of popular rage.

Once in a time of famine, the demonstrators entered al-Azhar, disrupted the lessons and beat the ulama (1137/1724).<sup>79</sup>

*Shaykh al-Azhar* Ahmad al-'Arusi was not devoid of courage and leadership, yet he was caught between the rulers and groups of protesters. After Isma'il Bey imposed heavy taxes and loans on certain merchants and businessmen, some of them forced their way into al-Azhar and compelled al-'Arusi to close the gates of the mosque. They manhandled him so roughly that the students had to protect him. Under pressure, al-'Arusi endorsed the assailants' petition to Isma'il Bey only to be accused again by the latter of inciting them.<sup>80</sup> During the civil war between Isma'il Bey and his rivals—beys who had retreated to Upper Egypt and fought him from there—Cairo suffered from the drawn-out conflict. The barricades and the fortifications set up for the city's defense made normal life impossible; the people could not reach the Nile freely and the price of drinking water soared. Al-'Arusi and several Azhari shaykhs rode to the Divan, where they demanded, valiantly and even aggressively, that an end be put to the people's suffering. When an imperial edict was being read to him, al-'Arusi interrupted and said: 'Come to the crux of the matter. We don't understand Turkish.' He expressed the people's rage at the prolonged warfare: 'Egyptian emirs never fight this way. They clash in a single combat which decides who wins and who loses (i.e. without causing superfluous trouble to the civilian population).'<sup>81</sup>

During Shaykh al-Sharqawi's term of office, the *Shaykh al-Azhar* and the ulama defended the people's rights again. Peasants, who were tenants in a village which al-Sharqawi held as *iltizam*, complained against the well-known emir Muhammad Bey al-Alfi. Al-Sharqawi tried to solve the problem by negotiating with Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey, but he failed since the issue apparently penetrated to the very foundations of the emirs' system of exploitation. Al-Sharqawi and the shaykhs led a mass demonstration, which was joined by residents of various quarters of the city. When the emirs saw the dimensions of this protest movement, they found it prudent to negotiate a settlement. A document abolishing unjust and oppressive taxes was drawn up by the chief *qadi*, the pasha issued a firman to the same effect, and the duumvirs Murad and Ibrahim signed it. The common people believed naively that their ulama had succeeded in doing away with injustice in Egypt, but al-Jabarti, who reports the episode, had no illusions. Barely one month later, the situation reverted to what it had been, if not worse. Murad Bey, for example, descended upon Dimyat (Damyetta) and imposed particularly heavy taxes on its residents.<sup>82</sup>

## Conclusion

Al-Jabarti repeatedly accuses the majority of the ulama of flattering the rulers in order to obtain appointments, gifts, wealth and honor. Yet it would be wrong to stigmatize the entire ulama estate as being submissive to the rulers. As al-Jabarti himself shows, the ulama did produce men of character who, if their privileges and independence were threatened, or if the suffering of the common people reached unbearable proportions, dared to challenge the emirs.

Those few strong-minded ulama, who shunned the company of the rulers and turned down their benefits, were respected and sometimes even feared by the emirs. The ulama were an immensely important link between the rulers and the subjects: the ruling class, whether Mamluk or Ottoman, could not ignore the representatives of their religion, who upheld its values and traditions. Although most of the ulama could perhaps be bought off and cowed, pragmatic emirs and pashas did not underestimate the leadership potential of the exceptions. Even the few instances cited in this chapter make it clear that the emirs usually preferred to use the ulama in order to negotiate and reach a compromise with the people rather than to resort to coercion.

In conclusion: the ulama could not be expected to moderate the oppressive military rule in Ottoman Egypt, but they were a barometer of the public mood, and sometimes were able to deter the worst kinds of misrule. Given the circumstances and limitations of the ulama, they alone could provide the people with leadership. Despite their privileged position, they were after all closer to the subjects than to the ruling class.

## 5 The Sufis

### ORTHODOXY AND SUFISM—GENERAL REMARKS

Egyptian society under Ottoman rule was, as it had always been, deeply religious. Sufism, the mystical dimension of Islam, was an inseparable part of that religiosity; without it the religious, cultural, and social life of the Egyptian people cannot be understood. Sufism was not a separate sect, but a popular movement that reached into every corner of society.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, Islamic religious scholarship had lost much of its previous originality and freshness, despite its massive written output and extensive teaching activity. The barren erudition of the ulama, which concentrated on scholastic and technical-legal questions, was unable to offer the Muslim community, especially the common people, the warm, intimate and emotional experience of religion—the feeling of a direct contact with God and His prophet—which the Sufis provided. This deficiency was the religious and cultural setting for the growing attractiveness of Sufism in Egypt and throughout the other lands of Islam in the late medieval period.

On the social level, the relationship between orthodox, or normative, Islam and Sufism is far more complex. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d.1111), possibly the greatest Islamic theologian of all times, had tried in his monumental writings to work out a compromise by which the Sufis would comply with the ordinances of Islam, and the jurisconsults (*fuqaha'*) would accept Sufism as an integral and legitimate part of Islam. Al-Ghazali insisted on the obligation to obey the *Shari'a* law, but he believed that Sufism gave Islam depth and meaning beyond the legal technicalities and casuistry of jurisprudence (*fiqh*). But the confrontation between the ulama and the Sufis was not only one of ideas, but also involved interests, ambitions and envy.

It is extremely difficult to generalize about the connections between orthodoxy and Sufism, owing to the complexity and subtlety of these ties and the different nature of each of these two aspects of Islam. While orthodoxy was quite uniform, Sufism was amorphous and multifaceted. The education and attitudes of the ulama were similar everywhere throughout the (Sunni) Islamic world, despite local and scholastic differences. By contrast, the Sufi movement revealed a confusing diversity, often apparent within the same order, as will be shown below.

From earliest times, orthodoxy and Sufism were rivals. The tensions between the mystics on one hand and the theologians, jurists, and *madrasa* teachers on the other were a sign of a living religion and contributed much to Islamic culture. The present chapter attempts to describe Egyptian Sufism and its place within Islam in the Ottoman period.

### THE IMPACT OF THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST ON EGYPTIAN SUFISM

The Ottoman conquest did not transform Egypt's religious institutions. Sufism had already been active and mature under the Mamluks; the *turuq* (Sufi orders or associations), the *zawiyas* and *tekkes* (centers or cloisters), and Sufi feasts and celebrations were familiar. However, the Ottoman regime gave a strong impetus to Sufism; during the three centuries of Ottoman rule Sufism made great progress in Egyptian society. If one compares the situation at the end of the Mamluk era<sup>1</sup> with developments in the sixteenth century (as seen through the eyes of 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani and others),<sup>2</sup> with the seventeenth century (the detailed descriptions of Evliya Çelebi), and with the panoramic presentation of Egyptian society in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (by 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti), one realizes how much the Sufis' influence had increased. The Sufi orders multiplied and their activities intensi-fied: more *mawlid*s (saints' days) were celebrated; more Sufi institutions, such as *zawiyas* and *tekkes*, were built, and many more ulama were involved with Sufism.

While the facts of the increase in the influence and activity of Egyptian Sufism are evident, it is hard to determine the underlying reason for these developments. It is certain that the Ottoman rulers' favorable disposition did much to enhance the Sufis' position and status. The Turks had been converted to Islam not by orthodox theologians, but by the dervishes. Hence, all versions of Sufism flourished in the Turkish regions—from the sophisticated monism of

Ibn al-'Arabi (d.1240), through the mystical poetry of Jelal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273), to the crude practices of simple *dedes* (Turkish Sufi shaykhs). Generally speaking, the Turks and the Persians had a much stronger mystical bent than the Arabs; nevertheless, there was no lack of support for the Sufis among the Mamluk emirs. Although the Ottomans' patronage of the Sufis is well-documented, Mamluk support for them did not lag behind. Although under Mamluk rule there was often serious tension between ulama and Sufis, the ulama instructed the Mamluks in Islam, but it was the Sufi saints whom the Mamluk emirs and soldiers venerated.<sup>3</sup>

Another possible explanation for the advance of Sufism to a central role in Egyptian society has already been alluded to, namely the decline of the ulama. Although they were not conspicuous for their originality and creativity, they were the custodians of a long unbroken tradition of learning and, more important, played an indispensable role in government. The Ottoman occupation disrupted the orderly development of Egyptian Islam. It will be recalled how bitterly Ibn Iyas bewailed the deterioration of Islamic institutions during the first years of Ottoman rule. After 1517 the native, Arabic-speaking ulama were not appointed as *qadis*, this most influential and lucrative post now invariably being given to Turkish-speaking outsiders. Despite the political weakness of the 'Abbasid caliphate before its abolition by the Ottomans, the office had been a focus of veneration and a traditional symbol of Egypt's greatness.<sup>4</sup> On the intellectual level, there was a sudden and complete break immediately after the Ottoman conquest in the rich Egyptian historiography. It is highly significant that the most prominent Egyptian writer in the sixteenth century was al-Sha'rani, a Sufi.

All these developments were the result of Egypt's relegation from an Empire to a province, which may have caused a widespread malaise that was favorable for Sufism. The strengthened position of Sufism may serve as a barometer of the Egyptian people's general cultural and intellectual decline during the Ottoman period. The vacuum created by the Ottoman conquest was filled to some extent by Sufism. While the ulama were preoccupied with the administrative and legal business of government, Sufism nurtured the interior life, with an apolitical and even other-worldly orientation. It offered solace to the oppressed, but also provided them with food which was distributed to the poor during the *mawlid* celebrations and through various Sufi-related charitable foundations.

### THE *TURUQ* (THE SUFI ORDERS)

Although in Egypt and elsewhere there were individualistic and solitary, shaykhs, the main Sufi activity was conducted within the framework of the orders. In Ottoman Egypt there were several dozen orders, yet their exact number is unknown. *Argumentum ex silentio* is a poor historiographical proof, but the dearth of information about particular Sufi orders in the richly documented Mamluk period suggests that there were not many.<sup>5</sup> It is clear, however, that their number grew with time. The names of numerous orders are provided by Evliya Çelebi in the second half of the seventeenth century and by al-Jabarti and other eighteenth century sources.<sup>6</sup> Al-Maliji, Sha'rani's biographer, who wrote his book 136 years after Sha'rani's death (973/1565), reports that Sha'rani was initiated into 26 orders.<sup>7</sup>

The difficulty of ascertaining the number of the Sufi orders derives from the amorphous and disorganized world of Sufism in Ottoman Egypt. In 1812, Mehmet 'Ali Pasha gave the head of the Bakri family formal authority over all the orders and institutions linked to them, thus creating a central organization and a channel through which the state could supervise the Sufi associations. Before that, the orders lacked any supreme head or body, although the Bakri and Wafa'i families enjoyed the privileged position, wealth and prestige which gave them leadership, but it was informal and without binding authority.<sup>8</sup>

According to al-Maliji, Sha'rani stated that the principal 'poles' (*aqtab*) in the Sufi society of his day were al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya, the Sufi house (or order) of Muhammad Shams al-Din al-Hanafî (d. 847/1443), of Sidi Madyan al-Ashmuni (another fifteenth century Sufi shaykh), and the house of Sidi Abu'l-'Abbas al-Ghamri (d. 905/1499–1500).<sup>9</sup> This list, even if accurate, does not enlighten us about the sixteenth-century orders, because Sha'rani's choices are subjective, excluding any non-orthodox order; Sha'rani was connected in one way or another with all these four 'poles.' Even if a full list of the Sufi orders were available, it would not reveal the full picture, since some orders were major ones, with others being their offshoots or sub-orders. The Sufi orders had a strong fissiparous tendency, with new orders appearing, splitting and splitting once again.

The scholarly literature distinguishes between orthodox, or *Shari'a*-abiding Sufi orders, and antinomian orders that disregard the religious prescriptions and ordinances in favor of faith alone. Of the orders represented in Egypt, the Qadiriyya and the Shadhiliyya, for example, were considered as orthodox, and the Rifa'iyya, the Ahmadiyya, the

Sa'diyya and others as antinomian. The dividing line, however, between 'orthodox' and 'antinomian' Sufism is not always clear. Unlike the orders of Christian monks, the Sufi orders were not always compact bodies that recognized a central authority and adhered to a single doctrine, but often loose associations operating on several social levels, with faith and practice varying considerably.

The question of the exact character of an order is also complicated by many orthodox Sufis being unwilling to emphasize or even disclose their membership in an order, at least in the early Ottoman period. Instead, they proclaimed, sometimes apologetically, their allegiance to the Muslim community at large, to the *Shari'a*, and to Sufism generally (*tariq al-qawm*), thus muting any connection with an order. An orthodox Sufi was loyal to his shaykh, not to an organization. This type of relationship comes out clearly in Sha'rani's works on the lives of Sufis (*Tabaqat*) where he portrays his own milieu of mostly orthodox Sufi shaykhs. In this portrait gallery of men of religion, only rarely is a person's affiliation with an order mentioned; the emphasis is always on his relationship with his teachers, brethren in the Way, and his disciples.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout Sha'rani's numerous writings and many references to himself—he wrote a lengthy autobiography entitled *Lata'if al-minan*—he never mentioned his membership of an order. Some modern scholars have mistakenly called him a Shadhili, but a close reading of his work shows that while he held that order in great esteem, he did not belong to it. Sha'rani may be placed in the Shadhili *literary* tradition, but not in its social milieu. The Shadhiliyya was an urban, refined, and aristocratic form of Sufism, whereas Sha'rani was a village boy of simple and modest tastes. Sha'rani and many of his fellow shaykhs were attached to the cult of Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi (d. 1276), the most popular Sufi saint in Egypt, and were considered as Ahmadis, at least by later generations. Nevertheless, they severely criticized the Ahmadiyya (or Badawiyya), the order of Ahmad al-Badawi, for being one of the unruly dervish orders which violated the rulings of the *Shari'a* and was guilty of religious and moral misdeeds.

How can this seeming contradiction be explained? The only element common to the orthodox Sufi shaykhs and the Ahmadiyya dervishes was their veneration of Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi. The Sufis struggled against the influence of the dervishes by trying to spread the true Islam among the common people, who were under dervish influence. The battle for the uncorrupted Islam was waged in the name of the saint, using arguments such as: 'What you are doing (or, what the dervishes

are teaching you) is against the wish of Ahmad al-Badawi. Had it been acceptable to him, we ourselves would be doing it, but it is not!’<sup>11</sup>

It is obvious, then, that there was more than one way of belonging to an order or adhering to a saint’s cult. In contrast to Sha’rani’s time, in all of al-Jabarti’s numerous biographies of ulama and Sufis their affiliation with their orders is routinely recorded almost as a part of their names, like their place of birth and their school of jurisprudence.<sup>12</sup> This change may well indicate that by the eighteenth century the Sufi orders had become crystallized and organizationally more rigid.

### THE PRINCIPAL SUFI ORDERS

In the early Ottoman period, the *Shadhiliyya* was Egypt’s most intellectual and aristocratic order. Its spiritual father was Abu Madyan Shu’ayb (d. 1197), but the actual founder and eponym was Abu’l-Hasan al-Shadhili (d. 1258), both of whom were North African Sufis. Al-Shadhili left North Africa for Alexandria, which became an important Sufi center. Overcoming the opposition of the ulama, the order became popular; it produced many talented poets and writers, whose treatises were circulated in many literate Sufi circles, and Shadhili litanies and poems were recited at religious celebrations.<sup>13</sup>

The order aimed to cultivate the inner life; it did not impose a special dress and usually did not establish cloisters,<sup>14</sup> nor did it encourage saint and shrine cults. The Shadhiliyya also frowned on mendicancy and the renunciation of the world for the sake of the contemplative life, and insisted that its sympathizers and adherents lead socially and economically productive lives. The Shadhilis were by no means averse to worldly riches and were not ascetics: many of them were strikingly well-dressed; they held lavish parties at which musical instruments were played, much to the displeasure of the strictest religious puritans. An important Shadhiliyya group, the Wafa’i family, about whom more will be said, is a good example of this aristocratic type of Sufism.

In time, the Shadhiliyya lost its central position in Egyptian Sufism. Some of its later offshoots, notably the ‘Isawiyya and the ‘Arabiyya, were among the ‘orders of the blameworthy innovations’ (*ahl al-bida’*), about which al-Jabarti makes derogatory remarks. Other Shadhiliyya groups promoted pantheistic theories, proving what has been said about them, namely that Sufi orders were capable of transforming themselves from orthodoxy to heterodoxy and vice versa.<sup>15</sup>

The *Ahmadiyya*, sometimes called al-Badawiyya, is named after Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi, the saint whose shrine in Tanta in the Delta is the

center of the order. Unlike the Shadhiliyya, the Ahmadiyya did not produce writers and great teachers, but was a people's cult. Their distinctive color was red, which was used on the adherents' turbans and banners. The chief events in the life of an order were and still are the *mawlid* celebrations at the saint's sepulchre, which drew the largest crowds, and still do. As has already been mentioned, the 'Ahmadi' orthodox Sufis of the Sha'rani type (if indeed they can be regarded as members of the Ahmadiyya), attempted to civilize these *mawlids*. Muhammad al-Shinawi, Sha'rani's shaykh, abolished some of the more violent manifestations of fervor that were common during the *mawlid*, such as the violent processions with drums and flutes; he arranged *dhikr* sessions instead.<sup>16</sup> The orthodox Sufis looked down on the Ahmadiyya dervishes as hopelessly depraved and corrupt. Some of the Sufi shaykhs would not accept applicants who had been under the influence of the Ahmadis. Both Sha'rani and al-Jabarti considered the Ahmadiyya one of the despicable orders (*al-turuq al-mardhula*), whose excesses ulama and the orthodox Sufis condemned.<sup>17</sup>

The Ahmadiyya was not elitist, but neither was it completely antinomian. Just as even the orthodox Sufis in the sixteenth century could be affiliated with the Ahmadiyya, in later times too the orders had various expressions and ramifications. Describing their wild *mawlids*, al-Jabarti condemns 'the fiendish orders...which identify themselves (falsely!) to the saints buried in the famous sepulchres, such as the Ahmadiyya, Qadiriyya, Burhaniyya, and others.'<sup>18</sup> Not unlike Sha'rani three centuries before, al-Jabarti does not attack the Ahmadiyya (and the other orders) as such, but only their most vulgar expressions. Al-Jabarti's labelling of the Qadiriyya order, universally acknowledged as orthodox, as fiendish, supports our argument. Moreover, al-Jabarti himself composed biographies of Ahmadi Sufis, whom he viewed favorably: in his obituary of Shaykh Rabi'al-Shayyal (d.1121/1710), he describes the shaykh as 'a saintly man, one of the virtuous Sufis of the Ahmadiyya at Dimyat.' He was an ascetic, very devout, carefully performing his prayers, observing the religious ordinances and the *dhikr*. He made his living by working as a simple porter.<sup>19</sup>

It seems certain that the Ahmadiyya order had a greater number of followers, centers, and branches than other orders. While the Ahmadiyya was culturally inferior to the Shadhiliyya, it was much more popular and influential socially, since the cult of Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi was already fashionable among the ruling class in the Mamluk Sultanate. When Sultan Qansawh al-Ghawri went to war in Syria against the Ottomans, along with the 'Abbasid caliph, he took with him the

Ahmadiyya and the Rifa'iyya leaders in order to give his campaign religious legitimacy.<sup>20</sup> The influence of the Ahmadiyya did not diminish after the Ottoman conquest; Evliya's descriptions leave no doubt that in the seventeenth century the Ahmadiyya had the largest number of followers.<sup>21</sup> In the early nineteenth century, Lane says of the Ahmadiyya: 'It is a very numerous and highly respected order.'<sup>22</sup>

The Ahmadiyya was probably better organized than most other orders. It had a chief shaykh, (*shaykh masha'ikh al-Ahmadiyya*) with supreme authority (*ri'asa*) over all the shaykhs. In al-Jabarti's obituary of Shaykh 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Shinawi, nicknamed 'Bunduq,' (d. 1186/1772), the shaykh is described as 'the head of the Ahmadiyya shaykhs in his time.'<sup>23</sup> He was a direct descendant of the above-mentioned Muhammad al-Shinawi, one of Sha'rani's shaykhs, who lived in Mahallat Ruh, north of Tanta.<sup>24</sup> This information confirms the affiliation of the orthodox Sufis with the Ahmadiyya and it is clear that these connections survived for centuries. 'Ali Mubarak writes that the Ahmadiyya had 16 branches (*furu'*), more than any other *tariqa*. As late as the early twentieth century, the head of the Ahmadiyya had control over the shaykhs of all the sub-orders.<sup>25</sup>

Another type of 'irregular' Sufism, known by the name of *al-Mutawi'a*, may have been a sub-order of the Ahmadiyya. From Sha'rani's numerous references to the Mutawi'a dervishes and also from a *fatwa* issued by Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan al-'Adawi al-Sa'idi (d. 1189/1775) against them, it is obvious that they were regarded as very unorthodox, guilty of total ignorance of Islam, of hatred of the jurists (who could have guided them toward the right behavior) and of pederasty and fornication. It seems certain that the Mutawi'a were active mainly (or only) in the Sharqiyya province and in Upper Egypt, perhaps because normative Islam was weakest there.<sup>26</sup>

Like the Ahmadiyya, the *Burhamiyya* (or *Burhaniyya*) was a purely Egyptian order that had originated in Egypt, had its center there and had little following elsewhere. The Burhamiyya, named after Ibrahim al-*Dasuqi* (d.1288), was actually related to the slightly older and more popular Ahmadiyya. *Dasuq*, the founder's birthplace, is in the vicinity of Tanta, and the Burhamiyya may have originated from rivalry between the two towns. The Burhamiyya color was green; *Dasuqi's mawlid* took place one week after Ahmad al-Badawi's.<sup>27</sup>

The *Rifa'iyya* order is one of the oldest in Islam. It is named after Ahmad al-Rifa'i (d.572/1176 or 1177), and was notoriously antinomian. It is remarkable for the torture to which the devotees subjected themselves; they used to stab and burn themselves without injuring

themselves, and were famous for their ability to handle snakes. The Rifa'iyya was well represented in Egypt. The *Sa'diyya*, a sub-order of the Rifa'iyya, founded by the Syrian Shaykh Sa'd al-Din al-Jibawi (d. 1335), became closely associated with the strange custom of the *dawsa* (colloquial *dose*), 'trampling,' in which the shaykh rode on horseback over his prostrate dervishes, allegedly without harming them. The custom was banned officially in the nineteenth century, but seemingly survived until the 1940s.<sup>28</sup>

The *Qadiriyya* is Islam's first order, and was traditionally an orthodox order. It was established by the Hanbali theologian and preacher 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d.561/1166 or 1167) in Baghdad. Lane writes that 'their banners and turbans are white. Most of the Kadireeyeh of Egypt are fishermen: these, in religious processions, carry, upon poles, nets of various colors (green, yellow, red, white, etc.), as the banners of their order.'<sup>29</sup> Al-Jabarti reports that the shaykh of the order traditionally held the position of the secretary in the office of the *Naqib al-ashraf*.<sup>30</sup>

The *Bektashiyya* and the *Mevleviyya*, the two orders of paramount importance in the Turkish provinces of the Ottoman Empire, had only a limited following in Egypt and their activities remained confined to the Turkish residents. There were no centers outside Cairo; the main Bektashi *tekke* was that of Qasr al-'Ayni, near the Nile. As in Istanbul, the Cairo branch of the order was connected with the Janissaries.<sup>31</sup>

The *Mevleviyya* (*Mawlawiyya* in Arabic pronunciation) was the order of 'the dancing dervishes,' as it was known in Europe because of their custom of spinning around on the right foot during their devotions. Evliya Çelebi, who visited the Mevlevi cloister in Cairo, reported that it had a special hall for music (*sama' hane*), because the Mevleviyya was famous for its cultivation of music, and another hall, apparently for studying the *Mesnevi* (or *Mathnawi*), a mystical poem composed in Persian by Jelal al-Din Rumi, the founder of the order.<sup>32</sup>

*Al-Bayyumiyya*, another Ahmadiyya sub-order, is typical of the orders of the common people. It was established by 'Ali ibn Hijazi al-Bayyumi, who became a *majdhub* (an 'enraptured one,' an 'illuminated one'). Most of his many believers came from al-Husayniyya, a congested, poor quarter of Cairo which became the order's stronghold. All year round he wore a white robe and a white cap with a red turban over it, red being the color of the Ahmadiyya, his original order. He held regular *dhikr* sessions at al-Zahir mosque outside al-Husayniyya and every Tuesday, surrounded by his followers, he would ride his mule to perform the *dhikr* at the al-Husayni mosque, one of Cairo's most

sacred and venerable shrines. The ulama objected to the barefooted, dirty and noisy crowd and nearly succeeded in convincing an emir to prevent 'Ali al-Bayyumi from entering the mosque. But Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shubrawi, then the Shaykh of al-Azhar, who was favorably disposed to the 'illuminated ones,' interceded with the pasha and the emirs on al-Bayyumi's behalf saying that he was a great scholar ('*alim*) and should not be molested. To prove his point, al-Shubrawi arranged a class for al-Bayyumi at al-Azhar, where the ulama were so impressed that they left him alone.

'Ali al-Bayyumi was a charismatic shaykh; he even made criminals repent and they became his disciples (*muridun*). He would chain them to the pillars of al-Zahir mosque; lead them through the streets with collars round their necks, and while riding through the streets in a regal manner, have them march around him carrying weapons and sticks to protect him. Mustafa Pasha, the governor of Egypt, was one of al-Bayyumi's admirers. When the shaykh's prophesy that he would be made Grand Vizier was fulfilled, the pasha erected a mosque for the shaykh at al-Husayniyya with the usual complex of religious facilities: a *sabil* (public fountain), a *kuttab* (Koran school) and a *qubba* (domed building) where al-Bayyumi was buried after his death in 1183/1769.<sup>33</sup>

There is evidence that the shaykh of the Bayyumiyya order became an influential figure in the Husayniyya quarter. Al-Jabarti reports that in early 1205/late 1790 an oppressive and grasping emir and his aides entered the quarter and robbed the house of Ahmad Salim al-Jazzar, ('the butcher'), who was the head of the Bayyumiyya dervishes. As a result of this injustice, the people of the Husayniyya rioted, closing down the al-Azhar mosque and the shops in the neighborhood.<sup>34</sup>

The list of the antinomian or despicable *turuq* most commonly mentioned by al-Jabarti and other sources includes al-Sammaniyya, al-'Afifiyya, al-'Isawiyya and al-'Arabiyya. Of course, this list is far from complete.

The vicissitudes of the *Khalwatiyya* order in Ottoman Egypt may serve as a warning against a schematic approach to the study of Sufism. When the *Khalwatiyya* first appeared in Egypt toward the end of the Mamluk rule, it was a non-orthodox Turkish Sufism. In the eighteenth century, it became a bastion of orthodoxy, with unrivaled supremacy among the ulama of al-Azhar.<sup>35</sup> Since its inception in Egypt, the *Khalwatiyya* offered a well-developed mystical system and a Way which demanded a strict novitiate under a master. The novice's progress along the mystical path required learning the meanings of 'the Divine Names' in a graded way, with each successive Name standing for a

higher spiritual stage. The devotee's routine included retreat into a solitary cell, *khalwa*, hence the name of the order. The thirteenth century mystical classics of the great Sufi writer Muhyi'l-Din ibn al-'Arabi and the poet 'Umar ibn al-Farid were part of the esoteric lore studied in the order. The most prominent Khalwatis in late Mamluk and early Ottoman Egypt came from a Turkish-speaking milieu and were disciples of 'Umar Rusheni from Tabriz (d.1487). One of the most prominent Khalwatis was Ibrahim Gülsheni (d.940/1534), who escaped from Tabriz after the Safavid occupation. He became extremely popular with the Ottoman troops in Egypt; they even quarreled among themselves for the water with which he washed his hands. He was summoned to Istanbul, since the government was wary of his popularity in Cairo, and upon his return had to retreat into complete seclusion. Two other Khalwatis, also former disciples of Rusheni, were Muhammad Demirdash al-Muhammadi (d.929/1522 or 1523) and Shahin al-Jarkasi (d.954/1547). Shahin, an ex-officer in the army of Sultan Qa'it Bay, became a hermit and lived for several decades on the Muqattam Mountain, east of Cairo.<sup>36</sup>

The Khalwatis were reputed to practise alchemy and other occult sciences (as were members of other orders) and were even suspected of counterfeiting coins. There is a report that when Demirdash died, it was rumored that a treasure was hidden in his *tekke*. When the *qadi* went to investigate, he discovered equipment for practising alchemy. The seclusion of the Khalwatis in their cells for the sake of prayer, fasting and meditation could be abused for the purpose of practising alchemy or even forging money.<sup>37</sup> The Khalwatiyya came to be associated with Turkish and Persian customs. For example, Ibrahim Gülsheni prepared a grave near his cell 'after the custom of the Persian shaykhs' for each of his Sufis.<sup>38</sup>

'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani was a genuine representative of the orthodox, middle-of-the-road, Egyptian Sufism. Too meek to quarrel openly with the Khalwatis, whom he regarded as lacking in true Islamic belief and practice, he avoided open confrontation with them, but nevertheless denounced the ways of 'the people of the manipulation of the 'Divine Names' for practical purposes. He retreat' (*ahl al-khalwa*), by which he could only mean the Khalwatiyya, for their laxity in fulfilling the religious ordinances and their perceived the psychological dangers inherent in confining the Sufi to a solitary cell for extended periods, sometimes as much as 40 days during the 'Forty-day Retreat' (*Arba'iniyya*).<sup>39</sup> Not surprisingly, intense religious disputes and personal rivalries developed between the more orthodox and moderate Sufism as

personified by Shaʿrani and the more mystical and ecstatic version of the Khalwatiyya, of Karim al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Khalwati (d.985/ 1578). Karim al-Din had been a shopkeeper before he was introduced to Shaykh Demirdash with whom the young novice studied occult sciences and Sufi poetry and literature. Although he became Demirdash's favorite disciple, the shaykh in his will did not name Karim al-Din his successor as head of the order. When the new shaykh humiliated Karim al-Din, he left the Sufi center and eventually established himself as the head of the Khalwatiyya of Cairo. When word of Karim al-Din's popularity reached Shaʿrani, he went to see Karim al-Din only to discover that the Khalwati was ignorant of such elementary practices as how to perform the ritual of ablution (*wuduʿ*). When Shaʿrani offered to instruct him, al-Khalwati snapped at him: 'He wants to make a *faqih* (jurisconsult) out of me, when I am a Sufi.' From then on he avoided Shaʿrani. 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Munawi (d. 1031/1621), Shaʿrani's follower and successor as the historian of Egyptian Sufism, says about Karim al-Din's career: 'Relations between him and Shaʿrani were those of equal rivals.' After Shaʿrani's death in 973/1565, Karim al-Din became the undisputed leader of Sufism in Cairo.<sup>40</sup> A remark attributed to Muhammad al-Turki, one of Karim al-Din's disciples, lends insight into Khalwatiyya attitude toward the Shadhiliyya. Complaining that the Sufis in his day were ignorant and that their Sufism consisted of falsehood and fantasies, he summarized the degeneration as he saw it: 'The way of the Khalwatiyya has become that of the Shadhiliyya.'<sup>41</sup> Turkish Sufism continued to have an impact on Egyptian society after the Ottoman conquest, as can be seen by the biographies of Turkish shaykhs in al-Munawi's work.<sup>42</sup>

Although the information about the Khalwatiyya in the seventeenth century is scanty, the order continued its activity on the foundations laid down in the previous century: Evliya Çelebi reports about several Khalwatiyya *tekkes* and refers to the Khalwati Sufis marching in a ceremonial procession, bearing themselves with dignity unlike unruly dervishes of other *turuq*.<sup>43</sup> The *zawiya* (a Sufi center and hospice) established by Demirdash survived uninterruptedly at least until the eighteenth century under the direction of the founder's family.<sup>44</sup> Another cloister for the Turkish Sufis of the Khalwatiyya order was built in 1112/1700–1 in the Qara Maydan square by Mehmet Pasha, the governor of Egypt.<sup>45</sup> Until the eighteenth century, the Khalwatiyya was confined to Egypt's Turkish community, but this changed as a result of the missionary activity of a Syrian Sufi shaykh by the name of Mustafa ibn Kamal al-Din al-Bakri (1099/1688–1162/1749).<sup>46</sup> A native of

Damascus, he traveled widely and his first visit to Egypt was in 1133/1720–21. He propagated the Khalwatiyya of the line of a Turkish shaykh called ‘Ali Efendi Qarabash; his line was called the Qarabashliyya. Mustafa al-Bakri was the author of nearly 200 treatises and more than 60 litanies or ‘collects’ (*ahzab* and *awrad*).<sup>47</sup>

Mustafa al-Bakri’s chief deputy (*khalifa*) in Egypt was Muhammad ibn Salim al-Hifni (or al-Hifnawi), a distinguished ‘*alim* of the Shafi’i legal school, who was to rise to the position of the *Shaykh al-Azhar* (from 1171/1757 to 1181/1767).<sup>48</sup> Al-Hifni began his illustrious career as a poor boy from a small village in the Sharqiyya province. At the age of fourteen, he came to study in Cairo where he copied manuscripts to make a living. Then, someone gave him a large sum of money and after that ‘riches came to him’; he became immensely wealthy, feeding 40–50 people daily at his table, and supporting his followers. Al-Hifni’s first Sufi guide was a Maghribi shaykh, Ahmad al-Shadhili al-Maghribi, but his true Sufi career began when he became associated with al-Bakri. He was so attached to al-Bakri that he went to Jerusalem to visit him there, an unusual undertaking for an Egyptian scholar, because the Egyptians were reluctant to travel and usually left their country only during the *hajj*. The strict al-Hifni did not easily accept applicants to the order and did so only after much soul-searching. But al-Bakri told him to accept everyone, regardless whether the applicant was a man, a woman or even a Christian. Indeed, many Christians were said to have converted to Islam through his missionary efforts. According to al-Jabarti, al-Hifni spread the Khalwatiyya with great success and had followers in many villages. Al-Hifni was on excellent terms with the rulers; he was especially revered by the governor, Raghib Pasha. Al-Jabarti believes that al-Hifni’s influence on the emirs was so strong and beneficial that he was able to prevent civil strife by chiding them and talking sense to them. After his death on Rabi’ I 27, 1181/August 17, 1767 ‘the old system collapsed,’ he said, and ‘Ali Bey came to power.’<sup>49</sup> Al-Hifni’s most important deputy was Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-‘Adawi, a Maliki scholar from Upper Egypt, better known as al-Dardayr (d. 1201/1786). Al-Dardayr was also al-Hifni’s student at al-Azhar in *hadith* traditions besides being his disciple in Sufism. Al-Dardayr held a succession of administrative and judicial posts at al-Azhar.<sup>50</sup>

Another al-Hifni disciple was Shaykh Mahmud al-Kurdi (d.1195/1780). His detailed biography by al-Jabarti, who was his direct disciple, demonstrates the central role of dreams in Sufi life. The Sufis believed that their dreams were a guide, especially in cases of doubt. Although

al-Kurdi became al-Hifni's follower, he did not want to forsake the litanies of al-Qusayri, his former Sufi guide. Al-Hifni did not insist, but when al-Kurdi met Mustafa al-Bakri, the latter made him choose between al-Qusayri's litanies and the Khalwatiyya. Al-Kurdi had dreams in which he saw the Prophet, al-Qusayri and Mustafa al-Bakri with his ancestor, the caliph Abu Bakr. Al-Kurdi was told in his dream to obey al-Bakri and to recite his *awrad*, the most famous being *Wird al-Sahar*, which the Khalwatis repeated before daybreak.<sup>51</sup> Al-Kurdi was an ascetic who devoted his life to Sufism, and did not make a career as an *'alim*. His deputy, Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Sharqawi, however, was *Shaykh al-Azhar* from 1208/1793 to 1227/1812.<sup>52</sup> His first taste of Sufism, under the guidance of al-Hifni, was disastrous: when al-Hifni taught him the secrets of the first Divine Name, al-Sharqawi temporarily lost his mental balance and had to be hospitalized in an asylum for a few days. Soon after his release, he renewed his study of Sufism, this time under Mahmud al-Kurdi. Now he was so successful that the latter invested him with a *taj* (a 'crown,' a high crowned hat, symbolizing the status of a Khalwati deputy). Like al-Hifni, al-Sharqawi in his youth was very poor, until some Syrian merchants gave him gifts which made him a rich man.

The Khalwatiyya had a very elaborate system of mysticism and demanded a high intellectual and religious level of its adherents. The *tariqa* became the dominant order among the senior ulama; Khalwati training became an integral part of the spiritual formation of the Azhari elite. It is significant that many young men who came to study in Cairo had already been initiated into a Sufi order in their native place, but became Khalwatis in the capital. In many cases being admitted to the Khalwatiyya was a vehicle for the newcomer's socialization as an Azhari *'alim*.

Needless to say, in order to qualify as the pre-eminent *tariqa* of the ulama, the Khalwatiyya (or at least the line established by Mustafa al-Bakri) had to have an impeccable reputation for orthodoxy. The best proof that the Khalwatiyya did, in fact, acquire such a position is the praise given by al-Jabarti, who himself took the Khalwati way. The historian, whose rigid orthodoxy and contempt for the 'irregular' and vulgar form of Sufism are beyond doubt, portrays the Khalwati Sufis most favorably. He also praises the order explicitly:

It (the Khalwatiyya) is an order which is buttressed by the noble *Shari'a* and the true religion. It does not impose (upon the devotees) anything unbearable. It is the best of the orders, since

its specific *dhikr* is ‘la ilaha illa Allah’ (‘there is no deity but Allah’) which, according to the noble *hadith* is the best thing a man can utter.<sup>53</sup>

### SHAYKH AL-BAKRI

The Bakris were an old Egyptian Sufi family of *ashraf*, who claimed descent from Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, the first caliph, and assumed a central position in Sufism in Ottoman Egypt.<sup>54</sup> According to the family tradition, the Bakris traced their history in Egypt back to the Arab conquest in the seventh century; they became prominent in the fifteenth century, when Muhammad Jalal al-Din al-Bakri came from Dahrut, a village in Upper Egypt<sup>55</sup> where the family had lived for generations, and settled in Cairo in 841/1437–8. As a *qadi* and a mufti, he was primarily known as a legist, not as a Sufi.

The family’s earliest known contact with Sufism was its attachment to the famous shaykh ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Dashtuti (d. 924/1517), who made Muhammad Jalal al-Din the trustee of his *waqf*. It was believed that the family’s wealth and prestige stemmed from al-Dashtuti’s blessing (*baraka*). This office remained in the al-Bakri house until the nineteenth century; the trusteeship of additional *waqfs* conferred immense wealth on the Bakris.<sup>56</sup>

During the sixteenth century, the Bakriyya established itself as a Sufi order under the leadership of Muhammad Shams al-Din Abyad al-Wajh (d. 994/1586). Abyad al-Wajh composed a distinctive litany called *Hizb al-Fath* or *Hizb al-Bakri* and was famous as a Shafi’i ‘*alim* and a great Shadhili Sufi. The timid and simple Sha’rani regarded himself as socially far inferior to Muhammad Abyad al-Wajh al-Bakri and his family.<sup>57</sup> The family also produced one of Ottoman Egypt’s important historians, Muhammad ibn Abi’l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, whose chronicles are an indispensable source for the history of the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>58</sup>

By the end of the sixteenth century, when it became possible for rich ulama, Sufis and other civilians to convert their wealth into tax farms (*iltizams*), Taj al-‘Arifin al-Bakri, (d. 1003/1594–5), the historian’s paternal uncle, had *iltizam* of 50 villages, which yielded an annual harvest of 10,000 *qintars* of sugar and similar quantities of rice, sesame seed and wheat.<sup>59</sup> The Bakris had a large and luxurious palace at the fashionable Azbakiyya Pond in Cairo, which became a meeting place for the social and political elite. They had a considerable library and a literary salon. They also had Mamluks, which was most unusual for civilians.<sup>60</sup>

The head of the Bakri family held the title of *Shaykh sajjadat al-Bakriyya* (*sajjada* is a prayer rug and *Shaykh al-sajjada* indicates the head of an order).<sup>61</sup> Shaykh al-Bakri did not have official authority over the Sufi orders, but by being in charge of the celebrations of the Prophet's birthday (*mawlid al-Nabi*), the biggest Sufi event in Cairo, he attained a unique position. It is not clear when the Bakris were given this distinguished office, but at the end of the seventeenth century Evliya Çelebi describes the festivities under the direction of the Bakris as a well-established custom. All the major Sufi orders participated in this feast, which must have enhanced the Bakris' prestige even more. The Bakris held a *mawlid* of their own, since many of them had a reputation of being saints (*awliya'*). The feast was celebrated near the sepulchre of al-Imam al-Shafi'i, where the Bakris have their cemetery.<sup>62</sup>

The Bakris enjoyed official recognition of their social and religious distinction in the form of grants from the state treasury. Ibn Abi'l-Surur says that his father, Abu'l-Surur al-Bakri (d.1007/ 1598), was the first to be given the title 'the mufti of the noble Sultanate' (*mufti al-saltana al-sharifa*). It is not clear what functions or powers accrued to him.<sup>63</sup> The Bakris' high status is attested by their appearing routinely as addressees of imperial decrees issued in the name of the sultan in Istanbul.<sup>64</sup> Last but not least, since the second half of the eighteenth century, the family had claims to the office of the *Naqib al-ashraf*, as is explained elsewhere in this volume.<sup>65</sup> The success of the al-Bakri family demonstrates the rise of the local Sufi notables to unprecedented positions of influence and wealth during the Ottoman period. In matters related to the leadership of the Sufi elite, the Bakris competed with the Wafa'i family group, to which I now turn.

### AL-SADAT AL-WAFA'IYYA

In many ways, the history of the Wafa'i family paralleled that of the Bakris, although it is agreed that the latter were considered to have higher social status.<sup>66</sup> The similarities between the two houses are striking: both had deep roots in Egypt, although the Bakris were superior to the Wafa'is because they were said to have emigrated from Tunisia in the fourteenth century. The Wafa'is' eponym was Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Wafa' (d.1358) and the family traced its origins to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, the fourth caliph. Both were very important orthodox Sufi families in the Shadhili tradition and had characteristics of an order, such as *mawliids* and *ahzab*, but they did not accept novices; one could not become a Bakri or a Wafa'i, one had to be born one. The

Wafa'iyya acquired its wealth as the Bakriyya had, namely, by lucrative trusteeships of *waqf* foundations and by investing the capital thus acquired to get hold of *iltizams*.

Just as the Bakris were in charge of the Prophet's *mawlid*, the Wafa'is were in charge of Husayn's and the Shaykh al-Wafa'iyya was the trustee (*nazir*) of the Husayni mosque. Like the Bakris, the Wafa'is also had their own *mawlid*. Likewise, they enjoyed Istanbul's official recognition and received fixed grants. Finally, they competed with the Bakris for the office of *niqabat al-ashraf* with one of their members being the first native Egyptian named to that post.<sup>67</sup> The Wafa'iyya had a distinctive ceremony called *takniya*, at which a surname (*kunya*), such as Abu'l-Imdad, Abu'l-Iqbal and Abu'l-Safa' was conferred by the *Shaykh al-sajjada al-Wafa'iyya* to invoke blessing (*baraka*). This ceremony usually took place on the 27th of Ramadan, on the *Laylat al-Qadar*. In exceptional cases, the Wafa'i shaykh authorized someone else to perform the ceremony, as in the case of Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Aydarusi who was to confer surnames in Yemen.<sup>68</sup>

Muhammad Abu'l-Anwar ibn 'Abd al-Rahman was perhaps the most interesting Wafa'i shaykh, if not the most likable. Al-Jabarti devotes to him an unusually detailed biography, which reveals many aspects of contemporary society and illustrates how an ambitious and grasping man could exploit his position as an influential Sufi shaykh and *Naqib al-ashraf*.<sup>69</sup> Abu'l-Anwar's claim to the position of Shaykh al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya was not strong, being a Wafa'i only on his mother's side. When the male line of the family became extinct in 1176/1762–3, he was quick to wear the *taj*, and to marry the mother of the deceased shaykh and move into a house adjacent to the palace of the Wafa'i *khalifa*. He waited six years more until the death of a rival who had been appointed to the post, and then, in 1182/1768–9, he rode with Shaykh al-Bakri and the other Sufi shaykhs to the Khalwati center (*ribat*) at al-Khurunfish. Having performed the required religious ceremony, he was invested by 'Ali Bey Bulut Kapan, the de facto ruler of Egypt, with the robe of honor, and in the presence of the chief shaykhs became the Wafa'i *khalifa*. Thus Abu'l-Anwar put his hands on the family's immense wealth. Al-Jabarti recounts that their mansion resembled an emir's palace: it was elegant, had many gardens and servants, and was spacious enough to entertain a large number of guests. Abu'l-Anwar did not neglect his role as a patron of learning and culture; he purchased many books for his library and entertained ulama and poets. The poets praised him, and his guests, including ulama,

flattered him, hoping to receive his gifts and to meet the emirs and other notables who frequented his house.

Abu'l-Anwar conducted his financial affairs with great skill. In 1190/1176, when a new governor arrived in Egypt with *reisülküttab*, the highest Ottoman official for foreign affairs, Abu'l-Anwar convinced these Ottoman dignitaries to grant him 50 purses and then 50 purses more, to repair his ancestors' *zawiya*. Through his own efforts and those of an agent whom he dispatched to Istanbul to plead his case before the authorities, the villages within his *iltizam* were exempted from the usual taxes.<sup>70</sup> But he was also ruthless, beating the clerks and attendants of the sepulchres (*adriha*) under his supervision, and extorting money whenever possible. Once he beat a Coptic secretary of the *Amir al-balad* and when the Copt complained to his master, the latter answered: 'What do you want me to do to a great shaykh who has beaten a Christian?' Abu'l-Anwar's treatment of his tenants was extremely cruel, worse than that of other *multazims*. He would add to their tax burden, and if they failed to pay, he had them arrested for months and whipped. Abu'l-Anwar even cheated Shaykh al-Bakri out of the trusteeship of the Husayni shrine. The two had agreed to exchange the trusteeships of the Husayni and al-Imam al-Shafi'i shrines, but according to al-Jabarti, Abu'l-Anwar ended up keeping both positions. In addition, he got hold of other revenue-yielding trusteeships of the sepulchres of the holiest and most famous saints. In order to increase his prestige and income from the *mawlid* of al-Husayn, he ordered the police to make the shopkeepers open their shops at night and light lamps throughout the *mawlid* for 15 nights, instead of only one night until then. Al-Jabarti says that Abu'l-Anwar devoted all his years to amassing money and purchasing slaves, slave girls and eunuchs. As he became richer and more powerful, he no longer condescended to participate in the religious ceremonies at al-Azhar or even in the Wafa'i center, but dressed like an emir rather than a man of religion, abandoning the *taj* cap for a *qawuq* (a kind of high felt hat) topped by a green turban that indicated his *sharifi* origin.

Yet this unscrupulous shaykh was not lacking in courage. During Jaza'irli Hasan Pasha's punitive campaign against the Mamluk emirs Murad and Ibrahim, they entrusted their wives and children to Abu'l-Anwar. When the pasha intended to sell them into slavery, the shaykh protected them and the pasha had to give in. Similarly, despite the pasha's threats, Abu'l-Anwar refused to give up a sum of money which Ibrahim had entrusted to him (Shaykh al-Bakri on the other hand surrendered a sum of money given to him by Murad; after Hasan Pasha withdrew from Egypt and the two emirs returned to Cairo, Murad

punished al-Bakri by selling his lands). Later, Abu'l-Anwar was not afraid to accuse the two emirs of misdeeds, saying that the French had conquered Egypt because of the Mamluks' acts of injustice.

The story of Abu'l-Anwar's relationship with the French and the struggle against 'Umar Makram for the *niqabat al-ashraf* are outside the period under discussion. He died in March 1813 as *Naqib al-ashraf* and Shaykh al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya.

### THE SUFI SHAYKH

The Sufi shaykh completely controlled the lives of his disciples. According to Sufi belief, the member of a Sufi order (*faqir*) should wholly yield himself to the shaykh's will, being in his hands 'like a corpse in the hands of the corpse-washer.' The shaykh was not only the novice's spiritual guide; he could determine every aspect of his personal life, including the most intimate. The shaykh was an arbiter within his order or cloister. Sha'rani describes how this was done by Muhammad al-Ghamri at his *zawiya* in Mahallat Ruh. The shaykh would convene his disciples once or twice a week and ask them to present their differences to him. In the Ahmadiyya, the shaykh acting as an arbiter sat behind a curtain so that no one could see his face. Meanwhile, the attendant (*naqib*) recorded the disputes. Then the shaykh announced his decisions which were accepted by all the *faqirs*. This kind of litigation was often preferred to recourse to the courts of the *qadis*, whom many people wanted to avoid, justly regarding them as an arm of the government. The shaykh also fulfilled the function of confessor; a novice had to reveal all his thoughts, both good and bad, to his shaykh. In the sixteenth century, a Sufi association called Khawatiriyya was founded by Muhammad ibn 'Arraq, a Syrian Sufi, who was a disciple of 'Ali ibn Maymun, a renowned Maghribi shaykh. It derived its name from the practice of its members revealing to the shaykh all their thoughts (*khawatir*). The importance of dreams in Sufi culture has already been mentioned and often the shaykh interpreted his disciples' dreams.<sup>71</sup> The majority of the Sufi shaykhs aspired to spread their *tariqa* and to have as many followers as possible. Inevitably, jealousy and rivalry arose, and shaykhs often acted in a very ugly manner in order to enhance their own popularity and to prevent other shaykhs from encroaching on their territory. For example, shaykhs who were *multazims* took advantage of their position in the areas of the *iltizam* to bar rival orders from entering.<sup>72</sup>

Yet not all the shaykhs were eager to devote all their time to guiding novices in the Way (*taslik al-muridin*); some considered it a distraction from concentrating on their own religious experiences. When ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Dashtuti, the famous itinerant Sufi, saw ‘Ali al-Marsafi, one of Sha‘rani’s shaykhs, busy teaching *dhikr*, he told him: ‘O, ‘Ali, leave these fetters and go out and wander in the land.’ But ‘Ali replied: ‘The right thing for me is to do what I am doing, and the right thing for you is to do what you are doing.’<sup>73</sup> Some Sufi shaykhs preferred the life of wandering (*siyaha*), journeying many years to distant countries, but only very rarely outside the lands of Islam.<sup>74</sup> Others did not leave their native village or town, or returned there after a few years of study in Cairo.

