HAKAN-I RUM OR YAVUZ SULTAN SELIM – THRONE OF JOSEPH OR UNIVERSAL ISLAMIC CALIPHATE? SOME OBSERVATIONS ON CHANGING OTTOMAN TURKISH PERCEPTIONS OF THE CONQUEST OF THE MAMLUK LANDS FROM 1520 TO 1920

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This paper discusses the impact of changing understandings of the Battles of Marj Dabiq and Ridaniya as well as the incorporation of Bilad al-Sham, Egypt, and the Two Sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina into the Ottoman Empire on Ottoman-Turkish historical consciousness from the Ottoman Classical Age to the Young Turk Era. The Ottoman–Mamluk War of 1516–17 constituted a watershed for the history of the early modern Middle East, for the Arab world, and for the Ottoman Empire. The demographic, religious, and political self-image of the empire was transformed from a more or less loosely defined Islamic identity to a predominantly Sunni Islamic one. At the same time, the Mamluk sultanate, until then a major Islamic empire that had controlled the greater part of the Middle East and had held the title of *Hadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn* ("Custodian of the two Sanctuaries") for more than two centuries, was annihilated within a period of merely six months.[1]

Conventional historiography until the mid-twentieth century has assumed the transfer of the universal Sunni Islamic caliphate as a direct outcome of this significant event. As the Ottoman Empire weakened in relation to Russia and the Habsburgs, Ottoman sultans came to attach major political weight to the title of caliphate as a means of keeping the ethnically diverse Muslim populations united within the "well-protected domains." Later, during the reign of Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909), the Sublime Porte

1. For some recent discussion of the Ottoman–Mamluk War and its regional impact, see Benjamin Lellouch and Nicolas Michel, eds., *Conquête ottomane de l'Égypte (1517). Arrière-plan, impact, échos* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013); Feridun Emecen, *Zamanın İskenderi, Şarkın Fatihi: Yavuz Sultan Selim* (Istanbul: Yitik Hazine Yayınları, 2010); Halil İnalcık, "Selim I," in *Encyclopedia of Islam,* 2nd ed., vol. 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1997, hence *EI2*), 127–131.

pursued the policy of pan-Islamism, and the Arabic-speaking provinces received significant investment. The Young Turk regime (1908–1918), after initially pursuing rigid administrative centralization and ethnicist approaches, reverted to pan-Islamism with the outbreak of World War I. The Ottoman presence in the Arab world came to an end as a consequence of its defeat by the British following the Third Battle of Gaza (31 Oct–7 Nov 1917), the Allied occupation of Jerusalem on 9–11 Dec 1917, and the Ottoman withdrawal to the north of Aleppo prior to the Armistice of Moudros on 30 Oct 1918. It is an irony of history that the final dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 was triggered by battles in those very regions that witnessed Ottoman victories over the Mamluks four centuries earlier, transforming the Ottoman State into a universal Islamic empire.

The Ottoman–Turkish perceptions of four hundred years of Ottoman presence in Egypt and Bilad al-Sham, and the accompanying internal political as well as cultural shifts can be traced by examining sources dealing with the process of the conquest of Syria, Egypt, and the Two Sanctuaries. In this paper, the historiographical eras to be examined have been defined as, first, the works of the generation of authors who were themselves eyewitnesses or who based their accounts on the first-hand testimonies of eyewitnesses, covering the years from 1520 to 1580 (and hereafter referred to as first-generation authors or historians); then second, those historiographical texts spanning the 1580s to 1850, which had to have recourse to the first-hand material; and finally, works from the era of modernizing reforms, which also entailed the expansion of government education and printing presses, beginning from 1850 to the 1920s. The sources selected for this paper are works intended as general histories of the Ottoman Empire, often titled *tarih* (history), *tevarih* (histories), and sometimes *fezleke* (reports), as well as post-1850-era history textbooks designed for government primary (*ibtidai*), lower secondary (*rüşdiyye*), secondary (*idadi*), and high schools (*sultani*), and historical and geographical lexicons (*lugat; kamus*). Official annals (*vakayiname*) of Sublime Porte chroniclers (*vakanüvis*) which, in general, focus on contemporary developments recorded by their respective authors have been mostly excluded due to their expected lack of focus on previous centuries.[2]

2. About the general development of historiography in the Ottoman Empire, see Franz Babinger, *Die*

History as an academic discipline emerged in Germany and Britain only in the mid- nineteenth century, a development which took place in the Ottoman Empire after the Young Turk Revolution. Thus historical studies in the Ottoman lands prior to 1908 were composed mostly by literate individuals, some of them with clear political concerns. In fact, many of these history writers were government officials.[3] Therefore, in terms of sources to be examined, the changing patterns of perception as well as contradictions regarding Selim's campaign reflect, to a major extent, the evolving views and ideological cleavages among members of the Ottoman ruling elite.

This study does not purport to determine or verify historical facts related to Selim's Egyptian campaign; rather, it aims to illustrate the changing perceptions concerning some key events of the Ottoman–Mamluk War. Furthermore, this paper does not cover every single known historiographical source from the early sixteenth to early twentieth centuries; the author believes, however, that the sources examined here may, to some extent, convey to the reader the general intellectual tendencies of the respective eras.

Research questions regarding the historiographical perceptions of Selim's campaign against the Mamluks will focus on such parameters as the reasons and motivations for the campaign; legitimizing arguments for the campaign; the perceived importance and consequences of the conquests; the religious and political symbolism in the narratives; the policies and measures taken in the conquered lands; the historiographical perceptions of Selim and the Ottomans; the historiographical images of the Arab population and the conquered lands; and historiographical representations of Kansu al-Gavri, Tumanbay, and the Mamluks, in general. While elaborating on policies and precautions, reports concerning routine

Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und Ihre Werke (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1927), hence *GOW*; Necdet Öztürk and Murat Yıldız, İmparatorluk Tarihinin Kalemli Muhafızları: Osmanlı Tarihçileri. Ahmedî'den Ahmed Refik'e (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2013); Bekir Kütükoğlu, "Vak'anüvis," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 42 (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2012, hence *DIA*), 457–461; Halil İnalcık and Bülent Arı, "Osmanlı-Türk Tarihçiliği Üzerine Notlar," in *Uluslararası Askeri Tarih Dergisi* 19 (2007): 213–247; Erhan Afyoncu, "Osmanlı Siyasî Tarihinin Ana Kaynakları: Kronikler," in *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 1–2 (2003): 101–172; Abdülkadir Özcan, "Osmanlı Tarihçiliğine ve Tarih Kaynaklarına Genel Bir Bakış," in *FSM İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi* 1 (Bahar 2013): 271–293; H. Erdem Çıpa and Emine Helvacı, eds., *Osmanlı Sarayında Tarihyazımı*, transl. Mete Tunçay (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2014).

3. Çıpa and Helvacı, *Osmanlı Sarayında Tarihyazımı*, ix.

measures, such as administrative or other appointments or the voluntary submission of Arab notables and tribal leaders, will not be discussed in this paper. Instead, controversial actions which apparently exceeded the limits of legitimate violence and thus have been considered and judged by historians in rather different ways will be highlighted.

Aspects of Historiographical Developments in the Ottoman Empire

In contrast to the post-Enlightenment understanding of modern history, which denotes a clear "differentiation between the *present* and the *past*," the traditional historiography of numerous world civilizations perceived the past by incorporating selected historical traditions of various earlier eras into narratives of the contemporary, thus skirting the existence of an "autonomous present time."[4] An additional trait of traditional historiography was the evident motive of writing histories with the aim of utilizing the past for the sake of political legitimation; such histories also displayed the function of "analyzing failures and successes" and thereby representing "a science of the practice of power"; this approach overlapped with the Mirror for Princes genre.[5] In the Islamic world, this outlook emerged during the Abbasid period and became more pronounced among the Mamluks and the Ottomans.[6] Another tendency among premodern-era historians was their origins in a ruling elite background; they were often *alims*, or high-level scribal bureaucrats, in the case of the Islamic world, or jurists and magistrates in the case of Europe. They were frequently engaged to produce histories by the ruler, who sometimes acted as their patron.[7] Prior to 1580, some authors displayed a more or less dynastic approach

4. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, transl. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 2–5. See also Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13.

5. Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 6–7; and Georg G. Iggers and Q. Edward Wang, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2013), 36.

6. Franz Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 48–53. Kâtib Çelebi, in his *Keşf-i Zünûn*, defines the term *tarih* as "knowledge of the conditions" of the past, including groups, countries, laws, customs, crafts, and "individuals of the past such as prophets, saints, scholars, . . . kings, sultans . . ." While elaborating on the uses of the study of history, he includes "to seek advice" from past information to produce similar benefits [for the present time]. Quoted in Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 531. See also Colin Imber, "Ideals and Legitimation in Early Ottoman History," in *Süleyman the Magnificient and His Age. The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, eds. Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (London: Longman, 1995), 138–153.

7. Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 6–7; Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 26; A. C. S. Peacock, *Mediaeval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy. Bal'amī's Tārīkhnāma* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 2, 8, 162; Iggers and Wang, *A Global History*, 36.

to discussing the Ottoman–Mamluk War. All these factors determined the quality of historical narratives, which in turn affected the argumentation on past events.

A pattern specific to pre-Tanzimat Ottoman historiography related to the foundations of Islamic historical writing. Medieval Islamic historiography developed following the model of collecting prophetic traditions (*hadith* and *ahbar*), rendering them without major stylistic and literary editing, so that premodern historical works in the Islamic world at times resembled narrative agglomerations, often with little substantial textual editing.[8] Numerous Ottoman historical texts prior to the Tanzimat era often included passages which can be traced back to a few celebrated sixteenth-century works, such as İdris Bitlisi's *Selimname* or Hoca Sadeddin Efendi's *Tacü't-Tevarih*.[9]

Sixteenth-century narrations on the Ottoman–Mamluk war can be found within three groups of texts: in *Selimnames*—writings with the aim of praising the deeds of Selim; in *Tevarih-i Al-i Osmans*—histories of the Ottoman dynasty; and in general or universal histories. Some of these sixteenth-century narrations are in verse, and most include both prose and verse. Numerous *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*s were compiled for popular consumption. According to İnalcık, these *Tevarihs*, being relatively short and in verse form, enjoyed popularity among common people during the sixteenth century.[10]

While pre-1580 authors were either eyewitnesses of the Ottoman–Mamluk campaign or based their narrations on oral testimonies of those dignitaries who took part in the conquest, seventeenth and eighteenth-century historians compiled works which often resembled the abovementioned narrative agglomerations consisting of selections of sixteenth-century histories. While these historiographical clusters generally lack originality in terms of factual content,[11] certain differences in

8. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 18.

9. Concerning other aspects of pre-Tanzimat era Ottoman historiography, see Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 30–49; Mükrimin Halil Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete Kadar Bizde Tarihçilik," in *Tanzimat*, reprint of the original 1940 edition (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1999), 2:573; İnalcık and Arı, "Osmanlı-Türk Tarihçiliği Üzerine Notlar," 216.

10. İnalcık and Arı, "Osmanlı-Türk Tarihçiliği Üzerine Notlar," 216.

11. Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete Kadar Bizde Tarihçilik," 2:573–574. See also Babinger's evaluations for the majority of individual historians in his *GOW*, following p. 149.

details, such as omissions or additions, may reflect the social and political realities of the period of the compilation of these works. Though it would be difficult to claim the existence of clear-cut patterns common to post-1580 historiography, these narratives still bear certain characteristics clearly differentiating this era from both sixteenth-century as well as post-1850 historiography.

Historical works from the Tanzimat, Hamidian, and Young Turk periods, on the other hand, represent a series of new approaches to historiography. During these periods, numerous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historical manuscripts were printed in great numbers and made available to the wider public. Educated citizens gained the opportunity to consume the classics of Ottoman historiography and to reassess the centuries of Mehmed the Conqueror, Selim, and Süleyman the Magnificient. Meanwhile, with the expansion of government schools, history textbooks began to be published. While these works conveyed official versions of the Ottoman past to the students, the Young Ottoman and Young Turk movements produced their own interpretations of Ottoman history. These developments created a significant difference in public outlook toward past centuries.[12]

Contentwise, the most obvious innovation in later Ottoman historiography has been the admission of the necessity to use European historical literature in addition to the Ottoman chronicles. While previously, Ottoman world histories mostly ignored the history of Europe, the nineteenth century witnessed the gradual inclusion of medieval and early modern European history as a part of general history. Furthermore, Ottoman historiographical narratives acquired a distinguishable patriotic discourse, which separates them from the histories of past generations in terms of emancipating themselves from a discourse which propagated a strictly dynastic outlook.[13] In connection with this development, one can observe, among some of the historical texts, an increasing uneasiness

12. Abdülkadir Özcan, "II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Tarihçiliği ve Literatürü," in *Devr-i Hamid. Sultan II.Abdülhamid*, eds. Mehmet Metin Hülagü, Şakir Batmaz, and Gülbadi Alan (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011), 1:113–125; Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete Kadar Bizde Tarihçilik," 2:576–595.

13. Mehmet Demiryürek, *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Bir Osmanlı Aydını. Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi (1853–1925)* (Ankara: Phoenix Yayınevi, 2003), 88–115; Christoph K. Neumann, *Das indirekte Argument. Ein Plädoyer für die Tanẓīmāt vermittels der Historie. Die geschichtliche Bedeutung von Aḥmed Cevdet Paşas Ta'rīḫ* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1994); Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete Kadar Bizde Tarihçilik," 2:574–577.

and even a critical approach toward certain events within Ottoman history. In this context, the description and evaluation of the policies and deeds of Selim during the Egyptian Campaign have acquired a new quality.

Accounts of the Egyptian Campaign prior to the 1580s

Sixteenth-century authors wrote at a time when the sultanic authority was strong and the empire was expanding. Despite certain nuances, the historical writings of this period are characterized by a dynastic outlook. For their authors, the conquest of Syria and Egypt was a result of the conflict between Selim, the champion of the Sunni Islamic cause, and the Mamluk rulers Kansu al-Gavri and Tumanbay, who resisted the Ottoman sultan. Abstract factors of an ideological nature, such as the issue of a universal Islamic caliphate or custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, emerged only in texts compiled after the 1550s. Another characteristic of some of the pre-1580 authors was their social origin as sultanic slaves with Balkan Christian roots. The unusual presence of Biblical religious motifs in sixteenth-century accounts may be a cultural reflection of this fact.

Authors compiling their narratives on Selim's campaigns prior to the 1580s were either themselves eyewitnesses, as were Haydar Çelebi (completion date around 1518, hence "c.") and İdris Bitlisi (c. 1520/1567),[14] or based their narratives on the accounts of eyewitnesses, as did Hadidi (c. 1523), Şükri Bitlisi (c. 1523), Celalzade Salih (c. 1546), Muhyiddin Cemali (c. 1549), Matrakçı Nasuh (c. 1553), Lutfi Paşa (c. 1553), Celalzade Mustafa (c. 1565), Küçük Nişancı Mehmed Paşa (c. 1571), Mehmed Zaʿim (c. 1578), and Hoca Sadeddin (c. 1580).[15] Authors outside of the Ottoman ruling

14. For the diaries of Haydar Çelebi (*Haydar Çelebi Ruznamesi*), who was a scribe at the Imperial Council, see Feridun Bey, ed., *Münşeatü's-Selatin* (Istanbul: Takvimhane-i Amire, 1265), 398–448, and Rıza Yıldırım, "Turkomans between Two Empires: The Origins of the Qizilbash Identity in Anatolia (1447–1514)," (PhD diss., Bilkent University Department of History, 2008), 26. For İdris-i Bitlisi, see Hicabi Kırlangıç, "**İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name: İnceleme-Metin-Çeviri," 2 vols. (PhD diss.,** Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 1995). Although Kemal Paşazade, who acted as *kazasker* during Selim's reign, took part at the Egyptian campaign, his narration of the Egyptian campaign, originally a part of the *IXth Defter* of his *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* has been lost. See Şerafettin Turan, "Kemalpaşazade," in *DIA*, vol. 25 (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2002), 239; Ahmet Uğur, *The Reign of Sultan Selīm in the Light of the Selīm-nāme Literature* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1985) and Şefaettin Severcan, ed., *Kemal Paşa-zade. Tevarih-i Âl-i Osman X. Defter* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1996). For the claims that Saʿd bin Abdülmüteal's *Selimname* contains the lost parts of Kemal Paşazade's *IXth Defter*, see Mustafa Argunşah, "Türk Edebiyatında Selimnameler," *Turkish Studies. Int. Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 4, no. 8 (Fall 2007): 37–39.

15. For these authors, see Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman (1299–1523)*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1991); Şükri-i Bitlisi, *Selimname*, ed. Mustafa Argunşah (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997); Hasan Hüseyin Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali'nin Tevarih-i Al-i Osman'ı" (Master's thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 1990); Matrakçı Nasuh,

elite, such as Ibn Iyas (died after 1521, hence "d."), Hasan al-Tuluni/Samed ed-Diyarbekri (d. after 1540), and Ibn Zünbül (d. after 1554),[16] who were eyewitnesses, more or less, from the Mamluk side, are also partially taken into consideration here; they provide an alternative view to those of the Ottoman literate circles vis-à-vis the hegemony of the one-sided *Rumi* account. This very first generation of accounts on the Ottoman–Mamluk War constitute a kind of a historical "measure" in terms of comparing their perceptions with those views formulated in subsequent centuries.

