CAMBRIDGE
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THE MILITARY HOUSEHOLD
IN OTTOMAN EGYPT

For over 350 years, Egypt was the largest province of the Ottoman Empire, which had captured it from the Mamluk sultanate in 1517. It is well known that the Ottomans retained key Mamluk usages, above all in subprovincial administration, and that a number of the defeated Mamluks who were willing to cooperate with the new regime were allowed to join the Ottoman administration. In consequence, a number of practices of the Mamluk sultanate survived the Ottoman conquest. Critical administrative offices such as those of pilgrimage commander (*amīr al-ḥajj*), treasurer (*daftardār*), and deliverer of the annual tribute to Istanbul (*khaznadār*) were analogous to offices of the Mamluk sultanate, and the grandees whom the Ottomans installed in these offices were analogous to the Mamluk amirs of the sultanate.[1] Above all, the practice of recruiting boys and young men from the Caucasus as military slaves, or mamluks, and training them as soldiers in households geared to that purpose appears not only to have survived but to have flourished in Ottoman Egypt. By the time of Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt in 1798, in fact, the province's military elite was dominated by Caucasian, and above all Georgian, mamluks.[2] In the face of such apparent similarities with the Mamluk sultanate, it is tempting to define the military society of Ottoman Egypt as a continuation or revival of the sultanate. In fact, the historiography of Ottoman Egypt before the 19th century has typically defined the military regime as precisely that; it is quite common in the field today to describe Ottoman Egypt's military society as Mamluk or neo-Mamluk.[3]

   This is not to imply, however, that historians do not acknowledge key administrative innovations under the Ottomans. The Ottomans rejected the Mamluk system of cavalry-supporting assignments of usufruct, or *iqtāᶜ*s, which itself resembled the *timar* system in force in the Ottoman Empire's central lands at the time of the conquest of Egypt. Instead, the Ottomans installed a regime of tax collectors known as *amīn*s, who were appointed from Istanbul and delivered the revenues they collected directly to the governor's treasury. During the 17th century, the system of *amīn*s gradually gave way to tax farms, or *iltizām*s, which were sold at auction to the highest bidders.[4] The tax farmers were predominantly military grandees, many of whom were manumitted mamluks. There is no question, however, that these mamluk tax farmers served different administrative functions from the amirs of the

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Mamluk sultanate. Moreover, their ranks had been joined by large numbers of non-mamluk military personnel: free-born Anatolian mercenaries; Ottoman soldiers recruited through the *devşirme*, the classical Ottoman system of collecting non-Muslim boys from conquered territories; Kurdish, Turcoman, and Bedouin tribal levies; and various sorts of enterprising locals. Yet the method of recruitment and training, these historians hold, survived from the Mamluk sultanate; slaves and mercenaries alike were recruited into and trained within households inspired by the households of the sultanate. Thus, not only are individual households termed Mamluk households; Mamluk households are regarded as a fundamental characteristic of Ottoman Egypt's military establishment as a whole.

A reassessment of this terminology and the assumptions that underlie it can, I believe, bring to light an approach to Ottoman Egypt's military society that more faithfully reflects its complexity. Such a reassessment must center on the problematic concept of the reappearance of the Mamluk household in Ottoman Egypt. There were certainly households in Ottoman Egypt, but we cannot prove that they took their inspiration directly or entirely from comparable structures in the Mamluk sultanate. However, households were a key feature of Ottoman society at large in the years following the reign of Sultan Süleyman I (1520–66). The prototype of the Ottoman elite household was, naturally, the household of the sultan himself, which reached its full development during Süleyman's reign.[5] The imperial household headquartered at Topkapı Palace in Istanbul combined the trappings of the elite domestic household—kitchens, gardens, privy chambers, women's quarters guarded by eunuchs—with the attributes of a military household—training schools for palace pages and guards, and, of course, the pages and the various detachments of valets and bodyguards themselves. Many of these detachments of household soldiery, such as the Baltacıs (axemen) and Bostancıs (gardeners), themselves played dual domestic and military roles.[6]

Although it was unquestionably the preeminent household in Istanbul and in the empire at large, the imperial household faced rivalry, or at least a diffusion of its own power, on both fronts from lesser households. Competition came from the households of viziers and provincial governors, many of whom had begun their own careers in the imperial palace,[7] and from groups of soldiers that coalesced in the barracks of the imperial Janissaries in the capital. The formation of gangs within the Janissary barracks complicated the tradition by which the Janissaries of Istanbul were considered an extension of the sultan's household. Household, and specifically kitchen, terminology defined the Janissaries' ranks and functions: the corps was known as an *ocak* (hearth), as was the case in Egypt, and *çorbacı* and *aşçıbaşı* (soup-maker and head cook, respectively) were officer ranks. The Janissaries signaled a rebellion by overturning their soup kettles, indicating that they rejected the sultan's food and, thus, their place in his household.[8] Particularly after the 16th century, when imperial power became dispersed among an ever-widening network of interest groups in the palace and capital, this tension among competing loci of power increased.

The same sort of tension existed in the Ottoman provinces, where the governors' households imitated the sultan's palace on a smaller scale. But any governor's household was itself likely to face competition from the households of local elites.

