

Who Came on Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods? An Interreligious Comparison

In the Mamluk and Ottoman periods Jerusalem, as it always has, attracted Christian, Muslim and Jewish pilgrims coming in their hundreds or thousands each year. Christians of various nationalities and denominations came each year, reaching a peak at Easter. Many Muslims also came from throughout the Muslim world, as did smaller numbers of Jews.

This article attempts to determine who came on pilgrimage and from where and, when possible, in what numbers, during the Mamluk and Ottoman periods – here from 1260 to around the early 19th century, leaving out the later 19th and early 20th centuries. It cannot be my task here to summarize the history of the various religious communities in Jerusalem. Rather my short remarks focus on scattered historical accounts that reveal the sorts of people who came to Jerusalem out of religious interest, including some prominent pilgrims, and occasions when large numbers of pilgrims are attested. The study is based on scattered and incomplete documentary evidence, including anecdotal reports from hundreds of Western Christian pilgrim accounts and a smaller number of Muslim pilgrimage accounts.

The Population of Jerusalem

When pilgrims of the various religious affiliations came to Jerusalem in pre-modern times they would find support and accommodation with co-religionists. So it is worth establishing what the size of the Jerusalem's resident populations was.

Some census registers from the Ottoman period provide information about the size of Jerusalem's population. Without attempting to examine the fluctuations over the years, a general impression can be gained of the size of the various religious groups resident in Jerusalem. To cite a few figures, based on information recorded in three census registers from the 16th century¹:

In 1525-6 there were 3,699 Muslims, 714 Christians and 1,194 Jews for a total of 5,607.

In 1538-9 there were 7,287 Muslims, 884 Christians and 1,363 Jews for a total of 9,534.

In 1553-4 there were 12,079 Muslims, 1,956 Christians and 1,958 Jews for a total of 16,068.

In 1562-3 there were 11,806 Muslims, 1,830 Christians and 1,434 Jews for a total of 15,070.

According to other figures², in 1529 there were 608 Christians living in Jerusalem, including 84 Syrians; 84 Copts; 120 Armenians; and 420 Melkites, and in 1540 there were 5,640 Muslims and 780 Christians.

Five tax registers from the 16th century also provide some details about the number of Christians, separated into categories of Melkites (576, 523, 827, 594, 252); Syrians (48, 72, 136, 119); Jacobites (90, 72); Copts (162, 262, 326); Armenians (332, 189); Melkites of Bayt Rima (95), Hebron (27), Bethlehem (183, 159), Bayt Jala (114, 127); and monks (40, 110, 108)³.

The tax register for 1553-1554 also records the number of people who paid the jizyah poll-tax: Jews 85; Armenians 15; Melkite Greeks 15; Copts 10; Christians from Bayt Rima 13; Christians from Hebron 4⁴.

With the number of Christian residents ranging from the high hundreds up to nearly two thousand, the couple of full ship-loads of several hundred pilgrims from Western Europe each year would have been a large percentage of the number of Christian residents. The Ethiopians who came on pilgrimage in 1516, for example, would have swamped the numbers of any Ethiopians resident in the city.

Another assessment of the relative size of the various Christian communities is given by the Franciscan Elzear Horn⁵, long resident in Jerusalem between 1724 and 1744, who stated that in the city were about 25 monasteries,

1 Cohen/Lewis, Population 92-94.

2 Salameh, Survey.

3 Cohen/Lewis, Population 92-94.

4 Cohen/Lewis, Population 70-72. 98-99.

5 Horn, *Ichnographiae* 32.

2 Franciscan, 14 Greek, 3 Armenian, 3 Coptic, 1 Syrian and 1 Nestorian.

Christian Pilgrims

The Christians who came on pilgrimage included Catholics and Protestants from Western Europe, Orthodox from the Eastern Mediterranean and distinct groups of Georgians, Armenians, Syrians, Copts, Ethiopians and Nestorians, with local resident communities in the city and accommodations for pilgrims.

Contemporary sources provide little reliable information about total numbers of pilgrims who may have come. But the numbers seem to have ranged in the dozens to hundreds or low thousands, excluding residents of the city or region, who would have come to participate in such events as the Easter celebrations in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

One useful record of total numbers, before the growth of modern tourism starting in the 1830s, is by Augustin Scholz who estimates the numbers of people who came for Easter in 1820 as 1,400 Armenians; 1,200 Greeks; 30 Georgians; 300 Moskovites; 60 Copts; 15 Syrians; 1 Abyssinian; 20 Greek and Armenian Oriental Catholics; 4 Maronites; and 15 Franks⁶. He elsewhere estimated that the Greeks and Armenians average 4,000 pilgrims each year, while the Latin pilgrims numbered 10 to 20, and also identified the numbers of Armenians in Jerusalem as 100 monks in three monasteries and 200 lay people⁷.

