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BEING A COMRADE OF THE CIDDAVIS: THE SECURITY OF THE CAIRO PILGRIMAGE CARAVAN AND ITS ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract

The Ottoman sultans, who bore the title "Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries", assumed many responsibilities related to Mecca and Medina and their pilgrimage affairs, including the security of pilgrims, pilgrimage routes, and of the Holy Cities themselves. During the Ottoman period, these security services were mainly provided both by soldiers located in Mecca and Medina, and by troops who were sent from the provinces of Damascus and Egypt. This study evaluates the role of the Ciddavi (Ar. Jiddawi) soldiers recruited from the seven corps of Egypt to escort the pilgrimage caravans under the command of the *serdar-ı kitar* (commander of the military force escorting pilgrims) of Egypt, returning to Cairo at the end of the pilgrimage season. In this context, the military structure and remit of the Ciddavi Unit will be examined by focusing on the imperial edicts in the *mühimme-i Mısır* registers. This study reveals that the Janissaries were the most powerful and influential military corps within the Ciddavi Unit and they used this power to benefit their commercial interests. The soldiers who went to Mecca and Jeddah from Cairo for pilgrimage services created commercial opportunities for the Janissary Corps, which had a great interest in the Red Sea trade. Janissary commanders and soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit, together with the Egyptian merchants and artisans under their protection, became inconspicuous, yet important, parts of the international trade conducted between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.

Keywords: Egypt, Red Sea, pilgrimage caravan, Ciddavi Unit, Janissaries

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Ciddavilerin Yoldaşı Olmak: On Sekizinci Yüzyılda Kahire Hac Kervanının Güvenliği ve Bunun Ekonomik Yönleri

Öz

Hadimü'l-Haremeyn unvanına sahip olan Osmanlı sultanları bu unvanla kutsal şehirler ve hac işleriyle ilgili birçok sorumluğu üzerlerine almışlardır. Bu sorumluklar arasında hacıların, hac yollarının ve kutsal şehirlerin güvenliği de yer almaktadır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu devrinde bu güvenlik hizmetleri ağırlıklı olarak Mekke ve Medine'de yerleşik halde bulunan askerler ile Şam ve Mısır eyaletlerinden gönderilen askerler üzerinden sağlanmaktaydı. Bu çalışma, Mısır'ın yedi askeri bölüğünden toplanan ve Mısır *serdar-ı kitarı* emri altında hac kervanlarıyla birlikte seyahat eden ve hac mevsiminin sonunda yeniden Kahire'ye dönen "Ciddavi" birliği hakkında bir değerlendirmedir. Bu kapsamda *mühimme-i Mısır* defterlerinde yer alan fermanlar değerlendirilerek Ciddavi birliğinin askeri yapısı ve görev tanımı açığa kavuşturulacaktır. Bu çalışma, yeniçerilerin Ciddavi birliği içindeki en güçlü ve etkili bölük olduğunu ve bu güçten ticari olarak faydalandıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Hac hizmetleri için Kahire'den Mekke ve Cidde'ye giden askerler, Kızıldeniz ticaretine büyük bir ilgisi olduğu bilinen yeniçeri bölüğü için ticari fırsatlar yaratmıştır. Ciddavi birliğindeki yeniçeri komutanlar ve askerler ile onların himayesinde ticaret yapan Mısırlı tüccar ve esnaf, Kızıldeniz ve Akdeniz arasındaki uluslararası ticari organizasyonun dikkat çekici olmayan parçaları haline geldiler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mısır, Kızıldeniz, hac kervanı, Ciddavi birliği, yeniçeriler

After the conquest of Egypt in 1517, Sultan Selim declared himself "Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries" (*Hadimü'l-Haremeyn*) and pilgrimage (*hac*) affairs were defined as the single most important of all state affairs, as Ottoman archival sources often repeat.[1] This responsibility required that two essential tasks regarding the pilgrimage be carried out without interruption and on time, the first task being the supply of foodstuffs and other provisions to the Holy Cities. Because Mecca and Medina were surrounded by deserts, foodstuffs for their inhabitants had to be procured from distant lands. Transferring large quantities of agricultural products over desert roads was an expensive operation and its continuity required serious and very organized management.[2] The second essential task was the security of

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1 "*Umur-ı hac ehemm-i mehamm-ı devlet-i aliyyeden olduğuna binaen*…". Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Mühimme-i Mısır Defterleri (A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D) 6:531 (evail-i C 1162/May 19-28, 1749).

2 For centuries, the Ottoman Empire had regularly supplied the Holy Cities with grain harvested from the fertile lands around the Nile Valley. Inconveniences or severe famines in the food supply chain could prevent the pilgrimage from taking place, as happened in 1047 and 1048; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans 1517-1683*, London 1994, p. 7.

pilgrims, pilgrimage routes, and the Holy Cities. Muslim pilgrims departing from various parts of the world joined the main pilgrimage caravans to reach the heart of Islam. During the Ottoman period, there were two main state-sponsored pilgrimage routes, bearing the names of the Damascus and Cairo Roads.

Each year in the month of Zilhicce in the Islamic calendar, thousands of pilgrims gathered in Cairo for the pilgrimage in order to travel for a total of four months on their outbound and return journeys. It was important for the legitimacy of the sultan that the Cairo pilgrimage caravan, which travelled in tough desert conditions and under the threat of Bedouin attacks, should reach Mecca on time and safely.[3] Therefore, a large number of civil and military officials were charged with various responsibilities related to its organization and security. Among them, the pilgrimage commander (*emirü'l-hac* or *mir-i hac*), who was the head of the caravan, and the *serdar-ı kitar*, who was the commander of the military force escorting it, were the leading officers, chosen from among the prominent grandees and military commanders of Egypt. The eighteenth century was a period during which the power of Egyptian military households and notables grew significantly and, as the struggles between these actors played an increasing role in shaping the political life of Egypt, the authority of governors and the imperial center in the province was becoming weaker. In this context, the senior positions in command of the pilgrimage caravan provided opportunities for their holders to gain control over the regions of the Red Sea and Arabia, two areas through which Yemeni coffee and Indian goods flowed into the Mediterranean. The control of these posts was, therefore, to become the target of powerful Egyptian households,[4] and the commanders and soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit sent from Cairo for the protection of the pilgrims and of Mecca were to find themselves involved in this complicated nexus of administrative and economic relations. This study is an evaluation of the organization of the military unit in charge of securing the annual Cairo pilgrimage caravan and the participation of its soldiers in the trade of the Red Sea ports. By focusing on the imperial edicts addressed to the governors of Egypt and Jeddah, it aims to describe how the Janissaries of Cairo, the dominant element of this military

[3] In fact, as long as the Bedouins obeyed the state, they performed vital services for pilgrimage caravans, such as supplying riding animals and water. However, when they rebelled and targeted the pilgrims, they could also create huge problems. Benjamin Claude Brower, "The Hajj by Land", *The Hajj: Pilgrimage in Islam*, (eds. Eric Tagliacozzo and Shawkat M. Toorawa), New York 2016, p. 87-113. For the increased Bedouin attacks when the Şerif of Mecca and the pilgrimage commander did not give the Bedouins the promised payment for their services, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Mekke-i Mükerreme Emirleri*, Ankara 2013, p. 59-60; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D. 8:180 (evail-i B 1177/January 5-14, 1764).

