

THE LAST JANISSARY LEADER OF ALEPPO: 'ABDALLAH BABINSI (1780s-1850), A NOTABLE BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL SPHERES

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Abstract | Focusing on the last great Janissary leader of Aleppo, 'Abdallah Babinsi (1780s-1850), this chapter examines the historical ties between Aleppo's power brokers and the hinterland. The modalities of Babinsi's rise to power through the household of one of Aleppo's influential families, which parallels careers such as Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi's are depicted against the background of Aleppo's family politics. Babinsi, who cultivated a deliberate ambiguity with regard to his status, maintained a close relationship with the rural world while obtaining important political positions (*mütesellim*, *mültezim*) both under Egyptian (1832–1840) and Ottoman rule (after 1840). It is argued that ties to both the Bedouin and villagers allowed him to secure his position by guaranteeing security in the city and its hinterland and keeping both in balance. These ties simultaneously explain the anachronistic survival of the Janissary faction in Aleppo until 1850 when Babinsi, financially threatened by the Tanzimat reforms, drew his faction and supporters from the hinterland into an uprising against the Ottomans.

INTRODUCTION

Scholars engaging with the political history and economy of late Ottoman Aleppo rarely think of this city as a place open to the rural world immediately surrounding it, a city that is affected by its problems, concerned with its control, and fundamentally imbricated with it in all kinds of ways.¹ However, "the city and the countryside lived not in separate impermeable spaces."² One of the keys to the wealth of count-

less *awqaf*, schools, and other institutions in the city was Aleppo's hinterland. Many of Aleppo's influential families had the right to collect *iltizam*s (tax farms); others held *malikanes* (lifetime tax farms).³ Some families were involved in long-distance trade and the hubs of these activities were the eastern suburbs of the city. Through such ties to the hinterland and rural resources, the Jabiri and Kawakibi families, for example, were able to establish themselves as some of the most important political and economic actors in the nation state of Syria up until the second half of the 20th century.⁴ To better

1 Notable exceptions include, for example, Margaret L. Meriwether, "Urban Notables and Rural Resources in Aleppo, 1770–1830," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 4 (1987), pp. 55–73; Jean-Pierre Thieck, *Passion d'Orient* (Paris: Karthala, 1992) (see his notion of supra-urban regional networks, pp. 157–62); and Bruce Masters, "The Political Economy of Aleppo in an Age of Ottoman Reform," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53/1–2 (2010), pp. 290–316.

2 Sarah D. Shields, "Interdependent Spaces: Relations between the City and the Countryside in the Nineteenth

Century," in Peter Sluggett (ed.), *The Urban Social History of the Middle East, 1750–1950* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), p. 44.

3 On the control of the countryside through *malikane* and *iltizam*, see in detail Thieck, *Passion*, pp. 128–40.

4 On the Jabiri's and Kawakibi's control of rural resources in the late 18th/ early 19th century, see Meriwether, "Urban Notables," p. 62.



understand how this came to pass, the historical ties between Aleppo's power brokers and the hinterland need exploration.

This chapter focuses on a major player in Aleppo's politics who came to power through the household of one of Aleppo's influential families and maintained a close relationship with the rural world – the Janissary leader 'Abdallah Babinsi (1780s-1850), the *mütesellim* of Aleppo and a *mültezim* for almost two decades in the mid-19th century.⁵ He was such an important political figure that Mustafa Zarif Paşa, the *vali* of Aleppo between 1848 and 1850, mentions him by name in his memoirs,⁶ and the same *vali*'s secretary Ibrahim Reşid appended a short biography of Babinsi to his account of the 1850 events.⁷ Babinsi's influence can otherwise be gleaned from scattered references in the writings of locals from Aleppo; namely, the diary of the Catholic teacher and contemporary observer of Aleppo's politics, Na'um Bakhkhash, and accounts by Christian eyewitnesses reporting on the 1850 uprising in Aleppo.⁸ 'Abdallah Babinsi is also referred to time and time again by European residents of Aleppo: the Consul Nathaniel William Werry (1782–1855) mentions him in his correspondence.⁹ So do the diplomats Andrew Archibald Paton (1811–1874) and Edward Barker in their historical accounts.¹⁰ Slightly later works by

the historians Kamil al-Ghazzi and Muhammad Raghیب al-Tabbakh from Aleppo also offer valuable information, mostly in the framework of discussions of the 1850 uprising in Aleppo.¹¹ Although scholars have already recognized the important role 'Abdallah Babinsi played in urban politics, especially during the uprising,¹² very little is known about Aleppo's last Janissary leader.

Albert Hourani famously characterized notables as possessing access to authority and simultaneously having some social power on their own, with which they create “a coalition of forces both urban and rural.”¹³ An examination of 'Abdallah Babinsi's case can lead to a better understanding of relations between urban power brokers and the Ottoman authorities on the one hand, as well as Aleppo's suburbs, hinterland, and tribal groups from beyond

Egypt under the Last Five Sultans of Turkey being Experiences, during Fifty Years, of Mr. Consul-General Barker Chiefly from his Letters and Journals, Edited by His Son, Edward B. B. Barker, Her Majesty's Consul, vol. 2 (London: Tinsley, 1876), pp. 287–294 (chapter 16). Edward Barker's work is based on the letters and journals of his father, John Barker (1771–1849), who was consul in Aleppo. Since John Barker died in 1849, the report about the 1850 events, and consequently the discussion of 'Abdallah Babinsi's involvement, can be attributed to his son in its entirety.

11 See al-Ghazzi in Shawqi Sha's and Mahmud Fakhuri (eds.), *Kitab Nahr al-dhahab fi tarikh Halab* [The Book of the Golden River on the History of Aleppo], vol. 3 (Aleppo: Dar al-Qalam al-'Arabi, 1999), pp. 281–292 [in Arabic]; and Muhammad Raghیب al-Tabbakh, *Ilam al-nubala' bi-tarikh Halab al-shahba'* [Information on the Notables in the History of Aleppo the Grey], vol. 3 (Aleppo: Al-Matba'a al-Ilmiyya, 1925), pp. 438–440 [in Arabic].