As previously stated, impressions with regard to the Ottoman–Mamluk War will be analyzed on the basis of certain parameters, the first of which is the question of the reasons and motivations for the campaign. A common argument appearing in most of the works prior to the 1550s states that Selim's original intention in launching a new military campaign in 1516 was to confront the Safavids for a second time with the aim of conquering central parts of Iran and eliminating the Shiite threat altogether. A military contingent led by Grand Vizier Hadım Sinan Paşa was sent to Diyarbekir as an advanced force, to be followed by Selim's main forces to eastern Anatolia. The road to Diyarbekir passed through Malatya, at that time a part of the Mamluk territories. When Sinan Paşa's forces approached Malatya and asked the Mamluk officials for permission to construct a bridge over the Euphrates, the Mamluks refused , creating tensions between the two sides. The Ottoman envoys sent by Selim to Mamluk Sultan Kansu al-Gavri were treated badly, and eventually Selim shifted the operation

Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid ve Sultan Selim (Manuscript, British Museum Or. Dem. No. 23586 [compilation date: Cemaziyelahir evahiri 960]). For Celalzade Salih's *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid* (1546), see Tuncay Bülbül, ed., *Mensur Bir Hikaye: Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid: İnceleme-Metin* (Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2011). Other authors include Ahmet Uğur and Mustafa Çuhadar, eds., *Celâlzade Mustafa (1494–1567). Selimnâme* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990); Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1341); Küçük Nişancı Mehmed Paşa, *Tarih-i Nişancı Mehmed Paşa* (Istanbul: Tabhane-i Amire, 1279); Ayşe Nur Sır, "Mehmed Zaʿim Cami'ü't-Tevarih," 3 vols. (PhD diss., Marmara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2007); Hoca Sadeddin Efendi, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, vol. 2 (Istanbul: n.p., 1280).

16. Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Iyas al-Hanafi (hereafter cited as Ibn Iyas), *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur fi Vaqayiʿ al-Duhur*, vol. 5 (Istanbul: Matbaʿa al-Davlat, 1932). About Ibn Iyas, see Muhammed Razûk, "İbn İyas," *DIA* (Istanbul: Divantaş, 1999), 20:97–98; W. M. Brinner, "Ibn Iyās," *EI2* vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 812–813. Abdü's-Samed bin Seydi Ali bin Davud ed-Diyarbekri translated Hasan al-Tuluni's *Nuzhatu's Saniyya fî Ahbari'l-Hulafa wa'l-Muluki'l-Masriyya* from Arabic into Ottoman Turkish and made historical additions for the period between 1488 to 1540. The original manuscript is located at Millet Kütüphanesi Ali Emiri Yazmalar Tarih dno. 596; a photocopy of the work is available at İSAM Library. For information about ed-Diyarbekri, see Babinger, *GOW*, 58–59; Ahmad bin Ali bin Ahmad Nur ad-Din, known as Ibn Zünbül, wrote a history of the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, quoted with two alternative titles of *Gazawat as-Sultan Salim Han maʿa Qansu al-Gawri Sultanu Misr wa Aʿmaliha*, and *Fathu Misr aw Ahziha min al-Jarakisa ʿala yadi as-Sultan Salim*. Ahmed Süheyli bin Hemdan translated this work into Ottoman Turkish in 1621 under the title *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, and it was printed in 1730 by Müteferrika Press in Istanbul. For more information, see Babinger, *GOW*, 56–57, Seyyid Muhammed Es-Seyyid, "İbn Zünbül," *DIA* 20:474–476, and Şerife Yalçınkaya, "Süheylî, Ahmed", *DIA* (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2010), 38:32–33.

from Iran to the Mamluk Empire.[17] Arguments comparable to this view assert that although Selim had launched a campaign against Iran, he changed his mind when intelligence reached him about al-Gavri's troop concentration around Aleppo, and turned his attention toward the Arab frontier.[18] Al-Gavri's military moves in northern Syria and his refusal to allow the Ottoman army to pass through Malatya were interpreted by the Ottoman ulema as an act of heresy since, from the Ottoman perspective, the Mamluks, as Custodians of the Two Sanctuaries, were obligated to support their Sunni Ottoman brethren against the "heretic" Safavids; instead they were seen as threatening the *Rumis* and helping the Shiites.[19] The dominant argument until the mid-sixteenth-century supported the impression that Selim did not preconceive a military operation against the Mamluks; instead, unexpected circumstances led the Ottoman sultan to change his expansionist attention from Iran toward Egypt.

From the Mamluk perspective, Ibn Iyas and Tuluni/Diyarbekri support the view that a war between the Ottomans and the Mamluks was far from inevitable. From those sources, the reader gets the impression that a feeling of mutual distrust was the catalyst for the conflict between Selim and al-Gavri. Al-Gavri was convinced that the winner of an Ottoman–Iranian war, either the Ottomans or the Safavids, would then attack the Mamluk state, and thus he concentrated his army in the Levant. Selim, in turn, considered al-Gavri's military preparations as a sign of an impending attack on the Ottomans from the rear while they were busy fighting the Safavids. When Selim's envoys failed to negotiate an agreement with the Mamluks, the Ottoman sultan decided to move toward Syria.[20]

The argument for the absence of predetermination on either side is also backed by historiographical statements asserting that, following the Battle of Marj Dabiq and his subsequent occupation of Aleppo and Damascus, Selim was indecisive as to whether or not to finish the campaign, to content himself with the annexation of Bilad al-Sham or

17. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 294–298; Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 398–403; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 183; Sır, "Mehmed Zaʿim," 316–317; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 326.

18. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 426; Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 139a, 144b–145a; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 5a–6a, 16a; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 211.

19. Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 143b.

20. Ibn Iyas, *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur*, 20–21, 43, 58–59; Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 139b.

to continue the war in order to eliminate the Mamluk state in Egypt altogether. Prior to his reaching Gaza, letters were sent to Mamluk Sultan Tumanbay and the military commander, Janbirdi al-Ghazali, expressing an interest in a peaceful solution of the conflict.[21] However, according to Nişancı and Sadeddin, it became a strategic necessity to conquer Egypt in order to keep Damascus and Aleppo in Ottoman hands. They also argue that Selim developed a longing in his heart to conquer Egypt.[22]

The abovementioned arguments imply mainly pragmatic motives for the continuation of the campaign. However, there is a second line of reasoning that stresses ideological or value-based motives for the Ottoman–Mamluk War and emerges mostly among authors who wrote after the 1550s. One of these authors is İ. Bitlisi; although he wrote his *Selimname* before 1520, the draft text was edited by his son Ebu'l-Fazl in 1567 with probable additions reflecting evolving imperial perceptions from Ebu'l-Fazl's time.[23]

Included in this second line of argumentation, Matrakçı Nasuh and Celalzade Mustafa describe Selim as suspecting a secret alliance between Egypt and Iran, and also being unable to forgive the Ottoman defeat by the Mamluks during his father Bayezid II's reign. In addition to his drive for revenge, Selim considered Circassian rule as too corrupt and irreligious to deserve the eminent title of the Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries; he believed it was the Ottoman dynasty who had the right to be the servants of Mecca and Medina. According to Matrakçı Nasuh, the crisis concerning the Ottoman forces being refused passage through Malatya via the Euphrates bridge was created intentionally to provide an excuse for a war against the Mamluks. A comparable view on the Circassians also appears in İ. Bitlisi's 1567-edited *Selimname*, which asserts that Damascus needed to be conquered in order to cleanse the city of the irreligious and corrupt Circassians.[24]

According to Ottoman sources, clear proof of the evil nature of the

21. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 429, 430; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 313; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 259–263; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 343–345; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 18b–19a.

22. Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 213; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 344.

23. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 34.

24. Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 141a; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 173–176; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 312.

Circassians was their unwillingness to support the Ottomans against the "heretic" Safavids. Zaʿim contends that while the Ottomans and the Mamluks were at the stage of negotiations over the Malatya passage to Iran, al-Gavri sent a letter to Selim demanding the relinquishing of control over Maraş and Elbistan to Egypt as a precondition for an agreement—a demand that made Selim furious. Furthermore, the delegation that delivered al-Gavri's letter to Selim was led by a military commander named Moğolbay. Since the delegation consisted of armed men, it contravened the diplomatic tradition of sending civilians or members of the ulema as envoys. According to Zaʿim, they were actually assassins on a mission to kill the Ottoman sultan. Thus Selim ordered the army to march toward the *qiblah* instead of to the east.[25]

In addition to the apparent worthlessness of Circassian rule, Sadeddin expressed the opinion that one of the main reasons for Selim to conquer the Arab lands was to acquire the honor of serving the Two Sanctuaries. According to Sadeddin, factors such as the help of God, the light of the caliphate, and the drive for conquest constituted the determining factors for Selim's campaign to conquer Bilad al-Sham and Egypt; in this quest, Sultan Selim was the obvious candidate. İ. Bitlisi also asserts that Selim adopted Alexander the Great's mission to become a world conqueror (*cihangir*).[26]

This value-laden and ideological perspective used to explain Selim's motives for the attack on Mamluks overlaps to some extent with other legitimizing arguments for the campaign. The prevalent line of legitimation is the notion that Mamluk rule violated the Sharia and embodied a despotic regime which had to be eliminated. As stated by Hadidi, Circassians constituted an oppressive rule over the "Throne of Egypt" and the Arab lands. They represented an unjust and arrogant administration which was detested by most of the population. Under such circumstances, it was believed that the souls of the prophets could not remain indifferent and God provided help for Selim. The "vengeance of the oppressed ones" (*mazlumun ahı*) was executed by the *Gazi Padişah*. These ideological motives were added to other previous disagreements

25. Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 144a; Sır, "Mehmed Zaʿim," 318–319.

26. Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 324, 328; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 295.

between the Ottomans and the Mamluks, such as the issue of the Beylicate of Dulkadiroğlu, and therefore the attack by the "Sultan of Rum Selim Shah" was also legitimized by the Sharia.[27]

In connection with allegations of al-Gavri's deviation from the Sharia, was the emerging view that the Circassians actively made pacts with the infidel Iranians, thus betraying the Sunni cause. İ. Bitlisi, Ş. Bitlisi, and Sadeddin emphasized that the sultan of Egypt, who resided on the "Throne of the Prophet Joseph" and served the Two Sanctuaries, bore a responsibility to support Sunni Islam against heresy. Thus, they contended, he was expected to provide assistance to Selim's efforts to combat Shah Ismail of Iran. When the Egyptian sultan acted in a contrary manner and tacidly supported the Shii "heretics," attempting to reconcile the Ottomans and the Iranians, he was interpreted as making a pact with the infidels. The leading Ottoman ulema therefore issued *fatwas* to legitimize a war against the Mamluks.[28]

Therefore, in addition to the religious views, we see a rather different line of legitimation which concerns the social and racial origins of the Mamluks. İ. Bitlisi claimed that since Circassians lacked noble blood and possess infidel roots, they were not entitled to rule as sultans over Islamic lands. In a comparable manner, Ş. Bitlisi asserted that Bilad al-Sham and Egypt should not be governed by slaves. Ibn Zünbül reported Selim's conversation with Tumanbay following his capture, whereby Selim harshly criticized the Mamluk system of selecting a sultan from among slaves of obscure origins.[29]

The third research question concerns the importance and the consequences of the conquest of Syria and Egypt as perceived by the first-generation authors. Again there appear to be two lines of argumenation. One point of view emphasizes aspects with a more or less secular quality, while the other underlines the religious importance of the outcome. Considering the first argument, authors like Hadidi, Celalzade Salih, and

27. Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 415–416; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 235–236.

28. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 296, 301–309; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 243–248; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 143b; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 185; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 328, 331; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 4a.

29. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 313; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 259; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 42b–43b.

Sadeddin asserted that once the campaign had achieved the conquest of the Arab lands (*feth-i memalik-i Arab*) and the elimination of the Circassian enemy, Selim became the "Shah of Islam." In a more literary style, Celalzade Salih contended that the Battle of Marj Dabiq "was conclusive in terms of the termination of the Circassian state. The mythical bird *Hüma* [symbolizing imperial destiny, left the Mamluks and] flew to the nest of the Ottoman dynasty."[30] Celalzade Mustafa and Matrakçı Nasuh, on the other hand, made truly imperial claims, asserting that Selim's conquests of Syria and Egypt created a profound impact in all four directions of the inhabited world—Mecca and Medina, all of northern Africa as far as Morocco, and the southern regions from Abyssinia to Zanzibar became part of the Ottoman Empire. These authors attributed a nearly cosmic significance to Selim's conquest.[31]

The more religious perspective, which appeared in İ. Bitlisi and Sadeddin, pointed to the importance of the protective mission of the Ottoman state over the Two Sanctuaries, and the Arab and Islamic lands. Their arguments about the outcome of the conquest of Bilad al-Sham and Egypt contained the core idea that the Arab population was not targeted by the Ottomans, but by the evil oligarchy of Circassians, who had made a pact with the "heretic" Shiites. The result of the Ottoman victory was overall peace, order, and security for the Sunni Islamic world so that the Hajj routes to Mecca and Medina became safe for the pilgrims, and the Ottoman government could serve the Two Sanctuaries effectively.[32]

Additional perceptions of the Ottoman–Mamluk War include opinions on Ottoman policies and measures applied in the newly conquered lands. The occupation of Aleppo and Damascus met with little resistance. A Mamluk historian, Ibn Iyas, even stated that following Marj Dabiq, the population of Aleppo attacked the remaining Mamluks, forcing them to flee the city.[33] The consolidation of Ottoman rule in the Syrian lands proceeded during Selim's wintering in Damascus in 1516–17. A second

30. Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 417–419; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 237; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 360, 368. In Celalzade Salih's own words, *Devlet-i Çerakise bunda ahir olub ol hinde tumar-ı devletleri dürildi. Hüma-yı saltanatları dudman-ı Al-i Osman aşyanına pervaz eyledi*. For this quotation, see Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 236.

31. Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 174b–175a; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 203.

32. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 360; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 370–373.

33. Ibn Iyas, *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur*, 71, 72.

military encounter between the Ottoman and the Mamluk forces took place at Gaza around 21 December 1516/27 Dhu'l-Qada 922, where Sinan Paşa defeated Janbirdi al-Ghazali.[34] This defeat was followed by violence inflicted by Sinan's forces upon the populations of Ramle and Gaza.

Several earlier commentators from among the first-generation authors have reported on these events. Haydar Çelebi noted that:

> when Sinan Paşa swiftly galopped to fight [against al-Ghazali], the inhabitants of Gaza and Ramle, people of the countryside and towns as well as the population of Jerusalem believed that Sinan panicked and fled [from the Mamluks]; thus they assaulted the remaining [Ottomans], killed thirty of 300–400 [Ottoman] soldiers, wounded and robbed some others, rendering them peniless. Upon the news of Sinan Paşa's victory, those who were able did run away, while the returning army units raided and plundered Ramle.[35]

Slightly different accounts were provided by authors like İ. Bitlisi, Ş. Bitlisi, and Cemali. Accordingly, before the Ottomans moved to the Sinai Peninsula in order to proceed toward Egypt, the inhabitants of Ramle and Gaza believed that the Egyptians had defeated the Ottomans at Gaza, and thus revolted and killed the few Ottoman military units stationed in these towns. Following this incident, the Ottoman authorities reacted harshly and killed the entire male population of the two towns, irrespective of class or status.[36] In Celalzade Mustafa's Selimname, this incident was narrated only vaguely. Thus:

> upon hearing the news of Sinan Paşa's victory at Gaza, festivities were made by the sultan's army. Full of luck and prosperity, they camped at Ramle and remained there for five days. The [local] inhabitants, having deviated from the true path of submission, had their ears to be pulled for punishment; thus they received sentences or what they deserved, and [their goods] were plundered and destroyed.[37]

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34. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 430–431.

35. *Ve paşa cenke gitdikde ılgarla gitmegin Gazzelu ve Ramlelu ve sa'ir kırı ve bilad ve Kudüs şehirleri paşa için havf idüb kaçdı deyu heman içlerinde buldıkları askerler halkını kırub heman üç dört yüz kişiden otuzın öldürüb bazı mecruh kılub soyub habbeye muhtac eylemişler. Sinan Paşa galib oldıgın işidüb kādir olan kaçmış ama dönüşde leşker Ramle'yi gāret iylediler.* See Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 431.

36. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 321–322; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 268; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122.

37. *Sinan Paşa tarafından avaze-i feth-i 'azim ile mübeşşirler varid olub, Ordu-yı Hümayun'da şenlikler ve şadilikler itdiler. Andan yümn-ü-ikbal ile nüzul-i iclal Ramle'de vaki' olub, anda beş gün karar iyleyüb, ahalisi ki nehc-i istikametden kadem-i ta'atı haric idüb, guş-male müstahakk olmuşlardı. İstihkaklarına göre cezaları ve sezaları verilüb, yagma ve hasarat olundı.* Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 195.

In contrast, authors who wrote after the 1560s, such as Sadeddin, do not mention any of these events.

