

## **TURKISH HAREMEYN RELATIONS DURING THE ERA OF MAMLUKS**

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### **Introduction**

One of the most significant ties that connect the faithful to one another is unquestionably universities. Symposiums serve an essential function as they bring universities together in an intellectual platform. Therefore, I would like to thank everybody who contributed to this meaningful organization.

The topic of this paper is the "Turkish-Haremeyn relations during the era of Mamluks." I will divide my paper into two parts. In the first part, I will talk about Mamluks and in the second part, I will explain relations with Haremeyn and Haremeyn Waqfs.

### **Mamluks**

Turks started to establish power centers in Baghdad, Egypt and Anatolia after converting to Islam increasingly since the 8<sup>th</sup> century onwards. They participated in states ruling in these power centers; moreover Turks established their own states in time<sup>1</sup>. Among these states, Mamluks, which was founded in Egypt (648-932/ 1250-1517), has an important and special position. Mamluks, like Ayyubids and Selchuks, struggled with Mongols in the East and Crusades in the West and tried to protect holy lands from enemies. Mamluks' successes in their struggles, especially their success in Aynalut War waged against the Mongols, are significant. While Eastern Islamic World was invaded by the Mongols and the Western Islamic World that is Andalusia was invaded by the Crusades, Egypt under the Mamluks

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<sup>1</sup> See, Hamilton.A.R.Gibb, **Orta Asya'da Arap Fütuhâtı**, Çeviren: M.Hakkı, İst.1930;V.V. Barthold, **Moğol İstilasına Kadar Türkistan**, Haz. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, Ankara 1990; A.Zeki Velidi Togan, **Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş**, 3.bs. İstanbul 1981; Şemseddin Günaltay, "Abbas Oğulları İmparatorluğunun Kuruluş ve Yükselişinde Türklerin Rolü" **Belleten**, c.IV, Temmuz 1942, S.23-244; Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, **İslamiyet ve Türkler**, İstanbul 1976 vd.

governance with its military power became an important center for the Islamic world.

Mamluks gained considerable power in Islamic world by protecting Abbasid caliphate after the fall of Baghdad in 1258. Then, Abbasid caliph gave Mamluk Sultan- like Ayyubids- the title of ‘‘Hadim’ul Haremeyn’’ that means the server of two holy city Mecca and Medina.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this title, Abbasid caliph Muntansırbillah gave Sultan Baybars the title of ‘‘Kasım emürü’l Müminin’’ that means the partner of the caliphate<sup>3</sup> These titles kept the falling position of the caliph in power<sup>4</sup>, and strengthen the spiritual authority of caliph all over the Islamic world.

#### **Relations with Haremeyn and Haremeyn Waqfs**

Muslim’s visiting Mecca and Medina for pilgrimage and *umre* gave an important and special position to these cities throughout the history. Controlling these holy cities was accepted as providing prestige among Islamic states<sup>5</sup>.

Haremeyn was ruled by descendants of Hasan, emirs (şerifs), since Fatimids. Emirs of Mecca, called Hasimids<sup>6</sup> as an attribution to the prophet Muhammad’s great grandfather Hasım in Abülmenaf, never acted independently being under the influence of states established in Egypt and having Friday sermons delivered in the name of the rulers of these states. On the other hand, emirs pursued a policy that sided with the powerful states and emirs ruled the region with the effect of local factors while avoiding going under direct control of any state. Islamic states, therefore, had to collaborate with the emirs in order to rule the region. A state, which controlled the haremeyn, gained considerable advantage in both religious and political domains. Therefore, this state ended up exerting substantial influence and dominance all over the Islamic World<sup>7</sup>.

For haremeyn, it seemed to be indispensable to maintain relations with Egypt in some aspects. First of all, Hejaz, especially the long shore called

<sup>2</sup> Mustafa Sabrı Küçükkaşçı; **Abbasiler’den Osmanlılar’a Mekke-Medine Tarihi**, İstanbul 2007,s.152. İbn Tagrıverdi says that this title became identical with calıps and sultans who were living in Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> Osman Turan, **Selçuklular Tarihi ve Türk İslam Medeniyeti**, İstanbul 2005, s307.vd.

<sup>4</sup> İsmail Yiğit, ‘‘Memlukler’’, **DİA**, İstanbul 2004, c.29, s.93

<sup>5</sup> Şaban T.Buzpınar-Mustafa S.Küçükkaşçı, ‘‘Haremeyn’’, **DİA**, İstanbul 1997,c.16,153.

<sup>6</sup> See, Zekerıya Kurşun, ‘‘Haşimiler’’, **DİA**, İstanbul 1997, 412-414.

<sup>7</sup> Şaban T. Buzpınar-Mustafa S.küçükkaşçı, *ibid*, s.153.