12 See Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine 1840–1861: The Impact of the Tanzimat on Politics and Society* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), pp. 101–107 and *passim*; Thomas Scheben, *Verwaltungsreformen der frühen Tanzimatzeit: Gesetze, Maßnahmen, Auswirkungen: Von der Verkündigung des Ediktes von Gülhane 1839 bis zum Ausbruch des Krimkrieges 1853* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1991), p. 405; Hidemitsu Kuroki, “The 1850 Aleppo Disturbance Reconsidered,” in Markus Köhbach, Gisela Procházka-Eisl, and Claudia Römer (eds.), *Acta Viennensia Ottomanica: Akten des 13. CIEPO-Symposiums vom 21. bis 25. September 1998 in Wien* (Wien: Im Selbstverlag des Instituts für Orientalistik, 1999), pp. 226–231; Bruce Masters, “Aleppo's Janissaries: Crime Syndicate or *Vox Populi*?” in Eleni Gara, M. Erdem Kabadayı, and Christoph K. Neumann (eds.), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011), p. 137; Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*, pp. 305–319.

13 Albert Hourani, “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables,” in William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1968), p. 46.

5 The *mütesellim* was a local notable representing the central authorities, see Thieck, *Passion*, pp. 117–118.

6 For a translation of the relevant sections of Mustafa Zarif's memoirs, see Virginia H. Aksan, *Ottoman Wars 1700–1870: An Empire Besieged* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 419–20.

7 See Süleymaniye kütüphanesi, Tercüman 256, 37b-47a (the account), pp. 46a-47a (the biography).

8 See Yusuf Qushaqji (ed.), *Akhbar Halab kama kata-baha Na'um Bakhkhash fi dafatir al-jam'iyya* [The Events in Halab the Way Na'um Bakhkhash wrote them in his Comprehensive Notebooks] (Aleppo: Matba'at al-Ihsan, 1985–1994) [in Arabic]; for the two untitled eyewitness reports, see Feras Krimsti, *Die Unruhen von 1850 in Aleppo: Gewalt im urbanen Raum* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2014), pp. 384–426, 427–454.

9 The National Archives (United Kingdom) (TNA), FO 861/2 *passim*.

10 Andrew Archibald Paton, *The Modern Syrians; or, Native Society in Damascus, Aleppo, and the Mountains of the Druses, from Notes Made in those Parts during the Years 1841–2–3* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1844), pp. 246–48; *idem*, *A History of the Egyptian Revolution, from the Period of the Mamelukes to the Death of Mohammed Ali; from Arab and European Memoirs, Oral Tradition, and Local Research*, vol. 2 (London: Trübner, 1870), pp. 114–15, 132, 410–11; John Barker, *Syria and*

the “desert frontier” on the other.¹⁴ It can shed light on a number of problems and questions relating to Aleppo’s economic and political history: What can we learn about the constitution of the notoriously elusive group of the urban notables and their interventions in urban politics through the study of a Janissary leader’s involvement? Why did the corps of the Janissaries last so long in Aleppo when it had officially been liquidated in 1826 in the Ottoman Empire, and to what extent was this a result of economic constellations involving the hinterland? How were episodes of urban unrest manipulated by power brokers and to what extent was the rural world involved?

FACTIONAL POLITICS AND THE AMBIGUITIES OF NOTABLE STATUS

In contrast to other *vilayets* in the Levant, Aleppo was directly controlled by the Ottomans and always in Istanbul’s orbit. Here, “Ottoman authority remained real.”¹⁵ Ottoman bureaucrats were regularly dispatched to the city to govern it. Yet Aleppo was not completely untouched by the crisis in Ottoman rule that rattled a number of Ottoman provinces in Syria.¹⁶ Political events, bad harvests, and plagues, but also frequently occurring Bedouin raids – particularly by the Mawali and the ‘Anaza, who had moved northward during the 18th century and forced the Mawali to give them space¹⁷ – accelerated the erosion of Ottoman power. The Ottoman *vali* was no longer able to pay for his own troops and a power vacuum was created in which none of the city’s major players was able to dominate the political scene. No local dynasty emerged that could be compared to the ‘Azm family in Damascus. Instead, episodes of urban violence led to clashes between various factions competing for power.

14 On the “desert frontier” or “line,” the transition zone in the east and south of Aleppo between the uncultivated country and the cultivated area inhabited by village-dwelling farmers, see in detail Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 15–17.

15 Hourani, “Ottoman Reform,” p. 52.

16 See James Grehan, “Imperial Crisis and Muslim-Christian Relations in Ottoman Syria and Palestine, c. 1770–1830,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58/4 (2015), pp. 490–531.

17 On these two Bedouin tribes, see Lewis, *Nomads*, pp. 7–11.

At the same time, local groups rebelled several times against Ottoman *valis*, and succeeded in ousting a number of them from the city.¹⁸

Aleppo’s factional politics has garnered significant scholarly interest.¹⁹ The city’s *ashraf* (who claimed descent from the Prophet) represented one influential local political faction. While the leader of the *ashraf*, or *naqib al-ashraf*, was not able to control the group since he mostly served his own interests, the Janissaries, the second local faction, were characterized by greater solidarity.²⁰ They have been shown to have increasingly evolved from a locally recruited military arm of the provincial government into a social class.²¹ Individuals from tribes and villages were absorbed into this group. Janissaries traditionally resided in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo – Bab al-Nayrab, Qarliq, and Banqusa – and had close ties to the rural hinterlands of Aleppo; they either came from the rural world or were connected to it through caravan trade. Andrew Paton’s impression was that Banqusa appeared “like a country Arab town fifty miles from a city” in the 1840s.²² Bab al-Nayrab has similarly been described as a transition space between the city of Aleppo and its rural hinterland.²³

As has been pointed out by historians, the conflicts between *ashraf* and Janissaries have taken on almost mythical proportions. Yet neither of these groups was homogeneous and its members, particularly their leaders, pursued individual interests. These leaders constitute a third, rather elusive group whose contours are difficult to establish: the notables (*ayan*), who controlled the city’s resources and influenced political life decisively.²⁴ Scholarly and/ or re-

18 Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*, pp. 153–173.