[4] On Egypt in the eighteenth century, see P. M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516-1922*, New York 1966, p. 85-101; Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of Qazdağlı*s, Cambridge 1997; Daniel Crecelius, "Egypt in the Eighteenth Century", *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, Volume 2, (ed. M. W. Daly), Cambridge 1998, p. 59-86.

unit, expanded their local commercial connections, giving them an interregional dimension.

Organization of the Ciddavi Unit

In the early years of their rule in Egypt, instead of removing the old Mamluk administrative system altogether, the Ottomans established a hybrid system of administration.[5] They formed a new military organization for which, in addition to the soldiers sent from Istanbul, they recruited troops from local groups, especially the Circassians. According to the Ottoman law code (*Kanunname*) promulgated in 1525, there were six military corps in Egypt, called the Çerakise (Circassians), Gönüllüyan (Volunteers), Tüfenkciyan (Riflemen), Çavuşan, Mustahfizan (Janissaries), and Azeban,[6] and in 1554 one more corps called the Müteferrika was established in Egypt in order to curb the increasing influence of former Mamluk *emir*s and the Caucasian *bey*s.[7] The Çerakise was a cavalry corps which consisted of the Mamluks of Hayri Bey, the first Ottoman governor of Egypt. The Gönüllüyan and Tüfenkciyan were also cavalry regiments which initially included only soldiers sent from Istanbul, but later started accepting sons or followers of local notables into their ranks. Two corps, the Çavuşan and Müteferrika, consisted of a combination of cavalry and infantry soldiers and were directly connected to the *divan* of the Egyptian governor.[8]

The Janissary and Azeban Corps were the two infantry regiments of Ottoman Egypt. As the Janissaries were the principal military force protecting Cairo, they were locally called *Mustahfizan* (guardians).[9] They were positioned in Cairo's citadel and constituted the most numerous and powerful military corps of Egypt. Vacant positions in the corps were filled either by soldiers sent from Istanbul or by sons of Janissaries. While the Janissaries were the Egyptian corps that sent the largest number of soldiers to imperial campaigns,[10] they also constituted the primary military force guarding the annual pilgrimage caravan which travelled between Cairo and Mecca, and were responsible for policing Cairo and its marketplaces. Thanks to this powerful and prestigious place they enjoyed in the Egyptian military system, the Janissaries were also granted important positions

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5 Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*, p. 11.

6 Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *XV ve XVI inci Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları, Birinci Cilt Kanunlar*, Istanbul 1943, p. 355-359.

7 Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*, p. 11.

8 *Ibid*., p. 38.

9 Stanford J. Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt 1517-1798*, Princeton 1962, p. 189.

10 In the eighteenth century the average number of the soldiers sent by the governor of Egypt to the imperial campaigns was 3,000. For example, of the 3,000 soldiers sent from the seven corps of Egypt for the Moscow campaign in 1713, 1,263 were Janissaries; BOA, Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler (MAD.d) 4258 (1 M 1125/ January 28, 1713).

in the administration of customs, the imperial mint of Egypt (*Darbhane*), and the local *mukataa* system.[11] The Azeban, the other infantry corps, on the other hand, was located both in Cairo's citadel and in frontier fortresses. These two infantry military units were the most powerful and politically influential corps of Egypt in the eighteenth century, a fact that could create serious political tensions between them.[12]

Corps	***1672***	***1709***	***1717***
Mustahfizan	6821	5263	5106
Azeban	3007	3285	3810
Müteferrika	2871	1485	1680
Çavuşan	1471	1641	2293
Gönüllüyan	1278	1236	1321
Tüfenkciyan	1066	1030	945
Çerakise	1074	981	900
Total	***17588***	***14921***	***16582***

Table: Number of soldiers in the seven corps of Egypt between 1672 and 1717.[13]

During the pilgrimage season, an officer bearing the title "*serdar-ı kitar*" and the soldiers under his command, called "*Ciddavi*" (جداوی) and "*Ciddelüyan*" (جدەلویان) in Ottoman sources, were responsible for the security of the caravan. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, the post of the *serdar-ı kitar* had been monopolized by the Janissaries who were associated with the Kazdağlı household.[14] In the course of the eighteenth century, almost every year 500 soldiers from the seven corps were called on to join the Ciddavi Unit,[15] while on extraordinary occasions, such as when Bedouin attacks increased or revolts broke

11 Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt*, p. 190.

12 In 1711, a disorder started within the Janissary Corps which subsequently extended to the other six corps, especially the *Azeban*, and turned into a civil war called *Muareke*. For the 1711 civil war, see Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent*, p. 88-90; Abdülkerim b. Abdurrahman, *Tarih-i Mısr*, Süleymaniye Library (Istanbul), Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa Collection 705, fol. 127b-146b.

13 Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt*, p. 392-393.

14 Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*, p. 134-135.

15 Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the number of soldiers was increased to 525; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.9:184 (evail-i L 1190/November 13-22, 1776).

out in the Haremeyn, additional Ciddavi soldiers from Egypt were sent to join the abovementioned troops.[16]

The Ciddavi soldiers, who were in charge of guarding Mecca and the pilgrimage caravan, were recruited from among the members of the seven corps of Egypt. Although there are many imperial edicts concerning the Ciddavi Unit in the *mühimme-i Mısır* registers, there is no specific information concerning the number of soldiers appointed as Ciddavis from each corps. However, an imperial edict dated 1723 reveals some details on this issue; specifically the decree states that, in accordance with an old custom, of the 500 soldiers sent to Mecca, 300 had to come from Egypt's cavalry and 200 from its infantry corps.[17] Moreover, Cezzar Ahmed Paşa, a governor of Damascus who in 1785 wrote a report (*Nizamname*) on the conditions in Egypt at the request of the Ottoman council, offers additional information about the military unit guarding the annual pilgrimage caravan. According to his report, the caravan was protected by 40-50 large and 15 small cannons. As well as the soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit, 200 young people who came to Egypt from Anatolia and Rumelia to perform the pilgrimage were additionally recruited as riflemen to reinforce the defense of the caravan.[18]

The pilgrimage caravan was a large organization, consisting of thousands of pilgrims, merchants, and their riding animals. The caravans usually proceeded under the guidance of a Bedouin who acted as a desert pilot. Along with the caravan, an offering called *surre*, sent by the sultan, as well as large amounts of food and the personal belongings of pilgrims, were carried. In order for the caravan to travel safely and reach its destination at the scheduled time, its march formation and discipline were important. The merchants carrying valuable goods and those rich enough to buy fast riding animals traveled in the front and middle rows of the caravan, while poor pilgrims were located in the rear which was considered to be the most dangerous part of the caravan.[19] Attention was paid to ensuring that civil servants and soldiers walked in their designated places, a rule emphasized in the imperial orders addressed to the pilgrimage commander.[20] So, how were the soldiers positioned in the pilgrimage caravan? Evliya Çelebi, who traveled from Mecca to Cairo with the Egyptian pilgrimage caravan in 1672, maintains that the pilgrimage caravan traveling towards Cairo was surrounded by the soldiers of the

16 For example, due to a rebellion in the Haremeyn in 1722, an additional 500 soldiers were ordered to be sent from Egypt; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.3:289 (evahir-i Ca 1134/March 8-17, 1722); 3:290 (evasıt-ı Ca 1134/February 26- March 8, 1722).