Tihame, was geographically closer to the Red Sea in the West than Negev in the East. For this reason, it could be controlled easily by a state which was powerful in seas. In terms of economics, Hejaz depended on Egypt's food supplies especially Egyptian grain. This dependence provided an advantage to Egyptian rulers against a potential uprising in Hejaz. Furthermore the security of pilgrimage routes from Syria-Egypt to Mecca-Medina needed to be protected by a military power. The conflict between Mecca and Medina emirs were affecting their authority in the region negatively, therefore they could preserve their authority under Egypt protectorate<sup>8</sup>.

During the Mamluks era, Egypt's aids to Mecca increased every year. When these aids could not reach to Mecca because of famine or security problems; this situation caused a rise in prices in Mecca. Mamluk sultans allocated many lands and villages in Egypt, Syria and Anatolia to harameyn residents and sent products of these allocations to Mecca and Medina in the name of *Zahire*. *El-evkafü'l-hükmiyye*, which was one of the parts of *Divanü'l-ahbas* which was the responsible of waqfs, was governing the properties in Medina. Moreover, Mamluk sultans allocated a budget in treasure for Mecca in order to provide cancellation of emirs' tax collection from pilgrims. Sultan Baybars sent sacred litter and cover to the Kaaba for the first time in 664 (1266). Then Muhammed b. Kalavun and Sultan Kayıtbay went to Kaaba for pilgrimage and granted gifts to people<sup>9</sup>.

The most important symbol of sovereignty over Mecca was the cover of Kaaba which was sent every year. While Mamluk Sultan el-melikü'l Mansur Kalavun taken devotion oath to himself and his caliphs from Şerif Ebu Numey, he made Numey not to hang another cover to Kaaba instead of Egyptian one. Moreover, Mamluk sultans were caring much about the reaching of the cover of Kaaba and pilgrimage caravan to Mecca and Medina. Since the end of 16<sup>th</sup> century, they meet the cover of Kaaba outside of the city and organized ceremonies for this event<sup>10</sup>.

Holding the control of harameyn, Mamluks took the responsibility of pilgrimage, appointed the pilgrimage emir and other officials and catered for all needs of harameyn since 1261. Seyfeddin Kalavun (1279-1290) allocated Beysus village, known as *beytü'l Mak*, to Mecca and also allocated its incomes to *Hücre-i Nebevi* once in every five years. Moreover, he founded

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<sup>8</sup> Donald Edgar Pitcher, **Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Tarihsel Coğrafyası**, Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayınları, Çeviren: Bahar Tırnakçı, İstanbul 1999, s.155.

<sup>9</sup> Mustafa S.Küçükbaşçı, "Mekke", **DİA**, C.28, s.560.

<sup>10</sup> Küçükbaşçı, *ibid.*, s.154.

waqfs for the needs of Ravzai Mutahhara (prophet Mohammad's tomb) and ordered sixteen servants to work for the cleaning and the care of this sacred place<sup>11</sup>.

Sultan Baybars( 1422-1438) and Sultan Çakmak had Mescid-i Haram's worn out and collapsed walls and gates repaired. Kayıtbay (1468-1496) after a dream he once had embellished Prophet Mohammad's tomb with priceless ornaments, constructed a new dome

for ravza and constructed a tomb for himself near the Prophet's tomb. He made the Mescid-i Nebevi reconstructed between the years of 1474 and 1477<sup>12</sup>.

Sultan Baybars had Kaaba washed with the water of rose during his pilgrimage for the time in 1269 and even he carried water on his shoulders. Sultan Baybars was the initiator of sending sacred litter tradition to Kaaba (1271). After him, every Mamluk Sultan preserved this sacred litter tradition, even after the collapse of Mamluks, Ottomans continued to send sacred litter from Egypt for a while.

Baybars appropriated funds for the building, imaret and other needs of the Eşrefiye Madrasah in Mecca. Around the same time, outsenry (ribats) were constructed, the care of the gardens in Medina was realized. Sultan Kayıtbay dedicated a candlestick to the house of Prophet. Kansu Gavri had his soldiers restore pilgrimage route, Kaabah(the House of God) and water sources although he was in war with Ottoman Army<sup>13</sup>.

At the time of Mamluks, the administration of Haremeyn (double holy cities) waqfs was carried by an organization named el-Evkafi'l-Hükmiye ruled by a Shafi'i judge. The Mamluk period was essential in terms of Haremeyn sevices and waqfs. These services were carried on similarly by Ottoman Sultans<sup>14</sup>.

In this period, Mohamed the Conqueror sent some repairmen to restore water deep hole on pilgrim routes but these repairmen were sent back by Mamluks who had sovereignty of Haremeyn. This shows us that there was a rivalry between Mamluk and Ottoman states and it was essential for Islamic

<sup>11</sup> Mustafa Güler, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Haremeyn Vakıfları", *Türkler*, C.X, Ankara 20, s. 470-471.

<sup>12</sup> Güler, *ibid.*, s.471.

<sup>13</sup> Güler, *a.g.m.*, p. 471.

<sup>14</sup> Güler, *a.g.m.*, p. 471.

States to service sacred places because it was a means to have legitimation (meşruiyet)<sup>15</sup>.