Egypt's local elite consisted primarily of officers of the seven Ottoman regiments stationed in the province[9] and the group of grandees known as beys, who held sub-provincial governorships and such posts as pilgrimage commander and treasurer. Localized Ottoman officials, such as longtime administrators or exiled palace eunuchs, could also join this elite. A grandee typically built up an entourage of slaves, domestic servants, bodyguards, and assorted clients who collected at his place of residence. He might provide for the mamluks and mercenaries among his clients by placing them on the regimental payrolls, an increasingly frequent practice after the 16th century. The governor's entourage, naturally, coalesced in Cairo's citadel, and the entourages of beys and officers typically gathered in the palatial houses that many of them owned in various neighborhoods of the city. Elite residences tended to concentrate in certain areas of the city; in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, the hub of elite residence shifted from Birkat al-Fil in southern Cairo to Birkat al-Azbakiyya in the western part of the city.[10] Chronicles of the period typically refer to such a residence-based conglomerate as *bayt*.[11] Such a structure is what most historians have in mind when they speak of the Mamluk household, taking into account that not all the members of the grandee's entourage need be slaves.

Yet groups of clients could also form within the barracks where the Ottoman troops were garrisoned, much as they did in the Janissary barracks in Istanbul. In this process, an officer cultivated clients among the soldiery in the subdivision of the corps that he led. Histories of Ottoman Egypt give ample evidence of such groups, typically led by lower officers who did not have the money or status to build lavish houses outside the barracks. The 17th and 18th centuries saw the rise of two particularly aggressive Janissary bosses, Küçük Mehmed and Ifranj Ahmed. Both held the rank of *başodabaşı*, or chief barracks (*oda*) commander, the smallest subdivision of the Janissary corps.[12] The hierarchical structure and routine of barracks life no doubt facilitated their attempts to attract clients among those under their command. Such followings within a regiment are usually called *ṭaraf*, *ṭāʾifa*, or *jamāʿa* in the chronicles, although these terms can denote a number of other sorts of social and military groups as well.[13] They do not easily fit the rubric of the Mamluk household. Yet the chronicles suggest that such gangs were contiguous with residence-based households, for once a regimental officer had attained a high enough rank and income—typically those of *çavuş*[14]—he would normally leave the barracks and purchase, confiscate, or build a house in one of Cairo's neighborhoods. Here, he would build up a domestic-cum-military household of his own on the foundation of the followers he had cultivated in the barracks.[15]

In all, then, three types of household coexisted on the local scene: (1) the households of the governor and other Ottoman officials and former officials, (2) the households of local grandees, and (3) groups within the barracks. These were all, however, interconnected: Ottoman functionaries who formed households on the spot became local grandees, as did barracks strongmen who left the barracks and formed sophisticated households. In the latter case, the household could serve as an instrument of social mobility within the military cadre, or at the least as an affirmation of having attained an influential status. In the former case, it served as a meeting ground for imperial and local interests by providing an opportunity for imperial functionaries to exercise local influence and to co-opt local luminaries.

Thus it appears that the term "Mamluk household" confuses the reality of Ottoman Egypt's military society because it excludes the barracks groups and ignores precedents for and parallels to the Egyptian household in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the chroniclers of and the participants in this society did not, to judge from their own writings, employ this term themselves. In the chronicles of the 17th and 18th centuries, a mamluk denotes simply a military slave. Furthermore, the word *mamlūk* and the various terms for "household," such as *bayt*, *ṭaraf*, and *ṭāʾifa*, are never combined. The terminology that these sources do employ seems instead to acknowledge that a household commonly contained non-mamluks in addition to mamluks. The historian ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, whose lengthy chronicle *ʿAjāʾib al-āthār fī al-tarājim wa al-akhbār* is probably the most widely cited source on Ottoman Egyptian society, frequently uses the phrase *atbāʿ wa mamālīk* (followers and mamluks) to refer to a grandee's entourage.[16] Arguing from al-Jabarti's usage, some historians have asserted that the singular of *atbāʿ*, *tābiʿ*, must designate a non-mamluk or, on the other hand, that it is simply a synonym for mamluk.[17] I would argue that the term has no bearing on slave status but denotes a follower who may or may not be a mamluk. This meaning is implicit in the manner in which al-Jabarti uses *tābiʿ*. He describes the lineage of the famous late 18th-century grandee ʿAli Bey al-Kabir, who rebelled against the Ottoman sultan in 1768, in the following terms: *al-amīr al-kabīr ʿAlī Bak . . . wa huwa mamlūk Ibrāhīm Katkhudā tābiʿ Sulaymān Jāwīsh tābiʿ Muṣṭafa Katkhudā* (the great amir ʿAli Bey, and he was the *mamlūk* of Ibrahim Kâhya, [who was] the *tābiʿ* of Süleyman Çavuş, [who was] the *tābiʿ* of Mustafa Kâhya).[18] The historical record leaves no doubt that ʿAli Bey was the mamluk of Ibrahim Kâhya al-Qazdağlı; however, the status of Ibrahim Kâhya and his patron Süleyman Çavuş is far less clear. A number of Ottoman Turkish sources use the word "Kazdağlı" to refer to Ibrahim and earlier Qazdağlı leaders.[19] "Kazdağlı" is the Turkish *nisba*, or adjectival form, of the Kazdağ, or Mount Ida, in western Anatolia. Normally, Ottoman Turkish sources would use this term only when referring to a native of the Kazdağ region, who would probably be a free-born Muslim. In addition, military salary registers of the period give the impression that a majority of the household's membership during the early 18th century was Anatolian.[20] Nonetheless, André Raymond has found evidence in Cairo's religious court registers that Ibrahim and his immediate predecessors as head of the Qazdağlı household were mamluks.[21] It seems likely in any case that al-Jabarti cautiously uses *tābiʿ* when he is not certain whether or not a particular household member is a mamluk. The term is used in similar fashion in Arabic and Turkish chronicles of the early 18th century.[22]