17 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.3:386 (evahir-i N 1135/June 24-July 4, 1723).

18 Cezzâr Ahmed Pasha, *Ottoman Egypt in the Eighteenth Century: The Nizâmnâme-i Mısır of Cezzâr Ahmed Pasha*, (ed. and trans. Stanford J. Shaw), Cambridge 1964, p. 41.

19 Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans*, p. 34.

20 For the imperial edict sent to the pilgrimage commander of Cairo, see BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:54 (evasıt-ı R 1166/February 14-24, 1753). For a similar edict sent to the pilgrimage commander of Damascus, see Uzunçarşılı, *Mekke-i Mükerreme Emirleri*, p. 41.

seven corps. While the soldiers of the pilgrimage commander's *kethüda* and the Çerakise Corps were positioned on the right of the caravan, the Gönüllüyan Corps and the soldiers of the pilgrimage commander himself were positioned on the left. The artillery gunners and the soldiers of the Janissary and Azeban Corps, on the other hand, were positioned next to the *surre*.[21] It was probably no coincidence that the Janissaries, who were a centrally created imperial corps, escorted the sultanic *surre*. It would not be far-fetched to assume that there might have been an implied role of the corps – even if symbolic – as imperial agents directly representing the sultan's authority during the pilgrimage, although no such information is to be found in the sources.

The imperial center regularly sent out edicts which were similar in content and called the attention of the governor of Egypt to the organization and functioning of the Ciddavi Unit, revealing, in the process, some of the unit's chronic problems. In an imperial edict dated 1729, for example, it is mentioned that the soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit must be enrolled in the corps, must go to Mecca in person, and should not be mixed with Arabs and merchants.[22] It was a common problem that some of the soldiers selected for the Ciddavi Unit did not go to Mecca or sent someone else in their place; individual soldiers could avoid duty by directly disobeying orders, or, in some cases, the corps in Egypt could send unenrolled men to replace their registered soldiers in their service. As was a widespread practice all around the Empire, when a soldier who was enrolled in one of the seven corps died, his death was not reported to the Porte by his officers, in order for their corps to hold on to the wages of the deceased. Subsequently, when the governor requested soldiers from the corps, an unregistered *mamluk* or peasant was hired to illegally replace the dead soldier.[23]

As emphasized in the aforementioned imperial edict, it was requested that the Ciddavi soldiers "*should not be mixed with Arabs*" (*Arab ile mahlut olmaya*). Despite being illegal, it was a known problem that people called "*sons of Arabs*" (*evlad-ı Arab*) were enrolled in the seven corps of Egypt. As a response to this phenomenon, on various occasions the government issued orders which expelled the "*sons of Arabs*" from the corps and cut off their stipends. It has to be noted,

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21 "*Mısır huccâcın yedi bölük askeri kuşadup emîr-i hac kethudâsı ve Çerâkise askeri sağda ve emîr-i hac askeri ile dündâr ve sipâh ve gönüllü solda ve müstahfızân ve azebân ve topçıyân hazîne ve toplar ile cümle pür-silâh mîrî heccân ve kısrak develer üzre giderler*"; Evliyâ Çelebi b. Derviş Mehemmed Zıllî, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, Volume 9, (eds. Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, and Robert Dankoff), Istanbul 2011, p. 419.

22 "*Mahruse-i Mısr-ı Kahire'den mutad-ı kadim üzere Mekke-i Mükerreme muhafazasına memur olan Mısır askeri bi'n-nefs kendüleri gidüb bedel göndermeyüb Arab ile mahlut olmayub tüccardan yazılmayub sahibü'l-esami olmayan gitmeyüb cümlesi sahibü'l-esami olub bir takrib noksan olmamak üzere güzide Mısır askeri irsal eyleyüb bu hususda zerre kadar müsahele ve müsamahadan tevakki eyleyesüz…*"; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.4:275 (evahir-i Ca 1142/December 11-20, 1729).

23 Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt*, p. 210.

however, that the term "*sons of Arabs*" is ethnically ambiguous and did not refer only to people of Arab descent, but might have also been used as the opposite of the term *Rum oğlanı*, which referred to the soldiers recruited from the eastern and southern provinces of the empire.[24] Another group that illegally joined the Ciddavi Unit, causing aggravation to Istanbul, was the merchants (*tüccar*). The term "merchant" was used to signify those traders who enrolled in one of the corps in order to acquire protection (*himaye*) and gain commercial privileges. This issue, which was especially common in the case of the Janissary Corps, will be evaluated in detail below.

Istanbul cared about the participation of professional soldiers registered in one of the seven corps in the Ciddavi Unit. The Ciddavi soldiers who did not go to Mecca, or sent a replacement instead, were identified and punished by the officers of the governors of Egypt and Jeddah, and in some cases by an agent (*mübaşir*) sent from Istanbul. In 1722, 500 extra Ciddavi soldiers were added to the 500 men sent from Egypt in order to restore the subverted order in the Haremeyn. However, it was understood that the troops sent from Cairo deserted before reaching Birketü'l-hac, the first encampment place of the pilgrimage caravan in Egypt, located in north Cairo. When the officers responsible for the inspection of the soldiers decided to initiate a roll-call to identify the fugitives, the rest of the soldiers, in an act of solidarity toward their deserter comrades-in-arms, opposed them by saying "*you cannot count us here, but in the Haremeyn*". The desertion of half of the soldiers in the Ciddavi Unit was an incident that seriously endangered the safety of the pilgrims, and this situation did not go unnoticed by the imperial center. As a matter of fact, Istanbul, which was aware of the situation, ordered the Egyptian governor to cut off the salary-increase (*terakki*) of the fugitives and collect the expenses made by the Egyptian treasury to equip these soldiers from their corps. In addition, in order to detect any desertions that might occur during the one-month journey, it was requested that the Ciddavi Unit be inspected by the governor of Jeddah and a *mübaşir* upon its arrival at its place of duty, and a list of the deserters sent to Istanbul.[25]

The pilgrimage caravan's administrators, Red Sea trade, and the Janissaries

Pilgrimage affairs and supplying grain for the inhabitants of the Holy Cities were among the essential issues that occupied the Ottoman governors in the province of Egypt. Although there were many *vakf*s in Egypt that provided in-kind and in-cash aid to the Haremeyn, expenditures for Mecca and Medina and

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24 For a comprehensive analysis on the "sons of the Arabs", see Jane Hathaway, "The *Evlâd-ı 'Arab* (Sons of the Arabs) in Ottoman Egypt: A Rereading", *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province and the West*, (eds. Colin Imber and Keiko Kiyotaki), London 2005, p. 203-216.