Mamluks had been sending the robes of Kabah as sovereignty on Hejaz. This was providing a prestige and legitimation for the states which dominating Egypt. Sultan Salih İsmail bin Kalavun dedicated two villages in order to send the robes of Kabah. Later on, these villages continued at the time of Sultan Selim I. Suleiman the Magnificent also devoted seven villages<sup>16</sup>.

Pilgrim caravan on Egypt had been moving from Birketü'l-Hac on 27th of Savval every year. Mahmil (the gift brought by caravan for Mecca) had been enthusiastic welcome and taken all over the city when the caravan reached the Mecca. This customary was first started by Sultan Baybars in Mamluk in 1271-72 A.C<sup>17</sup>

The political and religious ascendance of Egypt continued in the time of Mamluk like one in Fatimid's because it was an honour for all Islamic states and empires to be a servant and protector of haremeyn. Therefore, all of the Mamluk Sultans gave an essential importance to Hejaz. By sending robe of Kabah and restoring the buildings of Mecca and Madinah and pilgrim routes, Mamluk Sultans had been aiming at assure their ascendance on Hejaz. Every year in the time of pilgrimage a Mahmil and also some money and gifts had been preparing and sending to sheriffs (rulers of Hejaz).<sup>18</sup>

### **Waqfs of Deşişe**

The word Deşişe means to flail, cut and pestle the wheat, cereal and corn. As a term, it means a soup with wheat or bulghur. These waqfs were constructed to help poor people by giving this soup.<sup>19</sup>

Deşişe was the name of a wheat and barley meal with meat and date at the time of Prophet Muhammad and his companions. This old customary for poor people of Madinah was continued and institutionalized later and it

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<sup>15</sup> Şehabettin Tekindağ, "Fatih devrinde Osmanlı-Memlûklü Münasebetleri, TD, XXX, 1976, 73-99, Ş.Tufan Buzpınar-Mustafa S. Küçükaşçı, age, pp. 153-154.

<sup>16</sup> Abdülmütî, Hüsam Muhammed, *el-Alâkatü'l-Mısıryye el-Hıcaziyye fi'l-Karni's-Sâmin Aşer*, Kahire 1999, p. 261

<sup>17</sup> İbrahim Ateş, "Osmanlılar Zamanında Mekke ve Medine'ye Gönderilen Para ve Hediyeler" *Vakıflar Dergisi* XIII, p.114

<sup>18</sup> Kâzım Yaşar Koprıman, *Mısır Memlûkleri Tarihi*, Ankara 1989, p. 204.

<sup>19</sup> İbrahim Ceylan, "Kanunî'nin Haremeyn Deşişe Vakfı ve Vakfiyesi", *V. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi, İstanbul 23-28 Eylül 1985, Tebliğler III Türk Tarihi*, C.I, İstanbul 1986, p.164.

became a waqf. The constructors of these waqfs which were later named as property waqfs were Mamluk Sultans. These waqfs were used to provide food supplies which sending to Haremeyn.sultan Baybars devoted annual revenues of

his properties, approximately 7000 erdeb. Other Mamluk Sultans who constructed waqfs for Deşişe were Çakmak, Kayıtbay and Gavri.<sup>20</sup>

Deşişe is a soup which cooks to give the poor people of Mecca and Madinah imarets. The root of word is ceşişe, an Arabic word. It is the name of a wheat and barley meal with meat and date and famous in Arabian Peninsula. By the time the word ceşişe transformed to deşişe in spoken language. Deşişe started to spread and have a social meaning in the time of Prophet Muhammad. In hadits, we see that both of prophet and his companions invited each other so as to eat deşişe. After this period, deşişe became a customary continued by Islamic caliphates and sultans. In the length of time, it became famous by the name “deşişe-i Resulullah” and this would be the oldest type of charity give to the poor people of Haremeyn. It is unknown who sent cereal charity firstly. However, there was cereal in the first surre caravan sent by Muktedir Billah (908-932), Abbasid Caliph. After that, Mamluk Sultans devoted a lot of villages and their cereal in Egypt, Damascus and Aleppo to the poor people of Haremeyn. In addition, they devoted some villages in order to cook deşişe for the same people. These villages were named as “the villages of Deşişe” or “the villages of Deşişe waqfs” and cereal was named as “deşişe cereal” or “deşayış of Haremeyn”. All of these waqs were named “Sultan Deşişe Waqf” or “Sultan Kayıtbay Deşişe” after Sultan waqfs started to increase.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, the waqf known as “Deşişe-I Kübra Waqf” passed from Mamluks to Ottomans as an inheritance and it was carried on by Selim I and Suleiman the Magnificent.the waqf had 60 villages in Behnesaviye, Kalubiyye, Ciza, Dakhaliyye, Garbiyye ve Circe. Also it had an economical importance because it had commercial ships for shipping on the River Nile<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Güler , *a.g.m.*, p. 475.

<sup>21</sup> Seyyid Muhammed es-Seyyid, “Deşişe”, *DİA*, C. 9. p. 214.

<sup>22</sup> Shaw, Stanford Jay, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517-1798*, Princeton 1962, p.269