Another event which could be compared with the incidents in Ramle and Gaza relates to urban resistance to Ottoman occupation in Cairo, 27–29 January 1517/5–7 Muharram 923, following the Battle of Ridaniya and the ensuing violence inflicted by Selim. Possibly the earliest account belongs to Haydar Çelebi, who decribed the events in detail. In summary, runaway soldiers from the defeated Egyptian army led by the last Mamluk sultan, Tumanbay, infiltrated the city and built barricades and trenches to resist the Ottoman troops. The Ottomans, in turn, sent units with light cannons and muskets and surrounded the rebellious neighborhoods, while sending pamphlets with both guarantees and threats to the insurgents. Heavy fighting lasted for days, and Selim was present, in person, at some of the confrontations. After three days of resistance, the townspeople asked for mercy. When janissary units entered the neighborhoods, stones and chisels were thrown from high walls onto the soldiers. In response, 4,000 Egyptian soldiers and Arabs were killed; the streets were blocked with corpses. Tumanbay, however, succeeded in escaping from the Ottomans, but around 400 Circassians, who were captured alive, were brought to the imperial pavilion and beheaded in the presence of Selim.[38]

This event was narrated by most of the first-generation authors, who also provided additional details on the events that were not provided by Haydar Çelebi. Many historians—including İ. Bitlisi, Ş. Bitlisi, Cemali, Lutfi Paşa, Zaʿim, and Sadeddin—agree that a few days after the Battle of Ridaniya, the defeated Tumanbay, together with his troops, secretly entered Cairo and killed the Ottoman troops stationed in the city. As a counter-measure, Selim sent major contingents to Cairo, equipped with heavy artillery and guns. This was followed by a three-day street fight where town inhabitants, including women and children, joined the Mamluk resistance against the Ottoman presence. Eventually, all the Mamluk fighters were killed, and this was followed by the massacre of nearly 50,000 civilians, men and women, children and adults. The streets were piled with corpses; Selim was unable to enter Cairo for days due to the stench of

38. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 434.

putrefaction. Only after piles of corpses were thrown into the Nile, could he enter the city.[39]

Haydar Çelebi's report on the beheading of the captured Circassians following the Cairo rebellion was confirmed by Cemali, Lutfi Paşa, and Sadeddin with slight variations. Accordingly, Selim retaliated against Tumanbay's Cairo resistance with the summary execution of between 2,000 and 4,000 Circassians, who had been previously imprisoned. The executed bodies were then thrown into the Nile.[40]

A further event, whose exact date cannot be ascertained, is the incident of Menouf, which stands out for being reported only in Hadidi's *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*. We learn from Hadidi that, after their having established full control over Egypt, intelligence reached the Ottoman headquarters of a Mamluk presence in Menouf, a region located in the Nile Delta. Military contingents were sent to take control of the region; however, all the Ottoman units were killed by the Mamluk resistance forces there. Upon hearing this, Selim became furious and ordered the Ottoman army to massacre all the population and to destroy all the settlements in the Menouf region. However, Veli Paşa, one of the commanders, implored the sultan to revise this order, pointing out that killing innocent people would constitute a major sin; he succeeded in limiting the death sentence only to those who had actively taken part in the armed resistance.[41]

The period of rebellions and suppressions was followed by measures to establish order, peace, and justice, which was reported by almost all the first-generation authors. As stated by Celalzade Salih, after Selim and the Ottoman dignitaries violently suppressed most of the Circassians and others resisting the Ottoman presence, the sultan applied a policy of justice and righteousness which stabilized *Rumi* rule over Egypt, Damascus, Aleppo, and the Arab lands, in general.[42]

The Ottoman–Mamluk War and the dramatic conquest by Selim

39. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 333; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 275–279; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 123; Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 262; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 200–201; Sır, "Mehmed Zaʿim," 329–331; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 358–360.

40. Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 124; Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 263; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 360.

41. Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 416–417.

42. Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 237; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 175b–177a.; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 47b–48a.

of a major part of the Middle East have been described by authors from the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries by employing a variety of religious and political symbolisms in their narratives which included the acquisition of the religious titles of the caliphate and the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries. There has been a lack of consensus among academic historians, at least until the 1980s, about the actual role of the conquest of Egypt in the transfer of the title of caliphate to the Ottoman dynasty, and about the details of the acquisition of the attribute of Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries. Diverging views have coexisted, ranging from the claim that the Ottomans acquired the caliphate and Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries right after the occupation of Aleppo to the view that it took until the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774 for the Ottomans to assume the universal caliphate.[43] Since the 1980s, to a major extent, researchers have tended to downgrade the overall importance of the conquest of Egypt to the acquisition of the title of universal Islamic caliphate.[44] What is known as fact, reported by contemporary authors, is that the last Abbasid caliph, Mutawakkil III ʿAlaʾl-lah, who hitherto lived under the protection of the Mamluk sultanate, was deported to Istanbul in 1517 and allowed to return to Egypt in 1520 after having lost his overall political influence. The son of the Sharif of Mecca, Abu Numayy, on the other hand, formally handed over the keys of the Two Sanctuaries to Sultan Selim while the sultan was in Cairo.[45]

In addition to the abovementioned historiographical ambiguity, it should also be added that Ottoman sultans prior to Selim I already had

43. See Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, vol. 2 (Pest: C.A. Hartleben's Verlage, 1828), 541; N. Jorga: *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches nach den Quellen dargestellt*, vol. 2 (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1909), ix, 340; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 5th ed., vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988), 280; Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs from the Earliest Times to the Present*, 10th ed. (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1970), 703, 705; İsmail Hami Danişmend, İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi, vol. 2 (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971), 29, 36–38; Yılmaz Öztuna, *Başlangıcından Zamanımıza Kadar Türkiye Tarihi*, vol. 5 (Istanbul: Hayat Yayınları, 1964), 39; Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire. The Classical Age 1300–1600* (New Rochelle, NY: Orpheus Publishing,1989), 57; Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 250.

44. See Robert Mantran, ed., *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman* (Paris: Librairie Artheme Fayard, 1989); Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650. The Structure of Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream:The Story of the Ottoman Empire* (London: John Murray, 2005); Gabor Agoston and Bruce Masters, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2008); Suraiya Faroqhi and Kate Fleet, eds., *The Cambridge History of Turkey: the Ottoman Empire as World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Emecen, *Zamanın İskenderi*, 321–327; Lellouch and Michel, *Conquête ottomane de l'Égypte*, 35–36, 89. İnalcık, by using the historian Shams al-Din Muhammad Ibn Tulun's *Mufakahat al-hillan fi havadith al-zaman*, ed. Muhammad Mustafa (Cairo: n.p., 1952) as a source, states that Selim's name was mentioned together with the title of *Hadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn* for the first time at the Friday *hutba* in Damascus. See İnalcık, "Selim," 130.

45. Emecen, *Zamanın İskenderi*, 324.

assumed the title of caliph. This becomes particularly clear in the case of Mehmed II the Conqueror. The Law Code, also known as *Kanunname-i Al-i Osman*, issued by Mehmed II around 1477–81, specifies in the preamble the Ottoman ruler as "owner of the caliphal throne" (*malik-i serir-i hilafet*) and "caliph of God over the world" (*halifetuʾllah fiʾl-alem*). Tursun Beg's chronicle, titled "History of Mehmed the Conqueror" (*Tarih-i Abuʾl-Fath*), compiled before 1488, attributes to Mehmed II in the very beginning of the text the quality of a *halife*.[46] This Ottoman assertion of caliphal title, apparent as early as the fifteenth century, finds its historiographical confirmation among sixteenth-century authors. Returning to the first-generation historians, Haydar Çelebi in his diaries legitimizes Selim's campaign against the Safavids by referring to verses 30–31 of the Surah Baqara in the Quran, where God says to the angels that "I am about to appoint a vice-regent (*ḫalīfah*) on the earth," implying the role of Selim as a caliph.[47] Authors such as Sadeddin provide the impression that even prior to the campaign against the Mamluks, İstanbul was called the "Abode of the Caliphate" (*makarr-ı hilafetleri olan Darü's-Saltanatü's-seniyye-i mahruse-i Kostantiniyye*), thus implying that, at least since the conquest of Constantinople, Ottoman sultans used the title of caliph. Again Sadeddin states that it was the help of God, the spiritual light of the caliphate, and the drive for conquest which constituted the determining factors for the campaign to conquer Bilad al-Sham and Egypt, and that Sultan Selim was destined to become the conqueror.[48] When Selim, during his stay in Damascus, sent a letter to Tumanbay to demand submission to his authority, the Ottoman sultan claimed the title of caliphate on earth by referring to the following Quranic verses: verse 30 of Surah Baqara, 33 of Tawba, 14 of Hajj, 2 of Māʾida, 5 and 6 of Yūsuf, 13 of Saff, and 59 of Anʿām.[49]

Most of the first-generation historians, including Sadeddin, do not mention any kind of formal transfer of the caliphate from the Abbasid

46. Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı kanunnameleri ve hukuki tahlilleri*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: FEY Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), 317; Halil İnalcık and Rhoads Murphey, eds., *The History of Mehmed the Conqueror by Tursun Beg* [*Tarih-i Abuʾl-Fath*]. *Text Published in Facsimile with English Translation* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1978), 69. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Y. Hakan Erdem for drawing my attention to these sources.

47. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 406; *The Holy Qurʾān*. Arabic Text and English Translation. Transl. Maulawī Sher ʿAlī (Islamabad, PK: Islam International Publications Limited, 2004), 5–6.

48. Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 329. See also Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 141a.

49. Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 191–192.

shadow-caliph to Selim. However, Matrakçı Nasuh narrates that shortly after the Battle of Ridaniya (Friday, 1 Muharram 923/24 January 1517), all the mosques began to deliver homilies and prayers in the name of the "caliph sultan" (*hutbe-i hilafet-i padişahi nam-ı saadet-encamına*).[50]

Ibn Iyas, on the other hand, states that al-Mutawakkil III ʿAlaʾl-lah, who was a part of Kansu al-Gavri's entourage, was taken prisoner following the Battle of Marj Dabiq. Tumanbay, in turn, appointed al-Mutawakkil's father and predecessor Yaʿqub al-Mustamsik as the new caliph.[51] Thus, there emerged an alternative Abbasid caliph in Egypt; in other words, for around four months, we encounter the phenomenon of two Abbasid caliphs simultaneously controlled by Selim and Tumanbay.

We have Haydar Çelebi's report about the last Abbasid caliph's role in persuading Selim to send peace envoys to Tumanbay. Accordingly, following the military consolidation of the Ottoman presence in Cairo, the caliph Mutawakkil, together with the judges of the four legal schools, applied to the sultan to send envoys to demand Tumanbay's submission. Mutawakkil and Hayrbay, the former Mamluk governor of Aleppo, wrote letters to Tumanbay with this aim.[52] This information shows us that Selim considered Mutawakkil, who was still carrying the caliphal title, as an important political asset to help establish full control over Egypt. One might infer from this detail that the issue of the universal caliphate was, at least at this point, not a politically or personally crucial issue for Selim.

Considering the honorific attribute of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, it has been already stated that authors like Ş. Bitlisi, Matrakçı Nasuh, Celalzade Mustafa, İ. Bitlisi, and Sadeddin considered the Ottoman sultan as more worthy of this title than the corrupt Mamluk rulers, and they mentioned this issue within the context of the impending conquest of Syria and Egypt. However, there is practically no information with regard to the actual occasion or moment when Selim "officially" acquired the custodianship. Haydar Çelebi while informing us about the Friday homilies and prayers at Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo mosques in his diaries, does

50. Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 163b.

51. Ibn Iyas, *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur*, 101.

52. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 435.

not mention that title.[53] Authors, in general, report the visit of the son of the sharif of Mecca to Selim, whereby the former delivered his father's congratulations for the conquest and declared the loyalty of his father to the Ottoman ruler. Selim was very pleased and bestowed valuable gifts on the son of the Sharif. In addition, the sultan sent considerable amounts of grain and other types of food to Mecca and Medina.[54] Early authors mention that Selim was attentive to the organization of annual Hajj caravans; Sadeddin reports that when Selim sent a letter to Tumanbay, he stated that his aim was to provide justice to the region as well as to take over the responsibility for preparing the Hajj caravans. Lutfi Paşa states that following the consolidation of his authority in Egypt, Selim personally took part in the organization of the Hajj to Mecca; he appointed an *Emirü'l-Hacc*—commander of a company of pilgrims to Mecca—and provided a new *kisve*, the cloth covering of the Kaaba at Mecca.[55]

Despite this dearth of references by pre-1580 Ottoman authors in terms of concrete procedures for a transfer of the title of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, Ibn Iyas reports that on the first Friday following the Battle of Ridaniya, all mosques in Egypt added the title *Hadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn* to Selim's name in their sermons. According to Ibn Zünbül, while Selim, in Damascus, was still undecided about attacking Egypt, the former Mamluk governor of Aleppo, Hayrbay, told him that only the conquest of Egypt would provide the sultan with the title of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries.[56]

It appears that the issue of the "official" transfer of the caliphate and the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, which consumed the energies of later historians, was actually paid little significance by the Ottoman authors of the first generation. , What is most striking among the first-generation historians is their tendency to qualify sultanic acts and developments with symbolism often related to pre-Islamic, mainly Biblical, characters also recognized by the Quran. Numerous early authors, including Haydar Çelebi and İ. Bitlisi, emphasized that the Battle of Marj Dabiq took place

53. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 428, 429, 433.

54. Feridun, Münşeatü's-Selatin, 439; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 341; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 204–205; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 371–372.

55. Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 345; Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 263; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 206.

56. Ibn Iyas, *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur*, 145; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 20a.

at the exact location where the Prophet David was buried. İ. Bitlisi even stresses that this battle resembled the struggle between the sunshine of the morning and the darkness of the night, between God (*haqq*) and the devil (*batıl*). This reported resemblance possibly alludes to Selim's victory having received the spiritual support of David, a view openly expressed by Celalzade Mustafa and later recorded as a local tradition by Evliya Çelebi in the late seventeenth-century.[57] It is noteworthy that practically none of the authors of Mamluk origin refer to this Biblical connection.

Most of the historians prior to the 1580s attach major significance to Selim's visits to Biblical and Islamic holy places in Jerusalem and Hebron. Accordingly, before moving from Gaza to Sinai, Selim swiftly galopped back to Jerusalem in order to pray at the al-Aqsa Mosque and at the Dome of the Rock, and to visit the tombs of the Abrahamic prophets. Then he went to Hebron to pray at the tombs of Abraham and other prophets. While visiting Jerusalem, he donated huge sums to the local poor people as well as to local Christian and Jewish clergy.[58]

The Battle of Ridaniya and the subsequent conquest of Egypt have been described by authors like Haydar Çelebi, Tuluni/Diyarbekri, Ş. Bitlisi, Cemali, Lutfi Paşa, Küçük Nişancı, Zaʿim, and Sadeddin through Biblical metaphors, whereby Tumanbay is compared to the infidel pharaoh and the land of Egypt to the "Throne of Prophet Joseph" (*Taht-ı Yusuf*). Haydar Çelebi reports Selim's ceremonial entrance at the citadel of Cairo as his accession to the "Caliphal Throne of Joseph" (*kal'a-i Mısır'da Yusuf Nebi Aleyhi's-Selam Hazretlerinin serir-i hilafet-i masirine . . . cülus iyledi*).[59] Sadeddin goes even further and combines Biblical metaphors with quasi-sexual allusions. He likens Egypt to beautiful Suleika, who yearned for Joseph while getting old under the arrogant rule of the Circassians. However, the arrival of Joseph

57. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 427; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 301, 303; Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 406; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 146b; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 173, 187; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 332; Evliya Çelebi bin Derviş Mehemmed Zıllı, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, eds. Yücel Dağlı, Seyit Ali Kahraman, Robert Dankoff, vol. 10 (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), 63–64.

58. Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 147a; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 323–342; Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 410; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 268; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122–123; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 158a–158b; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 195, 196; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 213–214; Sır, "Mehmed Zaʿim," 326; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 349–351.

59. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 435; Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 151b; Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 279; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 124; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 154a, 171a–171b; Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 259; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 202; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 213, 214; Sır, "Mehmed Zaʿim," 331; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 351.

had a rejuvenating effect, transforming Suleika into a fresh bride ready to enter the nuptial chamber.[60] A further religious motif which occurs among some of the early authors is related to God's grace during the difficult passage of Selim's army through the Sinai desert. Writers like Cemali, Matrakçı, and Sadeddin asserted that the arid desert between Gaza and Katya experienced unexpectedly heavy rainfall while the Ottoman troops passed through the region. These authors attribute this improbable event to the grace of God.[61] A final depiction with religious associations concerns the tomb in Damascus of the eminent Sufi philosopher Muhyiddin Ibn al-Arabi. Haydar Çelebi, Celalzade Mustafa, Küçük Nişancı, and Sadeddin reported that Selim, while on the road back to Istanbul, spent time in Damascus, where he provided for the cleaning of the grave of Ibn al-Arabi and the construction of a mosque as well as a soup kitchen adjacent to the tomb.[62]

The final parameters to be investigated are the self-image of Selim and the Ottomans, observations on the Arab population during the campaign, and the representation of Kansu al-Gavri, Tumanbay, and the Mamluks, in general. Concerning the self-image of the Ottomans, practically all of the first-generation historians refer to the Ottoman state and its administrators and soldiers as *Rumi*, *Rumlu*, or *Ervam*. The Ottoman monarch is either mentioned as *Sultan-ı Rum* or "Sultan of Islam" (*Hudavendigar-i İslam)*, while Ottoman military units are very often also qualified as "soldiers of Islam" (*asker-i İslam*).