Even the shaykhs who were willing to educate novices held widely differing views about how to do so. Some shaykhs were strict and often cruel to new applicants and novices; others were very lenient, regarding the spread of the order as an ideal way of fighting ignorance or the influence of the antinomian dervishes, particularly in the countryside. It will be recalled how Shaykh al-Hifni, under the influence of Mustafa al-Bakri, relaxed his demands on new applicants and spread the Khalwatiyya by accepting all newcomers.<sup>75</sup> Sha‘rani provides several examples of other shaykhs who acted likewise. Muhammad al-Shinawi, who was his direct shaykh, is perhaps the best representative of the truly popular, optimistic and lenient Sufism. Unlike other shaykhs, who tested those wishing to join the order, he spread the *dhikr* throughout Gharbiyya province and did not hesitate to authorize women, and even children, to arrange *dhikr* sessions.<sup>76</sup>

A fundamental quality of Sufi shaykhs was their *baraka*, an untranslatable term, which literally means ‘blessing,’ but essentially signifies holiness or charisma. Belief in the power of *baraka* was universal and was not confined to Sufis. *Baraka* was unrelated to learning or even to moral excellence or piety; sometimes even madmen were believed to have it. Al-Sha‘rani relates a fascinating story of a confrontation between an Egyptian Sufi named Muhammad al-Munayyir and a Syrian, Muhammad ibn ‘Arraq. The latter scolded the former for bringing presents which Egyptian merchants and emirs had donated to the residents of Mecca. Ibn ‘Arraq claimed that the presents were *haram*, i.e. morally tainted owing to the donors’ moral depravity. Ostensibly, al-Munayyir accepted the reproach, but a short time afterwards the Syrian died, smitten, it was said, by al-Munayyir’s *baraka*. Although the two men are historical figures, the events related definitely are not, as shown by the dates of their deaths, al-Munayyir

having died two years *before* Ibn 'Arraq.<sup>77</sup> The significance of the story lies in the confrontation of two different types of Sufis, one holding to moral principles and the other endowed with *baraka*. The divine gift of *baraka* is closely related to the belief in *karamat*, miracles attributed to saints. It was believed that miraculous phenomena were not only possible, but ever present, and that saints had the power to invoke them. The miracles were taken for granted not only by men like Sha'rani, who himself was a superstitious miracle-monger, but also by al-Jabarti, the honest and sober historian.<sup>78</sup> Sufi shaykhs were also believed to have the gift of prophesy. Al-Jabarti reports a Sufi who predicted the promotion of the governor of Egypt to the grand vizierate and of another shaykh who foresaw the promotion of an '*alim* to the office of the *Shaykh al-Azhar*.<sup>79</sup> Many Sufis occupied themselves with divination and other occult practices.<sup>80</sup> The popular imagination attributed to Sufi shaykhs supernatural powers of all kinds, including the ability to force their will on man and nature.

Sufi shaykhs differed in how they maintained themselves. The majority lived by their religion as teachers, trustees of *waqfs*, wardens of holy sepulchres, or were recipients of donations from local and foreign rulers, the wealthy, or the common people who believed in their sanctity. In addition to the examples of rich Sufis increasing their wealth by investing their capital in *iltizams*,<sup>81</sup> as shown above, the case of 'Abd al-Karim al-Zayyat (d. 1118/1768), a Sufi who was also an '*alim*, shows how the position of a shaykh could bring riches. Al-Zayyat was sent to Upper Egypt by al-Hifni, his master in Sufism, because an Arab chief of the Hawwara confederation believed in al-Hifni and requested that he send one of his disciples. Al-Zayyat was accepted with great honor and was given a spacious house, a tract of land, servants and a retinue. He became extremely rich by accumulating more land, slaves and livestock. He taught, issued *fatwas*, made converts to Sufism, and set *dhikr* sessions. Because of changed circumstances in Upper Egypt, probably the fall of his Hawwara patrons, he lost his wealth and position; he returned to Cairo only to discover that his teacher al-Hifni had died. He then returned to Bahjura, his town in Upper Egypt, but did not regain his former wealth.<sup>82</sup> This biography also illustrates in a lively fashion how '*ilm*, or Islamic learning, and Sufism were interwoven. Al-Zayyat had been sent to Upper Egypt primarily as a Sufi, and al-Jabarti is explicit about the centrality of Sufism in his activities. But apparently, being the only religious authority in that remote bedouin-inhabited region, he was a teacher and a mufti as well.

Not all the Sufi shaykhs, however, depended on their religion for their livelihood. The Shadhilis and other Sufi orders demanded that a Sufi should occupy himself with useful work. ‘Ali al-Khawwas, Sha‘rani’s guide to Sufism, was a palm-leaf plaiter (hence his surname, *laqab*). Some shaykhs lived very modestly, earning their living from humble manual labor, such as looking after the oil and the lamps or the worshippers’ shoes in a mosque. One Sufi was a simple porter. Many Sufis are described by their biographers as true ascetics, who subsisted on the barest minimum and who turned down gifts.<sup>83</sup>

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE *TARIQA*

A sharp line divided full-time Sufis from those who made their living outside the order although they had been accepted as members and participated in the order’s rituals and ceremonies. E.W.Lane writes:

Almost all the darweeshes of Egypt are tradesmen or artisans or agriculturalists; and only occasionally assist in the rites and ceremonies of their respective orders: but there are some who have no other occupations than those of performing zikrs at the festivals of saints and at private entertainments, and of chanting in funeral processions. These are termed ‘fukara,’ or ‘fakeers;’ which is an appellation given also to the poor in general, but especially to poor devotees.<sup>84</sup>

To become a novice one had to be accepted personally by the shaykh or his authorized deputy. The initiation ceremonies varied in their details from one order to another, but certain elements were common to almost all the orders. Usually, the first step was taking the vow of allegiance to the order (*akhdh al-‘ahd*), thus submitting oneself to the order’s specific rules. The ceremonies might also include the *bay‘a*, oath of loyalty to the shaykh. Other ceremonies, such as the shaykh loosening the edge of the novice’s turban (*irkha’ al-‘adhba*) and the novice being invested with the gown of the order (*ilbas al-khirqa*), seem to have been reserved exclusively for ‘professional’ and dedicated Sufis. A necessary part of the initiation was teaching the novice the *dhikr* formula (*talqin al-dhikr*). The disciple then started his journey, *suluk* (literally, ‘taking the road’), the stages of which varied from one order to another, and sometimes from one shaykh to another in the same order. The pace of the novice’s progress often depended on his personality and dedication.

Below the shaykh in the order, the sources mention two functionaries: his deputy, the *khalifa*, and the *naqib*. The former was a central figure in Sufi life; no *dhikr* sessions were permitted without him being present.<sup>85</sup> A study made at the beginning of the twentieth century says that the *khalifa* keeps the order's equipment, such as flags, banners and musical instruments. The *khalifa* obtains from the shaykh written permission (*ijaza*) to teach the *dhikr* to new Sufis. The *naqib* was the guardian of the liturgy and was responsible for preparing the technical aspects of Sufi gatherings.<sup>86</sup>

The members of the Sufi orders participated in the *mawlid*s and in the *dhikr* sessions, which were held at least once a week. They marched under their banners on certain public occasions, such as the departure of the *mahmal* (the litter sent to Mecca each year with the pilgrims' caravan), the *wafa' al-Nil* ('the high-water of the Nile,' when the water has risen high enough to cut the dike of the Cairo canal), and on the *laylat al-ru'ya* ('the night of the observation' of the new moon on the eve of Ramadan).<sup>87</sup>

As with other social organizations in the Middle East, relationships within the order were personal and familial, rather than formal. Many of the relationship terms used were borrowed from the family group: the shaykh was called father or grandfather; a Sufi's comrades—other disciples of the same shaykh—were called his brothers; when the novice completed his spiritual progress, he was 'weaned.' Similarly, the position of shaykh was passed on from father to son. Many orders established dynasties of shaykhs, which survived for centuries. This was particularly true when the order was of the hereditary type and was centered on an important *zawiya*, *tekke*, or the founder's sepulchre (*darih*). The Khalwatiyya, however, which was not a popular cult but an organization for teaching a mystical doctrine, did not apply the hereditary principle: a shaykh's deputy was not his son, but his most outstanding disciple. Sometimes there were struggles over the succession between the shaykh's sons and his disciples. On occasion, the shaykh himself designated his successor; a would-be successor could improve his chances by marrying his shaykh's daughter.<sup>88</sup>

Finally, the question of multiple membership in the orders: on the evidence of the numerous biographies of Sufi shaykhs it is clear that being initiated into several orders was the norm. Sha'rani's initiation into 26 orders has already been mentioned. Al-Maliji, Sha'rani's biographer, was known as al-Wafa'i, al-Ahmadi, al-Shinawi, al-Sha'rani. Al-Jabarti wrote a biography of an '*alim* who also studied Sufism and was given *ijazas* (diplomas to teach) of several Sufi

orders.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, it was a fact of Sufi life that the vow of allegiance (*'ahd*) given by the novice to his shaykh bound them together and existed alongside the rivalry between orders. The solution to this apparent paradox lies in the distinction between full membership in an order as a social organization, entailing obedience to a shaykh and regular participation in the rituals and ceremonies, and between learning the *dhikr* formula for itself or for gaining a blessing.<sup>90</sup> Clearly, Sha'rani did not regularly participate in the rituals of all the orders whose *dhikr* he had learned. It would also seem that such superficial affiliation with more than one order was tolerated in the case of more mature, educated and independent Sufis, but not in the case of the common people.<sup>91</sup>

### SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE *TURUQ*

The *raison d'être* of the Sufi associations was religious. This basic fact should not be overlooked when the social aspects of Sufism are considered. There is no doubt that the orders fulfilled vital social functions and catered to important social and psychological needs, although this was seldom a formal part of Sufi doctrine. On the contrary, as Sha'rani has Sidi Abu Su'ud al-Jarihi, one of his colleagues, say: 'All the people who have come to me have done so because of their troubles with their wives, neighbors or masters. None of them desired to be brought closer to God.' In other words, people felt that Sufism could give them the comfort and hope that orthodox Islam, which had become the religion of the jurisconsults, failed to confer.<sup>92</sup> Since Islamic mysticism did not demand, and did not even recommend, celibacy, the orders increased in size not only by new applicants joining, but also through natural growth. As Sufism ceased to be an elitist movement, many people were born into an order just as they were born into a social class, a village, or a profession. Social mobility was minimal in those times and most people had little choice about which social organization or milieu they belonged to.

As has already been indicated, some Sufis were rich and others poor, some were grasping and others ascetics; examples abound to illustrate the great diversity in this respect. Nevertheless, most of the orders had a well-defined socio-economic character, and there was often a close positive correlation between that character and the order's religious quality. The popular or vulgar orders, whose members belonged to the lower classes, also had a reputation of being antinomian and lax in observing the ordinances of Islam; the orders of the social elite were noted for their orthodoxy. While the Khalwatiyya of Mustafa al-Bakri

was an orthodox, Azhar-based order, the Bayyumiyya, for example, which was the dominant order of Cairo's poor Husayniyya quarter, with a butcher as its shaykh, was notoriously unorthodox. There are also many references in the sources to the antinomian character of the rural orders. Evliya Çelebi often carefully notes the social standing of the participants in various *mawlid*s, or of visitors to certain holy sepulchres. For example, he says that those who come to Ibrahim Gülsheni's *mawlid* are Turks, soldiers, cultured and learned people such as poets and writers, a clean and civilized public. He adds that the *mawlid* is an occasion for the gathering of the elite (*khawass*), and common people (*'awamm*) and fellahin are fortunately absent. By contrast, the *mawlid* of 'Umar ibn al-Farid draws a crowd of poor people, and all kinds of eccentrics but never men of high social standing.<sup>93</sup>

Al-Jabarti, with his keen observation of the social realities, provides the best descriptions: his blame of the 'irregular' orders for their behavior during their *mawlid*s, reflects, no doubt, the contempt of the educated Azhari *'alim*. The orders, whose members took part in a certain *mawlid* of dubious origin, were 'the people of the blameworthy innovation,' *ahl al-bida'*. Al-Jabarti was disgusted with the behavior of the rabble shouting and joking in the mosque, flirting with handsome young men, munching nuts and seeds, and littering the mosque with the shells.

They belonged to the orders of al-'Afifi, al-Samman, al-'Arabi, and al-'Isawiyya. They made much noise with their drums, loud chanting and dancing. Then the situation worsened with the arrival of the Sufi processions (*jama'at al-ashayir*) from the remote and nearby quarters of the city, carrying candles, lamps, drums and wind instruments, and uttering, in a distorted language, what they think is *dhikr* and prayer. They accuse anyone who denounces them of infidelity and freethinking. Most of them are rabble, of the base trades, people who do not have food for the next day. Some of them would sell their belongings and borrow money to buy candles and to pay the drummers and the wind instrument players. They are all riffraff.<sup>94</sup>

Elsewhere, al-Jabarti speaks similarly of 'the devilish orders, known as *al-ashayir* (the Sufis' processions), who are the rabble and members of the base guilds, who link themselves to the famous saints, such as the Ahmadiyya, Rifa'iyya, Qadiriyya, Burhaniyya and the like.'<sup>95</sup>

Sometimes Sufi shaykhs prompted by moral considerations spoke out for the oppressed and exploited fellahin, or even acted on their behalf. Shaʿrani, himself a migrant to the capital from a small village, never concealed his rural origin, although he thanked God for transferring him ‘from the village, which was a place of rudeness and ignorance, to the city, which was the place of gentleness and knowledge.’<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, Shaʿrani and his fellow Sufis attempted to instruct the fellahin in the true religion and to ease their hard life. This attitude is in sharp contrast with the disdain with which Shirbini, himself of fellah origin, regarded the fellahin: he ridiculed them with cruel satire and maintained that they fully deserved the oppression and hardship which they suffered.<sup>97</sup> Muhammad al-Shinawi, who as mentioned above, was active in the countryside, successfully intervened to redress an injustice suffered by the fellahin at the hand of an oppressive *multazim*.<sup>98</sup>

Al-Jabarti reports a case of agrarian unrest in Jumada II 1222/ August 1807, that was started by the followers of a rural ‘enraptured’ (*majdhub*) Sufi shaykh called Sulayman from the district of Banha al-ʿAsal. He was one of the familiar type of popular saints: his talk was limited to *dhikr* and strange utterances, which his devotees interpreted as divine intimations. The inner circle of his admirers consisted of 160 young beardless men, mostly sons of village chiefs (*mashaʿikh al-bilad*); they lived in a camp of huts and tents set up in an open field around the shaykh’s hut. They wore necklaces of colored pearls and earrings and carried whips made of thick plaited cord. This budding order started demanding donations from other villages. It grew more aggressive and became the hard core of a social protest movement: Sulayman’s followers began to incite the fellahin against the rulers, using the slogan: ‘No injustice today! Don’t give the oppressors any of the unjust taxes which they demand from you. Kill those who come!’ The fellahin drove away the soldiers who came to collect taxes and killed some of them. The movement came to an end when Sulayman made the fatal mistake of going to Cairo with his followers to challenge the authorities. He was induced to do so by an ‘*alim*’ of the same village, who felt himself wronged by *multazims* who had taken away a tract of land belonging to his family. The ‘*alim*’ pleaded his case with the high ulama and with ‘Umar Makram, the *Naqib al-ashraf* in the capital, but to no avail. Then he persuaded Sulayman to march to Cairo with all of his followers, promising him great success. Not surprisingly, the authorities were not enthusiastic about receiving the noisy, whip-cracking villagers. Sulayman’s dervishes conducted a *dhikr* at the Husayni shrine and then visited the sepulchres of al-Shafiʿi and al-Layth ibn Saʿd.

'Umar Makram was unimpressed by the sanctity of Sulayman, whom he considered a charlatan. The shaykh's followers dispersed, until he was left with only four of the faithful. They were put aboard a boat in Cairo, and were then drowned in the Nile.<sup>99</sup> The agrarian unrest caused by the dervishes of Sulayman 'the enraptured' was unusual in Egypt; it was much more frequent in Anatolia, for example, where peasants led by Sufi shaykhs often revolted for social and economic reasons.<sup>100</sup> Though unusual, the episode illustrates a social dimension of Egyptian Sufism.

Another such dimension was the charitable nature of many of the Egyptian Sufis' institutions and activities. Many Sufis fed their disciples and sympathizers and other poor people. Sha'rani, for example, had a large *zawiya*, where he kept 200 students, 29 of them blind. Not only was there plentiful food for those who lived there, but there was always enough for non-resident followers to take home.<sup>101</sup> Other Sufi-related institutions that served as agencies for charity were the *mawlid*s, where free food was often distributed to the needy; this was made possible by special *waqfs*. Likewise, many cloisters had free kitchens for the poor or for passers-by. This is attested by Evliya, who carefully notes those cloisters that had facilities and funds for giving food and refreshments to the public, with special extras on holidays.<sup>102</sup>

Finally, the relationship of the orders with the guilds (*hiraf*), whose network spread all over the cities and included almost the entire population, deserves attention. Gabriel Baer, the author of the most comprehensive study on the guilds in Egypt, argues convincingly that despite many similarities in organization and nomenclature between the two sets of associations, there was no direct link or contact between them. Baer rightly points out that the much cited example, drawn from Lane, of the Qadiriyya fishermen, supports his own argument, since it is the only case of a connection between a Sufi order and a guild; the fact that Lane mentioned it twice, but did not cite any other such example, may even indicate that it was an exception rather than the rule. Baer concludes:

Most of the members of *tarikas* were probably also members of guilds. However, since the guild system embraced the whole town population (except for the highest bureaucracy and the '*ulama*'), comprising people who differed widely in wealth and social status, not all the guilds and probably not even all the members of certain guilds were members of *tarikas*.

Baer also reminds us that the nature and purpose of the two types of organizations were different. The guilds' functions were mainly administrative, fiscal, and economic; the orders fulfilled a spiritual and social task.<sup>103</sup> The logic of Baer's arguments is undeniable, yet much more research should be done into this matter. For example, information mentioned in passing in a chronicle draws our attention to the fact that the shaykhs of the guilds and the shaykhs of the Sufi orders were considered as belonging to the same social category, whatever the exact connections between the two associations may have been.

The chronicle tells us that in the year 1107/1695–6, the pasha gave a grand feast on the occasion of his son's circumcision. He held a series of receptions that continued for 14 days, with a different social group being invited to the Citadel on each day. A very careful protocol and a rigid class distinction were observed, with those of higher social status being invited before those of lower. Thus, on the first day, *qadis* with the *qadi'l-'askar* at their head were invited. The second day was reserved for *ulama* and students. The third day, for the *ashraf* with the *Naqib* at their head. On the fourth day, *the heads of the Sufi orders and the guilds (arbab al-sajajid wa'l-hiraf) were invited together*. The fifth day to the ninth were reserved for the military groups, again according to the rank and importance of the units; the 10th day to the 13th for the various groups of merchants, and the last day, for the blind students of al-Azhar and the beggars.<sup>104</sup>

### ETHNIC DIVISIONS IN SUFI SOCIETY

Ottoman Egypt's ethnic diversity was reflected in Sufi society. Although the vast majority of the population was (and still is) native and Arabic-speaking, there were considerable communities of Turks and Maghribis, and much smaller ones of Indians, Yemenites, Muslims from central Asia, and others.<sup>105</sup> In the 1830s, Lane writes about Persian and Turkish dervishes in Cairo.<sup>106</sup> As a general rule, Sufi orders in Egypt were not ethnically mixed. The evidence points to separate orders of Turks and Arabs; the predominantly Turkish nature of the early Khalwatiyya has already been referred to. It was natural that ethnic segregation was adhered to, particularly in the buildings that served as Sufi centers and had living quarters and study rooms. In a recent article, Leonor Fernandes studies two *waqf* deeds of a *zawiya* and a *tekke* founded in early Ottoman Egypt.<sup>107</sup> The *zawiya* of Hasan ibn Ilyas al-Rumi (the Turk) al-Istanbuli was established in 933/1526 by Süleyman Pasha, the governor of Egypt, but the *waqf* document was drawn up by Hasan al-

Rumi himself. The *zawiya*, which included a mosque, a small religious college (*madrassa*) and a graveyard, was exclusively reserved for non-Arab Sufi residents of Egypt, as the *waqf* document clearly stipulates. All the functionaries, from the shaykh down to the manual workers, had to be non-Arabs (*'Ajam*). The second institution was a *takiyya* (Arabic for *tekke*) established for the famous Sufi, Ibrahim Gülsheni. Unlike Hasan's *zawiya*, the *takiyya* was not primarily concerned with teaching orthodox Sufism, but rather with spreading the *tariqa*. Residence was not limited to non-Arabs, but it was confined to members of the order. The restriction of Hasan's *zawiya* to non-Arabs—in practice, doubtlessly mainly to Turks—is clearcut. Yet even in Gülsheni's cloister, where there was no explicit provision limiting residence, it is safe to assume that most residents, though not necessarily all, were Turks. Voluntary racial and ethnic segregation was accepted as normal and natural, even more so in the small and intimate community of a Sufi center. Evliya Çelebi, who visited the Gülsheni cloister about 150 years after its foundation, emphasizes that the people who came there were invariably Turks, and that Arabs did not even enter the place.<sup>108</sup>

Gülsheni's cloister is not the only one that Evliya and other sources call an enclave of Turkish Sufis or ulama in the great Arab city. Such were groups like the Bektashiyya and the Mevleviyya that were an extension of the mother-orders in the Turkish provinces, and also orders that were not specifically Turkish.<sup>109</sup> Writing in the late nineteenth century, 'Ali Mubarak says that all of Cairo's 18 cloisters were populated by non-Arab dervishes. Mubarak speaks also of two Qadiriyya cloisters in Alexandria, one for Turks and one for Arabs.<sup>110</sup>

If there was friction between Turkish and Arab Sufis in Ottoman Egypt, the sources do not mention it. Yet it is significant that the most serious incident between Turkish-speaking and Arabic-speaking Muslims in Ottoman Egypt started as an attack on Sufism. The riot was started by a man identified only as *al-wa'iz al-Rumi*, 'the Turkish preacher' in the Arabic sources, and the *sofîa*, 'the student of religion,' in the Turkish chronicle. It has been aptly labelled 'a pre-Wahhabi *fitna* (disturbance)' as it involved a purist and fundamentalist attack on Sufism and popular religion.<sup>111</sup> In Ramadan 1123/October 1711, the Turkish 'student of religion' started to preach at the Mu'ayyad mosque, which had long been a Turkish center. The preacher, who had been influenced by the writings of the Turkish fundamentalist writer Birgili Mehmet (d. 981/1573), put out a list of 'blameworthy innovations'—(*bida'*) and incited his all-Turkish audience to denounce and remove them. The points he made were:

- 1 Contrary to Sufi belief, saints' miracles cease with their death.
- 2 Sha'rani's statement that saints can see the 'Well-Preserved Tablet' (*al-lawh al-mahfuz*) is false. Even the Prophet did not see it, therefore it is impossible for saints to do so.
- 3 The custom of burning candles and oil lamps at the tombs of saints and kissing the thresholds is a sign of unbelief.
- 4 Muslims should destroy the cupolas built over sepulchres and cloisters, as in the Gülsheni and the Mevlevi cloisters.
- 5 Dervishes' cloisters, such as the Gülsheni, the Mevlevi and the Bektashi, must be converted into religious colleges (*madrasas*), and the Sufis ought to be ejected.
- 6 It is forbidden to visit the sepulchres of al-Imam al-Shafi'i and others on Friday nights to perform *dhikr* or prayer.
- 7 The dervishes' custom of performing *dhikrs* near the Zuwayla Gate during the nights of Ramadan is a sin and ought to be stopped. (It was believed that the Zuwayla Gate was the seat of the unseen *Qutb* or Axis, the master of the saints; therefore, the common people particularly revered the place).<sup>112</sup>

Incited by the preacher's sermons, the crowd attacked with swords and cudgels the dervishes who were holding their *dhikr* at the Zuwayla Gate.

Some people went to the chief Egyptian muftis of the three law schools and obtained a *fatwa* asserting that the miracles of saints are a reality, during their lifetime and after their death. Anyone who denies this is a Mu'tazilite (here in the sense of freethinker or rationalist). The *fatwa* also warned that denying that the Prophet could see the Well-Preserved Tablet is unbelief punishable by death. Finally, the *fatwa* ruled that converting the cloisters into *madrasas* was not permissible, since this would mean changing the provisions of the *waqf*, which are as immutable as the Divine Law. When the preacher was shown the *fatwa*, he rejected it, declaring that it had been issued by Arab ulama. He demanded to carry on a debate with them in the presence of the judge (*qadi'l-'askar*, who, of course, was a Turk). Then the preacher led a crowd of 1,000 'illiterate Turks', in the language of the Arab chronicles, to the house of the *qadi*. Alarmed at the sight of this unruly crowd, the *qadi'l-'askar* told them what they wanted to hear, namely that the *fatwa* was invalid; but he fled to his private rooms (*harim*) without putting this ruling into writing. The crowd then compelled his deputy (*na'ib*) to do so.

On the next day, the preacher was not seen and his crowd suspected foul play. They forced the *qadi* to ride to the Citadel, where he explained his predicament to the pasha. The Turks kept demanding a debate between the preacher and the three Arab Azhari muftis, shouting out threats against them. The pasha finally sent for two Mamluk emirs and asked them to put down the riot. The Turkish preacher was sent into exile, many of his admirers, who were students of religion, were ejected from the cells of the Mu'ayyad mosque, where they had been living. The cells were boarded up; some of the preacher's followers were beaten, others were also exiled.

The riot was a violent confrontation between neo-Hanbalis, or pre-Wahhabites, and Sufis and believers in Sufism. But it was also a struggle along clear-cut ethnic lines—Turks against Arabs. The preacher's lack of respect for 'your ulama, *awlad al-'Arab*,' and the contemporary chroniclers' distaste for 'the rough and ignorant Turks' speak for themselves. It should be noted that the Azhari ulama, the most authoritative interpreters of orthodox Islam, sided with the Sufis against the fundamentalist preacher; they found themselves in a predicament, since they, too, were not enthusiastic about popular religious practices and 'excesses.' Had the preacher not resorted to radicalism and violence, threatening as he did public order, they might have been less implacable. But the ulama had little choice when an unmistakable confrontation took place between the Egyptian public and the Turkish *softas* and soldiers. It is instructive how Hasan al-Hijazi, the popular poet, saw the incident. In a short poem, he retells the main events of the riot, accusing the Turkish preacher of ignorance and expressing his satisfaction with the resolute manner in which the authorities suppressed the movement. One line says: 'He exceeded the proper bounds, he exaggerated, he incited the army against us!'<sup>113</sup>

Another aspect of the preacher's anti-Sufi propaganda is noteworthy. He directed his attacks expressly against *Turkish* institutions, such as the Gülsheni and the Mevlevi cloisters, which makes it abundantly clear that his campaign was not directed against only Arab or Egyptian Sufism, but against Sufism and popular religion in general. The Turkish community of Egypt was susceptible to Sufism just as the Arabic-speaking majority was, if not more so.<sup>114</sup> By identifying the Turkish cloisters by name, the preacher was warning his listeners to stay away from places of worship that they evidently found attractive.

To sum up: Turkish particularism in Egyptian Sufism and religious life persisted throughout the Ottoman period. It started before the Ottoman era, and there is evidence that some of the Turkish institutes

were established at the initiative of the pashas or the beys. For example, in the second half of the eighteenth century, Muhammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab built a new *tekke* and a *madrassa* in Cairo for Turkish Sufis and students of religion.<sup>115</sup> The Turkish cloisters were not the result of a discriminatory or segregationist policy, but rather the outcome of a natural inclination of the Turkish Sufi to live among those with whom he would be socially and linguistically at ease.

The Maghribi (North African) influence on Egyptian Sufism was always considerable: Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi, Egypt's most popular saint, came from the Maghrib; likewise, Abu'l-Hasan al-Shadhili and al-Sha'rani's ancestors.<sup>116</sup> It was natural that a certain percentage of the Maghribi pilgrims should have stopped in Egypt and settled there on their way home from Mecca.<sup>117</sup> Some orders and family groups, such as the Shadhilis, the Wafa'is or the Sha'ranis, lost their Maghribi traditions and became wholly Egyptianized. More recent newcomers, however, retained their Maghribi clothes, dialect and customs; some Maghribi Sufis kept up their contacts with their lands of origin.<sup>118</sup> While the Maghribis had a reputation for practising a strict version of Islam, sometimes even fanatical, others were guilty of serious aberrations of orthodoxy. For example, a great number of Maghribis, particularly Maghribi Sufis, occupied themselves with occult sciences.<sup>119</sup> Al-'Isawiyya, a Maghribi order in Cairo, was described by al-Jabarti as one that performed a wild *dhikr*, with the celebrants uttering ecstatic cries in a Maghribi dialect and stamping their feet in unison.<sup>120</sup> There is no evidence of separate Maghribi Sufi centers, although Evliya Çelebi mentions a cloister where the majority of the Sufis were Maghribis.<sup>121</sup>

Evliya Çelebi also provides information about a Naqshabandi *tekke* in Cairo whose members, from India and central Asia, were Balkhis, Bukharis, Özbekis, and Persians.<sup>122</sup> He also refers to Yemeni dervishes. Describing a procession, he notes that of all the Sufi groups the Yemenis were the wildest and the fiercest, brandishing their swords as they marched. A Yemenite cloister at the river port of Bulaq, named after a certain Shaykh Farajallah, housed some 40 Shadhili Sufis and made a speciality of serving cups of Yemenite coffee to passers-by.<sup>123</sup> (Coffee was introduced to the Middle East by Yemenite Sufis of the Shadhiliyya order.)<sup>124</sup>

## VARIATIONS OF SUFI-ULAMA RELATIONSHIPS

In Ottoman Egypt, perhaps more so than in most Islamic lands, the relations between the Sufis and the ulama were so close as to be symbiotic. Many Sufis were trained as ulama, and ulama were initiated into Sufism in one way or another. Nevertheless, Sufis and ulama remained two distinct groups. In most cases, a glance at an obituary in the histories of contemporary biographers suffices to determine whether the man was an *'alim* or a Sufi. Although the ideological gap between orthodox Sufis and the ulama narrowed considerably during the Ottoman period, a fine line between Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic mysticism (or in the traditional terminology, between *'ilm*, religious, but rational knowledge, and *ma'rifa*, gnosis) did not disappear, despite the inroads that Sufism made into the domain of the ulama.

Writing in the sixteenth century, Sha'rani disclosed the considerable tension between Sufis and ulama. Despite Sha'rani's readiness to seek compromises, one can discern the depth of the differences between Sufis and ulama (the *fuqaha*' in particular) in their approach to religion and in their social views.<sup>125</sup> The Sufis believed themselves religiously and morally superior to the legists. Sha'rani maintained that an *'alim* without knowledge of Sufism missed an important element of religion: 'A *faqih* without Sufism is like a slice of dry bread without anything added to enrich it.'<sup>126</sup> Since the emergence of Sufism in Islam, many mystics despised the bookish erudition of the ulama. A favorite saying in Sufi circles expressed this attitude succinctly: 'You receive your knowledge from a dead man who passes it on to another, we receive ours from the Living One who never dies.'<sup>127</sup> Although numerous Sufis were themselves prolific writers, the underlying distrust of books and the emphasis on personal guidance by a shaykh remained permanent elements of Sufi culture.<sup>128</sup> The Sufis slighted the studies of the legists, and held their hair-splitting legalistic arguments in the greatest contempt, believing them to be irrelevant to true religiosity. Sha'rani suggested that the differences between the four law schools were artificial and ought to be abolished. By advocating the reform of Islamic law through uniting the law schools, Sha'rani anticipated the ideology of modern Islam, although he based his reform on mysticism, while the modern reformers developed their ideas from rationalism. Needless to say, Sha'rani had no chance of implementing his legal reform owing to the conservatism of his times and the vested interests of the ulama.<sup>129</sup>

The Sufis often accused the ulama of persecuting them, although it is often difficult to verify these accusations. Not a single *'alim* can be named as disapproving of Sufism in principle. An *'alim* would speak against certain Sufis, orders, or practices, but not against Sufism as such. Sha'rani liked to pose as a wronged and persecuted man, but he was, in fact, highly successful in his lifetime. He said he had (unnamed) enemies at al-Azhar, but he also named leading Azhari ulama who supported him. There is no evidence that enmity between Sufis and ulama was worse than that within the two groups.<sup>130</sup>

Sufism was studied at al-Azhar and other colleges, although of course in the *madrasa* the emphasis was on Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*.<sup>131</sup> Many Azhari shaykhs were favorable to Sufism; Sufi practices penetrated into al-Azhar and other mosques. A good example is the case of 'Ali al-Shuni, one of Sha'rani's shaykhs, who introduced the *al-mahya*, a special prayer in honor of the Prophet, into al-Azhar. This prayer session, which became very popular, began after the Friday evening service and continued throughout the night.<sup>132</sup> Similarly, Karim al-Din al-Khalwati held regular *dhikr* gatherings at the Husayni mosque, although it is true that many ulama disapproved of this practice.<sup>133</sup> The opposition of the ulama to 'Ali al-Bayyumi, who did the same in the eighteenth century, was directed at his followers' uncouth appearance and bearing, not at Sufism.<sup>134</sup> 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi (d. 1143/1731), the famous Sufi writer and traveler, an exponent of Ibn al-'Arabi, was also well received at al-Azhar.<sup>135</sup>

There is no doubt that Sufism's influence on the ulama became stronger with time, until virtually all the ulama in the eighteenth century had Sufi connections of some sort; these connections were not limited to orthodox Sufis, but sometimes were extended to some of the weirdest santons. The following story, recorded by al-Jabarti under the year 1191/1777, vividly illustrates such a relationship.<sup>136</sup> A certain Shaykh Ahmad Saduma was a controversial figure; he was reputed to be a magician, with power over inanimate objects and able to communicate with jinees. Nevertheless, Shaykh Hasan al-Kafrawi, the chief Shafi'i mufti, was one of his most ardent admirers and believed in his holiness. Once, when Yusuf Bey al-Kabir was alone with a concubine of his, he saw a certain inscription on her private parts. He asked her what it was, threatening to kill her if she did not tell him. The girl replied that a woman she knew had taken her to Shaykh Saduma, who had written it there to make her master love her. Yusuf Bey immediately ordered the shaykh killed and his body thrown into the Nile. When Saduma's house was searched, many strange objects were found there, among them a phallic

statue made of velvet. It was taken to the bey's house, where he and other emirs started to make fun of the shaykhs and their doings. Then the emir dismissed Shaykh Hasan al-Kafrawi from his office as the chief Shafi'i mufti and from a teaching post.

The friendship of 'Ali al-Bayyumi with a leading shaykh of al-Azhar whose support he enjoyed is another example of a Sufi-ulama connection. Still another example is the friendship of Ahmad ibn Musa al-'Arusi (d. 1208/1794), an outstanding Shafi'i scholar, with a holy man, called Ahmad al-'Aryan. Al-'Aryan was very fond of al-'Arusi and gave him one of his daughters in marriage; he also foretold that al-'Arusi would become *Shaykh al-Azhar*.<sup>137</sup>

An *'alim*'s initiation into Sufism rarely affected his career as a scholar and teacher at al-Azhar or another *madrasa*. However, a few cases are known in which the Sufi experience disrupted an *'alim*'s life for a shorter or longer period. One such case is Shaykh al-Sharqawi, a future *Shaykh al-Azhar*, whose first encounter with Sufism caused him a temporary breakdown. Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Umar al-'Arishi (d. 1193/1779), another future *Shaykh al-Azhar*, took his Khalwatiyya training so seriously that he entered a trance (*jadhb*, becoming a *majdhub*), and became a real Sufi in theory and practice. Al-Jabarti reports that 'later he returned to his former state,' and eventually became the Hanafi mufti, and enriched himself. He gave grand parties to emirs and finally, with the support of the emirs and some of the shaykhs, was named *Shaykh al-Azhar* after a fierce and ugly struggle for the office.<sup>138</sup>

Well known is the example of al-Ghazali, the medieval theologian who, at the height of his career as a professor at the most prestigious *madrasa* in the Muslim world, renounced everything to become a Sufi. An *'alim*, who also suddenly renounced a scholarly career for Sufi life, was Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Hanafi al-Azhari, known by his nickname of *al-Sa'im* ('the one who fasts') (d. 1170/ 1756-7). He gave up a brilliant career as a Hanafi scholar and teacher when he met Ahmad al-'Aryan and devoted himself exclusively to Sufism, forsaking all worldly things and wearing the habit of the *faqirs*. He sold his possessions, left Egypt and wandered until he settled in Yanbu', a seaport on the Arabian coast. The local ruler received him kindly, but misled by the shaykh's shabby appearance, believed him to be a simple wandering dervish. During a legal dispute concerning the property of a deceased bedouin chief, there was need for someone able to solve the complicated problem. To the surprise of everyone, the Sufi retired to his cell in the mosque and wrote a detailed and learned *fatwa*. The ruler said: 'Why

have you hidden yourself when you are one of the great ulama?’ After that the shaykh began to teach and prosper. Finally, he returned to Cairo where he died.<sup>139</sup> This biography also illustrates the difference between the status of a Sufi and an *‘alim*: the Sufi may have charisma and have benefited from charity (in this case, the ruler’s), but the *‘alim* commanded respect.

### THE SUFIS AND THE RULERS

An ancient theory of Muslim piety says that the ideal man of religion is one who shuns the company of rulers, while the ideal ruler seeks the company of men of religion. In reality, Sufis and the ulama often had ties with members of the ruling class, and sought their favors and help. The best excuse a man of religion had for going to an emir’s house was to intercede on behalf of someone who had been ill-treated.

In one of his treatises, Sha‘rani assumed that the emir was interested in the spiritual benefits of being in the company of a Sufi; the emir should also yield to the shaykh’s intercessions (*shafa‘at*). Sha‘rani perfectly represented the apolitical, timid attitude of Sufism, and of Egyptian Sufism in particular, toward the rulers. He repeatedly warned his fellow Sufis to avoid doing anything that could arouse the rulers’ disfavor: he was aware that excessive popularity might endanger a Sufi shaykh, even if he did not intend to provoke the authorities in any way.<sup>140</sup> As for the rulers, many of them were attracted by the Sufis’ charisma and saintliness. Since many ulama were employed by the state directly, their involvement with legal and administrative affairs made them appear less otherworldly than the Sufis, who usually maintained a façade of independence, although they were supported by the men in power no less than the *fuqaha’*. The rulers liked to pose as patrons of Sufis; many pashas and emirs contributed handsomely to erect Sufi *tekkes* and *zawiyas* and established *waqfs* for their maintenance. In many cases, an army officer or an emir was the *ex officio* trustee of certain *waqfs*.<sup>141</sup> Throughout the Ottoman period, many pashas and beys in Egypt wanted to be remembered as the builders or renovators of *tekkes*, *zawiyas* and shrines of saints.<sup>142</sup> It is perhaps symbolic that ‘Ali Bey Bulut Kapan, who attempted to sever Egypt’s ties with the Ottoman Empire, built a large mosque near the tomb of Ahmad al-Badawi in Tanta, and also put a dome on his sepulchre.<sup>143</sup> On the other hand, Muhammad Bey Abu’l-Dhabab established a *tekke* for Turkish *faqirs*. Was this a way of demonstrating his loyalty to Istanbul?<sup>144</sup>

The ruler could grant the Sufis' intercession or reject it. In this way, he could enhance the shaykh's standing in his community, or reduce him into insignificance. On the other hand, a popular Sufi shaykh could improve the public image of an emir or remove the sting from public criticism directed against him. In many situations, the emirs and the Sufis needed each other. Men of religion enjoyed an immunity of sorts from the rulers' wrath, the Sufis more so than the ulama. Such immunity was neither formal nor absolute, but nevertheless real. In a period when a subject could easily lose his head at the wave of the ruler's hand, a Sufi was never executed. Unorthodox dervishes might be, but only if they caused a riot or assumed the status of a prophet or a *mahdi*. Abu'l-Anwar, the Wafa'i shaykh, was not harmed, even though he dared to speak harshly to a high-ranking Ottoman pasha and to the Mamluk beys. He had only his position as the head of an ancient and venerated Sufi family to protect him.

As already pointed out, the Bakri and the Wafa'i family groups enjoyed official recognition and regular grants thanks to their position as the most prominent representatives of Egyptian Sufism. The chief *mawlid*s, which were predominantly, although not exclusively, Sufi celebrations, were state occasions enjoying the government's supervision, support and military protection.

For all their pro-Sufi sympathies, the ruling class consisting of military men was less superstitious than other segments of the population. The same emirs who patronized Sufi institutes had little patience for the more vulgar manifestations of popular religion. The following anecdote illustrates this point. Among the events of 1173/1759–60, al-Jabarti recounts a bizarre story concerning a goat, which the superstitious custodians of the shrine of Sitt Nafisa believed had in a mysterious way rescued Muslim prisoners from the Franks. (Their escape was attributed to Sitt Nafisa, the most popular of the women saints interred in Cairo.) The goat became an object of veneration: women started to feed it nuts and almonds, gave it sugared water and rose water to drink, and it was also draped with golden necklaces and other ornaments. 'Abd al-Rahman Ketkhuda, the strongman of Cairo in those days, ordered Shaykh 'Abd al-Latif, the chief custodian of the Nafisa shrine, to bring the goat to his house so that he and his women could seek its blessing. The shaykh came in a Sufi-like procession with flags, drums and wind instruments. The emir then ordered his servants to slaughter the goat and serve it to the shaykh and his followers. When the meal was over, 'Abd al-Rahman Ketkhuda revealed to his guest what he had eaten. The horrified shaykh was rebuked and sent home,

with the goat's skin attached to his turban, accompanied by the banners and musical instruments.<sup>145</sup>

## 6

# Popular Religion

### A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The study of popular religion in Ottoman Egypt, doubtlessly one of the most important aspects of social and cultural life, poses a methodological problem. Contemporary sources—chronicles, Sufi writings, travel reports and others—provide rich and fascinating information, but the fullest and most systematic treatment of the subject is available in later descriptions and studies. The best sources on nineteenth century popular religion and culture in Egypt are E.W.Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, and 'Ali Basha Mubarak's *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-jadida*, written in the first and the second half of the nineteenth century, respectively. 'Ali Mubarak's monumental work in particular is a most valuable source. The author, who was a reformer as well as administrator and educator, was deeply interested in popular religion, and his outlook in this respect was quite traditional. There are also valuable studies on various aspects of popular religion by twentieth century Western and Egyptian scholars.

While one must not rely on late sources for political history, it would be extravagant not to benefit from them concerning popular religion, which has changed much less. Some traditions and customs prevalent in the Ottoman period and still alive can be traced back to Pharaonic times. A comparison of nineteenth-century *mawlid* celebrations or customs related to visiting tombs with those in the sixteenth century shows a strong resemblance and continuity. Therefore, materials of the post-Ottoman period have been used, with extreme caution, if they fit the picture that emerges from earlier sources.

### SAINTS (*AWLIYA'*) AND *MALAMATIS*

Normative Islam, like normative Judaism, but unlike normative Catholicism, has never recognized the existence of saints and has no procedure for canonizing them. Yet saints (*awliya'*, singular *wali*, literally 'God's protégés') fill the world of popular Islam, where even *living* saints, which Christianity lacks, possess supernatural powers and the ability to perform miracles. Harmless insane persons are revered by many as 'natural saints' and allowed to walk about the streets.<sup>1</sup>

The Malamatiyya, santons of a peculiar kind, were notorious for their strange appearance and behavior. The original Malamati (from the root *lama*, to blame) mystics who appeared in Khorasan in the ninth century, went out of their way to incur censure by blatant disregard of the requirements of the holy law in order to stress their indifference to public opinion and their concentration on a direct and sincere relationship with God. Pure Malamatism was naturally an ideal that only very few attained, but its popular manifestations were well known in later times. Among Sha'rani's biographies, for example, are lives of Malamatis whose behavior was outrageous and disgusted him. They must have been included in his books alongside accounts of pious, *Shari'a*-abiding and learned Sufis because of the belief in their *baraka* (charisma) and their existence on the fringe of Sufi society.<sup>2</sup>

The tolerance generally extended to lunatics had its limits. As soon as a santon or *wali* started to attract crowds, to create a commotion or to challenge the tenets of established Islam seriously, the authorities reacted to stop him. False prophets were summarily executed. Such was the fate of a *wali* who came to Cairo in 1110/ 1698. Common people followed him, 'men and women mingled, and much corruption occurred because of him,' wrote al-Jabarti.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the *walis* who were put to death were strangers, not Cairenes. Once it was a *wali* from the province of Fayyum, another time a Takruri, that is, a man from western Africa.<sup>4</sup> Writing in the first half of the seventeenth century, Ridwan Pashazade, a Turkish historian, points to the proliferation of swindlers feigning holiness as one of the national characteristics of the Egyptians. They claim to be *awliya'* in order to get food and to influence those in power; they are ignorant, yet they claim to know divine secrets, he writes.<sup>5</sup>

Sometimes a *wali* was entirely passive, but was used by others who exploited the people's superstitious belief in him. Such was the case of one 'Ali al-Bakri (no relation of the famous Bakris), who walked about in the streets of Cairo barefooted and almost naked, raving

incomprehensibly. A certain woman became his adherent and through him assumed the status of saint, soliciting gifts from women. She used to utter obscenities in Arabic and Turkish and put on men's clothes. Soon the *wali* and the woman had a large following of people who stole goods from shops. This was brought to a stop by an army officer who had the woman confined to an asylum (she was later released and became an 'independent' saint). The officer also beat up some of the naked lunatics who had followed the pair. Another one who succeeded in turning 'Ali al-Bakri into a source of income was his brother, who locked 'Ali up and collected donations. Living in indolence and with plentiful food, 'Ali grew fat. After his death, 'Ali was buried as a saintly shaykh, and his tomb became a place of pilgrimage and worship.<sup>6</sup>

Al-Jabarti wrote a revealing report about an episode which took place during the French occupation and concerned the madmen. The French commander asked the shaykhs: 'Does your religion allow or forbid [the behavior of] those individuals, who walk around in the streets exposing their private parts, shouting and pretending to be saints? The common people believe in them, but they do not pray or fast as other Muslims do.' When the shaykhs replied that this was contrary to Islam, the French commander ordered that the real lunatics be confined to the asylum, and the others, who pretended to be mad, be expelled from town, unless they behaved themselves.<sup>7</sup>

Faced with such a straightforward question the shaykhs had little choice but to answer 'yes' or 'no.' Attitudes toward the various types of *walis* and 'enraptured ones' (*majadhib*) were not so clearcut, and therefore both the ulama and the rulers had not always been as unequivocal as the shaykhs were in the presence of the French commander.

### Visiting Tombs and Shrines

The Egyptians' fondness for visiting tombs and sepulchres as a pious deed or a social activity has attracted the attention of many observers and travelers. Mustafa 'Ali, a Turkish historian and writer, who described Cairo at the end of the sixteenth century, wrote:

Every Friday, starting at the time of the morning prayer, a countless multitude of people, walking or riding, appearing in the direction of the cemeteries, take the road toward the Qarafa [the famous cemetery of Cairo]. After having visited the graves of his sanctity al-Imam al-Shafi'i and al-Imam Layth ibn Sa'd, they

arrive at the grave of Sitt Nafisa. When the women go to the graves of their relatives, they always take some green plants and flowers along with them, they visit the tombs of the dead with fragrant herbs. But the shaykhs go with banners, and chant litanies. They visit the graves and mausoleums, which are considered to insure the acceptance of prayers, with this crowd and then return.<sup>8</sup>

Three hundred years later, Lane's description shows that not much had changed.<sup>9</sup> There was a mixture of religiosity, the wish to visit the shrines for the sake of paying homage to the saints and of obtaining their intercession with God, and have a social outing. Many women stayed at the cemetery for a whole day, or even overnight, if the family had a house there. Lane says: 'Intrigues are said to be not uncommon with the families who spent the night in tents among the tombs,' repeating suspicions voiced earlier by Mustafa 'Ali.<sup>10</sup> It was inevitable that women would be accused of immodest behavior, but it must be borne in mind that visiting the tombs of relatives or of saints may have been the only chance many women had to go outdoors.

The cult of holy sepulchres and shrines was by no means limited to Cairo; it was spread all over the country and was very popular in the provincial towns, such as Dimyat, and in most of the villages. Evliya Çelebi<sup>11</sup> never tires of counting and describing the holy tombs in every city quarter or village on his way. He obviously enjoyed his travels through Egypt because of its popular religion in general and the veneration of tombs in particular.<sup>12</sup>

A saint's tomb was called *qabr*, *darih*, *maqam*, *mazar*, or *mash had* in Arabic. Contrary to the other terms, the last one designates a place somehow connected with the departed saint, but often not his or her actual place of interment. For example, the famous saint Sitt (or Sayyida) Nafisa, who is buried in Cairo, has a *mashhad* in Aswan, since she appeared in someone's dream, in which she marked out a shrine for herself in that town.<sup>13</sup> Large and beautiful mosques were built over the graves of most of the celebrated saints, such as al-Imam al-Shafi'i and Ibrahim Gülsheni in Cairo, or Ahmad al-Badawi in Tanta. Over the grave of a saint of lesser note, a small, square, whitewashed building crowned with a cupola was constructed. The tomb can be found also inside a *zawiya*, a cemetery, or standing alone. Often a *wali*'s tomb is surrounded by the graves of his relatives and descendants, his disciples, or other saints. Some of the most famous sepulchres, such as al-Shafi'i's in the Cairo Qarafa, became the centers of a whole complex of

buildings, dwellings for Sufis and poor people, public fountains, mosques, *zawiyas*, Koran schools and the like.<sup>14</sup> Several times Evliya Çelebi noticed an old tree, usually a lotus tree (*nabq*), near a tomb.<sup>15</sup> Sacred trees or groves have a special place in Egyptian popular religion, and the belief in their holiness may also be a survival from ancient times.<sup>16</sup>

An oblong structure of stone (*tarkiba*) or of wood (*tabut*) covered with a velvet or a silken decorated *kiswa* (covering) is constructed over the grave. The *tabut* is surrounded by a kind of fence made of wood or copper; the portion of the mosque enclosing the tomb of the patron saint is called *maqsura*, a term which may also designate the fence around the tomb. The tombs of many saints in villages are decorated with primitive drawings on the walls representing subjects such as a camel or a boat, which can also be seen on a house of a *hajj*. In Upper Egypt, there are often drawings of snakes, which, researchers believe, is also a survival of ancient Egyptian traditions.<sup>17</sup>

### The Saints' Tombs

Cairo, which dwarfed all other towns in the country, had the lion's share of tombs and shrines of Egypt's famous saints. The two large cemeteries (*al-Qarafatani*) had scores of the most venerated tombs, which constantly drew the residents of the capital and Muslim visitors from other lands in great numbers. As has already been mentioned, there were in the two *Qarafas* public and private houses and facilities, where frequent visitors could spend some time. Evliya reports the numerous hostels (*tekkes*) in that area, which offered generous hospitality to travelers.<sup>18</sup>

The saints buried in the cemeteries of Cairo can be divided into three main categories: descendants of the Prophet, ulama and Sufis. It is generally agreed that Cairo's most sacred shrine is the tomb where the head of al-Husayn, the martyred grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, is buried. Even a Maghribi *hajj*, noted for his strict orthodoxy, confirms that this was the most venerated shrine in Cairo, the first the Maghribis visited in Cairo and the last before their departure.<sup>19</sup> As is often the case, the shrine was the nucleus of intensive religious and Sufi learning, prayer and worship.