19 The classical study on this topic is Herbert L. Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760–1826* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963). See for a more recent discussion Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*, pp. 73–90.

20 Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” p. 59, for the conflict of interest between the majority and the leadership among the *ashraf* and the greater solidarity among the Janissaries.

21 See especially Masters, “Aleppo’s Janissaries,” who asks whether the Janissaries could be seen as a *vox populi*.

22 Paton, *History*, vol. 2, p. 413.

23 See Jacques Hivernel, “Bâb al-Nayrab, un faubourg d’Alep, hors de la ville et dans la cité,” *Études rurales* 155–156 (2000) (with an account of the quarter’s history, pp. 218–224).

24 See Margaret L. Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count: Fa-*

religious status, a military background, but most importantly financial resources were crucial aspects determining the notable status. *Ulama*, local military leaders, and “secular notables” have accordingly been distinguished as notable sub-groups.²⁵ Most of the notables were *ashraf*; it remains an open question how Janissary leaders and chiefs with rural ties were related to the group of notables. It has been suggested, for example, that they belonged to the political elite, while they did not belong to the social elite.²⁶

The Janissary leader ‘Ali Agha Tallqarahiyya (d. 1787), who is mentioned in the chronicle of Yusuf ‘Abbud (d. 1806), a Melkite Christian merchant, is a good case in point. Although scarcely anything is known about ‘Ali Agha, his name suggests an affiliation with the village of Tall Qarah north of Aleppo, and therefore a rural background. According to ‘Abbud, who clearly venerated him and admired his prowess,²⁷ he was able to gain much power through his rural resources: “In this period, he [i.e. ‘Ali Agha] increased his prestige, his business, his gains and incomes [...]. He earned most from selling and buying camels, sheep, crops, and properties.”²⁸ He had a hand in maintaining order in the city on various occasions: “In those days, ‘Ali Agha called his followers, warning them not to attack anyone, whether Muslim or Christian or anyone else, and not to blackmail anyone or ask for *raki*.”²⁹

Despite his power and influence, ‘Ali Agha did not identify with the notables. Having on one occasion successfully suppressed the *Dalatiyya*, a para-military group who looted and plundered the villages outside of Aleppo, he was honored by being asked to join the *meclis* but declined: “[The notables] asked ‘Ali Agha to join them; i.e., be part of their *meclis*, but he refused saying, ‘I don’t have the right to sit

in the *meclis* of the *a’yan*.’ He went to another room and stayed there for a while. So the *mitesellim* came to him and dressed him in a fur garment [...].”³⁰

This points to the deliberate ambiguity regarding the notable status of power brokers with ties to the rural world. Although scholars tend to differentiate Janissary leaders from notables for analytical reasons, they share a propensity for serving their own interests, which overlapped with those of the notables where rural resources were concerned.³¹ The relationship grew even closer toward the end of the 18th century, when notable families, who by and large had an urban economic base (moneylending, commerce, real estate), began acquiring rural resources and started to invest in Aleppo’s countryside. They were now competing with Janissary chiefs, who had come to dominate the countryside as tax-farmers and moneylenders.³²

During the 18th century, the importance of kinship and family ties grew, as evidenced by the adoption of family names as an expression of “a new status consciousness.”³³ Households have accordingly been identified as pivotal in defining “the kin who count.”³⁴ But while notable families usually bequeathed power to their own kin, they were more permeable than one might be inclined to think and their households could become springboards for non-kin, and among them individuals with a rural background.³⁵ From the ranks of the powerful Taha family’s household,³⁶ for example, it was his client Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi, himself of humble origin, who rose to power in the last decade of the 18th century rather than Taha’s own offspring. The name Qattar Aghasi suggests that he was a caravan leader, most probably from

mily and Society in Ottoman Aleppo, 1770–1840 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), p. 32, for a discussion of various scholarly takes on the notable category.

25 Hourani, “Ottoman Reform,” pp. 48–49; Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” p. 57.

26 Meriwether, *Kin who Count*, p. 48.

27 Fawwaz Mahmud al-Fawwaz (ed.), *Hawadith Halab al-yawmiyya, 1771–1805: Al-Murtadd fi tarikh Halab wa-Baghdad* [Daily Events in Aleppo, 1771–1805. A Revisiting of the History of Aleppo and Baghdad] (Aleppo: Shu’a li-l-Nashr wa-l-Ulum, 2006), p. 147 [in Arabic]. He calls him “ferocious lion.”

28 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 143.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 148–149.

31 On the distinction between notables and Janissary leaders, Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” p. 60.

32 See Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” pp. 58–59. See Shields, “Interdependent Spaces,” p. 48 and *passim*, on the continuation of this trend in the 19th century due to global demand.

33 Meriwether, *Kin who Count*, pp. 50–52, quotation 51.

34 See the title of Meriwether, *Kin who Count*.

35 On upward social mobility in the framework of patronage growing out of large households, see Meriwether, *Kin who Count*, pp. 60–61.

36 On the Taha family, see Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” p. 62, and *eadem*, *Kin Who Count*, pp. 36–38.

the eastern suburbs (although he was no Janissary). Shortly after he rose to power through the Taha family, Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi formed a network of connections with important circles in Istanbul. He was able to obtain influential political positions for himself and his kin in that he became *muhassıl*, *mütesellim*, and later *vali* of Damascus, where he mustered a private army consisting of so-called Arnaout-soldiers (Albanian irregular soldiers). His son Muhammad became *vali* of Aleppo.³⁷ Travelers such as Jacob Burckhardt were quick to remark on the influence of the Qattar Aghasi family in Aleppo.³⁸ With influence came competition: other notable families repeatedly formed alliances against the Qattar Aghasi family and, in 1805, they tried to expel Ibrahim's son Muhammad from the city. The Qattar Aghasi clan fought for years for power positions in Aleppo. They succeeded in establishing themselves as the major family in Aleppo's urban politics and remained in their power position until the middle of the 20th century.