Notwithstanding, *tābiʿ* was not simply a term of convenience for military figures who may or may not have been mamluks. Rather, the term seems to lie at the heart of the configuration of military society in Ottoman Egypt. Nowhere is this more apparent than in a type of document that was critical to the operations of Egypt's soldiery, namely, the salary registers that the Ottoman administration drew up at the time of military campaigns. This type of register is known in Ottoman Turkish as *mevācib defteri* (register of salaries) or *esāmi defteri* (register of names) and consists of lists of soldiers from all seven of the Egyptian regiments, with their salaries. An entry in such a register might contain nothing more than the soldier's name and

salary; however, several more pieces of information were not infrequently added: the name of the soldier's father and/or his patron, his place of origin, perhaps even his craft.[23] In these registers, no specific indication of slave or free-born status occurs; the word mamluk is absent, as is the Turkish word *kul* or any other term for a slave. However, the word *tābi^c* is applied both to soldiers whose slave status is apparent from the fact that they are labeled *ibn ^{c}Abdullah* and to those whose fathers are specified. The Ottoman administrators, it appears, identified these soldiers not by their slave status but by the persons whom they followed.

Clearly, the sort of follower designated by *tābi^c* is a military client who is engaged in a patron–client relationship, or *intisāb*, with a senior personage. The patrons who appear in the pay lists and in the chronicles comprise a broad range of higher and lower officers, beys, imperial officials, bureaucrats, descendants of the Prophet (*ashrāf*), and others. *Tābi^c* must have applied to a variety of *intisāb* arrangements. Nonetheless, military clientage of this type appears to have been somewhat more intense than the sort of *intisāb* encountered between a court poet and his imperial patron, for example, or among commercial partners. Clients identified with their patron to the extent of adopting his sobriquet (*laqab*) and bearing his grudges into succeeding generations. Thus, it is safe to say that while a *tābi^c* was certainly a client, he was not merely a client.

Additional light may be shed on the implications of *tābi^c* for military clientage by the more customary use of the term in both Turkish and Arabic sources. It is typically a geographical term used to identify the parts or dependencies of a certain region. An imperial order, or *mühimme*, of 1733, for example, refers to the village of Bilifya in the Upper Egyptian subprovince of al-Bahnasa as *vilāyet-i Bahnasavīye$^>$ye tābi^c . . . ḳarye-i Bilifyā*.[24] This would translate literally to "the village of Bilifya following the subprovince of al-Bahnasa." The implication is that Bilifya is a dependency of al-Bahnasa and, as such, belongs to a group of villages included in al-Bahnasa. We might by analogy take *tābi^c* in the context of military clientage to mean a soldier who is a dependent of an officer, bey, or official and who belongs to the group of soldiers whom this person patronizes. In other words, the *tābi^c* is a member of his patron's entourage, or household. In fact, as Rifaat Abou-el-Haj's work has shown, the word does not belong to mamluk terminology at all but simply denotes any member of any household, whether or not he or she is a slave.[25] In stressing household membership, furthermore, *tābi^c* differs from the Turkish term *çırak*, which denotes a protégé who is promoted to a higher office by a patron without necessarily belonging to that patron's household.[26] In general, the reliance of both official documents and local chroniclers on *tābi^c* as a generic term for members of the entourages or grandees, regardless of slave status, gives the impression that household membership overshadowed slave status in defining a person's position in Egyptian military society by the late 17th century.

I believe that the concept of the household, allowing for a wide range of variation, from relatively informal barracks coalitions to highly articulated residence-based conglomerates, provides a more flexible and representative framework within which to place Ottoman Egypt's military society than the conventional notion of a neo-Mamluk military regime. Focusing on the household as a unit of social organization in its own right, rather than as an inherently Mamluk phenomenon, also allows us

to accommodate the decidedly disparate elements who participated in household building: officers and beys, Caucasian slaves and free-born Anatolian Muslims, merchants and artisans, ulema and *ashrāf*. Emphasizing the household also enables us to link Egypt to the pattern followed by the Ottoman Empire as a whole during the period after the death of Süleyman I. A hallmark of the diffusion of imperial power was the efflorescence of households removed from the political center: those of provincial governors and of high palace officials. Such households were the prototypes for the households of local notables (*aᶜyān*) that came to dominate provincial society during the 18th and 19th centuries.[27] Egypt's prospective *aᶜyān* consisted in part of military grandees. These grandees had numerous examples of the residence-based elite household before them in the households of the high Ottoman functionaries dispatched to administer the province. Foremost, of course, was the Ottoman governor's household, but a number of other imperial figures established households, as well: for example, the chief judge (*qāḍī ᶜaskar*); the head of the descendants of the Prophet (*naqīb al-ashrāf*);[28] and above all, the exiled Chief Black Eunuchs of the imperial harem.[29] The habit of patronage through the household created common ground between imperial officials, both on the spot and in Istanbul, and local grandees. Ambitious local figures sought favor with the imperial center by joining the households of imperial functionaries in Cairo; imperial figures in turn injected their clients into the households of local grandees; local grandees even channeled members of their households into elite households in Istanbul. In this respect, the household served as a nexus between center and province.

THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE EVOLUTION OF
EGYPT'S MILITARY SOCIETY

Acknowledging the household as the fundamental component of Egypt's military society allows us to reappraise that society during the critical period in the mid- to late 18th century when its Mamluk character was supposedly consolidated. During these years, Egypt fell under the sway of a group of beys of predominantly Georgian mamluk origin. It is easy to see in this upper echelon of Caucasian beys a throwback to the Circassian regime of the late Mamluk sultanate and to interpret this perceived Mamluk resurgence as the culmination of the evolution of Egypt's military society. However, this beylicate stemmed from the unprecedented practice, beginning in the late 1720s, of regimental officers promoting their clients to the rank of bey.[30] Foremost among these officers was Ibrahim Kâhya al-Qazdağlı, the *kâhya* of the Janissary corps,[31] who exercised de facto control over Egypt from 1748 to 1754. He established a Qazdağlı hegemony in Egypt; most of the Georgian beys of the late 18th century belonged to the Qazdağlı household.

   The ethnic origin of Ibrahim Kâhya himself and whether he was a mamluk are unclear. If his immediate predecessors were indeed mamluks, as suggested earlier, then he is likely to have been a mamluk as well. Certainly, most of his known followers were mamluks. This does not mean, however, that the Qazdağlı leadership sought to create a purely mamluk household for its own sake. If we examine the clients whom Ibrahim Kâhya raised to the beylicate during his lifetime, as well as those who were promoted just after their patron's death, we find an array of defec-

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tors and hand-me-downs from other households. ᶜAli Bey al-Qird, later known as al-Ghazzawi, and his brothers had been mamluks of the Chief Black Eunuch in Istanbul, and Hüseyin Bey al-Sabunji had served as treasurer (khaznadār) to Mehmed Çorbacı al-Sabunji of the ᶜAzeban corps. Hamza Bey Abaza, meanwhile, defected to Ibrahim Kâhya's household from the household of Mehmed Bey Abaza. Most of these beys were Georgian or Abkhazian; however, they were acquired not solely because of their ethnicity but to ensure to Ibrahim Kâhya and his heirs control of the pilgrimage route to Mecca and Medina and of the tax farms of the grain-rich districts of Upper Eygpt. All these beys, like others of Ibrahim's clients, served at various times as protectors of the pilgrimage caravan and as governors of grain-producing villages and subprovinces.[32]

The acquisition of mamluks was for the Qazdağlıs and other ambitious grandees of the 18th century not so much a program of ethnic consolidation or the implementation of a slave ethos as it was a strategy for expeditious household building. For those with the requisite rank and income, mamluks were by the mid-18th century a means toward a strong, self-sustaining household. Indeed, Georgian mamluks represent not a throwback to the practices of the Mamluk sultanate but a practical new trend in the Ottoman provinces during the 18th century. The disintegration in 1722 of the rival Safavid Empire in Iran, which had employed Georgian mamluks on a large scale, freed up a source of eastern Georgian slaves for the Safavids' Ottoman neighbors. (Western Georgia had been an Ottoman sphere of influence and an important source of slaves since the late 15th century.) In 1724, furthermore, the Ottoman Empire and Russia signed a treaty giving the Ottomans suzerainty over all of Georgia, which they retained until 1735.[33] The autonomous governors of Ottoman Baghdad took aggressive advantage of this new supply of manpower to cultivate an entourage of Georgian mamluks,[34] and one is inclined to believe that Egypt was inspired by the Baghdadi example. Egypt's military leaders were regularly exposed to the Baghdadi Georgians because Egyptian contingents to the Iranian battlefront typically mustered in Baghdad; the governor of Baghdad was often chief field commander of these expeditions.[35] There is even tenuous evidence that Georgian mamluks could migrate from Baghdad to Cairo and back again. Al-Jabarti recounts how the followers of Ridvan Kâhya al-Jalfi, on being defeated and driven out of Cairo following the death of Ibrahim Kâhya al-Qazdağlı, settled (istawṭana) in Baghdad. One would suspect that they chose this highly unusual exile because they were also Georgians; they may even have come to Cairo from Baghdad.[36]

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE HOUSEHOLD

The concept of the household broadens the scope for comparison of the evolution of Egypt's military society with that of military societies in other provinces of the Ottoman Empire. As its grandees built up large concentrations of Georgian mamluks, Egypt's military establishment began to lose the character of a mixed society whose households consisted of free-born Muslims of largely Anatolian origin and mamluks of predominantly Caucasian origin. It now more closely approximated the sort of mamluk society that Ottoman Baghdad had cultivated. The extent to which the Baghdadi version of the Georgian mamluk society resembled its Egyptian counterpart, as

well as the extent to which Georgian mamluks were being employed in other Otto-man provinces and in the capital, merits further investigation. Generally speaking, both the structures and the methods of recruitment that Egypt employed bear com-parison to those prevailing in a number of the Ottoman Empire's other Arab prov-inces, including Baghdad, the province of Damascus (*Shām*), Tunisia, and Algeria. Baghdad and Algeria make particularly interesting comparisons because they rep-resent the two extremes between which Egypt operated: a military elite composed en-tirely of Georgian mamluks and one composed entirely of Anatolian Janissaries. Both, however, were quasi-autonomous frontier provinces not subject to the same degree of central interference as Egypt. Eighteenth-century Tunisia and Damascus present mixed military societies arguably closer to that of Egypt.[37]