Cairo has shrines of several female descendants of the Prophet: *al-Sittat* (or *al-Sayyidat*) Nafisa, Sakina, Ruqayya, Zaynab, 'A'isha and others. These sepulchres, that of Nafisa, the great granddaughter of al-Husayn, in particular, play an immensely important role in Egyptian

popular religion, by adding a feminine quality to it and making it specially attractive to women.<sup>20</sup> Because of men's dominant role in normative Islam, women, to whom popular religion in general was very important, were especially fond of the female saints. Most of those who visited their tombs were women. Since the orthodox frequently complained that men and women intermingled in the crowds during such visits, the authorities arranged special entrances for women at the sepulchres of Nafisa, Sakina, 'A'isha, Fatima, and Ruqayya.<sup>21</sup>

Nafisa's image as a motherly savior is illustrated by a gruesome event reported by Ibn Iyas that occurred in 926/1520. A seven-year-old girl, who lived with her family in the vicinity of the Nafisa shrine, was tempted into the shrine by a young neighbor and his black slave. The youth cut the girl's throat, stole her gilded kaffiyeh, and threw the body into a well. In the search for the missing girl, the youth was caught trying to sell the kaffiyeh and under torture, he confessed and led the investigators to the well. The boy and his accomplice were hanged for the crime, but the girl was later found alive. The criminal had cut her throat, but the cut had not been deep. The girl's recuperation was considered almost as a miracle. She told her mother that as she lay in the well bleeding, a veiled woman appeared to her and said: 'Don't cry, I am Nafisa. I will rescue you from here.' And so she did.<sup>22</sup>

Most of the shrines of the Prophet's family were founded during the two centuries of Fatimid rule in Egypt (969–1171). The Shi'i dynasty based its legitimacy largely on its real or assumed origin as the descendants of Fatima, the Prophet's daughter and wife of 'Ali. With Saladin's overthrow of the Fatimids, every Shi'i trace was obliterated from Egypt; the Fatimids had not founded even a small Shi'i community which would survive their downfall. Yet the shrines of Husayn and the women of his line, as well as lesser figures of the house of 'Ali continued to exist under the new regime, but without their Shi'i emphasis. That was easily enough done, because Sunni Islam venerates 'Ali and his descendants, but unlike the Shi'a does not deify them.

Of the second category of sacred shrines—those of the famous ulama—the most prominent were the tombs of al-Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (d. 820), the founder of the Shafi'i *madhhab*, and the eighth century theologian, al-Layth ibn Sa'd, whose grave is close to al-Shafi'i's sepulchre. Al-Shafi'i was the only founder of a school of jurisprudence who was buried in Egypt, and his *madhhab* was by far the most important of the four. Understandably, the mosque with al-Shafi'i's tomb became a symbol of Egyptian scholarly Islam. Al-Shafi'i's shrine is surrounded by the tombs of deceased governors and

high-ranking ulama. New governors routinely paid a visit to the place upon their arrival in Egypt and it also often became a rallying point for Egyptian emirs and soldiers.<sup>23</sup>

The third category of saints' tombs—that of Sufi shaykhs—is very heterogeneous. It includes, for example, the thirteenth century poet 'Umar ibn al-Farid, and sixteenth century Sufis like Sha'rani and his generation. There were shrines of Turkish and Arab Sufi shaykhs, the Bakris, the Wafa'is, and many others, each attracting its own faithful visitors and worshippers. The tomb of a departed Sufi shaykh was a potential source of revenue, since the believers brought votive offerings (*nudhur*) and donations to maintain the tomb and its wardens. It was also the focus of veneration, visits and ritual, and, as such, the center of the *tariqa*, the site of the annual celebration of the shaykh's *mawlid*, and an assurance of the continuity of the order. After Karim al-Din's death, for example, some of his disciples wanted to bury him near his teacher Demirdash, but others said, 'No, our interests require that we bury him, in our *zawiya*.' When Da'ud al-A'zab, another Sufi, was dying, his followers wanted to carry him to Cairo, but he was furious and accused them of planning to exploit his death for financial gain.<sup>24</sup>

Many of the shrines are said to contain the remains of little known saints who are referred to simply as '*rajul salih*' (a saintly man) or *al-wali* (or colloquially as *wili*). Sometimes a saint is known by his first name (for example, Shaykh Mahmud) which, instead of giving information about him, only indicates his anonymity. There are also places of worship named after 'the forty men', 'the seven,' representing heroes of stories long forgotten, and shrines attributed to the *Sahaba*, the Prophet's companions, who took part in the Arab conquest of Egypt.<sup>25</sup>

In contrast to the host of anonymous saints, there are those for whom the sources provide full details about how their sepulchres were created. Al-Jabarti reports that Shaykh Murtada buried his wife near the shrine of Ruqayya. Later, he erected a *maqsura* and a building on her tomb. He furnished the place with carpets, lit candles, and hired Koran readers, whom he accommodated in an adjacent house. Similarly, al-Dawakhili, *Naqib al-ashraf*, built a structure (*maqam*) and a *maqsura* on his son's tomb, 'like the sepulchres that are visited by the public.'<sup>26</sup>

The custody of tombs of insignificant shaykhs in the villages was usually given to a poor man or woman, who was often old and even blind. On the other hand, the custodians in charge of the large sepulchre-mosques were often wealthy and influential. The custodians of Ahmad al-Badawi's shrine were the *multazims* and the rich men of Tanta.<sup>27</sup> Al-

Jabarti accuses the family of custodians of al-Badawi's shrine of corruption and immorality, and of taking advantage of the simple-minded devotees who brought money and candles with them. The family's wealth caused disputes among its members and as a result it lost control of the shrine to other families. Grasping rulers would occasionally confiscate a part of the shrine's property, as 'Ali Bey did in 1182/1768, and the French did later.<sup>28</sup>

There are many popular customs and beliefs concerning the sacred tombs, but only the most widespread ones will be mentioned. A *mawlid* is usually an annual event, yet many saints had a *hadra*, a weekly gathering at night for prayer, Koran reading, and *dhikr*. The rites performed at the tomb were more or less fixed, and included reciting the *Fatiha* (the first chapter of the Koran), greeting the buried saint and walking around the *maqsura*. Some popular customs resembled ceremonies incumbent on the pilgrims during the *hajj*.<sup>29</sup>

A different kind of a weekly visit, held usually on Thursdays or Fridays, was related to the belief that on that particular day the saint's soul visited the tomb. This idea had its origin in the myths of ancient Egypt and was disapproved of by orthodox Islam.<sup>30</sup> Another custom, evidently also a survival of Pharaonic times, was that of the visitor placing some of his hair, fingernails, or teeth near the grave. This usage originated in the belief that such objects contained 'soul material,' by which contact could be made with the saint.<sup>31</sup> One of the most common customs was putting pieces of cloth on the grave or driving nails into a nearby tree. The custom of driving nails into the Zuwayla Gate in Cairo, where the *Qutb* (Axis, the chief saint) was believed to reside, was particularly famous.<sup>32</sup>

Holy tombs were believed to have the power of protecting a fugitive. Al-Jabarti relates how in 1182/1768 Khalil Bey and his men escaped to the shrine of Ahmad al-Badawi. His pursuers did not dare to kill him there, but exiled him to Alexandria, where he was executed. Other reports in the same vein can be found in the sources. The function of a holy shrine as a trusted guardian of goods is also well known, especially among the bedouins.<sup>33</sup> Finally, the belief in the healing power of holy tombs and their capacity to cure women of infertility ought to be mentioned. Women would come to the tomb, bring votive offerings, pray, and perform a ritual.<sup>34</sup>

The rulers were aware of the people's veneration of holy sepulchres, and often demonstrated their personal interest by visiting the tombs or renovating them. Here are some examples: The sepulchre of Zaynab was renovated twice during the Ottoman period, in 955/1548-49 and

1173/1759–60.<sup>35</sup> ‘Abd al-Rahman Ketkhuda renovated Nafisa’s shrine and other holy sepulchres.<sup>36</sup> Ali Bey dismissed the custodians of Ahmad al-Badawi’s shrine, and confiscated their property, using the money thus obtained to found *waqfs* for the shrine and for students and worshippers who resided there. He also renovated the dome on the Shafi’i mosque.<sup>37</sup> Several Mamluk beys were noted for their frequent visits there.<sup>38</sup> Ottoman viziers and the Moroccan sultan occasionally sent contributions for the saints’ sepulchres in Egypt.<sup>39</sup>

## THE MAWLIDS (SAINTS’ DAYS)

### Introduction

The *mawlid*s (colloquial pronunciation, *moolids*) were a central part of the people’s religious and social life in the Ottoman period.<sup>40</sup> It is not known exactly when the *mawlid*s appeared in Islam. Ibn Jubayr, the twelfth century traveler, is probably the first to mention *mawlid* celebrations and he speaks of them as a well-established custom. The theologians held lengthy discussions as to the legitimacy of the *mawlid*. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d.1505), the famous writer, theologian, historian and Sufi, ruled that it was indeed an innovation, but a good one (*bid’a hasana*). He asserts that the feast of *mawlid al-Nabi* (the Prophet’s birthday) was good, because it induced the Muslims to give money to charity, recite the Koran, perform *dhikr*, and rejoice in the Prophet’s birth. An earlier theologian, who had been asked whether he considered the *mawlid* as praiseworthy or reprehensible, put it thus: Feasts and meals are always welcome, let alone when they are accompanied by rejoicing in the emergence of the light of the prophecy in this month. Muslim fundamentalists, primarily Hanbalis and later the Wahhabis, were opposed even to the Prophet’s *mawlid*. It is not surprising, therefore, that later *mawlid*s of local saints, which in many cases were survivals of pre-Islamic customs, encountered much criticism.<sup>41</sup>

### The Saints and the Creation of their *Mawlid*s

The list of the saints whose *mawlid*s are celebrated is very long and includes men and a few women of various periods, starting with the Prophet and ending with recent Sufi shaykhs. *Mawlid*s were, and still are, held for members of *ahl al-bayt*, the Prophet’s family —Husayn ibn ‘Ali and his female descendants. Among the saints we also find ulama,

Sufis, *ashraf*, emirs, and many charlatans and lunatics who were reputed to be saints.<sup>42</sup> Many saints were regarded as patrons and protectors: one defended his area against crocodiles, another protected against snakes, still another was a friend of the fellahin. The function of the saint as the patron of his village was very widespread.<sup>43</sup>

A few *mawlid*s were unrelated to a particular saintly person, but rather to a holy place. Two *mawlid*s were performed when the *Miqyas* (Nilometer) was cleaned, and when the water was expected to rise. Another *mawlid* of the same kind was that of *Qadam al-Nabi*, 'the Prophet's footprint,' a place near Cairo where it was believed that Muhammad had left a footprint.<sup>44</sup>

It is not always easy to determine when a particular *mawlid* was established. Obviously, the process of creating *mawlid*s sometimes extended over generations. The *mawlid*s of Husayn and the women of his house were introduced during the Fatimid era.<sup>45</sup> A considerable number of *mawlid*s were established for Sufi shaykhs during the sixteenth century, a development related to conditions created by the Ottoman occupation, which were conducive to the spread of Sufism.

'Ali Mubarak cites the Sufi traditions about the creation of Ahmad al-Badawi's *mawlid* in the thirteenth century.<sup>46</sup> These cannot be trusted, however, since it is obvious that many customs are pre-Islamic and connected with the Nile and agriculture. The popularity of al-Badawi's *mawlid* probably prompted the establishment of other *mawlid*s, smaller but similar; this is how the *mawlid*s at the towns of Dasuq and Damanhur as well as the Imbabi *mawlid* in western Cairo came about.<sup>47</sup>

Naturally, we are usually better informed about the more recent *mawlid*s. Evliya recounts that the *mawlid* of Shaykh 'Uqba al-Juhayni was discontinued, because the shrine fell into ruins. In 1063/1652–53, Abu'l-Nur Mehmet Pasha, a governor famous for his interest in promoting religion, re-established the mosque, and founded a *tekke*, a fountain, a kitchen and other facilities there. He also revived the *mawlid*, which was to be financed by a special *waqf* under the supervision of the Janissary commander.<sup>48</sup> Al-Jabarti also recounts the circumstances of the emergence of several new *mawlid*s. 'Abd al-Wahhab ibn 'Abd al-Salam al-Marzuqi, a modest Sufi who frequented holy tombs, died in 1172/1758. After his tomb was damaged by a flood, his disciples and followers built around the grave a *maqsura*, a structure (*maqam*), and a dome, and the shrine became a place of pilgrimage, during which men and women mingled. The Sufis built another structure there in which they buried other Sufis and ulama. Then they established an annual date for a celebration and invited visitors from Upper and Lower Egypt.

Many tents, poles, kitchens, and coffee stalls were set up there during the *mawlid*. The occasion attracted fellahin from neighboring villages, as well as jugglers, singers, prostitutes, and snake charmers. For more than ten days, the crowds kindled bonfires, and fouled the graves; they fornicated and danced, drum and flute music was played day and night. Even ulama erected their own tents, as did the most prominent emirs and merchants. Al-Jabarti blames the ulama for not censuring such behavior, thereby letting the common people believe that the participation in this *mawlid* was a pious deed.<sup>49</sup> One can clearly see how a legitimate way (from the orthodox point of view) of commemorating a good man of religion deteriorated into an abominable event of the lowest social strata, which the elite was unable or unwilling to stop.

The *mawlid* of Husayn ibn 'Ali was abolished and revived several times during the Ottoman period. This principal Shi'i shrine in Egypt apparently attracted Shi'i, pseudo-Shi'i, and heterodox elements and created customs, which aroused the suspicions of the orthodox and the authorities. Evliya, who apparently approved of every *mawlid*, reported that this *mawlid* had been abolished because of unjust criticism. In 1089/1678, the *ashraf* petitioned 'Abd al-Rahman Pasha to permit the *mawlid* of 'Husayn, their forefather' and the *vali* issued the desired directions to the *qadi* and the police. Evliya reports that after that a grand feast was celebrated on the day of the '*Ashura* (the 10th of Muharram, the Shi'i day of mourning for Husayn's martyrdom).<sup>50</sup>

In contrast to the enthusiasm of Evliya, al-Jabarti's cynical attitude towards the *mawliids* and their participants is expressed in his report of the revival of Husayn's *mawlid*. The initiator was the trustee of the *waqf* of Husayn's mosque, who had fallen ill with a skin disease, probably venereal, and vowed that he would renew the *mawlid*, hoping that God would cure him. He got hold of money from the *waqf*, and started to organize the *mawlid*. He put candles and lamps in the mosque, and appointed readers of the Koran by day and of *Dala'il al-Khayrat* (a well-known book of prayers) at night. Many adherents of the 'irregular' Sufi orders came to celebrate, fouling the mosque and showing no respect for the place. The man who initiated the *mawlid* did not get any better, Jabarti pointedly concluded.<sup>51</sup>

Al-Jabarti describes the creation of another *mawlid*—commemoration of Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Sharqawi, who was the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, and a Sufi. His widow and son fixed his *mawlid* on the day of al-'Afifi's feast, having obtained the pasha's agreement. The police proclaimed the celebration in the streets, and the public was invited to attend the festivities. In front of the sepulchre poles were set up with candles, flags

and colored streamers attached to them. The heads of the Sufi *turuq* were invited and food was served. Once again, al-Jabarti, speaking for the Azhari elite, censures the crowd for its misconduct, revealing the gap between his veneration of the departed shaykh and his disgust with the *mawlid*.<sup>52</sup>

### The Time and Duration of the *Mawlids*

Many *mawlids* were celebrated according to the Muslim lunar calendar, but a few, including some of the most important ones, were held according to the Coptic solar calendar. The *mawlids* of the former category were scattered over the months of the Muslim year with the exception of Ramadan. More *mawlids* were held during Sha‘ban, the eighth month that precedes Ramadan, than in any other month. After Ramadan, there were not many *mawlids*, because preparations were being made for the *hajj*.<sup>53</sup> Many *mawlids* lasted from the beginning to the middle of Sha‘ban, the most important ones in Upper Egypt being those of Abu‘l-Hujjaj in Luxor and ‘Abd al-Rahim in Qena, whose main festivities fell on the 15th of the month.<sup>54</sup> The *mawlid* of al-Imam al-Laythi in Cairo was held on the Friday nearest to mid-Sha‘ban; Demirdash’s *mawlid* was on Thursday, in the second half of Sha‘ban.<sup>55</sup> Many *mawlids* were arbitrarily fixed at mid-Sha‘ban, the reason being that tradition had it that man’s fate for the coming year is determined on the night of mid-Sha‘ban.<sup>56</sup>

The timing of some *mawlids* was connected with Muslim feasts. The Wafa’i *mawlid*, for example, was held four days after the major feast, ‘*Id al-Adha*.<sup>57</sup> Dashtuti’s *mawlid* was held at *Laylat al-Mi‘raj*, the night of the Prophet’s ascent to the seven heavens, on Rajab 27.<sup>58</sup> The *mawlid* of Abu‘l-Qasim al-Tahtawi was held together with the Prophet’s *mawlid*.<sup>59</sup> The dates of some of the major *mawlids* were determined by the Coptic calendar, thus linking them to the seasons, which is impossible if the Muslim calendar is adhered to. Some *mawlids* celebrated the agricultural cycle related to the flooding of the Nile, as had already been customary in Pharaonic times.<sup>60</sup> The most important of such *mawlids* were the two of Ahmad al-Badawi, which were linked to irrigation. The great Badawi *mawlid* was held in the month of Misra (from August 6) and the smaller one at the beginning of Barmuda (which starts on April 8). Mubarak reports that the *mawlid* of al-Bayyumi was held ‘according to the days of the Nile.’ Some *mawlids* in Upper Egypt were held when the water of the Nile began to rise. Others were held ‘in the summer,’ or ‘at the time of the harvest.’<sup>61</sup> A few *mawlids* were celebrated

throughout Egypt, although their center was in Cairo, such as the *mawlid*s of the Prophet, of Husayn, or the women of Husayn's house and of al-Shafi'i. Since these major feasts affected activity all over the country, they determined the dates of other *mawlid*s.<sup>62</sup>

Sometimes geographical location determined the timing of *mawlid*s. The proximity of the saints' mosques or sepulchres one to the other made it convenient that their *mawlid*s be celebrated together, or at proximate dates. The need to synchronize transportation, commerce, and security of neighboring *mawlid*s probably influenced the arrangements for their celebration. It has to be remembered that the government was ultimately in charge of *mawlid*s and was responsible for the orderly conduct of the crowds.<sup>63</sup>

The connections between the patron saints themselves should be noticed. For example, all the saints related to Ahmad al-Badawi had their *mawlid* celebrated according to the Coptic calendar. Imbabi was al-Badawi's disciple; the Bayyumiyya was a sub-order of the Ahmadiyya, and Marzuq was al-Bayyumi's descendant. The dates of the *mawlid*s of these saints were dependent on the Ahmadiyya.<sup>64</sup> Some *mawlid*s were held on a particular day of the week.<sup>65</sup> The celebrations of a Cairo *mawlid* lasted one week<sup>66</sup> though a few *mawlid*s of Cairo lasted eight days, for example, the *mawlid*s of Rifa'i, Dashtuti and Bayyumi.<sup>67</sup> By contrast, the average length of the important *mawlid*s of Upper Egypt was eight days.<sup>68</sup> The small *mawlid*s did not last more than one night. Such a *mawlid* was called *layla* (a night) and consisted only of prayer, without many of the usual trappings of a *mawlid*.<sup>69</sup>

### The Participants in the *Mawlid*s

*Mawlid* celebrations drew huge crowds from all walks of life. The *mawlid*s belonged to the realm of popular religion, but also the elite attended at least part of the celebrations. Although the *mawlid*s have always been primarily Sufi festivals, the ulama and the emirs participated as well. The *mawlid*s were so colorful and their activities so diverse that it would seem that everyone could find there something to his or her liking.

Some *mawlid*s were regional events, such as the *mawlid*s of Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in Asyut, Abu'l-Hujjaj in Luxor, and 'Abd al-Rahim in Qena.<sup>70</sup> Others caught up a whole city which was decorated for the occasion.<sup>71</sup> Smaller *mawlid*s drew their crowds only from the particular quarter or village where the mosque or the tomb was situated.<sup>72</sup> Some *mawlid*s, such as Bayyumi's, for example, attracted villagers to the

town. Others did the opposite: the Cairenes went out to a village in the province of Minya to go to the fair that was held with the *mawlid*.<sup>73</sup>

Ahmad al-Badawi's *mawlids* in Tanta were the most crowded gatherings, and people would come to them even from remote places, as is still true. The experienced and widely traveled Evliya asserts that he had never seen crowds of the magnitude of those at al-Badawi's *mawlid*, although he compared it with some of the most illustrious state ceremonies in Istanbul. He notes that the *mawlid* of Ibrahim al-Dasuqi, which took place a week later, was smaller, but more orderly and more pleasant.<sup>74</sup>

Several *mawlids* attracted a particular segment of the population. For example, butchers were dominant in a certain *mawlid* in Cairo.<sup>75</sup> There were *mawlids* in which the ulama in particular participated: such were the *mawlids* of al-Matrawi in Matariyya near Cairo,<sup>76</sup> and al-Sha'rani in the Bab al-Sha'riyya quarter.<sup>77</sup> Conversely, the participants in the *mawlid* of 'Umar ibn al-Farid, the famous Sufi poet, were for some reason the poor and uneducated.<sup>78</sup> The *mawlid* of Ibrahim Gülsheni was a feast exclusively for the religious, intellectual, and political elite, with a strong Turkish coloring, if Evliya's description is accurate.<sup>79</sup>

### The Religious Side of the *Mawlids*

Al-Jabarti aptly defined the four features of the *mawlids* as *ziyara* (visit to a holy place), *tijara* (commerce), *nazaha* (it should really be *nuzha*, outdoor entertainment), *fusuq* (dissolute behavior).<sup>80</sup> The *mawlids* have always been primarily religious events despite their secular aspects. The feast invariably focused on the saint and his shrine. Much evidence indicates the seriousness and the piety with which Egyptians of all social strata regarded these saints' days. Describing a *mawlid* in a town in the Asyut province, 'Ali Mubarak says:

If anyone neglects [the ritual of the *mawlid*], the others say to him: 'Don't cause the destruction of our village.' Because they believe that if they do not perform the ritual of that night, then —as their experience has taught them—they will be harmed in their crops, livestock, or their own bodies. They are constrained in this belief, although seemingly they do it of their free will. This is the way most villages perform the *mawlids*.<sup>81</sup>

It should be stressed that ‘Ali Mubarak was referring to Upper Egypt, where the veneration of saints and their *mawlid*s was particularly strong.

The main religious rituals during the *mawlid*s are:

- 1 A visit to the shrine (*ziyara*): The visitor places his (or her) hands on the tomb, and then covers his face with his hands. Then he circumambulates the tomb, saying the *Fatiha* and blessing the saint.<sup>82</sup>
- 2 Koran reading: It was customary to recite the whole Koran (*khatma*) during *mawlid*s. Often professional Koran readers were hired for that purpose.<sup>83</sup>
- 3 Recitation of Sufi litanies: *Dala’il al-khayrat*, a famous Sufi collect, was often read and recited during *mawlid*s. Litanies (*ahzab*) were also read; in many *mawlid*s the preferred text was *Hizb al-Shadhili*, also known as *al-Birr al-kabir*. If the particular saint had a *hizb* to his name, naturally that text was read.<sup>84</sup>
- 4 Recitation of praises of the Prophet or the saint: The poem *al-Mawlid al-Sharif*, recited at the Prophet’s *mawlid* after *al-Hizb al-Bakri*, was particularly famous.<sup>85</sup> According to Evliya, the Laythi *mawlid* was a literary festival for ulama. Authors would submit what they had written in honor of the *mawlid* to the chief muftis of the *madhhabs*. If the latter approved them for recitation, the pamphlets were signed and deposited in a box at the tomb. Evliya’s description implies that the same was done at al-Shafi’i’s *mawlid*.<sup>86</sup>
- 5 *Dhikr*: Repetition of certain formulas in praise of God to achieve a religious experience. There was no *mawlid* without *dhikr* sessions, although *dhikr*s could be performed independently of *mawlid*s. There were the intimate *dhikr* circles of Sufis, but also the crowded gatherings of many participants in the *mawlid*, who convened for a rendition of a vulgar version of the Sufi *dhikr*. Many men and women believed that being present at the *dhikr* was sufficient to cure them of sickness. Sometimes hashish and other drugs were used to attain religious ecstasy.<sup>87</sup>
- 6 Processions: The most spectacular side of the *mawlid*s were, and are, the colorful Sufi processions known as *al-ashayir*. The orders marched under their banners, or carried torches at night, chanting their *dhikr* as they went. The Sufis played their musical instruments and exhibited their peculiar tricks. At the end of the *mawlid*, a general procession (*zaffa*) of all the orders took place.<sup>88</sup>

7 Private religious and pseudo-religious ceremonies: It was customary to circumcise boys and to shave children's heads during the *mawlid*s. Men and women used to fulfill their vows during the *mawlid*s and the charity given to Sufis and poor people was more generous than usual.<sup>89</sup>

### **The Commercial Side of the *Mawlid*s**

The commercial side of *mawlid*s was not only a natural outcome of many people gathering in the same place, but was a chief objective of the feasts. This emerges clearly from al-Jabarti's above-mentioned definition, and even more so from 'Ali Mubarak's description of al-Badawi's *mawlid*:

It is a large fair known as the *mawlid* of Ahmad al-Badawi, where many people from all over the country convene; only God can count them. They don't come there merely for the sake of commerce, but for that purpose and also in order to seek a blessing in the saint Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi.<sup>90</sup>

The fairs specialized in certain commodities. The *mawlid*s of Tanta were the largest and were famous for their slave market. Evliya describes the trade in the cotton of al-Fayyum for which these *mawlid*s were well known.<sup>91</sup> During Ibrahim al-Dasuqi's *mawlid*, which was held on the riverbank, boats came from Mediterranean seaports and from Upper Egypt, carrying people and merchandise. Evliya mentions particularly fabrics from Yemen and India.<sup>92</sup>

### **The Secular Side of the *Mawlid*s**

All the sources comment on the merry, carnival-like atmosphere of the *mawlid*s; the festivals gave the fun-loving Egyptians the chance to enjoy themselves.<sup>93</sup> Even al-Jabarti, known for his strict orthodoxy, says that Cairo was beautifully lighted and decorated during the Prophet's *mawlid*.<sup>94</sup> Jugglers, snake charmers, shadow plays, story tellers, singers and various shows entertained the public. The *mawlid*s in the country and the provincial towns also included horse and camel races and other equestrian shows performed by bedouin Arabs.<sup>95</sup>

The *mawlid*s had their charitable side as well. They provided the opportunity for feeding the poor. Already in the sixteenth century, Sha'rani emphasized this aspect of the *mawlid*s.<sup>96</sup> Ali Mubarak,

describing the *mawlid* of Ibrahim al-*Dasuqi* in the nineteenth century, says that one of its main purposes was ‘feeding the poor, the miserable, and wayfarers.’<sup>97</sup> It is possible that the *mawlids* proliferated because they served to a large degree as unofficial agencies of welfare and charity.

### Objectionable Sides of the *Mawlids*

The *mawlids* have always had a mixed reputation: beside their religious and positive features, they were notorious for the violence and immorality that were associated with them. In the Mamluk period, the *ulama* had advised the sultan to proscribe the *mawlid* in Tanta because they considered it immoral.<sup>98</sup> Early in the Ottoman period, Shaykh Muhammad al-Shinawi outlawed the practice of residents of Tanta robbing outsiders who had come to celebrate the *mawlid*, claiming: ‘This is Sidi Ahmad al-Badawi’s region and we are his *faqirs*.’ As late as in 1200/1785, camels of *ashraf* (in this case bedouins) who came to the *mawlid* at Tanta were stolen.<sup>99</sup> The same shaykh reportedly introduced the *dhikr* instead of the music and dancing that had been previously performed.<sup>100</sup>

Al-Jabarti uses harsh language to express his disgust with the loose morals at the *mawlids*: women mingled with men, the *ghawazi*, or ‘public dancing girls,’ as Lane calls them, performed in the streets, and fornication and prostitution were frequent.<sup>101</sup> Al-Jabarti goes so far as to accuse the French during their occupation of Egypt of allowing the Egyptians to celebrate the *mawlids* in order to corrupt them: ‘The French allowed the people to have the *mawlids*, because they realized that this entailed forsaking religion, having illicit liaisons with women, following lust and seeking pleasures, doing what is forbidden, and mingling women with men.’<sup>102</sup>

‘Ali Mubarak criticizes the superstitions, the ‘excesses and blameworthy behavior of the dervishes and others during the *mawlid*s such as eating snakes, glass, fire, and thorns, stabbing themselves with swords and pins, walking naked in public, uttering obscenities, and the like.’<sup>103</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, very little had changed in this respect since the days of Ottoman rule.

## The *Ashraf* and *Naqib Al-Ashraf*: The Prophet's Descendants and their Chief

### THE ASHRAF

#### The Terms *Ashraf* and *Sada*

The *ashraf* (pl. of *sharif*)—the ‘nobles’—or the *sada* (pl. of *sayyid*)—the ‘masters’—are usually considered to be the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad by the marriage of his daughter Fatima to ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. More precisely, the *ashraf* are descendants of ‘Ali’s elder son, Hasan, and the *sada* of his younger son, Husayn.<sup>1</sup> During the ‘Abbasid period, the term *ashraf* was applied to all *ahl al-bayt* (the Prophet’s family, including, for example, the descendants of Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya, ‘Ali’s second wife and the Hashimites), but the Fatimid rulers of Egypt (969–1171) restricted its use to the descendants of Hasan and Husayn. This restriction remained in force even after the government of Egypt became Sunni again.<sup>2</sup>

Social practice in Egypt does not distinguish between *ashraf* and *sada*. The sources speak of *ashraf* who are called *sada ashraf* and *sayyid* became a *sharif*’s title.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the distinction between *Hasani ashraf* (i.e. *ashraf* according to the ‘classical’ definition)<sup>4</sup> and *Husayni ashraf* (i.e. *sada*) is not unknown.<sup>5</sup> It should be pointed out that by as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century *sayyid* had no meaning other than *sharif* in Egypt. ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti felt compelled to explain that a certain al-Sayyid ‘Ali al-Qabtan was a Mamluk and not a *sharif*, as might have been mistakenly inferred from his title. The title in this case—meaning a ‘master’—originated from the Maghribi usage of so addressing an emir.<sup>6</sup> In modern usage, *sayyid* has lost its religious significance and means simply ‘mister.’

The Sufis have also been called *sada* in the sources and in modern times;<sup>7</sup> thus, al-Sada al-Qadiriyya, al-Shadhiliyya, and generally, al-Sada al-Sufiyya. This usage does not imply that all Sufis are *ashraf*; it is merely a religious honorific<sup>8</sup> that may have originated from the belief that the four ‘axes’ (*aqtab*), the founders of the four major Sufi orders, were *ashraf*, or from the special position of the Prophet in the Sufi chains of tradition (*silsilas*) and the strong emphasis which later Sufism put on the Prophet.<sup>9</sup> True *ashraf* received great honor and played central roles in Sufi orders,<sup>10</sup> and there is evidence that this tradition survived until the twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> Since the status of the *sharaf* is heritable through either the father or mother,<sup>12</sup> the number of *ashraf* has increased dramatically.

### Establishing the *Sharaf*

Well aware of their distinguished descent, the *ashraf* in Egypt kept genealogical records and were socially acknowledged as a religious elite. Inevitably, doubts arose concerning the descent of many claimants to the title. Al-Jabarti’s comment about a man claiming descent from ‘Ali is typical: ‘He is one of the *ashraf* of true genealogy (*al-sahihi al-nasab*). Sayyid Muhammad Murtada verified his genealogy.’<sup>13</sup> ‘Ali Basha Mubarak, the author of a detailed topographical encyclopedia of nineteenth century Egypt, described how the *sharaf* was established by the marshal of the *ashraf* (*Naqib al-ashraf*), who was assisted by several attendants (*shawishes*). One *shawish* was charged with allocating allowances to the *ashraf*. Another official confirmed the representatives of the *ashraf*, called *wakils*, in each district and city. Elected by the local *ashraf*, these *wakils* were in charge of everything concerned with the establishment of the *sharaf*. If someone wanted to prove his *sharifi* descent, because his genealogical records had been lost, he had to apply in writing to the office of *Naqib al-ashraf*, which searched for the record of his name in the books of the *awqaf* and of the allowances of the *ashraf*, which had been established by the Egyptian government and other bodies. If the names of the applicant’s ancestors were among those who had been entitled to the allowances, he had to swear that he was related to them and bring witnesses to support his claim. If the names were not found in the records, witnesses had to testify that he was a *sharif*.<sup>14</sup>

### The Origin of the Egyptian *Ashraf*

Many *sharifi* families immigrated to Egypt. Mubarak tells of a family by the name of Bayt al-Ashraf whose forefather, Al-Sharif Majd al-Din, came to Egypt from Mecca at the beginning of the ninth century Ali (fifteenth century AD), settled in the district of al-Jiza, and engaged in trade, especially sheep and cattle. His descendants carried on his occupation.<sup>15</sup> Mubarak also cites al-Maqrizi, the fifteenth century Egyptian historian, who writes about the villages of *ashraf* in the Buhayra province, the *ashraf* having settled there with their followers and allies.<sup>16</sup> Mubarak also writes:

When the families [of *ashraf*] scattered in the Asyut province, a group of descendants of Marwan ibn al-Hakam camped in the village of Tunat al-Jabal...and settled there. On their mother's side they were descended from Husayn ibn 'Ali [the Prophet's grandson]. The mother was the daughter of the founder of the village of Drut Siryan, which is known as Drut al-Sharif. Later, they settled in Sohaj, where they are still living today.<sup>17</sup>

Another village is named after unidentified *ashraf*, Kum al-Ashraf.<sup>18</sup> The inhabitants of several villages in Upper Egypt claim descent from Ja'far al-Sadiq; they are *ashraf* and known as Ja'afira.<sup>19</sup> The majority of the families of *ashraf* living in the village of Sirs al-Layan in the middle of the twentieth century originated from outside the village, sometimes outside of Egypt, coming from the Hijaz, Iraq, Syria and Upper Egypt.<sup>20</sup>

Many families and villages whose inhabitants are *ashraf* are descended from a man referred to as *sahib al-qarya*, founder of the village, after whom it is named. According to al-Maqrizi, Drut al-Sharif was named after its founder, the Arab emir al-Sharif Tha'lab ibn Ya'qub, 'the Glory of the Arabs,' who led the rebellion of the bedouin tribes of Egypt against Mamluk rule during the reign of al-Mu'izz Aybak al-Turkmani, the first Mamluk sultan. The rebellion was suppressed and its leaders were imprisoned and later hanged by order of Sultan Baybars.<sup>21</sup> The largest and most famous mosque in Jazirat Shandwil, a town near Sohaj, is known as the mosque of Sidi 'Ali ibn Sidi Abu Qasim al-Tahtawi, the ancestor of the *ashraf* in the town.<sup>22</sup> Mubarak also reports that in Zawiyat al-Baqli, a village in the province of al-Minufiyya, most of the 1,700 villagers are descendants of Abu Rabi' al-Sayyid Sulayman al-Baqli, the Husayni *sharif* who founded the village.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Social Distinction and Influence of the Egyptian *Ashraf***

The *ashraf* of Egypt, as in other Muslim countries, were respected for religious reasons, and often enjoyed high social status and economic privileges. The revenue from several villages was converted into *waqf* and provided income that was distributed among the *ashraf*.<sup>24</sup>

The *ashraf* were distinguished by their green turbans and they were also permitted to wear light green garments. This distinction was introduced in 773/1371–72 by Sultan al-Ashraf Sha‘ban, who ordered that *ashraf* affix a green badge to their turbans.<sup>25</sup> If a *sharif* was rich and learned, he preferred the title *shaykh* to that of *sayyid*, and the white turban to the green one. Sometimes *ashraf* who were also ulama wore a green badge or strip on a white turban.<sup>26</sup>

The *ashraf* often appeared as a united body in festive processions or religious and other public occasions, such as the ceremony of the opening of the canal, the departure of the *hajj* caravan, or on saints’ days (*mawalid*). When a public prayer was organized due to a particularly low Nile, the *ashraf* would march together to the ancient ‘Amr ibn al-‘As mosque, carrying with them ‘the Prophet’s mantle.’<sup>27</sup> Evliya Çelebi describes them as a group, some mounted on horses and some on foot, all solemnly dressed and wearing green turbans.<sup>28</sup> In the nineteenth century, Mubarak gives a lively description of *ashraf* marching during a *mawlid* in Manfalut.<sup>29</sup>

M. de Chabrol, writing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, reports that the *ashraf* are usually of high social standing, yet some may engage in menial occupations. *Ashraf* were brought to trial only before the *Naqib al-ashraf* and were jailed in a separate prison. Even when a *sharif* was put to death, he was treated with more respect than a common Muslim.<sup>30</sup> Although the *ashraf* did not have immunity from corporal punishment, public opinion would react with anger when they were mistreated or punished harshly.<sup>31</sup>

The *ashraf* in Ottoman Egypt were a significant social class: Evliya Çelebi reports that 46,000 *ashraf* were under the jurisdiction of the *Naqib al-ashraf*.<sup>32</sup> While Evliya’s figures are notoriously inflated, there is no doubt that the *ashraf* were very numerous. It suffices to note that many nomad and settled Arab tribes were of Arabian origin and claimed the *sharaf*. Likewise, a considerable part of the urban population included *ashraf*. It is noteworthy that official orders to the public were routinely addressed to the three basic classes of urban society: the

military (*'askeri*), the *ashraf*, and the native subjects (*ra'aya* or *abna' al-balad*).<sup>33</sup>

*Sharifi* descent conferred social distinction and privilege, as very often indicated in the sources, and noted by foreigners. For example, an imperial edict of 994/1586 stresses that a minor state official, who was abducted by Christian pirates, was truly a *sharif*; it seems that the Egyptian authorities convinced Istanbul to ransom him for a huge sum of money and to exchange him for three Christian captives in Egypt.<sup>34</sup>

It seems certain that the status of the *ashraf* in Egypt was considerably enhanced during the Ottoman period in comparison with Mamluk times. This change parallels the rise of popular Islam in Ottoman Egypt and elsewhere. From the rather scanty information available concerning the early Ottoman period, the *ashraf* seem to have been a cohesive group. It is reported that in 1079/1668–69 the governor of Mansura attacked the village of Minbul in the Daqahliyya province, plundering it and killing fifteen of its inhabitants, the majority of whom were *ashraf*. The *ashraf* complained to the Divan of Egypt, and the case was brought before the military judge (*qazi'asker*) who sentenced the governor to death. A compromise was eventually reached, compensating the *ashraf* by 30,000 *nisfs*.<sup>35</sup>

A confrontation in 1089/1678 exemplified the fierce independence of the *ashraf*. In that year, 'Abdallah Efendi, the *qadi* of Jerusalem, was ordered to go to Egypt to inspect the *ashraf*, probably an investigation concerning their allowances. The *ashraf* protested vehemently, claiming that such an inspection was unprecedented. They went to al-Azhar mosque and obtained a *fatwa* from the ulama stating that it was illegal to take their money. The furious *ashraf* then went to the Divan to protest; their demands not being met immediately, they went down to the city to demonstrate, they forced people to close their shops and marched toward al-Azhar. There they took the Prophet's flag from the Husayni mosque and hoisted it on the al-Azhar minaret. Finally, the pasha cancelled the inspection and the unfortunate *qadi* of Jerusalem fled.<sup>36</sup> In another event, in 1659, the *ashraf* are described as a military body, composed of horsemen and infantry, who took part in a campaign to suppress a rebellious governor of Jirja, the capital of Upper Egypt. In the military parade, *Naqib al-ashraf* marched together with the *qazi'asker*.<sup>37</sup>

The same source describes an incident in 1105/1693 involving *ashraf* and bedouins in Manfalut that throws light on the *ashraf's* solidarity and pride. Amir 'Abdallah ibn Wafi, the shaykh of 'Arab al-Maghariba, killed a certain *sharif*, al-Sayyid Muhammad. The *ashraf* did not

succeed in avenging his blood; later the bedouin chief was given the tax farm in that district and became reconciled to al-Sayyid Hadiyya, the leader of the *ashraf*, with whom he shared it. To strengthen the alliance, the bedouin chief wished to have his son marry the daughter of the murdered *sharif*. When Hadiyya consulted the daughter's uncle and her cousins, they replied: 'Even if we are killed to the last man, we cannot agree to the marriage of an 'Alawite *sharifa* to a bedouin devoid of any noble lineage, who had in addition killed her father.' Having decided to avenge the murder, the *ashraf* killed Shaykh 'Abdallah when he came to the uncle's house, as well as other local bedouins.<sup>38</sup>

The *ashraf* were also considered a zealous and potentially dangerous element of the population. In 1703, the French consul in Cairo was exerting pressure on the pasha of Egypt to dismiss the *agha* of the Janissaries, who in his capacity as chief of police, had brutally beaten a French merchant in the middle of the street for wearing white headgear, which was presumably reserved for Muslims. The consul reported to his government that it was feared that the *agha*'s dismissal would lead the army, the *ashraf*, and the ulama to resort to violence. Concerning the same incident, it was made clear that Muslim public opinion would not tolerate the dismissal of the influential *agha*, who had put *ashraf* to death, for merely beating a Christian.<sup>39</sup> In 1112/1700 or 1701, a soldier of the 'Azab regiment killed a *sharif* during a quarrel in a marketplace. The pasha ordered the culprit strangled, but the rabble of Cairo and several *ashraf* seized the soldier from the officer taking him to prison and lynched him, then burned the body in the square below the Citadel.<sup>40</sup> In a similar incident in 1712, a Mamluk killed a *sharif* during a brawl in a Cairo market and then escaped. The *ashraf* put the corpse into a coffin, went to the Divan, and proved that a murder had been committed. Then they brought the markets to a halt, stoning shopkeepers who did not close their shops quickly enough, and beating up everyone they met, even emirs. This went on for two days. They also summoned the *ashraf* from the villages on the outskirts of Cairo to assemble in al-Husayni mosque. Carrying the 'Prophet's banner,' the *ashraf* marched to the house of the treasurer (*defterdar*) Qaytas Bey, where they fought with his Mamluks. The emirs then decided to exile a group of the *ashraf* leaders, but had to pardon them after several shaykhs and ulama interceded. After this, the *ashraf* considered it prudent to wear white turbans instead of green ones.<sup>41</sup> The above-mentioned incidents demonstrate vividly the *ashraf*'s solidarity, sensitivity to violation of their rights by rulers, influence in the Cairene society, and support among the Egyptian ulama. Al-Jabarti recounts a

clash between *ashraf* and the governor of the Gharbiyya and Mansura provinces during Ahmad al-Badawi's *mawlid* in Tanta, in Jumada II 1200/April 1786, that demonstrates the *ashraf*'s readiness to challenge the rulers. The camels of several *ashraf* (who were probably bedouins) were confiscated, because the owners refused to pay the special tax imposed on the sale of camels during the *mawlid*. Many participants in the *mawlid*, led by the famous 'alim Shaykh al-Dardayr, supported the *ashraf*, and a brawl followed between the crowd and the governor's soldiers.<sup>42</sup>

One notable difference in the social composition of the *ashraf* during the Ottoman period as compared with the Mamluk period was that some members of the ruling class were now *ashraf*. In the Mamluk period, no sultan, emir, or soldier could be a *sharif*, for the simple reason that a Mamluk in theory and fact was the son of non-Muslim parents and had been born outside the geographical boundaries of Islam. Under the Ottomans, the ruling class no longer consisted only of Mamluks, although the latter survived and ultimately became rulers of Egypt once again under Ottoman suzerainty. The chronicles mention numerous Turkish pashas and officers, called *sayyid* or *sharif*, who were *ashraf* and served in Egypt.<sup>43</sup> One of the governors of Egypt, Sherif Mehmet Pasha (ruled 1004–6/ 1596–98), was of Persian stock, and it was he who decreed that all Egyptian *ashraf* should wear a green turban instead of the green badge (or stone) on their turbans. He must have been keen to emphasize social differences, because he also compelled Jews to wear red caps in order to humiliate them and also strictly upheld the limitations on the Arabic-speaking Egyptians (*awlad al-'Arab*).<sup>44</sup>

In conclusion, while the information on the *ashraf* in Ottoman Egypt is not very rich, we know much more about this social class in the nineteenth century thanks mainly to 'Ali Mubarak's comprehensive encyclopedia.<sup>45</sup> It should be emphasized, however, that information about the Mamluk Sultanate (for which the historical sources are richer and more numerous than for the Ottoman period) is still poorer. One gets the clear impression that the *ashraf*'s social status, solidarity and economic conditions improved considerably in the Ottoman period, with most of the significant information on this subject relating to the seventeenth century onward. These changes are not surprising: the Ottoman government's weakening hold on Egypt toward the end of the sixteenth century and the ensuing lack of political stability strengthened local elements, as has been shown. These elements, including the *ashraf*, had existed during the Mamluk period, but the strong, authoritarian regime of the time kept them in check to a greater degree

than during Ottoman rule. However, the centralized regime established by Mehmet 'Ali, along with the modernization that began in the nineteenth century, led to a gradual decline of these local elements. The incidents involving *ashraf* strongly suggest that the cohesiveness and assertiveness of the *ashraf* were the native Egyptians' expressions of their pride and their opposition to oppression by Turkish soldiers.

## NAQIB AL-ASHRAF

### The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt and the First Years of Ottoman Rule

*Naqib al-ashraf* was the title of the officer appointed by the government to supervise the *ashraf*. The term *naqib* derives from the root *n-q-b*, which means 'to search and investigate' and it was his duty to examine the origin of claimants to the status of *sharif* and to prevent imposters from having their names included in the register of *ashraf*, lest they come to enjoy the accompanying tax reductions and allowances. The office was created in the 'Abbasid period. The Fatimids called the incumbents *Naqib al-Talibiyyin* or *al-'Ala wiyyin*, the title *Naqib al-ashraf* first appearing in the Mamluk period. Under the 'Abbasids and the Fatimids, the office was one of the political and military posts, while the *naqib* was one of 'the men of the sword' (*arbab al-suyuf*), as distinct from administrative and religious functionaries. In the Mamluk Sultanate, however, *Naqib al-ashraf* was a religious functionary. Although he was entitled to be regarded as a 'man of the sword,' he was traditionally considered one of the 'men of the pen' (*arbab al-aqlam*) and wore a turban as an '*alim*'.<sup>46</sup> The explanation for the change seems simple: owing to the social structure of the ruling military elite in the Mamluk Sultanate, no man of non-Mamluk origin could belong to the *arbab al-suyuf*, certainly not in the higher posts. As already mentioned, a Mamluk emir could never be a *sharif* and, therefore, not *Naqib al-ashraf*.

At the end of the Mamluk period and the beginning of Ottoman rule in Egypt, the *Naqib al-ashraf* is rarely mentioned in the chronicles and when he is, the manner in which this is done leaves no doubt about his limited influence.<sup>47</sup> In describing public ceremonies or the ruler's consultations with religious leaders during the Mamluk period, for example, the sources mention the 'Abbasid caliph, the four chief *qadis*, and occasionally the heads of Sufi orders, but never any *Naqib al-*

*ashraf*. Two years after the Ottoman conquest, a *sharif* arrived from Istanbul with an order from the sultan stating that he had been appointed *Naqib al-ashraf* of Egypt.<sup>48</sup> It is noteworthy that Ibn Iyas, the chronicler who describes the Ottoman conquest and the five years following it, reports this particular appointment matter-of-factly and laconically, although he was wont to criticize sharply any appointment or innovation that originated from Istanbul. Moreover, his detailed chronicle contains not a single shred of evidence to suggest that the appointment was in any way opposed by local elements, in sharp contrast to the later Ottoman period.<sup>49</sup> During the early years of Ottoman rule, the office is rarely mentioned in the sources, which is striking, notwithstanding the paucity of historical sources on sixteenth century Egypt.<sup>50</sup> A short notice, in Diyarbakri's chronicle, however, reports Ha'in Ahmet Pasha's revolt in 1523. The rebellious pasha named as his *Naqib al-ashraf* a certain Fahd al-Din al-Mahalli, who made a living by selling pillows and mattresses. This appointment of an insignificant Cairene merchant surprised the people of Cairo and it seems that it was intended to weaken Istanbul's influence in Egypt.<sup>51</sup>

### *Naqib al-ashraf* as an Ottoman Functionary

The status of the *Naqib al-ashraf* is important not only in Ottoman Egypt's social history; the vicissitudes of the office also reflect political developments in Egypt in a manner reminiscent of the changes in the power of the Ottoman pasha himself. Until the second half of the eighteenth century, *Naqib al-ashraf* was a typical Turkish—Ottoman functionary, like the pasha or the *qazi'asker*.<sup>52</sup> He was responsible to *Naqib al-ashraf* in Istanbul, although (like other provincial *Nuqaba' al-ashraf*) he played a rather more influential role in the affairs of Cairo than the chief *Naqib* himself did at the Ottoman capital. The appointment was limited to one year, with the possibility of renewal, and like other high officers, *Naqib al-ashraf* had to pay a substantial price for the office and send an annual gift to Istanbul.<sup>53</sup>

Until the early nineteenth century, the *Naqib* tried the *ashraf*<sup>54</sup> in all except capital cases,<sup>55</sup> but he lost this power under Mehmet 'Ali.<sup>56</sup> The *Naqib* and his representatives in the town kept the *ashraf*'s genealogical tables which were needed to determine the origin of those who claimed *sharifi* descent<sup>57</sup> and arranged the payment of the allowances due to them.<sup>58</sup> The *Naqib al-ashraf* participated in various ceremonies, such as cutting the dam of the canal at the completion or abundance of the Nile, or the procession of the *kiswa* covering the *Ka'ba*.<sup>59</sup> He also saw to it

that the *ashraf* participated in ceremonies, such as the procession of the *mahmal*.<sup>60</sup> He initiated religious activities, such as repairing mosques and establishing lodges for dervishes.<sup>61</sup> The *Naqib al-ashraf* was assisted by several aides and clerks, including *shawishes*, headed by *bash shawish* (or *bash-jawish*) *al-ashraf*, a clerk (*katib*), a respectable office which was apparently hereditary in certain families.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to *Naqib al-ashraf* of Egypt, there were also local *nuqaba'* in charge of a city or district. Thus, one source mentions *Naqib al-ashraf* of the town of Tahta,<sup>63</sup> *Naqib al-ashraf* in the province of Asyut,<sup>64</sup> the *Naqib* of Manfalut, whose office was hereditary in one family,<sup>65</sup> and that the town of Abyar is the center of *niqabat al-ashraf* of Minufiyya.<sup>66</sup>

By the seventeenth century, *Naqib al-ashraf* had become one of the outstanding dignitaries and his presence in the Divan is often noted. Occasionally, he is mentioned as one of the notables who tried to negotiate a truce between the regiments or Mamluk factions.<sup>67</sup> When the grandees deposed Musa Pasha for the assassination of Qaytas Bey in July 1631, it was *Naqib al-ashraf* who bestowed the robe of honor on the emir who was named acting pasha.<sup>68</sup> In 1069/1659, *Naqib al-ashraf* Burhan al-Din Efendi joined the *qazi'asker* in issuing a *fatwa* which declared Muhammad Bey, the governor of Jirja, a rebel and sanctioned a campaign against him, in which the *Naqib* participated.<sup>69</sup>

In 1211/1709 *Naqib al-ashraf* al-Sayyid Hasan Efendi died. He was the last of the line in a family which had held the office for several generations.<sup>70</sup> Evliya Çelebi provides some information about this family, which had served as *Nuqaba' al-ashraf* of Egypt for almost a century, and particularly about the above-mentioned Burhan al-Din Efendi, who died in 1674 or 1675. Burhan al-Din was a Turk who had been born in the Hamid province in Anatolia and had studied at the famous Süleymaniye Medrese in Istanbul. Burhan al-Din is described as a generous and rich man who controlled numerous *waqf* foundations and had tax farms, some of which consisted of whole villages.<sup>71</sup> According to the usual Ottoman procedure, an Egyptian deputy was appointed in place of the deceased *Naqib* and when the new *Naqib* arrived from Istanbul nearly a year later, he spent the night in the house of the *bash jawish al-ashraf*, where he was murdered in his sleep. The office was then offered to the deputy, who refused it. A former Ottoman officer, deputy commander, the *kahya* or *ketkhuda* of the 'Azab regiment was finally named to the post.<sup>72</sup> A Turkish chronicler reporting the same story mentions that the appointment was supported by all the *ashraf*.<sup>73</sup>

### The Transfer of the Office to Local Notables

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the office of *Naqib* was transferred to two distinguished Cairene families, al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya (or Banu'l-Sadat) and al-Bakri, both of them old Sufi families and among the richest and most respected in Egypt.<sup>74</sup>

The family of al-Bakri al-Siddiqi claimed descent from Abu Bakr, the first caliph, and from Hasan ibn 'Ali, thus making the family one of *ashraf*.<sup>75</sup> According to family tradition, the Bakris arrived in Egypt in the first century AH, or the sixth century at the latest.<sup>76</sup> In either case, they can be traced back as a prominent Sufi family in Cairo only from the ninth/tenth century, when reference is made to Muhammad Jalal al-Din al-Bakri (d. 922/1516), a *qadi* in al-Fayyum. He established ties with the famous itinerant Sufi shaykh, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Dashtuti, and supervised his affairs and the houses he had built in Cairo.<sup>77</sup> In the early Ottoman period, the Bakris were Shadhilis, but in the first half of the eighteenth century they became attached to the Khalwati *tariqa* by the Damascene Shaykh Mustafa al-Bakri (d. 1749).<sup>78</sup>

The family of al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya claimed descent from the Idrisi royal dynasty of the Maghrib, and, like the Bakris, were *ashraf* of the line of Hasan ibn 'Ali. According to family tradition, they came to Egypt from Tunis and Sfaks at the beginning of the eighth/fourteenth century.<sup>79</sup> They established a Sufi order, which was a branch of the Shadhiliyya. The Wafa'is were famous for their wealth, poets and gatherings where Sufis played musical instruments, in spite of the displeasure of the orthodox Muslims.<sup>80</sup> The head of the family, Shaykh al-Sadat (known also by the title *shaykh al-sajjada* or *khilafat al-Wafa'iyya*), acted in the eighteenth century as a counterbalance to Shaykh al-Bakri, although the latter enjoyed a higher social and religious status.<sup>81</sup> Shaykh al-Bakri was in charge of the administration and organization of the Prophet's *mawlid*, while Shaykh al-Sadat was responsible for Husayn's *mawlid*, the second in importance.<sup>82</sup> Al-Sadat also supervised the *waqf* of the Husayni mosque.<sup>83</sup> In addition to their estates and income as administrators of *waqfs*, the Bakris and the Wafa'is received special government allowances.<sup>84</sup>

It is significant that in the second half of the eighteenth century, contemporaneously with the decline in influence of the central government in Egypt, the office of *Naqib al-ashraf* passed to local families holding a high place in Cairo's Sufi hierarchy. This change strengthened the office, which had never before been connected to the Sufis. We have already mentioned the increase of the *ashraf*'s influence

in the Ottoman period, but after the Wafa'is and the Bakris attained the office of *Naqib*, the incumbents' social and political influence far surpassed that of the *ashraf*. The sources provide much more information on the *Naqib* than on the *ashraf*. The office of *Naqib* was no longer only an administrative one; it also had social and religious prestige.