There was a clear fascination among Ottoman literati with Selim's victories over the Safavid Shah Ismail as well as over the Mamluks and with the subsequent incorporation of nearly all the classical centers of Islam into the Ottoman realm within a span of months. In this context, most of the sixteenth-century authors tend to compare Selim with Alexander the Great. The first-generation authors, in general, seem to have considered Sultan Selim's often violent measures taken toward his viziers and subordinates and against dissenting population groups in the

60. Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 364–365.

61. Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 123; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 159b; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 353.

62. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 444; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 209; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 215; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 379–380.

course of the Ottoman–Mamluk War as acceptable by *raison d'état*. At the same time, some of them depict Selim as possibly feeling uneasy about his violent actions. Ş. Bitlisi, Cemali, and Küçük Nişancı report that after the massacres committed against the rebellious people of Ramla and Gaza, and also following the execution of Vizier Hüseyin (or Hüsam) Paşa, Selim went to Jerusalem and to Hebron to pray at the tombs of the prophets and he distributed rich donations to the local poor people.[63]

Selim is known to have been a ruler with a highly refined taste in literature, and particularly in poetry, and was famous for his enjoyment of literary conversations with men of fine arts.[64] Authors like Lutfi Paşa provide us with a picture of Selim as having a personality characterized by intellectual curiosity. According to Lutfi when in Egypt, Selim was intrigued by the great pyramids (*hereman dağları*), curious about their origins and their builders, and he searched for anyone who could satisfy his historical interest. Finally a "major philosopher" (*bir feylesof-ı cihan*) was found who reported that their origins and founders were unknown. Selim also asked about the source of the Nile River, and that same philosopher told him that the source of the Nile was located in Abyssinia, where the river emerged from a mountain called Cebel Kamer. He also informed Selim about the heavy rainfalls at Cebel Kamer leading to annual Nile floods which provided fertility to Egypt.[65]

The Mamluk elite referred to the Mamluk sultanate as the "State of the Turk" (*dawlat al-turk*), the "State of the Turks" (*dawlat al-atrak*), or the "State of Turkey" (*al-dawla al-turkiyya*), probably due to their mainly Turkic-speaking ruling elite of slaves of Circassian and Kipchak origins.[66] Based on accounts by Ottoman authors from the first generation, the most common designations for the Mamluk sultanate included either "Arab lands" (*Memalik-i Arabistan*; *Diyar-ı Arabistan*; *Arab Kişveri; Arab Mülkü*) or "Circassian lands" (*Diyar-ı Çerkes*). Some authors called Kansu al-Gavri "the sultan of Egypt," whereas others used the combination of "Sultan of Egypt and the Levant" (*Sultan-ı Mısr ü Şam*) or named him "Sultan of the

63. Bitlisi, *Selimname*, 268; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122–123; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 213–214.

64. Selâhattin Tansel, *Yavuz Sultan Selim* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1969), 250–251; Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, 2:377–380; Emecen, *Zamanın İskenderi*, 360–361.

65. Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 272–273.

66. D. Ayalon, "Mamluk," *EI2*, vol. 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 316.

Arabs" (*Arab Sultanı*).[67] These designations raise the question of how these authors perceived the Arabs, the main population of Syria and Egypt, and the Circassians, the Mamluk ruling elite. Nearly all of the early Ottoman historians seem not to have viewed the Arabs as a single major population group. Instead, they considered populations of localities, towns, and tribes as particular demographic groups. When janissary units were killed at Ramle, the perpetrators were called "the treacherous people of Ramle." Nasir al-Din Ibn Hanesh, who later revolted against the Ottomans in Syria, was described in a similar manner. The bedouins of the Sinai desert, called *urban*, who even robbed the personal effects of Selim while he crossed the Sinai desert, were described as plundering highwaymen.[68] It is rather difficult to find any qualifying generalizations about Arabs in the early historiography.

In glaring contrast, the Circassians are described as a single people and in a highly negative manner which sometimes approaches the level of racism. Numerous authors use insulting terms such as "despicable Circassian" (Çerkes-i na-*kes*), "cursed Circassians" (Çerakise-i mena*hise*), "devilish Circassians" (Çerakise-i eba*lise*), "ignorant Circassians" (Çerakise-i nada*n*), "contemptible Circassians" (Çerakis-i zeli*le*), and "weak Circassian soldiers who [easily] become demoralized" (*mehazile-i asker-i Çerakise-i na-tüvan*).[69] According to İ. Bitlisi and Celalzade Mustafa, the Circassians were a group of irreligious usurpers of power, unable to deliver justice, lacking noble blood, and possessing infidel roots. Celalzade Salih claimed that Circassians and Abkhasians in their homelands are not people of the book (*kitabi degillerdür*). Thus, those who are enslaved and become Muslims do not have any problems in accepting Islam, in contrast to the infidels of the book who show resistance in embracing it.[70] A contrasting and rather exceptional view is represented by Tuluni/Diyarbekri, who described Mamluk rule over Egypt as a golden age for learning and

67. For example, Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 295; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 235; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 143b; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 173; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 317; Sır, "Mehmed Za'im," 323; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 325, 326, 328.

68. Feridun *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 440; Uğur and Çuhadar, 196, 197.

69. Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 236; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 141a; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 211, 214; Sır, "Mehmed Za'im," 325; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 325.

70. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 311, 313; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 233; Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 175.

science,[71] And included remarks which point to Circassian bravery and courage. Hadidi provides us the image of the "terrible Circassian" (*yavuz Çerkes*) at the Battle of Marj Dabiq. He depicted Circassian troops as able and formidable fighters who, from time to time, created serious difficulties for the Ottoman army. Among such fighters, Hadidi singled out Janbirdi al-Ghazali, whom he called the "champion of Egypt" (*Mısır'da pehlüvanidi zamanın*). Celalzade Salih also contended that Circassians were brave people. Sadeddin, unwilling to attribute a positive value to their bravery and courage, claimed that their corrupt nature (*tıynet-i reddiyelerinde*) produced fanaticism (*hamiyyet-i cahiliye*).[72] Celalzade Mustafa, on the other hand, evaluated Circassian bravery in a rather patronizing manner. Accordingly, he remarked that the despicable Mamluks were too ignorant and arrogant to comprehend that their cavalry tactics and chivalry were utterly useless in the face of the Ottoman artillery and fire power.[73]

A possible reason for these contrasting differences of attitude among the authors vis-à-vis the Arabs and the Circassians may relate to the fact that the Ottoman establishment, in general, considered the Circassian ruling elite as their main adversaries, whereas the Arab people were regarded mostly as a subjected population who needed to be liberated from their oppressors. However, at least one author, Cemali, noted that during the Battle of Marj Dabiq, the Ottomans fought against an Arab army.[74]

Depictions of Sultan Kansu al-Gavri by the first-generation authors reflect their generally negative attitude toward the Circassians. For İ. Bitlisi, Celalzade Salih, and Matrakçı Nasuh, al-Gavri was an arrogant ruler who did not promote the principles of Sharia in Egypt and Syria, and whose mind was corrupted by admiration for the supposedly heretic Shah Ismail.[75] Interestingly, the Mamluk author Ibn Iyas supported this view. Accordingly, he seems to have considered al-Gavri an unjust ruler, and noted that the people of the Mamluk sultanate suffered from oppression. For Ibn Iyas, the

71. Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 150b–151a.

72. Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 406; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 233; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 326.

73. Uğur and Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 187.

74. Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122.

75. Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 300; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 235–236; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 141a.

death of al-Gavri signified an act of divine justice.[76]

The first-generation authors disagree about al-Gavri's fate following the Battle of Marj Dabiq, an ambiguity seen even in authors like Haydar Çelebi and Tuluni/Diyarbekri. Most share the view that the body of the Mamluk sultan, who was old, was found some days after he had fled from the battle scene. Selim organized a religious funeral, and al-Gavri was buried in Aleppo.[77] Ibn Iyas provides a more detailed picture of the death of al-Gavri, reporting that he died of paralysis due to the shock of his unexpected defeat.[78]

The last Mamluk sultan, Tumanbay, has been characterized by the first-generation authors with a mixture of respect and hostility. Tumanbay's staunch refusal to submit to the Ottomans and his resistance until the very end earned a grudging acknowledgment of his bravery. At the same time, Küçük Nişancı described Tumanbay as an inauspicious person with pharaoh-like features (*kendü asar-ı şeamet-işar-ı firavni nümudar olub*), and as arrogant, willing to create discord, having decapitated several of Selim's envoys when they came conveying messages of peace.[79]

Nearly all of the early historians state that following the capture of the last Mamluk sultan after nearly three months of resistance, Selim initially intended to win Tumanbay over to his side and appoint him governor of Egypt. However, he changed his mind, and Tumanbay was publicly hanged. Most authors report that former Mamluk leaders like Hayrbay and Janbirdi al-Ghazali, who became a part of Selim's entourage, convinced the Ottoman sultan of the security risks of leaving him alive. It has been also stated that parts of the Cairene population publicly expressed their loyalty to Tumanbay even after his capture, a development which worried Selim. Another reason for having him killed, put forward by Haydar Çelebi as well as by Lutfi Paşa, was to avenge the execution of Selim's numerous envoys by Tumanbay.[80]

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76. Ibn Iyas, *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur*, 69, 71.

77. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 427–428; Tuluni/Diyarbekri, *Nuzhatu's Saniyya*, 146a; Hadîdî, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, 407; Bülbül, *Mensur Bir Hikaye*, 236; Adalıoğlu, "Muhyiddin Cemali," 122; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 211. See also Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 335–336, 337.

78. Ibn Iyas, *Badayiʿ al-Zuhur*, 69.

79. Adalıoğlu, Muhyiddin Cemali," 122, 124; Matrakçı, *Tarih-i Sultan Bayezid*, 154b, 163a; Nişancı, *Tarih-i Nişancı*, 213; Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 264–265: Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 345–346, 365–367.

80. Feridun, *Münşeatü's-Selatin*, 437; Kırlangıç, "İdris-i Bidlisi Selim Şah-Name," 338–339; Uğur and

Before concluding this section, the main outstanding features of first-generation historians' perceptions can be summarized as follows: First, authors from 1518 until the 1550s tended to consider Selim's Egyptian campaign as an initially unintended development. However, texts from the 1550s onwards increasingly emphasize the opinion that Selim had planned the conquest of Egypt right from the beginning. Closely connected with this change in argumentation is the fact that whereas authors prior to the 1550s stressed pragmatic motives and strategic reasons for the war, this view changes in favor of ideological intentions such as the promotion of Sunni Islam or the aim of conquest. Another striking aspect is the absence of any report on the formal transfer of the caliphate from Mutawakkil III to Selim, a subject which predominated post-1850 era historiography. Connected with this issue is the paucity of references to Selim's adoption of the honorific title of Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries prior to the 1560s. On the other hand, we encounter a strong presence of Biblical symbolism in accounts from the Battle of Marj Dabiq to the occupation of Cairo.

Historiographical Attitudes from the 1580s until Mid-Nineteenth Century

The incorporation of the classical centers of the Islamic world into the Ottoman Empire highlighted the imperial ruling institution's predominantly Sunni character. At the same time, the centralized feudal institutions based on timar-prebendism were increasingly replaced by tax-farming practices and a monetary economy, and the sultanic authority became restricted in favour of the strengthening of the scribal bureaucracy and ulema class. These new socio-economic circumstances are reflected in post-1580 historiography where the previous dynastic viewpoint transitioned toward a more Islamic and institutional approach. In conjunction with these developments, the issue of the formal transfer of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, hitherto a marginal subject, became a crucial issue. As a parallel development, the harsh attacks on the personalities of Kansu al-Gavri and Tumanbay acquired more impersonal qualities. Moreover, we observe a gradual disappearance of

Çuhadar, *Celâlzade Mustafa*, 203; Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 367–368; Lutfi Paşa, *Tevarih*, 270; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 42b–45b.

Biblical symbolism in the historiography of this era.

It can be argued that Sadeddin was one among the last authors to base his history on first-hand testimonies of the Ottoman–Mamluk War. Historians who produced their works after the 1580s came to rely on histories compiled by the first-generation authors. As a consequence, the high degree of originality in the earlier sources largely disappeared, at least in narratives about the period of Selim's rule. We encounter histories of the Selimian era which mostly consist of rather careless copies or summaries of the first-generation authors. A few are distinguished by stylistic quality, such as those of Solakzade and Müneccimbaşı. Despite lacking originality in terms of factual information, the best historiographical works in terms of factual accuracy and argumentation are displayed in the writings of Kâtib Çelebi, Solakzade, and Müneccimbaşı. In terms of originality, one exception among the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ottoman Turkish accounts is Evliya Çelebi's travelogue, in which he recorded local traditions, perceptions, and stories related to the campaign when visiting Syria, and later Egypt.

This era also witnessed reproductions of the works of authors from the first generation of writers on either side. They include the linguistic adaptations of Şükri Bitlisi's *Selimname* by Çerkesler Kâtibi Yusuf Ağa (died after 1642?) into prose form and the poet İbrahim's (with the pen name Cevri; died after 1654) Ottomanisation of Ş. Bitlisi's archaic Turkic poetry, which became known as *Cevri Selimnamesi*. A notable example of an adaptation of a Mamluk source from Arabic into Ottoman Turkish is Ahmed Süheyli's (died after 1621) translation of the Mamluk author Ibn Zünbül's history, known as *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*.[81] One might argue that the Turkish translation of this comprehensive and highly original work made this history more accessible to the Ottoman literary realm and provided an important alternative view of the history of the Egyptian campaign for the era prior to 1850. Though the original Arabic version was compiled in the previous era, the possible impact of the Turkish version requires that we consider it as a part this era.

81. About the Çerkesler Kâtibi Yusuf Ağa, see Babinger, *GOW*, 52; Öztürk and Yıldız, *Kalemli Muhafızlar*, 86; Argunşah, 36–37. For the Divan scribe İbrahim, known as Cevri, see Babinger, *GOW*, 52, 214; Argunşah, "Türk Edebiyatında Selimnameler," 36; Arzu Atik, "Bir Hulasa Denemesi: Cevrî ve Selîmnâme'si," in *Divan Edebiyatı Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8 (2012): 21–36. For Ibn Zünbül and Ahmed Süheyli, see footnote 16 above.

Among the principal authors of this second period who discuss the Ottoman–Mamluk War are Mustafa Cenabi (c. 1588); Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli (c. 1596 and 1599); Yusuf al-Karamani (c. 1599); Taşköprizade Kemaleddin (c. 1603); Mehmed Edirnevi, or Rumi (c. 1617); Ahmed Süheyli (c. 1621); Abdülmuti Ali al-İshaki (c. 1624); Cevri (c. 1628); Mehmed Hemdem Çelebi, known as Solakzade (c. 1643); Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz (c. 1649); Kâtib Çelebi (c. 1649 and 1650); Evliya Çelebi (c. 1670–1680); Ahmed bin Lutfullah, known as Müneccimbaşı (c. 1672); Hezarfen Hüseyin (c. 1673); İbrahim Müteferrika (c. 1730); Şemdanizade Fındıklılı Süleyman (c. 1770); and Feraizizade Mehmed Said (c. 1836).[82] It is self-evident that such historiographical masters of this era as İbrahim Peçevi, Mustafa Naima, Mehmed Raşid, Ahmed Vasıf, Ahmed Asım ("Mütercim"), and Şanizade Ataullah are not included since their works primarily cover the period of their lifetimes.