25 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.3:338 (evahir-i Z 1134/October 1-10, 1722).

pilgrimage services constituted the second-largest costs of the imperial treasury of Egypt.[26] The pilgrimage commander and the *serdar-ı kitar* needed large financial resources for their services during the pilgrimage season. Pilgrimage commanders, in particular, fell into financial difficulties at various times and had to demand additional economic assistance from the treasury of Egypt. In some periods, the *bey*s ran into large amounts of personal debt due to the administration of the pilgrimage and refused to undertake this task the following year.[27] In fact, the Ottoman center generally responded positively to persistent requests from the Egyptian court to increase the allowance of pilgrimage commanders. Bearing this practice in mind, it can be argued that the strategy of securing a greater income in the form of allowances was behind the refusal of this post under the pretext of financial difficulties. Nevertheless, it is known that some pilgrimage commanders and *serdar-ı kitar*s spent a considerable amount of money from their personal wealth while serving in these posts. At this point, the question of why the *bey*s and commanders in the province of Egypt volunteered for these temporary positions comes to mind. Prestigious posts in the provincial hierarchy brought their holders certain political and economic advantages. The *bey* who held the post of the pilgrimage commander was guaranteed a place in the *divan* of the governor and those who took on these tasks used this temporary service as an investment tool for their political careers or business ventures.[28] Janissary commanding officers who were interested in trade, on the other hand, had the opportunity to connect with the port of Jeddah, an important hub of the Red Sea trade, thanks to these posts.

From the beginning of the eighteenth century, a complex relationship developed between pilgrimage services and the Red Sea trade. The reason for this was the interest of the Kazdağlı household – founded by a Janissary and rooted in the Janissary Corps – in the lucrative Red Sea coffee trade, which represented one of its main sources of income. The heads of the Kazdağlı household shaped their commercial investments according to the maritime trade cycle running in the northern half of the Red Sea. In this framework, the grain harvested from the

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26 Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt*, p. 229.

27 The pilgrimage commander of Egypt, Salih Bey, fell into significant debt due to his duty as the pilgrimage commander and did not accept this duty the following year. Consequently, Istanbul ordered Salih Bey to be given a one-off additional allowance of 2,500,000 *para*s in 1163; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:649 (evahir-i Ş 1173/April 7-16, 1760).

28 In earlier periods too, the sources testify to the pilgrimage commander's trading activities during the pilgrimage season. It is known, for instance, that in 1571 the people of the pilgrimage caravan were deprived of ship's biscuit, as pilgrimage commanders and ship captains loaded trade goods on the ships allocated to carry ship's biscuit from Suez to the pilgrimage caravan; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı'da Kentler ve Kentliler: Kent Mekânında Ticaret Zanaat ve Gıda Üretimi 1550-1650*, (trans. Neyyir Berktay), Istanbul 2011, p. 67; BOA, Bab-ı Asafi Divan-ı Hümayun Sicilleri Mühimme Defterleri (A.DVNSMHM.d) 12:710 (15 S 979/July 9, 1571).

lands of Upper Egypt was transported from Suez to the ports of Jeddah and Yanbu through either state-owned ships or vessels chartered from merchants for the provision of the Holy Cities. Ships unloading their cargo in Jeddah had returned with various Indian commodities and especially Yemeni coffee. Following a long-standing strategy, the Kazdağlıs aimed to take control of the rural tax farms in Egypt and the pilgrimage route in order to increase their share in the coffee trade. To achieve this, from the beginning of the eighteenth century, they used the position of *serdar-ı kitar*, a Janissary post, as a tool.[29]

The most important commercial strategy of the Kazdağlı–Janissary alliance was to establish their influence on the Nile and Red Sea customs which facilitated their ship-management business, an expensive and risky investment. Many Janissaries were trading in the Red Sea using their own ships,[30] with the state as their most important client. Egyptian grain was largely transported to the Haremeyn by ships belonging to the state and various Haremeyn-related endowments (*evkafü'l-Haremeyn*), but the capacity of these ships was often not sufficient to handle such high-volume transports and the state had to hire or purchase merchant ships.[31] Since it was forbidden for the soldiers in the pilgrimage caravan to be involved in trade, it is not possible to follow in detail their business ventures through the official documents of the period. Fortunately, the documentation available on the *bey*s and commanders of the pilgrimage caravan, whose personal stories are easier to follow, can shed some light on some of the main aspects of the topic.

The detailed probate record of Kazdağlı Süleyman Çavuş, who was appointed as the *serdar-ı kitar* of the annual Egyptian pilgrimage caravan in 1739, but died in the first days of the journey, is an important example which allows us to see the wealth and commercial connections of this officer. Before being promoted to this position, Süleyman Çavuş was already a member of the Janissary Corps and one of the leading figures of the Kazdağlı household. He had remarkable wealth, as almost all of the inheritance of his patron Osman Çavuş,

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29 For the activities of the Kazdağlı Janissaries in the Red Sea trade, see Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*, p. 134-135; Daniel Crecelius, "Egypt in the Eighteenth Century", p. 73; André Raymond, *Yeniçerilerin Kahiresi: Abdurrahman Kethüda Zamanında Bir Osmanlı Kentinin Yükselişi*, (trans. Alp Tümertekin), Istanbul 2015, p. 88-91.

30 For details of the boats of the *serdar-ı kitar* Süleyman Çavuş on the Nile, and a Red Sea ship of which he was a shareholder, see Michel Tuchscherer, "Le Pèlerinage de l'émir Suleymân Gawis al-Qâzdughlî, Sirdâr de la Caravane de La Mekke en 1739", *Annales Islamologiques*, 24, (1988), p. 162.

31 Some records dated 1747 show that the state, which had a shortage of ships for the transportation of the Haremeyn grain, bought two ships belonging to the Janissary Mehmed Kethüda. The purchased ships were still under construction in Suez. Of these two ships, 3,050,000 *para*s were paid for a ship called Ezheri and 2,700,000 *para*s were paid for a ship called Aşur; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.6:367 (evahir-i M 1160/February 1-11, 1747).

who was killed in 1736 in the *Vaka-i Şur-engiz* incident, was left to him.[32] In order to show his economic power and strengthen his presence in the political competition, he left Cairo with a very flamboyant procession and went to Birketü'l-hac, the starting point of the annual pilgrimage caravan. Süleyman died there and his personal assets were recorded in the Cairo court registers. According to the probate record, Süleyman owned fifteen boats running on the Nile and a share of a Red Sea ship. On his journey to Mecca, he carried 679,105 *para*s in cash with which he probably wanted to buy coffee and Indian commodities in Jeddah. In addition, Süleyman carried textile products worth 32,450 *para*s; in this period, textile products imported from France were among the important commodities of the Cairo–Arabia trade.[33]

On the other hand, Süleyman Çavuş took on a great financial burden as a *serdar-ı kitar*. For the pilgrimage caravan and his cortege of around a hundred people, he had to spend about a third of his personal wealth.[34] Presumably, he would compensate at least some of the money he had spent by selling the commodities he had taken with him to Mecca, as well as the coffee and Indian goods he would purchase during the trip. Moreover, as a commander who had ships on the Red Sea and the Nile, Süleyman possibly aimed to use the prestigious post of *serdar-ı kitar* as a means to achieve greater commercial privileges.