Aleppo's last great Janissary chief, 'Abdallah Babinsi, shared characteristics with both 'Ali Agha Tallqarahiyya and with Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi. In particular, he had ties to the rural world. He was catapulted into Aleppo's power politics through the springboard of a household like the latter, and cultivated a deliberate ambiguity with regard to his aspirations to power like the former, as the following paragraph will show.

'ABDALLAH BABINSI'S RISE TO POWER AND HIS CONNECTIONS TO THE HINTERLAND

'Abdallah Babinsi was a virtual nobody – an illiterate “butcher's lad”³⁹ – before he became one of Aleppo's most influential power brokers in the first half of the 19th century. His name possibly suggests an affiliation with the small

village of Babins about a hundred kilometers to the northeast of Aleppo.⁴⁰ For a while, he was employed as a gatekeeper by the Consul John Barker (1771–1849).⁴¹ Just like Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi, he too rose to his position through a household; namely, the Jabiri or possibly the Qudsi family.⁴² He maintained this power by and large through his close relations to the eastern quarters and, above all, Aleppo's hinterland. It is likely that Aleppo's Janissaries were able to outlive the group's general demise in 1826, when Istanbul's Janissaries were massacred, precisely for the reason that they had ties to the rural world.⁴³

'Abdallah Babinsi became *mütesellim* under Ibrahim Paşa (1789–1848), the son of Muhammad 'Ali (1769–1849), during the Egyptian occupation (1832–1840).⁴⁴ Despite Edward Barker's claims, it is highly unlikely that this occurred because he was illiterate and therefore “innocuous in a political sense.”⁴⁵ Barker's second explanation is much more convincing, namely that he was reinstated “on account of his influence and connexion with the tradespeople, and the sedentary Arabs and the people of the villages around Aleppo.”⁴⁶ Andrew A. Paton similarly mentions that the Egyptians made him *mütesellim* “[o]n condition of Abdallah's keeping the canaille of the Janissary faction in order.”⁴⁷

Babinsi's monthly salary attests to his importance: under the Egyptians, he received

40 See al-Tabbakh, *Ilam al-nubala'*, vol. 3, p. 438, fn.1.

41 See Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 288; Masters, “Aleppo's Janissaries,” p. 173.

42 al-Tabbakh, *Ilam al-nubala'*, vol. 3, p. 438, fn.1, mentions that he was employed as a guardian “in al-Jabiri's or Qudsi's house.”

43 Although the Janissaries later clashed with the Egyptian rulers in 1833 by revolting they remained powerful. See Masters, “Political Economy,” pp. 294–295. In 1850, Edward Barker observed: “The latter [the Janissaries] had been proscribed and dispersed in 1812 and 1820, but the party was by no means broken. Thirty years had elapsed, and during that time the hydra-headed monster had recovered from its wounds. Those of the Janissaries who had survived, returned to Aleppo, and had recovered the greater part of their property, and all their influence, which lay with the tradespeople class.” See Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, pp. 287–88.

44 See Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 188.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 288.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 289.

47 Paton, *Modern Syrians*, p. 246; *idem*, *History*, vol. 2, p. 115.

37 On Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi's career, see Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” p. 64; *eadem*, *Kin Who Count*, p. 61; and Masters, “Aleppo's Janissaries,” p. 164.

38 John Lewis Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land* (London: John Murray, 1822), pp. 649–652.

39 Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 288. Babinsi's illiteracy / lack of education is also mentioned by Paton, *Modern Syrians*, p. 246; *idem*, *History*, vol. 2, p. 114; and al-Tabbakh, *Ilam al-nubala'*, vol. 3, p. 438, fn. 1.

5,000 *kuruş*. In comparison, only the *mütesellim* of Damascus received more among the *mütesellims* of Bilad al-Sham (8,333 *kuruş*), with the *mütesellims* of Adana and Ghaza earning as much as 'Abdallah Babinsi.⁴⁸ It is probable that 'Abdallah Babinsi's ties to the rural world made his influence an invaluable asset to the Egyptians. Muhammad 'Ali's struggles to stabilize the region targeted the rural world and involved repopulating the villages and making the land arable again.⁴⁹ An important facet of Ibrahim Paşa's policy consisted of settling the Bedouin; he was able to push back against the 'Anaza Bedouin and encouraged the Mawali Bedouin to settle in abandoned villages.⁵⁰

The return of the Ottomans to Aleppo in 1840 did not precipitate 'Abdallah Babinsi's quick demise, as might have been expected. This is particularly astonishing given that he had energetically supported the Egyptians in their fight against the Ottomans.⁵¹ He had also helped the Egyptians impose order in the city by arming thousands of Janissaries, who then patrolled while Ibrahim Paşa and his army were absent.⁵² The Ottomans did not remove Babinsi from office when they recaptured the city but rather treated him with circumspection. Paton tells us:

On the restoration of Syria to the Sultan, Assad Pasha, experienced vizier as he was, found an alliance with the Janis-

48 For the list of payments to *mütesellims* in Bilad al-Sham under the Egyptians, see Yusuf Na'isa, *Al-Marji' fi wathaiq tarihiyya 'an al-Sham fi athna' hamlat Muhammad 'Ali Basha* [The Authoritative Reference Work on Historical Sources on Syria in the Time of the Campaign of Muhammad Ali Basha] (Damascus: Jami'at Dimashq, 2004), pp. 282–285 [in Arabic]. 'Abdallah Babinsi is mentioned on p. 282.

49 See Werry's comments on the restoration of villages and cultivation of lands under the Egyptians in William R. Polk, "Document: Rural Syria in 1845," *Middle East Journal* 16/4 (1962), p. 509.

50 See Masters, "Political Economy," p. 308.

51 According to Na'um Bakhkhash, in April 1839, Ibrahim Paşa had 'Abdallah Babinsi's support when trying to ward off the Ottomans; he requested mules for the fight and helped empty mosques and caravanserais in order to provide quarters for the soldiers. See Qushaqji, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 1, pp. 97–98.