Disruptions to Pilgrimage

The desire of Christians to come on pilgrimage to Jerusalem is irrepressible. Even in times of acute disruption, such as war and plague, pilgrims have attempted to come, if given half a chance. One especially disruptive event in Palestine was the Mongol invasion of 1260, with Mongol raiding in Palestine in the months between their capture of Damascus on 1st March and their defeat by the Mamluks at the Battle of 'Ayn Jalut on 3rd September⁸. Within days of the Mongol defeat, some Christians from Crusader territory arranged a truce and safe-conduct with the Mamluk Sultan Qutuz. But when Qutuz was murdered by Baybars on 24th October, the ruler of Jerusalem closed the city gates, leaving the pilgrims stranded in the city, and only with great suffering and loss of life were they able to return to Crusader territory⁹. The Mongols raided far into Palestine for a second time in early 1300¹⁰, but any disruption to pilgrimage would have been only short-term.

The most devastating event of the Mamluk period was the Black Death, at its peak in the eastern Mediterranean around 1347-1349. However, shipping across the eastern Mediterranean did not come to a complete halt in those years, and Western pilgrims are attested: Niccolo da Poggibonsi in 1347 and some Germans in 1346 and 1348¹¹.

The invasion of Timur into Syria in 1400 included the sack of Damascus, but Christian pilgrims are attested around the time¹², including Grethenios, from Russia¹³. The Ottoman-Venetian war of 1463-1479 plausibly would have led to fewer Christians coming from Western Europe, but there are plenty of pilgrimage accounts where the conflict plays no role, nor is any sustained drop in the numbers of pilgrims observable. The Ottoman-Mamluk conflicts of the 1480s also appear to have had little observable impact on pilgrimage.

The Ottoman conquest of the Mamluk Sultanate in the fall of 1516 disrupted pilgrimage for only a few months, as shiploads of pilgrims from Venice are attested within months of the conquest: Hessel van Martena, Tziallingh van Botnya and Juw van Bortyna, from the Netherlands were pilgrims on one shipload and Bernhard von Hirschfeld was on another, both in mid-July 1517¹⁴.

Occasional military campaigns led to armies marching back and forth between Egypt and Syria, which might lead to the city gates of Jerusalem being closed, as noted by Meshullam ben Menahem in 1481¹⁵, or would make it prudent for pilgrims and other travelers to stay out of their way, such as staying indoors in the Franciscan hospice in Ramla, but such disruptions would only last a day or two. A general lack of security in the countryside and highway robbers was a problem that everyone faced.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Christian Access

The focus of Christian pilgrimage in Jerusalem is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and there are countless descriptions of the church by Western pilgrims, detailing the fluctuations over the centuries as to which communities were present and where they had their own spaces¹⁶. The Franciscan Francesco Suriano¹⁷, resident in Jerusalem between 1481-1484 and 1493-1515, for example identifies ten distinct groups of Christian Religious who lived in the church: Franciscans; Catholic and Orthodox Maronites; Greeks; Georgians; Abyssinians; Copts; Jacobites; Syrians; Armenians; and Nestorians. The abundant information about the various Christian communities and their presence in the church is not repeated here.

6 Scholz, *Reise* 230.

7 Scholz, *Reise* 214-215.

8 Amitai, *Raids*. – Jackson, *Crisis*.

9 Shirley, *Syria* 110-120.

10 Amitai, *Raids*.

11 Röhricht, *Bibliotheca* 86-87. – Röhricht, *Pilgerreisen* 92.

12 Röhricht, *Bibliotheca* 101-102. – Röhricht, *Pilgerreisen* 208-211.

13 De Khitrowo, *Itinéraires* 167-191. – Yerasimos, *Voyageurs* 102. – Skarlakidis, *Holy Fire* 189-191.

14 Röhricht, *Bibliotheca* 171-172. – Röhricht, *Pilgerreisen* 208-211.

15 Alder, *Travelers* 189.

16 Krüger, *Grabeskirche*. – Biddle, *Tomb*. – Biddle et al., *Church*. – Peri, *Christianity*, among many others.

17 Suriano, *Treatise* 77.

Muslims came to the church as well, as the Italian pilgrim Niccolo da Poggibonsi wrote in 1347:

»And many Saracens, men and women, have great devotion there, and many of them come from Syria and the land of Egypt, and from the city of the Sultan, which is distant six days by desert; and also they come from many provinces, some out of devotion, and some to see what the Christians adore«¹⁸.