The career of İbrahim Kethüda, another Janissary from the Kazdağlı household who was an important political and military figure in Egypt in the 1650s, explicitly reveals the connection between the Janissaries, the post of pilgrimage commander, and the coffee trade. In the petition he sent to Istanbul in 1749, İbrahim Kethüda complained about the Egyptian *bey*s who provided protection services to the caravans carrying coffee from Suez to Cairo. According to his allegation, this duty of protection actually belonged to the pilgrimage

32 Tuchscherer, "Le Pèlerinage de l'émir Suleymân Gawis al-Qâzdughlî", p. 159-160. The *Vaka-i Şur-engiz* (tumultuous incident) was a massacre which occurred as a result of the power struggle between the *bey*s and the governor of Egypt on November 15, 1736. Salih Kaşif, the governor (*kaşif*) of Mansura sub-province, planned the massacre, with the support of the governor Ebubekir Paşa, against some emirs of Egypt with whom he had in a conflict of interests. To achieve his goal, Salih organized an assembly to be held in the *defterdar*'s house and invited the *bey*s and senior officers of the seven corps. During the meeting, an armed assault took place and ten of the *bey*s and corps officers, including the Janissary commander Kazdağlı Osman Kethüda, were killed. For this incident, see Al-Damurdashi Ahmad Kethuda 'Azaban, *Al-Damurdashi's Chronicle of Egypt 1688-1737: Al-durra al-musana fi akhbar al-kinana*, (eds. and trans. Daniel Crecelius and 'Abd al-Wahhab Bakr), Leiden 1991, p. 309-316.

33 Tuchscherer, "Le Pèlerinage de l'émir Suleymân Gawis al-Qâzdughlî", p. 181.

34 The amount of money Süleyman Çavuş spent was determined as 2,128,332 *para*s. Ibid., p. 187. This sum of money was more than enough to buy a new high-capacity cargo ship running on the Red Sea.

commander of Egypt and, by demanding five to six gold pieces[35] for the protection service, the Egyptian *bey*s increased the tax burden of coffee merchants. Thereupon, Istanbul gave the protection service of the coffee caravans to the pilgrimage commanders and allowed them to receive one *fındık altın* (approx. three *guruş*es) for each coffee *ferde* (coffer). In this way, an additional income of approximately 2,500,000 *para*s was allocated to the Egyptian pilgrimage commanders per year.[36] About a year after this decision, İbrahim Kethüda was given a reward for his effort and loyalty, and was appointed *şeyhü'l-beled*[37] (head of Cairo) and pilgrimage commander. In addition, it was decided that Istanbul would donate, just once, 2,500,000 *para*s from the Egyptian treasury to Ibrahim Kethüda for his pilgrimage services.[38] İbrahim used a clever method in his petition by emphasizing that the current situation went against the interests of coffee merchants. Thus, he attracted the attention of the Ottoman imperial council and, in turn, gained political and economic benefits from it.[39]

Ciddavi trade in the Jeddah and Suez ports

The fact that the commanders of the Ciddavi Unit held *ex officio* an important place in the trade between Egypt and the Haremeyn created favorable conditions for its soldiers to participate in this trade also. Some soldiers were involved in the trade of Suez, Jeddah, and Mecca as commercial agents of their corps, while others were personally seeking income from this journey by selling

35 The type of currency is not explicitly stated in the document. In the eighteenth century, however, gold coins called *zer-i mahbub* and *fındık* were in circulation in Egypt. Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge 2000, p. 174.

36 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.6:531 (evail-i C 1162/May 19-28, 1749).

37 The *Şeyhü'l-beled* was an office created in the mid eighteenth century held by the prominent grandees of Cairo; Jane Hathaway, "Çerkes Mehmed Bey: Rebel, Traitor, Hero?", *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 21/1 (1998), p. 110-111.

38 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.6:591 (evasıt-ı Ca 1163/April 17-27, 1750). When İbrahim Kethüda passed away, his personal assets, worth 57,500,000 *para*s, were confiscated by the state; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:214 (evasıt-ı B 1168/April 22-May 2, 1755). On Kazdağlı İbrahim Kethüda and his partner Rıdvan Kethüda, see Abd ar-Rahman al-Jabarti, *Al-Jabarti's History of Egypt*, (ed. Jane Hathaway), Princeton 2009, p. 75-83; Al-Damurdashi, Ahmad Kethuda 'Azaban, *Al-Damurdashi's Chronicle of Egypt*, p. 363-387.

39 Since the beginning of the seventeenth century, coffee had become an indispensable beverage for Ottoman society. During this period the Ottoman Empire was Europe's largest supplier of coffee. Due to the huge increase in the demand for coffee at the end of the seventeenth century, the Ottomans tried to meet the domestic demand by banning the export of coffee. For coffee consumption and exports in the Ottoman Empire, see Mehmet Genç, "Contrôle et taxation du commerce du café dans l'Empire ottoman fin XVII^{e}-première moitié du XVIII^{e} siècle", *Le commerce du café avant l'ère des plantations coloniales : espaces, réseaux, sociétés (XV^{e}-XIX^{e} siècle)*, (ed. Michel Tuchscherer), Cairo 2001, p. 161-179.

small amounts of trade goods in Mecca.[40] In the imperial edicts sent from Istanbul about the Ciddavi soldiers, the name of the Egyptian corps to which the soldiers were attached is generally not mentioned, but the names of the Janissary and Azeban Corps are clearly emphasized in the edicts that address the problems arising from commercial issues. These two corps were, as previously noted, the most dominant military actors in Cairo and had a close relationship with the Cairo guilds and artisans. Moreover, Janissary and Azeban soldiers received significant support from these Cairene artisans in the Red Sea trade. The merchandise brought by the troops from Jeddah was unloaded to the port of Suez with the help of these artisans and transported to Cairo.