The first Wafa'i (and Egyptian) to be appointed *Naqib al-ashraf* was the head of the family, al-Sayyid Muhammad Abu'l-Hadi (d.1 176/1762).<sup>85</sup> After his death his relative, al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn Isma'il Abu'l-Imdad (d.1182/1768) was appointed to succeed him. Eight years later, when he became the head of the Wafa'i family, he renounced the post to Sidi Muhammad Efendi al-Bakri 'al-Kabir', the first Bakri incumbent.<sup>86</sup> Al-Jabarti's short notices on the first Wafa'is who held the office indicate that it did not pass automatically to the head of the family and was considered less important than the leadership of the family and the Sufi order. Muhammad Efendi al-Bakri (senior) was also head of the family, and upon his death in 1196/1781, his son Muhammad Efendi al-Bakri 'al-Saghir' (junior) inherited the two positions. Al-Jabarti indicates that the appointment of al-Bakri 'al-Saghir' was made public by Murad Bey, who invested him with an official robe for both positions.<sup>87</sup> Appointment from Istanbul was no longer necessary and the hereditary transmission of the office in the al-Bakri family seemed a natural procedure requiring only formal approval by Egypt's ruler.<sup>88</sup>

### 'Umar Makram

The two positions, *niqabat al-ashraf* and family headship (*khilafa*), were separated again when Muhammad al-Bakri 'al-Saghir' died heirless in 1208/1793. His cousin Khalil al-Bakri was named only head of the family and Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey, the Mamluk emirs who were de facto rulers of Egypt, paid a political debt by appointing 'Umar Makram, a native of Asyut, as *Naqib al-ashraf*.<sup>89</sup> When the two beys had been in exile in Upper Egypt, 'Umar Makram supported them and successfully fulfilled a diplomatic mission on their behalf to the Ottoman pasha, to *Shaykh al-balad* (the most influential Mamluk emir in Cairo) and to the chief ulama in 1205/1791, which prepared the way for their return to Cairo and ultimately their seizure of power.<sup>90</sup> 'Umar Makram's appointment as *Naqib al-ashraf* was extraordinary, since he was an outsider without social or family contacts in Cairo,<sup>91</sup> and was neither a Sufi nor an *'alim*.

Although 'Umar Makram attained his position through the emirs, he proved his independence. In 1209/1795 he sided with Shaykh al-Bakri and Shaykh al-Sadat against Murad and Ibrahim, demanding that they prevent the injustice several Mamluk emirs perpetrated upon residents of a village that was within the tax farm of Shaykh al-Sharqawi, one of the distinguished ulama of al-Azhar.<sup>92</sup> Upon Bonaparte's conquest of Egypt in 1798, 'Umar Makram refused to stay in his office and went into exile in Palestine. In his place, the French appointed Khalil al-Bakri, a natural choice, since unlike 'Umar Makram and Shaykh al-Sadat, Khalil collaborated with them. As a result, his house was later looted and his daughter was executed for her contacts with the conquerors. With the return of Ottoman rule to Egypt, Khalil al-Bakri was dismissed from his two positions.<sup>93</sup>

'Umar Makram's activity as popular leader of the rebellion against the French, his crucial contribution to the appointment of Mehmet 'Ali as *vali* of Egypt, and his leadership of the opposition to the British invasion of 1807 are well known and need not be repeated here. It should be emphasized, however, that a political vacuum emerged in the turbulent period between the French evacuation and the consolidation of Mehmet 'Ali's rule. 'Umar Makram proved himself to be a popular leader of a new type who derived his power directly from the people. His control of the city was complete,<sup>94</sup> and there is no doubt that his leadership was made possible by his strong character and his courage. Nevertheless, one can assume that without his office he could not have attained his influential position. It should be noted that *niqabat al-ashraf* was the only high administrative position held by an Egyptian.

As soon as 'Umar Makram discovered that he had brought about the rise of a tyrant, he turned against Mehmet 'Ali, who feared 'Umar Makram's total control of the people.<sup>95</sup> Failing to bribe him, the pasha decided to isolate him. Prompted by Mehmet 'Ali, the ulama wrote a petition to Istanbul accusing 'Umar Makram of deleting from the records names of *ashraf* entitled to pensions, and of substituting names of converted Copts and Jews. He was also accused of gathering around him gangs of 'Maghribis, people of Upper Egypt and rabble,' and of inciting the Egyptian emirs to rebel against the Ottoman government.<sup>96</sup> Al-Jabarti believes that these were false accusations, and that the ulama signed the petition out of fear of the pasha and their jealousy of 'Umar Makram. The accusations against 'Umar that he associated with socially inferior elements seem to reflect his style of leadership that was not based on conservative social elements. In 1224/1809, 'Umar Makram was dismissed as *Naqib al-ashraf* and exiled to Damietta. The office passed

to Shaykh al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya, al-Shaykh Muhammad Abu'l-Anwar ibn 'Abd al-Rahman, a domineering, greedy and ambitious man who had been coveting the post for a long time.

Under Mehmet 'Ali's rule the post became a Bakri monopoly and remained so until the middle of this century. Shaykh al-Bakri held three offices simultaneously: head of the Bakri family, head of all Sufi orders in Egypt—an office created by Mehmet 'Ali to centralize his supervision of the orders—and *Naqib al-ashraf*, an office which had become less important than that of head of the Sufi orders.<sup>97</sup> In the nineteenth century, the power of *Naqib al-ashraf* was again limited to the affairs of the *ashraf*. From Mehmet 'Ali's days until the overthrow of the ruling dynasty in 1952, the Bakris were closely attached to it. They intermarried with the Sadat family, and according to the testimony of Muhammad Tawfiq al-Bakri, the two families merged, with Shaykh al-Bakri becoming Shaykh al-Sadat as well towards the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>98</sup>

In summary, the vicissitudes of the office of *Naqib al-ashraf* in Ottoman Egypt were unusual, even if one considers the changes which shaped the political and social elites in that country. The office clearly illustrates the rise of an indigenous religious aristocracy in the eighteenth century and its growing impact on Egypt's political and social life. It also demonstrates the strengthening of the Sufi orders, which has been elucidated in [Chapter 5](#).

## The *Dhimmis*: Jews and Christians

### THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST AND THE *DHIMMIS*

A survey of the religious minorities in Ottoman Egypt must include the Coptic and Jewish communities, with more emphasis on the former since it was much larger.<sup>1</sup> But, since the sources provide considerably more information about the Jews, this chapter will deal with them in greater detail. The disproportionate attention the sources pay to the Jews in comparison with the Copts is perhaps due to the high position that some Jews attained in Ottoman Egypt's fiscal administration. This does not mean, however, that the sources are particularly rich concerning the Jews. The archival material and the chronicles provide only rather scanty, episodic information on the *dhimmis* in comparison with other elements in Egyptian society, such as the ruling class or the ulama. Another word of caution is in order. Both the official documents, such as the firmans, and the chronicles more often than not mention the *dhimmis* in a negative context: for example, when a Jewish or a Christian financial agent is accused of fraudulent practices, or when Muslims riot against the *dhimmis*. Since the sources may rarely record honest *dhimmi* officials or peaceful relations between Muslims and *dhimmis*, the picture that emerges may be gloomier than it was in fact.

Generally speaking, the Ottoman conquest improved the fortunes of the Jewish community. Mamluk rule had been tyrannical, exploitative and arbitrary and tended to oppress the religious minorities. Financial extortion, destruction of the *dhimmis*' houses of worship and other forms of persecution were quite frequent. Such a regime which was, in addition, spiritually guided by orthodox Islam (the ulama enjoyed a high position and influence in the Mamluk Sultanate), was onerous for the religious minorities. The economic distress and sense of military

insecurity during the Sultanate's final decades also created a feeling of insecurity among the *dhimmis*.<sup>2</sup>

By comparison, in the sixteenth century the Ottomans were at the height of their power. For Egypt, the era of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–66) was one of firm rule, sure of itself, orderly and efficient with a developed economic consciousness. The Ottomans made full use of their Empire's material and human resources, including the economic talents of the religious minorities. Although the Empire was an orthodox Sunni state, it was pragmatic and enlightened by contemporary standards. The generally just treatment the government meted out to its subjects and its utilitarian and thrifty orientation contributed to the *dhimmis*' wellbeing. In spite of what has been said about the general situation of the Jews in the Mamluk Sultanate, they had risen in the Circassian Mamluk (1382–1517) administration in comparison with the preceding Turkish (Bahri) period (1250–1382).<sup>3</sup> But by the end of the sixteenth century, the positions that Jews had attained in Egypt's fiscal administration were higher and more influential than any since the rule of the Fatimids (969–1172).

### **The *Dhimmis* during the First Period of Ottoman Rule**

Shortly after Sultan Selim's conquest of Egypt, Jews of Cairo were among those deported to Istanbul under the Ottomans' traditional forced banishment (*sürgün*) system.<sup>4</sup> Although the Cairenes considered this deportation to be harsh, it cannot be regarded as anti-Jewish. Rather, it should be seen as Ottoman acknowledgment of the special skills of the Jewish community, just as the other groups of exiles consisted of merchants, craftsmen and government clerks, whom the conquerors had singled out to practise their skills in the Ottoman capital.<sup>5</sup> It is worth noting in this connection that the Jews were regarded more as a professional class than as a religious community. Similarly, Christians sent to Istanbul were 'some clerks of the Treasury who were Christians,' as the chronicler carefully describes them.<sup>6</sup>

During the governorship of Kha'ir Bey, the first Ottoman governor of Egypt (1517–22), the position of the *dhimmis* did not undergo any discernible change. The chronicler blames Kha'ir Bey for giving 'Ibrahim the Jew, the director of the mint, authority to take the Muslims' money.' Kha'ir Bey also appointed a Christian called al-Shaykh Yunus the chief administrator of the state bureaus and the Muslims had to be subservient to him. On the other hand, Kha'ir Bey

did not hesitate to impose harsh sentences upon Jewish and Christian employees of the mint, and upon money-changers accused of debasing the coinage. One of the employees of the mint was beaten, then led through the streets of Cairo with his amputated arm suspended above his nose. In another incident, a Jew and a Christian were executed by impalement for counterfeiting coins. Such punishments do not prove that Kha'ir Bey was anti-*dhimmi*, but show rather his cruelty, which was frequently directed against Muslim culprits as well.<sup>7</sup> As already mentioned, in one of the first cases heard before an Ottoman judge in Cairo during Kha'ir Bey's term of office, a Turkish Jew won his case against a Mamluk emir. The *qadi's* decision surprised the Cairenes who were not used to a Jew suing an emir, let alone winning his suit.<sup>8</sup>

Jews and Christians participated as organized bodies in the celebrations on the occasion of the sultan's extension of Kha'ir Bey's incumbency: the Christians marched in a procession holding lighted candles; the Jews did not come that time, as the celebrations fell on the Sabbath.<sup>9</sup>

The Jews were vulnerable, particularly during a political crisis, a change of government or a rebellion. When Sultan Selim died in 1520, the Janissaries threatened the Jews of Cairo, claiming that an old custom entitled them to ransack Harat Zuwayla, the Jewish quarter. When several emirs intervened, the Janissaries threatened to pillage the whole city, but backed down after being placated by a sum of money. When the atmosphere became tense once again in Cairo shortly afterwards, the Jews hid their valuable fabrics and fortified their quarter.<sup>10</sup>

The Jews and the Janissaries were joined by bonds of common interests throughout the Ottoman period, since the Janissaries, as the largest and strongest regiment, acquired various tax farms (*maqata'at*), which Jews administered for them.<sup>11</sup> During the revolt of Ha'in Ahmet Pasha, both the Jews and the Janissaries became victims of his tyranny. When the pasha had his name put on the coinage, Abraham Castro, the Jewish master of the mint, fled to Istanbul to inform Sultan Süleyman of the pasha's treason. Ahmet Pasha put pressure on the Jews to provide him with money, threatening to put several of them to death and, according to a Hebrew source, even with the annihilation of the entire community unless his exorbitant demands were met. When Ahmet's forces overran the Citadel, they killed the Janissaries stationed there and also Jews, who were there probably in connection with their work in the financial bureaus.<sup>12</sup>

During Ahmet Pasha's revolt, the Mamluks' hatred of the Jews expressed itself once again in attacks on the Jewish quarter, if the report

of the Jewish chronicler Sambari is to be believed.<sup>13</sup> According to a Turkish source, the attackers and looters were not Circassian Mamluks, but irregular troops (*levend*) and young thugs of Cairo (*zu'ar*).<sup>14</sup> The downfall of Ahmet Pasha came as a relief to the Jews who celebrated their deliverance as 'the Egyptian Purim,' since his defeat occurred in March, close to the festival of Purim.<sup>15</sup>

Generally speaking, the Mamluks were more anti-Jewish than the Ottomans, being more religiously fanatic. The most difficult days for the Jews in the Ottoman period occurred during two Mamluk revolts against Ottoman sovereignty—the rebellions of *Ha'in* Ahmet Pasha in 1523–4 and of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir in 1769–73.<sup>16</sup>

The *Qanun-name-i Misir*, the administrative code promulgated by Ibrahim Pasha, the Grand Vizier, after the restoration of the sultan's authority in Egypt in 1525, does not expressly mention Jews or Christians, but this basic document does include two passages which implicitly refer to the *dhimmi*s. One says: 'The district governors (*kashifs*), financial agents (*mubashirs*), market inspectors (*muhtasibs*) and other officials were followed by advisers who induced them to actions which violated the *Shari'a* and harmed the Muslims. The employment of such assistants is to be discontinued. Should the need arise to replace them by other advisers, they should be capable, religious Muslims.'<sup>17</sup> One gets the strong impression that the edict calls for the dismissal of *dhimmi* advisers. The order is identical in its phrasing with other edicts ordering the pasha of Egypt to dismiss Jewish customs officials at the ports of Alexandria and Suez, who were accused of acting contrary to the *Shari'a* and to replace them with Muslims.<sup>18</sup>

A chapter in the *Qanun-name* dealing with the coinage says: 'A petition has been presented to my Sublime Threshold (i.e. the sultan's palace in Istanbul) that the money-changers (*sarrafs*) leave the city for the countryside and go from village to village. Whenever they find gold in someone's possession they buy and keep it. Later, when the government needs gold, it is not available, and the merchants have to buy it from the *sarrafs* at whatever price they demand. This practice is henceforth forbidden. The *beylerbeyi* of Egypt, through the inspector of finance (*nazir al-amwal*), will forbid the *sarrafs* from going out to the villages to buy gold in order to hoard it. Whoever disobeys after being warned will have his money confiscated and will be severely punished.'<sup>19</sup>

Here, too, Jews are not mentioned explicitly, but it has to be borne in mind that they were a dominant element—according to some sources the majority—among the money-changers. Many Jews were also

traditionally dealers in precious metals.<sup>20</sup> Almost 300 years after the promulgation of the *Qanun-name*, al-Jabarti reports that those Jews, whose task it was to supply gold and silver to the mint, were arrested and beaten, since the gold coins had disappeared from the markets.<sup>21</sup> It is highly probable then that the above-quoted passage from the *Qanun-name* refers to Jews, although it cannot be proven that it refers to them exclusively.

### THE JEWS AS *SARRAFS*

In spite of the Jews' importance in commerce, the number of them who made their living as money-changers, goldsmiths, tax collectors and bankers—all of whom came under the rubric of *sarrafs*—must have been much larger than those occupied in trade. This typically Jewish occupation determined to a great extent their image and their relations with the authorities and the non-Jews. Not all *sarrafs* were Jews; many were Armenians and Copts, and in the eighteenth century, Syrian Catholics, who competed successfully with the Jews.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, during most of the Ottoman period, Jews dominated the finances of the Divan, the mint and served as bankers to the Janissaries and many pashas and emirs. No wonder that the stereotype of the grasping and crafty Jews, familiar from other countries, persisted also in Egypt. Dealing in money, jewels and precious metals was lucrative, but also dangerous and inevitably caused jealousy and hatred.

The Copts, too, were financial specialists. Like the Jews, many of them were employed as *sarrafs*, and tax collectors. There are striking similarities between the occupations and the professional traditions of the two communities. Both used their language (Coptic and Hebrew) as a cryptic script for accounting and bookkeeping.<sup>23</sup> The main difference between the two stemmed from the Jews being city dwellers and the Copts mostly a rural community. The Jews were typically employed by the central government—the pasha and the Divan—while the Copts were mainly active in the villages. While Jews were customarily attached to the Janissaries—an urban and central military power—the Copts served individual beys and *kashifs* as secretaries and financial agents.<sup>24</sup>

Although the chronicles provide information about measures against individual Jews who were in the service of the Divan, and also about anti-Jewish and anti-Christian measures, the only case (before the incumbency of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir) of an attempt to remove *all* the Jewish *sarrafs* occurred during the governorship of Ahmet Pasha al-

Defterdar. In 1086/1676, this pasha dismissed all the Jewish *sarrafs* employed by the Divan of Cairo, and replaced them by Muslims, mainly *sarrafs* who had come from the Hijaz. Details about the circumstances that led to this decision are sparse, but Raymond suggests that it was aimed at the Janissaries who had common interests with the Jews.<sup>25</sup> It is clear, however, that this policy was short-lived, since the authorities discovered that the Jews were indispensable. The chroniclers report the purge of the Jews from the financial service of the Divan in obnoxious, anti-Semitic terms: ‘People were warned against the Jews’ thieveries and fraudulent acts. The pasha cleaned the Divan of their dirt.’ The chronicler calls the Jews *çifit*, a derogatory Turkish term for Jews, meaning ‘a mean, stingy man; a malicious, perfidious man.’<sup>26</sup> In the light of this attitude, the description of the Jewish *sarrafs* by Evliya Çelebi, who was no friend of the *dhimmis* or of the Jews in particular, is of interest: ‘The *defterdar* is in charge of the *sarrafbası* (chief *sarrafbası*), a Jew, who in turn employs 300 Jews. Furthermore, each tax farmer has a Jewish *sarrafbası* in the province. The Jews are usually wicked devils, but in Egypt they are honest. If a soldier, upon receiving his salary, finds among the coins some whose edges have been clipped (i.e. for their precious metal) or copper coins, and then encounters the *sarrafbası* on his way, the latter will immediately exchange the coins for better ones.’<sup>27</sup> Writing some 160 years later, Lane says: ‘although overreaching in commercial transactions (the Jews) are honest in fulfilling their contracts.’<sup>28</sup>

The best known case of the fall of a Jewish *sarrafbası* is that of Yasif (the Ottoman variant of Joseph) al-Yahudi, Leon Zaphir of the French consular reports. Master of the Cairo mint as well as *sarrafbası*, Yasif was summoned to Istanbul for consultations at which he suggested ways and means to increase the revenues. Upon his return to Cairo, the Jews greeted him festively and followed him in procession to the Divan. It soon became known that Yasif had brought with him imperial edicts imposing additional taxes on coffee, by then the major transit commodity, and on houses and shops. The pasha approved of these taxes, but the merchants and other notables, who opposed them, complained to the emirs and the soldiers, and these demanded Yasif’s head. Attempting to save his financial adviser, the pasha, who was now threatened by deposition from office, put Yasif in protective custody in the Citadel, but the soldiers forced their way in and killed him. His body was dragged to the Rumayla Square below the Citadel and burned by the mob (April 27, 1695).<sup>29</sup>

Sometimes the Ottoman authorities were convinced that certain Jews were abusing their connections with the mint for illegal gain. In one case, in 1179/1765, the charges were made against Isaq (the Ottoman variant of Ishaq) and Yasif who were employed in the technical service of the mint (as *ustabaşı* and *doğramacı*) and the Egyptian governor was ordered to dismiss them.<sup>30</sup> A series of imperial edicts, issued between 1179/1765 and 1180/1766, include strongly worded accusations against unnamed Jews who were moneylenders (*sermayecis*, who furnished capital to traders), and government agents for the purchase of rubbed down, obsolete or foreign coins for the mint (*mubaya'acıs*). The edicts present their perfidious behavior and intervention in the work of the mint as the main reason for the debasement of the Egyptian coinage, which it is said, was formerly of the quality of that minted in Istanbul. Sharp criticism is reserved for the Jews' Muslim accomplices, namely the officers of the mint whose duty it was to check the quality of the coins, (*sahib-i 'iyar*), and also for emirs, especially police inspectors (*walis*).<sup>31</sup>

Such cases should be seen in their true proportions. Certainly, they reflect an antipathy by some elements of the Muslim population toward Jews, but officials and advisers responsible for oppressive financial measures often paid with their lives for the public's angry reaction. When Jews were the victims, it was not necessarily related to their religious faith, but to the sensitive positions they held. Nevertheless, the Jews' role as *sarrafs*, petty bankers and moneylenders being vital, they continued playing it until the second half of the eighteenth century, when they lost their hegemony due to 'Ali Bey's persecution and their displacement by Catholic Syrians and Copts. But as attested by Lane and other nineteenth century sources, Jews were still active as *sarrafs* even in the post-'Ali Bey period.<sup>32</sup>

### CUSTOMS OFFICIALS AND MERCHANTS

Possessing financial and linguistic skills, many Jews were appointed directors of the customs at sea and river ports, posts they usually held as tax farms (*iltizam*) or as sub-lessees of tax farms held by the pasha himself or the Janissaries, although Jews sometimes preferred to administer the customs houses as salaried employees (*emin*), rather than as tax farmers.<sup>33</sup> Not all customs houses were controlled by Jews; the office sometimes was given to Christians. Writing early in the eighteenth century, Pococke observed that the customs house at Damietta was usually run by Christians.<sup>34</sup> Although these posts brought

Jews great wealth, they were also sources of envy and conflicts of interest, and it is hardly surprising that shipowners, merchants and other users of the ports, whether Muslims or European Christians, often complained about the customs officials to the authorities.<sup>35</sup>

In the second half of the sixteenth century, complaints were addressed to Istanbul about a certain Shmuel Cohen (or Kahana), one of Egypt's richest and most influential men, who was simultaneously director of the mint, currency inspector (*sahib-i 'iyar*), the *multazim* of the customs revenues of Alexandria and Damietta, and holder of the tax farm of the special Egyptian cucumber (*khiyar shanbar*) and spices.<sup>36</sup> An edict dated 975/1568, addressed to the *beylerbeyi* of Egypt, is based on a petition which certain captains of merchant ships presented to Piyale Pasha, the famous Ottoman admiral, against Cohen. He is accused of keeping the ships in the harbor longer than necessary and collecting exorbitant customs duties. He is also charged with molesting Muslim women returning home from the *hajj*: claiming that they were smuggling goods, he used to thrust his hands into their bosoms and armpits. The *beyler beyi* is asked to dismiss him immediately, if the accusations prove true, and replace him by an able, religious, and turbaned (? or wealthy) Muslim.<sup>37</sup> It is clear that this document is not concerned only with the charges against Cohen. While he was not to be dismissed without an investigation (a recurring and commendable formula in the Ottoman edicts), but if found guilty, no other Jew was to be trusted with the office.

Another edict, issued at about the same time, is even more explicit: An order to the *beylerbeyi* and *defterdar* of Egypt:

In the past, when the officials and the *mültezims* of the Suez customs house were Muslims, they had never delayed the pilgrims during the *hajj* period. They prepared ships for them and provided for their needs, so they could perform the *hajj* in time. Now, when the *mültezims* are Jews, they delay the pilgrims with various excuses and the Muslims do not reach the holy pilgrimage on time. Moreover, by delaying their departure, the Jews cause the destruction of the ships at sea (by making them sail in a time of storm). It has been known that the Jewish *mültezims* oppress and mistreat the pilgrims, the merchants and the passengers in general.

I [the Sultan] have, therefore, decreed that starting from the arrival of this order, no Jews will be employed at the seaport [of Suez]. Any moneys belonging to the state that they possess should

be taken away from them. Replace them with able, religious, and trustworthy Muslims, who will take care of the Muslim pilgrims as in the old days.<sup>38</sup>

One can see that this edict is based on allegations of a purely religious, not economic, nature: Suez was the main Egyptian port on the Red Sea and it had become policy in the second half of the twelfth century in the days of Salah al-Din (Saladin) to deny non-Muslims access to the Red Sea because of the proximity of the holy cities of Islam.<sup>39</sup> It is rarely possible to follow a story of a person like Cohen to its conclusion, since the relevant documents are often lacking. We know, however, that the anti-Jewish initiative was successful in this case, at least for a while: a payroll dated a few years later (993/1585) shows that the *emin* (the official in charge, not a *mültezim*) of the Suez harbor was a certain Muhammad, that is, a Muslim.<sup>40</sup>

The majority of the complaints against Jewish customs officers, however, were economic in nature. The director of the customs at Suez, for example, was accused in 986/1578 of conspiring with several merchants to smuggle lead, copper, tin and other valuable metals to India, despite a stern prohibition against exporting such materials.<sup>41</sup> Typical accusations were charging exorbitant customs duties and not transferring revenue to the Treasury.<sup>42</sup> It is obvious that the customs officials had willing accomplices among the pashas and emirs in the military establishment, who shared their legal and illegal profits.<sup>43</sup>

Throughout the Ottoman period, the imperial edicts reiterate the ban on selling wheat, rice and other provisions to European merchants; violations of the ban caused scarcity in the Empire, particularly in Istanbul. But the temptation was sometimes too strong for merchants and customs officials, including the *dhimmis*, despite the threat of harsh punishment. In the eighteenth century, the commodity most frequently banned was coffee, which could not be sold to European merchants before the requirements of the Ottoman government had been fully satisfied.<sup>44</sup> An imperial edict, dated mid-Sha'ban 1132 (end of May to early June, 1721), was issued in response to a petition of a group of Christian and Jewish merchants asking the sultan that the authorities not deprive them of their privilege of purchasing coffee at Suez. Apparently the government wanted to have full control over the coffee trade, suspecting that the merchants were selling coffee to the Europeans. The *dhimmi* merchants complained that when the government's intentions became known in Egypt, their trading partners refused to do business with them. The merchants said that they were *dhimmis* who paid poll

tax and could support themselves only from trade. The sultan's edict, issued in reply, dismissed the rumors that trade was forbidden to the *dhimmis*, but repeated the warning that no merchant, whether *dhimmi* or Muslim, should load coffee on the infidels' ships.<sup>45</sup>

Financial and fiscal occupations were the Jews' most important source of income. But they also engaged in other occupations that were important within the Jewish community or in economic relations with other communities. Most of the trade and commerce in Cairo was carried out within the framework of guilds. Members of a guild usually belonged to the same religious or ethnic community. Thus, we find Jewish, Coptic and other Christian, and Muslim guilds. There were, for examples, guilds of Jewish butchers and sellers of cheese;<sup>46</sup> Evliya Çelebi mentions a small guild of Jewish tinsmiths and a larger one of Jewish buttonmakers. Some Jews were tailors, yet most of the tailors were Greek or Copts. Many Jews and Christians were winemakers or keepers of wine-shops, which emirs sometimes closed down for religious reasons.<sup>47</sup> Evliya Çelebi also reports that the chief manufacturer of robes of honor (*hil'atci başı*) was a Jew who made as many as 6,000 robes a year. Another occupation, which Evliya describes as a Jewish monopoly, was the sale of incense on the 12th of Muharram during the *mawlid al-Husayn*.<sup>48</sup>

Jews were always prominent in medicine, but the sources provide only scanty information concerning Jewish (and Christian) physicians.<sup>49</sup> There were instances of business partnership between Jews and Muslims, even between Jews and Maghribis, even though the latter were known for their religious fanaticism.<sup>50</sup>

## THE POLICY OF THE PASHAS TOWARD THE JEWS

The policy of the governors of Egypt toward the *dhimmis* often reflected their personal attitudes. Some persecuted the Jews. Ahmet Pasha al-Defterdar dismissed all the Jewish employees of the Divan. Pashas sometimes tortured to death their Jewish financial manager after having extorted his money. In one famous case, Ya'qub al-Yahudi, who had served as the chief money-changer under several governors, was arrested and tortured by Halil Pasha (1041/ 1632–1042/1633). Ignoring the pleas of influential men who interceded on Ya'qub's behalf, the pasha expressed his determination to put him to death, even if it meant that he would have to pay all the money-changer's debts. Indeed, the pasha paid 5,000 piasters and ordered Ya'qub's execution.<sup>51</sup> The

Hebrew chronicler Sambari tells of a Jewish customs official arrested for a debt whom the pasha ordered to be executed. But he was saved when the pasha was murdered and the emir who was appointed acting governor released him.<sup>52</sup>

Cases such as these were exceptional. Although the majority of the governors were pious, their policy toward Jews and Christians was usually based on financial considerations, not religious fanaticism. The governors were appointed for one year, with an option for renewal. But, as already explained, the time spent in Egypt being usually brief, the governors wanted to enrich themselves during their incumbency. Realizing that their Jewish financial advisers were useful toward this end, the governors usually protected these advisers and gave them the support they needed. Some pashas brought their Jewish financial advisers with them from Istanbul.

An imperial edict dated 986/1578 regarding Shmuel Kahana, who is probably the above-mentioned director of the customs station in Alexandria, reminded the governor that he had been sent several firmans to dismiss Kahana who was allegedly oppressing the Muslims. The governor was warned to get rid of the 'accursed one' immediately. Kahana was dismissed the following year and a thorough investigation was made into his activities: there were suspicions that he had a network of accomplices some of whom were Muslims, who, with his help, had received tax farms illegally, for example, without the required bondsmen.<sup>53</sup> It is obvious that by not dismissing Kahana immediately the pasha risked incurring the sultan's wrath, which he would not have done had not Kahana been very useful to him. In some cases, the fate of the Jewish adviser was bound up with that of the pasha. After Mehmet Pasha Abu'l-Nur (1652–6) was recalled, he was put to death in Istanbul together with Hayyim Peretz, the Jew who had accompanied him from Egypt.<sup>54</sup>

The ruler during whose incumbency the Jews suffered the most was 'Ali Bey Bulut Kapan (*al-Kabir*) who ironically had been brought to Egypt as a slave by a Jewish customs official who gave him to Ibrahim Ketkhuda, the strong man of Cairo at the time. He needed large sums of money to finance his expansionist policies and his financial demands ruined the trading communities in Egypt, none more so than the Jews. The appearance of Syrian Catholics in Egypt in the early eighteenth century made the Jewish community dispensable for the first time. At the advice of a Syrian merchant, Mikha'il Fakhr, 'Ali Bey decided to put an end to the Jews' traditional control of the customs houses. In 1768, he had Yusuf Levi, the director of the Alexandria customs house, beaten to

death and his property confiscated. Next year, Ishaq al-Yahudi, the *multazim* of the customs station at Bulaq suffered the same fate. Again and again extortionate taxes (*avanies*) were imposed on the Jewish merchants, destroying their business and ending their political influence.<sup>55</sup>

Livingston and Crecelius, who wrote valuable studies on the rule of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir, are agreed that the fall of the Jews was not a result of religious persecution, but of their being easy victims of an oppressive tyrant who extorted money also from local and European Christians and also disregarded Muslim religious sensitivities.<sup>56</sup> Al-Jabarti writes that 'Ali Bey humiliated Islam by patronizing Christians and allying himself with Russia against the Ottoman Empire.<sup>57</sup> It is doubtful whether the beaten and impoverished Jews would have been relieved to know that they were persecuted because they were easy victims and not because of religious hatred. Perhaps this period, like that of Ahmet Pasha the Traitor, who also did not oppress the Jews on religious grounds, demonstrates the basic insecurity of Jewish existence, even in Egypt where they were 'under a less oppressive government than in any other country of the Turkish Empire,' to quote Lane.<sup>58</sup>

### **JIZYA OR JAWALI—THE POLL TAX**

As did other Islamic countries, Ottoman Egypt, too, accorded Christians and Jews autonomy in matters of religion, community organization and personal status. For this privilege they had to pay the poll tax (the *jizya* or *jawali*—tax of the exiles—the latter term being more common in Egypt). The tax payments were given to ulama, *sulaha*' (pious and just men), and *aghas*, who had pensions in Egypt.<sup>59</sup> The regime was praised by men of religion for so allotting the money.<sup>60</sup>

The historian Ahmad Shalabi provides additional details which are particularly valuable, since he was a contemporary observer. He reports that in 1147/1734 an imperial decree arrived from Istanbul concerning the poll tax. The decree, which abounded with Koranic verses and *hadith* sayings, stipulated that the collection of the poll tax was to be taken out of the hands of the local Egyptian official and transferred to a tax collector from Istanbul. The new taxes were so much higher that some 1,000 Christians demonstrated in protest. When the procession reached the Rumayla Square, it was attacked by soldiers who beat the Christians, killing two of them; the others dispersed. The chronicler concludes that thenceforth the revenue deriving from the poll tax and the mint was no longer collected by Egyptian officials, but by officials

sent from Istanbul instead.<sup>61</sup> It should be noted that the Jews did not take part in these demonstrations and were not part of the subsequent attempts made by Christians to cheat the tax assessors about their income. This example is one of many that illustrates how the Christians, being far more numerous than the Jews, were readier to take resolute action.<sup>62</sup>

Some information is available about the way *jawali* taxes were collected, the number of the *dhimmis* who paid them, and the sums paid by Christians and those paid by Jews. According to a series of edicts issued between 1153/1740–1 and 1170/1756–57, all the *dhimmis*—the Jews and the Coptic, Greek and Armenian Christians—had to pay the poll tax. The fiscal year was fixed according to the Coptic solar calendar, which was appropriate to the agricultural seasons. Aware that Egypt had large non-Muslim communities who would pay considerable sums in poll taxes, the government appointed a senior Istanbul bureaucrat as tax collector, as, for example, the former *shiqq-i evvel defterdari* (the officer responsible for the finances of the Empire's European provinces, which were the source of the greatest revenues).<sup>63</sup>

The *dhimmis* were divided into three tax categories: the affluent, the poor and those in between. Every *dhimmi* was given a certificate ('a paper'), which was sent in a sealed bundle from Istanbul to the Egyptian authorities for distribution among the *dhimmis* in towns and villages in all the Egyptian provinces. An edict concerning the collection of the *jizya*, dated Muharram 1155/mid-September 1734, is addressed to the pasha, the Ottoman official charged with collecting the poll tax, the bey of Jirja (the governor of Upper Egypt), the governors of the provinces of Manfalut, Buhayra, Gharbiyya, Minufiyya, Sharqiyya, Mansura, Qalyubiyya and al-Jiza.<sup>64</sup>

An edict of 1153/1740 mentions 7,500 certificates for the affluent, 20,500 for the poor and 40,000 for the middle category, making a total of 68,000 poll tax payers.<sup>65</sup> In 1155/1742, 70,000 certificates were sent, but in 1170/1757, the total was only 40,000,<sup>66</sup> possibly because the authorities in Istanbul realized that their estimates of the *dhimmi* population had been inflated. A recurring complaint in the edicts is that many *dhimmis* are tax evaders and that many names have disappeared from the poll tax registers by fraudulent means. The edicts warn that 'no one should remain without a paper.'<sup>67</sup>

Some edicts mention the size of the poll tax: in 1170/1757, the wealthy had to pay 11 piasters each, those in the middle category 5.50 and the poor 2.50.<sup>68</sup> According to Hüseyin Efendi, a bureaucrat writing at the end of the eighteenth century, the same principle was still in force,

the tax being 440, 220, and 110 *paras* respectively.<sup>69</sup> The numbers given by al-Jabarti for the year 1146/1733–34 were 420, 270, and 100 *paras*.<sup>70</sup>

### SARTORIAL LAWS AND OUTWARD APPEARANCE

The *dhimmi*s were required to wear special items of dress, particularly headgear, in order to distinguish them from Muslims. This rule was also in effect in other Ottoman provinces and Islamic countries. Ibn Nujaym, the sixteenth century Egyptian jurist, states that the *dhimmi*s must wear distinctive clothing and should especially refrain from the costume of ulama and *ashraf*. In Islamic society, where the law was personal (and not territorial as in the modern state), the obligation to wear distinctive clothing was not in itself humiliating. The laws concerning dress were neither unambiguous nor generally obeyed, and were influenced more by the initiative of the ruling pashas than by the policy of the central government in Istanbul.<sup>71</sup> The fact that the laws on dress of the *dhimmi*s were repeated several times, with significant variations, is the best proof that for long periods of time, perhaps even most of the time, these laws remained on paper only.

By an order of Hadim Hasan Pasha issued in 1580, Jews were enjoined to wear high conical red hats (*taratir*) and the Christians black hats (*baranit*, sing. *burneta* or *shapqa*), instead of the usual yellow turbans (for Jews) and blue ones (for Christians). A chronicler named al-Ghamri leaves no doubt that the pasha's aim was to humiliate the infidels for which he is praised, although generally he was seen as a bad ruler.<sup>72</sup> Another governor, Sherif Mehmet Pasha (1596–98), decreed a change in the color of the headgear which the Jews had to wear—from red to black.<sup>73</sup> On Jumada I 17, 1138 (January 18, 1726), a pasha ordered the *agha* of the Janissaries, acting as chief of police, to announce in the streets of Cairo that the Jews must wear blue *taratir* or *taqiya* hats, the local Christians special hats (*qala'iq*), and the European Christians *burnetas*.<sup>74</sup> Pococke noted that the Christians in Egypt wore red slippers, the Jews blue ones, and both the European and the Turks yellow ones.<sup>75</sup> More than a century later, Lane wrote that both the Jews and the Copts were wearing turbans of dark color, either black or blue.<sup>76</sup>

The European Christians, primarily the French trading colony in Egypt ('la Nation' in the French consular reports), were usually better treated than the local Christians, owing to the Capitulations agreements between France and the Porte. But they were by no means immune to maltreatment if the Janissaries decided that they had violated the dress

regulations. In an incident in 1703, reported in detail by the French consul, the *agha* of the Janissaries brutally beat a French merchant, M.Lazare Blanc, in a Cairo street for wearing a white Cesse instead of a Calpa on his head. Upon the insistence of the French consul, the pasha dismissed the *agha*, but a few days later armed soldiers forced their way into the pasha's presence and made him reappoint the *agha*, claiming that an officer who had killed many important Muslims, including *ashraf*, should not be dismissed merely for beating a Frenchman.<sup>77</sup>

### BATHHOUSES (*HAMMAMS*)

Related to the dress laws were the regulations that obliged the *dhimmi*s to wear distinctive marks in a public bathhouse, although it seems that these regulations were even less observed than the former. The chronicler Ahmad Shalabi reports the following episode: In Muharram 1136/October 1723, the *agha* of the Janissaries announced in the streets of Cairo that the *dhimmi*s were not allowed to enter the public bathhouses without a bell around their necks to set them apart from the Muslims. The decree was issued because an *'alim* had been insulted by another bather, but had not reacted, thinking the man to be a notable. When the *'alim* learned later that he had been insulted by the Jewish *sarrafi* of the Janissaries, he forced the *agha* to make the announcement, which, however, did not remain in force for a long time, because rather than wear the bell, the Jews preferred not to enter the bathhouses. The bath attendants, fearful that their income would be affected if the *dhimmi*s boycotted the bathhouses, collected 8,000 *nisfs* which they paid to the *agha*, who then cancelled the decree.<sup>78</sup>

Evliya Çelebi reports that the *hammam* of the sellers of sugar and sweets in Cairo did not admit Jews, Copts, and Greeks, because the founder of the *waqf* for that bathhouse had so insisted. Evliya typically says that this was why that particular *hammam* was clean and frequented by pious men.<sup>79</sup>

### SLAVES IN POSSESSION OF *DHIMMIS*

The *Shari'a* does not forbid *dhimmi*s from keeping slaves, but it does not allow them to have *Muslim* slaves. Ibn Nujaym, for example, states that a *dhimmi* should be forced to sell a slave who converts to Islam.<sup>80</sup> Describing his visit to Egypt in 978/1570, the Syrian *qadi* and writer Muhibb al-Din al-Hamawi, recounts that Jevizade, the well-known *qadi* whom he accompanied on the journey, abolished various reprehensible

innovations which he saw in Egypt. Among others, he made the *dhimmis* sell their Muslim slave girls.<sup>81</sup> Efforts were made to deprive Christians and Jews of the right to own slaves, a right enjoyed by Muslims. The number of documents dealing with slaves owned by *dhimmis*, Jews in particular, is considerably greater than those dealing with other matters. The edicts reiterate the suspicion that those slaves might be Muslims, or even worse—that they were Muslims whom their *dhimmi* owners had influenced to convert to Judaism. Repeatedly decrees say that the *dhimmis* should be forced to sell their slaves to Muslims, but it is also emphasized that no injustice must be done to the *dhimmis*, who should receive the full market price for their slaves.<sup>82</sup>

The predicament of a *dhimmi* slave owner is illustrated by a case that occurred at the beginning of Ottoman rule in Egypt. Ibrahim, the Jewish master of the mint, had a daughter by his Abyssinian slave girl. One day, the woman went to the Maliki *qadi* and announced that she wanted to convert to Islam. The *qadi* refused to return the woman and her daughter to Ibrahim. To Ibrahim's desperate entreaties the *qadi* replied: 'If you want your daughter back, do not cry, but become a Muslim.' Ibrahim's attempts to bribe the *qadi* and to seek the intervention of Kha'ir Bey were of no avail.<sup>83</sup> (Abyssinian slave girls were always in great demand in Ottoman Egypt, and one edict issued in 981/1573 forbidding Jews to keep them is phrased with unusual severity.)<sup>84</sup>

Jewish and Christian officials in Cairo and the seaports were also accused of *selling* Muslim slaves to Europeans. Needless to say, this was strongly condemned.<sup>85</sup>

Sometimes the oft-repeated prohibition on *dhimmis* from keeping slaves was associated with measures aiming at restoring what was considered the right order. When the soldiers revolted in 1589 against Üveys Pasha, they proclaimed in the streets that *awlad al-'Arab* were forbidden from keeping white slaves (one source says 'Turkish slaves,' meaning Mamluks). This prohibition, motivated by the wish of the Turkish-speaking soldiers, many of whom were Mamluks or Sipahis, to preserve their privileges, was coupled with the prohibition on Christians and Jews from owning *any* slaves.<sup>86</sup> The *dhimmis* were also warned not to employ Muslims. In 1722, during a brawl in a Jew's household, the son of the head of the family stabbed his Muslim servant to death with a dagger. The incident was particularly serious, because the victim was a *sharif*. As was customary in such cases, the young Jew was led through the city in disgrace and beheaded. The *agha* of the Janissaries was then ordered to proclaim that Jews and Christians were not allowed to

employ Muslim servants, and anyone who disobeyed this edict 'will deserve whatever befalls him.'<sup>87</sup>

The French trading colony, too, encountered problems caused by suspicions related to slave girls. In 1689, a rumour spread in Alexandria that Antoine Michel, a French captain, was holding a Muslim slave girl. Once again, public feeling ran high because of the belief that the woman was of *sharifi* descent. The consul's protestations that the woman was a Christian who attended mass were of no avail. The mob attacked the French vice-consul's house, set fire to the porch and looted the place.<sup>88</sup>

An episode reported by al-Jabarti offers additional insight into the problems faced by the *dhimmis* and their plight in general. In 1200/1785, the authorities decreed that Jews and Christians named after prophets, such as Ibrahim, Musa, 'Isa, Ishaq, and Yusuf, must change their names. They were also ordered to deliver up all their slaves before their homes were searched. The *dhimmis* paid large sums to have the decree concerning the names cancelled, which was very probably its purpose in the first place. As for their slaves, some were handed over, but others were hidden in the homes of Muslim friends until the storm blew over.<sup>89</sup>

The government in Istanbul and the local authorities laid down the principle that *dhimmis* were not allowed to keep slaves in general and Muslim ones in particular. But like other restrictions their frequent repetition is the best proof that they were not obeyed, or that they were obeyed for a while and then ignored. Life was stronger than administrative prohibitions, and Jews owned slaves up to the nineteenth century.<sup>90</sup>

## THE JEWISH AND THE CHRISTIAN QUARTERS

In the traditional Islamic city, the people lived in quarters that were homogeneous in religion, ethnic background or otherwise. Such separate quarters for the religious minorities are mentioned in the descriptions of all the larger towns in Egypt. The minorities' segregated life was rooted in considerations of physical security, the government's policy to control the minorities and also on the natural desire to dwell together for religious, social and economic reasons.

André Raymond, the historian of Cairo and other Arab cities in the Ottoman period, summarizes the information about the Jewish and Christian quarters. The former, the *Harat al-Yahud*, covered an area of six hectares in the middle of the city and was close by the goldsmiths'

quarter, where precious metals were bought and sold and money was changed. It was accessible from five adjoining quarters and had a mosque on its main street.<sup>91</sup> All descriptions of the Jewish quarter emphasize the extreme narrowness of its streets, in some places not wide enough even for a horse or a camel, or for two people walking side by side.<sup>92</sup> The outward squalor was deceptive; many houses were richly and well furnished. It made good sense to conceal one's wealth from the authorities and the public. Such caution was practised by all, but was especially understandable with regard to the Jews.

Evliya Çelebi's description of the quarter confirms that the life of the Jews was so organized that they had easy access to the communal services and their dealings with other quarters were minimal. For example, the Jews had a market where everything they needed was available.<sup>93</sup> There is no record of attacks on the Jewish quarter during the Ottoman era. Jewish lives and property could be endangered by the city toughs (*zu'ar*) or unruly soldiers, as happened shortly after the conquest. The Jews, as a religious minority, despised by many Muslims and reputed to possess great wealth, were potential victims of violence in times of crisis. A Janissary guard was permanently stationed at the entrance to the quarter, doubtless to protect them. (Evliya mentions only one entrance; Pococke mentions similar guards at the entrances to the Christian quarters.)<sup>94</sup>

Cairo had seven Christian quarters spread over a combined area of 16.7 hectares. Five of them were in the western side of the city, with the two main quarters touching the Birkat al-Azbakiyya and the Khalij, the favorite residential areas of the emirs and the wealthy Muslim bourgeoisie. The Europeans—the French and Italian merchants in particular—lived in *Harat al-Ifranj* (European quarter) in an area along the Khalij, near the large bazaars, a location explainable by considerations of security and trade.<sup>95</sup>

### THE JEWISH CEMETERY

The burial of the dead was sometimes a problem for the Jewish community of Cairo. Pococke describes how the Jews had to carry their dead from the Jewish quarter to their cemetery near al-Basatin, on the right bank of the Nile, 'the Jewish burial place to which place every body is escorted by a guard of Arabs who are paid money for their protection, and do not fail to use you ill.'<sup>96</sup> The shortest and most convenient approach passed through the Qarafa, the famous Muslim cemetery near the sepulchre of al-Imam al-Shafi'i, but the Jews could

not use this way. Sambari, the Jewish chronicler, complains of the trouble the Jews had because the route along the Nile was several miles longer.<sup>97</sup> Evliya Çelebi, who hated infidels and Jews in particular, rejoiced at their misery: ‘When a Jew perishes,<sup>98</sup> his carcass is carried away for burial. The procession goes at night with torches. The Jews hire soldiers (to protect the funeral) and they bury the dead near al-Basatin. They are not permitted to do it in daylight. Indeed, it is a painful agony [*‘adhab alim*—a Koranic expression denoting the punishment awaiting the infidels in the hereafter] for the Jews. May God multiply for them [troubles] of this kind.’<sup>99</sup>

At times, Muslims attempted to block the way through the Qarafa, because ‘this causes harm to the Muslims.’ Some Muslims appealed to the court about this matter, and one case, reported by el-Nahal, was decided in the Jews’ favor. The Jews presented legal opinions issued by four muftis, edicts by previous rulers and a statement signed by 49 ulama confirming the Jews’ claim that non-Muslims were entitled to use public roads belonging to Muslims. The *qadi* decided in favor of the Jews.<sup>100</sup> A similar conflict arose in the eighteenth century at the time of ‘Ali Bey al-Kabir’s persecution of the Jews, but with different results. It started when several ulama presented a petition to the authorities, using the services of the famous Sufi family of al-Sadat al-Wafa’iyya, complaining that:

The damned Jews, enemies of Allah, His messenger and the believers, who have a cursed pit [*hufra*, a derogatory word for the Jewish cemetery] for the burial of those of them who perished [*man halaka minhum*—an insulting word used for the death of infidels], since the conquest of Egypt by ‘Amr ibn al-‘As [in the seventh century] have used the road along the Nile to reach the cemetery. A few of these erring ones [the Jews] have bribed someone who does not fear God, and he granted them permission to walk in their shoes and with their animals through the blessed Small Cemetery (*al-Qarafa al-Sughra*, one of Cairo’s two main cemeteries), where the remains of saints, members of the Prophet’s house and ulama are interred. The Jews have been granted permission to do so in violation of the *Shari’a*. ‘Abd al-Khaliq ibn Wafa’, head of the Wafa’i family, has submitted a petition to the ruler of Egypt demanding that they should not be allowed to pass and ought to return to their original way [along the Nile].