52 See Qushaqji, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 1, p. 101; Paton, *History*, vol. 2, p. 132, reports that Babinsi stayed behind with some of Ibrahim's troops, guaranteeing "the security and tranquillity of the town of Aleppo during his absence."

sary party indispensable to the preservation of order. He therefore made use of the power of Abdallah Babolsi, now become Abdallah Bey, but kept him at a respectful distance, never allowed him to sit on the divan, and gave him coffee, but never a chibouque. The power of Abdallah Bey was increased under Vedgihi Pasha, who treated him with much greater honour, for he not only sat on the divan, but was presented with a chibouque. There were only 1500 Nizam troops in the Pashalic, but Abdallah had all the canaille of the Pashalic at his beck: they were not exactly in his pay, but under his protection, he as Mutsellim having many ways of forwarding their interests. He had besides great influence with the sheikhs of the Bedouins on the desert frontier of the Pashalic; and I may safely say that no man in Syria concentrated so much political power in his hands.⁵³

Ibrahim Reşid, the secretary of the Ottoman *vali* in 1850, Mustafa Zarif, also claims that Babinsi acquired more power under the Ottomans:

He was assigned the office of *kapıcıbaşı* with a monthly pay of eight thousand *kuruş* and sixty certificates of allotment (*tezkere*), because 'Abdallah Bey was a well-known person among the Arabs. Then, as a reward for his effort to stop some of the inconvenient behaviors of the tradesmen, he was designated to be the head of the royal stables.⁵⁴

Na'um Bakhkhash also noted in his diary in January 1841 that 'Abdallah Babinsi was appointed chief of the palace gatekeepers (*kapıcıbaşı*), a position that effectively regulated access to the *vali*.⁵⁵ Ibrahim Reşid's statement also suggests that the Ottomans allowed 'Abdallah Babinsi to remain in power to exploit his ability to maintain order in the city and guarantee its security, thanks to his ties to the unruly inhabitants of the eastern suburbs of Aleppo, who by and

53 Paton, *Modern Syrians*, p. 247; almost identically Paton, *History*, vol. 2, p. 410.

54 Süleymaniye kütüphanesi, Tercüman, p. 256, 46b.

55 Qushaqji, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 1, p. 158.

large lived off the caravan trade. So instead of being demoted or eliminated, 'Abdallah Babinsi's position was strengthened even more.

Manifest proof of 'Abdallah Babinsi's strong position can be found in his building activities. Towards the end of March 1841, Bakhkhash mentions that Babinsi started to build a palace (*qasr*) for himself in the Rihawi Garden located to the northwest of the city, outside of al-Judayda.⁵⁶ The garden was visited by Christians for recreational activities and Bakhkhash himself frequently went fishing and picnicking there.⁵⁷ The Ottomans destroyed Babinsi's palace ten years later, in the aftermath of the 1850 events, obviously rightly perceiving it as a demonstration of power through architecture. Despite his status, however, 'Abdallah Babinsi carefully maintained his ties to his power base: even as a *mütesellim*, he wore a "common sheepskin jacket, such as is worn by butchers and grocers at Aleppo."⁵⁸ He thus preserved the delicate balance Albert Hourani describes when writing that notables "must not appear to the city to be simply the instruments of authority; but also they must not appear to be the enemies of authority."⁵⁹

What is characteristic of contemporary references to 'Abdallah Babinsi is that he is depicted as responsible for general order in the city. This included maintaining order within and warding off threats from without the city. Whether the problem was offensive behavior that pitted different religious communities against each other, or Bedouin raids on the villages around the city, he was the one approached if order needed to be restored. For example, in October 1842, 'Abdallah Babinsi sent a letter to the British Consul Nathaniel William Werry, asking him to close taverns because the public consumption of alcohol was strongly resented by the locals. He even threatened to go round the city and close taverns by force if they continued to operate.⁶⁰

56 See *ibid.*, p. 163. For the acquisition of rural property by Aleppo's urban notables and the importance of the gardens and orchards surrounding the city, see the comments in Meriwether, "Urban Notables," pp. 58–59.

57 See the numerous references to al-Rihawi in the index provided by Qushaqqi, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 1, p. 381.

58 Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 288.

59 Hourani, "Ottoman Reform," p. 46.

60 TNA. FO. 195/207, Babinsi to Werry, Ramadan 14, 1258 (19 October 1842).

Even more important were actions in which Babinsi's special relationship to the rural world became visible. As of the end of the Egyptian occupation, the Bedouin abandoned the villages in which they had settled and the "desert frontier" was once again in upheaval. This led to the reorganization and strengthening of the Fifth Army Corps in 1843 by the Ottomans, a forerunner of a number of more aggressive policies to control the Bedouin. The province of Aleppo, however, was only secured at the end of the 19th century.⁶¹ Werry mentions in his letters numerous attacks by the "Annazee Arabs" under their chief Daham and Ottoman campaigns against them.⁶² Babinsi's potential usefulness in controlling the Bedouin was certainly not underestimated by the Ottomans in the 1840s. In his journal, Bakhkhash mentions several instances when 'Abdallah Babinsi went on campaigns against the Bedouin – frequently the 'Anaza tribe – in order to secure the city of Aleppo.⁶³ 'Abdallah Babinsi must have been so strongly associated with these campaigns that one of them took on quasi-mythical proportions and entered the collective memory. In April 1847, Bakhkhash reflected on rumors that 'Anaza Bedouin had been besieging 'Abdallah Babinsi in a village called Jibbrin and that they had been about to seize him. For this reason, the Ottoman *vali* dispatched troops who were able to defeat the Bedouin.⁶⁴

The 20th-century historian al-Ghazzi, in his *Nahr al-dhahab*, presents a very pointed and dramatic account of an event strongly reminiscent of Bakhkhash's rather succinct note. A tribe of Bedouin in the area of the salt lake al-Jabbul located exactly on the "desert frontier"⁶⁵ had risen up against the Ottoman authorities and refused to pay taxes. The Ottoman *vali* sent Yusuf Shurayyif with a huge number of soldiers to punish them. Since the latter was unsuccessful, 'Abdallah Babinsi was sent with only six follow-

61 For Ottoman dealings with the Bedouin from the 1840s onward, see Masters, "Political Economy," pp. 308–311; and Lewis, *Nomads*, pp. 25–26.