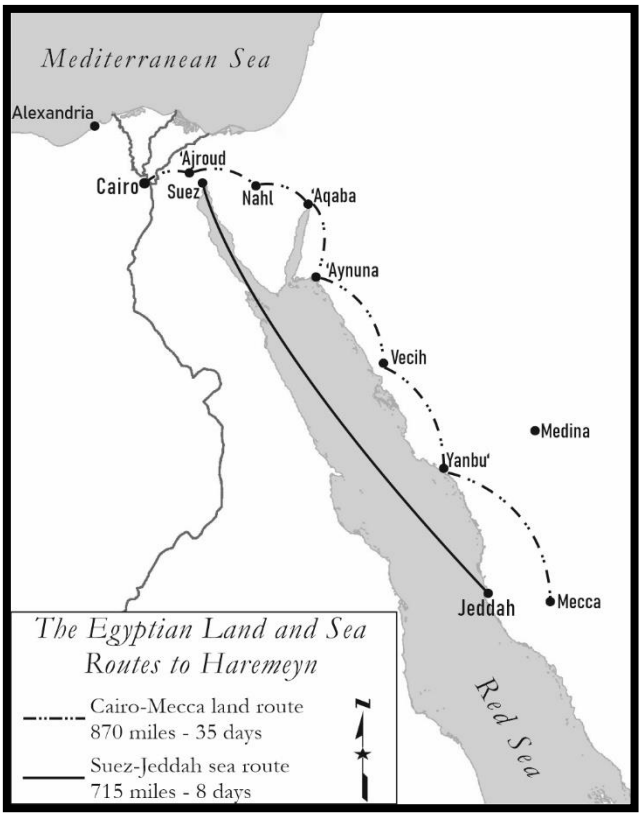
When the pilgrimage caravan reached the fort of Ajroud, near Suez, some soldiers left the caravan to conduct trade.[41] Instead of going to Mecca by land with the pilgrims, some Ciddavi soldiers went to Jeddah by boarding ships in Suez and reaching Mecca from there. The soldiers brought trading goods with them, thus making their journey not only faster, but also profitable.[42] However, their departure from the caravan weakened the security of the pilgrimage routes and left the pilgrims open to attacks. Therefore, the governors of Egypt were warned that the Ciddavi soldiers should travel by land under the authority of their commanders and together with the pilgrims.

The petitions sent to Istanbul by the governor of Jeddah and the Şerif of Mecca help us understand the trade methods used by these soldiers. The Janissary and Azeban troops who boarded the ships from Suez took with them trading goods worth twenty to thirty gold pieces, in addition to their personal belongings. When the soldiers came to the port of Jeddah, they unloaded these goods, which were normally subject to customs duties, together with their personal belongings. Since this problem caused considerable damage to the customs revenues of Jeddah, the governor of Jeddah and the Şerif of Mecca demanded that the soldiers pay taxes. However, the soldiers refused to pay the customs tax and even made

40 Even though pilgrimage is a religious practice, it was also a big event that brought together thousands of people in Mecca from various parts of the world, and many pilgrims covered a part of their travel expenses by bartering small amounts of merchandise at the fair in Mina; Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans*, p. 45, 168-170; for the coffee and Indian textile products found in the estates of the Janissaries who accompanied the pilgrimage caravan but died on the way, see André Raymond, "Soldiers in Trade: The Case of Ottoman Cairo", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 18/1, (1991), p. 20.

41 For the forts built on the Cairo–Mecca route for the security of pilgrims and pilgrimage routes, see Sami Saleh 'Abd al-Malik, "The *Khans* of the Egyptian Hajj Route in the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods", *The Hajj: Collected Essays*, (eds. Venetia Porter and Liana Saif), London 2013, p. 52-64.

42 According to the records of this period, ships could reach Jeddah from Suez in eight days with a fair wind: BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.3:689 (evasıt-ı S 1139/October 7-17, 1726).



Map. The Egyptian land and sea routes to the Haremeyn.

matters worse by engaging in combat with the local forces.[43] The customs revenues of Jeddah were the most important source of income for the governor of Jeddah and the Şerif of Mecca. In addition, the wages of Haremeyn officers, like those of the judges of Mecca and Medina, were paid by the income obtained from these revenues. To give an example of the impact that this loss of revenues could have on the local economy, let us note that, during this period, a small number of Indian ships and coffee-carrying Yemeni boats called *celbe* were transporting goods to the port of Jeddah. In some cases, the Indian ships were delayed and subsequently missed the winds that could carry them to the north to Jeddah. Whenever this happened, the Jeddah customs was deprived of an important income source and the governor of Jeddah and the Şerif of Mecca had to seek financial aid from the

[43] BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.1:85 (evahir-i Ca 1121/July 28-August 7, 1709); 1:438 (evahir-i R 1128/April 13-22, 1716); 1:450 (evahir-i Ca 1128/June 11-20, 1716).

imperial center or the province of Egypt.[44] In a similar fashion, the intervention of soldiers in trade damaged the delicate balance between the Jeddah customs revenues and the Haremeyn expenditures, causing problems for the local administrators.

In accordance with their remit, the Ciddavi soldiers traveled with the pilgrims and usually resided in Mecca during the pilgrimage season. Nevertheless, the commercial charm of Jeddah, which was the center of trading activities in the Haremeyn region, continued to attract them. Ciddavi soldiers were only allowed to come to Jeddah to ensure the security of caravans carrying grain to Mecca. However, as is understood from the complaints reflected in the archival documents, they instead arrived in Jeddah using various excuses and resided in the city for the purpose of doing business. Soldiers participating in trade harmed the merchants' businesses, reduced the customs revenues of the province, and disrupted its public peace and order. For this reason, the governors of Jeddah and Egypt were asked not to allow the soldiers who left Mecca to provide security to the transport of grain to reside in Jeddah.[45]

The volume of trade conducted by the soldiers in Suez, Egypt's gateway to the Red Sea and one of the important hubs of international trade, was much larger than that of Jeddah. In the eighteenth century Suez was the only port in the north of the Red Sea where international trade took place, and almost all of the supplies shipped from Egypt to the Haremeyn were transported from there.[46] Coffee from Yemen and other commodities from the Indian Ocean were distributed through Suez to Egypt and the Mediterranean world. This commercial value of Suez made it an important source of income for the province of Egypt. According to a record dated 1756, the governors of Egypt, until a few years prior to that date, were earning about 6,250,000-8,750,000 *para*s just from the Suez customs. However, during that period, the administration of Suez customs became corrupted, a fact that led to a dramatic decrease in the customs revenues collected by the governors.[47] This was not due to the decrease in the trade activity at the port; on the contrary, it was owing to the fact that no tax could be collected for the commodities arriving at the port. At the heart of the problem lay the Janissaries and Azeban soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit who were trading without paying customs duties, abusing their military power and political influence, as they were doing in the case of the Jeddah customs.

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44 See, for example, BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.8:611 (evahir-i B 1182/November 30-December 10, 1768).

45 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.4:67 (evahir-i S 1140/October 7-16, 1727).

46 On the position of Qusayr, another Egyptian port located about 290 miles south of Suez, as an alternative in the Red Sea trade, see Daniel Crecelius, "The Importance of Qusayr in the Late Eighteenth Century", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, 24, (1987), p. 55-56.

47 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:568 (evasıt-ı Ş 1172/April 8-18, 1759).