A *fatwa* and a legal document were appended to the petition and the ulama asked that a previous firman supporting their position be reiterated. The pasha's deputy then issued an edict granting the ulama's request. The edict, written in Turkish, repeats the anti-Jewish arguments of the Arabic petitions, albeit more concisely and in milder language.<sup>101</sup>

### THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Jewish communities also existed in relatively large towns like Rashid (Rosetta), Dimyat (Damietta), al-Mahalla al-Kubra, Manfalut, and Tanta, but the largest and most important community after Cairo's was the one in Alexandria. Although the Alexandria community had not yet attained the weight it achieved during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, it was quite prominent since Alexandria was Egypt's chief seaport even then. Although the number of the Jews in Ottoman Alexandria is unknown, they were, nevertheless, conspicuous, given the small size of the total population. The Jews of Alexandria are mentioned more frequently in the imperial documents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than their co-religionists in Cairo, because the friction between Jews and Muslims was more intense in Alexandria than in the capital.

The Alexandrian Jews had a special relationship to the city's citadel, which was completed in 884/1479 by order of Qa'it Bay the Mamluk sultan, who stationed soldiers there. By the end of the Mamluk rule, however, the city lost much of its importance, no doubt owing to the decline of the Egyptian transit trade at the end of the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries.<sup>102</sup> Ample evidence shows that this trade recovered markedly during the sixteenth century, but the military importance of the citadel remained marginal. The Jews were ordered to live in the citadel to keep it from falling into ruins. This decree demonstrates that the citadel had ceased to have any military significance, since the Jews were unarmed. Several imperial edicts, issued between 984/1576 and 1018/1609, reiterate that the Jews had lived in the citadel and built their houses and synagogues there, but had recently left it and erected their buildings outside on tombs of Muslim saints, martyrs and the Prophet's companions. By so doing, the Jews were said to be guilty on two counts: they had left their dwellings in the citadel without permission, causing it to deteriorate and to become a refuge for criminals, and they had built their houses and latrines on holy Muslim sepulchres. The sultan ordered that the Jews observe the religious law, the administrative law (*qanun*) and the status quo; they

should once again reside in the citadel, and their buildings should be demolished if they had been built in violation of the *Shari'a*. These edicts warn that a thorough investigation be conducted before any action is taken and that the situation must not be exploited to do injustice to anyone.<sup>103</sup>

Another edict is related to a petition that Muslims in Alexandria submitted against the Jewish director of the customs house for allegedly building 60–70 houses in the city. He was accused of using building materials that he had taken from *waqf* houses inside the citadel and stones from dilapidated mosques. This complaint, too, uses a religious argument against a rich Jew, whereas it seems certain that the real motive behind the petition was his neighbors' envy.<sup>104</sup>

Ahmad Shalabi's chronicle reports an incident in Alexandria in 1140/1728 in which a Jew killed a Muslim. Muslims caught him and wanted to tear him to pieces, but the Janissaries rescued the man and took him to the *Shari'a* court, where after the accusations were made, the *qadi* told the Muslims: 'Your attitude toward this *dhimmi* is fanatical.' Hearing this, the Muslims stoned the *qadi*, abducted the Jew and killed him. They burned his body and looted his house and the *khan* where he and other Jews used to trade. The lynching was reported to Cairo, but no action was taken against the Muslims.<sup>105</sup> This episode reveals once again the particularly tense atmosphere in Alexandria. A center of European commercial activity, the town was raided occasionally by pirates of all sorts. Its location on the frontier and, perhaps, the influence of North African pilgrims as well, made the Muslims in Alexandria more militant than those in Cairo.

## CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

A discussion of the status of the *dhimmis* must not overlook the relations between Christians and Jews under Muslim rule. Legally, the two *dhimmi* communities were entirely equal, but Muslim attitudes towards them were different. Many references indicate that the Jews were often detested and despised much more than the Christians. The origins of this difference are found in the Koran.<sup>106</sup> A clear expression of it can be seen in the writings of the famous Sufi 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani (d.973/1565), who respected Christian monks, but despised Jews.<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, there was no lack of anti-Christian persecution in Ottoman Egypt. As already noted, Christians were far more numerous than Jews and many villages were entirely Christian. The Christians, therefore, were more daring in their behavior and reactions than the Jews;

note, for example, the Christian demonstration against the increase of the *jizya* tax.<sup>108</sup> A recurrent accusation against the Christians in official documents was that they dared to flaunt their religion and its symbols, drinking wine, sounding the wooden clappers loudly as a call to prayer and so forth, allegations that were never made against the Jews.<sup>109</sup> In 985/1577, for example, several Christians in Alexandria erected a church on the site of a ruined mosque and a Muslim cemetery. When Muslims came to see what was going on, the monks chased them away with weapons.<sup>110</sup>

In 1750 or 1751, in a far more significant incident, the Copts planned to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The community's most prominent member was Nuruz, secretary to Ridwan Kahya (Ketkhuda). Nuruz spoke to Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shubrawi, *Shaykh al-Azhar* at that time, gave him a gift, and paid him 1,000 dinars. Al-Shubrawi issued a *fatwa* and a letter to the effect that the *dhimmis* should not be hindered in the observance of their religious customs and pilgrimages. The Christians then left in a procession full of pomp, followed by their women and children and accompanied by the music of drums and flutes. They even hired bedouins to guard them on their way. But later, at a meeting at Shaykh al-Bakri's house, Shaykh al-Shubrawi was rebuked for the legal opinion he had issued. 'Ali al-Bakri accused him of taking bribes from the Christians, saying sarcastically: 'Next year they might even make a *mahmal* and there will be a Christian *hajj*!' The angry al-Bakri then left the meeting and encouraged the rabble to attack the Christians. Students of al-Azhar attacked them with sticks and stones, and also pillaged a church. Al-Jabarti concludes that the Christians lost all the money and effort they had invested in their planned pilgrimage.<sup>111</sup>

In many cases, only Christians were oppressed or harassed, with no mention by al-Jabarti, our chief source for the later eighteenth century, of similar maltreatment of the Jews. The probability of his reports being inaccurate or incomplete is very slight, since al-Jabarti is noted for his trustworthiness and accuracy, especially in matters related to social history. He reports the demolition of churches in Alexandria by the famous Mamluk emir Murad Bey in 1200/1786.<sup>112</sup> On another occasion, in 1202/1788, the pasha ordered the demolition of the dwellings of Christians and forbade them to ride donkeys. As had often happened before, these cruel measures were converted into a fine on the Syrian Christians and the Copts of Cairo.<sup>113</sup> Al-Jabarti also records the decrees forbidding Christians to ride horses, to employ Muslim servants, to buy slaves, and forcing them to observe the dress regulations. Christians' houses were searched for slaves and those found were sold

by auction. The Cairo mob took advantage of these decrees to harass the Christians, and the government had to proclaim that it intended to protect them.<sup>114</sup>

One must not get the impression that the life of the Copts in Ottoman Egypt was one of unmitigated misery and persecution. Their standard of living was generally higher than that of the Muslims, and, like the Jews, some of their leaders attained positions of influence. Al-Jabarti writes about *al-Mu'allim* (a polite title when addressing a *dhimmi*) Ibrahim al-Jawhari (died 1209/1794 or 1795) who had power over all the Coptic clerks and money-changers. The churches and monasteries flourished in his time, owing to revenues from the *waqf* foundations which he established.<sup>115</sup>

There was much friction between the Jews and the various Christian sects—the Copts, the Armenians and the Syrian Catholics—since they competed for the same sources of income: the production and sale of alcoholic beverages; commerce in jewels, gold, silver and other goods; money-changing, moneylending and government fiscal service. This competition inevitably heightened religious tensions.<sup>116</sup> The existence of Christian anti-Semitism in Ottoman Egypt is attested by three edicts issued in 971/1563, 973/1566 and 989/1581 by Egyptian pashas to their representatives at al-Tur, a small port in the Sinai peninsula. We learn from the documents that the monks of the monastery in Sinai complained that, contrary to the old custom that whenever a Jew came to al-Tur for business he had to leave as soon as he completed it, a group of Jews had settled there permanently, thereby violating the *Shari'a*, the *qanun* and the established custom. A certain Jew named Abraham, the monks said, moved to al-Tur with his family 'to stir up trouble.' The monks' petition also stated that the mountain was holy and it was not customary for Jews to live in Sinai. By their very presence there the Jews desecrated Mt Sinai made holy by God's revelation to Moses. Although the Christian monks were also regarded as infidels, they were allowed to reside on Mt Sinai and had been granted a covenant of protection. It is worth noting that the Muslim governor of Egypt repeats, with apparent approval, the monks' religious and non-religious charges against the Jews.<sup>117</sup>

Unfortunately, the data about the conversion of Jews and Christians to Islam are scanty and episodic. It can be concluded from them, nevertheless, that the conversion of Christians was common, but that of Jews extremely rare. Of course, some Jews converted to Islam; al-Jabarti's biographies include those of Jewish converts 'whose Islam was good,' and who even became ulama. Several Mamluks were former

Jews.<sup>118</sup> Yet the massive conversions that eroded the Coptic community in Egypt had no parallel among the Jews. To the Muslims, the Christians in Egypt were potential converts while the Jews were not.<sup>119</sup> Ibn Nujaym al-Misri (d.970/1563), a prolific writer on Islamic law, only discusses the possibility of Christians converting to Islam, although the same page of his work contains several *fatwas* concerning Jews.<sup>120</sup> The chronicles contain a few instances of Christians converting to Islam in order to escape execution,<sup>121</sup> but a Jew refused the offer to do the same.<sup>122</sup> In one case, when a Christian and a Jew were being put to death by impalement, the Christian in his agony called out the two *shahadas* (the Muslim formula of credo and conversion), but the Jew did not.<sup>123</sup> In the history of Sufism, we come across Sufi shaykhs who influenced Egyptian Christians, but not Jews, to convert to Islam.<sup>124</sup>

### RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES TOWARD THE *DHIMMIS*

The *Shari'a* has much to say about the status of the *dhimmis*. The ulama were integrated into the judicial and administrative organs of the Ottoman regime and they did their best to observe the *Shari'a*'s rulings related to the *dhimmis*. The legal compendia and collections of *fatwas* always reserve space for the subject of the *dhimmis*. Ibn Nujaym, who may serve as an example of the attitudes of Egyptian jurists, did not propose any innovative views, and he based his rulings on precedents from his Hanafi *madhhab*. The tone of his arguments is moderate and his attitude reflects the traditional combination of tolerance toward and contempt for the *dhimmis*: he insisted on their social isolation and inferiority, but also defended their right to a secure life. He ruled, for example, that a *qadi* should not accept the testimony of a Muslim against a *dhimmi*, if it is known that the two are enemies.<sup>125</sup>

Ibn Nujaym was consulted as to how a Muslim's Jewish wife, who was pregnant when she died, ought to be buried. Contrary to the opinion of Abu Yusuf, the famous Hanafi jurist (d.798), that such a woman should be buried in the Muslim cemetery, Ibn Nujaym ruled that she be buried in the Jewish cemetery with her back to the *qibla* (the direction of Mecca) so that the unborn child (who is a Muslim by Islamic law) would face the *qibla*.<sup>126</sup> Ibn Nujaym also considered the question of the demolition or the closing of *dhimmi* houses of worship. The destruction of churches and synagogues in Mamluk Egypt is well documented, but not in Ottoman Egypt. The Sufi writer 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani, Ibn Nujaym's contemporary, approved the demolition of churches and

synagogues, since believers were obliged to ‘enjoin the good and prohibit the bad.’ Yet he warned that it was to be done only if the authorities so ordered; the law should never be taken into one’s own hands.<sup>127</sup> But Ibn Nujaym ruled that if a church or a synagogue is closed down even without justification, as happened when a well-known Ottoman *qadi*, Muhammad ibn Ilyas, ordered a synagogue in Harat Zuwayla closed down in the early days of Ottoman rule in Egypt, it should not be reopened. According to Ibn Nujaym, although a sultan’s decree arrived ordering the synagogue reopened, no local ruler (i.e. the pasha) dared [*sic*] obey the decree fearing the popular reaction.<sup>128</sup>

Practically, *dhimmi*s had to appear before Muslim courts in spite of the autonomy they enjoyed. For example, the *dhimmi*s had to go to a *qadi* when a document had to be approved by the court when a Jew rented property belonging to a Muslim *waqf*.<sup>129</sup>

The quarrels between the two Jewish communities, the Rabbinites and the Karaites, which they themselves could not settle, were sometimes brought before the Muslim courts. In one case, the Karaites appealed to a *qadi*, who granted their wish to be recognized as a separate Jewish community.<sup>130</sup> Other internal Jewish differences brought before a *qadi* concerned the established community and newcomers from other, unspecified oriental countries, who were called *Mashariqa*, ‘Easterners.’ The jurist al-Ujhuri (d.1656) was asked for his opinion on the following problem: The Jews in Egypt have a charitable fund to look after the community’s needy members. Recently, people from the east who claim to be Jews have entered the community. They are healthy and have no need of charity; some of them are merchants. They demand charity from the fund, yet the donors had contributed money on condition that aid be given only to the poor. Hence, the question put to al-Ujhuri: Do the ‘Easterners’ have the right to assistance from the fund? As could be expected, he ruled against the newcomers.<sup>131</sup>

Relations between the *dhimmi*s and men of religion were not confined to the sphere of normative Islam. ‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha’rani was a typical representative of popular Islam, who wrote that his hatred of Christians and Jews was divinely ordained. Nevertheless, Sha’rani believed that one of the favors God had conferred upon him was that Jews and Christians regarded him as a holy man and asked him to write a formula of blessing on amulets for their children and sick co-religionists.<sup>132</sup> No wonder that in the first half of the nineteenth century, Lane observed: ‘It is a very remarkable trait in the character of the people of Egypt and other countries of the East that Muslims,

Christians, and Jews, adopt each other's superstitions, while they abhor the leading doctrines of each other's faiths.<sup>133</sup>

## Life in Ottoman Cairo

### DEMOGRAPHY AND URBAN GROWTH

Ottoman Cairo consisted of three units: Al-Qahira, the Fatimid city within the walis and its adjacent quarters to the north, west and south; Misr al-Qadima, or Old Cairo, a rather decayed town some 2.3 kilometers southwest of al-Qahira; and Bulaq, about one kilometer westward from al-Qahira. Al-Qahira, Cairo properly speaking, was much larger in area and population than its two satellite towns combined. Old Cairo serviced boats coming down the Nile from Upper Egypt while Bulaq did the same for vessels arriving from Egypt's Mediterranean ports. Since the notion of a municipality as a legal or administrative unit was unknown in Ottoman Egypt, the question whether 'greater Cairo' was one or three units, or a large town and its suburbs or satellite towns, never arose.

Much has been written about the 'decline' of Cairo, and other Arab cities, during the Ottoman period. This view reflects the reduction of Cairo from the status of an imperial to a provincial capital, and the cessation of the construction of magnificent monuments, such as mosques and mausoleums, for which the Mamluk Sultanate was famous. André Raymond has noted that Cairo started to decline before the Ottoman conquest, because of the diversion of the Indian spice route from Egypt to the Cape and the insecurity of the final decades of Mamluk rule. In the Ottoman period, the city benefited from the commerce stimulated by the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and the international coffee trade, which began in the early sixteenth century and eventually took the place formerly occupied by the spice trade. Though no longer an imperial capital, Ottoman Cairo was still an extremely important town, being the seat of a pasha and a center of a large number of soldiers and bureaucrats who consumed a great quantity

of luxury goods. Cairo's lively commercial activity was expressed in the multiplication of caravanserais, bazaars and guilds of artisans and merchants.<sup>1</sup>

In the centuries of Mamluk rule, Cairo had expanded only slightly beyond the limits of Fatimid al-Qahira. During the first two centuries of Ottoman rule, the area of the city grew. The map of Cairo in 1798, when French scholars described the city in detail in the *Description de l'Égypte*, shows the massive expansion of the residential areas southward beyond the Zuwayla Gate at the southern extremity of al-Qahira, and westward beyond the Khalij, the canal. Raymond notes two signs of the city's growth. The tanneries, which had to be located far from residential areas because they were so malodorous, were moved in about 1600 from south of the Zuwayla Gate to the vicinity of Bab al-Luq, the city's westernmost point, thereby permitting the development of the districts south of al-Qahira. In addition, residential districts of the wealthy shifted toward the western part of the town. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, most of the emirs had built their houses in al-Qahira and near the Citadel; in the second half of the seventeenth century, they preferred the area around Birkat al-Fil and the Khalij, while in the second half of the eighteenth century, the city's most fashionable quarters were around the pond of the Azbakiyya.<sup>2</sup>

The Ottoman period was also one of population increase. Unfortunately, there are no exact data concerning the size of Cairo's population in the early sixteenth century. After Istanbul, Cairo was the largest Ottoman city. The *Qanun-name* of 1525 provides some figures which may indicate Cairo's size relative to other Egyptian towns. For example, the imperial granaries had to sell Cairo 100,000 *irdabbs* of wheat, Rashid 2,000, Dimyat 3,000, and Alexandria 10,000.<sup>3</sup> It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that Cairo was at least ten times larger than Alexandria. According to Baer, Cairo had about two-thirds of Egypt's entire urban population.<sup>4</sup> We have no figures earlier than 1800, when Jomard, one of the authors of the *Description de l'Égypte*, estimated Cairo's population at 263,700.<sup>5</sup> Raymond says that this figure shows that Cairo's population at the end of the Ottoman period was considerably larger than at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it must have been well below 200,000. Raymond estimates that in the seventeenth century the city's population exceeded 300,000. The city's demographic strength survived even the disastrous last decades of the eighteenth century, when the population shrank owing to a series of plagues, famines, brutal economic exploitation and factional strife.<sup>6</sup>

Although demographic data are very scarce, it seems that population changes in Ottoman Cairo resulted almost entirely from births and deaths, with emigration and immigration being only marginal. There was little movement into the city from the villages. In times of famine, fellahin came looking for food, but they were not permitted to remain. Those who did not return home were punished severely and then sent back 'to till the land.' There were some exceptions to this rule, the most important being those ulama who immigrated to Cairo from the countryside, but despite the social and cultural significance of this immigration, numerically it was negligible.<sup>7</sup>

By contemporary standards Ottoman Cairo was a vast city and travelers were deeply impressed by its size and the heterogeneity of its population. All the accounts of Cairo, whether written by the Turks Mustafa 'Ali and Evliya Çelebi, by the Maghribi visitors, or the many Europeans describe their authors' astonishment at the sight of this great city with its large number of foreigners, merchants and other segments of society.<sup>8</sup>

### ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN OTTOMAN CAIRO

Basing himself on the *Description de l'Égypte*, Raymond gives the following ethnic breakdown of Cairo's population in 1800: more than 200,000 indigenous Muslim Egyptians, 25,000 foreign Muslims (10,000 Turks, 10,000 Maghribis, 5,000 Syrians), 25,000 religious minorities (10,000 Copts, 5,000 Greeks, 5,000 Syrian Catholics, 3,000 Jews, 2,000 Armenians), 12,000 members of the ruling class—Mamluks and soldiers of Turkish and other stocks—and a small community of European merchants.<sup>9</sup> People of a common ethnic origin and religion tended to live and work together in clearly defined neighborhoods or quarters (*harat*). Generally speaking, each community specialized in certain economic or commercial activities.

The Jews and Copts have already been discussed elsewhere in the present work.<sup>10</sup>

The Turks were the largest foreign community and lived in the district of Khan al-Khalili, the famous bazaar.<sup>11</sup> They engaged in small-scale trade, mainly in tobacco, which was an item frequently frowned upon by the pious Muslims, but also in coffee and fabrics. Newcomers from the Turkish provinces settled in Egypt and the great differences between the Turks and the native Egyptians in temperament and bearing were too prominent to escape the notice of foreign travelers and Egyptian

observers alike. Yet intermarriage of Turks with native Egyptians must have been frequent (although more among lower classes than the elite), as can be seen from Mustafa 'Ali's observations in 1599:

The children of people of Egyptian origin are rarely beautiful... When, from time to time, a good-looking youth appears among them, it will certainly emerge that he is either a Turk (*Rumi*) or the son of a Turk (*Rumizade*). Even among those of Turkish (*Rumi*) extraction, those who belong to the first generation are better looking, those of the second and third generations have deteriorated in their looks.<sup>12</sup>

As already noted, the Turks' reputation for lack of piety was worse than the Egyptians' and their predilection for Sufism was too well-known to be elaborated upon here. Yet, in the famous incident of 1711, a Turkish preacher incited Turks in Cairo against the worship of saints.<sup>13</sup>

The sizeable Maghribi community, consisting of Tunisians and Algerians, established itself in Cairo owing to the pilgrimage and their trade connections. Typically small traders in coffee and fabrics, the Maghribis clustered around the central markets of al-Ghuriyya and al-Fahhamin, and in the vicinity of the Ibn Tulun mosque. They were known for their piety, their fiery and quarrelsome disposition and *esprit de corps*. Maghribi travelers were given warm hospitality. The community maintained close ties with the Maghribi *riwaq* at al-Azhar.<sup>14</sup> The Syrian community, less numerous and weaker than the former two, traded in coffee, fabrics and in Syrian manufactures, particularly soap. The community concentrated around Khan al-Hamzawi and in the Jamaliyya quarter.<sup>15</sup> The Greeks were another trading community. The Armenians specialized in goldsmithing and in building. The Syrian Catholics, who arrived only at the beginning of the eighteenth century, were important in Cairo's economic life because of their ties with foreign merchants. The Europeans (*Ifranj*), mainly French and Italian merchants, lived and traded along the Khalij and near the large bazaars for economic and security reasons.<sup>16</sup>

## SECURITY, CRIME AND JUSTICE

### Crime and Vice

Like every big city, Cairo, too, was not free of crime, but law enforcement guaranteed that its level remained relatively low and tolerable, so much so that chroniclers considered crime waves unusual. Pickpockets were active in the city, but they were kept under control: they were registered by the *wali* (chief of police) and were considered one of the guilds, though an immoral one.<sup>17</sup>

More serious were the gangs of robbers (*mansir*) who occasionally terrorized whole districts, the outlying areas and suburbs, such as Old Cairo and Bulaq, being particularly vulnerable. Bab al-Luq at the western extremity of al-Qahira was notorious as a center of crime and vice. Gangs of roughs (called *shuttar*, *zu'ar*, or *harafish*) were active in the poor neighborhoods and the outlying quarters (*al-harat al-barraniyya*), such as al-Husayniyya, al-'Utuf, Kafr al-Zaghani, al-Qarafa, al-Hattaba, 'Arab al-Yasar and Bab al-Luq. Evliya Çelebi reports that the Bab al-Luq neighborhood was infested with criminals who drugged young men in order to rob and even murder them.<sup>18</sup> At the river port of Bulaq, bandits often attacked homes, shops and boats. An imperial decree dated 982/ 1574 describes Bulaq as a dangerous place where criminals are busy, with bedouin Arabs being specifically mentioned. The *wali* is ordered to send a force to be on guard there night and day.<sup>19</sup> In one case, in 1147/1734, audacious robbers broke into the bedrooms of residents, tore jewelry off the women and told their husbands: 'Your life has been spared, because you are under your wife's protection.'<sup>20</sup>

There are reports of victims of burglaries in relatively prosperous business districts being compensated. In 1053/1643, thieves emptied the contents of eight stores in the bazaar near the Ibn Tulun district. The proprietors, Maghribi merchants, complained and were reimbursed by the police chief with two *kises* (purses). After a similar wave of burglaries in the Birkat al-Ratli district, the residents submitted a petition which was followed by the police chief's dismissal.<sup>21</sup>

Another kind of crime was hard to prevent, since it was committed by those charged with maintaining security, namely the soldiers. The chroniclers report many cases of soldiers molesting children and women and stealing. Especially notorious for their unruliness and cruelty were the *sarrajs*, the mounted henchmen of Mamluk beys, particularly during the ascendancy of Cherkes Muhammad Bey in the early eighteenth

century. They rode through the streets, brandishing their swords and handguns and doing whatever they pleased. In one famous case, several *sarrajs* surprised a group of women and their maids picnicking near the Azbakiyya pond and robbed them of their jewelry and other belongings. After that, the authorities forbade unprotected women to leave their homes.<sup>22</sup> Other reports tell of soldiers who stole clothes from public baths or snatched men's headgear in the streets. The days preceding the soldiers' departure on a campaign were particularly dangerous for women and young boys. As a precaution, they were forbidden to go out into the streets until the troops had left.<sup>23</sup> An edict of 981/ 1574 orders that soldiers who harm civilians must be judged according to the Muslim law, which imposes the death penalty for murder, and that they should not be protected by patrons in the army.<sup>24</sup>

Prostitution was apparently quite widespread in the city, despite the attitude of the government and the condemnation of the ulama. Though illegal, prostitution was tolerated, because there was obviously a demand for it and because a few officials earned a regular income from it. Attempts to suppress it are almost invariably coupled with measures against alcoholic beverages, wine or *boza* (a kind of beer).<sup>25</sup> Ibn Iyas recounts a case when the authorities acted resolutely against prostitution and drinking in order to seek divine intervention when the Nile did not rise on schedule. In Rajab 925/July 1517, the pasha ordered all taverns and hashish shops closed down and a certain procuress named Uns to be drowned in the Nile. The chronicler notes cynically that as soon as the Nile rose, everything returned to normal, since the Ottomans themselves sold alcoholic beverages, and Uns's children were allowed to take up their mother's trade.<sup>26</sup>

The *Qanun-name* states that the authorities once ignored the transgressions against the *Shari'a* by tolerating drinking and prostitution, which were a source of tax revenue (*muqata'a*).<sup>27</sup> This strong official position notwithstanding, drinking and prostitution did not cease, although occasionally pashas acted on their own initiative, or were prompted to take action by an edict from Istanbul. In one case, the pasha paid the chief of police 12 purses to compensate him for the loss of his profits (taxes) from vice and drinking.<sup>28</sup>

Evliya Çelebi provides the most detailed description of prostitution in seventeenth century Cairo. As in other occupations, the women were organized in a corporation, although it was labelled 'immoral.' Some women were streetwalkers who could be found in the vicinity of Bab al-Luq. High-class prostitutes received clients at home and operated through their pimps. All prostitutes, except those under the protection of

the army, that is, those who made payments to military officers, were registered with the police (*subaşı* or *wali*) and paid taxes. Evliya Çelebi also mentions male prostitutes, who were active in the vicinity of Bab al-Luq.<sup>29</sup>

### Security and Peace-Keeping in Cairo

As already indicated, Cairo did not have a municipal status. Therefore, units under the pasha's command were responsible for security. There was no distinction between army and police. Certain military functionaries and corps were charged with police duties; the ultimate responsibility lay with the pasha himself. In the first century of Ottoman rule, when the ruling pashas were still powerful, and occasionally in the seventeenth century as well, the pashas dealt personally with crime in Cairo. The chronicles often describe a pasha's policy toward criminals as firm or weak and how he carried out his policy. Khusrev Pasha (1534–36) suppressed crime so effectively that the shopkeepers could leave their shops unlocked at night. It was said of Mesih Pasha (1575–80) that he ordered the thieves' arms and legs broken off and thrown into the street. Hüseyin Pasha (1635–37) was nicknamed 'Deli' (the Mad) for his cruel and bizarre actions. He personally supervised the enforcement of an edict forbidding smoking in public. He toured the streets incognito and put to death on the spot some 50 people who were caught smoking. On the other hand, Mustafa Pasha (1640–42) was naive and set criminals free. His *wali* was corrupt and released thieves against payment of bribes. During his incumbency, 48 shops were burglarized simultaneously; the shopkeepers complained and the *wali* was dismissed.<sup>30</sup> With the decline of the pashas' power after the sixteenth century, their involvement in maintaining law and order also diminished.

Officers with the rank of bey were also responsible for the security of some areas inside greater Cairo. It is reported that beys were in charge of the guards in the remote districts of Bulaq, Old Cairo, al-Imam al-Shafi'i, and Sabil 'Allam. According to Evliya, the bey himself had to compensate victims of theft or robbery.<sup>31</sup> Functionaries responsible for maintaining the peace in certain districts were called *sahib darak*, a term better known in relation to the pilgrimage route to Mecca.<sup>32</sup>

The force directly and regularly responsible for keeping the peace was the garrison and its two large infantry regiments, the Janissaries and the 'Azab. The Janissaries were usually patrols and the 'Azab sentries. There were also guard stations, called *qolluq*, manned by soldiers. The

*agha*, or commander of the Janissary regiment, who was the commanding officer of the entire Ottoman garrison in Egypt, was the highest police authority and had wide powers to inflict the harshest punishments. Subordinate to him was the police chief, the *wali*<sup>33</sup> or *subaşı* (in Turkish), and less frequently, *za'im*. There were three *walis*, one each for Cairo, Bulaq and Old Cairo. The *agha* patrolled the city during the day and the *wali* at night.<sup>34</sup>

The *muhtasib*, inspector of the markets, also exercised police authority. In medieval Islam, he policed and regulated all markets and trades. Even in late Mamluk and early Ottoman Cairo, Barakat ibn Musa, a *muhtasib*, was very influential and his policies were crucial for maintaining nice stability.<sup>35</sup> In time, the *muhtasib* lost much of his power and his duties were limited mainly to enforcing standards of weights, measures and prices in the food markets. He rode about town, preceded by an officer with a large pair of scales, and followed by soldiers and servants. He also led the ceremony of *laylat al-ru'ya* on the eve of Ramadan, which is described on p. 242.<sup>36</sup> The Ottoman conquest increased the *qadi*'s power at the expense of the *wali* and the *muhtasib*. The *Qanun-name* specifies that the *wali* shall no longer have judicial functions; these should rest exclusively with the *qadi*. Likewise, any quarrel in the city, which before the conquest had been dealt with by the *muhtasib*, now came under the jurisdiction of the *qadi*.<sup>37</sup>

The residential quarters (*haras*), which were homogeneous communities according to a certain criterion (religious, ethnic, occupational) were protected by gates at their entrance. Usually, a single road led into a *hara* and its gate was closed for the night and the night watchman permitted only those whom he knew to enter the quarter. There are indications that during the Ottoman period, the *haras* became better protected, and even fortified, than they had been under the Mamluks.<sup>38</sup> Soon after the occupation, Sultan Selim, fearing the conduct of unruly troops, ordered that narrow paths (*durub*, singular *darb*) be opened at the entrance of the *haras* and that gates be built to keep intruders out. Ibn Iyas says that the inhabitants narrowed the wide gates in order to block the passage of horsemen.<sup>39</sup> It was reported that Khusrev Pasha promoted public security by strengthening the walls and the gates of the *haras*. In times of crisis, the residents were ordered to shut the gates, but sometimes they did so on their own.<sup>40</sup> Mustafa 'Ali was favorably impressed 'by the alertness at night of their [the Egyptians'] watchmen and guardians who until the morning keep each other awake with their shouts.'<sup>41</sup> The night curfew was a security measure imposed during dangerous times, when there was fear of

soldiers or thieves causing trouble. At least once, the residents themselves asked that a curfew be imposed.<sup>42</sup>

### **Punishment**

It was frequently announced that those who disobeyed orders, such as those concerned with economic measures (new rates of exchange, the opening of the shops) or with public security (staying indoors during a night curfew) would pay with their lives. Many people were summarily put to death upon the decision of the governor, his subordinates or an emir, without a hearing before a *qadi*. The *Shari'a* procedure often makes conviction difficult, and limits the penalties, including the manner of execution. Many people were put to death for trivial offences upon the whim of a pasha or an emir. There were many methods of execution, mutilation, torture and other cruel punishments and humiliation which the chroniclers of Ottoman Cairo describe in detail. Execution by impalement was particularly common. At the beginning of the period, the chief of police impaled in a single day 24 men, most of them thieves and counterfeiters of coins. Women accused of licentiousness were sometimes tied to a horse's tail and dragged through the streets.<sup>43</sup> A particularly infamous method of execution, which was reserved for brigands (often Arab chiefs), was flaying the condemned man alive and then filling his skin with straw, which was then seated on horseback and paraded in front of the Divan.<sup>44</sup>

Another harsh punishment, reserved for criminals who did not deserve capital punishment or amputation, was service as oarsmen in the galleys of the Ottoman navy. Convicts were sent to the Kapudan (captain) of Alexandria or Suez. It is obvious from several edicts of the sixteenth century that contrary to the law and the will of the sultan, the period of time that convicts had to serve as rowers was often determined not by a *qadi*, but by the needs of the navy, and men were kept on ships for no other reason. Worse still, men were sometimes abducted from the streets of Cairo and sent to the ships as rowers; they were usually fellahin and bedouins who had come to the city. An edict dated 989/1581 says that a bey had sent 50 or 60 men to the oars without any justification, and orders an inquiry.<sup>45</sup>

### **Prisons**

The information concerning the prisons in Ottoman Cairo is scanty. At the beginning of the period, Diyarbakri speaks of two prisons, the

Daylam prison and the al-Rahba prison, which were under the jurisdiction of the police chief and the *qazi'asker*, respectively. The former was a jail for military men and bureaucrats (*ehl-i örf*) and the latter for ordinary subjects (*re'aya*) who had been sentenced by the court of a *qadi*. Another prison, 'Arqana, was situated within the Citadel. Bureaucrats and financial agents who failed to pay their debts to the Treasury were among those detained there.<sup>46</sup> What has been said regarding the men sent to the galleys is also true about prisoners. Edicts sent from Istanbul to the Egyptian authorities show that the administration of justice was defective, even in the 'golden age' of the Empire, despite the central government's best intentions. On the one hand, the Egyptian office-holders were ordered to make a survey of the conditions of the prisoners in Cairo and other towns and to set free those who had been punished unjustly or had served their term. On the other hand, the authorities were warned not to release prisoners without the appropriate warrant.<sup>47</sup>

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Plagues

Plagues occurred every few years. The sources generally call them *ta'un* or *waba'*, and *fasl* (a 'season') for an eruption in a specific year, but provide too little information and almost no descriptions that could help identify their precise nature. Doubtlessly, they were varied. For example, one epidemic which reportedly arrived from India via Yemen and Mecca was not lethal and could be treated, it was said, by eating sugar and bitter orange.<sup>48</sup> Yet the chroniclers seemingly did not feel that the usual type of plague needed qualification: it always killed a sizeable part of the population and the prevailing assumption was that it originated in the lands to the south of Egypt, primarily Abyssinia. Often a plague was known by a special epithet, which indicated in some way its nature and circumstances, such as 'the Ethiopian,' 'the Yellow,' 'the Great,' 'of the nobles and the children.' One famous plague during the incumbency of Mustafa Pasha (1624–26) was remembered as 'the quiet one,' because the pasha, in order to contain the people's panic, forbade the women's usual loud lamentations during funeral processions and the wearing of black mourning clothes.<sup>49</sup>

A plague usually lasted between two and four months, but also as much as seven. In the 1830s, Lane says that 'when the plague visits

Egypt, it is generally in the spring; and this disease is most severe in the period of the *khamaseen*' (the period of about 50 days in April and May).<sup>50</sup> Yet the chroniclers of Ottoman Egypt also report other periods for the plague. Contemporary sources give highly exaggerated figures on the number of plague victims. It is clear, however, that some of the plagues decimated the population of Cairo and the country as a whole. It was estimated that the plague of 1784, for example, killed one-sixth of Egypt's population.<sup>51</sup> Lane reports that the terrible plague of 1835 'destroyed not less than 80,000 persons in Cairo, that is one-third of the population.'<sup>52</sup> The chroniclers speak of whole quarters being depopulated by the pestilence, and describe the unending number of funerals.<sup>53</sup>

As can be expected, and as the history of the plague in the Mamluk era shows,<sup>54</sup> not all parts of the population were equally affected. The hardest hit were those who had not developed a natural immunity, such as imported Mamluks, Ottoman soldiers in the early days of Ottoman rule, and young people. In the plague of 1791, 14 out of the 24 *sanjaq beys*, all Mamluks, perished. In the following year, the pestilence killed many *multazims*.<sup>55</sup> In one epidemic, most of the the victims were between the ages of 15 and 25, and girls kept in seclusion from the outside world. In another year, it was emphasized that the victims were people above the age of 60, and once the plague hit mainly foreigners and slaves.<sup>56</sup>

The usual response to the plague was prayer. A particularly favorite place for prayer, because it was believed that prayers offered there would be answered, was the Juyushi mosque on the Muqattam mountain behind the Citadel. More practical measures were not undertaken, and in this regard, Cairo in Ottoman days resembled the city during Mamluk rule. Ignorance and superstition hindered any real progress in the struggle against epidemics. An old belief forbade a Muslim to leave a plague-stricken area, but even some men of religion fled with their families to the Sinai desert while the pestilence raged in the city, where most people regarded it as the inevitable will of God to be endured fatalistically.<sup>57</sup> Only in the nineteenth century were quarantine regulations adopted to guard against the introduction of disease from other countries, thanks to European influence.

The first and perhaps only time that the Ottomans took sanitary measures against an epidemic was in 930/1524, when following the custom in Istanbul, the Ottomans ordered that all the dogs in Cairo be killed and their carcasses hung in front of the shops. One chronicler believed that the order was meant to scare the plague away. The people

did not like killing the dogs (even though Islam considers a dog as unclean), and regarded it as a bad omen. They even interceded with the governor to spare the dogs.<sup>58</sup>

The *Qanun-name-i Misir* forbade burying a deceased person, whether Muslim or *dhimmi*, before obtaining the Treasury's permission, apparently to ensure that the state got its share of the estate.<sup>59</sup> Yet during a severe plague in 1618, the pasha exempted the families from this obligation out of compassion toward the public.<sup>60</sup> The pasha ordered the Treasury to pay the burial expenses of the poor during a plague.<sup>61</sup>

### Cleanliness

The Ottomans were concerned with cleanliness and the *Qanun-name* orders the governor of Egypt to see to it that the streets of Cairo are regularly swept and sprinkled with water. Everyone was made responsible for keeping the area in front of his house clean.<sup>62</sup> Often the governors issued orders to the population to remove the refuse in front of their shops or to clean the *Khalij*, the canal that carried the water in the months of the rise of the Nile. Mehmet Pasha had all the religious buildings whitewashed and won the complimentary epithet of Abu'l-Nur ('Father of Light'). Mustafa 'Ali writes:

It is a very nice thing that they kept their business district neat, that water carriers sprinkle and clean the streets of Cairo morning and evening; the expense of all these services for each shop is just one *manqur* [small coin, one sixth of a *para*] a week...<sup>63</sup>

It should be added, however, that such a favorable description (and official attention) was limited to the business sections of the town, whereas the residential quarters, the outlying poor *haras* in particular, were notoriously filthy and neglected. Not only Evliya, whose Turkish 'patriotism' makes him compare many things in Egypt (including cleanliness) with Istanbul and finds them wanting,<sup>64</sup> but also the German traveler Johann Wild, who visited Cairo at the beginning of the seventeenth century, makes exactly the same observation.<sup>65</sup> Hasan al-Hijazi, a popular Cairo poet, uses strong language in his description of *harat awlad al-'Arab*, the quarters of Cairo where the native poor population lived, calling them dirty, dusty, and noisy.<sup>66</sup> Mustafa 'Ali is deeply disgusted by the filthy water of the Shafi'i pond, where the common people made their ritual ablutions.<sup>67</sup>

Again, it is Evliya who gives us a detailed description and assessment of sanitation in Cairo. The air in the city was unhealthy, he says, but there were a few places near the city with fresh and pleasant air, such as 'Adiliyya, Sabil 'Allam, Matariyya, Birkat al-Hajj, and the Muqattam mountain. It was also pleasant in the mansions on the banks of the ponds. The city was very crowded, there was little space between buildings and many houses had three or four storeys. The air was particularly stuffy in the caravanserais and the rented apartment buildings. Residents of these neighborhoods suffered from flies and the offensive smells of sewer canals. Evliya says these smells were harmful to infants' health and that whoever could move out of Cairo to the countryside for a few months did so.<sup>68</sup>

According to Mustafa 'Ali, the food in Cairo was unhealthy, tasteless, oily, heavy and dirty. He notes: 'the rural population and the townspeople eat heavy, indigestible food. In the hot days of summer they consume, because of their cheapness, indigestible dishes like ox heads, ox feet, lungs and tripe...'<sup>69</sup>

It is not surprising, therefore, that the standards of public health in the city were generally low. Mustafa 'Ali says: 'Most of the people of Egypt are affected by some disease. One rarely meets a person whose eyes are right and sound, who is not suffering from an illness, and whose physical health is manifest...'<sup>70</sup> Evliya Çelebi, writing some 160 years later, draws a similar picture as do European travelers. All of them noticed that eye diseases were especially widespread. According to Evliya, it was said of a person with weak sight that 'his eyes are like an Egyptian's.' He adds that there was a shortage of physicians, particularly eye doctors.<sup>71</sup> The information about the physicians in Ottoman Cairo is scanty. The profession was certainly not at its peak. Like all the other professions, the doctors were organized in a guild, or corporation. Many of the physicians were Jews, and after the beginning of the eighteenth century, Syrian Catholics. In 1730, the *hakim başı*, head of the doctors' guild, was a Syrian Catholic.<sup>72</sup>

Evliya mentions several hospitals in Cairo, but it is obvious that in most of them no real treatment was given; the patients were merely fed there. The only hospital worthy of the name was the Bimaristan al-Mansuri, named after the Mamluk Sultan al-Malik al-Mansur Qala'un. Evliya was very favorably impressed: it included a department for mental patients, and one for women, with attendants who were also women. He was astonished that the male doctors entered the women's quarters in the hospital 'without shame' to treat them.<sup>73</sup> By the end of the Ottoman period, this hospital was a ruin.<sup>74</sup>

Egypt was famous as a manufacturer of the antidote against poisons, called *tiryaq Faruq*, which was made by extracting the venom from snakes. Members of the Arab tribe of Banu Khabir, who lived at al-Jiza area, specialized in this occupation. They wore special protective clothing for their work, which Evliya, who devotes a whole chapter to the industry, describes in great detail. The drug could remedy various ailments and Evliya attests, for example, that it restored his virility.<sup>75</sup> Until the end of the eighteenth century, the guild of makers of sweetened medicines held an annual ceremony at the hospital at which the shaykh made the antidote, which was sold all over the Middle East to finance the maintenance of the institution.<sup>76</sup>

### Public Baths

Foreign travelers were favorably impressed by Cairo's public baths and describe them as clean, orderly and pleasant. The usually critical Mustafa 'Ali writes: 'Another point is the pleasantness of their [public] bath houses. Most of them are furnished with tub baths. Their marble does not get mossy as in the baths of other lands, they continually take great care to polish it like a clear mirror.'<sup>77</sup> Evliya Çelebi provides some details. In his time there were 55 public baths,<sup>78</sup> in addition there were private baths in the houses of such wealthy men as emirs, black eunuchs, rich ulama and merchants. Each public bath had a fountain (*fasqiyya*), a basin (*hawd*) and an ornamental fountain (*salsabil*). Evliya notes that Egyptian *hammams* did not have underneath them stokeholes (*cehennemlik*) like the Turkish *hammams*.<sup>79</sup>

### TRANSPORTATION

Cairo had a large network of roads, some of them major thoroughfares (as the *Qasaba* from Bab al-Futuh Gate to the Zuwayla Gate, Bayn al-Qasrayn, or Bayn al-Surayn), and many small roads and alleys leading to the larger roads.<sup>80</sup> Cairenes could either walk or ride on horses, mules, asses or donkeys, which were the only means of transportation. One's mount was not only a matter of convenience and economics, but also of social status. Only military men were allowed to ride horses and from its early days, Islam forbade non-Muslim minorities from doing so. Some prohibitions were stricter and forbade the *dhimmi*s to use precious mules, brisk asses, or even donkeys worth more than 10 *dirhams*. Certain jurists even did not permit the *dhimmi*s to ride any animal at all inside a town.<sup>81</sup> In about 1735, an imperial decree reminded the native

Egyptians that they were forbidden to ride mules and saddle horses; but often ulama and the wealthy, as well as low-ranking army officers, rode mules.<sup>82</sup> The common mount in Cairo was the donkey. Everyone rode donkeys except the privileged few who had horses or mules. Evliya Çelebi, who constantly compares Cairo to Istanbul, says that the donkeys in Cairo are like the boats of Istanbul, that is, the popular means of transportation; they gallop quickly, 'faster than horses,' he says.<sup>83</sup> Jean Palerne, a European who visited Cairo in 1581, says that the donkeys there fulfilled the same function as the gondolas of Venice.<sup>84</sup> The city had an elaborate and well-regulated system of hiring donkeys and camels for transporting merchandise in Cairo and its vicinity, with fixed stops and prices.<sup>85</sup> According to the *Description de l'Égypte*, Cairo had 30,000 donkey drivers (*mukaris*).<sup>86</sup>

At the time of their conquest, the Ottomans considered it immoral for women to ride their own donkeys or to hire donkeys. A decree declared that only elderly women might ride in the marketplace. Ibn Iyas recounts that the donkey drivers then sold their animals and bought saddle horses instead, which women rode sitting on a rug while the drivers held the bridle, according to the custom of Istanbul. Some women rode mules instead of donkeys.<sup>87</sup> This decree was not effective for very long. At the end of the sixteenth century, Mustafa 'Ali, the Turkish writer, reports his shock:

Their women, all of them, ride donkeys. Even the spouses of some notables ride on donkeys to the Bulaq promenade... This unbecoming behavior constitutes a serious defect for the city of Cairo, because in other lands they put prostitutes on a donkey as a punishment. In Cairo the women mount donkeys of their own free will and expose themselves to the public; therefore it appears appropriate that for a punishment they be put on camels.<sup>88</sup>

Evliya and other observers express their amazement that even respectable people in Cairo rode donkeys and did not regard it as shameful.<sup>89</sup> In 1547, the French traveler Belon speaks exactly in the same vein: 'Mais n'est pas deshonneste aux habitants ou estrangers d'aller sur les asnes!'<sup>90</sup> Mustafa 'Ali says that the Egyptian ulama 'content themselves with riding a donkey, without any shame. They mount their asses, and sometimes two or three of them squeeze together on one animal, being a heavy burden on the weak burro.'<sup>91</sup>

## CHARITY

Giving charity to the hungry and destitute was a cherished ideal often practised among Cairo's rich and powerful, either in fulfillment of an Islamic injunction or out of fear of food riots, if the misery of the poor became intolerable, or, of course, a combination of both. Food riots occurred occasionally in Cairo, some of them being serious, with the mob stoning emirs and soldiers.<sup>92</sup> As Raymond has shown in detail, the gap between the rich and the poor in Cairo was vast.<sup>93</sup> The ruling class deemed it necessary, therefore, to create a set of institutions to alleviate at least the most extreme suffering in times of economic crises. During famines, a pasha would take it upon himself to feed a certain number of poor and would urge the emirs to do likewise. (Such behavior had historical precedents in the Mamluk Sultanate.)<sup>94</sup> During a famine in 1107/ 1695, Isma'il Pasha fed 1,000 poor men and the emirs, 100–200. When Isma'il celebrated his son's circumcision, he did the same for 1,336 orphans, with each boy being given a gift of one gold piece and a set of clothes. As already mentioned, a pasha ordered that the Treasury pay the burial expenses of the poor during a plague. Some of the grandees routinely used various occasions to give food to the poor of Cairo, as is attested by Mustafa 'Ali, al-Jabarti, and others.<sup>95</sup>

The relationship which the emir Ibrahim Abu Shanab (d. 1130/ 1717 or 1718) maintained with beggars is of particular interest. He knew all of them personally and remembered how much in alms he gave to each of them. Once, when he returned to Egypt after a long absence, the chief of the beggars' guild, *shaykh al-shahhatin*, and his men came to welcome him. They presented him with a noble horse and its expensive trappings. In return, Ibrahim Bey gave all the beggars gifts of money and clothing and treated them to a feast.<sup>96</sup> Orthodoxy and popular religion provided opportunities and institutions for giving charity. Members of the ruling class and the wealthy who wished to do so established *waqf* foundations, which financed the establishment and maintenance of schools for orphans, and the provision of food to the needy during *mawlid* celebrations and other religious occasions. Sufi centers (*zawiyas*), like 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani's, provided food and shelter for many Sufis and poor people.<sup>97</sup> The most permanent charitable institutions were the public soup kitchens or poorhouses ('*imaret* in Turkish), which offered free food to the poor. Financed by *waqfs*, and mostly attached to mosques, Evliya says that they were less generous than those in Istanbul where the needy could get food twice a day. Most of Cairo's '*imaret*s distributed food on Fridays and special

holidays. The largest *'imaret*, at the Sultan Qala'un mosque, provided soup daily and rice and meat as well on Friday nights.<sup>98</sup>

### PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS

Fun-loving people, the Cairenes were fond of all kinds of public ceremonies, celebrations and spectacles. They liked to relax, entertain themselves, go on excursions and picnics, as foreign travelers of more dour disposition from the Turkish provinces of the Ottoman Empire or North Africa could not fail to observe. Following the Ottoman conquest, the Cairenes missed the splendid celebrations and shows to which they had been accustomed under the Mamluks. With time, however, they could enjoy themselves and celebrate once again when the new masters adopted this feature of Mamluk rule. Mustafa 'Ali wrote in 1599:

There are strange festivities every week, according to the customs of the people of Cairo, their social life of which they say that it promotes leisure and happiness. Namely that they are not content with the two noble Feasts and with splendid gatherings connected with the departure and arrival of the pilgrims. Contrary to other countries, in Cairo never a month passes without some festivity, without their flocking together saying today is the day of the excursion to such and such place, or today is the day when such and such procession goes around. Therefore most of their time passes in leisure.<sup>99</sup>

Mustafa 'Ali also speaks of the frequency of Egyptian social gatherings. Beside the two religious feasts, which they celebrated with great jubilation, the governor of the country appeared on horseback on the second day of each feast and distributed robes of honor to the soldiers, who displayed their skills in war games.<sup>100</sup> Mustafa 'Ali's description is confirmed by Johann Wild who visited Cairo in 1606–10. He says that the people of Cairo have a festivity of some kind almost every day, especially at Bulaq and on the riverbanks.<sup>101</sup>

Other occasions celebrated according to the Muslim calendar were the departure of the *hajj* for Mecca. Every year, on the last week of Shawwal, the *kiswa* (the black brocaded covering for the walls of the *Ka'ba*), and the *mahmal* (the decorated palanquin), were displayed in colorful processions prior to the departure of the *hajj*, and then carried to Mecca. The return of the pilgrims at the end of the month of Safar

likewise attracted crowds.<sup>102</sup> Another Muslim feast was *laylat al-ru'ya*, 'the night of the observation' of the new moon on the eve of Ramadan. The most impressive spectacle on that night was the procession of all the guilds, an event which provided Evliya Çelebi with an opportunity to survey all the organized arts and crafts of Cairo in detail. The procession, which resembled a similar one in Istanbul, started with the *muhtasib* and his men, followed by the various guilds each carrying its banners, symbols and paraphernalia amid music and sometimes mock fights and other tricks to amuse the spectators. Evliya says that the night was popularly known as 'the women's night,' since it was impossible to prevent them from leaving their homes to watch the procession; that they be allowed to do so was even stipulated explicitly in marriage contracts.<sup>103</sup>

According to a notice in Ahmad Shalabi's chronicle, the procession of the guilds was interrupted for about 40 years, from 1105/ 1694 to 1147/1735, when the *muhtasib* ordered the shaykhs of the guilds to revive the old tradition of contributing toward the expenses for food and drink, music bands, candles, torches and attendants' pay. But the influential and strong-minded merchants of the Ghuri and Jamalun bazaars refused to participate and pay, claiming that the procession was an immoral practice.<sup>104</sup> The *mawlid*s (saints' days) of Cairo, which were held according to the Muslim calendar (with several very important exceptions), have been described in [Chapter 6](#).<sup>105</sup>

The most outstanding fêtes held according to the Coptic calendar were connected with the annual rhythm of the Nile, the *wafa' al-Nil*, when the river reached its peak. The event was celebrated for a whole week, usually between the first and eleventh of the Coptic month of Misra (August 6–16). The high point of the ceremonies was the opening of the canal of Cairo, when, with the water rising, the dam which closed the canal was cut by a high-ranking emir with the ruling elite and huge crowds looking on. All the people of Cairo spent the night on the river banks. Many decorated boats with people aboard playing musical instruments were ready to enter the canal once the dam was cut. All business stopped in the city, which was filled with entertainments of many sorts. Fireworks were set off and cannons were fired.<sup>106</sup> This major holiday was preceded by a lesser one, called *laylat al-nuqta*, the Night of the Drop, on about the 11th of Ba'una (June 7), which marked the onset of the rising of the Nile. It was believed that on such a night a miraculous drop fell into the river and caused it to rise.<sup>107</sup>

From time to time, the authorities also ordered the Cairenes to observe holidays related to the ruling dynasty or to military victories.