From the 1580s onwards, certain new themes emerged which, though not predominant, nevertheless were present until the late eighteenth century. One was the growing fixation on the issue of the exact formal occasion of Selim's "official" acquisition of the title of the Custodianship of the Two Holy Cities. As stated previously, among the first-generation accounts, there is no mention of this issue. Despite the fact that there was hardly any agreement about this occasion, numerous seventeenth-

82. Mehmet Canatar, "Müverrih Cenâbî Mustafa Efendi ve Cenâbî Tarihi," vols. 1–2 (PhD diss., Ankara Üniversitesi, 1993); Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli, *Künhü'l-Ahbâr*, *Dördüncü Rükn: Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol.1, facsimile print (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2009); Âli, *Hâlâtü'l-Kahire mine'l-Âdâti'z-Zâhire*, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1984); Ahmed bin Yusuf el-Karamani, *Ahbar al-Duwal wa Asar al-Uwal fi al-Tarih*, ed. Ahmad Hatit and Fahmy Sa'd, 3 vols. (Beirut: Alam al-Kutub, 1992); Taşköprizade Kemaleddin Mehmed, *Tarih-i Saf*, vol. 1 ([Istanbul?]: Terakki Matbaası, 1287); Mehmed bin Mehmed Edirnevi (or Rumi), *Nuhbetü'l-Tevarih ve'l-Ahbar* (Istanbul: Takvimhane-i Amire, 1276); Süheyli Ahmed bin Hemdan, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Kadim*; *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid* (Constantinople: Müteferrika, 1142) [Ottoman Turkish version of Ibn Zünbül's history], hence Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli; Abd al-Muʿti bin Abu al-Fath bin Ahmad bin Abd al-Mugni bin Ali al-Ishaki, *Lataifu Ahbar al-Awwal fi-man Tasarrafa fi Masr min Arbab al-Duwal* (Cairo: Matbaʿa al-Muyammaniya, 1310); Atik, "Bir Hulasa Denemesi," 21-26; Mehmed Hemdemi Çelebi [Solakzade], *Tarih-i Solakzade* (Istanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1297); Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrari'l-mübin bi-haka'iki'l-ahbar* (Cairo: Bulak Matbaası, 1248); Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleketü't-Tevârih* [*Fazlakatu Aqwali al-Ahyar fi ʿIlm* al-Tarih wa al-Ahbar. Tarihu Muluki *al-ʿOsman*], ed. Sayyid Muhammad al-Sayyid (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2009); Kâtib Çelebi, *Takvimü't-Tevârih* (Constantinople: Müteferrika, 1146); Evliya Çelebi bin Derviş Mehemmed Zıllı, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, ed. Yücel Dağlı, Seyit Ali Kahraman, Robert Dankoff, vols. 9 and 10 (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2005 and 2007); Ahmed bin Lutfullah [Müneccimbaşı], *Müneccimbaşı Tarihi Tercümesinin Cild-i Salisi* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1285) [Original Arabic title *Djamiʿ al-Duwal*; transl. Ahmed Nedim in 1730 under the title *Saha'ifü'l-Ahbar*]; Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, "Tenkihü't-Tevarîh-i Müluk" (world history, completed in 1673, still in manuscript format available at Atatürk Library, Istanbul); İbrahim Müteferrika's introductory historical remarks within Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid* , 1–6; Şemdanizade Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi, *Mer'iü't-Tevarih*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Maarif Nezareti, 1338); Feraizizade Mehmed Said, *Tarih-i Gülşen-i Maarif*, 2 vols. ([Istanbul?]: n.p., 1202 [1252?]). For all the compilation dates mentioned above, See Babinger *GOW*, passim. About a detailed account on Evliya Çelebi's impressions and recordings on Selim as a sultan, see Emecen, *Zamanın İskenderi*, 371–390.

century historiographies insist on a variety of different specific events in relation to Selim's assumption of this significant title.

M. Cenabi (d. 1590), who is known to be the author of the very first Ottoman world history, appears also to have initiated the view that Selim acquired the title of the Custodianship of the Two Holy Cities shortly after the Battle of Marj Dabiq, when the sultan attended the first Friday prayers at the main mosque of Aleppo after the occupation of the city. According to Cenabi, at that time, the imam, while delivering his sermon, mentioned Selim's name, adding, among other titles, the title of *Hadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn*. This information also appears within the histories of al-İshaki and H. Hüseyin.[83] As will be seen in nineteenth-century historiography, this opinion creeps into works written after the 1850s.

Other historians disagreed with the aforementioned viewpoint. Al-Karamani insists that it was during the first Friday prayer at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, after Selim's entrance to the city, that the preacher announced the sultan's Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries.While a part of the previous era, but still influential after 1621, Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli appears to be indecisive on this subject. In one section of his text, he states that Selim received this title following the conquests of Aleppo and Damascus, and we read a few pages later that during a meeting in Damascus, Hayrbay, the former Mamluk governor of Aleppo, tried to persuade Selim to conquer Egypt in order to acquire that title. The remaining authors more or less agree that Selim received this title following the conquest of Egypt. Taşköprizade vaguely hints that Selim acquired the custodianship as a consequence of the conquest of Egypt. Solakzade, in line with Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, mentions the meeting of Hayrbay and Selim in Damascus, where the former urged the latter to attack Tumanbay to secure the title. Müneccimbaşı specifies that it was at the first Friday prayers at the Malik Muayyad Mosque, immediately following the Battle of Ridaniya, that the imam named Selim the Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries. Evliya Çelebi claims, in his Book 9, that it was the sharif of Mecca, in person, who, while visiting Selim in Cairo and offering his congratulations, officially declared Selim the Custodian of Mecca and Medina. Çelebi's Book 10, on the other

83. Canatar, "Müverrih Cenâbî," 1:223; Ishaki, *Lataifu Ahbar al-Awwal*, 142; Hezarfen, "Tenkihü't-Tevarîh-i Müluk," 104a.

hand, does not mention this incident and merely states that the conquest of Cairo and the first Friday prayer brought Selim that title.[84]

The issue of the Custodianship of the Two Holy Cities is a matter closely related to the question of the initial Ottoman resolution to become the main Islamic power in the world. Historical texts prior to 1550 convey an image of Selim as not originally determined to conquer Egypt or even to move deep into Syria, but who would have preferred to concentrate on Iran, provided that the Mamluks obeyed or supported him in his struggle against the Shiites. In the historical texts after 1580, beginning with Sadeddin, we see a new perspective whereby Selim consciously conquered Bilad al-Sham and Egypt in order to acquire the title of *Hadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn*. Those who defend this notion include authors like al-Karamani, Taşköprizade, and Evliya Çelebi.[85] Though this new approach was not predominant among historians of this era, from the nineteenth century onwards, it became the norm within late Ottoman and Republican historiography.

Alongside this new historical image of Selim as the unifier of the core Islamic lands, we observe a decrease in attributions to the Abrahamic elements of religious symbolism, such as the grave of the Prophet David at Marj Dabiq, Selim's visits and prayers in Jerusalem and in Hebron, and the identification of Egypt as "Throne of Joseph." However, it is rather difficult to establish a clear-cut pattern among historians in terms of the limited use or disappearance of Abrahamic symbols in the historical literature due to the possibly subjective inclinations of individual authors in terms of Islamic sensibilities or academic exactitude. It can be argued that the authors most sensitive to representing the Selimian age in harmony with the accounts of the first-generation authors tended to include Abrahamic motifs in their texts. This is very much true for Müneccimbaşı and, to a lesser extent, for Gelibolulu and Feraizizade. Evliya Çelebi's accounts of the Egyptian campaign also include Abrahamic elements; however, these are, to a significant extent, based on local traditions which he

84. Karamani, *Ahbar al-Duwal*, 46; Taşköprizade Kemaleddin, *Tarih-i Saf*, 71; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 35/18b, 38/20a; Solakzade, *Tarih-i Solakzade*, 392–393; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 9:370 and 10:69; Müneccimbaşı, *Müneccimbaşı Tarihi*, 467.

85. Sadeddin, *Tacü't-Tevarîh*, 324, 328; Karamani, *Ahbar al-Duwal*, 45–47; Taşköprizade Kemaleddin, *Tarih-i Saf*, 68–69; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 9:181.

recorded during his travels in Bilad al-Sham and Egypt around the 1670s.[86] Most of the remaining authors incorporated only Selim's visits to Jerusalem and Hebron as well as his generous donations to the local tombs in their accounts. With the exceptions of Gelibolulu, Müneccimbaşı, and Feraizizade, however, the metaphor of the Throne of Joseph for Egypt practically disappears. In contrast, Cenabi, Taşköprizade, and Zünbül/Süheyli refrained from including any kind of Abrahamic symbolism in their narratives.

While Selim's described role as the unifier of Islamic lands became more pronounced in this second period, it is rather ironic that treatment of the issue of the caliphate was limited. Cenabi, Gelibolulu, al-Karamani, Taşköprizade, Edirnevi, al-İshaki, Kâtib Çelebi, Müneccimbaşı, Hezarfen, and Şemdanizade did not mention the issue at all; others discussed it within different contexts. Zünbül provided the wording of a letter sent by Selim to Tumanbay while wintering in Damascus where he declared himself as the caliph and suggested that Tumanbay be his regent (*naib*). Solakzade, while evaluating Selim as a ruler, stated that Selim succeeded his father Bayezid II's "caliphal throne" (*serir-i hilafet*). Evliya Çelebi insisted that the caliphate was transferred from the Seljukid Sultan Alaeddin to Ertugrul, and from him to his son Osman. All these authors noted that the Ottoman sultans prior to Selim were already considered to be caliphs. The caliphate, according to these authors, did not seem to have a universal Islamic significance, which was probably true also for the remaining authors. If we consider Evliya Çelebi's statement that, upon the death of Kansu al-Gavri following Marj Dabiq, Tumanbay became the new *halife*, we may state that the terms *hilafet* and *halife* simply denoted "succession."[87] Karaçelebizade, while reporting that the last Abbasid caliph, "Mustansik," and his children were deported by Selim to Istanbul, does not follow up on the issue of the transfer of the caliphate.[88]

86. Müneccimbaşı, *Müneccimbaşı Tarihi*, 462, 464, 466; Gelibolulu, *Künh*, 246b, 251a; Feraizizade, *Tarih-i Gülşen-i Maarif*, 1:545, 546; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 9:183, 230–231, 246, 251 and 10:63–64, 67.

87. About the various conceptions of caliphate, see Azmi Özcan, "Hilafet. Osmanlı Dönemi," in *DIA* 17:539–553.

88. Solakzade, *Tarih-i Solakzade*, 418; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 10:55–56, 68; Karaçelebizade, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrar,* 411; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 3–5, 36/19a.

However, it is İbrahim Müteferrika, the publisher of Zünbül/Süheyli's history, who strikingly emphasized in the introductory part of the 1730 edition that the Islamic caliphate was transferred to the Ottoman dynasty following the conquests of the Arabic and Iranian lands (*diyar-ı Arab ve Acem*). He added that, as a part of this process, religious precepts were regenerated and the *Sunna* revitalized.[89] Thus, we may say that, of the authors of Ottoman history discussed so far, it is Müteferrika—incidentally, a convert of Hungarian and Unitarian origins—who was the first to suggest the notion of a universal caliphal transfer from the Abbasids to the Ottomans.

Post-1580 historiography, in most cases, does not differ from that of the first-generation authors in terms of discrediting the Mamluk sultanate by referring to the Circassian ruling elite as a "bunch of vermin" (*haşare güruhu*), defaming the Mamluk administration as inauspicious, and evil Circassian despotism and Mamluk policies as "Circassian sedition" (*fiten-i Çerakise*) and "Circassian corruption" (*fesad-ı Çerakise*). On the other hand, we also encounter historians from this period who, like Kâtib Çelebi and Müneccimbaşı, kept a neutral stance vis-à-vis the Mamluk past by referring to the sultanate as "Arab lands" (*memalikü'l-Arab*) or "Arab country" (*diyar-ı Arab*), and calling the Mamluks "Egyptians" (*Mısriler*). In fact, Evliya Çelebi stated that Aleppo had great wealth during Circassian rule.[90]

Considering the evaluations of the last Mamluk sultans, Kansu al-Gavri and Tumanbay, by post-1580 authors, one might say that the harsh condemnations expressed by the first-generation historians were replaced, to a certain extent, by more balanced and even favorable views. Most of the historians of this era still discredit al-Gavri as being "stupid" (*gabi*), dishonest, vain, and ungrateful. However, authors like Solakzade or Kâtib Çelebi simply called him "Sultan of Egypt," "Sultan of the Arabs," and "Sultan of the Circassians." Again, Evliya Çelebi went as far as stating that al-Gavri was a just (*adil*) ruler. In the case of Tumanbay, at least four authors—i.e., Cenabi, Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, al-Ishaki, and Evliya Çelebi—described him as "brave," "courageous," "just," and as a "protector of the

89. Müteferrika, Introduction, in Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 1–2.

90. Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 267; Kâtib Çelebi, *Takvim*, 115; Müneccimbaşı, *Müneccimbaşı Tarihi*, 461; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 9:184 and 10:41.

poor people." Most of the remaining historians of this period simply refrained from describing Tumanbay.[91]

As with the first-generation historians, most post-1580 authors described Selim as a stern but courageous and highly capable ruler who did not shy from shedding blood for the benefit of the state. In addition to these qualities, Gelibolulu praised Selim as a benevolent sultan who constructed numerous pious foundations. There are, however, two authors who appear critical of Selim, especially in terms of his policies toward the Circassian ruling elite following the Battle of Ridaniya. Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli and Müneccimbaşı belong to a line of historians who, while not expessing it openly, imply the unjustifiable nature of the massacres inflicted upon the Circassians. Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli informed readers of how the wives and children of the Egyptians who resisted the conquest were taken as slaves and sold at the slave markets in the Balkans. Among other details, his text relates a conversation between Tumanbay and his associate, Şad Beg, while in hiding prior to their capture, wherein Selim is described as a ruler who unnecessarily massacres countless fellow Muslims. Müneccimbaşı described how, following the Battle of Ridaniya, Selim ordered that all the Circassian prisoners be killed. Müneccimbaşı provided graphic details about the massacres inflicted upon the resisting Cairene population; in short, around sixty thousand individuals, both Circassians and local Egyptians (*ehl-i Mısır*), were killed after which, by Selim's imperial order, an additional eight hundred prisoners were massacred. The homes of the resisters were burned down; the streets had to be cleaned from the piles of corpses which were then thrown into the Nile.[92] By providing such graphic details without including any justifications, these authors appear to display a degree of indignation toward Selim's actions in Egypt. As will be seen below, at least a part of late Ottoman historiography, in its relative pluralism, came to include an understanding of Selim which was very close to that of Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli and Müneccimbaşı.

A final note about post-1580 historiography is related to a series of

91. Solakzade, *Tarih-i Solakzade*, 384; Kâtib Çelebi, *Takvim*, 116 ; Canatar, "Müverrih Cenabi," 225; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 50/26a–82/42a; Ishaki, *Lataifu Ahbar al-Awwal*, 143; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 10:70.

92. Gelibolulu, *Künh*, 254a; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 65/33b, 75/38b; Müneccimbaşı, *Müneccimbaşı Tarihi*, 465–466.

deviations from the information conveyed by the first-generation authors. Since the analysis of each text in terms of its exact sources is not a part of the objectives of this article, any definite conclusion concerning the issue of factual errors would be too early to decide upon. Here, only certain cases of information will be shown which differ from the knowledge provided by sixteenth-century historiographers and are controversial in character in terms of present-day scholarship.

First-generation authors, in general, mention that Hayrbay, the Mamluk governor of Aleppo, submitted himself to Selim to become a part of his entourage following the Battle of Marj Dabiq, whereas Janbirdi Ghazali resisted the Ottomans until the outcome of the Battle of Ridaniya. In contrast, a number of post-1580 historians including Cenabi, Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, al-Ishaki, and Hezarfen, contend that Hayrbay collaborated with the Ottomans well before Marj Dabiq. The same authors insist that Janbirdi al-Ghazali joined Hayrbay in this collaboration with Selim; accordingly, from the beginning of the Ottoman–Mamluk conflict, al-Ghazali had already taken sides with Selim. Şemdanizade, at another extreme, claims that both Hayrbay and al-Ghazali submitted their allegiance to Selim while he was spending the winter of 1516–17 in Damascus.[93]

Another topic where opinions diverge concerns the relationship between Selim and the sharif of Mecca. Whereas first-generation writers agree that it was the son of the sharif of Mecca, Abu Numayy, who visited the sultan following the conquest of Egypt, al-Karamani, Evliya Çelebi, and Hezarfen offer different views. According to al-Karamani, after Selim departed from Egypt, he encountered the sharif of Mecca, Barakat, and his son on the way back to Syria. Evliya Çelebi and Hezarfen, on the other hand, insist that the sharif of Mecca visited the sultan in Cairo. As stated previously, Evliya claims that it was Barakat who officially announced that Selim was the Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries.[94]

The erection of a tomb and mosque, and the financing of pious works at the grave of Ibn al-Arabi in Damascus has also been a matter of historiographical disagreement. As previously discussed, the theme of

93. Canatar, "Müverrih Cenabi," 223; Ibn Zünbül/Süheyli, *Tarih-i Mısr-ı Cedid*, 21/11b; Ishaki, *Lataifu Ahbar al-Awwal*, 142; Hezarfen, "Tenkihü't-Tevarîh-i Müluk," 103b; Şemdanizade, *Mer'iü't-Tevarih*, 500.

94. Karamani, *Ahbar al-Duwal*, 46–47; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 9:370; Hezarfen, "Tenkihü't-Tevarîh-i Müluk," 105a.

Ibn al-Arabi's tomb acquired prominence only in the texts of late first-generation authors like Küçük Nişancı and Sadeddin, and became a recurrent subject for the majority of post-1580 historians.[95] While both Küçük Nişancı and Sadeddin state that Selim's efforts to develop and restore Ibn al-Arabi's graveyard took place during his second visit to Damascus, on his return to the *Rumi* lands, al-Karamani, al-Ishaki, Karaçelebizade, Evliya Çelebi, and Hezarfen all assert that the sultan spent his time building a dome, mosque, madrasa, and soup kitchen at the sheikh's tomb during his first visit to the city following the Battle of Marj Dabiq, prior to the conquest of Egypt. Şemdanizade goes further, claiming that Selim visited the already existing *türbe* of Ibn al-Arabi and even had a conversation with the *türbe*-keeper.[96] Evliya Çelebi and Şemdanizade appear to have created a "meaningful" causality by connecting the subject of Selim's endeavors to develop and restore Ibn al-Arabi's burial ground during his initial stay in Damascus with the role of onomancy in the conquest of Egypt.