62 TNA. FO. 861/2, Werry to Stratford Canning, 24 June 1848, 16 September 1848, 7 April 1849, 5 May 1849, etc.

63 See for example Qushaqqi, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 1, pp. 189 (March 1842), 194 (April 1842), 230 (June 1843), vol. 2, p. 49 (April 1847). For these campaigns, see also Kuroki, "1850 Aleppo Disturbance," p. 231.

64 See Qushaqqi, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 2, p. 50.

65 See Lewis, *Nomads*, pp. 15–16.

ers. They were initially taken hostage by the tribe but when rumors reached the tribe that the Ottoman authorities were prepared to advance on them, Babinsi demanded his release and offered to act as a mediator and to inform the government that the tribe had agreed to pay the tax. 'Abdallah Babinsi, upon his return to Aleppo, was celebrated for his triumph; festivities and a parade were organized in Qarliq and Bab al-Nayrab.⁶⁶ The anecdote speaks volumes about Babinsi's relationship to the hinterland and to the Ottomans, and his standing in the city.

LOSS OF POWER IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TANZIMAT REFORMS

The 1850 uprising constituted a tipping point in 'Abdallah Babinsi's career. On 16 October 1850, the inhabitants of Aleppo's eastern quarters Qarliq, Bab al-Nayrab, and Banqusa rebelled against a tax reform and the conscription announced by the Ottoman officials in the city. After unsuccessful attempts to confront the *vali* Mustafa Zarif, the rebels looted the suburb of al-Judayda, which was mostly inhabited by Christians. A day later, they attacked the Christian quarter of al-Saliba, plundering private homes and shops and burning three churches to the ground. After two days of looting and violence against Christians, the *vali* pretended to accede to the insurgents' demands. When, however, military reinforcements arrived from Diyarbakır on November 2, the insurgents' quarters were placed under siege, which resulted in their almost complete destruction and fatalities in the thousands. Hundreds of insurgents were arrested, recruited, or exiled from the city.⁶⁷

One of the reasons for the uprising was the introduction of a new mode of taxation. In the framework of the Tanzimat, which inaugurat-

ed an "age of reform,"⁶⁸ the Ottomans abolished the *iltizam* system.⁶⁹ This development threatened 'Abdallah Babinsi's position, given that he was responsible for collecting the *iltizam* from the villages around Aleppo. Although he had indeed collected the money, he had never turned anything over to the Porte and had consequently incurred large arrears. For years, Istanbul ignored his practices, but in 1850 the *vali* Mustafa Zarif Paşa asked him to pay his debts.⁷⁰ The *vali* recalls this in his memoirs when narrating his appointment to Aleppo:

I was then ordered to confiscate any property and goods of anyone in arrears. That was followed by an order for conscription. Arabistan did not want to give soldiers; as for the rest, they are Aleppo bandits. Abdullah Bey had only 4,000 *kese*.⁷¹

The difficulties encountered by the new *vali* are also reflected in a comment by the Consul Werry, who mentions in his letter describing Mustafa Zarif's arrival that the "Government experienced much difficulty in collecting the Revenue, principally from the *Iltizamgis*."⁷²

There are hints that the 1850 uprising in Aleppo was initiated by 'Abdallah Babinsi, as an unknown Christian local suggested decades later:

[This was so] because 'Abdallah Bey owed the *miri* [a tax on state-owned land], a sum of 50,000 *kuruş*. He hoped the uprising would force the Christians to provide some sort of aid since on the second day the uprising was delayed until four o'clock. But when he did not achieve his goal, they [the insurgents]

68 Masters, "Political Economy," p. 291.

69 For the administrative changes introduced in the framework of the early Tanzimat reforms, see the detailed study in Scheben, *Verwaltungsreformen*.

70 On Babinsi's exorbitant debts, see Kuroki, "1850 Aleppo Disturbance," pp. 226–227. Bakhkahsh mentions an incident in the *meclis* in January 1851, when a member of the Yakan family was expelled for misappropriating 45,000 *kuruş* with which 'Abdallah Babinsi had settled some of his debts. Qushaqji, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 2, p. 217.

71 Mustafa Zarif, "Memoirs," trans. in Aksan, *Ottoman Wars*, p. 420.

72 TNA. FO. 861/2, Werry to Stratford Canning, 8 September 1849.

66 See Sha's and Fakhuri (eds.), *Nahr al-dhahab*, vol. 3, pp. 282–283.

67 For a detailed recent analysis of the 1850 events, see Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*; idem, "The Uprising in Aleppo: Reconsidering the Explanatory Power of Sectarian Argumentations," in Ulrike Freitag, Nelida Fuccaro, Claudia Ghrawi, and Nora Lafi (eds.), *Urban Violence in the Middle East: Changing Cityscapes in the Transition from Empire to Nation* (New York: Berghahn, 2015), pp. 141–163.

instigated the second uprising (*al-qawma al-thaniya*).⁷³

‘Abdallah Babinsi became a convenient scapegoat in the aftermath of the uprising for all parties involved.⁷⁴ While it is doubtful that he alone was able to set in motion and plan an entire uprising, there is little doubt that he manipulated it for his own purposes. Eyewitness reports mention him as an important authority whom the insurgents consulted before launching the uprising, although he publicly refused to lead them.⁷⁵ One of these reports clearly identifies him and other influential men from among the Janissaries as the instigators of the uprising.⁷⁶ Christian locals, European diplomats, and members of the *a‘yan* families turned to him in the hope that he could protect them and prevent an escalation by calling the insurgents to order.⁷⁷ ‘Abdallah Babinsi, supported by masses who were weary of the prospect of military conscription, negotiated with the authorities to put an end to their reform plans, firmly believing in his own importance as a power broker who was needed to uphold security. He was appointed *kaymakam* (vice-*vali*) and the *vali* tricked him into believing that his efforts were considered a service to the government by staging a spectacle in front of the consuls: Werry reports that the *vali* asked the consuls to “recommend in strong terms to our respective Ambassadors, the essential services Abdallah Bey had rendered during this critical time, which my colleagues and myself promised H. E. and Abdallah, who was present, we would do, as without his influence and exertions the actual tranquility which exists, could not have been obtained.”⁷⁸