Acknowledging that building a viable household, rather than striving for mam-luk exclusivity, was the chief motive driving Egypt's grandees in turn provides an opportunity to address considerations of household building that are arguably more fundamental than the acquisition of mamluks. No household could survive without a relatively stable source of revenue, for example. Historians have noted that beys typically drew the bulk of their revenues from rural tax farms, whereas regimental officers relied on urban tax farms, such as that of the customs, until the early 18th century, when officers began to encroach on rural tax farms. Yet the household economic strategies that lay behind these choices have not been considered. The evolution of the Qazdağlı household, which dominated Egypt for much of the 18th century, becomes more comprehensible if these strategies are taken into account. The Qazdağlıs amassed part of their wealth from the trade in coffee from the Ye-meni port of Mocha through the Holy Cities to Egypt. Until the mid-18th century, Qazdağlı household leadership and alliances seem to have depended to a degree on the control of revenues from and the formation of partnerships in this trade. The joint leaders Ibrahim Kâhya al-Qazdağlı and Ridvan Kâhya al-Jalfi, for a notable example, undertook a commercial partnership whereby Ibrahim kept two-thirds and Ridvan one-third of all profits accruing from trade and "extortion" (*balṣ*). Fol-lowing Ibrahim's death in 1754, Ridvan's downfall was signaled when Ibrahim's successors refused to enter a similar partnership with him.[38] Moreover, the ten-dency of Ibrahim Kâhya and other prominent officers of his generation to promote their clients to the beylicate toward the middle of the 18th century coincides with, and may have been affected by, an influx of cheap coffee from French possessions in the Caribbean and a consequent drop in the price of Mochan coffee.[39]

Similarly, the household supplies the context for basic features of elite life that have not received close scrutiny, notably elite marriages and elite residences. Mar-riages that linked two households or that absorbed otherwise rootless clients were a key strategy of any household head, for they not only increased the household's membership but also forged political alliances and gave the household access to new sources of wealth. It was primarily through marriage, furthermore, that a household head's wives, concubines, and daughters exercised influence and contributed to the household's fortunes.[40]

Perhaps the most visible feature of a household was the house or other building that served it as a place of assembly and a bastion of political power. High-ranking regimental officers, beys, and Ottoman officials typically established their entou-

rages, including wives and concubines, in palatial residences. Often, the houses of allied grandees clustered in particular elite neighborhoods; by the mid-18th century, for example, the southern shore of the pond known as Birkat al-Azbakiyya in western Cairo was dominated by the houses of the Qazdağlıs and their allies.[41] By the late 18th century, the houses of the leading Qazdağlı grandees had displaced the governor's council, or diwan, in the citadel as loci of political power.[42] In time of political turmoil, however, the house could serve as a fortress where the household head could face down or hide from his enemies, or stash his wealth should he have to flee.[43]

Far more difficult to define are the smaller, less wealthy households of lower officers or officials that coalesced in the barracks of Cairo's citadel or perhaps in modest homes. One can speculate that they were somewhat more loosely organized than the great houses because many soldiers had shops and even homes in or near Cairo's bazaars[44] and would therefore not tend to group regularly in a central location unless mustered for a military expedition or to receive their salaries. Most likely the headquarters of such a household was the barracks room, or *oda*, where the barracks commander acted as boss of his subordinates. By the 18th century, barracks commanders, or *odabaşıs*, were the most numerous household heads among the Janissaries and ᶜAzeban.[45] Women could have participated in these households only tangentially, for although some officers housed their wives in Cairo's citadel,[46] the main arenas of most wives' and daughters' activity would have been the houses of their respective husbands and fathers.

The bases of households in common property, commercial partnerships, and marriage alliances have remained virtually unexplored with reference to Ottoman Egypt.[47] Yet such considerations were fundamental to household formation; they provide a critical key to our understanding of household building strategies and of household self-definition. These issues can be addressed through creative exploitation of the narrative and archival sources that historians of Ottoman Egypt already use. Military salary registers of the sort cited earlier can shed some light on the composition of both large and modest households, although their evidence is relatively sketchy, and much must be read into them. The statistical evidence that they offer, however, finds a ready complement in the contents of the deeds of pious endowments (*waqfiyya*s) and inheritance registers of various regimental officers. Such registers typically list the members of these officers' entourages, including their slaves, clients, agents, and heirs, and thus provide clear evidence of household composition.[48]

A more elusive household feature that cannot be easily addressed through archival sources is what one might call the folkways of military households, particularly groups of soldiers headquartered in barracks. Indications of Ottoman Egypt's barracks culture are most likely to be found in narrative sources emanating from the barracks themselves. The best known and most accessible of these is the so-called Damurdashi group of chronicles, five early-18th-century chronicles written in a form of colloquial Arabic. The authors of these chronicles are all connected to officers of the ᶜAzeban corps, which by the 18th century was second in size, wealth, and influence only to the Janissaries. Their works provide some inkling of the culture of the ᶜAzeban corps as a whole.[49] No similar body of chronicles survives from the Janissary

corps, despite its immense social importance in Ottoman Egypt. Nonetheless, scattered manuscripts, generally in Ottoman Turkish, exist. In an intriguing anonymous narrative now in the Bibliothèque nationale, a Janissary recounts to his barracksmates in Cairo his exploits as a captive in France following the abortive 1683 Ottoman seige of Vienna. The narrator's details of Versailles and Louis XIV's weaponry and military deployment attest to a little-suspected worldliness and a keen technological curiosity among the Janissaries. More generally, the text reflects the officer hierarchy within the Janissary corps and gives some idea of barracks routine.[50]

The very fact that a narrative tradition existed within the military regiments suggests that oral and perhaps written literary production and, no doubt, other arts were cultivated in that setting, and that therefore the barracks were not simply rude bunkhouses crowded with coarse soldiers. On the contrary, this tradition gives Egypt's soldiery a voice and puts the officer class, at least, in a position to write its own history. The language of these regimental narratives also has implications for the place in Egyptian society of the various military corps. The Damurdashi chronicles are composed in an Arabic that, although colloquial, is heavily peppered with Turkish military and administrative terms; the Janissary narrative, in contrast, is composed entirely in Ottoman Turkish. This linguistic difference could indicate that the ᶜAzeban were more thoroughly assimilated to Cairene society than the Janissaries. Alternatively, it could mean the regiments in general had become more thoroughly assimilated by the early decades of the 18th century, when the Damurdashi chronicles were composed, than they had been at the time of the Vienna debacle of 1683.[51] Because such chronicles reflect the milieu within which they were produced, they allow the historian to move beyond mere names and numbers to achieve some idea of the role of the military household in instilling an identifiable military culture.