The topic of onomancy relates to the roles played by the "science of onomancy" (*ilm-i cifr*) and the "interpretation of dreams" (*tabir-i rüya*) in Selim's decision to conquer Egypt. Gelibolulu and Şemdanizade include in their histories the event of Selim's meeting with a wise man or a tomb keeper during his visit to Ibn al-Arabi's tomb. Accordingly, this eminent person foretold the conquest of Egypt by citing certain *ayah*s of the Quran and interpreting specific letters in these verses. Evliya Çelebi recounted an elaborate story whereby Selim, after entering Damascus, saw Ibn al-Arabi in a dream, who gave him the good tidings of the conquest of Egypt. The only condition Selim had to fulfill was to locate Ibn al-Arabi's vanished tomb and erect a dome over it, and then to build a mosque, a madrasa, and other pious works around it. When Selim awoke, the first thing he did was to follow the clues told by Ibn Al-Arabi in the dream and to find the grave. Evliya included another event whereby a scholar, an expert in onomancy,

95. Concerning the impact of Muhyiddin Ibn al-Arabi's Sufi philosophy on Ottoman cultural life, see M. Erol Kılıç, "İbnü'l-Arabî, Muhyiddin," *DIA*, 20:512–516; Ali Kozan, "İbnü'l-Arabî ve Osmanlı Feslefî/Tasavvufî Düşüncesi Üzerindeki Etkileri: Şeyh Bedreddin Örneği," in *Turkish Studies. Int.Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 7, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 1555–1565; Rüya Kılıç, "Osmanlı Sûfiliğinde İbnü'l-Arabî Etkisi: XVII. Yüzyıldan Üç Sûfî," in *Bilig* 40 (Winter 2007): 99–118.

96. Karamani, *Ahbar al-Duwal*, 46; Ishaki, *Lataifu Ahbar al-Awwal*, 142–143; Karaçelebizade, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrar,* 408; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 9:275–276 and 10:65–66; Hezarfen, "Tenkihü't-Tevarîh-i Müluk," 104a; Şemdanizade, *Mer'iü't-Tevarih*, 500.

interpreted the Quran and foretold the conquest of Egypt for Selim.[97]

To recapitulate, the long period stretching from 1580 to 1850 witnessed historiographical peculiarities such as the emergence of an interest in establishing the exact occasion of Selim's acquisition of the title of Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries; the view of Selim's major role as the unifier of the Islamic lands; the fading of Abrahamic religious symbolism; a lessening of the harsh tone against the Circassians, and a fairer evaluation of the last two Mamluk sultans; the emergence of a critical perspective vis-à-vis Selim's policies toward the Mamluks; an emphasis on Selim's care for the construction of Ibn al-Arabi's tomb in Damascus and the surrounding complex; and the emergence of the motif of onomancy as a factor in the conquest of Egypt. During this era, with the exception of Müteferrika, relatively limited importance has been paid to the issue of the transfer of the universal caliphate from the Abbasids to the Ottomans, a feature which signifies a historiographical continuity with the first-generation authors. Nevertheless, Müteferrika's position predominated in post-1850 historiography.

Conflicting Perceptions of Selim and the Egyptian Campaign during Ottoman Reform Era

This final part discusses historical perceptions of Selim's campaign as reflected in historical literature produced during the Tanzimat period, the reign of Abdülhamid II, and the Young Turk regime. The Ottoman Empire, in its last century of existence, faced territorial losses while, at the same time, endeavoring to reform its administration and take measures to incorporate provincial communities into the political structure. These policies provided for the diffusion of public education, while also leading to divisions among the Ottoman bureaucratic class. The obvious impotence of the Sublime Porte in the face of European political and military interventions may have created psychological conditions for the emergence of a nostalgia for a terrific and all-powerful character such as "Yavuz Sultan Selim." Meanwhile, the decline of the Christian population relative to Turkish- and Arabic-speaking Muslim subjects

97. Gelibolulu, Künh, 252b–253a; Şemdanizade, Mer'iü't-Tevarih, 500–501; Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 10:65–66.

led to an increasing political weight of the caliphal title of the Ottoman sultans and encouraged pan-Islamist policies during the Hamidian and Young Turk regimes. These developments appear to be reflected within the post-1850 historiography. Namely, Selim's acquisition of the universal Islamic caliphate directly from Mutawakkil III turned into an almost unquestionable fact. Similarly, we observe a near consensus concerning the question of reasons and motivations for Selim's Egyptian campaign according to which Selim, from the beginning, had planned the unification of the Islamic lands.

Another factor influencing post-1850 historiography is connected to Circassian migrations, which became a massive demographic movement following the Crimean War. After the 1860s, numerous Circassian families entered the Ottoman ruling elite. In correlation with these new circumstances, the derogatory ethnonym Çerkes, used in relation to the Egyptian campaign, disappeared from historiographical texts. In addition, the Tanzimat efforts to establish a rule of law created a new political climate of legitimate power which made it difficult to defend Selim's harsh measures taken against the Circassian Mamluks and the people of Cairo, Ramle, and Gaza. As a result, a twofold historical approach toward Selim became prevalent. One aspect displayed a fascination with *Yavuz*, the "Terrible," and the other represented a historiographical continuity in remaining distant from Selim and honoring Kansu al-Gavri and Tumanbay.

Furthermore, this period witnessed an expansion of printing presses and the publication of historical works in Turkish and in Arabic in cultural centres like Istanbul and Cairo. During the Tanzimat period, numerous sixteenth- to eighteenth-century manuscripts on Ottoman history were published in print. Such printed historiographical material rendered works that had been preserved in manuscript form accessible to a wider public, which also encouraged the compilation of new history books on general Ottoman history.[98] Another development was the government-sponsored foundation of primary and secondary schools. It is noteworthy that history as a course subject was introduced to the teaching curriculum as late as

98. Concerning the expansion of printing publications during the first half of the nineteenth century within the Ottoman realm, see Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought. A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 196–205; and Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* (İstanbul: Ülken Yayınevi, 1979), 20–53.

1869. The earliest history textbook was compiled by Ahmed Vefik Paşa under the title *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Osmani* (Account of Ottoman History) and published in 1869. During the period of Abdülhamid II, textbook and historical dictionary publications became a real industry due to the rapid expansion of government schools and private educational institutions.[99]

In comparison to the previous two periods, this third era witnessed the emergence of authors with educational backgrounds hitherto difficult to imagine, including authors who, for the most part, were products of secular government education. School instructors, either from secondary or high schools; military officers employed as teachers at military colleges; bureaucrats; and journalists devoted their energy to writing Ottoman history. In possible connection with this educational development, historiographical discourse acquired a more natural scientific quality. From Hayrullah onwards, we often encounter the term *umur-ı tabiiyeden*, or "due to natural conditions," to explain events, whereas supernatural causes, as observed particularly in the historiography of the post-1580 era, practically disappeared.

In the 1860s, the Young Ottoman movement, consisting of oppositional intellectuals, produced a series of literary works with highly patriotic content. One of these intellectuals, Namık Kemal, also wrote texts related to Ottoman history with clear agitative aims. These texts deviated from other Tanzimat-era authors and, in some aspects, constituted a precursor to nationalist Young Turk or Westernist approaches to Ottoman historiography, as exemplified by Ahmed Refik [Altınay]. In short, in striking contrast to the previous historiographical eras discussed above, there emerged varying genres of historical writings which can be categorized as general historical works aimed at the literate public, agitative texts where history was exploited for direct political purposes, and textbooks for schools. The chronicles of Lutfi Efendi are not considered here since his work concentrates mainly on periods outside the scope of this paper. Post-1850 historical works that were aimed at the general public and are evaluated in this section include such authors as Abdullah Hulusi (c. 1850), Ahmed Cevdet (c. 1854–1882), Hayrullah (c. 1855), Mehmed

99. Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839–1908. Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 187–201.

Mazhar Fevzi (c. 1874), Tayyarzade Ata (c. 1874), Mustafa Nuri Paşa (c. 1877), Yağlıkçızade Ahmed Rifat (c. 1879 and 1882), Şemseddin Sami (c. 1889), Ali Cevad (c. 1895 and 1898), Mehmed Murad (c. 1909), Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi (c. 1909), Mehmed Kâmil Paşa (c. 1910), Ahmed Rasim (c. 1910), Mehmed Şakir (c. 1911), and Ali Seydi (c. 1912).[100]

In terms of agitative texts, we encounter Namık Kemal (c. 1871), Ahmed Refik [Altınay] (c. 1909), and Celal Nuri [İleri] (c. 1912). While the Young Ottoman journalist, poet, and intellectual N. Kemal used Selim's campaigns as a means to propagate Islamism, A. Refik, during the Young Turk period, referred to the Ottoman–Mamluk War with a rather imperialistic discourse intended to satisfy Turkish nationalist pride, reminicient of contemporary British and French Orientalist texts. In contrast to the previous two authors, C. Nuri tried to prove the absurdity of expansionist campaigns to conquer lands without investing on industry and trade. According to him, the Ottomans tried in a futile way to regenerate the title of universal caliphate, which, toward the early sixteenth century, had already become politically obsolete.[101]

The authors of history textbooks for primary schools that were consulted for this article include Selim Sabit (c. 1878), Ahmed Rasim (c. 1889 and 1913), İbrahim Hakkı (c. 1891), Ateşizade Mehmed Bedreddin (c. 1892), Ali Nazima (c. 1895), Hüseyin Hıfzı (c. 1904), Mehmed Necib (c. 1904), Ali Rıza (c. 1912), Ahmed Refik [Altınay] (c. 1916), and İhsan Şerif (c. 1918).[102]

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100. Abdullah Hulusi, *Esmarü'l-Hadayık* ([Istanbul]: Takvimhane-i Amire, 1267); Ahmed Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 2nd ed., vols. 1–12 (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1309); Hayrullah, *Tarih-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmaniye*. 16 vols (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1271); Mehmed Mazhar Fevzi, *Haber-i Sahih*, 8 vols. (Istanbul 1291); Tayyarzade Ahmed Ataullah [Ata Bey], *Tarih-i Ata*, 5 vols. (Istanbul: Basiret Matbaası, 1291–1293); Mustafa Nuri, *Netaicü'l-Vukuat*, 4 vols. (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1294–96); Yağlıkçızade Ahmed Rifat, *Nakdü't-Tevarih* (Istanbul: Mustafa Paşa Tekyesi Şeyhi Yahya Efendinin Matbaası, 1296); Yağlıkçızade Ahmed Rifat, *Lugat-ı Tarihiye ve Coğrafiye*, 7 vols. ([İstanbul?]: 1299–1300); Şemseddin Sami, *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 6 vols. (Istanbul: Mihran Matbaası, 1306–1316); Ali Cevad, *Memalik-i Osmaniyenin Tarih ve Coğrafya Lugati*, 3 vols. ([Istanbul: n.p.], 1313–1317); Ali Cevad, *Mükemmel Osmanlı Tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Kasbar Matbaası, 1316); Mehmed Murad, *Tarih-i Ebu'l-Faruk. Tarih-i Osmanide Siyaset ve Medeniyet İtibariyle Hikmet-i Asliye Taharrisine Teşebbüs*, 7 vols. (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amedi, 1325–1332); Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi, *Tarih-i İslam*, 2 vols. (Constantinople: Hikmet Matbaası, 1327); Mehmed Kâmil Paşa, *Tarih-i Siyasi-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmaniye*, 3 vols. (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Ahmed İhsan, 1327); Ahmed Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 4 vols. (Istanbul: Şems Matbaası, 1326–1330); Mehmed Şakir, *Yeni Osmanlı Tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası, 1330); Ali Seydi, *Resimli Kamus-i Osmani*, 3 vols. (Darü'l-Hilafetü'l-Aliyye: Matbaa ve Kütübhane-i Cihan, 1330). Diyarbekirli Said Paşa, who wrote a ten-volume world history titled *Mir'atü'l-İber* (1304–1306) won't be examined since the final volume, which contains Ottoman history, is still in manuscript form and inaccessible to researchers.

101. Namık Kemal, *Evrak-ı Perişan* (Istanbul: Ahmed Midhat Matbaası, 1288); Ahmed Refik, *Tarih Sahifeleri* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Ahmed İhsan, 1325); Celal Nuri, *Tarih-i Tedenniyat-ı Osmaniye* (Istanbul: İctihad Matbaası, 1330).

102. Selim Sabit, *Muhtasar Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul 1295); Ahmed Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Kitabcı Arakel; Şirket-i Mürettebiye Matbaası, 1306); İbrahim Hakkı, *Küçük Osmanlı Tarihi*

The authors considered while looking at textbooks for *rüşdiyye* (lower secondary schools) include Sami Aziz Şevki (c. 1876), Mehmed Tevfik (c. 1887), Ahmed Rasim (c. 1889), Ali Cevad (c. 1890), İbrahim Hakkı (c. 1895 and 1905), Mehmed Azmi (c. 1895 and 1905), Ahmed Refik [Altınay] (c. 1910), Ali Reşad (c. 1911), and Ali Seydi (c. 1911).[103] The authors of secondary (*idadi*) and high school (*sultani*) textbooks evaluated include Ahmed Vefik Paşa (c. 1869), Mehmed Tevfik (c. 1888 and 1890), Abdurrahman Şeref (c. 1890, 1892, and 1909), Ali Tevfik (c. 1893 and 1898), Mehmed Şevki (c. 1895), Mehmed Şükri (c. 1895), Mahmud Esad bin Emin Seydişehri (c. 1897), Ahmed Refik [Altınay] (c. 1910), Ali Seydi (c. 1913 and 1923), and Ali Reşad (c. 1916).[104]

A defining feature of the historiography of the post-1850 era dealing with Selim relates to the very name of this sultan. This is when we encounter the epithet *Yavuz* ("terrible") attached to Selim for the first time. Already in 1834, in his general Ottoman history, Feraizizade Mehmed Said had used the style "Yavuz Sultan Selim" to denote the ninth Ottoman sultan.[105] Nearly all of the authors of the post-1850 era that were consulted

([Istanbul?]: n.p., 1308); Ateşizade Mehmed Bedreddin, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Kasbar Matbaası, 1309); Ali Nazima, *Tarih-i Nazima* (Dersaadet: Kasbar Matbaası, 1313); [Commission], *Mülahhas Tarih-i Osmani* (Darü'l-Hilafetü'l-Aliyye: Matbaa-i Amire, 1315); Hüseyin Hıfzı, *Hulasa-i Tarih-i Osmani* (Dersaadet: Şirket-i Mürettebiye Matbaası, 1322); Mehmed Necib, Çocuklara Mahsus Muhtasar Tarih-i Selatin-i Osmaniye (Bursa: Matbaa-i Emiri, 1321); Ali Rıza, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani* (Dersaadet: Necm-i İstikbal Matbaası, 1328); Ahmed Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Küçük Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Şems Matbaası, 1329); Ahmed Refik, *Muhtasar Resimli Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası, 1332); İhsan Şerif, Çocuklara Tarih Dersleri (Darü'l-Hilafetü'l-Aliyye: Kanaat Matbaası,1334).

103. Sami Aziz Şevki, *Mir'at-ı Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Mekteb-i Sanayi Matbaası, 1293); Mehmed Tevfik, *Küçük Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani* (Constantinople: Matbaa-i Ebüzziya, 1305); Ahmed Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i İslam* (Dersaadet: Alem Matbaası, 1306); Ali Cevad, *Muhtasar Tarih-i İslam* (Dersaadet: Kasbar Matbaası, 1308); İbrahim Hakkı and Mehmed Azmi, *Muhtasar İslam Tarihi* (Istanbul: Karabet Matbaası, 1313); İbrahim Hakkı and Mehmed Azmi, *Muhtasar Osmanlı Tarihi* (Istanbul: Karabet Matbaası, 1323); Ali Reşad and Ali Seydi, *Tarih-i Osmani. Resimli ve Haritalı* (Dersaadet: Kanaat Matbaası, 1327); Ahmed Refik, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası, 1328).

104. Ahmed Vefik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1286); Mehmed Tevfik, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani* (Istanbul: A. Maviyan Şirket-i Mürettebiye Matbaası, 1305); Mehmed Tevfik, *Tarih-i Osmani* ([Istanbul?]: Mekteb-i Fünun-ı Harbiye-i Şahane Matbaası, 1308); Abdurrahman Şeref, *Tarih-i Osmani* ([Istanbul?]: Mekteb-i Mülkiye-i Şahane Destgahı, 1307); Abdurrahman Şeref, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Devlet-i Osmaniye* (Dersaadet: Kasbar Matbaası, 1310); Ali Tevfik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Umumi*, vol. 3: Tarih-i Kurun-ı Ahire (Istanbul: Karabet Matbaası, 1311); Mehmed Şevki, *Tarih-i Umumi* (Mekteb-i Fünun-ı Bahriye Matbaası, 1313); Mehmed Şükri, *Tarih-i Umumi* (Istanbul: Mekteb-i Fünun-i Bahriye Matbaası, 1313); Mahmud Esad bin Emin Seydişehri, *Tarih-i İslam* (Istanbul: Cemal Efendi Matbaası, 1315); Ali Tevfik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Umumi,* vol. 2: Tarih-i Kurun-ı Vusta (Istanbul: Kasbar Matbaası, 1316); Abdurrahman Şeref, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Devlet-i Osmaniye* (Istanbul, [1909?]); Ahmed Refik, *Haritalı ve Resimli Mükemmel Tarih-i Osmani*, 2 vols. (Dersaadet: Artin Asaduryan ve Mahdumları Matbaası, 1328); Ali Seydi, *Mekatib-i İdadiye Şakirdanına Mahsus Devlet-i Osmaniyye Tarihi: Resimli ve Haritalı* (Dersaadet: Kanaat Matbaası, 1329); Ali Reşad, *Kurun-ı Cedide Tarihi. İstanbul'un Fethinden sonra Devlet-i Osmaniye ve Avrupa* (Istanbul: Kanaat Matbaası, 1332); Ali Seydi, *Mekatib-i Sultaniye Şakirdanına Mahsus Devlet-i Osmaniye Tarihi: Resimli ve Haritalı* (Dersaadet: Kanaat Matbaası, 1339).