But once the Ottoman *vali* had received sufficient military reinforcement, he backtracked and bombarded the eastern quarters of the city. This led to the *de facto* destruction of the group of the Janissaries; in fact, thousands of Janissaries either died in the Ottoman reprisals or were later deported.⁷⁹ ‘Abdallah Babinsi was arrested, publicly humiliated, and paraded around the city on a donkey.⁸⁰ He was sent to the capital to be punished, but he died before he reached Istanbul.⁸¹

During the uprising, ‘Abdallah Babinsi relied on his power reservoir in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo, the insurgent stronghold, and the rural hinterlands. Tribes figured repeatedly and prominently at decisive points in the uprising. Werry mentions the “Mohali Arabs” (Mawali) in his letter to Stratford Canning as instigators of the uprising.⁸² They make a powerful reappearance when ‘Abdallah Babinsi is incarcerated and his cousin Muhammad calls for the tribes’ help.⁸³

Several documents substantiate Babinsi’s relations to the rural world. The first record sheds light on the “chains of debts and credits” with which Babinsi was financially connected to both people in the city and the villages beyond. It was drawn up after his death by the *kadi* of Aleppo, Hafiz Muhammad Amin, who tried to assess Babinsi’s financial situation to evaluate the property left against the sum he owed the Treasury.⁸⁴ The document shows that Babinsi also acted as a creditor for the local people. Moneylending had long been a powerful way to consolidate control of villages, even more powerful than the possession of *malikanes* or *iltizams*, or the supervision of *waqfs*, and is considered “the real key to understanding

73 Fondation Georges et Mathilde Salem, GAMS 905 (= Salem Ar. 113), 21a.

74 Edward Barker turns this idea on its head by suggesting that ‘Abdallah Babinsi had been induced to hopelessly entangle himself in the insurrection by his rival Yusuf Shurayyif, with whom he clashed “particularly in the purchase of landed property in houses and land near the villages.” See Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 289.

75 See Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*, pp. 393, 432. See also Kuroki, “1850 Aleppo Disturbance,” p. 222; and Masters, “Aleppo’s Janissaries,” p. 167.

76 See Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*, p. 432.

77 The inhabitants of al-Saliba argued about requesting a *seğmen*, an irregular mercenary troop, from ‘Abdallah Babinsi. See Krimsti, *Die Unruhen*, p. 432.

78 TNA. FO. 861/2, Werry to Stratford Canning, 26 Oc-

tober 1850. See also Kuroki, “1850 Aleppo Disturbance,” p. 224.

79 See Masters, “Political Economy,” pp. 299–300.

80 See Qushaqji, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 2, p. 210; and Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 293. See also Kuroki, “1850 Aleppo Disturbance,” p. 224; and Masters, “Aleppo’s Janissaries,” p. 172.

81 According to al-Tabbakh, *Ilam al-nubala’*, vol. 3, p. 440, he died in Çanakkale, while still on the way to Istanbul, and was buried there. Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, vol. 2, p. 294, implies that he was murdered to be silenced.

82 TNA. FO. 861/2, Werry to Stratford Canning, 19 October 1850.

83 See also Kuroki, “1850 Aleppo Disturbance,” p. 224.

84 For the record, see Kuroki, “1850 Aleppo Disturbance,” pp. 227–228, quotation 228.

both the power of the notables in the countryside and the basis of their power in the city.”⁸⁵ The record, which was submitted to the Porte, is full of names and figures. Most notably, fourteen *shaykhs* of villages, the inhabitants of 77 villages and 31 nomad tribes including Turkmen, were among those who had obtained credit from ‘Abdallah Babinsi.⁸⁶ His financial leverage meant that Babinsi was likely in a position to manipulate these villagers and Bedouin to revolt against the government.

The second document confirms ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s ties to the rural world. It is made up of a list of the 143 people who were arrested during the fight with the Ottomans; it also mentions their place of origin.⁸⁷ Most of the insurgents on the list came from the eastern suburbs or the villages east of Aleppo or had a tribal, Bedouin background.

Additional evidence points in the same direction. In a petition from a group of people of Aleppo, who call themselves “the 80 obedient quarters,” they claim that the insurgents were outsiders.⁸⁸ In the aftermath of the uprising, Aleppo’s elites distanced themselves from Babinsi by insisting that he was a brigand who was not even an Aleppine and that the rebels were not from Aleppo either, but rather villagers, Türkmen, and other outsiders. This myth of the outside actor(s) was later embedded in al-Ghazzi’s and al-Tabbakh’s historical works, who turned it into a lesson in citizenship, as Masters has observed.⁸⁹

These contortions notwithstanding, it is obvious that ‘Abdallah Babinsi relied on a rural network of support during the uprising. It ultimately was not strong enough to weather the changes brought about by the transition from the “old regime” to the Tanzimat regime. Yet it was still strong enough not to dissolve immediately upon his death. As early as 1853/54, his family was struggling to reassert its role in Aleppo’s power politics. ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s family members, particularly his sister, sent

petitions to the Porte asking the Ottomans to grant forgiveness to the family and to release ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s cousin Muhammad, who had been arrested during the uprising.⁹⁰ Later, the Ottomans turned to ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s son Ahmad in the aftermath of the 1860 massacres in Mount Lebanon and Damascus, when fears ran wild that the same would occur in Aleppo. Together with Ahmad, Ramadan Agha and one Ibn Jarna were vested by the *vali* as *aghawat* and asked to secure the city with ninety men each, according to Na‘um Bakhkhash’s diary.⁹¹ This clearly demonstrates that tensions between the city and its unruly eastern suburbs and rural hinterland were still part of the political reality.

A decade after ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s death, the delicate balance between the city and the hinterland still needed to be maintained with the help of individuals with ties to both. While his death heralded the end of the Janissaries it did not indicate the weakening of the power of urban notables. In the age of reforms, Ottoman *valis* still needed urban power brokers “not simply to carry on as before, but to apply a new reforming policy which was bound to arouse opposition.”⁹² Even later in Aleppo’s history, at the very end of Ottoman rule, these notable power brokers with ties to the rural world would still have a decisive influence on politics.⁹³ ‘Abdallah Babinsi was eliminated from the political scene precisely because he proved to be too powerful, not because he lost his power.