The birth of the sultan's heir had to be celebrated by decorating shops and lighting them up at night. Such celebrations imposed an unwelcome economic burden on the population because all work and business stopped on these days. In a few cases, the imperial government withdrew the demand to decorate the town and substituted public prayers for the sultan out of consideration for the people's difficulties. On occasion, an official decree shortened the duration of the festivities.<sup>108</sup> It would seem that the people were not enthusiastic about these state occasions, because they were not a part of the popular tradition and did not include recreation or shows.

### RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

The streets of Cairo were normally filled with entertainers of all kinds: dancers, storytellers, jugglers, snake charmers, manipulators of dolls in shadow plays and others. On holidays and festivals, their number increased.

The city's coffee houses were popular places for meeting and relaxation. Introduced into Egypt in the early sixteenth century, not without opposition by some religious fundamentalists who considered the beverage a blameworthy innovation, coffee drinking became immensely popular.<sup>109</sup> Mustafa 'Ali writes:

Also remarkable is the multitude of coffee houses in Cairo, the concentration of coffee houses at every step, and of perfect places where people can assemble. Early-rising worshippers and pious men go there, drink a cup of coffee adding life to their life.<sup>110</sup>

The writer notes, however, that coffee houses are unfortunately also the meeting places of 'dissolute persons and opium-eaters.' By the eighteenth century, coffee drinking had become acceptable to even the most orthodox Maghribis, as confirmed by their travel accounts. At the end of the eighteenth century, a Maghribi traveler considered coffee drinking a typical Egyptian custom, of which he approved, unlike smoking, which he condemned as unhealthy and sinful. He found coffee drinking very economical, having the great advantage of cutting the expenses of hospitality. It could be served even to a pasha and certainly to lower-ranking officials, and it freed the hosts from further obligations, such as they had when serving food without it. To have done so, would have been regarded as not honoring their guests at all.<sup>111</sup>

Evliya gives a list of places to which Cairenes went for recreation to escape the heat and pollution of the city. Strolling along the banks of the Nile or the Khalij and sailing boats on them when the Nile was high were among the favorite pastimes of the city's residents. Promenades, picnic grounds and places of excursion were plentiful in Cairo and its vicinity. Evliya's list includes the great ponds (especially the Azbakiyya); al-Basatin, a village within two hours' walk of the city; the island of Roda (or al-Rawda, literally: a garden), and the pyramids at al-Jiza. Qasr al-'Ayni on the bank of the Nile, the site of a famous Bektashi center, also had a lovely garden. The Matariyya well, two hours' walk north of Cairo, was known for its sweet water, whereas most wells were brackish. Groves of sycamore trees (*jummayiz*) around the city also attracted picnickers. A few places were for the exclusive use of the ruling class. Near the Sultan Hasan mosque, for example, an area was reserved for the Cairo aristocracy where they could relax, shoot arrows, and throw the *jereed*, a blunt javelin used in equestrian games.<sup>112</sup>

### THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATIFICATION OF THE POPULATION OF CAIRO

The classical Islamic dichotomy between the elite (*khassa*) and the common people (*'amma*), or the Ottoman dividing line between the *'askeri*, the military class and bureaucrats, and the *re'aya* (literally: flocks, i.e. subjects), should be refined by the evidence of the sources and the perceptions of contemporary observers. At the bottom of Cairo's social ladder were the black slaves, who were employed as domestic servants and maids; many black slave girls were kept as concubines. No estimates are available as to the number of the black slaves in Cairo; they are seldom mentioned in the sources as individuals, and never as a group or a class.<sup>113</sup>

The proletariat, usually called *'amma*, *suqa* (rabble), or *ahl al- hiraf al-safila* ('those occupied in lowly trades') were the poorest strata of urban society. At the end of the eighteenth century, the *Description de l'Egypte* estimated at 60,000 the total number of the proletariat, whose daily income ranged between 5 and 30 *paras*, and the workers without a fixed income, such as water sellers, donkey drivers, hawkers, scavengers, porters, beggars and the like. Living at the level of barest subsistence, they were immediately affected by economic crises, and were prone to violence when their living conditions became intolerable.<sup>114</sup> The chronicles report major popular disturbances during

famines and extreme scarcity in the years 1714, 1715, 1722, 1723, 1731, 1733. The period from 1736 until 1770 was one of relative prosperity, but when during the last quarter of the eighteenth century the population suffered because of the beys' extortions, the proletariat became restless again.<sup>115</sup>

The artisans and the merchants—about 15,000 at the end of the eighteenth century—were the backbone of Cairo's economically productive element. Organized in guilds, the chroniclers call them *ahl al-hiraf* or *al-mutasabbibun*, the people of the trades and retailers. There was considerable economic differentiation within this class, with the merchants generally being better off than the artisans. Some of the merchants even owned rural *iltizams*. The artisans and the merchants usually worked in the business quarters and the great bazaars of al-Qahira, such as al-Ghuriyya, al-Hamzawi, Khan al-Khalili, and al-Jamaliyya. As a rule, they lived near their shops, the more prosperous in houses they owned and the others in complexes of rented apartments, called *rab'*.<sup>116</sup>

The mercantile bourgeoisie<sup>117</sup> was estimated at 5,000–6,000 at the end of the period, and the elite among them were 600–700 rich merchants (*tujjar*), who engaged in the import and export of fabrics, spices, slaves and, most important, coffee. A large number of this group were foreigners: Maghribis, Turks and Syrians. These wealthy merchants, whose estates sometimes amounted to as much as 15 million *paras*, can be considered a social class in the modern sense of the term. They exhibited remarkable internal cohesion and class-consciousness and practised endogamy to a large degree. The *tujjar* were as independent as the conditions of the time allowed, not being subject to the supervision of the *muhtasib*. Their elected chief, the *shah bandar*, was always wealthy and influential. They had an extravagant life-style and lived in magnificent houses in the city's most fashionable quarters. From about the end of the seventeenth century, the *tujjar* tended to move out of the busy al-Qahira westward to the open space on the Khalij around the Azbakiyya pond, which was becoming the fashionable residential area *par excellence*, and was also popular among beys and rich ulama. Many rich merchants owned Mamluks, despite the oft-repeated prohibition on civilians possessing white slaves. It was usual for rich merchants to obtain *iltizams*. Many donated to charity and built mosques and Sufi cloisters.

There were social and often family ties between the big merchants and the affluent shaykhs, ulama and Sufis. Some ulama engaged in commerce, shaykhs invested in workshops, bathhouses and other

businesses, and the rulers consulted them on economic matters. The Jabartis (the historian's family) are a good example of a family of economically successful ulama that maintained close contacts with Cairo's military and the mercantile classes.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the fortunes of the wealthy merchants declined because of the crisis in the Egyptian economy. The Mamluk beys squeezed the population and imposed forced loans on the merchants. Some of the difficulties, however, were created by developments in international trade. The Egyptian economy had become almost colonial, exporting raw materials and importing finished products, such as English and French fabrics. The worst blow to the merchants was the competition of coffee that the French produced in the Antilles. Inferior in quality to the 'Egyptian' coffee, the most profitable item of Egypt's transit trade, it sold at about 25 per cent less. This French coffee finally conquered the 'Egyptian' variety's traditional markets in Salonika and the Maghrib, and was even introduced into Egypt itself. These changes were also favorable to the interests of the European merchants in Egypt and local Christians and Jews, who worked with them at the expense of the native Muslim *tujjar*.

The ruling class consisted of the military—the pasha and his entourage, the officers of the seven regiments and the Mamluk beys. The army was 10,000 strong. Naturally there were immense social and economic differences between the rich emirs and the simple soldiers. The ruling elite was mainly Turcophone, and mostly, though not exclusively, foreign born. The wealth of this class accrued from the salaries, very modest in the case of the men, but extremely high for emirs, and from a systematic exploitation of Egypt's revenues through rural and urban tax farms and various kinds of protection money and forced partnerships with artisans and merchants.

Some of the wealthiest emirs had a grand life-style; they lived in magnificent mansions and kept sizeable retinues. The patronage system and Mamluk political organization also required the emirs to spend large sums on their houses and households, which often served as headquarters for a faction. Like the big merchants, the emirs moved out of their original residential areas. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they were leaving the vicinity of the Citadel, perhaps owing to the decline of the pashas' power, but certainly because that area was often the scene of fierce fighting between warring military groups. The adjacent Sultan Hasan's mosque and other monuments were strategic targets in these battles. Many emirs moved to the northwestern parts of the city, first to the vicinity of Birkat al-Fil, especially to the Qawsun

area on the eastern shore of that pond. During the period 1650–1755, the right bank of the Khalij became the preferred place of residence for the military elite. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the emirs favored the surroundings of Birkat al-Azbakiyya. Many emirs had two houses: a large one, in which they lived with their families, and a small one, where they concealed their treasures and took refuge in times of trouble. Lower ranking officers, such as the *kashifs*, who were one rank below the beys in the military hierarchy, and the regimental commanders, lived in al-Qahira, primarily in its southern quarters.<sup>118</sup>

### THE GUILDS

The emergence of a ramified network of some 240 guilds is one of the most impressive developments in Cairo's social and economic history and indicates the vitality of its trade and small industry.<sup>119</sup> A guild was called *sinif* (plural *esnaf*) by Turkish sources, and *ta'ifa* (plural *tawa'if*) in Arabic, the latter term being general, and indicating any group, such as a Sufi order or a religious community. The most detailed description of the guilds is found in an Arabic treatise written by an anonymous Egyptian writer in the late sixteenth century or early seventeenth century (the work has not been published and is known as the 'Gotha manuscript'), and in a long chapter in Evliya Çelebi's travel account, *Seyahatname*, written in the 1670s. Additional information is scattered in the chronicles of Ahmad Shalabi, al-Jabarti and others.<sup>120</sup>

The historical origins of the guilds are not clear. Scholars seem to agree that the guilds were created under Ottoman rule,<sup>121</sup> but this does not mean that no professional organizations existed or that solidarity among people engaged in the same trade was unknown before 1517. On the contrary—there is evidence from the early years of Ottoman domination about 'the shaykhs of the markets,' (*masha'ikh al-aswaq*, the same term used by later sources for the guild chiefs) and groups of artisans marching to the Citadel with raised banners and copies of the Koran to demonstrate their grievances against new taxes and currency regulations. Diyarbakri reports that on Rabi' II 11, 929/February 27, 1523, the trade guilds demonstrated against a newly appointed *muhtasib*, who was an Ottoman Turk. The chronicler, an Ottoman *qadi*, regards the demonstration as an expression of Arab racial consciousness (*ta'assub*) against the *muhtasib*, who replaced Barakat ibn Musa, an Arabic-speaking Egyptian.<sup>122</sup>

The Gotha manuscript also reflects the tension between Arabs and Turks within the guilds. The Egyptian author accuses the Ottomans of

having caused the decline of the guilds and discriminating against the Arabs (*awlad al-'Arab*). The Turks are further accused of depravity, while the Mamluk sultans are remembered as virtuous rulers and their reign as the golden age of the guilds. The Ottoman authorities are said to have interfered in the life of the guilds by appointing shaykhs who were nothing but the government's fiscal agents.<sup>123</sup>

The Gotha manuscript not only provides a wealth of information about the guilds, but also about the anti-Ottoman attitude prevalent among Egyptian artisans. The treatise does very little to enlighten us about the origins of the guilds, and if anything, it adds to the confusion. The author assumes—contrary to the historical evidence—that the guilds not only existed but also flourished under the Mamluk sultans and declined after the Ottoman conquest. It is obvious that, as was the case with many institutions, the Ottomans formalized, systematized and elaborated structures which had existed in a rudimentary form before them.

An important difference between Ottoman (and hence Egyptian) guilds and their Western counterparts was that the European guilds were autonomous economic organizations, representing their members' interests vis-à-vis the government, while the Ottoman guilds were controlled by the state. The chiefs of the Ottoman corporations were often elected by the artisans and the merchants, but had to be confirmed by the government authorities. More often than not, the shaykh of the guild represented the government before the guild members, and not the other way round. The guild system provided the government with a convenient tool for collecting taxes from the merchants and the artisans. The state and not the guild fixed the prices of goods, especially those of staples.

The guilds had their tradition, ethos and ceremonies, all of which were known as *futuwwa*. A guild's most important ceremony was the *shadd*, the 'fastening' (of the girdle), which was performed when a novice was initiated into the organization. Each guild also had its special paraphernalia, symbols and banners, as well as its patron saint, usually a figure among the *sahaba*, the Prophet's companions. All the ceremonies and the *futuwwa* literature are filled with Islamic spirit and terminology, often strongly reminiscent of Sufism.<sup>124</sup>

The guilds participated in some public ceremonies, such as the *ru'ya* (the sighting of the new moon on Ramadan eve), especially those guilds controlled by the *muhtasib*, or the celebrations of *qat' al-khalij*, which was the day of the guilds supervised by the chief architect. Guilds also

held a public celebration on *mawlid* days, the departure of the *mahmal* and the like.

Evliya Çelebi gives a list of 30 categories of guilds, each category containing a cluster of corporations engaged in a certain field of economic activity.<sup>125</sup> The guilds were distinguished by other standards. Some were regarded as being 'immoral,' for example, prostitutes, pimps, beggars, black-slave dealers, pickpockets and scavengers. Some guilds had high social status, such as those of physicians, barbers, druggists and booksellers, and wealthy guilds of grain dealers, rice merchants, kettle and copper merchants, furriers and saddlers. All high-status guilds were 'moral.' Low-status guilds were principally those whose members were fellahin and Nubians, who worked as servants, watchmen, camel and donkey drivers, water carriers and cooks, all of whom had relatively little income, or engaged in 'dirty' occupations, such as oil dealers, peddlers, or in trades which were suspect on religious grounds, such as goldsmiths and the criminal and 'immoral' occupations.

A few guilds were concentrated geographically, for example, the Husayniyya quarter with its famous butchers' guild, or the Rumayla square, which was the center of the greengrocers.

The guilds were also classified by the type of control exercised over them. The chief architect (*mi'mar başı*) of Cairo, who was in charge of all construction, collected taxes from the guilds of builders, masons, architects and stone dressers. The *amin al-khurda*, who was in charge of the entertainers' guilds controlled and taxed all public spectacles. The 'immoral' guilds were supervised and taxed by the police superintendents. Finally, the guilds of trades dealing in producing or selling food were under the control of the *muhtasib*.

Some guilds had distinctive ethnic features. For example, the Maghribis, Turks and Syrians dominated the trade in certain kinds of merchandise. There was also the guild of the Nubian servants and the membership of certain guilds was composed of Jews or Christians. Evliya Celebi writes of guilds that were predominantly, but not exclusively, Coptic (goldsmiths), or Jewish (button makers). A few guilds had both Muslim and *dhimmi* members. Raymond thinks that this was less indicative of the authorities' tolerant attitude than their reluctance to allow separate *dhimmi* guilds to exist.<sup>126</sup>

A guild was a hierarchical organization: at the top of the hierarchy was the shaykh, and below him his deputy (*kahya* or *ket khuda*), an assistant in charge of ceremonies (*naqib*), and the guild elders (*ikhtiyariyya*), which was probably an informal body. Members were

also ranked according to their professional status: master, worker, apprentice.<sup>127</sup>

The guilds of Cairo were an impressive manifestation of the vigor of the city's artisanship and commerce. Their influence on the economy, however, was not wholly positive. They were tightly closed organizations and their conservative attitudes were likely to perpetuate monopoly and technological stagnation. The hereditary principle was paramount, especially in the artisans' guilds. In the merchants' guilds there was more flexibility and more opportunity for social advancement.<sup>128</sup>

### **THE ARTISANS AND THE MERCHANTS' RELATIONS WITH THE ARMY**

All of Egypt was regarded as one huge *muqata'a*, a source of revenue to be exploited by the sultan. At first, most *muqata'as* were assigned to officials called *emins*, who were salaried functionaries responsible for extracting revenue from the *muqata'a*. This system was gradually replaced by the system of tax farming (*iltizam*), whereby the sources of revenue were given out, usually by auction, to the powerful and wealthy, mostly army officers and Arab shaykhs, but later also to rich civilians, such as merchants and ulama. Many tax farms were further sublet to agents who administered them for the original tax farmer. For example, the collection of revenues of the custom houses, which was assigned to the governor of Egypt or to the Janissaries, was handled by Jewish tax farmers. By the eighteenth century, regimental officers did not always have to buy tax farms; they could now receive them as an inheritance.

The relationship between the sultan's productive subjects and the military was one of economic exploitation to a degree not envisaged by the Ottoman government at the time of the conquest.<sup>129</sup> In Cairo alone there were more than 90 *muqata'as*. The financial burden on the economically productive sector of Cairo's population became heavier in the latter part of the eighteenth century.<sup>130</sup> The picture, however, was not simply one of a parasitic relationship. A process of interpenetration of the guilds and the military bodies created a complex community of interests between the military class and the craftsmen, shopkeepers and merchants. Janissaries and the 'Azab were the regiments most intimately involved with the urban artisans. The bloody feuds between these regiments cannot be separated from their economic background, which was a struggle for the control of these urban sources of income.<sup>131</sup>

It has already been pointed out that civilians broke through the barrier between the *'askeri* and *re'aya*, when local Egyptians started to join the army. Of a different nature, socially if not legally, was the massive affiliation of craftsmen and merchants with the regiments in order to obtain protection and tax exemption. The phenomenon was neither new nor unique to Egypt, but there it assumed massive proportions by the mid-seventeenth century. The shaykhs of the guilds, in particular, were subjected to heavy pressure by the army to join the regiments, as part of its efforts to control the trades. Artisans and merchants joined the regiments in increasing numbers when the Janissaries achieved political supremacy. In 1709, a *qadi* who notified the shaykhs of the guilds that the Porte had again prohibited civilians from joining the regiments, was given the following reply: 'All of us are *'askeri*', sons of *'askeri*'.<sup>132</sup> The practice of rich merchants' placing their Mamluks in regiments became widespread. Similarly, the emirs' freedmen were encouraged to engage in economic activities. Simultaneously, soldiers began entering the trades, a process that had its beginnings in the first days of the conquest, when Turkish soldiers opened beer booths.<sup>133</sup> The influx of the soldiers into the trades increased toward the end of the sixteenth century, when the *devşirme*, the Ottoman system of recruitment, was on the decline, and the rules forbidding the Janissaries from marrying while on active military service and from engaging in trade were relaxed. Since the soldiers' pay was not indexed and did not keep up with the inflation, they looked for legal and illegal means to increase their income. In 1783, Volney described the regiments as a rabble of vagabonds and artisans, not soldiers.<sup>134</sup>

Marriage alliances between emirs and rich merchants, and between emirs and lower-ranking regimental commanders and artisans and shopkeepers became very common. Certain events, such as the Yasif al-Yahudi affair of 1697 and the crisis surrounding Ifranĵ Ahmad in 1710 revealed the extent to which the interests of the army and the merchants had converged.

## Conclusion

Social change was extremely slow in a pre-modern society like Egypt's. The pace of life, the way of life, the basic social structures were at the end of the Ottoman period very much as they had been in the beginning. Historians are agreed that even in Istanbul, the Empire's capital, which was incomparably more exposed to European influences than Cairo, social change before the nineteenth century was limited. Egypt was situated in the backyard of the Ottoman Empire, far from the dramatic events and new currents that had been affecting the heartland. Nevertheless, the incorporation of Egypt into the Empire itself introduced some social change. The emergence of a vigorous and ramified network of guilds in Cairo was doubtless a result of Ottoman rule and example. Possibly the proliferation of Sufi orders in Egypt should be regarded, at least partially, as influenced by Ottoman culture and social order.

The Ottoman domination affected Egypt in some very subtle ways, and unconsciously contributed to the creation of an Egyptian identity. Ottoman rule was never expressed or conceived in terms sometimes found in modern nationalistic historiography—namely, the Egyptians as oppressed and exploited by their Turkish masters. The Ottomans did not rule Egypt, or any other province, as Turks, since they did not regard themselves as such. The Empire was an Islamic state, the strongest one, and a leading world power. Its rule could be accepted in Egypt as wholly legitimate. With time, however, as the Empire declined, the Ottoman presence in Egypt was becoming burdensome. The Egyptians expressed their resentment at Ottoman misrule in the only way they knew in those pre-modern times—through religion. Egyptian Islam asserted itself as it had not done for centuries: through the centrality of al-Azhar, the emergence of the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, the advent of both Muslim religious elites and popular leaders—ulama, Sufis and *ashraf*, as well as the flourishing of *mawlid*s.

By the eighteenth century, Egyptian military and civilian elites became more independent-minded and more alienated from the Ottomans. The Mamluk emirs and the judiciary grew increasingly more Egyptian and Arab. The Egyptian identity vis-à-vis the Ottomans and Turks, rarely explicit before the nineteenth century, had already been latent before the French invasion and Mehmet 'Ali's rule.

# Notes

## 1

### Historical Background

- 1 On the Mamluk state and society, see D.Ayalon's collected articles, *Studies on the Mamluks of Egypt (1250–1517)* (London, Variorum Reprints, 1977) and *The Mamluk Military Society* (London, Variorum Reprints, 1979) and R.Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250–1382* (London, 1986).
- 2 On the social structure of the cities in Mamluk times, see I.M.Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967).
- 3 On the social and psychological background of the Mamluks' failure to adopt firearms, see D.Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom* (London, 1956).
- 4 On the Ottoman-Mamluk rivalry and its consequences, see Andrew C.Hess, 'The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt (1517) and the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century World War,' *IJMES*, vol. 4 (1973), pp. 55–76.
- 5 It is clear from the Arabic chronicles that the Mamluks were aware of the Ottomans' military superiority. Whenever an incident involving the Ottomans was resolved peacefully, the Mamluk royal court sighed in relief.
- 6 In historical perspective it seems reasonable to argue that the Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria was not merely an outcome of a series of misunderstandings and caprices, but rather an inevitable result of a situation in which Sunni Islam had to be unified under one leader owing to the heterodox Shi'i and Christian fronts (Persia and the Hapsburgs). It was also natural that the Ottoman Empire, intent on expansion and conquest and in need of more resources, would finally swallow the stagnant Mamluk state. See Hess, 'The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt.' For a concise and lucid account of the historical developments, see P.M.Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–1922* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), pp. 33–45. On Ottoman policies towards the Mamluks, see D.Ayalon, 'Mamluk

- Military Aristocracy during the First Years of the Ottoman Occupation of Egypt,' in C.E.Bosworth, Ch. Issawi, R.Savory and A.L.Udovich (eds), *The Islamic World: Studies in Honor of Bernard Lewis* (Princeton, NJ, 1989), pp. 413–31. Idem, 'The End of the Mamluk Sultanate (Why Did the Ottomans Spare the Mamluks of Egypt and Wipe Out the Mamluks of Syria?),' *Studia Islamica* 65 (1987), 125–48.
- 7 Iyas, pp. 174–7.
  - 8 Ibid., pp. 157, 183.
  - 9 Ibid., pp. 169–70, 186–7, 213, 219–20, 297, 366–7, 407–8, 429, 474–5.
  - 10 Ibid., pp. 150, 153–5, 162, 170, 207–8.
  - 11 Ibid., p. 172.
  - 12 Ibid., pp. 178–9, 184–5.
  - 13 The fact that the 'Abbasid caliph was among them is additional proof that the story about the transfer of the caliphate to Selim is a later invention. Had the caliph been a person of such importance, possessed with authority of his own, the Ottomans would not have let him simply go home.
  - 14 See, for example, Iyas, pp. 174, 214, 223, 335, 356, 372, 452, 462–3.
  - 15 Ibid., pp. 417–20, 427.
  - 16 Ibid., pp. 165, 417–18, 242, 453–4, 460–1, 466–7.
  - 17 Ibid., p. 461. Diyarbakri, fol. 226b–268a.
  - 18 Iyas, pp. 165, 427.
  - 19 The sources on Kha'ir Bey are Ibn Iyas and Diyarbakri. See also, J.-L.Bacqué-Grammont, 'Une dénonciation des abus de Ha'ir Beg, gouverneur de l'Egypte ottomane, en 1521,' *Annales Islamologiques*, vol. 19, 1982, pp. 5–52.
  - 20 On the revolt of al-Ghazali, see Holt, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–7.
  - 21 On that revolt see *ibid.*, p. 48, and Diyarbakri, fol. 292b–302a, and Chapter 3 below.
  - 22 On Ahmet Pasha's revolt, see Holt, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–51 and Diyarbakri, fol. 310a–337b.
  - 23 The text of the *Qanun-name* was published by Ö.L.Barkan, *XV ve XVIinci asirlarda Osmanli İmparatorluğunda ziraî, ekonominin hukukî ve malî esaslan*, vol. 1 (Istanbul, 1943), pp. 355–87.
  - 24 The basic study of the administration of Ottoman Egypt is by S.J. Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, NJ, 1962).
  - 25 Our survey is based mainly on the following studies: Holt, *op. cit.*, chapters 5, 6; Holt, 'The Pattern of Egyptian Political History from 1517 to 1798,' in Holt, ed., *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt* (London, 1968), pp. 79–90; Holt, 'The Last Phase of the neo-Mamluk Regime in Egypt,' in *L'Egypte au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1982), pp. 65–75; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*; D.Crecelius, *The Roots of Modern Egypt; The Study of the Regimes of 'Ali Bey al- Kabir and Muhammad*

- Abu al-Dhahab, 1760–1775* (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1981); M. Winter, 'Turks, Arabs and Mamluks in the Army of Ottoman Egypt,' *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. 72, 1980, pp. 97–122.
- 26 For bibliographical surveys of the sources for the period, see P.M. Holt, 'Ottoman Egypt (1517–1798): An Account of Arabic Historical Sources,' in Holt, ed., *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, pp. 3–12; S.J. Shaw, 'Turkish Source-materials for Egyptian History,' in *ibid.*, pp. 28–48.
- 27 See Winter, 'Turks, Arabs and Mamluks,' pp. 112–13. It is true that Mehmet Pasha abolished the Circassians' register, which recorded pensions and put another one in use (*daftar al-tarbi*). Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Nuzha al-zahiyafi dhikr wulat Misr wa'l-Qahira al-mu'izziyya* (Ms. 4995, Yahuda Collection, Princeton University) fol. 45b.
- 28 P.M. Holt, 'The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt during the Seventeenth Century,' in Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London, 1973), pp. 177–219.
- 29 Holt, 'Al-Jabarti's Introduction to the History of Ottoman Egypt,' in *ibid.*, pp. 161–76.
- 30 Holt, 'The Exalted Lineage of Ridwan Bey: Some Observations on a Seventeenth Century Mamluk Genealogy,' in *ibid.*, p. 228.
- 31 Holt, 'The Career of Küçük Muhammad (1676–94),' in *ibid.*, pp. 231–51.
- 32 A Raymond, 'Une 'revolution' au Caire sous les Mamelouks. Le crise de 1123/1711,' *Annales Islamologiques*, vol. 6, 1965, pp. 95–120.
- 33 *MM*, vol. 3, no. 561, fol. 121b, mid-Rajab, 1138 (December 9, 1726); vol. 4 no. 337, fol. 76a, mid-Safar, 1143 (August 30, 1730).
- 34 Crecelius, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

## 2

### The Vicissitudes of the Ruling Class

- 1 See U. Haarmann, 'Ideology and History, Identity and Alterity: The Arab Image of the Turk from the 'Abbasids to Modern Egypt,' *IJMES*, vol. 20, no. 2, May 1988, pp. 175–96, for a broad and insightful discussion of the subject.
- 2 Muhammad ibn Tulun, *Mufakahat al-khullan fi hawadith al-zaman*, Muhammad Mustafa, ed., (Cairo, 1964), vol. 2, especially pp. 29–31, 50, 61, 70, 73. Nevertheless, the Syrian writer was painfully aware of the unpleasant sides of life under military occupation. See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 34, 37, 68, 69, 80.
- 3 On al-Sha'rani, see Winter, *Society and Religion*.
- 4 Ibn Nujaym, *al-Fatawa al-zayniyya* (Ms. 4115 in the Garrett collection, Princeton University), fol. 50a, 62a.

- 5 'Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammad al-Jaziri, *Durar al-fawa'id al-munaz zama fi akhbar al-hajj wa-tariq Makka al-mu'azzama* (Cairo, 1384/ 1964), pp. 112, 126, 364 ff.
- 6 Qutb al-Din al-Nahrawali al-Makki, *Kitab al-i'lam bi-a'lam bayt Allah al-haram*, F.Wustenfled, ed. (Beirut, 1964), 283 ff. This work contains a laudatory history of the Ottomans up to the reign of Selim II (pp. 248–414).
- 7 See Abdul Karim Rafeq, 'Ibn Abi'l-Surur and His Works,' *BSOAS*, vol. 38, part 1, 1975, pp. 24–31.
- 8 Al-Nahrawali, *Kitab al-i'lam*, pp. 283–90, 331–55, 369, 388–97, 406–27.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 291.
- 10 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 268.
- 11 See M.Winter, 'A Seventeenth-Century Arabic Panegyric of the Ottoman Dynasty,' *Asian and African Studies* (Jerusalem), vol. 13, no. 2 (July 1979), pp. 130–56. Mar'i ibn Yusuf is strongly influenced by al-Nahrawali's *Kitab al-i'lam*.
- 12 Al-Nahrawali, *Kitab al-i'lam*, p. 405.
- 13 Examples abound. See, for example, Mustafa 'Ali, p. 40 (note 41), p. 57 (note 57).
- 14 Iyas, *passim*.
- 15 See the article 'Ghuzz,' in *EP<sup>2</sup>* vol. 2, part 2, pp. 1106–11.
- 16 Toward the end of the period under survey, that attitude seems to have changed, however. On the occasion of the death of Sultan Mahmut I in 1168/1754, al-Jabarti notes: 'He was the last of the Ottoman [sultans] to be endowed with the qualities of good conduct, gallantry, respect of sacred things, integrity, and worthy deeds.' Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 205.
- 17 See H.Inalcik, 'L'Empire ottoman,' *Actes du Ier congrès international des études balkaniques et sud-est européennes*, (Sofia, 1969), III, p. 88; Winter, 'A Seventeenth-Century Arabic Panegyric,' p. 155.
- 18 See H.A.R.Gibb and H.Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1950), vol. 1, part 1, p. 140.
- 19 For a survey of the Arabic chronicles for the period, see P.M.Holt, 'Ottoman Egypt (1517–1798): an Account of Arabic Historical Sources,' in P.M.Holt, ed., *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt* (London, 1968), pp. 3–12. For a survey of the Turkish chronicles, see S.J.Shaw, 'Turkish Source-Materials for Egyptian History,' in *ibid.*, pp. 28–48. For a convenient list of pashas and their terms of office in Ottoman Egypt, see Mustafa 'Ali, pp. 17–18 (for the sixteenth century); P.M.Holt, 'The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt during the Seventeenth Century,' in P.M.Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London, 1973), pp. 189–91 (for the seventeenth century); M. de Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottomane*, M.Dochez, trans. (Paris, 1844), vol. 3, pp. 666–7 (for the eighteenth century). For general surveys about the pashas and their activities, see E.Combe, 'L'Egypte Ottomane,' in *Précis de l'histoire*

- d'Egypte* (Cairo, 1933), vol. 3, pp. 21–39 and H. Dehérain, 'L'Egypte turque,' in G. Hanotaux, *Histoire de la nation égyptienne* (Paris, 1931), pp. 13–38.
- 20 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 73.
- 21 'Ali Efendi, *A Chronicle of the Pashas of Egypt* (Ms. 1050 in the Muzaffer Ocak collection, Ankara University), fol. 24a–24b.
- 22 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 342, 560–1.
- 23 See J.S. Shaw, 'Landholdings and Land-tax Revenues in Ottoman Egypt,' in Holt, *Political and Social Change*, pp. 91–103.
- 24 A. Raymond, 'The Ottoman Conquest and the Development of the Great Arab Towns,' *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, Winter 1979–80, pp. 84–101. See also the last chapter of the present book.
- 25 See M. Winter, 'The Islamic Profile and the Religious Policy of the Ruling Class in Ottoman Egypt,' *Israel Oriental Studies* (Tel Aviv, 1988), vol. 10, pp. 132–45.
- 26 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 87b–89b.
- 27 The Egyptian chronicles abound with examples of strong and weak, popular and hated pashas. See, for example, 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman; Hallaq; Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Sid diqi, *al-Nuzha al-iahyya fi dhikr wulat Misr wa'l-Qahira* (Ms. 4995, Garrett collection, Princeton University).
- 28 On the pashas' religious policy, see Winter, 'The Islamic Profile.'
- 29 For the text of the *Qanun-name-i Misir*, see Barkan's edition. See also R. Mantran, 'Note sur le Kanunname-i Misir,' *Cahiers de linguistiques d'Orientalisme et de Slavistiques: études sémitiques et islamiques*, vol. 9, Juillet, 1977, pp. 35–44; P.M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–1922* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), pp. 51–2.
- 30 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 358.
- 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 358–9.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 359.
- 33 See, for example, U. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine, 1552–1615* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 68–9.
- 34 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 1335, pp. 462–3, Dhu'l-Hijja 1, 975 (May 29, 1568).
- 35 *MD*, vol. 35, no. 745, Ramadan 2, 986 (November 2, 1578).
- 36 M. Winter, 'Military Connections between Egypt and Syria (including Palestine) in the Early Ottoman Period,' in A. Cohen and G. Baer, eds, *Egypt and Palestine: A Millennium of Association (868–1048)*, (Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 141 ff., based on the *MD*.
- 37 See, for example, *MD*, vol. 50, no. 45, p. 12, Ramadan 1, 991 (September 18, 1583), no. 14, p. 14, Dhu'l-Qa'da 15, 991 (November 30, 1583).
- 38 *MD*, vol. 26, no. 551, p. 199, Jumada I 19, 982 (October 6, 1574).

- 39 See Qutb al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Nahrawali al-Makki, *al-Barq al-Yamani fi'l-fath al-'Uthmani*, Hamad al-Jasir, ed. (Riyad, 1967), pp. 408, 432–3.
- 40 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 1329, *awa'il* Dhu'l-Qa'da, 975 (May 1–10, 1567).
- 41 Winter, 'Military Connections between Egypt and Syria.'
- 42 For example, al-Nahrawali writes that Egypt has become a fatherland (*watan*) to the soldiers serving there. They enjoy peace and tranquility in that land, love it, and have become accustomed to its inhabitants. *Al-Barq al-Yamani*, pp. 99, 199.
- 43 M. Winter, 'Ali Efendi's 'Anatolian Campaign Book': a Defence of the Egyptian Army in the Seventeenth Century,' *Turcica*, vol. 15, 1983, pp. 267–309.
- 44 *MD*, vol. 75, no. 199, p. 111, Shawwal, 1013 (February–March, 1604).
- 45 *MD*, vol. 26, no. 498, p. 183, Jumada I 10, 982 (August 28, 1574); vol. 73, nos. 634, 643, 644, Dhu'l-Hijja, 1003 (August–September, 1595); vol. 75, no. 199, p. 111, Dhu'l-Hijja, 1013 (April–May, 1605).
- 46 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 1329, p. 459, Dhu'l-Qa'da 1, 975 (April 28, 1568).
- 47 *MD*, vol. 5, no. 1146, p. 430, Sha'ban 14, 973 (March 6, 1566); vol. 23, no. 693, p. 313, Dhu'l-Qa'da 23, 981 (March 16, 1573).
- 48 'Ali Efendi, fol. 23a.
- 49 *Ibid.*, fol. 20a.
- 50 *MD*, vol. 50, no. 177, p. 42, Dhu'l-Qa'da, 15, 993 (November 8, 1585).
- 51 'Ali Efendi, fol. 19b.
- 52 *MD*, vol. 50, nos. 165, 182, 238, pp. 39, 42, 51, Safar-Dhu'l-Qa'da 993 (February–November, 1585).
- 53 *MD*, vol. 22, no. 320, pp. 165–6, Rabi'I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573); vol. 29, no. 9, p. 5, Ramadan 1, 984 (November 22, 1576); vol. 33, no. 2, p. 2, Ramadan 2, 985 (November 13, 1577). On the *Chavush* and *Mitteferriqa* corps, see S.J. Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798*, (Princeton, NJ, 1962), pp. 193 ff.
- 54 Winter, 'Ali Efendi's 'Anatolian Campaign Book,' p. 275 and note. Several decrees refer to the *aghas*. See, for example, *MD*, vol. 31, no. 190, p. 76, Jumada I 12, 985 (July 28, 1577); vol. 55, no. 605, p. 264, 1004/5; vol. 60, no. 45, p. 20, Shawwal 21, 993 (October 16, 1585).
- 55 *MD*, vol. 26, no. 645, p. 226, Jumada II 7, 982 (September 24, 1574).
- 56 *MM*, vol. 7, no. 531, p. 245b, *awakhir* Jumada I, 1127 (May 24–June 2, 1715).
- 57 *MM*, vol. 1, no. 237, p. 53a, *awasit* Ramadan, 1124 (October 12–21, 1712); vol. 3, no. 137, p. 27a, *awa'il* Rabi' I, 1133 (January 1–10, 1722); vol. 5, no. 352, *awakhir* Ramadan, 1156 (November 8–17, 1743).
- 58 *MD*, vol. 39, no. 201, p. 81, Shawwal 27, 987 (December 17, 1579).
- 59 *MD*, vol. 22, no. 355, p. 184, Rabi' I 28, 981 (July 28, 1573).

- 60 *MD*, vol. 23, no. 390, p. 184, Jumada II 27, 981 (October 24, 1573); See also *MD*, vol. 60, no. 31, p. 14, Shawwal 26, 993 (October 21, 1585), for another edict in the same vein.
- 61 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 376 (paragraph 36).
- 62 *MD*, vol. 26, no. 822, p. 284, Rajab 7, 982 (October 2, 1573).
- 63 See al-Jaziri, *Durar*, pp. 374–6; J.R.Blackburn, ‘The Collapse of Ottoman Authority in Yemen, 968/1560–976/1568,’ *Die Welt des Islams*, N.S. vol. 19, nos. 1–4, (1979), p. 121.
- 64 *MD*, vol. 14, no. 170, p. 120, Safar 9, 978 (July 23, 1570). Al-Nahrawali compares Yemen to a foundry in which the Egyptian soldiers melt like salt. *al-Bark al-Yamani*, p. 91.
- 65 Document E2283, Topkapi Sarayi archives, Istanbul. 957 (1550–1).
- 66 *MD*, vol. 19, no. 120, p. 54, Muharram 19, 980 (June 2, 1572).
- 67 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 358, p. 139, Rabi’ II 17, 975 (October 21, 1567); vol. 14 no. 179, p. 126, Safar 19, 978 (July 23, 1570); vol. 26, no. 236, p. 92, Rabi’ I 28, 982 (July 18, 1574).
- 68 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 2099, p. 735, Rabi’ I 11, 976 (September 3, 1568); vol. 27, no. 578, p. 249, Dhu’l-Qa’da 5, 983 (February 5, 1576); vol. 49, no. 212, p. 60, Rabi’ II 28, 991 (May 21, 1583). See also Mustafa ‘Ali, p. 52, where the writer describes in his usual vivid manner how the Turks (Rumis) of Egypt are tempted to be enlisted in the army in order to be sent to Yemen and Habesh, never to come back.
- 69 ‘Ali Efendi, *A Chronicle of the Pashas of Egypt*, fol. 42a, 42b.
- 70 See M.Winter, ‘Turks, Arabs and Mamluks in the Army of Ottoman Egypt,’ *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. 72 (Vienna, 1980), pp. 97–122, and the bibliography cited there.
- 71 On the Jelali revolts, see Ö.L.Barkan, ‘The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East,’ *IJMES*, vol. 6 (1975), pp. 3–28; H.Inalcik, ‘Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700,’ *Archivum Ottomanicum*, vol. 6, 1980, pp. 283–337.
- 72 Muhammad ibn Abi’l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Tuhfa al-bahiyya fi tamalluk Al ‘Uthman al-diyar al-Misriyya* (Ms. H.O. 35, Vienna), fol. 17a; Hallaq, fol. 91b–92a. On the same occasion the rebels forbade Jews and Christians to own slaves.
- 73 Hallaq, fol. 103a–103b; ‘Ali Efendi, fol. 23a–24b.
- 74 D.Ayalon, ‘Studies in al-Jabarti,’ *JESHO*, vol. 3, part 2 (August 1960), pp. 152–8.
- 75 *MD*, vol. 60, nos. 595, 596, p. 254, Jumada I 8, 994 (April 27, 1586).
- 76 Diyarbakri, fol. 14b; Mustafa ‘Ali, pp. 34, 52–56.
- 77 See, for example, ‘Ali Efendi, fol. 34a.
- 78 *MD*, vol. 46, no. 611, p. 270, Dhu’l-Hijja 6, 986 (February 3, 1579); vol. 76, p. 86, 1013 (1604–5).

- 79 *MD*, vol. 49, no. 91, p. 24, 991 (1583/84); vol. 53, no. 461, p. 157, Ramadan 2, 992 (September 7, 1584); vol. 75, no. 193, p. 109, 1013 (1604–5). See also Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, pp. 184 ff.; Holt, ‘The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt’, p. 185.
- 80 ‘Ali Efendi, fol. 27b.
- 81 Mustafa ‘Ali, p. 58.
- 82 Holt, ‘The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt,’ pp. 184–5.
- 83 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 2106, p. 771, Rabi’ I 26, 976 (September 18, 1568); vol. 76, no. 144, p. 58, Jumada I 12, 1016 (September 4, 1607).
- 84 *MD*, vol. 39, no. 418, p. 203, Muharram 10, 988 (February 26, 1580); vol. 55, no. 112, p. 63, Dhu’l-Hijja 4, 922 (December 7, 1584).
- 85 See Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent*, pp. 78–9; Combe, ‘L’Egypte ottomane’, pp. 21–39.
- 86 ‘Abdulkerim ibn ‘Abdurrahman, fol. 63b–64a; Hallaq, fol. 180a.
- 87 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 273–392; ‘Abdulkerim ibn ‘Abdurrahman, fol. 71b; Dehérain. ‘L’Egypte turque,’ p. 104.
- 88 See P.M.Holt, ‘Al-Jabarti’s Introduction to the History of Ottoman Egypt,’ *BSOAS*, vol. 25, part 1 (1962), pp. 38–51. See also, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 282–4.
- 89 ‘Ali Efendi, fol. 28a; Hallaq, fol. 108a.
- 90 Holt, ‘The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt,’ pp. 181–6.
- 91 Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent*, pp. 80–1; Winter, ‘Ali Efendi, fol. 46b–55b; Hallaq, fol. 140a–148b.
- 92 Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent*, p. 82; Hallaq, fol. 158a–178b.
- 93 See P.M Holt, ‘The Exalted Lineage of Ridwan Bey: Some Observations on a Seventeenth-Century Mamluk Genealogy,’ *BSOAS*, vol. 22, part 2, 1955, pp. 222–30.
- 94 Evliya, p. 159.
- 95 *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 143, 328, 401.
- 96 ‘Abdulkerim ibn ‘Abdurrahman, fol. 36b.
- 97 *MD*, vol. 55. no. 112, p. 63, Dhu’l-Hijja 4, 992 (December 7, 1584); vol. 75, no. 172, Shawwal 1, 1013 (February 20, 1605); vol. 76, p. 86, 1013 (1605); vol. 78, no. 746, p. 282, Dhu’l-Hijja, 1018 (February–March, 1610); ‘Abdulkerim ibn ‘Abdurrahman, fol. 36b, 76b; Hallaq, fol. 125b, 198b, 208 a–b, 211b. See Winter, ‘Turks, Arabs, and Mamluks,’ p. 104; Muhammad ibn Abi’l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Nuzha al-jaliyya fi dhikr wulat Misr wa’l-Qahira* (Ms. 4445 Garrett collection, Princeton University), fol. 57b.
- 98 Evliya, pp. 159–60; Here Evliya provides a long list of Arabic words current in Egypt, which the Mamluks used with their Turkish.
- 99 *Ibid.*, p. 581.
- 100 *Ibid.*, p. 602.
- 101 Unlike Evliya Çelebi’s notorious inaccuracies and inventions concerning other lands, his description of Egypt is generally reliable and often can be

- verified by other sources. Both Shaw and Raymond use him extensively. See S.J.Shaw, 'Turkish Source-materials for Egyptian History,' in Holt, ed., *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, p. 47; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 205, note. 1.
- 102 Hallaq, fol. 93b–94b; *MD*, vol. 7, no. 2100, p. 769, Rabi' I 24, 976 (September 16, 1568); vol. 28, no. 120, p. 50, Rajab 25, 984 (October 18, 1576).
- 103 On the *sekban* see H.Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700,' *Archivum Ottomanicum* (Louvin, 1980), vol. 6, especially pp. 292–303. On *sekban* in the service of Egyptian emirs, see, for example, 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 48b; Winter, 'Turks, Arabs, and Mamluks,' p. 115.
- 104 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 69a, 71a; Hallaq, fol. 159a ff.
- 105 *Ibid.*, fol. 185b–186a.
- 106 *Ibid.*, 237a–237b; Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 202–3.
- 107 See *MD*, vol. 22, no. 351, p. 182, Rabi' I 28, 981 (July 28, 1573); Hallaq, fol. 216a, 237a.
- 108 On the changes in the Ottoman armies in the period generally, see H.Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire.' For *firman*s ordering the governor of Egypt to enlist *gharib yiğit* Turkish troops, see *MD*, vol. 6, no. 412, p. 191, Rabi' II 20, 972 (November 25, 1564); vol. 14, no. 912, p. 633, Rajab 19, 978 (December 17, 1570); vol. 22, no 351, p. 181, Rabi' I 28, 981 (July 28, 1573). For *firman*s calling for an Egyptian contingent of 3,000 troops see, for example, *MM*, vol. 1, no. 499, fol. 111a, *awa'il* Muharram, 1130 (December 5–14, 1717); vol. 5, no. 340, *awakhir* Rajab, 1150 (November, 14–23, 1737).
- 109 Evliya, pp. 125, 145.
- 110 *Ibid.*, p. 222; Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 187, 468; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 25.
- 111 See *Archives Nationales*, Paris, Affaires Etrangères, B1 313, I, correspondance consulaire (le Caire, 1669–98), pp. 148, 200–4, 407–15; B1 315, III, pp. 203–5 (Mai, 1704).
- 112 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 728.
- 113 *Archives Nationales*, Paris, Affaires Etrangères, B1 313, I, pp. 200–4.
- 114 Al-Jabarti's chronicle ends in Dhu'l-Hijja 1236/September 1821.
- 115 Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Development*, pp. 35–8, 165, 168, 313–5.
- 116 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 540.
- 117 See *ibid.*, pp. 489, 493; *MM*, vol. 1, no. 182, fol. 42a, *awasit* Rabi' I, 1123 (April 29–May 8, 1711); no. 196, fol. 44a, *awa'il* Safar, 1124 (March 10–19, 1712).
- 118 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 247, 248, 315, 448–51.
- 119 *MM*, vol. 4, no. 337, fol. 76a, *awasit* Safar, 1143 (August 26–September 4, 1730); vol. 6, no. 268, fol. 59a–59b, *awasit* Muharram, 1159 (February 3–12, 1746).