105. Feraizizade, *Tarih-i Gülşen-i Maarif*, 1:536. The epithet *Yavuz* was possibly in use perhaps even during Selim's lifetime, along with its direct negative meaning. However, the regularization of the style "Yavuz Sultan Selim" at the level of official as well as popular history texts of the nineteenth century displays both the disappearance of this attribute in its original meaning in Ottoman Turkish as well as the general acceptance of this style among the wider public.

for this paper applied different versions of the same formula, such as "Yavuz Sultan Selim Han," "Yavuz Sultan Selim Han-ı Evvel," "Yavuz Sultan Selim Han Gazi," and so forth. Unless proven otherwise, this style seems to have been a mainly post-1850 historiographical phenomenon that has lasted until the present time.

It appears that, among the historiographical eras dealt with so far, it was in the post-1850 era that Selim was hailed by a majority of authors as the most magnificient of all Ottoman sultans. A. Cevdet, followed by Ş. Sami, described Selim's achievements as "combining caliphate and sultanate under the roof of the Ottoman dynasty," "unifying the Islamic world within one locus," and "maximizing the Ottoman lands twofold within a very short period." According to Sami, these deeds made Selim one of the foremost world conquerors (*cihangir*) of history, worthy of being considered the "second founder of the Ottoman State."[106] In his Islamic history, after expressing similar views as Ş. Sami, Şehbenderzade asserts that Selim was an "Ottoman Turk" (*Osmanlı Türkü*) whose aim was "not to expand Islamic religion by conquering new countries but to terminate the prevalent anarchy and disorder within the Islamic lands through providing union in language and creed."[107] M. Murad, who displayed a highly critical stance toward Selim, did not refrain from describing Selim as a "genius, in an objective sense, whose determination and success in securing the throne as well as his major achievements under highly unfavourable conditions make him a character observed rather rarely in the history of humanity."[108] In contrast to the balanced opinion of M. Murad, an over-enthusiastic author such as A. Refik attempted to prove Selim's superiority as a military strategist over Napoleon Bonaparte by comparing Selim's success in transferring 60,000 soldiers through the Sinai desert within ten days to Bonaparte's transferring of 15,000 soldiers through the same terrain within twenty days.[109]

As previously noted while discussing post-1580 historiography, Selim had already emerged as instrumental in the unification of the

106. Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 1:39; Sami, "Selim," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:2612.

107. Şehbenderzade, *Tarih-i İslam*, 2:594–595.

108. Murad, *Tarih-i Ebu'l-Faruk*, 2:254.

109. Refik, *Sahifeler*, 17.

core Islamic lands. As seen above, numerous post-1850 authors have defended the view that Selim consciously planned and pursued the aim of unifying the Islamic world. Therefore, the historical authors of this era, with few exceptions, completely abandoned the early sixteenth-century view that Selim's original aim was to attack the Safavids until Kansu al-Gavri's actions provoked him to conquer Egypt.[110] This view appears to be in harmony with the Islamist policies of Abdülhamid and with the Young Turk regime as well.[111]

It is perhaps in connection with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ottoman pan-Islamist policies that most of the post-1850 writers, in stark contrast to the previous historiographical eras, have emphasized Selim's "formal" acquisition of the universal Islamic caliphate. The sources for this claim appear to be Müteferrika, mentioned above, followed by Mouradgea d'Ohsson, who, in his *Tableau Général de l'Empire Othoman*, stated that "the right of *imamet*" over Muslims worldwide went from the Abbasids to the Ottomans in 1517.[112] Following this line of argument, the Tanzimat-era historian, Hayrullah, stated that the transfer of the caliphate took place together with the conquest of Egypt, without making further specifications. Though A. Cevdet Paşa did not write specifically on this issue, he incidentally confirmed in two of his works that the Ottoman dynasty received the universal caliphate from the Abbasids as a result of the Egyptian campaign. In 1869, A. Vefik provided some specific information about this transfer; accordingly, after Selim brought the last Abbasid caliph from Cairo to Istanbul, the caliph relinquished his title to Selim. A. Vefik's *Fezleke* is a critical source since it served as a kind of a template for later textbooks. The occasion for this transfer became even more specific in Tayyarzade Ata, who described an official ceremony at the Hagia Sophia

110. For general works and agitative texts, see Sami, "Selim," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:2612; Cevad, *Mükemmel*, 201-202; Şehbenderzade, *Tarih-i İslam*, 2:594–595; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Osmanlı*, 1:176; Kemal, *Evrak-ı Perişan*, 21; Refik, *Sahifeler*, 26. For textbooks, see Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani*, 28; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Küçük Tarih*, 34; Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i İslam*, 135; [Commission], *Mülahhas*, 16; Cevad, *Muhtasar*, 135; Refik, *Küçük*, 47; Refik, *Haritalı ve Resimli*, 222–223; Şeref, *Fezleke* (1310), 47; Şeref, *Fezleke* (1909?), 55–56; Seydi, *Mekatib-i Sultaniye*, 259. The opposite position is represented by M. M. Fevzi, *Haber-i Sahih*, 4:313–315; Kâmil Paşa, *Tarih-i Siyasi* 1:152–153.

111. Concerning Islamist policies during the final decades of the Ottoman Empire, see Tufan Buzpınar, *Hilafet ve Saltanat. II.Abdülhamid Döneminde Halifelik ve Araplar* (Istanbul: Alfa, 2016); Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism. Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877–1924)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

112. Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau Général de l'Empire Othoman*, vol. 1 (Paris: Imprimerie d'Monsieur, 1788), 269–270. I owe gratitude to Dr. Y.Hakan Erdem, who notified me about this source.

Mosque whereby Mutawakkil III Ala'llah publicly expressed that it was the [Ottoman] sultan who deserved this title. This description seems to have been taken over by Yağlıkçızade, who, in his historical and geographical lexicon, provided a summary of the same information. Ş. Sami, preferring to be cautious and vague, still stated in his universal lexicon that Selim took over the holy relics and the caliphate from Mutawakkil.[113]

On the other hand, there were also authors who were careful enough not to make explicit statements about the transfer of the universal Islamic caliphate following the Egyptian campaign. These included such names as A. Hulusi, M. M. Fevzi, and M. Nuri. However, it was the former, those who insisted upon Selim's formal acquisition of the universal caliphate, who established their historiographical hegemony by making an impact on the textbooks of the Hamidian period, such as primary-level textbook authors A. Rasim, İ. Hakkı, A. M. Bedreddin, H. Hıfzı, and M. Necib,[114] and *rüşdiyye*, or secondary or high-school, level authors such as A. Şeref, M. Tevfik, A. Rasim, A. Cevad, İ. Hakkı, and M. Azmi.[115] Thus, generations of youth learned this information as historical facts. Those textbook authors who constitute exceptions by omitting this issue were S. Sabit and A. Nazima, for primary-level material, and S. A. Şevki as well as M. E. E. Seydişehri for *rüşdiyye*, or secondary-level books.

Despite its vehement anti-Hamidian stance, the Young Turk regime did not bring about a notable change in the historiographical issue of the universal caliphate. History texts aimed at the wider public, in general, display a continuity which is also reflected in history textbooks after 1908. Authors like Şehbenderzade, M. Kâmil Paşa, M. Murad, and A. Rasim stressed the historical importance of the transfer of the universal caliphate from Mutawakkil to Selim.[116] Similarly, primary-level textbook writers of

113. Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 39; Cevdet, *Tezâkir 1–12*, ed. Cavid Baysun, 2nd ed. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986), 149; Hayrullah, *Tarih-i Devlet-i*, 8:3, 79, 86; Vefik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 120–121; Ata, *Tarih-i Ata*, 1:92; Yağlıkçızade, "Selim," in *Lugat*, 4:59; Sami, "Selim," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:2612. See also Christoph K. Neumann, *Das indirekte Argument. Ein Plädoyer für die Tanẓīmāt vermittels der Historie. Die geschichtliche Bedeutung von Aḥmed Cevdet Paşas Ta'rīḫ* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1994), 157.

114. Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani*, 27; Hakkı, *Küçük Osmanlı Tarihi*, 40–41; Bedreddin, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 19; [Commission], *Mülahhas*, 17; Hıfzı, *Hulasa-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 20; Necib, Çocuklara Mahsus, 7.

115. For *rüşdiyye*-schools, see M. Tevfik, *Küçük Telhis*, 64–65; Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i İslam*, 135; Cevad, *Muhtasar*, 138; Hakkı and Azmi, *Muhtasar İslam*, 144; Hakkı and Azmi, *Muhtasar Osmanlı*, 41. For secondary and higher schools, see M. Tevfik, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 74–75; M. Tevfik, *Tarih-i Osmani*, 125; Şeref, *Tarih*, 177; Şeref, *Fezleke* (1310), 46.

116. Şehbenderzade, *Tarih-i İslam*, 2:594; Kâmil Paşa, *Tarih-i Siyasi*, 1:159–160; Murad, *Tarih-i Ebu'l-Faruk*, 2:308; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Osmanlı*, 1:203.

the Young Turk period, such as A. Rıza, A. Rasim, A. Refik, İ. Şerif, and the *rüşdiyye*, or secondary and high-school textbook compilers like A. Şeref, A. Refik, A. Reşad, and A. Seydi repeated the same view.[117] However, when considering one of the last Ottoman high-school level textbooks revised by A. Seydi during the Allied occupation of Istanbul in the early 1920s, it is striking that the issue of the transfer of the universal caliphate was conspicuously omitted.[118]

As to the question of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, the first two historians of the post-1850 era—A. Hulusi and Hayrullah—stated without elaboration that the conquest of Egypt brought the Ottoman sultans the honour of being *Hadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn*. However, A. Vefik in his *Fezleke*, seems to have adopted the historiographical legacy of Mustafa Cenabi by underlining that it was during the first Friday prayer at the main mosque of Aleppo following Marj Dabiq that the preacher referred to Selim using this honorific title. While numerous historical works and lexicons for the general public that were published during the Tanzimat and Hamidian periods insist on the definite conquest of Egypt as the marker for the acquisition of the Custodianship,[119] we realize that a significant number of the textbooks of the Hamidian period, influenced by A. Vefik, maintain that the first Friday prayer at the mosque in Aleppo was the occasion for the acquisition of this title.[120]

The situation is quite similar in histories written during the Young Turk regime. At least two works intended for the general public, authored by M. Kâmil Paşa and A. Rasim, represent the view that it was in Aleppo that Selim was declared Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries.[121] Again, a number

117. For primary schools, see Rıza, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani*, 21–22; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Küçük Tarih*, 33–34; Refik, *Muhtasar*, 19; Şerif, Çocuklara Tarih Dersleri, 42. For *rüşdiyye* schools, see Refik, *Küçük*, 46; Reşad and Seydi, *Tarih-i Osmani*, 55. For secondary and high-schools, see Şeref, *Fezleke* (1909?), 54; Seydi, *Mekatib-i İdadiye*, 291; Reşad, *Kurun-ı Cedide Tarihi*, 49.

118. Seydi, "Mısır Sefer-i Mühimmi," in *Mekatib-i Sultaniye*, 266–273.

119. Hulusi, *Esmarü'l-Hadayık*, 9; Hayrullah, *Tarih-i Devlet-i*, 8:86; Vefik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 83; Fevzi, *Haber-i Sahih*, 4:346; Yağlıkçızade, *Nakd*, 479; Yağlıkçızade, "Selim," in *Lugat*, 4:59; Sami, "Selim," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:2612; Cevad, *Mükemmel*, 209.

120. For primary-level textbooks, see Hıfzı, *Hulasa-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 20. For *rüşdiyye* schools, see M. Tevfik, *Küçük Telhis*, 64; Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i İslam*, 134; Cevad, *Muhtasar*, 137; Hakkı and Azmi, *Muhtasar İslam*, 143; Hakkı and Azmi, *Muhtasar Osmanlı*, 41. For secondary and high schools, see M. Tevfik, *Telhis*, 74; M. Tevfik, *Tarih-i Osmani*, 124; Şeref, *Tarih*, 177; Şeref, *Fezleke* (1310), 46.

121. Kâmil Paşa, *Tarih-i Siyasi*, 1:155; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Osmanlı*, 1:199–200.

of textbooks of the Young Turk period included this same information.[122] Other authors were attached to the view that either the conquest of Egypt or the visit of Abu Numayy, son of Sharif Abu Barakat from Mecca, consituted the occasion for the acquisition of the title. However, authors like Tayyarzade Ata, M. Nuri, and Şehbenderzade refrained from touching on the issue. It is, again, in A. Seydi's textbook from the period of the Allied occupation that mention of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries has been removed.

While post-1850 historiography became preoccupied with the issues of the universal caliphate and the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries, the Abrahamic religious symbolism, as represented by the Prophet David's grave at Marj Dabiq, Selim's visits to Jerusalem and Hebron, and the metaphor of the Throne of Joseph symbolizing Egypt disappeared almost completely. Among these motifs, only Selim's visits to Jerusalem and Hebron were briefly mentioned by M. M. Fevzi, Ş. Sami, M. Kâmil Paşa, M. Murad, and A. Rasim.[123]

In harmony with the fascination for Selim, we see a new patriotic language used to describe events during his rule. While narrating the battles of Marj Dabiq, Gaza, and Ridaniya, first N. Kemal and M. M. Fevzi and then textbook authors like M. Tevfik, A. Rasim, and A. Refik applied a discourse which describes Selim and his army as "heros" (*kahraman*), "braves," and "gallants" (*bahadır*). It might be stated that the Ottoman–Turkish public opinion of the 1870s and 1910s, when the above-mentioned names compiled their works, was dominated by Young Ottoman and Young Turk sentiments.[124] Agitative works by authors such as Young Ottoman N. Kemal and Young Turk A. Refik include historical texts where Selim was dislocated from his original historical setting and turned into a kind of a popular leader of the masses. According to N. Kemal, Selim's "great strength agitated the whole brave nation for heroic conquests," whereas A. Refik depicted a Selim whose actions at the front line of battles

122. For primary-level textbooks, see Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Küçük Tarih*, 32–33. For secondaryand high schools, see Şeref, *Fezleke* (1909?), 54; Seydi, *Mekatib-i İdadiye*, 283–284.

123. Fevzi, *Haber-i Sahih*, 4:332; Sami, "Selim," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:2612; Kâmil Paşa, *Tarih-i Siyasi*, 1:156; Murad, *Tarih-i Ebu'l-Faruk*, 2:298; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Osmanlı*, 200.