CONCLUSION

“One of the principal ways in which the weakening of Ottoman authority was demonstrated,” Meriwether observed for the time under consideration, “was in the inability of the government to maintain security in the rural areas, and the problems of insecurity in the countryside around Aleppo during this period was [sic

85 For this observation, see Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” pp. 69–72, quotation 73. See also Thieck, *Passion*, p. 134; and Shields, “Interdependent Spaces,” pp. 50–52, on the importance of moneylending and rural indebtedment.

86 See Kuroki, “1850 Aleppo Disturbance,” p. 228.

87 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İ. DH 225/13432–2.

88 *Ibid.*, 226/13493–3.

89 See Masters, “Aleppo’s Janissaries,” pp. 172–174.

90 BOA, İ. MVL., 314/13172–1 and 2.

91 See Qushaqji, *Akhbar Halab*, vol. 3, p. 203.

92 Hourani, “Ottoman Reform,” p. 62.

93 See Nadine Méouchy, “Les temps et les territoires de la révolte du Nord (1919–1921),” in Jean-Claude David and Thierry Boissière (eds.), *Alep et ses territoires: Fabrique et politique d’une ville, 1868–2011* (Damascus: Presses de l’Ifpo, 2014), <https://books.openedition.org/ifpo/6657>, accessed 20 April 2019.

noted by many observers.”⁹⁴ It was by filling this void that ‘Abdallah Babinsi was able to become a power broker.

The analysis of Babinsi’s rise and fall and of his relations to the rural sphere throughout his career in the three preceding sections sheds light on various aspects of the questions raised in the beginning of this chapter. Should the last Janissary leader of Aleppo and similar figures before him such as Ibrahim Qattar Aghasi be considered notables between urban and rural spheres? The answer appears to be both yes and no. Babinsi rose to power through a notable household and, by exercising control over the hinterland, emerged and maintained himself as a political notable under changing rulers, although as a Janissary leader he could not lay claim to social nobility.

The second question regarding the curious anachronism of a Janissary gaining so much power can be explained precisely by ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s ties to the rural world. Although the Janissaries had been abolished elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire, they continued to play a significant role in Aleppo’s politics because their (and particularly their chiefs’) ties to the hinterland were too complex to be cut off and because they allowed the Ottomans to maintain a

precarious level of security in the city and the region. Babinsi in particular maintained public order and went on campaigns against the Bedouin. The last Janissary chief’s power was threatened by administrative reforms implemented in the framework of the Tanzimat. The second phase of the 1850 uprising, which resulted in a high number of fatalities in the eastern suburbs and eventually led to the ousting of influential Janissaries from the city, eventually brought about the belated demise of the Janissaries.

What happened in 1850 simultaneously answers the questions of the involvement of the rural world and Babinsi’s intervention in contentious politics. He did indeed attempt to make and unmake public order in 1850 through the eastern suburbs by drawing on his Janissary manpower as well as by prompting tribal interventions, as reports by contemporaries suggest. It is important to note, however, that his contemporaries were all too content to blame outsiders and foreigners for the bloodshed. This tendency notwithstanding, the intricate net of rural relations spun by Babinsi ultimately became the trap in which he entangled himself when using it to confront the Ottoman authorities.

94 Meriwether, “Urban Notables,” p. 66.

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RECONSTRUCTING THE MOTIVES AND ROLE OF AN URBAN POWER BROKER FROM DOCUMENTS BY CONTEMPORARY OBSERVERS CIRCA 1850

In his famous article “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables” (1968), Albert Hourani pointed to a source problem that historians interested in urban power brokers such as ‘Abdallah Babinsi often confront: “The voice of an important part of the population is scarcely heard in them [the sources], or heard only in a muted, indirect and even distorted form: that of the Muslim town-dwellers and their traditional and ‘natural leaders,’ the urban notables.”¹ Despite his powerful position, ‘Abdallah Babinsi was illiterate and left no writings of his own; on a more general level, no sources shed light on Aleppo’s urban history from the perspective of the Janissaries.² A micro-historical reconstruction of the motives and role of such an individual in urban politics must therefore be based on close readings of a variety of documents by contemporary observers. “Close reading” (as opposed to “distant reading”) is a crucial method in the study of literary and historical texts. A close reading of texts — whether historical or contemporary, literary or archival — seeks to tease out the multiple meanings of the language used and looks for voids and multiple voices within the sources.³

In the historical reconstruction of the case at hand, cursory references to ‘Abdallah Babinsi appear in diary notes of the Catholic teacher Na‘um Bakhkhash and locals’ reports about the 1850 uprising, in consular correspondence and historical accounts by European diplomats, and in reports by Ottoman officials. All these accounts contain a wealth of information and provide different perspectives on ‘Abdallah Babinsi, his social interactions, wealth, influence, economic interests, and military resources. These widely diverging narratives take on greater importance when they corroborate each other (e.g. ‘Abdallah Babinsi’s ties to the Bedouin). This type of historical analysis must be carried out with great circumspection as it needs to pierce through layers of contemporary bias. This is because the eastern suburbs of Aleppo and what lay beyond them were rumored to be the territory of unruly elements and bandits, a vilification that was consolidated in the 20th-century historical writings of Kamil al-Ghazzi and Muhammad Raghīb al-Tabbakh.⁴

1 Hourani, “Ottoman Reform,” p. 44.

2 On the absence of a “Janissary voice,” see Masters, “Aleppo’s Janissaries,” p. 160.

3 See Susan A. Crane, “Language, Literary Studies, and Historical Thought,” in Lloyd Kramer and

Sarah Maza (eds.), *A Companion to Western Historical Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 324–326.

4 See al-Ghazzi in Sha’s and Fakhuri (eds.), *Kitab Nahr al-dhahab fi tarikh Halab*; al-Tabbakh, *Ilam al-nubala’ bi-tarikh Halab al-shahba’*.