- 120 See, for example, *MD*, vol. 80, no. 1164, p. 491, Muharram 2, 1023 (February 12, 1614); vol. 82, no. 272, p. 126, Ramadan 18, 1026 (September 19, 1617); *MM*, vol. 3, no. 35, fol. 8b, *awa'il* Shawwal, 1131 (August 17–26, 1719); *ibid.*, no. 587, fol. 125b, *awakhir* Rajab, 1138 (March 25–April 3, 1726); vol. 6, no. 265, fol. 58a–58b, *awasit* Rajab, 1158 (August 9–18, 1745).
- 121 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 321.
- 122 *Ibid.*, p. 441. *MM*, vol. 1, no. 74, fol. 18b–19a, *awasit* Rabi' I, 1121 (May 21–30, 1709).
- 123 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 225; *MM*, vol. 1, no. 615, fol. 137b–138a, 138a, 1126 (1714).
- 124 Al-Nahrawali, *al-Barq al-Yamani*, pp. 470–1; Winter, ‘‘AH Efendi,’’ *passim*; Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 13.
- 125 *MM*, vol. 5, no. 45, pp. 20–22, *awa'il* Rabi'i I, 1146 (August 12–21, 1733); *ibid.*, no. 330, pp. 131–2, *awakhir* Jumada I, 1149 (September 27–October 6, 1736).
- 126 *MM*, vol. 5, no. 180, pp. 74–6, *awakhir* Ramadan, 1147 (February, 14–23, 1735).
- 127 See for example, *MM*, vol. 1, no. 372, fol. 83a–83b, *awa'il* Rajab, 1126 (July 13–22, 1714); *ibid.*, no. 499, fol. 111a, *awa'il* Muharram, 1130 (December 5–14, 1713); vol. 3, no. 66, fol. 14a, *awakhir* Rabi' II, 1132 (March 2–11, 1720); *ibid.*, no. 354, fol. 73b–74b, *awa'il* Ramadan, 1135 (June 5–14, 1723).
- 128 *Ibid.*, vol. 7, no. 164, fol. 79b–80a, *awasit* Ramadan, 1167 (July 2–11, 1754); no. 120, fol. 60a, *awasit* Rabi' II, 1167 (February 5–14, 1754).
- 129 *Ibid.*, vol. 3, no. 549, fol. 119b, *awa'il* Rajab, 1138 (March 5–14, 1726). See also Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 336, 359–60.
- 130 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 129; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 727–35.
- 131 See D.Kimche, ‘The Political Superstructure of Egypt in the late Eighteenth Century,’ *Middle East Journal*, vol. 22, no. 4, 1968, pp. 454–6.
- 132 *MM*, vol. 7, no. 758, pp. 345–6, Sha'ban 10, 1172 (April 8, 1759).
- 133 R.Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries* (London, 1743), vol. 1, p. 167.
- 134 On Ibrahim Ketkhuda, see Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 191–2; Dehérain, *L'Égypte turque*, pp. 110–15.
- 135 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 457. The text says clearly: ‘The new pasha, who arrived in Egypt in 1138/1725, gave robes of honor to 12 *sanjaqs* (beys); four of them were Mamluks.’ (The chronicler then calls these four beys by name.)
- 136 D.Ayalon, ‘Studies in al-Jabarti,’ *JESHO*, vol. 3 (1960), pp. 148–74, 275–325.
- 137 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 145.

- 138 For an interesting discussion strongly emphasizing self-interest in the Mamluk society over idealistic notions of loyalty and fraternity, see R.Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250–1382* (London, 1986), **chapter 8**, especially pp. 154–6.
- 139 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 374, 484, 486.
- 140 See *ibid.*, p. 30 (*akhadha min atba'ihī thalathata mamalik*). See P.M. Holt, 'The Career of Küçük Muhammad,' *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London, 1973), p. 237. Compare to Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti', *JESHO*, vol. 3, part 3 (October, 1960), pp. 278–83.
- 141 See D.Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom* (London, 1956), especially pp. 96–7.
- 142 Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' p. 310, citing several instances from al-Jabarti.
- 143 See D.Ayalon, 'Discharge from Service, Banishments and Imprisonments in Mamluk Society,' *Israel Oriental Studies*, vol. 2, pp. 25–50.
- 144 Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' p. 310, citing several passages in Jabarti.
- 145 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 116.
- 146 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 486, 615.
- 147 Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' vol. 1, pp. 190, 259.
- 148 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 190. See also *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 305.
- 149 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 28.
- 150 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 318.
- 151 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 506. Dehérain, *L'Egypte turque*, p. 75.
- 152 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 481.
- 153 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 145.
- 154 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 508–9.
- 155 *Ibid.*, pp. 391, 628; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 124.
- 156 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 345 ff.; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 51–6.
- 157 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 278.
- 158 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 191–2.
- 159 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 188; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 105.
- 160 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 203–4.
- 161 'Abdulkarim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 26b; 'AH Efendi, fol. 24b.
- 162 Evliya, p. 144.
- 163 Pococke, p. 193.
- 164 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 94–5; Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' p. 154.
- 165 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 427.
- 166 *Ibid.*, p. 392.
- 167 Iyas, p. 483.
- 168 See above, p. 53.
- 169 Pococke, p. 180.
- 170 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 91.
- 171 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 367, 518; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 207.

- 172 The chronicler reports that most of Khalil Bey's Mamluks were black, which is a contradiction in terms, and strengthens the impression that this emir and his retainers were atypical. Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 174–6. On black Mamluks, see Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' pp. 316–7.
- 173 Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 17–19; Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' p. 166, note 2.
- 174 This incident will be discussed in detail in [Chapter 5](#).
- 175 Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' pp. 318–21. I use the word 'race' not as an accurate scientific term, but as reflecting concepts prevalent in medieval and Ottoman societies.
- 176 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 180.
- 177 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 54, 210–11.
- 178 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 472; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 98.
- 179 The antagonism between Ottoman soldiers and Mamluks originated in the early days of the occupation and never disappeared. See, for example, Diyarbakri, fol. 287a–296b. 'Ali Efendi's 'Anatolian Campaign Book' is also an expression of these tensions. See also the hostility toward the Ottomans as expressed by Isma'il Bey ibn Iwaz: 'The Ottomans cannot be trusted and they have no friends.' Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 118.
- 180 Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 128.
- 181 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 129. The fact that the Mamluks were considered an integral part of Egyptian society comes out in the following incident (Safar 1202/November 1787). Isma'il Bey, the effective ruler of Cairo, asked the ulama to petition Istanbul to send troops to restore order in Egypt. The reply of *Shaykh al-Azhar al-'Arusi* (whose election over a non-Egyptian candidate had definitely 'national' overtones) is most revealing: 'There is no need for that. The Turkish troops (*al-'asakir al-Rumiyya*) will not be effective against the Egyptian troops. It is better to placate the soldiers by being generous to them. Better give to your countrymen than to strangers,' (*wa'lladhi tu'tuhu lil aghrab a'tuhu li-ahl biladikum awla*). Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 153–4.

### 3

#### The Bedouin Arabs and the State

- 1 On the *Muhimme Defteri*, see U. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine, 1522–1615* (Oxford, 1960).
- 2 Iyas, p. 155. This feeling ought to be attributed to the fact that Ibn Iyas was a son of a Mamluk emir. His hostility toward the bedouins reflects the ancient feud between the Mamluks and the bedouins, which originated in the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Mamluk state was established. The bedouins revolted then against the Mamluks, under the leadership of an Arab chief of *sharifian* descent. The revolt was harshly suppressed. Al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-suluk lima'ri fat duwal al-muluk* (Cairo, 1942), vol. 1, part 2, pp. 386–8.

- 3 Iyas, p. 167.
- 4 *Ibid.*, pp. 167, 171, 172.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 174–5.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 196–7, 202; Diyarbakri, fol. 125a.
- 7 Iyas, p. 216; Diyarbakri, fol. 124b.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 A letter from Kha'ir Bey to Sultan Selim written in 923/1517, document E5850/2 in the Topkapi Sarayi archives, Istanbul.
- 10 Iyas, pp. 222–6; Diyarbakri, fol. 125a–126b.
- 11 Iyas, pp. 261–4; Diyarbakri, fol. 123b–172a.
- 12 Iyas, pp. 220–41; Diyarbakri, fol. 136b–137a.
- 13 Iyas, pp. 258–9; Diyarbakri, fol. 171b.
- 14 Iyas, pp. 272, 278, 283; Diyarbakri, fol. 178b–180b.
- 15 Iyas, pp. 295–6; Diyarbakri, fol. 193b–194a.
- 16 Iyas, pp. 298, 300; Diyarbakri, fol. 196a–197a.
- 17 Iyas, p. 325; Diyarbakri, fol. 207a.
- 18 *Ibid.* On al-Zayni Barakat ibn Musa, see Iyas and Diyarbakri, *passim*.
- 19 Iyas, pp. 325–6; Diyarbakri, fol. 207a. See also Evliya, pp. 343–4.
- 20 Iyas, pp. 326–7; Diyarbakri, fol. 207b–208b.
- 21 Iyas, pp. 328, 370; Diyarbakri, fol. 209a, 232a–232b.
- 22 Iyas, p. 372; Diyarbakri, fol. 233a, 236b.
- 23 Iyas, p. 375; Diyarbakri, fol. 234b.
- 24 Iyas, p. 447; Diyarbakri, fol. 262a–262b.
- 25 *Ibid.*, fol. 262a, 288a, 291a; Iyas, pp. 375, 396, 397.
- 26 Diyarbakri, fol. 292b.
- 27 *Ibid.*, fol. 294b.
- 28 *Ibid.*, fol. 295a.
- 29 *Ibid.*, fol. 358b. Important information about Janim al-Hamzawi and his sudden execution in Dhu'l-Hijja 944/May 1538 by the order of Siileyman Pasha, the governor of Egypt, is provided by the Meccan chronicler Qutb al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Nahrawali al-Makki, *al-Barq al-Yamani fi'l-fath al-'Uthmani* (Riyad, 1967), pp. 71–5.
- 30 Diyarbakri, fol. 358b–359b.
- 31 *Ibid.*, fol. 259b–296a.
- 32 *Ibid.*, fol. 297b–298a.
- 33 *Ibid.*, fol. 301b–302a, 304b.
- 34 *Ibid.*, fol. 305a–306a.
- 35 *Ibid.*, fol. 307b, 309a–309b.
- 36 *Ibid.*, fol. 314a, 317a, 317b, 322a, 328b.
- 37 *Ibid.*, fol. 321a.
- 38 *Ibid.*, fol. 324b–325a.
- 39 *Ibid.*, fol. 335a–344a.
- 40 *Ibid.*, fol. 336a–337b.

- 41 S.J.Shaw correctly remarks that this Mamluk revolt was not quickly suppressed in 1524 and that Ahmet's followers continued to resist, and gained control of much of the countryside. J.S.Shaw, 'Landholding and Land-tax Revenues in Ottoman Egypt,' in P.M.Holt, ed., *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt* (London, 1968), p. 93, n. 3. It should be added that these followers were bedouin shaykhs, not Mamluks, and that their struggle was not a continuation of the Mamluk revolt but an exclusively bedouin uprising.
- 42 Diyarbakri, fol. 338a–340b.
- 43 Ibid., fol. 341b.
- 44 Ibid., fol. 343a.
- 45 Ibid., fol. 343b.
- 46 Ibid., fol. 345a–345b.
- 47 Ibid., fol. 342b.
- 48 Ibid., fol. 345a.
- 49 Ibid., fol. 342b–343a.
- 50 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 57.
- 51 Diyarbakri, fol. 346a.
- 52 Ibid., fol. 349a.
- 53 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 363 (15).
- 54 Ibid., p. 364 (18).
- 55 Ibid., p. 364 (17).
- 56 *MD*, vol. 26, p. 263, no. 755, Jumada II 24, 982 (October 11, 1574).
- 57 Diyarbakri, fol. 271a.
- 58 See al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, '*Kashf al-kurba fi raf' al-tulba*,' 'Abd al-Rahim 'Abd al-Rahman, ed., *al-Majalla al-Ta'rikhiyya al-Misriyya*, vol. 23, 1976, pp. 356–8.
- 59 *MD*, vol. 24, p. 312, no. 845, Safar 3, 982 (May 25, 1574).
- 60 See P.M.Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–1922* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), p. 51; G.W.F.Stripling, *The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs, 1511–1574* (Urbana, Ill., 1942), pp. 73–4; S.J.Shaw, 'Turkish Source-materials for Egyptian History,' in Holt, ed. *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, pp. 34–5.
- 61 See S.J.Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), pp. 52, 78, 85.
- 62 Ibid., p. 31.
- 63 *MD*, vol. 22, pp. 161–2, no. 315, Rabi' I, 981 (July 1573).
- 64 Diyarbakri, fol. 287a.
- 65 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 149, no. 296, Rabi' I, 981 (July, 1573); vol. 23, p. 209, no. 708, Dhu'l-Qa'da 23, 981 (March 16, 1574); vol. 24, p. 4, no. 9, Dhu'l-Qa'da 16, 981 (March 9, 1574); vol. 26, p. 167, no. 445, Jumada I, 982 (August-September, 1574).
- 66 *MD*, vol. 27, p. 104, no. 254, Sha'ban 18, 983 (November 22, 1575).

- 67 *MD*, vol. 40, p. 11, no. 22, Dhu'l-Hijja 23, 986 (February 20, 1579).
- 68 'Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammad al-Jaziri, *Durar al-fawa'id al-munaz zama fi akhbar al-hajj wa-tariq Makka al-mu'azzama* (Cairo, 1384/ 1964), p. 369; Ahmad al-Rashidi, *Husn al-safa' wa'l-ibtihaj bidhikr man waliya imarat al-hajj* (Ms. B.N.Paris), fol. 53a. These sources speak of Da'ud ibn 'Umar, emir of the Hawwara bedouins in Upper Egypt, Ahmad ibn Baqar, emir of the Judham bedouins in the Sharqiyya, and 'Isa ibn Isma'il, emir of the 'Awna bedouins in the Buhayra.
- 69 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 165, no. 320, Rabi' I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573).
- 70 Hallaq, fol. 77b.
- 71 See P.M.Holt, 'The Beylicite in Ottoman Egypt,' *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London, 1973), pp. 182–3.
- 72 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 184, no. 355, Rabi' I 28, 981 (July 28, 1573).
- 73 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 146, no. 292, Rabi' I 15, 981 (July 15, 1573).
- 74 *MD*, vol. 24, p. 132, no. 365, Dhu'l-Hijja 28, 981 (April 20, 1574); vol. 40, p. 268, no. 622, Ramadan 27, 987 (November 17, 1579).
- 75 *MD*, vol. 23, p. 209, no. 708, Dhu'l-Qa'da 23, 981 (March 16, 1574); vol. 50, p. 15, no. 59, Dhu'l-Qa'da 15, 991 (November 30, 1583); vol. 61, p. 107, no. 267, Sha'ban 24, 994 (August 10, 1585).
- 76 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 151, no. 300, Rabi' II 15, 981 (August 14, 1573).
- 77 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 145, no. 290, Rabi' I 15, 981 (July 15, 1573); *ibid.*, p. 146, no. 291, same date; *ibid.*, no. 292, same date; *ibid.*, p. 149, no. 296, same date; *ibid.*, p. 151, no. 300; *ibid.*, p. 155, no. 307, Rabi' I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573); *ibid.*, pp. 161–2, no. 315, same date; *ibid.*, p. 162, no. 316, same date.
- 78 *MD*, vol. 24, p. 312, no. 845, Safar 3, 982 (May 25, 1574).
- 79 *MD*, vol. 23, p. 178, no. 376, Rajab 29, 981 (November 24, 1573); vol. 36, p. 153, no. 423, Safar 2, 987 (March 31, 1579).
- 80 *MD*, vol. 26, p. 264, no. 757, Jumada II 24, 982 (October 11, 1574).
- 81 See, for example, D.Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti,' *JESHO*, vol. 3, 1960, part 2, p. 151 and part 3, p. 299.
- 82 Hallaq, fol. 87a; *MD*, vol. 10, p. 312, no. 503, Dhu'l-Hijja 22, 987 (May 17, 1571).
- 83 *MD*, vol. 22, pp. 181–2, no. 350, Rabi' I 28, 981 (July 28, 1573).
- 84 On the office of *amir al-hajj* in Ottoman Egypt see Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization*, by index.
- 85 See al-Rashidi, *Husn al-safa' wa'l-ibtihaj*, fol. 53a, 54b, 56a, 57a, 57b; *MD*, vol. 67, p. 123, no. 331, Rajab 23, 999 (May 17, 1591).
- 86 *MD*, vol. 59, pp. 36, 38, nos. 161, 164, 172, Rabi' I 12, 993 (March 14, 1585); *ibid.*, p. 10, no. 34, Rabi' I 25, 993 (April 26, 1585).
- 87 *MD*, vol. 10, p. 312, no. 503, Dhu'l-Hijja 22, 978 (May 17, 1571); vol. 22, p. 148, no. 295, Rabi' I 15, 981 (July 15, 1573); vol. 28, p. 178, no. 413, Rajab 25, 984 (October 19, 1576).

- 88 *MD*, vol. 19, p. 276, no. 552, Rabi' I 26, 980 (August 6, 1572); vol. 28, p. 169; no. 393, Rajab 25, 984 (October 18, 1576).
- 89 *MD*, vol. 22, pp. 163–5, no. 319, Rabi' I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573).
- 90 *MD*, vol. 22, p. 163, no. 318, Rabi' I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573); vol. 22, pp. 165–6, no. 320, Rabi' I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573); vol. 27, pp. 5–6, no. 27, Rajab 1, 983 (October 6, 1575); vol. 28, p. 169, no. 393, Rajab 25, 984 (October 18, 1576); vol. 35, p. 291, no. 738, Shawwal 986 (December 1578).
- 91 *MD*, vol. 21, p. 162, no. 398, Dhu'l-Qa'da 8, 980 (March 11, 1573); vol. 26, p. 173, no. 468, Jumada I 5, 982 (August 23, 1574); vol. 27, p. 104, no. 254, Sha'ban 18, 983 (November 22, 1575); vol. 27, p. 243, no. 565, Dhu'l-Qa'da 5, 983 (February 5, 1576); al-Jaziri, *Durar al-fawa'id*, p. 381.
- An Arabian chronicler familiar with Egyptian affairs reports that Süleyman Pasha, the governor of Egypt from 931/1525 until 941/1535 and again from 942/1536 until 945/1538, ordered the hanging of Da'ud ibn 'Umar, the Arab shaykh of the Sa'id, who was a generous and just ruler, for the purpose of getting hold of his riches. The Pasha accused the bedouin of sending him unclean grain. Two other Arab shaykhs were put to death with him. See al-Nahrawali, *al-Barq al-Yamani*, p. 76.
- 92 *MD*, vol. 50, p. 59, Dhu'l-Qa'da 15, 991 (November 30, 1583); Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization*, p. 88.
- 93 *MD*, vol. 27, p. 243, no. 566, Dhu'l-Qa'da 5, 983 (February 5, 1576).
- 94 *MD*, vol. 19, p. 276, no. 552, Rabi' I 26, 980 (August 6, 1572).
- 95 *MD*, vol. 27, p. 104, no. 254, Sha'ban 18, 983 (November 22, 1575).
- 96 See Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Mu'ti al-Ishaqi, *Kitab akhbar al-uwal fiman tasarrafafi Misr min arbab al-duwal* (Cairo, 1303/1885), p. 167; *MD*, vol. 61, p. 107, no. 267, Sha'ban 24, 994 (August 10, 1586).
- 97 *MD*, vol. 21, p. 92, no. 221, Shawwal 10, 980 (February 13, 1573).
- 98 *MD*, vol. 27, pp. 5–6, no. 27, Rajab 1, 983 (October 6, 1575); vol. 73, p. 464, no. 1023, Shawwal 29, 1003 (May 28, 1595).
- 99 *MD*, vol. 24, pp. 232–3, no. 616, Muharram 26, 982 (May 18, 1574).
- 100 *MD*, vol. 24, p. 250, no. 663, Muharram 26, 982 (May 18, 1574).
- 101 *MD*, vol. 26, p. 229, no. 655, Jumada II, 982 (September, 1574); vol. 27, p. 243, no. 565, Dhu'l-Qa'da 5, 983 (February 5, 1576). On Süleyman Bey (later Pasha), see Holt, 'The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt,' pp. 183 and 218, note 21. See also J.-C. Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la Haute Egypte médiévale: Qus* (Cairo, 1976), p. 516, note 1.
- 102 *MD*, vol. 28, p. 140, no. 333, Rajab 25, 984 (October 18, 1576).
- 103 *MD*, vol. 28, p. 287, no. 715, Rajab 25, 984 (October 18, 1576); vol. 34, p. 264, no. 554, Rabi' I 16, 986 (May 23, 1578).
- 104 *MD*, vol. 29, p. 226, no. 517, Dhu'l-Hijja 14, 984 (March 4, 1577). This is the earliest mention of Süleyman's transfer.

- 105 *MD*, vol. 30, p. 325, no. 754, Rabi' II 14, 985 (June 30, 1577); vol. 36, p. 343, no. 902, same date as above; vol. 43, p. 198, no. 358, Rajab 7, 988 (August 18, 1580).
- 106 *MD*, vol. 33, p. 103, no. 213, Ramadan 20, 985 (November 30, 1577).
- 107 *MD*, vol. 36, p. 343, no. 901, Rabi' II 9, 987 (May 6, 1579); vol. 36, p. 343, no. 902, same date as above; vol. 43, p. 198, no. 358, Rajab 7, 988 (August 18, 1580).
- 108 *MD*, vol. 36, p. 153, no. 423, Safar 2, 987 (March 31, 1579); vol. 40, p. 177, no. 391, Sha'ban 11, 987 (October 3, 1579).
- 109 Compare with Garcin, *op. cit.*, p. 516, note 1.
- 110 Garcin, *op. cit.*, p. 521 ff.
- 111 See Muhammad ibn Abi'l Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, '*Kashf al-kurba fi raf' al-tulba*,' 'Abd al-Rahim 'Abd al-Rahman, ed., *al-Majalla al-Ta'rikhiyya al-Misriyya*, vol. 23, 1976, pp. 358–9.
- 112 See Hallaq, fol. 144a–144b.
- 113 *Ibid.*, fol. 172b–175b.
- 114 See al-Nahrawali, *op. cit.*, pp. 213, 304, 307; Evliya, pp. 264, 776, 1003.
- 115 Abu Salim al-'Ayyashi, *al-Rihla al-'Ayyashiyya (Ma' al-mawa'id)*. M. Hajji, ed. (2nd printing, Rabat, 1977), vol. 1, pp. 118–19.
- 116 See Ahmad Shalabi, p. 193; Hallaq, fol. 240b–241a; 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 92b–94a; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 24, 95. See also, 'Abd al-Rahim 'Abd al-Rahman, '*Dawr al-Maghariba fi ta'rikh Misr fi l-'asr al-hadith*,' *al-Majalla al-Ta'rikhiyya al-Maghribiyya* (Tunis), January 1978, vol. 11, nos. 53–68, pp. 53–6.
- 117 Al-Jaziri, *Durar al-fawa'id*, p. 481 ff. On the *darak* system, see R. Humsch, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des osmanischen Ägypten* (Freiburg i. Br., 1976), pp. 81, 116, 118, 133.
- 118 Al-Jaziri, pp. 154, 405–8.
- 119 *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 408, 481, 486.
- 120 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 374; Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 340, 355; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 285. It should be noted that the epithet al-Jazzar, 'the Butcher,' was given to *honor* an emir who killed 'thousands of bedouins,' Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 111. In the mid-seventeenth century, 'Ali Efendi praised the Egyptian army: 'They (the army commanders) put the heads of 4,500 Arabs in containers like watermelons and brought them to the Divan.' M. Winter, '“Ali Efendi's “Anatolian Campaign Book”: A Defence of the Egyptian Army in the Seventeenth Century,' *Turcica*, vol. 15, 1983, p. 287.
- 121 See Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 203, 442; Hallaq, fol. 237a–237b.
- 122 A. Raymond, 'Une “Revolution” au Caire sous les Mamelouks. La crise de 1123/1711,' *Annales Islamologiques*, vol. 6, 1965, pp. 107, 108, 112.
- 123 R. Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries* (London, 1743), vol. 1, pp. 89, 162.

- 124 See Garcin, *op. cit.*, pp. 522–31; S.J.Shaw, ed., *Ottoman Egypt in the Eighteenth Century: The Nizamname-i Misir of Cezzar Ahmed Pasha* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), p. 41 ff; idem, *Hüseyn Efendi, Egypt in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p. 141.
- 125 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 343–5.
- 126 Ahmad Shalabi's chronicle provides much information on the Habayiba Arabs in the early eighteenth century. See particularly pp. 365, 370, 371, 373, 394–6.
- 127 See Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 345–50.
- 128 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 281, 338–41, 373–4, 395–6; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 118.
- 129 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 335–6, 380.
- 130 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 93.
- 131 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 116.
- 132 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 161–2.

#### 4

### The Ulama

- 1 H.A.R.Gibb and H.Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1957), vol. 1, part 2, p. 99, and note.
- 2 See, for example, I.M.Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 107–13, 130–41. J.Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1939), pp. 28–36.
- 3 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 419.
- 4 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 17–19.
- 5 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 108.
- 6 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 224, 461. For a particularly clear text according to which Isma'il Bey asked the ulama to petition Istanbul to send Turkish troops, see Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 153.
- 7 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 370, 567.
- 8 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 107–8.
- 9 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 28.
- 10 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 393.
- 11 Qutb al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Nahrawali al-Makki, *al-Barq al-Yamani fl'l-fath al-'Uthmani*, Hamad al-Jasir, ed. (Riyad, 1967), p. 400.
- 12 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 214, 224, 312, 583.
- 13 See [Chapter 1](#), pp. 11–12.
- 14 Iyas, p. 165.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 458. The term *qazi'asker* was used to designate Egypt's chief judge throughout the Ottoman period, although in the later period he was also called *menla*, a variant of *mawla* or *mevla*.
- 16 *Ibid.*, pp. 417–19, 452.

- 17 Ibid., pp. 451–2; G.H.El-Nahal, *The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt in the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1979), pp. 12 ff., 47.
- 18 Sa'düddin, *Tajül-tevarih* (Istanbul, n.d.), vol. 2, p. 375; Qutb al-Din al-Nahrawali al-Makki, *Kitab al-i'lam bi-a'lam bayt Allah al-haram*, F.Wüstenfeld, ed. (new printing, Beirut, 1964), p. 282.
- 19 Iyas, p. 453; Diyarbakri, fol. 310a.
- 20 Ibid., fol. 317b. It stands to reason that the supremacy of the Turkish Hanafi *qadi* was reinstated upon the suppression of Ahmet Pasha's rebellion, but evidence is lacking.
- 21 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 382.
- 22 *MD*, vol. 27, no. 248, p. 102, Sha'ban 18, 983 (November 22, 1575).
- 23 Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Tuhfa al-bahiyya fi tamalluk Al 'Uthman al-diyar al-Misriyya* (Ms. H.O. 35, Vienna), fols. 146a–156a; Evliya, p. 1029 f.
- 24 See [Chapter 5](#).
- 25 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 305, 315.
- 26 G.H.El-Nahal, *The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt*, p. 14; A.Raymond, 'Le Caire sous les Ottomans, 1517–1798,' in M.Maury, A.Raymond, J.Revault, M.Zakariya, eds., *Palais et Maisons du Caire*, vol. 2, *L'époque ottomane*, (Paris, 1983), p. 32.
- 27 See, for example, Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 219–27, 236–41.
- 28 See Lane, p. 65.
- 29 Gibb and Bowen, vol. 1, part 2, p. 123, note 4, citing Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 229.
- 30 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 227.
- 31 Evliya, p. 448; Ahmad Shalabi, p. 519; Jabarti (mentioning the three chief muftis), vol. 1, p. 418.
- 32 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 80–1.
- 33 J.Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 77–83; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 219, 304; vol. 2, p. 75.
- 34 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 186–7.
- 35 Gibb and Bowen, vol. 1, part 2, p. 155, note 1.
- 36 See G.Baer, 'Fellah and Townsman in Ottoman Egypt,' *Asian and African Studies* (Jerusalem, 1972), vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 221–56.
- 37 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 164–5, 369.
- 38 See A.Loutfi el-Sayed, 'A Socio-Economic Sketch of the 'Ulama' in the Eighteenth Century,' in *Colloque international sur l'histoire du Caire* (DDR, 1972), pp. 313–9.
- 39 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 73.
- 40 See, for example, Ibn Nujaym, *al-Fatawa al-zayniyya* (Ms. 4115, Garrett collection, Princeton University), fol. 64a-b; *MD*, vol. 26, no. 659, p. 231, Jamada II 8, 982 (September 25, 1574); *MD*, vol. 74, no. 494, p. 205, Muharram 24, 1005 (September 18, 1597); Ahmet Refik, *On altinci asirda İstanbul hayati* (new printing, Istanbul, 1988), vol. 1, p. 33.

- 41 E.Combe, 'L'Egypte ottomane,' *Précis de l'histoire d'Egypte* (Cairo, 1933), vol. 3, p. 27.
- 42 *MM*, vol. 5, no. 212, p. 91, Rabi' II 1, 1157 (August 31, 1734).
- 43 Al-Nahrawali, *Kitab al-i'lam*, p. 333.
- 44 *MD*, vol. 27, no. 249, p. 102, Sha'ban 18, 983 (November 22, 1575); vol. 75, nos. 94, 95, 223, 270, 274, pp. 62, 121, 148, 149, 1013 (1604–5).
- 45 For example, Ahmad Shalabi, p. 332; Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 163.
- 46 G.Baer, *History of Landownership in Modern Egypt, 1800–1950* (London, 1962), pp. 50–61.
- 47 See Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Nuzha al-zahiyya fi dhikr wulat Misr wa'l-Qahira al-mu'izziyya* (Ms. 4995, Garrett Collection, Princeton University), fol. 35a; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 148.
- 48 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, p. 488; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 69, 167–8; *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 98.
- 49 See G.Baer, 'Jerusalem Notables in Ottoman Cairo,' in A.Cohen and G.Baer, eds, *Egypt and Palestine; a Millennium of Association (868–1948)* (Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 167–75; U.M.Kupferschmidt, 'Connections of the Palestinian 'Ulama' with Egypt and other Parts of the Ottoman Empire', in *ibid.*, pp. 182–4. See also Heyworth-Dunne, p. 35.
- 50 Evliya, pp. 195, 196, 205, 216, 218–9, 225, 227, 231, 235, 293.
- 51 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 57.
- 52 Iyas, p. 427.
- 53 Winter, *Society and Religion*, al-Azhar, by index.
- 54 Evliya, pp. 150, 194–6; Abu Salim al-'Ayyashi, *al-Rihla al-'Ayya shiyya*, Muhammad Hajji, ed. (2nd printing, Rabat, 1977), vol. 1, p. 126.
- 55 Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 17–18.
- 56 See *ibid.*, pp. 28–9; Gibb and Bowen, part 2, p. 154, note 3, citing Chabrol; *MM*, vol. 4, no. 203, fol. 48a, *awasit* Shawwal, 1141 (April 30, 1729).
- 57 Heyworth-Dunne, p. 25.
- 58 For an invaluable description of the organization of life and studies at al-Azhar, written in the late nineteenth century, see 'Ali Basha Mubarak, *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-jadida* (Cairo, Bulaq, 1887–9), vol. 4, pp. 20–44. See Gibb and Bowen, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 98–9.
- 59 See D.Crecelius, 'The Emergence of Shaykh al-Azhar as the Preeminent Religious Leader in Egypt,' *Colloque international sur l'histoire du Caire* (DDR, 1972), pp. 109–23; See also: A.C.Eccel, *Egypt, Islam and Social Change: Al-Azhar in Conflict and Accommodation* (Berlin, 1984), p. 203; Sulayman al-Zayyat, *Kanz al-jawhar fi ta'rikh al-Azhar* (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 123–34.
- 60 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 228.
- 61 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 65.

- 62 According to Eccel's list (p. 136), Ibrahim al-Barmawi, the second *Shaykh al-Azhar*, was a Shafi'i. His name is missing from al-Zayyat's list (*Kanz al-jawhar*).
- 63 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 70. It should be noted that although al-Khurashi is usually recognized as the first *Shaykh al-Azhar*, Ahmad Shalabi records the death of *Shaykh al-Azhar* Sultan al-Marahi (vocalization uncertain) on Jumada II 10, 1076 (December 18, 1665). No further details are given. Ahmad Shalabi, p. 162.
- 64 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 208–9.
- 65 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 73, 87.
- 66 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 209.
- 67 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 303–4.
- 68 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 25.
- 69 Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 52–4.
- 70 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 252.
- 71 Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 159–64.
- 72 See G.Baer, 'Popular Revolt in Ottoman Cairo,' *Der Islam*, vol. 54, no. 2 (1977), pp. 213–42.
- 73 Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 8–9.
- 74 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 93.
- 75 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 152.
- 76 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 572.
- 77 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 189.
- 78 Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 8–9, 103–4.
- 79 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 433.
- 80 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 152.
- 81 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 158.
- 82 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 258.

## 5

### The Sufis

- 1 A.Schimmel, 'Sufismus und Heiligenverehrung im spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten (Eine Skizze),' in E.Gräf, ed., *Festschrift Werner Caskel* (Leiden, 1968), pp. 274–89.
- 2 Winter, *Society and Religion*.
- 3 See *ibid.*, pp. 25–31.
- 4 See [Chapter 1](#), p. 10.
- 5 See Schimmel, 'Sufismus.'
- 6 J.Heyworth-Dunne, *Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1939), p. 9, note 3, based on al-Jabarti.
- 7 Muhammad Muhyi'l-Din al-Maliji, *al-Manaqib al-kubra—tadhkirat uli'l-albab fi manaqib al-Sha'rani* (Cairo, 1350/1932), pp. 66–7. For a list of the Sufi orders in nineteenth century Egypt, see 'Ali Basha Mubarak, *al-*

- Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-jadida* (Cairo, Bulaq, 1887–9), vol. 3, pp. 129–30. See also P.Kahle, ‘Zur Organisation der Derwischorden in Egypten,’ *Der Islam*, vol. 6 (1916), pp. 149–69; F. de Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-linked Institutions in Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Leiden, 1978), [chapter 2](#).
- 8 See de Jong, [chapter 1](#).
- 9 Al-Maliji, *al-Manaqib al-kubra*, p. 84.
- 10 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 25–8.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 88–101.
- 12 See, for example, Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 94, 99, 147.
- 13 See J.S.Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 47–51, 84–90; Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 88–93.
- 14 There were exceptions: Evliya mentions a Shadhili *tekke* in Cairo, whose residents were Yemenite Sufis. Evliya, p. 230.
- 15 De Jong, pp. 27, 32.
- 16 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 93–101.
- 17 *Ibid.*, pp. 100–1; De Jong, p. 8; Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 120.
- 18 Jabarti, vol. 4, pp. 119–21.
- 19 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 84.
- 20 Iyas, vol. 5, p. 43.
- 21 Evliya, p. 428.
- 22 Lane, p. 249.
- 23 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 376; De Jong, pp. 16, 117.
- 24 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 98–9.
- 25 Mubarak, vol. 3, pp. 129–30; Kahle, ‘Zur Organisation der Derwischorden in Egypten,’ p. 154, note 3.
- 26 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 104–5, 121–2, note 54. See also Tawfiq al-Tawil, *al-Tasawwuf fi Misr ibban al-‘asr al-‘Uthmani* (Cairo, 1945), p. 112.
- 27 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 102–3, 120–1, note 47.
- 28 Trimmingham, pp. 37–40; De Jong, pp. 18–19; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 109.
- 29 Lane, pp. 248–9, 489. See Trimmingham, pp. 40–4 and by index.
- 30 Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 89, 150.
- 31 H.A.R.Gibb and H.Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1965), vol. 1, part 2, pp. 190–6; De Jong, pp. 26–7.
- 32 Evliya, p. 230.
- 33 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 337.
- 34 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 188; De Jong, p. 34, note 177.
- 35 See B.G.Martin, ‘A Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes,’ in N.R.Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis; Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972), pp. 290–305; Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 105–12; E.Bannerth, ‘La Khalwatiyya en Egypte,’ *Mélanges de l’Institut Dominicaine des Etudes Orientales*, 8 (Cairo, 1964–6), pp. 1–75.

- 36 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani, *al-Tabaqat al-kubra* (Cairo, n.d.), vol. 2, p. 133.
- 37 Diyarbakri, fol. 346b–347a.
- 38 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Munawi (or al-Minawi), *al-Kawakib al-durriyya fi taqat al-sufiyya* (Ms. Garrett 249, Princeton University), fol. 416a.
- 39 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 107–9.
- 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 110–11.
- 41 Al-Munawi, *al-Kawakib al-durriyya*, fol. 466a.
- 42 *Ibid.*, fol. 465b, 466a, 466b.
- 43 Evliya, pp. 219, 228, 229, 255, 429.
- 44 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 60.
- 45 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 30.
- 46 Mustafa al-Bakri was a *sharif* and also claimed descent from Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, the first caliph. He should not be confused with the family of al-Bakri al-Siddiqi which was of an old Egyptian origin.
- 47 On Mustafa al-Bakri, see Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 165; P.Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism; Egypt 1760–1840* (Austin and London, 1979), p. 43 f.; C.Brockelmann, 'Al-Bakri, Mustafa Kamal al-Din,' *EF<sup>2</sup>* vol. 1, p. 965 f.
- 48 See Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 289 ff.
- 49 Al-Hifni's grandson 'opened his house' after his death. Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 76.
- 50 For a biography, see Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 147–8.
- 51 For a complete bibliography, see Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 61–8. On *wird al-sahar*, see Lane, p. 251.
- 52 For-a biography, see Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 159–65.
- 53 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 294–5. It is not certain whether the phrasing is al-Jabarti's; anyway he repeats it with obvious approval. Al-Jabarti viewed al-Sammaniyya, a Khalwati branch, with strong disfavor. See de Jong, p. 28, citing Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 417.
- 54 There is an Arabic history of the family written by a family member. See Muhammad Tawfiq al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Siddiq* (Cairo, 1323/1905). See also N.-C.D., 'Bait as-Siddik. L'aristocratie religieuse en Egypte,' *Revue du Monde Musulman*, vol. 4 (1908), pp. 241–83.
- 55 The village was also called Dahrut al-Ashraf or Dahrut al-Bakriyya. De Jong, p. 9, note 10.
- 56 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 222–3; De Jong, pp. 215–17, for a genealogy of the family, and by index.
- 57 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 223.
- 58 See [Chapter 1](#), p. 19 and [Chapter 2](#), p. 30 ff.
- 59 Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Nuzha al-zahiyya fi dhikr wulat Misr wa'l-Qahira al-mu'izziyya* (Ms. Garrett 4995, Princeton University), fol. 37b–38a.
- 60 See de Jong, pp. 61–62; Evliya, pp. 465–6; Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 191; vol. 4, p. 25.

- 61 See de Jong, p. 11.
- 62 Evliya, p. 474.
- 63 Al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Nuzha al-zahiyya*, fol. 35b–36a.
- 64 See, for example, *MM*, vol. 6, no. 227, fol. 48a, *awasit* Jumada I, 1158 (June 11–20, 1745); vol. 7, no. 758, p. 345, Sha'ban 10, 1172 (April 8, 1759).
- 65 See pp. 195–6.
- 66 See Muhammad Tawfiq al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya* (Cairo, n.d.).
- 67 Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 11; Trimmingham, pp. 49, 87; Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism*, pp. 38 ff.
- 68 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 28; De Jong, p. 76, note 205.
- 69 Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 185 ff.
- 70 Several decrees issued by the Divan of Egypt, which are located at Dar al-Kutub in Cairo, prove that al-Jabarti did not exaggerate with regard to the preferential treatment extended to Abu'l-Anwar by the government. Firmans dated 1196 and 1207 addressed to the local authorities at Fariskur and the Gharbiyya province ordered to exempt the properties included in his *iltizam* from all dues and taxes. See documents nos. 2 and 3, *Ta'rikh* 2784, *Dar al-Kutub*, Cairo.
- 71 See M. Winter, 'Ali ibn Maymun and Syrian Sufism in the Sixteenth Century,' *Israel Oriental Studies*, vol. 7, 1977, p. 294.
- 72 De long, p. 41.
- 73 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 140.
- 74 See, for example, Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 284–5; vol. 2, pp. 28, 89, 127–8.
- 75 See pp. 140–1 above.
- 76 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 57, 126.
- 77 *Ibid.*, pp. 143–4; Winter, 'Ali ibn Maymun,' p. 296.
- 78 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 184–8; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 69, 303–4; vol. 2, p. 61 ff.; vol. 3, p. 238 ff.
- 79 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 338; vol. 2, p. 252.
- 80 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 159; Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 172–6.
- 81 Winter, pp. 153–5; A. Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, 'A Socio-Economie Sketch of the 'Ulama' in the Eighteenth Century,' *Colloque inter national sur l'histoire du Caire* (DDR, 1972), p. 315.
- 82 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 286.
- 83 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 128–9, 150–5.
- 84 Lane, pp. 251–2.
- 85 See Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 69–70.
- 86 See Trimmingham, Chapters IV and VII, for a discussion of the organization of the Sufi orders and their ritual and ceremonial.
- 87 Lane, pp. 479, 489, 491.
- 88 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 139.
- 89 Al-Maliji, *al-Manaqib al-kubra*, the title page; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 287.

- 90 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 142–4.
- 91 See Lane, p. 251.
- 92 Al-Shaʿrani, *al-Tabaqat al-kubra*, vol. 2, p. 118.
- 93 Evliya, pp. 467, 469–70. By the term ‘fellahin’ Evliya could well mean just the native Egyptians in a derogatory way. See Lane, p. 27.
- 94 Jabarti, vol. 3, pp. 39–40.
- 95 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 120.
- 96 ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Shaʿrani, *Lataʿif al-minan* (Cairo, 1357/1939), vol. 1, p. 33; Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 275–6.
- 97 See G.Baer, ‘Fellah and Townsman in Ottoman Egypt,’ *Asian and African Studies* (Jerusalem, 1972), vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 221–56.
- 98 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 57; al-Shaʿrani, *al-Tabaqat al-kubra*, vol. 2, p. 120.
- 99 Jabarti, vol. 4, pp. 63–5.
- 100 See, for example, H.Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600* (London, 1973), pp. 187–93.
- 101 Al-Shaʿrani, *Lataʿif al-minan*, vol. 2, pp. 158–60.
- 102 See, for example, Evliya pp. 240–2, 246–7, 251, 255.
- 103 G.Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times* (Jerusalem, 1964), pp. 125–6.
- 104 Ahmad al-Dimurdashi, *Kitab al-durra al-musana fi akhbar al-kinana* (Ms. Or. 1073–1074, The British Library), fols. 25a–26b.
- 105 See, for example, Evliya, pp. 242, 243, 244, 251, 253, 690.
- 106 Lane, pp. 252–3.
- 107 L.Fernandes, ‘Two Variations on the Same Theme: The *Zawiya* of Hasan al-Rumi and the *Takiyya* of Ibrahim al-Gulshani,’ *Annales Islamologiques*, vol. 21, (1985), pp. 95–111.
- 108 Evliya, pp. 244–5.
- 109 *Ibid.*, p. 580; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 418.
- 110 Mubarak, vol. 2, p. 130; vol. 6, p. 54.
- 111 The episode is reported in several sources. Turkish: Hallaq, fol. 296b–301a. Arabic: Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 251–5; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 48–50. See B.Flemming, ‘Die vorwahhabische Fitna im osmanischen Kairo, 1711,’ *Ismail Hakki Uzunçarşili’ya Armağan* (Ankara, 1976), pp. 55–65; R.Peters, *The Battered Dervishes of Bab Zuwayla: A Religious Riot in Eighteenth Century Cairo* (a paper read at the Hebrew University in June 1985 during the International Colloquium on 18th Century Renewal and Reform Movements in Islam); Gibb and Bowen, vol. 1, part 2, p. 160, note 1. The *fitna* had deeper ethnic connotations than has been noticed.
- 112 See Lane, p. 237.
- 113 Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 49–50.
- 114 It is interesting to note that when al-Jabarti reports the restoration of the famous Bektashi *tekke* at Qasr al-ʿAyni by Hasan Pasha, he writes that the pasha did it at the instigation of a dervish, because ‘the Turks incline to this kind (of religion).’ Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 144.

- 115 See Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 418; see *MM*, vol. 8, no. 668, fol. 18a, *awakhir Rabi' II*, 1188 (July 1–10, 1774). See Daniel Crecelius, 'The *waqf* of Muhammad Bey Abu al-Dhahab in historical perspective,' *IJMES*, vol. 23, no. 1 (February 1991), pp. 57–81.
- 116 Al-Sha'rani, *al-Tabaqat al-kubra*, vol. 2, p. 19.
- 117 See, for example, the case of Qasim al-Maghribi al-Qasri (d. 956/1549 or 1550), who first came to Egypt on his way to Mecca, then returned to his native Fès, and finally returned to settle in Egypt, followed by 500 Sufis. Al-Munawi, *al-Kawakib al-durriyya*, fol. 446b–447a.
- 118 See, for example, Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 210; vol. 2, pp. 261–2; al-Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Warthilani, *Nuzhat al-anzar fi fadl 'ilm al-ta'rikh wa'l-akhbar* (Beirut, 1974, 2nd edn), p. 201; Evliya p. 253.
- 119 Heyworth-Dunne, p. 12.
- 120 Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 39; Lane, pp. 466–7.
- 121 Evliya, p. 253.
- 122 *Ibid.*, p. 242.
- 123 *Ibid.*, p. 251.
- 124 See 'ahwa,' in *EP<sup>2</sup>*, vol. 4, p. 451, by C. van Arendonk.
- 125 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 58–9, 230–6.
- 126 Cited in al-Sha'rani, *Lawaqih al-anwar al-qudsiyya fi bayan al-'uhud al-Muhammadiyya* (Cairo, 1381/1961), vol. 1, p. 67.
- 127 This saying, attributed to Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. 261/875) the famous Persian Sufi, is cited in al-Sha'rani, *al-Tabaqat al-kubra*, vol. 1, p. 5.
- 128 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 192–5.
- 129 *Ibid.*, pp. 236–41.
- 130 *Ibid.*, pp. 58–9.
- 131 For a list of Sufi texts studied at al-Azhar, see Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 56–7.
- 132 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 47, 78; al-Sha'rani, *al-Tabaqat al-kubra*, vol. 2, pp. 155–6; I. Goldziher, 'Über den Brauch der *Mahya* — Versammlungen im Islam,' *WZKM*, vol. 15 (1901), pp. 33–50.
- 133 Al-Munawi, *al-Kawakib al-durriyya fi tabaqat al-sufiyya*, fol. 455b.
- 134 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 337.
- 135 See Tawfiq al-Tawil, *al-Tasawwuf fi Misr ibban al-'asr al-'Uthmani*, p. 180.
- 136 Jabarti, vol. 2, pp. 17–18.
- 137 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 252.
- 138 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 52.
- 139 *Ibid.*, vol. 1., p. 210.
- 140 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 262–72.
- 141 See, for example, Evliya, p. 241.
- 142 See, for example, Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 100.
- 143 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 382.
- 144 See note 115.

145 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 362.

## 6

### Popular Religion

- 1 See Lane, p. 234: ‘Some of them go about perfectly naked, and are so highly venerated, that the women, instead of avoiding them, sometimes suffer these wretches to take any liberty with them in a public street.’
- 2 See M. Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 112–6.
- 3 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 28.
- 4 Ibid. vol. 1, p. 47; vol. 4, p. 65.
- 5 Ridwan Pashazade, *Ta’rih-i Misir* (Ms.H.O. 6; Mxt 933, Vienna), the end of the ms.
- 6 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 248.
- 7 Ibid., vol. 3, p. 141.
- 8 Mustafa ‘Ali, p. 33.
- 9 Lane, pp. 243–5.
- 10 Ibid., p. 468; Mustafa ‘Ali, p. 41.
- 11 H.A.R.Gibb and H.Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1957), vol. 1, part 2, p. 202, note 3.
- 12 See, for example, Evliya, pp. 471–3, 476, 551, 557, 560–3, 573, 575, 579–80, 629–30, 637, 647, 747, 749.
- 13 See Ahmad Amin, *Qamus al-‘adat wa’l-taqalid wa’l-ta‘abir al-Misriyya* (Cairo, 1953), p. 269; R. and H.H.Kriss, *Volksglaube im Bereich des Islams* (Wiesbaden, 1960), vol. 1, p. 217.
- 14 See ibid., pp. 69, 112; Evliya, pp. 260–2.
- 15 Ibid., pp. 650, 652, 654.
- 16 Ali Basha Mubarak, *al-Khitat al-Tawflqiyya al-jadida li-Misr al-Qahira wa-muduniha al-qadima wa’l-shahira* (Cairo, Bulaq, 1887–9), vol. 10, p. 60; vol. 13, p. 61.
- 17 Kriss, pp. 112, 115.
- 18 Evliya, p. 256.
- 19 Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Fihri al-Fasi, *al-Rihla*, (Ms. 1403, *Ta’rikh, Dar al-Kutub*, Cairo), pp. 105, 201, 282.
- 20 Lane, p. 243 ff.; Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 6; Evliya, pp. 552, 557, 638; Kriss, vol. 1, p. 60.
- 21 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 6.
- 22 Iyas, pp. 346–8. Naturally, parallels from Christianity come immediately to mind.
- 23 See Evliya, p. 562 ff.
- 24 Winter, *Society and Religion*, p. 141, citing al-Munawi.
- 25 See for example, Mubarak, vol. 2, pp. 36, 40; vol. 4, pp. 19, 23, 27, 44, 45, 127; vol. 5, p. 75; vol. 8, p. 112; vol. 11, pp. 15, 16; vol. 12, pp. 129, 138; vol. 14, p. 108; vol. 15, pp. 4, 76; Kriss, pp. 116–18.

- 26 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 201; vol. 4, p. 295.
- 27 Ibid., vol. 3, p. 112.
- 28 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 306, 382; vol. 3, pp. 40, 112, 229; Mubarak, vol. 15, p. 72.
- 29 See Mubarak, vol. 4, pp. 90, 101; Lane, pp. 244–5; Kriss, pp. 61, 68.
- 30 See Kriss, pp. 61, 207–8; Ahmad Amin, *Qamus*, p. 322; M.Meyerhof, 'Beitraege zum Volksheilglauben der heutigen Aegypter,' *Der Islam*, vol. 7 (1917), p. 335.
- 31 See S.M.Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islam* (London, 1920), p. 72; W.S.Blackman, 'Some Social and Religious Customs in Modern Egypt with Special Reference to Survivals from Ancient Times,' *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte*, vols. 13–14, (1924–26), pp. 47–61.
- 32 W.S.Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt* (London, 1927), p. 247; Kriss, p. 81.
- 33 See, for example, Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 306; vol.4, p. 64; Mubarak, vol. 10, p. 93.
- 34 See, for example, Blackman, 'Some Social and Religious Customs,' Meyerhof, 'Beitraege,' p. 340; Kriss, vol. 1, pp. 211, 217.
- 35 Mubarak, vol. 3, p. 16.
- 36 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 60; Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 225.
- 37 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 382.
- 38 Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 38, 81.
- 39 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 148; vol. 3, p. 188.
- 40 A *mawlid* is literally a birthday; in popular Islam it meant the celebration of a saint's birthday, the high point of which was a visit to his or her tomb. Many *mawlids* were celebrated on the day of the saint's death and not his birthday; in most cases neither date is exactly known. A study of the various contexts in which the term was used leads us to extend its meaning beyond its accepted definition to include any Sufi or religious celebration, even if unrelated to a certain saint. See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 177–84; see H.Fuchs, 'Mawlid,' *EI*, pp. 419–22.
- 41 See Mubarak, vol. 3, p. 131; J.W.McPherson, *The Moulids of Egypt* (Cairo, 1941), p. 29; G.E. von Grunebaum, *Mohammadan Festivals* (London, 1958), pp. 73–6.
- Saints' days are not peculiar to Islam. They resemble, for example, the seventeenth century English fairs which were likewise related to saints. The Western fairs are often named after saints but have lost their religious nature. See Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt*, p. 253.
- 42 See, for example, Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 120; Mubarak, vol. 2, pp. 6, 92, 117; vol. 3, p. 93; vol. 4, p. 64; vol. 11, p. 57.
- 43 McPherson, pp. 13, 15, 18; Kriss, pp. 85, 79, 173–4.
- 44 See Evliya, pp. 473–4.
- 45 Mubarak, vol. 2, p. 78; McPherson, p. 33.