124. Kemal, *Evrak-ı Perişan*, 19; Fevzi, *Haber-i Sahih*, 4:319–320; Refik, *Sahifeler*, 17; Refik, *Küçük*, 46–47; Refik, *Muhtasar*, 19; Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i İslam*, 133; M. Tevfik, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 72.

encouraged his commanders and soldiers to be as brave as the sultan himself. Both of these authors resorted to a romanticization of violence; N. Kemal described the Cairo massacre in terms of a heroic fight of brave Ottomans against insurgents; Selim is depicted as a hero riding a leopard (*kaplan*), which is in fact the sultan's grey horse stained with enemy blood from Selim's sword. A. Refik also chose the event of the Cairo resistance to praise Selim's mercilessness in subduing the enemy and eradicating the remains of the Circassians. He went even further, describing Selim's army entering Egypt as a kind of a colonial force invading an Oriental and exotic landscape. In his own words, "the Ottoman army headquarters at Bulaq with its magnificient white tents could be observed from far away, and Sultan Selim undertook excursions along the Nile together with his brave soldiers and self-sacrificing pashas. At the shore, where once a boat of love and passion, decorated with blue sails, silver-like rudders, golden masts disseminated moaning melodies of a zither, and Anthony and Cleopatra admitted to each other [the secrets of] their hearts, now brave Selim's victorious soldiers were establishing their army camp."[125]

While encountering this kind of glorification of Selim, at the same time we observe a contrasting historiographical attitude where certain other authors, continuing an intellectual strain from the post-1580 era, distanced themselves from the sultan and evaluated him critically. In his 1850 published biographical lexicon on Ottoman sultans, viziers, and other dignitaries, A. Hulusi not only refrained from praising Selim, but states that Yavuz first lit the eastern lands on fire and immersed Georgia in a bloodbath (*diyar-ı şarkı hark ve Gürcistanı seylab-i huna gark*), then took Shah Ismail's wife Taclı Hanım captive before conquering Kurdistan, Aleppo, Damascus, the Egyptian lands, and the Two Sanctuaries.[126] Hayrullah Efendi, who was a part of the Tanzimat official establishment as a member of the Sublime Council of Judicial Ordinances (*Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkam-ı Adliyye*) as well as of the Council of Public Education (*Meclis-i Maarif-i Umumiyye*), was rather uneasy vis-à-vis Selim's massacres committed at different locations during the campaign. While silent on the massacres in Ramle and Gaza, he tried to justify the massacre in Cairo by outlining the difficulties the Ottomans

125. Kemal, *Evrak-ı Perişan*, 19, 60; Refik, *Sahifeler*, 21–22.

126. Hulusi, *Esmarü'l-Hadayık*, 9.

faced in establishing control over a territory as huge as Egypt. For him, the population of Cairo, a city that had enjoyed the well-established privilege of being the capital city of a major empire for centuries, had difficulties in accepting being unexpectedly demoted to a provincial center within a foreign state, and naturally resorted to violence, and the Ottomans had no choice but to suppress the resistance.[127]

Mustafa Nuri Paşa, who, like Hayrullah, was a higher functionary within the Sublime Porte and served as Minister of Education and Minister of Pious Foundations during the early years of the Hamidian period, wrote an Ottoman history which adopted a highly analytical and institutional perspective. M. Nuri openly displayed his lack of sympathy for Selim by focusing on the sultan's inclination toward violent acts in relation to the fates of his brothers, Ahmed and Korkud, without trying to provide any excuses. In contrast to perhaps nearly all the authors hitherto discussed in this paper, M. Nuri expressed sorrow for the massacred tens of thousands of people in Cairo. However, he also denounced Tumanbay for instigating the Cairo rebellion, the result of which was an unaccountable number of civilians and thousands of young men who became victims of this *fitna*. As part of his antipathy toward Selim, M. Nuri provided us with the opinions of some of the ulema from Selim's time who were highly critical of the campaigns against Iran and Egypt. Accordingly, they stated that it would have been much more acceptable to gain a single Christian village or to convert only one Christian individual to Islam rather than conquering huge Islamic regions and shedding the blood of fellow Muslims.[128]

From the Young Turk regime, we notice two authors who were critical of Selim. Mehmed Kâmil Paşa, a statesman who acted as grand vizier several times during the Hamidian as well as Young Turk regimes, moved closer to the Liberal Party (*Ahrar Fırkası*) after 1908 and became a vocal critic of the centralist measures of the Committee of Union and Progress (hence CUP). M. Kâmil's political history of the Ottoman Empire provides the reader with an image of Selim as a sultan who killed his viziers without good reason. The same is true for M. Kâmil's accounts of the rebellions of Ramle and Gaza; according to him, not only the insurgents,

127. Hayrullah, *Tarih-i Devlet-i*, 8:60–61.

128. M. Nuri, *Netaicü'l-Vukuat*, 1:85, 92, 94.

but all of the inhabitants were wiped out. During the Cairo rebellion, Selim tricked the Circassians by promising amnesty if they laid down their weapons; instead those 800 Circassian fighters who surrendered were immediately beheaded.[129]

Mehmed Murad Bey, also known as Mizancı Murad, was a professor and journalist who, in the 1890s, ranked among the leaders of the Young Turk opposition to Abdülhamid. However, after 1908, he took an oppositional stance to the CUP. Similar to M. Nuri's institutional approach, M. Murad adopted a quasi-Hegelian philosophical methodology to explain developments in Ottoman history. While discussing the rule of Selim, M. Murad expressed criticism of Selim in regard to issues already mentioned by Hayrullah, M. Nuri, and M. Kâmil. In the case of M. Kâmil's condemnation of Selim's deceptive promise of amnesty and the subsequent executions of Circassians, however, M. Murad argued that this was false information, fabricated by hostile European historians. M. Murad's heaviest criticism of Selim relates to the massacres of the civilian population in Cairo, whereby homes were entered and women and children thrown from windows; those women who continued resisting were nailed by their breasts to the walls and left there until their corpses decayed. According to M. Murad, Islamic sensitivities and civilized values ought to have prevented such atrocities.[130]

Such criticisms, as expressed in works intended for the wider public, apparently didn't have a significant impact upon the contents of textbooks. Only after the Young Turk Revolution did A. Şeref revise his secondary-level *Fezleke*, wherein he covertly criticized the sultan, implying that executions of viziers took place for trivial reasons. A. Seydi wrote more openly, explicitly condemning the arbitrary nature of the executions. However, neither A. Şeref nor A. Seydi mentioned the events of Ramle, Gaza, or Cairo.[131]

While Selim, in general, remained a source of historical pride throughout post-1850 era historiography, a major change can be observed in relation to the depiction and evaluation of the Mamluks and the Mamluk sultans. As noted previously, the first-generation historiography was

129. Kâmil Paşa, *Tarih-i Siyasi* 1:146, 153–158.

130. Murad, *Tarih-i Ebu'l-Faruk*, 2:265–266, 294–295, 299, 303–305.

131. Şeref, *Fezleke* (1909?), 53, 54; Seydi, *Mekatib-i İdadiye*, 266, 289–290.

dominated by a slanderous approach to the Mamluk administration, the Circassians, and their rulers, whereas post-1580 narrations reflected a softening of this attitude. Within the great majority of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century historical texts, this degrading discourse almost disappeared. First of all, while discussing the Ottoman–Mamluk War, the ethnonym "Circassian" (Çerkes, Çera*kise*), with some exceptions, was abandoned in favour of the term "Mamluk" (*Kölemen*). One exception appears in A. Refik's agitational text, where the discourse of "the eradication of the Circassian remains" (*bakiyye-i Çerakiseyi istisal*) within Cairo appears to contain Social Darwinistic undertones.[132] Such authors as A. Vefik, M. Şevki, M. Şükri, M. E. E. Seydişehri, and A. Tevfik argued that the Circassian state had become dominated by incompetent individuals.[133] Many of the remaining authors, both in general works as well as in textbooks, underlined the bravery and the martial abilities of the Mamluk cavalry forces.

The same attitude appears to apply to descriptions of the final Mamluk sultans. With the exception of the Young Turk A. Refik, there is virtually no author from the post-1850 period who seems to have defamed Kansu al-Gavri.[134] On the contrary, we encounter writers who praise al-Gavri. For example, Yağlıkçızade and M. Tevfik praised the "Egyptian sultan" (*Mısır meliki*; *Mısır sultanı*) al-Gavri for being courageous and brave. Ş. Sami, in his universal lexicon, dedicated a separate entry for al-Gavri, reporting that the sultan was engaged in such benevolent works as building a mosque in Cairo, constructing a wall around Jeddah, and establishing pious foundations in Mecca. M. Nuri even declared al-Gavri a martyr (şehid) who died on the battlefield.[135] Due to the compactness and limitations of textbooks, the name Tumanbay doesn't often occur in the teaching material; we see this name mostly in works intended for the general public. With the exception of A. Refik, none of the sources defame

132. Refik, *Sahifeler*, 21–22.

133. Refik, *Sahifeler*, 21–22; Vefik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 84; M. Şevki, *Tarih-i Umumi*, 274–275; Şükri, *Tarih-i Umumi*, 275; Seydişehri, *Tarih-i İslam*, 203, A. Tevfik, *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Umumi*, 2:76.

134. Refik, *Haritalı ve Resimli*, 223. According to him, al-Gavri was a coward.

135. Yağlıkçızade, "Selim," in *Lugat*, 4:59; M. Tevfik, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 73–74; Sami, "Kansu Gavri," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 5:3581; M. Nuri, *Netaicü'l-Vukuat*, 1:91.

Tumanbay.[136] Yağlıkçızade, Ş. Sami and A. Şeref described him as a heroic personality. According to Ş. Sami, he did not surrender, but defended Cairo although he was defeated at Ridaniya.[137]

As with the historiographical eras discussed previously, we encounter practically no descriptions of the Arab population of Bilad al-Sham and Egypt, the people who Selim and his armies must have encountered on a daily basis. The only exception is the work of A. Seydi, who stated that the Arabs were more inclined toward the "Turks" than the Circassians, a situation that made the conquests easier. Thus, when the Mamluks were defeated, the whole Hijaz could be considered as good as secured by the Ottomans.[138] Similar to the prior eras, in the histories of this period, the term Arab appears primarily to denote the Mamluk realm, such as *Memalik-i Arab* (Arab lands), *hudud-ı Arabistan* (borders of Arabia), or *sefer-i Arabistan* (Arabian campaign).[139]

Before concluding this section, a final observation about post-1850 historiography relates to geographical terminology: we encounter an expansion of the usage of the category Palestine (*Filistin*). Prior to the Hamidian period, the term Palestine was probably used sporadically. We know that Evliya Çelebi, while describing Selim's visits to the sheikhs of Jerusalem, used the expression *meşayih-i Filistin* (sheikhs of Palestine).[140] Among those works intended for the general public, Ş. Sami and A. Rasim applied this term when explaining the impact of the Battle of Marj Dabiq on Ottoman territorial gains.[141] With regard to the textbooks of both Hamidian and Young Turk periods, authors A. Rasim, M. Tevfik, A. Şeref, and A. Seydi applied the term *Filistin* together with *Suriye* (Syria) or *Dımışk* (Damascus).[142]

To sum up, a crucial difference between accounts from the post-1850 era and previous eras is the dissemination of historical perceptions through government education and textbooks among the literate masses

136. Refik, *Haritalı ve Resimli*, 226. For him, Tumanbay was an ignorant Circassian.

137. Yağlıkçızade, "Selim," in *Lugat*, 4:59; Sami, "Tumanbay," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:3025. Şeref, *Tarih*, 174.

138. Seydi, *Mekatib-i İdadiye*, 284; Seydi, *Mekatib-i Sultaniye*, 268–269.

139. Fevzi, *Haber-i Sahih*, 4:218; M. Nuri, *Netaicü'l-Vukuat*, 1: 90; Cevad, *Mükemmel*, 1:200; S. A. Şevki, *Mir'at-ı Tarih-i Osmani*, 147; Refik, *Haritalı ve Resimli*, 222.

140. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 10:67.

141. Sami, "Selim," in *Kamusü'l-Alam*, 4:2612; Rasim, *Resimli ve Haritalı Osmanlı*, 1:200.

142. Rasim, *Küçük Tarih-i Osmani*, 28; M. Tevfik, *Küçük Telhis*, 65; M. Tevfik, *Telhis-i Tarih-i Osmani*, 74; M. Tevfik, *Tarih-i Osmani*, 124; Şeref, *Tarih*, 174; Seydi, *Mekatib-i Sultaniye*, 269.

post-1850. In this context, we see the pinnacle of the glorification of Selim, which amounts to a kind of hero-worship. The predominance of the epithet *Yavuz* during this era perhaps symbolizes a pride and even an identification with the martial and merciless qualities of this ruler. On the other hand, it is also during this era that Selim's policies toward the Mamluks and the Cairene population was harshly criticized by applying both Islamic and universal ethical values. Thus, we see a major fault-line in the perception of Selim over time. Another feature of the late Ottoman historical consciousness attributed to Selim the mission of the unification of Sunni Muslims. In harmony with this perception, practically none of the authors questioned the factual accuracy of the formal transfer of the universal caliphate from Mutawakkil III to the Ottoman dynasty, an attitude probably reflecting the pan-Islamist policies of the Hamidian and Young Turk regimes. In possible correlation with this consciousness, the use of Abrahamic religious symbolism, prevalent among the first-generation authors, nearly disappears during this era. The issue of the formal recognition of Selim as the custodian of the Two Sanctuaries seems to have divided historical texts of this era into two conflicting schools: those who considered the definite conquest of Egypt as the main factor, and those who believed the first Friday prayer at the main mosque of Aleppo following the victory at Marj Dabiq was the main moment. Finally, we encounter increasing signs of Turkish nationalism entering into some of the post-1850 texts, such as naming Selim as an "Ottoman Turk" or considering the Ottomans as "Turks."

Conclusion

This paper attempts to outline changing Ottoman–Turkish historiographical perceptions of the Ottoman–Mamluk War of 1516–1517 between 1520 and 1920. This time span of four centuries encompasses three distinct social and political periods of the Ottoman Empire— sometimes referred as the Classical Age, the Age of Decentralization, and the Age of Modernization.[143] The first historiographical period, depicted by the first-generation authors, coincides with a time of major sultanic authority,

143. See Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vols. 1 and 2.

military expansionism, and bureaucratic development. In spite of the remarkable variety of views on different issues, the historiographical outlook of the pre-1580 authors displays a strict dynastic outlook; the lack of interest among the authors in structural issues such as the universal Islamic caliphate or the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries is an indirect indicator of this. The heavy slandering of the final Mamluk rulers and the Circassian ruling class appears to represent a highly subjective hatred in the person of Selim for his adversaries. Sadeddin's sexualised metaphor of Suleika can be considered an extreme case of this personalisation.

Prior to Selim's campaigns, the Ottoman Empire, being mainly a Balkan state with a Christian-majority population, was governed through an administrative apparatus which included, as a product of the "child levy," also known as *devshirme*, a significant number of sultanic slaves of Christian origin. At least some of the authors of the first-generation probably had Christian roots. The prevalence of Abrahamic religious symbolism in the historiography of this era may be an indication of the cosmopolitan nature of the Ottoman ruling elite of the early sixteenth century as well as the relatively limited cultural influence of the Sunni ulema establishment in public life.[144]

The conquest of the core Islamic lands entailed a major cultural revolution which gradually changed the central institutions and transformed the empire. The demographic majority became Muslim, and the Two Sanctuaries together with the famed cities of Jerusalem, Damascus, and Cairo became incorporated into the empire. The Ottoman state could legitimately boast of the leadership of the Islamic world. The military and fiscal transformation of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the growing power of the scribal service and the ulema in politics, and the promotion of a more Sunni Islamic political culture signified an institutionalization of the Ottoman State; the power of the sultan as an individual became more or less circumscribed.[145] In this context, we observe a post-1580 historiography where the previous

144. About the gradual replacement of folk religion by learned Islam at the ideological level, see Imber, "Ideals and Legitimation," 148–149.

145. See Halil İnalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700," in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History*, ed. Halil İnalcık, 283–337 (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985); Madeline C.Zilfi, "The Ottoman *ulema*", in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: the Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, ed. Suraiya N. Faroqhi, 209-225 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

dynastic outlook became more Islamic and institutional. During this era, the issue of the Custodianship of the Two Sanctuaries acquired primacy, and the approach toward Kansu al-Gavri and Tumanbay became less hostile and less personal. At the same time, the use of Abrahamic religious symbolism began to vanish within the historiography of this era.

The "long nineteenth century" of the Ottoman Empire, which can be stretched until 1920, incorporated simultaneous processes of territorial shrinking, political reforms to centralize the state apparatus, and measures to integrate communities and provincial populations into the imperial political framework. These processes and challenges produced both opportunities, such as the expansion of education, and major cleavages within the Ottoman–Turkish ruling elite. The apparent fascination with a frightful and formidable "Yavuz Sultan Selim" may be better understood when considering Ottoman weakness vis-à-vis the Great Powers, incessant territorial losses, and general atmosphere of demoralization and frustration during this era. The proportional shrinking of the Balkan provinces and Christian populations vis-à-vis the Muslim people of Anatolia and the Arabic-speaking provinces led to the pan-Islamist policies of the Hamidian and Young Turk regimes. Concomitantly, Selim's acquisition of the universal Islamic caliphate from Mutawakkil III came to be seen as a nearly unquestionable fact, something seldom referred within historiographical texts before the nineteenth century. The reasons and motivations for Selim's Egyptian campaign can also be considered within this context. It is striking that, whereas there existed among first-generation authors two different views—namely, that Iran was Selim's initial military target versus that Egypt was his main object from the onset—which implies a kind of a historiographical pluralism before 1580, the post-1850 writings are in near consensus that Selim planned the unification of the Islamic lands from the beginning.

Nineteenth-century territorial losses were accompanied by massive waves of Muslim migrations from the Balkans, the Crimea, and the Caucasus, which included Circassians. During this period, numerous Circassian families established ties with the Ottoman Palace.[146] We may

146. For D. Quataert's discussions on nineteenth century population changes and migrations, see Halil İnalcık with Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 2:

assume that the presence of Circassians within Ottoman daily life and at higher levels after 1860 may have created a new sensitivity which led to the elimination of the ethnonym Çerkes in historiographical texts and narratives on the Egyptian campaign. This tendency towards increased tolerance might be also combined with a different process. The Tanzimat period represented attempts to establish a *rechtsstaat*, or rule of law. This process acquired constitutional legitimacy during the Constitutional Periods of 1876–78 and 1908–18. Numerous contemporary historical authors apparently found it difficult to reconcile the legal values promoted by this political climate of legitimate power with Selim's violent actions against the Circassian ruling elite and his measures to subdue the populations of Cairo, Ramle, and Gaza. Thus we encounter, despite their fascination with Selim, a continuation of an earlier tendency to maintain a critical distance from Selim and to rehabilitate Kansu al-Gavri and Tumanbay as honorable rulers.

On the other hand, the expansion of primary and secondary government-sponsored education from the second half of the nineteenth century together with the industrial production of textbooks promoted the expansion and predominance of those historiographical opinions favored mainly by the Hamidian and Young Turk regimes. These opinions included the glorification of Selim and the reification of the transfer of the universal caliphate from Mutawakkil to Selim. Despite events like the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the abolition of the caliphate in 1924 by the newly-founded Republican government, and Kemalist reforms in the 1930s that brought about a dramatic regime change negating the Ottoman past, one cannot help but observe that Turkish nationalism, as also reflected in officially approved history textbooks, has continued to this day to maintain these same historiographical positions.

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