In general, broadening the pool of sources from which historians draw can yield a more inclusive, and therefore more faithful, reconstruction of Ottoman Egypt's military households. Critical to this effort are sources that are produced within the households themselves, or as a direct result of the households' activities: chronicles of the regiments, salary registers, *waqfiyya*s, and inheritance registers. Although such sources can amplify our impressions of the large, highly visible households represented in more conventional narrative sources and in archival sources emanating from the imperial center, they are essential for an appreciation of the barracks conglomerates that, although easily overlooked by mainstream institutional history, were critical to the evolution of Egypt's military society. These lesser households were the building blocks of that society; in such barracks contingents the Qazdağlı group, which controlled Egypt from the rise of Ibrahim Kâhya until after the French invasion of 1798, had its beginnings.

But a larger pool of sources can elucidate the household's role only if the historian adopts a more inclusive definition of the military household that does not adhere strictly to the model of the Mamluk sultanate but assesses the military entourage as an instrument of cultural assimilation and social mobility. By addressing these functions in a wide range of households, from loose barracks gangs to residential conglomerates, we can transcend the limitations and assumptions of Mamluk terminology and achieve a more nuanced view of the military society that

is ordinarily labeled Mamluk. At the same time, we can restore Egypt's military so-
ciety to its Ottoman context by recasting it as a regional variation on a household-
based elite culture that existed throughout the Ottoman Empire and that integrated
the imperial center with its provinces.

Within an even broader context, the household is an attractive historiographical
tool because it has a much wider application than does the Mamluk institution. Not
only does it allow us to integrate Egyptian historiography into the broad range of
central and provincial Ottoman historiography; it has farther-reaching implica-
tions, as well. As a structure for the maintenance and assimilation of a wide variety
of recruits, the Egyptian military household bears comparison to similar structures
in a variety of societies and periods: to lineage factions in medieval Florence, to
officer-led gangs within the former Soviet army, even to Mafia families.[52] Such
comparisons can sharpen our appreciation of the household as the milieu within
which members of Egypt's military establishment carried out their daily opera-
tions, and as the framework that shaped their self-perception. Once we admit that
we are not dealing with a phenomenon in all respects unique to Egypt, we can use
the fruits of historiographical ventures in other fields to gain new insights into how
Egypt's households, and by extension Ottoman Egyptian society in general, may
really have functioned.

NOTES

[1]Ömer Lutfi Barkan, *Osmanlı imparatorluğunda ziraî ekonominin hukukî ve malî esasları* (Istanbul:
Türk Tarih Kurumları, 1943), vol. 1, chap. 105, "Mısır Kanunnâmesi"; Stanford Shaw, *The Financial
and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, N.J.:
Princeton University Press, 1962), chap. 1; P. M. Holt, "The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt during the
Seventeenth Century," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 24, 2 (1961): 223. I have
used an Arabic transliteration system for place names in Egypt and for administrative offices when
these are not specifically Turkish. I have retained Turkish transliterations for the grandees' names on
the theory that these come closest to the grandees' pronunciation of their own names.

[2]Ahmed Pasha Cezzar, *Ottoman Egypt in the Eighteenth Century: The Nizâmnâme of Cezzâr Ahmed
Pasha*, ed. and trans. Stanford Shaw (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 33.

[3]See, for example, Holt, "Beylicate," 218, 223, 225; idem, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–
1922* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966), 73, 85, 90–92; Shaw, *Financial and Administra-
tive Organization*, 33, 37, 63, 186, 194; David Ayalon, "Studies in al-Jabarti I: Notes on the Transfor-
mation of Mamluk Society in Egypt under the Ottomans," pts. 1–2, *Journal of the Economic and Social
History of the Orient* 3, 2–3 (1960), passim; Daniel Crecelius, *The Roots of Modern Egypt: A Study of
the Regimes of ⁽Ali Bey al-Kabir and Muhammad Bey Abu al-Dhahab, 1760–1775* (Minneapolis: Bib-
liotheca Islamica, 1981), 30–31; Michael Winter, "Turks, Arabs, and Mamluks in the Army of Ottoman
Egypt," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 72 (1980): 100, 120–22; Gabriel Piterberg,
"The Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian Elite in the Eighteenth Century," *International Journal of
Middle East Studies* 22 (August 1990): 280.

[4]On land tenure in the Mamluk sultanate, see Hasanayn Rabie, *The Financial System of Egypt*, A.H.
564–741/A.D. 1169–1341 (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), chap. 2; idem, "The Size and
Value of the *Iqtā⁽* in Egypt, 564–741 A.H./1169–1341 A.D.," in *Studies in the Economic History of the
Middle East*, ed. M. A. Cook (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 129–38; A. N. Poliak, "Some
Notes on the Feudal System of the Mamluks," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1937): 97–107. On
the Ottoman *timar*, see Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300–1600*, trans. Nor-
man Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 104–18. On developments
in Ottoman Egypt, see Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization*, 28 ff., 65 ff.