- 46 Mubarak, vol. 13, p. 50.
- 47 McPherson, pp. 31, 287.
- 48 Evliya, p. 472.
- 49 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 220.
- 50 Evliya, p. 476.
- 51 Jabarti, vol. 4, pp. 39–40.
- 52 Ibid., p. 163.
- 53 Mubarak, vol. 9, p. 61.
- 54 McPherson, p. 132; Kriss, p. 106.
- 55 McPherson, pp. 232, 257.
- 56 Kriss, p. 61; Lane, pp. 476–7; McPherson, p. 306.
- 57 Mubarak, vol. 11, p. 18.
- 58 Ibid., vol. 3, p. 72; McPherson, p. 183.
- 59 Mubarak, vol. 13, p. 53.
- 60 McPherson, p. 228.
- 61 Mubarak, vol. 2, p. 6; vol. 13, p. 50. For an earlier description of al-Badawi's *mawlid*, see Evliya, pp. 624–6.
- 62 Mubarak, vol. 1, p. 92.
- 63 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 39; vol. 8, pp. 25, 43; vol. 10, pp. 39, 58.
- 64 McPherson, pp. 17, 18, 246; Kriss, vol. 1, p. 71.
- 65 McPherson, pp. 13, 18.
- 66 Ibid., p. 52; Mubarak, vol. 1, p. 90.
- 67 Mubarak, vol. 2, p. 6; vol. 3, p. 72; vol. 4, p. 118.
- 68 Ibid., vol. 9, p. 61.
- 69 Ibid., vol. 3, p. 40; vol. 8, p. 77.
- 70 McPherson, p. 199; Meyerhof, 'Beitraege,' p. 338; Kriss, vol. 1, p. 106.
- 71 Mubarak, vol. 1, p. 92.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 6; vol. 8, p. 2; vol. 14, p. 97.
- 74 Evliya, pp. 624–5, 644–5.
- 75 Mubarak, vol. 5, p. 94.
- 76 Ibid., vol. 15, p. 47.
- 77 Evliya, p. 475.
- 78 Ibid., pp. 469–70.
- 79 Ibid., p. 476.
- 80 Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 3.
- 81 Mubarak, vol. 12, p. 96.
- 82 McPherson, p. 70.
- 83 Mubarak, vol. 1, p. 92.
- 84 Lane, p. 463; P.Kahle, 'Zur Organisation der Derwischorden in Egypten,' *Der Islam*, vol. 6 (1916), p. 153, note 2.
- 85 Mubarak, vol. 3, p. 133.
- 86 Evliya, p. 472.

- 87 Jabarti, vol. 3, pp. 39–40; Mubarak, vol. 4, pp. 69, 114; vol. 12, pp. 96–7; vol. 17, p. 23. Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Fasi, a Moroccan traveler who visited Cairo at the end of the eighteenth century was unfavorably impressed by the vulgar *dhikr* he witnessed at the al-Husayni mosque. Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Fasi, *al-Rihla* (Ms *Ta'rikh* 1403, *Dar al-Kutub*, Cairo), p. 203.
- 88 Mubarak, vol. 3, p. 131; vol. 4, p. 118.
- 89 McPherson, pp. 68, 78; Kriss, vol. 1, p. 57; G.E. von Grunebaum, *Mohammedan Festivals*, p. 83; W.S.Blackman, 'An Ancient Egyptian Custom Illustrated by a Modern Survival,' *Man*, 1925, pp. 25–6; Mubarak, vol. 1, p. 42; vol. 12, p. 106.
- 90 Mubarak, vol. 13, p. 45.
- 91 See *ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 2; vol. 9, pp. 5, 83; vol. 11, p. 8; vol. 15, p. 5; Evliya, p. 635.
- 92 Evliya, p. 644.
- 93 Mubarak, vol. 1, p. 94.
- 94 Jabarti, vol. 3, pp. 190, 223.
- 95 Mubarak, vol. 14, p. 123; McPherson, pp. 74–83; Ahmad Amin, *Qamus*, p. 218.
- 96 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 182–3.
- 97 Mubarak, vol. 11, p. 7.
- 98 Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani cited in I.Goldziher, 'Le culte des saints chez les Musulmans,' *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* (Paris, 1880), vol. 2, p. 310.
- 99 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 104.
- 100 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 57, 98, citing al-Sha'rani's *al-Tabaqat al-kubra*, vol. 2, p. 57.
- 101 Sha'rani, vol. 1, pp. 220–1; vol. 2, p. 248.
- 102 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 6. Al-Jabarti's logic in this case is flawed. In his hatred of the French he seems to forget that they were not the ones who introduced the *mawlid*s to Egypt. It is absolutely clear from al-Jabarti's own lucid account, that the real motivation of the French in encouraging, even forcing, the Egyptians to celebrate the Prophet's *mawlid* was to return life back to normal in Cairo after the confusion caused by the conquest.
- 103 Mubarak, vol. 4, p. 118; vol. 8, p. 2; vol. 12, p. 96; vol. 14, p. 132.

## 7

**The Ashraf and Naqib al-Ashraf**

- 1 See C. van Arendonk, 'Sharif,' *El*, vol. 4, pp. 324–9; P.Hitti, *History of the Arabs* (London 1960), p. 440, n. 4. This distinction between *sharif* and *sayyid* was adhered to particularly in Arabia. See H.A.R. Gibb and H.Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1957), vol. 1, part 2, p. 93, n. 1.

- 2 During the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, this restriction of the term *ashraf*, aroused the resentment of Egyptian ulama and Sufis who were as a rule orthodox Sunnis. However, the usage became firmly established and could not be changed. See Muhammad Tawfiq al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Siddiq* (Cairo, AH 1323), p. 395; Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, *al-Hawi li'l-fatawi*, 2nd edn (Cairo, 1378/1959), vol. 2, p. 84; 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani, *Lata'if al-minan* (Cairo, AH 1357/1938), vol. 1, pp. 5, 108.
- 3 Lane, p. 135. In Persia, the descendants of both Hasan and Husayn are called *sada*, see H.Lammens, *Islam: Its Beliefs and Institutions* (Hebrew trans., Jerusalem, 1955), p. 110. In Chubaysh in southern Iraq, only the term *sada* is used, see S.M.Salim, *Marsh Dwellers of the Euphrates Delta* (London, 1962), pp. 62–4.
- 4 See, for example, Mubarak, vol. 11, p. 84; vol. 15, p. 10.
- 5 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 83; vol. 13, p. 40.
- 6 Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 278.
- 7 See, for example, *al-Ahram*, March 11, 1937; November 29, 1939; *al-Balagh*, February 21, 1942; March 26, 1942.
- 8 Al-Yafi'i, a fourteenth century Yamani Sufi, explains that anyone who struggles heroically is a *sharif* (even if not descended from the Prophet's house). Thus, since the Sufis struggle against 'the self,' (*nafs*), which is a man's enemy, they are entitled to this appellation. See 'Abdallah al-Yafi'i, *Nashr al-mahasin al-ghaliya fi fadl al-masha'ikh al-sufiyya* (Cairo, 1961), p. 100.
- 9 See J.S.Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971), p. 27.
- 10 For the expressions of admiration addressed to *ashraf* by 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani, the important sixteenth century Egyptian Sufi writer, see Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 278–82. See the biography of the Sufi al-Sayyid Muhammad ibn 'Uthman al-Dimirdashi al-Khalwati in Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 60. On *sada ashraf* holding central positions in the Qadiri order, see *ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 89, 150.
- 11 Ahmad Amin, *Qamus al-'adat wa'l-taqalid wa'l-ta'abir al-Misriyya* (Cairo, 1953), p. 199.
- 12 The marriage of a *sharif* with a *sharifa* woman was considered socially desirable. Also, the marriage of a non-*sharif* with a *sharifa* conferred upon him a social distinction. Since the subject of *sharaf* is not included in formal Islam, and is a purely social issue which belongs to the area of popular religion, there are no binding legal decisions about it. There is no unanimity concerning the descent which confers the status of a *sharif*; likewise, there are different opinions concerning the status of a *sharifa*'s son by a non-*sharif* man. Some ulama have decided that he was not a *sharif*. See van Arendonk, p. 327, who cites a *fatwa* by Ibn Hajar al-Haythami. See also al-Suyuti, *al-Hawi*, vol. 2, p. 83. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that such a man was regarded as a *sharif* in Egyptian society, although his claim for *sharaf* is weaker. See al-Sha'rani, *Lata'if*

- al-minan*, vol. 2, p. 33; Lane, p. 135, n. 1. Regarding the twentieth century, see J.Berque, *Histoire sociale d'un village égyptien au XXe siècle* (Paris, 1957), p. 62.
- 13 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 56.
  - 14 Mubarak, vol. 3, p. 134.
  - 15 Ibid., vol. 8, p. 22.
  - 16 Ibid., vol. 8, p. 32; vol. 11, p. 5.
  - 17 Ibid., vol. 11, p. 96.
  - 18 Ibid., vol. 15, p. 12.
  - 19 Ibid., vol. 9, p. 84; vol. 11, p. 64. See also H.Ammar, *Growing Up in an Egyptian Village* (London, 1954).
  - 20 Berque, p. 61. Apparently, the majority of *ashraf* settled in the early Islamic period, many of whom moved to Lower Egypt only more recently. Awareness of *sharifism*, like other facets of popular religion, is stronger in Upper than in Lower Egypt.
  - 21 Mubarak, vol. 11, p. 4; al-Maqrizi, *al-Bayan wa'l-i'rab*, 'Abd al-Majid 'Abidin, ed. (Cairo, 1961), pp. 9–10, 38. Al-Maqrizi expressly states that the bedouin ('urban) of Egypt were repelled by the rule of the 'Turkish Mamluks' and revolted under the leadership of an Arab emir who was also a *sharif*.
  - 22 Mubarak, vol. 10, p. 65.
  - 23 Ibid., vol. 11, p. 84.
  - 24 See, for example, *MM*, vol. 78, no. 1039, p. 404, Safar 14, 1022 (April 5, 1613).
  - 25 Al-Suyuti, *al-Hawi*, vol. 2, p. 85; See also van Arendonk, *EI*, pp. 324–9.
  - 26 See the description of the French traveler Villamont, who visited Egypt at the end of the sixteenth century. Villamont, *Voyages en Egypte des années 1589, 1590 et 1591* (Cairo, 1971), pp. 215–16. See also Lane, pp. 32, 135. Green is considered a 'good' color. According to the Koran, 18: 31, the clothes worn in paradise are green.
  - 27 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, *Ta'rikh-i Misr-i Qahire* (Ms. Add. 7878, The British Library), fol. 97b. See also Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 195.
  - 28 See, for example, Evliya, p. 161.
  - 29 Mubarak, vol. 15, p. 95.
  - 30 M. de Chabrol, 'Essai sur les moeurs des habitants modernes de l'Egypte,' *Description de l'Egypte* (Paris, 1812), vol. 2, pp. 457–8.
  - 31 See, for example, *Iyas*, vol. 3, p. 218; vol. 5, p. 149. On the immunity of the *ashraf* in Aleppo from corporal punishment, see H.L.Bodman, Jr., *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760–1826* (Durham, 1963), p. 921.
  - 32 Evliya, p. 161.
  - 33 *MM*, vol. 6, no. 268, fol. 59a, *awasit* Muharram 1159 (February 3–12, 1746); Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 375, 472.
  - 34 *MD*, vol. 60, no. 515, p. 217, Rabi' II 3, 994 (July 2, 1586).
  - 35 Mubarak, vol. 13, p. 44.

- 36 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, *Tevarih-i Misr-i Qahire* (a manuscript in the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Hacci Mahmut Efendi, no. 4877), fol. 112b–113a.
- 37 Mubarak, vol. 15, p. 97; Hallaq, fol. 170b.
- 38 Mubarak, vol. 15, p. 99.
- 39 *Archives Nationales*, Affaires étrangères, Correspondance consulaire, B 315, III, le Caire, pp. 110b, 120b.
- 40 Hallaq, fol. 243b–244a.
- 41 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 256–7; Hallaq, fol. 302b–303a; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 50.
- 42 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 103.
- 43 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 56a, 87b, 106a; Hallaq, fol. 93b. See also Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 162.
- 44 Hallaq, fol. 95b.
- 45 See M. Winter, 'The *ashraf* and *niqabat al-ashraf* in Egypt in Ottoman and Modern Times,' *Asian and African Studies* (Haifa), vol. 19, no. 1, March 1985, pp. 17–41.
- 46 E. Tyan, *Histoire de l'organisation judiciaire en pays d'Islam*, 2nd edn. (Leiden 1969), pp. 550–4; M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie à l'époque des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1923), p. 163.
- 47 In his list of religious functionaries Ibn Iyas mentioned *Naqib al-ashraf* in a very modest place, almost at the end. See Iyas, p. 5.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 302.
- 49 One may argue that the appointment was made shortly after the occupation, at a time when the people were still cowed into accepting anything the Ottomans chose to impose. However, in matters of true importance to the Egyptians, such as interference in traditional judicial procedures or in the command of the pilgrims' caravan, the local ulama did not hesitate to protest to the new rulers (as is clearly reflected in the chronicler's comments). See, for example, Iyas, pp. 243, 246, 417, 418, 428. It would rather appear that the office of *Naqib al-ashraf* was not of sufficient importance to warrant a confrontation with the Ottoman authorities.
- 50 It is interesting to note that 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani, the Sufi who wrote many treatises and books including biographies of ulama and Sufis during the first forty years of Ottoman rule in Egypt, does not mention *Naqib al-ashraf* even once, although he does speak of *ashraf*. See note 10 above.
- 51 Diyarbakri, fol. 316b.
- 52 Al-Jabarti says of the office of *Naqib al-ashraf*: 'It is the rank of *wali* with the Ottomans.' Vol. 4, p. 244.
- 53 See Gibb and Bowen, part 2, pp. 99–100.
- 54 A complaint against a *sharif* had to be addressed to *Naqib al-ashraf*. One against a common Muslim was addressed to the *shar'i* (religious) court, and one against a soldier, to his regiment (*ojaq*). Jabarti, vol. 3, p. 116.

- 55 See R.Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries* (London, 1743), vol. I, p. 171; de Chabrol, p. 458.
- 56 N.-C. D., 'L'aristocratie religieuse en Egypte-Bait as-Siddik,' *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 4/2. p. 275.
- 57 Mubarak, vol. 12, p. 96.
- 58 See accusations against 'Umar Makram for paying allowances to people not entitled to them, in Jabarti, vol. 4, pp. 10, 194.
- 59 Ibid., vol. 4, p. 16; vol. 3, p. 201.
- 60 Ibid., vol. 3, p. 195.
- 61 Mubarak, vol. 4, p. 19; vol. 8, p. 39.
- 62 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 74; vol. 2, p. 150; vol. 3, p. 148; vol. 4, p. 196.
- 63 Mubarak, vol. 13, p. 52.
- 64 Ibid., vol. 12, p. 96.
- 65 Ibid., vol. 15, p. 96. Jabarti mentions *Nuqaba al-ashraf* of Rashid, Dimyat and Damanhur. See also Gibb and Bowen, vol. 1, part 2, p. 101, n.4.
- 66 Mubarak, vol. 8, p. 30.
- 67 See, for example, *MM*, vol. 7, no. 758, pp. 345–6, Sha'ban 10, 1172 (April 8, 1759); Ahmad Shalabi, p. 320.
- 68 Hallaq, fol. 124b; Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 312, 472.
- 69 Hallaq, fol. 169b, 170b.
- 70 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 226; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 74.
- 71 Evliya, pp. 161, 288, 328, 639.
- 72 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 74.
- 73 Hallaq, fol. 268b.
- 74 See the list of the incumbents of the *niqabat al-ashraf* from c. 1750 until 1911, in F. de Jong, *Turuq and Turuq-Linked Institutions in Nineteenth Century Egypt* (Leiden, 1978), pp. 220–1.
- 75 Mubarak, vol. 3, p. 123. See also al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Siddiq*, p. 7. In this book Shaykh al-Bakri, who was *Naqib al-ashraf* and the head of the Sufi orders in Egypt at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries writes the history of his family. The author provides interesting information about his own lifetime, but adds little about the Ottoman period to what he copies from al-Sha'rani, al-Nabulsi, al-Jabarti and others.
- 76 Al-Bakri, p. 6.
- 77 Al-Sha'rani, *al-Tabaqat al-sughra*, 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata, ed. (Cairo, 1390/1970), pp. 50–2.
- 78 B.G.Martin, 'A Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes,' in N.R.Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints and Sufis* (Berkeley, 1972), pp. 297–8.
- 79 Muhammad Tawfiq al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya* (Cairo, n.d. [c. 1900]) pp. 33, 57.
- 80 Al-Sha'rani, *Lata'if al-minan*, vol. 2, pp. 17, 106–7.
- 81 Gibb and Bowen, vol. 1, part 2, p. 101; Lane, p. 247.
- 82 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 154; vol. 3, pp. 15, 80, 225, 257.

- 83 Ibid., vol. 4, p. 120.
- 84 See S.J.Shaw, *The Budget of Ottoman Egypt, 1005–1006/1596–1597* (The Hague-Paris 1968), p. 182; idem, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), p. 139; F.Vansleb, *The Present State of Egypt* (London, 1678; reprinted Westmead, England, 1972), p. 175.
- 85 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 260; vol. 2, pp. 27, 28; Ahmad Amin, p. 172; al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Siddiq* (French version), p. 267.
- 86 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 316.
- 87 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 72.
- 88 It should be noted that at some unknown earlier date, probably in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Mamluk emirs prevented a *sharif* from Hamat from assuming the office of *Naqib al-ashraf* in Egypt, although he had received an appointment from Istanbul. This man had occupied various offices in Egypt and had also married into the Bakri family. Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 101.
- 89 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 252.
- 90 For the historical background, see P.M.Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516–1922* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), pp. 99–100.
- 91 'Umar's lack of organic social connections with the high ulama in the capital is inferred from Shaykh al-Mahdi's suggestion to Mehmet 'Ali to dismiss him from the *niqaba*: '*Huwa lay sa ilia bina wa-idha khala 'anna fala yaswa bishay*'. In *huwa ilia sahib hirfa aw jabi waqf yajma 'u al-irad wayasrifuhu 'ala al-mustahiqqina*.' Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 96. 'Umar Makram was a rich man and administered many important *awqaf*, such as *waqf* al-Imam al-Shafi'i and *waqf* Sinan Pasha in Bulaq. See *ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 99; see also Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, 'The Political and Economic Functions of the Ulama in the 18th Century,' *JESHO*, vol. 16 (1973), pp. 141, 153–4. Al-Mahdi meant that all of 'Umar's functions as director of *awqaf* depended upon his office as *Naqib al-ashraf*, and that his dismissal would leave him without economic power, in distinction to the important ulama who were directors of *awqaf* and *multazims* because of their social and religious position despite the fact that they held no office. Two studies have been written in Egypt on 'Umar Makram: 'Abd al-'Aziz Muhammad al-Shinawi, *'Umar Makram batal al-muqawama al-sha'biyya* (Cairo, 1967) and Muhammad Farid Abu Hadid, *al-Sayyid 'Umar Makram* (Cairo, 1951).
- 92 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 258.
- 93 See his biography in *ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 86–8.
- 94 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 295.
- 95 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 96.
- 96 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 100.
- 97 *Shaykh masha'ikh al-sufiyya* was chairman of the supreme council of the Sufi orders, whose resolutions had to be ratified by the government.' See

- P.Kahle, 'Zur Organisation der Derwischorden in Egypten,' *Der Islam*, vol. 6 (1916), p. 152. Our assumption about the drastic decline in the power of *niqabat al-ashraf* in the nineteenth century is supported by de Jong's detailed study of the Sufi orders in that century. De Jong's thorough research necessarily concentrates on the heads of the Sufi orders, and the Bakris' function as *nuqaba' ashraf* is hardly mentioned.
- 98 Al-Bakri, *Bayt al-Siddiq*, p. 20; French version, pp. 266–7.

## 8

**The *Dhimmi*s: Jews and Christians**

- 1 Exact figures are not available. Yet at the end of the eighteenth century, the total Coptic community of Egypt was estimated at 150,000, or about one-seventh of the entire population. One-fifteenth of the Copts, or 10,000, lived in Cairo. The majority of the Copts lived in Upper Egypt and the Fayyum region. The total number of the Jews in Egypt at the same time was about 5,000. The majority (3,000) were concentrated in the capital, and the rest in Alexandria, Damietta, Rosetta, and other towns. See H.Motzki, *Ḍimma und Egalité; die nichtmuslimischen Minderheiten Ägyptens in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts und die Expedition Bonapartes (1798–1801)*, (Bonn, 1979), pp. 25–6; J.Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London, 1939), pp. 84–7.
- 2 See for example, E.Strauss (Ashtor), *The History of the Jews in Egypt and Syria under the Mamluks* (Jerusalem, 1944, in Hebrew), vol. 2, pp. 204–36; idem, 'The Social Isolation of Ahl adh-Dhimma,' in O.Komlós, ed., *Études orientales à la mémoire de P.Hirschler* (Budapest, 1950), pp. 73–94.
- 3 Strauss, *History of the Jews in Egypt and Syria*, vol. 2, p. 176.
- 4 Iyas, p. 182.
- 5 Ibid., p. 232.
- 6 Ibid., p. 184.
- 7 Ibid., pp. 254–5, 337, 377–8, 445, 453, 480.
- 8 See p. 12 above. It should be noted, however, that this particular Jew was not an Egyptian, but came from the Turkish provinces, if the report of the Turkish chronicler Diyarbakri, who calls him 'Rumlu' (a Turk) is accurate. Diyarbakri, fol. 266b–268a.
- 9 Iyas, p. 289.
- 10 Ibid., p. 374.
- 11 S.J.Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), p. 103.
- 12 See Diyarbakri, fol. 326a; Eliyahu Kapsali, *Seder Eliyahu Zuta* (in Hebrew), A.Shmuelevich, Sh. Simonson, M.Benayahu, eds (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1966), vol. 2, p. 168; Joseph Sambari, *Selections* (in

- Hebrew), A. Neubauer, ed. (Oxford, 1887), vol. 1, p. 145; Diyarbakri, fol. 326a.
- 13 Sambari, p. 145.
  - 14 Diyarbakri, fol. 327a–b.
  - 15 Kapsali, vol. 2, pp. 147–201; Sambari, p. 145.
  - 16 Although Ahmet was an Ottoman Pasha, his uprising should be considered as a Mamluk rebellion, since it called for the restoration of the Mamluk Sultanate and appealed to Mamluk support. See above pp. 14–16.
  - 17 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, pp. 381–2.
  - 18 *MD*, vol. 7, no. 859, p. 302, Sha'ban 13, 975 (February 12, 1568); vol. 30, no. 691, p. 299, Rabi' I 28, 985 (June 15, 1577).
  - 19 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 386.
  - 20 See, for example, Evliya, pp. 135, 179; A. Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 228, 282, 335, 461–2; S.J. Shaw, ed., *Hüseyn Efendi, Egypt in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 46, 115–6 and note 157.
  - 21 Jabarti, vol. 4, p. 205.
  - 22 See Shaw, *Hüseyn Efendi*, pp. 115–16, note 157; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 228, 282, 459, 460. Raymond says (p. 336) that it is not true that the majority of the *sarrafs* were Jews; his sample included more Muslims than Jews. Yet the stereotype of the Jewish moneylender persisted.
  - 23 It is interesting to note that the Copts were identified with financial book-keeping to such a degree that the term *al-kataba* (clerks) became synonymous with the Copts. See Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 262; vol. 3, pp. 154–5.
  - 24 See R. Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries* (London, 1743), vol. 1, 176–7; H. Dehérain, 'L'Egypte turque' in G. Hanotaux, *Histoire de la Nation Egyptienne* (Paris, 1931), vol. 5, pp. 80–2.
  - 25 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 740.
  - 26 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, *Tevarih-i Misr-i Qahire* (Ms. 4877, Hacci Mahmut Collection, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul), fol. 7a.
  - 27 Evliya, p. 135.
  - 28 Lane, p. 562.
  - 29 See Hallaq, fol. 235a–b; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 27; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, vol. 1, p. 27.
  - 30 *MM*, vol. 8, no. 395, p. 197, *awasit* Jumada I, 1179 (October 26–December 4, 1765).
  - 31 *MM*, vol. 8, no. 343, pp. 171–2, *awa'il* Safar, 1179 (July 20–29, 1765); no. 345, pp. 172–3 (same date); no. 380, pp. 188–9, *awakhir* Ramadan, 1179 (March 3–12, 1766); no. 475, pp. 242–5, *awa'il* Muharram, 1180 (April 15–24, 1766).

- 32 See J.M.Landau, *Jews in Nineteenth Century Egypt* (New York, 1969), pp. 134, 150, 157, 171, 205, 207, 215, 239, 243.
- 33 *MD*, vol. 42, no. 1011, pp. 330–1, Shawwal 21, 988 (November 29, 1580).
- 34 Pococke, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
- 35 Already in the Middle Ages, when the customs officers at the Alexandria sea-port were Muslims, there was serious friction between them and Maghribi pilgrims. See, for example, the bitter criticism directed by Ibn Jubayr, the Spanish traveler, against Saladin's customs officers whom he encountered on his journey during the 1180s at Alexandria and Qus in Upper Egypt. Ibn Jubayr, *Rihla* (Leiden, 1907), pp. 39–40, 63.
- 36 *MD*, vol. 30, no. 733, Rabi' I 8, 985 (May 26, 1577).
- 37 *Ibid.*, vol. 7, no. 859, p. 302, Sha'ban 13, 975 (February 12, 1568).
- 38 *Ibid.*, vol. 3, no. 691, p. 299, Rabi' I 28, 985 (May 13, 1580).
- 39 See A.S.Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, NY, 1972), p. 180.
- 40 *MD*, vol. 50, no. 170, Dhu'l-Qa'da 1, 993 (October 25, 1585).
- 41 *Ibid.*, vol. 35, no. 750, p. 296, Sha'ban 19, 986 (October 21, 1578).
- 42 *Ibid.*, vol. 53, no. 427, p. 147, Sha'ban 25, 992 (September 1, 1584).
- 43 *MM*, vol. 8, no. 527, fol. 142a, *awasit* Rajab, 1181 (December 3–12, 1767).
- 44 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, no. 334, fol. 75a, (the volume contains documents from 1139/1726 until 1146/1733). For the general Ottoman background, see O.L.Barkan, 'The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East,' *IJMES*, vol. 6 (1975), p. 6 f.
- 45 *MM*, vol. 3, no. 63, fol. 13b, *awasit* Sha'ban, 1132 (June 18–27, 1720).
- 46 G.Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times* (Jerusalem, 1964), p. 29.
- 47 Evliya, pp. 366, 370–1.
- 48 *Ibid.*, pp. 406, 476.
- 49 Sambari, *Selections*, p. 156; Shaw, *Hüseyn Efendi*, p. 132; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 440, 460, 649.
- 50 'Abd al-Rahim 'Abd al-Rahman 'Abd al-Rahim, '*Dawr al-Maghariba fi ta'rikh Misr fi'l-'asr al-hadith*,' *al-Majalla al-ta'rikhiyya al-Maghribiyya* (Tunis), vols. 10–11 (January 1978), p. 59.
- 51 Hallaq, fol. 127b; Sambari, *Selections*, p. 150.
- 52 Sambari, p. 161.
- 53 *MD*, vol. 34, no. 42, p. 22, Safar 22, 986 (April 30, 1578); vol. 36, no. 462, p. 169, Safar 9, 987 (April 7, 1579).
- 54 Sambari, *Selections*, p. 150.
- 55 See D.Crecelius, *The Roots of Modern Egypt: A Study of the Regimes of 'Ali Bey al-Kabir and Muhammad Bey Abu al-Dhahab, 1760–1775* (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1981), pp. 132–3.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 133; J.W.Livingston, 'Ali Bey al-Kabir and the Jews,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 7 (1971), p. 225.

- 57 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 380 f.
- 58 Lane, p. 559.
- 59 *MD*, vol. 75, no. 191, p. 108 (the volume contains documents from Dhu'l-Hijja 1011 through Sha'ban 1013).
- 60 See Qutb al-Din al-Nahrawali, *Kitab al-i'lam bi-a'lam bayt Allah al-haram*, F. Wüstenfeld, ed. (new printing, Beirut 1964), pp. 333–4; M. Winter, 'A Seventeenth-Century Arabic Panegyric of the Ottoman Dynasty,' *Asian and African Studies*, vol. 13 (July 1979), pp. 145–6.
- 61 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 590–1.
- 62 *MM*, vol. 7, no. 359, fol. 166a, *awasit* Rabi' II, 1170 (January 3–12, 1757).
- 63 *MM*, vol. 5, no. 150, p. 60, *awasit* Rabi' I, 1147 (August 11–20, 1734).
- 64 *MM*, vol. 5, no. 699, pp. 250–1, *awakhir* Muharram, 1155 (March 28–April 6, 1742).
- 65 *MM*, vol. 5, no. 512, p. 188, *awasit* Safar, 1153 (May 8–17, 1740).
- 66 *MM*, vol. 7, no. 367, p. 166, *awasit* Rabi' II, 1170 (January 3–12, 1757).
- 67 *MM*, vol. 8, no. 373, p. 185, *awa'il* Muharram, 1180 (June 9–18, 1766).
- 68 *MM*, vol. 7, no. 367, p. 166, *awasit* Rabi' II, 1170 (January 3–12, 1757).
- 69 Shaw, *Hüseyn Efendi*, p. 64.
- 70 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 146. The *jizya* tax was abolished in Egypt in 1885. See Landau, *Jews in Nineteenth Century Egypt*, p. 169.
- 71 Ibn Nujaym, *al-Ashbah wa'l-naza'ir* (Ms. 833 in the Garrett Yahuda Collection, Princeton University), fol. 184a. For dress regulations in earlier periods, see Strauss (Ashtor), *The History of the Jews in Egypt and Syria*, vol. 2, pp. 210–14; idem, 'The Social Isolation,' pp. 74–82.
- 72 Hallaq, fol. 89b; Ahmad ibn Sa'd al-Din al-Ghamri, *Dhakhirat al-i'lam* (Ms. arabe 1850, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), fol. 170a.
- 73 Hallaq, fol. 95b. On Sherif Mehmet Pasha, see M. Winter, 'Turks, Arabs and Mamluks in the Army of Ottoman Egypt,' *WZKM*, vol. 72 (1980), pp. 106–11.
- 74 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 469.
- 75 Lane, pp. 537, 559.
- 76 *Archives Nationales*, Paris, Affaires Etrangères, Correspondance consulaire, B1, le Caire, 315, III, pp. 110–17.
- 77 Pococke, p. 177. On the physical appearance of the Jews, see Lane, pp. 558–9.
- 78 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 378–9.
- 79 Evliya, p. 258.
- 80 Ibn Nujaym, *Fatawa* (Ms. 5777, the Garrett Yahuda Collection, Princeton University), fol. 54b.
- 81 Muhibb al-Din al-Hamawi, *al-Durra al-mudi'a fi'l-rihla al-Misriyya* (Ms. Landberg 427, Yale University), fol. 26a.
- 82 See, for example, *MD*, vol. 32, p. 422, Shawwal 13, 1003 (June 21, 1595).

- 83 Iyas, pp. 442–3; Diyarbakri, fols. 261b–262a.
- 84 *MD*, vol. 23, no. 26, p. 17, Jumada I 1, 981 (August 29, 1573).
- 85 *Ibid.*, vol. 7, no. 1611, p. 572, Muharram 2, 976 (June 27, 1568); vol. 27, no. 610, p. 260, Dhu'l-Qa'da 17, 983 (February 17, 1576).
- 86 Muhammad ibn 'Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Tuhfa al-bahiyya fi tamalluk Al 'Uthman al-diyar al-Misriyya* (Ms. H.O. 35, Vienna), fol. 88b. One source says that the *dhimmi*s were not allowed to keep black slaves. (It was unthinkable that *dhimmi*s could own white slaves.)
- 87 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 337–8.
- 88 *Archives Nationales*, Paris. Affaires Etrangères, Correspondance consulaire, B1, le Caire, 313, I, pp. 93–6, December 9, 1689.
- 89 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 119.
- 90 See Landau, *Jews in Nineteenth Century Egypt*, pp. 171–2; S.Douin, ed., *Egypte de 1828 à 1830: Correspondance des consuls de France en Egypte* (Rome, 1935), pp. 86, 98–100.
- 91 A.Raymond, 'Le Caire sous les Ottomans/1517–1798,' in M.Maury, A.Raymond, J.Revault, M.Zakariya, eds, *Palais et maisons du Caire* (vol. 2: *Epoque Ottomane, XVIe–XVIIIe siècles*) (Paris, 1983), p. 80.
- 92 See, for example, Landau, *Jews in Nineteenth Century Egypt*, pp. 152, 157–8, 205.
- 93 Evliya, p. 190.
- 94 *Ibid.*; Pococke, p. 170.
- 95 Raymond, 'Le Caire sous les Ottomans,' p. 81.
- 96 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- 97 Sambari, *Selections*, p. 157.
- 98 Evliya uses the expression *merd olmak*, which is equivalent to the Arabic *halaka*, to denote the death of non-Muslims.
- 99 Evliya, p. 514.
- 100 G.H.et-Nahal, *The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt in the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1979), p. 57.
- 101 See *A Collection of documents concerning the family of al-Sadat al-Wafa'iyya*, Ms. *Ta'rikh* 2784, *Dar al-Kutub*, Cairo, documents nos. 10, 22, 39.
- 102 See Iyas, pp. 423–5.
- 103 *MD*, vol. 28, no. 348, p. 149, Jumada I 13, 984 (August 8, 1576); vol. 73, no. 933, p. 423, Shawwal 13, 1003 (June 21, 1595); vol. 78, no. 209, p. 85, Safar 13, 1018 (May 18, 1609).
- 104 *Ibid.*, vol. 35, no. 336, p. 132, Jumada II, 5, 986 (February 21, 1561).
- 105 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 530.
- 106 Koran, V, 82.
- 107 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 284–5.
- 108 See p. 211 above.

- 109 See, for example, *MD*, vol. 28, no. 616, p. 254, Rajab 25, 984 (October 18, 1576); vol. 29, no. 75, p. 31, Ramadan 25, 984 (December 16, 1576); no. 238, p. 98, Dhu'l-Qa'da 2, 984 (January 21, 1577).
- 110 *Ibid.*, vol. 33, no. 549, p. 269, Dhu'l-Qa'da 27, 985 (February 5, 1578).
- 111 *Jabarti*, vol. 1, p. 188.
- 112 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 103.
- 113 *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 154–5.
- 114 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 20, 21, 54, 119–20.
- 115 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 262.
- 116 See, Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization*, p. 140; idem, *Hüseyin Efendi*, pp. 94, 115–16, 132, 159; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 228, 282, 460.
- 117 R.Humbsch, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des osmanischen Agyptens (nach arabischen Sultans und statthalterurkunden des Sinai-Klosters)*, (Freiburg, 1976), pp. 347, 349. It is true that the monks possessed an imperial edict issued by Selim II forbidding the Jews to stay in Sinai. See K.Schwarz, *Osmanische Sultanurkunden des Sinai-Klosters in türk ische Sprache* (Freiburg, 1970), pp. 41–2.
- 118 See *Jabarti*, vol. 1, p. 112.
- 119 See Lane, p. 556.
- 120 Ibn Nujaym, *Fatawa*, fol. 39b.
- 121 See Iyas, pp. 445, 475–6; Diyarbakri, fols. 126b–127a.
- 122 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 338.
- 123 Diyarbakri, fol. 262b–263a; Iyas, p. 445.
- 124 *Jabarti*, vol. 1, p. 301; Muhammad ibn Salim al-Hifnawi, *Muntaha al-'ibarat* (Ms. 4992 Garrett Yahuda Collection, Princeton University), fol. 73b.
- 125 Ibn Nujaym, *Fatawa*, fol. 69b.
- 126 Idem, *al-Ashbah wa'l-naza'ir* (Ms. 833 Garrett Yahuda Collection, Princeton University), fol. 225a.
- 127 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 263–4.
- 128 Ibn Nujaym, *al-Ashbah wa'l-naza'ir*, fol. 212–19.
- 129 Documents from a private collection in the United States on Jews in Ottoman Egypt.
- 130 El-Nahal, p. 42.
- 131 'Ali al-Ujhuri, *al-Zaharat al-wardiyya min fatawi al-Shaykh al-Ujhuri* (Ms. 271 from collection 895, University of California, Los Angeles), no pagination. On the Mashariqa Jews, see Sambari, *Selections*, p. 150.
- 132 Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 287–8.
- 133 Lane, p. 241.

## 9

**Life in Ottoman Cairo**

- 1 A.Raymond, 'The Ottoman Conquest and the Development of the Great Arab Towns,' *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1979/80, pp. 84–101.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 91–92; idem, 'Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique au Cairo au XVIIIe siècle,' *JESHO*, vol. 6, 1963, pp. 58–103.
- 3 See *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 369.
- 4 G.Baer, 'Village and City in Egypt and Syria, 1500–1914,' in G.Baer, *Fellah and Townsman in the Middle East; Studies in Social History* (London, 1982), p. 56.
- 5 J.A.McCarthy disputes that figure, which is based not on a population census but on a house census. According to McCarthy's computation, Cairo's population in 1800 was only 210,960. J.A.McCarthy, 'Nineteenth Century Egyptian Population,' in E.Kedourie, ed., *Middle Eastern Economy* (London, 1976), pp. 1–39. Lane, who lived in Cairo and knew it well, says that its population in 1835 was 240,000 (out of 2.5 million in all Egypt), a figure which seems to support McCarthy's thesis. Lane, p. 4.
- 6 Raymond, 'The Ottoman Conquest,' p. 92.
- 7 See Baer, 'Village and City in Egypt and Syria,' pp. 56–7, 61. It is interesting to note that contrary to the widespread notion that Egyptian fellahin never or very rarely left their villages, we have clear evidence that Egyptian fellahin went as far as Istanbul in search of a livelihood. An imperial edict of 1576 states that Istanbul was full of Egyptian fellahin who were begging in the markets. They were to be returned to their villages in Egypt. The edict makes it clear that this was not an isolated case. *MD*, vol. 27, no. 947, p. 369, Dhu'l-Hijja 8, 983 (March 10, 1576). See also *ibid.*, vol. 22, no. 311, p. 159, Rabi' I 26, 981 (July 26, 1573), concerning an Egyptian fellah in Istanbul. A Turkish chronicler provides evidence of the brutal manner in which fellahin who overstayed in Cairo were punished. Diyarbakri, fol. 312a.
- 8 Mustafa 'Ali; Evliya Celebi; Abu Salim 'Abdallah al-'Ayyashi, *al-Rihla al-'Ayyashiyya* (Rabat, 1977, 2 vols); al-Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Warhilani, *Nuzhat al-anzar fi fadl 'ilm al-ta'rikh wa'l-akhbar* (2nd edn, Beirut, 1974); Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Fasi, *al-Rihla (Ta'rikh Ms. no. 1403, Dar al-Kutub, Cairo)*; P.Belon, *Voyage en Egypte de Pierre Belon du Mans 1547* (Cairo, 1970); J.Wild, *Voyages en Egypte 1601–1610*, O.V.Volkoff, ed. and trans. (Cairo, 1973).
- 9 A.Raymond, 'Le Cairo sous les Ottomans, 1517–1798,' in M.Maury, A.Raymond, J.Revault, M.Zakariya, eds., *Palais et maisons du Caire*, vol. 2, *Epoque Ottomane* (Paris, 1983), p. 28.

- 10 See [Chapter 8](#).
- 11 Raymond, 'Le Caire sous les Ottomans,' p. 35.
- 12 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 40.
- 13 See [Chapter 5](#), pp. 157–9.
- 14 See al-Warhilani, p. 284; al-Fasi, p. 135 (see note 8 above); Raymond, 'Le Caire sous les Ottomans,' p. 35.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Evliya, p. 383
- 18 Ibid., p. 382.
- 19 *MD*, vol. 26, no. 755, p. 263, Jumada II 24, 982 (October 11, 1574).
- 20 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 618.
- 21 Hallaq, fol. 136a.
- 22 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 326, 352, 466, 467, 582, 583; D.Ayalon, 'Studies in al-Jabarti I,' *JESHO*, vol. 3 (1960), pp. 304–6, citing al-Jabarti.
- 23 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 582–3.
- 24 *MD*, vol. 23, no. 390, p. 184, Shawwal 3, 981 (January 26, 1573).
- 25 See, for example, Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 574–5; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 144.
- 26 Iyas, p. 305.
- 27 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 378 (33).
- 28 Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 574–5.
- 29 Evliya, pp. 381–2.
- 30 Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Nuzha al-zahiyya fi dhikr wulat Misr wa'l-Qahira al-mu'izziyya* (Ms. Garrett 4995, Princeton University), fol. 29b, 65a, 68b, 69b, 73a, 76b; 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 7b, lib, 13a; Hallaq, fol. 76b.
- 31 Evliya, pp. 131, 306–7.
- 32 See *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 378 (32).
- 33 Not to be confused with the office of the pasha, who was also called *wali* (*vali*), governor of a province (*vilayet*).
- 34 A.Raymond, 'Problèmes urbains et urbanisme au Caire' in *Colloque international sur l'Histoire du Caire* (DDR, c. 1972), pp. 358–60.
- 35 Iyas, pp. 271, 282, 335.
- 36 A.Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 588–96; S.J.Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), pp. 118–21.
- 37 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 382 (41); G.H.El-Nahal, *The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt in the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1979), p. 63.
- 38 On the *hara*, see A.Raymond, 'Quartiers et mouvements populaires au Caire aux XVIIIe siècle,' in P.M.Holt, ed., *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt* (London, 1968), pp. 104–16; idem, *Artisans et*

- commerçants*, pp. 441–8; idem, ‘Problèmes urbains et urbanisme,’ pp. 355–7.
- 39 Iyas, pp. 164, 174, 309, 328.
- 40 ‘Abdulkerim ibn ‘Abdurrahman, fol. 7b.
- 41 Mustafa ‘Ali, p. 34.
- 42 Diyarbakri, fols. 291a, 311b; Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 514, 618.
- 43 See, for example, Iyas, pp. 290, 461; Diyarbakri, fol. 312a; Evliya, pp. 160, 343–4.
- 44 Ibid., pp. 160, 343–4.
- 45 See, for example, ‘Abdulkerim ibn ‘Abdurrahman, *Tevarih-i Misr-i Qahire* (Ms. 4877 Hacci Mahmut Collection, Siileymaniye Library, Istanbul), fol. 30b–31a; *MD*, vol. 5, no. 272, p. 118, Safar 29, 973 (September 25, 1565); vol. 33, no. 214, p. 105, Ramadan 20, 985 (December 1, 1577); vol. 34, no. 54, p. 27, Muharram 14, 986 (March 23, 1578); *ibid.*, no. 116, p. 55, Muharram 20, 986 (March 29, 1578); vol. 45, no. 1144, p. 97, Rajab 6, 989 (August 6, 1581).
- 46 Diyarbakri, fol. 284b; Evliya, p. 160.
- 47 *MD*, vol. 21, no. 245, p. 101, Shawwal 17, 980 (February 20, 1573); vol. 23, no. 114, p. 54, Jumada II 8, 981 (October 5, 1573).
- 48 Ahmad ibn Sa‘d al-Din al-Ghamri, *Dhakhirat al-i‘lam* (Ms. arabe 1850, B.N., Paris), fol. 181a.
- 49 For references to plagues, see for example, Anonymous author, the continuator of al-Ishaqi (no title, Ms. arabe 1854 B.N.Paris), fol. 156b–57a; Hallaq, fol. 118b, 156b; Ahmad Shalabi, pp. 155, 165, 170, 293, 489, 607–9; Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 51, 191; E.Combe, ‘L’Egypte ottomane,’ in *Précis de l’histoire d’Egypte*, vol. 3 (Cairo, 1933), pp. 28, 31, 34; Raymond, ‘Problèmes urbains et urbanisme,’ p. 365.
- 50 Lane, p. 2.
- 51 A.Raymond, ‘Le Caire—Economie et société urbaines à la fin du XVIIIe siècle,’ *L’Egypte au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1982), p. 134.
- 52 Lane, p. 3, note 1.
- 53 Al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, (Ms. Garrett 4995), fol. 76a; Hallaq, fol. 138a.
- 54 See M.W.Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ, 1977), chapter V; D.Ayalon, ‘The Plague and its Effects upon the Mamluk Army,’ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1946), pp. 67–73.
- 55 Jabarti, vol. 2, p. 191; Ahmad Shalabi, p. 170.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 293; Muhammad ibn Abi’l-Surur al-Bakri al-Siddiqi, *al-Tuhfa al-bahiyya fi tamalluk Al ‘Uthman al-diyar al-Misriyya* (Ms. H.O.35, Vienna), fol. 113b; idem, (Princeton Ms.), fol. 53b; the continuator of al-Ishaqi, fol. 145a.
- 57 Iyas, vol. 4, p. 298.
- 58 Diyarbakri, fol. 340a; Iyas, pp. 248–9.
- 59 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 379 (34).
- 60 The Continuator of Ishaqi, fol. 140–141a.

- 61 Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Hallaq, *Ta'rikh-i Misr-i Qahire* (Ms. H.O.37, Vienna), fol. 87b.
- 62 *Qanun-name-i Misir*, p. 383 (43).
- 63 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 34.
- 64 Evliya, pp. 195, 365.
- 65 Johann Wild, *Voyages en Egypte, 1601–1610*, p. 316.
- 66 Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 79.
- 67 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 38.
- 68 Evliya, p. 515.
- 69 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 44.
- 70 *Ibid.*, pp. 42–3.
- 71 Evliya, p. 385; See also Wild, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
- 72 On the physicians see *ibid.*, pp. 367–8, 385; Raymond, 'Problèmes urbains et urbanisme,' p. 365; *idem*, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 460, 493, 534, 551.
- 73 Evliya, pp. 262–4.
- 74 Raymond, 'Problèmes urbains et urbanisme,' p. 365.
- 75 Evliya, pp. 264 ff.
- 76 G.Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times* (Jerusalem, 1964), p. 118.
- 77 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 34.
- 78 Lane (p. 343) enumerates between 60 and 70 *hammams*.
- 79 Evliya, pp. 257–60.
- 80 *Ibid.*, pp. 588–9; Raymond, 'Problèmes urbains et urbanisme,' pp. 361–2.
- 81 See E.Strauss [Ashtor], 'The Social Isolation of Ahl adh-Dhimma,' in O.Komlós, ed., *Etudes orientales à la mémoire de P.Hirschler* (Budapest, 1950), pp. 82–5.
- 82 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 273; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 104.
- 83 Evliya, p. 383.
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- 85 Raymond, 'Problèmes urbains et urbanisme,' pp. 363–4.
- 86 Raymond, 'Le Caire sous les Ottomans,' pp. 54–5.
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- 90 Belon, *Voyage en Egypte de Pierre Belon du Mans 1547* (Cairo, 1970), p. 106b.
- 91 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 42.
- 92 G.Baer, 'Popular Revolt in Ottoman Cairo,' *Der Islam*, vol. 54, no. 2, 1977, pp. 213–42.
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- 94 I.M.Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 52.
- 95 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 197; 'Abdulkerim ibn 'Abdurrahman, fol. 87b–88a; Mustafa 'Ali, pp. 49–50; Jabarti, vol. 1, pp. 26, 203.
- 96 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 188; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 105. See [Chapter 2](#), p. 72.
- 97 See Winter, *Society and Religion*, pp. 50–1.
- 98 Evliya, pp. 256–7.
- 99 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 49.
- 100 Ibid., p. 36.
- 101 Wild, p. 278.
- 102 Lane, pp. 439 ff., 486 ff.
- 103 Ibid., p. 478 f; Evliya, p. 356.
- 104 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 606.
- 105 See [Chapter 6](#), p. 175 ff.
- 106 Lane, pp. 498 ff.
- 107 Ibid., pp. 495–6; Evliya, p. 326.
- 108 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 386.
- 109 'Kahwa,' *EF*, vol. 4, pp. 449–53 by C. van Arendonk.
- 110 Mustafa 'Ali, p. 37.
- 111 Al-Fasi, *Rihla*, pp. 208–9; al-Warhilani, *Nuzhat al-anzar*, p. 268.
- 112 Evliya, p. 479.
- 113 G.Baer, 'Popular Revolt in Ottoman Cairo,' p. 214.
- 114 Ibid., pp. 219–20; A.Raymond, 'Le Caire—Economie et société,' pp. 121–5.
- 115 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 91–7; Baer, 'Popular Revolt in Ottoman Cairo,' p. 220 ff.
- 116 Ibid.; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 391.
- 117 Raymond, 'Le Caire—Economie et société,' p. 126.
- 118 Idem, 'Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique au Caire au XVIIIe siècle,' *JESHO*, vol. 6, 1963, pp. 58–103. Some of the emirs' second houses were located in the vicinity of al-Azhar and the Husayni sanctuary, being considered safer areas because of the sanctity of these buildings. See Jabarati, vol. 4, p. 128.
- 119 It is noteworthy that Istanbul, whose population was triple that of Cairo, had only 150 guilds at that time. Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 511.
- 120 G.Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times*, pp. 2–3.
- 121 See, G.Baer, 'Guilds in Middle Eastern History,' in M.A.Cook, ed., *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East* (London, 1970), pp. 27–8.
- 122 Diyarbakri, fol. 286b.
- 123 Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times*, pp. 14–15.
- 124 Ibid., pp. 1–10.
- 125 Ibid., pp. 33–48; Evliya, pp. 358–86.

- 126 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, p. 526.
- 127 Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times*, pp. 6–10, 49–57.
- 128 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, pp. 582–5.
- 129 The subject is discussed extensively in *ibid.*, pp. 659–726.
- 130 *Ibid.*, p. 650.
- 131 The cavalry regiments were stationed outside Cairo and had no access to Cairo's *muqata'as*. They oppressed and exploited the villagers.
- 132 Ahmad Shalabi, p. 225; Jabarti, vol. 1, p. 37.
- 133 Iyas, p. 305.
- 134 C.F. Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt in the Years 1784 and 1785* (London 1887, repr. 1972), vol. 1, p. 166.

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## M. stands for Muḥammad

Egypt, Egyptians, Cairo have not been indexed

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