Coffee and spices were brought to Suez in coffers called *ferde*.[48] *Ferde* was also a standard measuring unit, and in Egypt coffee and spices were taxed according to the number of *ferde*s.[49] Returning from Jeddah to Suez by ship, the Ciddavis would open the coffee and spice *ferde*s on board and transfer them to smaller bags called *zenbil* and *katma*, a trick they invented to avoid taxes. When they arrived at the port, they refused to pay their duties, claiming that these small bags were their personal property.[50] The Cairene artisans who were in contact with the soldiers also played a part in the commercial order in the Suez port. According to a document dated 1759, when the news of the spice ships approaching the port of Suez reached Cairo, more than a thousand saddle makers (*sarrac*)[51] and peddlers (*koltukçu*) went to Suez.[52] They arrived before the *şehir havalesi*, the official who collected the tax rights of the governor at customs, and took the goods by saying "*we are Ciddavis and this item is comrade property*". This way, the coffee, spices, fabric, and porcelain goods coming to the port of Suez were transported to Cairo without customs duties being paid.[53] Thanks to this cooperation between soldiers and artisans, the merchandise was procured at a much more affordable cost and thus their trade became more lucrative.

In 1672, Captain M. Niebuhr, who visited the ports of the Red Sea on an expedition of discovery in the service of the Danish king, recorded some remarkable information about the commercial life in the Red Sea region. The information he gave is important because he had the opportunity to talk to the

48 The average value of the *ferde* was between 3 and 3.5 *kantar*; André Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIII*e *siècle*, Volume 1, Damascus 1973, p. lvii.

49 Customs duty in Suez in the seventeenth century was 100 *para*s per *ferde*. While 20-30,000 *ferde*s of coffee and spices came to the port per year, in the mid eighteenth century this number decreased to the level of 18,000 *ferde*s due to additional taxes and illegal charges; Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt*, p. 106.

50 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:245 (evasıt-ı S 1169/November 15-25, 1755).

51 *Sarrac* was also the name of the soldiers who were levied from Anatolia, Rumelia, and the Aegean islands, and served the *emir*s and the military officers in Egypt. After several years of service in this manner, the *sarrac* soldiers were enrolled in the seven corps and made partners of wealthy Jeddah merchants by their patrons. They were, therefore, also called *yoldaş* (comrade). On the *sarrac* soldiers, see Cezzâr Ahmed Pasha, *Ottoman Egypt in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 24-26.

52 It is quite possible that the artisans who came to the Suez port to receive the trade goods sent by the Ciddavi soldiers were those who were under the protection of the seven corps in Cairo or had commercial partnerships with them; Raymond, "Soldiers in Trade", p. 16-37.

53 "*Canib-i Hicaz'dan bahren Mısr-ı Kahire'ye beher sene tevarüd iden kahve ve ecnas-ı bahar mukataasının iki-üç seneden berü ukde-i nizamı muhtel olub bahar sefineleri Süveyş'e karib mahalle geldiği haberi Mısır'da şayi olduğu gibi Mısır valileri tarafından şehr havalesi Süveyş'e gitmezden evvelce Mısr-ı Kahire'den ecnas-ı muhtelifeden sarrac ve kapusuz ve koltukçu misillü bin neferden ziyade eşhas Süveyş'e gidüb biz Ciddavileriz ve gelen eşya yoldaş malıdır deyü kudretleri mertebe zenbil ve sehhare ve fağfur ve akmişe ile memlu sandıkları zabt ve gümrüğünü kendüleri ashab-ı erzakdan olub bu bahane ile mal-ı baharı telef ve izaat iderek mukataa-i mezbureden Mısır valilerine senede 350 kise-i mısri ve dahi ziyade hasıl olur iken el-yevm mal-ı bahar 200 kise akçeye tenezzül bulub…*"; BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:569 (evasıt-ı Ş 1172/April 8-18, 1759).

Janissaries trading in the Red Sea. According to him, people whose professions were actually in trade were registered in the Janissary Corps and thus were assured of Janissary protection. These people did not perform any military duties and did not receive a salary from the corps, but enjoyed some privileges that would provide them an advantage in trade.[54] Niebuhr's narrative agrees with the information given in the *mühimme* records and describes the advantages of a merchant Janissary as follows:

> "*He enjoys also an exemption from the payment of custom-house dues, for a trunk and two baskets, which are allowed them for the conveyance of their baggage and provisions. But, instead of baggage or provisions, the trading janissaries take care to fill the trunk baskets with their most precious goods. I have seen, likewise, some ship-captains and pilots who had inrolled themselves among the janissaries, solely to acquire importance, and to secure the protection of this powerful body, who are always ready to support and defend a brother janissary; for such janissaries did not share the privileges of their Turkish brethren.*"[55]

It was not only the Cairo artisans who smuggled goods through the Suez customs using the name of the Ciddavi Unit. In 1760, 80-100 soldiers from the Janissary and Azeban Corps, whose main purpose was to trade, went to Jeddah, claiming that they were Ciddavis, and from there they sailed to Suez with merchant ships. When they returned, hundreds of people from Cairo were already at the port to meet them. Some Cairenes received bribes from merchants and became intermediaries charged with unloading the goods from the ships to the port without paying customs duty by using the well-known trick and claiming that the merchants were "*comrades of the Ciddavis*".[56]

Being a comrade of Ciddavis was a status similar to the Janissary comradeship we encounter in other cities of the empire, and, when referring to merchants or artisans, it indicates that they were under the protection of soldiers. While the soldier received a share of the income of the artisan under his protection, the artisan would gain some commercial privileges thanks to the protection and would prevent foreigners from interfering in their business. André Raymond states that the merchants and artisans of Cairo, especially the richest class trading in coffee, spices, and fabrics, benefited from this protection. According to his findings, of the forty-one coffee merchants whose assets could be examined, twenty-four were enrolled in the Janissaries and nine in the Azeban

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54 M. Niebuhr, *Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East*, (trans. Robert Heron), Volume 1, Edinburgh 1792, p. 237-238.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 238.

56 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:724 (evahir-i C 1174/January 27-February 5, 1761).

Corps.[57] Therefore, it would not be wrong to guess that hundreds of the Cairenes who flocked to the port of Suez to meet the soldiers were artisans and merchants under the protection of the Janissary and Azeban Corps. On the other hand, as in other cities of the empire, some Janissaries were also integrated into the Cairo guilds and, due to the two-way mobility between artisans and soldiers, in such cases it is difficult to distinguish who was primarily a soldier engaged in trade and who an artisan affiliated with the military.[58]

From the correspondence between Istanbul and Egypt, we can understand in which cases the soldiers were chastised, and how. For instance, the soldiers who did not join the unit or deserted while on duty were punished and sanctions were imposed on their corps. It was also a major problem for the security of the pilgrims and the authority of the state that the soldiers left the pilgrimage caravan on their journeys to Mecca, traveled by ship, and traded in the ports of the Red Sea. According to the old and established (*kadim*) regulations of the Ciddavi Unit, soldiers who did not join the unit or went to Mecca by sea had to be dismissed from their corps by their commanders, but the frequent violations of these rules show that this regulation was not strictly implemented and that the corps's officers responsible for disciplining the transgressors could also be involved in the same illegal activities. The governors of Egypt and Jeddah, whose incomes decreased due to the commercial ventures of the soldiers, complained about this to Istanbul. No governor was powerful enough to persuade the unit's members to stay within the confines of their military remit. An edict dated 1754 sent from Istanbul to the Egyptian governor, Mustafa Paşa, offers us an interesting view of the way the Ottoman court approached the problem. The document emphasized that it was generally forbidden for the soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit to participate in trade. Nonetheless, no sanction was proposed for punishing the soldiers involved in it. Instead, they were allowed to participate in trade, provided that they obeyed the same rules that merchants and artisans had to follow.[59] Thus, the imperial center effectively acquiesced to the soldiers' involvement in trade, despite defining it is as an illegal endeavor.