[5]Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), passim; Gülrü Necipoğlu-Kafadar, "The Formation of an Ottoman Imperial Tradition: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" (facsimile of a Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1986), 588–97.

[6]İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilati* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1945), esp. 432–39, 465–87; idem, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapukulu Ocakları*, 2 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1943–1944), 1:60, 65, 137–38, 478, 2:198; *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Bostandji," by İ. H. Uzunçarşılı; *EI*[2], s.v. "Adjami Oghlan," by H. Bowen.

[7]Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Rifaat Abou-el-Haj, "The Ottoman Vezir and Paşa Households 1683–1703: A Preliminary Report," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94 (October–December 1974): 438–47.

[8]Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, 1:167–71, 234–37, 254–59.

[9]These were the Müteferrika, Çavuşan, Janissaries (Mustahfizan), ʿAzeban, Gönüllüyan, Tüfenkçiyan, and Çerakise.

[10]André Raymond, "Essai de géographie des quartiers de résidence aristocratique au Caire au XVIIIe siècle," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 6 (1963): 58–103.

[11]Aḥmad Çelebi and al-Jabartī refer to the large household of ʿOsman Çavuş al-Qazdağlı in this manner. See Aḥmad Çelebi b. ʿAbd al-Ghani, *Awḍaḥ al-ishārāt fī man tawallā Miṣr al-Qāhira min al-wuzarāʾ wa al-bāshāt*, ed. ʿAbd al-Rahim ʿAbd al-Rahman ʿAbd al-Rahim (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, 1978), 608; and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-āthār fī al-tarājim wa al-akhbār*, 7 vols. (Cairo: Lajnat al-Bayan al-ʿArabi, 1958–1967), 2:12.

[12]On Küçük Mehmed, see, for example, Aḥmad Katkhudā ʿAzabān al-Damūrdāshī, *Al-durra al-muṣāna fī akhbār al-kināna*, British Museum, MS Or. 1073–74, 14, 26; Aḥmad Çelebi, *Awḍaḥ*, 190 ff.; al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib*, 1:130 ff.; P. M. Holt, "The Career of Kūchūk Muhammad (1676–94)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26, 2 (1963): 269–87. On Ifranj Ahmed, see ʿAbdülkerīm b. ʿAbdurraḥmān, *Tārīḫ-i Mıṣır*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MS Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 705, fols. 128r–146v; Aḥmad Çelebi, *Awḍaḥ*, 229 ff.; al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib*, 1:107 ff.; André Raymond, "Une 'revolution' au Caire sous les Mamelouks: La crise de 1123/1711," *Annales islamologiques* 6 (1966): 95–120.

[13]For example, the entourages of the early Qazdağlı leaders Mustafa Kâhya and Hasan Çavuş are called variously *ṭaraf* and *ṭāʾifa*. See al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib*, 1:107, 238; ʿAbdülkerīm, *Tārīḫ-i Mıṣır*, fol. 135v. Interestingly, similar groupings were noted in the former Soviet army in Germany. See "Bad Blood in Germany: The Soviet Army Can't Leave Soon Enough," *Newsweek*, 12 November 1990, 42.

[14]A *çavuş* was the third-highest-ranking officer in most regiments, behind the agha and the *kâhya*.

[15]On ʿOsman Çavuş al-Qazdağlı's house, see al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib*, 2:48; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Azbakiyya and Its Environs: From Azbak to Ismail, 1476–1879* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1985), 55–62; Raymond, "Essai de géographie," 74.

[16]See, for example, al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib*, 2:90. (The plural is usually *atbāʿ*, but occasionally *tawābiʿ*.)

[17]Piterberg, "Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian Elite," 279; Ayalon, "Studies in al-Jabarti," pt. 2, 278–83.

[18]Quoted by Ayalon, "Studies in al-Jabarti," pt. 2, 279.

[19]ʿAbdülkerīm, *Tārīḫ-i Mıṣır*, fol. 152v, referring to Kazdağlı Hasan Kâhya; Istanbul, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *Mühimme-i Mıṣır*, 5:313, dated 1147 A.H. (1734), referring to Kazdağlı ʿOsman Kâhya. Kazdağlı Ibrahim Kâhya appears in *Mühimme-i Mıṣır*, 6:418, 419, 426, 427, all dated 1160 A.H. (1747); 6:591, 592, both dated 1161 A.H. (1748); 7:121, dated 1167 A.H. (1754); 7:185, 214, both dated 1168 A.H. (1755); 7:547, dated 1172 A.H. (1759).

[20]Istanbul, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Maliyeden Müdevver 7069, a register of 3000 soldiers dated 1150 A.H. (1737–38), specifies places of origin for seven followers of household founder Mustafa Kâhya al-Qazdağlı. Of these, five come from a variety of districts in Anatolia (see n. 23).

[21]Cairo, Maḥkama li-al-aḥwāl al-shakhṣiyya, ʿAskariyya no. 108 (3 January 1716), 110; ʿAskariyya no. 147 (24 March 1740), 17. Professor Raymond cited these documents in a communication to me.

[22]For random examples, see Aḥmad Çelebi, *Awḍaḥ*, 235; and ʿAbdülkerīm, *Tārīḫ-i Mıṣır*, fol. 135v (both concerning Hasan Çavuş al-Qazdağlı).

[23]I have examined two registers from the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi in detail: Maliyeden Müdevver 4787, dated 1086–88 A.H. (1675–77), which lists 2,000 soldiers for an unspecified imperial campaign; and 7069, dated 1150 A.H. (1737–38), which lists 3,000 soliders for a campaign against Austria.

[24]*Mühimme-i Mısır*, 5:18, dated 1146 A.H. (1733).

[25]Abou-el-Haj, "Vezir and Paşa Households," 441, where he notes that in central Ottoman sources, *atbāᶜ* refers to "followers/hangers on" of a vizierial household.

[26]For an example of a *çırak* of one patron who was the *tābiᶜ* of another, see Aḥmad Çelebi, *Awḍaḥ*, 514.

[27]Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, especially chap. 5 and Conclusion. See also Abou-el-Haj, "Vezir and Paşa Households," 446, n. 37.

[28]The *naqīb al-ashrāf* was appointed from Istanbul until the 18th century, when the Bakri family, a prominent Cairene clan of descendants of the Prophet, came to monopolize the post.

[29]See Jane Hathaway, "The Role of the Kızlar Ağası in Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century Ottoman Egypt," *Studia Islamica* 75 (June 1992): 141–58.

[30]Aḥmad Çelebi (*Awḍaḥ*, 514) records what is to my knowledge the first instance of an *ocak* officer raising a client to the beylicate in 1727, when the Janissary *kâhya* Hüseyin al-Dimyati made his client Mustafa Agha al-Wali *sancak beyi* of Jirja and Minya in Upper Egypt.

[31]The *kâhya*, also rendered *katkhudā* or *ketḫüda*, was nominally second in command to the agha; by the 18th century, however, the *kehyas* of the Janissary and ᶜAzeban corps exercised de facto control over their respective regiments.

[32]On al-Qird, see al-Jabartī, *ᶜAjāᵓib*, 3:158; on al-Sabunji, al-Damūrdāshī, *Durra*, 491, 546, 549–52, and al-Jabartī, *ᶜAjāᵓib*, 2:116–18; on Hamza Bey and the Abaza household generally, al-Damūrdāshī, *Durra*, 533, 542, 543, 559.

[33]David M. Lang, *The Last Years of the Georgian Monarchy, 1658–1832* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), 11–22, 57–58, 69, 74, 105, 114–15, 139–42. Lang notes (p. 105) that the slave trade with western Georgia also intensified early in the 18th century.

[34]Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent*, 146.

[35]Al-Damūrdāshī, *Durra*, 55–56.

[36]Al-Jabartī, *ᶜAjāᵓib*, 2:110.

[37]See, for example, L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, 1837–1855* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), chap. 2; Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus, 1723–1783* (Beirut: Khayats, 1966; 2nd ed. 1970), 234.

[38]Al-Damūrdāshī, *Durra*, 560, 577–78.

[39]André Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1973–74), 1:156–57, 175–79.

[40]Jane Hathaway, "Marriage Alliances among the Military Households of Ottoman Egypt," *Annales islamologiques* 29 (1995).

[41]Raymond, "Essai de géographie," 73 ff.; Behrens-Abouseif, *Azbakiyya and Its Environs*, 49 ff.

[42]See, for example, al-Jabartī, *ᶜAjāᵓib*, 4:256–57.

[43]Hathaway, "Marriage Alliances," 18 ff. (manuscript).

[44]André Raymond, "Soldiers in Trade: The Case of Ottoman Cairo," *British Society for Middle East Studies Bulletin* 18, 1 (1991): 21 ff.

[45]Based on Maliyeden Müdevver 7069, dated 1150 A.H. (1737–38).

[46]I am grateful to Professor Daniel Crecelius for this information.

[47]For a study of the phenomenon in medieval Europe, see Carol Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), esp. chap. 2–5. In "Soldiers in Trade," cited earlier, André Raymond has made an intriguing study of the wealth of low-ranking officers, based on inheritance registers.

[48]See, for example, Michel Tuchscherer, "Le pèlerinage de l'émir Sulaymân Gâwiš al-Qazduġlî, sirdâr de la caravane de la Mekke en 1739," *Annales islamologiques* 24 (1988): 155–206. The followers listed in such a register do not necessarily comprise the totality of their patron's entourage, however.

[49]For a description of these chronicles, see P. M. Holt, "Ottoman Egypt (1517–1798): An Account of Arabic Historical Sources," in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P. M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 3–12; and Daniel Crecelius, "Aḥmad Shalabī ibn ᶜAbd al-Ghanī and

Aḥmad Katkhudā ᶜAzabān al-Damūrdāshī: Two Sources for al-Jabartī's ᶜAjāʾib al-āthār fīʾl-tarājim waʾl-akhbār," in *Eighteenth Century Egypt: The Arabic Manuscript Sources*, ed. Daniel Crecelius (Claremont, Calif.: Regina Books, 1990), 89–102. See also the published edition by ᶜAbd al-Rahim ᶜAbd al-Rahman ᶜAbd al-Rahim (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1989) and the English translation, *Al-Damūrdāshī's Chronicle of Egypt, 1688–1755: Al-durra al-muṣāna fī akhbār al-kināna*, ed. and annotated by Daniel Crecelius and ᶜAbd al-Wahhab Bakr (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991).

[50]The manuscript is discussed by Cemal Kafadar in his "Bir Mısır Yeniçerisinin Fransa Anıları" (Paper presented to the meeting of the Comité international d'études pré-ottomanes et ottomanes, Ankara, September 1992).

[51]For an analogous analysis of the literary output of the soldiers of the Mamluk sultanate, see Barbara Flemming, "Literary Activities in Mamluk Halls and Barracks," in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, Hebrew University, 1977), 249–60.

[52]See nn. 13, 47.