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57 Raymond, *Yeniçerilerin Kahiresi*, p. 85. Merchants were enrolled in the corps for protection and paid an entrance fee. In addition, when one of these merchants died, one-tenth of his inheritance was given to the corps; ibid., p. 88.

58 For a study on the two-way movement between Janissaries and artisans in seventeenth-century Istanbul, see Gülay Y. Diko, "Blurred Boundaries between Soldiers and Civilians: Artisan Janissaries in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul", *Bread from the Lion's Mouth: Artisans Struggling for a Livelihood in Ottoman Cities*, (ed. Suraiya Faroqhi), New York 2015, p. 175-193.

59 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.7:170 (evahir-i N 1167/July 11-21, 1754).

Actions of the Ciddavi soldiers that disturbed the public peace and order in the Haremeyn

The problems caused by the Ciddavi soldiers were not limited to the port-city customs duties. Some adverse events also occurred due to the soldiers' contacts with Bedouins and some of the local power-holders in Mecca and Medina. Although these incidents were rare, they were important because they could damage the public peace and order in the Haremeyn. Among these, the issue of arming the Bedouins was the most significant. The superiority of the Ciddavi soldiers when protecting the Cairo pilgrimage caravans against Bedouin attacks came from the fact that they were professional soldiers and bore firearms such as cannons and rifles. However, according to the imperial edicts sent to the governor of Jeddah in 1711 and 1712, although such procurements were banned, Bedouins were reported to have been buying handguns from soldiers of the Janissary and Azeban Corps. Bedouins, who paid ten to fifteen gold pieces for each handgun, were thus gaining access to several thousand rifles a year. The widespread use of firearms among the Bedouins was a serious threat to the Holy Cities and the pilgrims who constituted the natural targets of Bedouin raids. For this reason, the governor of Jeddah was strictly warned by the imperial center and ordered to confiscate firearms from people who did not belong to the military class.[60]

It was inevitable that the Ciddavi Unit would develop conflicts of interest with local groups as a result of their involvement in affairs beyond their job definition. In 1734, the escalation of the tension between the followers of the Şerif of Mecca and the soldiers of the Ciddavi Unit turned into a battle. Concerned about the further growth of the crises, Istanbul tried to bring the hostility between the two sides to an end through the governors of Egypt, Jeddah, and Damascus, and the Şerif of Mecca. The reason for the hostility was the credit relations between the Ciddavi soldiers and certain members of the Şerif's family, which presented the Ciddavi soldiers – "*most of whom are wealthy*", as noted in the imperial edict – with the opportunity to put forward some inappropriate requests.[61] During the ensuing battle, Hüseyin Efendi, a Janissary commander from the Ciddavi Unit, died, which led the Şerif of Mecca to punish his followers who caused this event. However, some Ciddavi soldiers, who were characterized as "*ignorant*", demanded retaliation and called for one of the Şerif's commanders to be killed in return for the deceased Hüseyin Efendi. According to the edict sent to the Şerif of Mecca, if this demand was deemed to be legally sound, the murderers of Hüseyin Efendi had to be executed for their crimes; if not, the "*ignorant*" people who came up with this demand would have to be the ones to be punished.[62] In addition, in order to stop

60 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D.1:173 (evail-i R 1123/May 19-28, 1711); 1:210 (evail-i R 1124/May 8-17, 1712).

61 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D. 5:62 (evail-i N 1146/February 5-15, 1734).

62 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D. 5:82 (evasıt-ı L 1146/March 16-26, 1734).

this enmity between the Ciddavi soldiers and the followers of the Şerif of Mecca from continuing into the following years, it was ordered that different soldiers be appointed to the Ciddavi Unit.[63] The information in the edict does not allow us to fully understand the roots of this crisis which took place in Mecca. However, the fact that the central administration sent the same edict to the governors of Egypt, Jeddah, and Damascus proves that Istanbul approached the issue with concern. It is known that all across the empire, the Janissaries who left their headquarters for temporary missions had a bad track record in obeying the local administrators in the places they went and were often involved in various conflicts with them.[64] The Janissaries of Egypt were already systematically disobeying the authority of the governor and the Şerif by encroaching on the income of the Jeddah customs and responding to warnings with aggression. In this framework, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the requests mentioned in the aforementioned edict as "*inappropriate requests of Janissaries*" were perceived as yet another manifestation of their challenge to the power of local authority.

Conclusion

In the eighteenth century, as a result of the enlargement of the sphere of influence of local actors in Egypt vis-à-vis the authority of the central state, a new order regarding pilgrimage affairs was formed. While the imperial center focused on the security of the pilgrims and the supplies of the Holy Cities, the military corps which supported the political control of Egyptian households increased their power in the ports and their share in trade. During this period, although there was no change in the old and established regulations of the Ciddavi Unit, a number of problems arose concerning their implementation. In particular, the Ciddavis who belonged to the Janissary and the Azeban Corps pursued active involvement in trade by taking advantage of their privileged and dominant position in the trading routes of the region. It is not possible to determine the exact scope of these privileges, but the cases examined in this study show that the Janissaries especially took advantage of their commanders' political influence to establish their commercial presence in the ports of Suez and Jeddah. The Janissary and Azeban Corps, which had already for many years been integrated with the commercial life of Cairo, expanded on these connections offered by their Ciddavi affiliation and extended their trade well into the Red Sea and Haremeyn regions. In addition, the Egyptian artisans and merchants under the protection of the corps, who supported the soldiers in transporting their merchandise from Suez to Cairo and selling it there, played an important role in this interregional trade. Eventually, the Ottoman

63 BOA, A.DVNS.MSR.MHM.D. 5:62 (evail-i N 1146/February 5-15, 1734).

64 On the disobedience of the Janissaries and their tendency to rise against their commanders, state officials, and even the central authority, see Mehmet Mert Sunar, *Cauldron of Dissent: A Study of the Janissary Corps, 1807-1826*, SUNY-Binghamton, Ph.D, New York 2006, p. 148-157.

court, unable to keep the Ciddavi soldiers away from such entrepreneurial activities, would acquiesce to accepting their involvement in trade as an ineluctable result of their military presence in the region, as was the case with Ottoman soldiers all around the Empire.

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