But the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was normally closed and opened for pilgrims only upon payment of a pilgrim tax. As the German pilgrim Wilhelm Tzewers in 1477 described the scene in the courtyard in front of the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the names of the pilgrims were recorded by officials and each one who had not come on the galleys across the Mediterranean, but rather had come from Beirut, Damascus or Cairo had to pay eight and a half ducats, while those who had come by sea on the galleys, in spite of having paid earlier, had to pay four ducats. When the church was opened priests and laypeople from all the Christian sects went inside to the various holy places where their communities were present, while the Western pilgrims stayed together with the Guardian and Franciscans for a celebratory procession through the church¹⁹.

Some Christians – monks, nuns and the poor – were exempt from paying that pilgrim tax, at least nominally. An anonymous English pilgrim in 1345 was one of a group of eight; four paid the full fee and four only half when they were found to not have anymore, »by an extraordinary concession and one unexpected by those present«. Others who had nothing were allowed. »This had not been seen for a long time, as the Christians said«²⁰. But the Franciscan Niccolo of Poggibonsi in 1346 reports how the Franciscan friars still had to pay. Their translator was beaten, and they were taken off to prison, until they came up with the money to pay the tribute to the sultan²¹. The anti-pilgrim George Robinson (see below) was expected to pay the pilgrim tax of 25 dollars (125 shillings) in 1658, even though he was vociferously not a pilgrim²². That tax was dropped only in the time of the Egyptian ruler Ibrahim Pasha in 1832.

There are many reports about the amounts that each individual pilgrim paid, and some census records of the sum totals²³, but it is difficult to determine the total number of Christians who paid, given the different rates. But Salameh suggests calculating that over a period of nine months in 1532 they paid an amount equivalent to 3,700 people; that would average some 400 per month²⁴. The census documents for 1553-1554 and 1562-1563 also record 60 Frankish pilgrims per year paying for admission²⁵.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, however, was opened without payment of the tax twice a year at Easter from Good Friday to Easter Monday and at the Exultation of the Cross in September, from the day before until the day after, as reported by Ludolf von Suchem in 1350²⁶. The precise timings, however, fluctuated across the centuries; for example the English pilgrim Henry Maundrell reported in 1697 that the last day the Church was open without payment was the Saturday after Easter²⁷.

Large numbers, perhaps thousands, of local Christians, predominantly Orthodox, would come then, especially for the Miracle of the Fire on Holy Saturday, for which there are abundant descriptions²⁸. Wilhelm Tzewers in 1477 wrote that »above all during Easter a large number of Christians come from Judaea and other regions of the East, who then are said to almost be the majority«²⁹. The Franciscan Francesco Suriano wrote that Christians »assemble from Egypt, Syria, Pamphylia, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Greece, Armenia and Lebanon, men and women« at Eastertime for the Holy Fire³⁰.

The Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi described what happened in 1671³¹:

»Even now 5,000 or 10,000 hell-destined infidels gather here every year on their infamous Festival of the Red Egg (Easter). Greeks and Armenians come from the seven climes, and fractious Franks from eighteen kingdoms. On the days of their assembly here, the Pasha and the Molla and *Shaykhülislam* and the notables of the province, as well as all the Ottoman military personnel, fully armed, stand ready in front of the Church to prevent 10,000 infidels from swarming into it to perform their pilgrimage. The trustee of the Church utters a benediction upon the Sultan of Islam and a malediction upon the infidels. The Pasha and the Molla break the seal of the Church's door and open it, because for the rest of the year it is sealed shut«.

But not only pilgrims took advantage of the opportunity to go into the church for free. In Henry Maundrell's version of events in 1697:

»The Turks allow free admittance, for all people, without demanding any fee for entrance as at other times; calling it a day of Charity. By this promiscuous Licence, they let in not only the poor, but, as I was told, the lew'd and vicious also: who come hither to get convenient opportunity for prostitution, prophaning the holy places in such a manner (as it is said) that they were not worse defil'd even then when the Heathens here celebrated their Aphrodisia«³².

Once Catholics adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1582, the date of Easter for Catholics and those other Christians

18 Poggibonsi, Voyage 14.

19 Hartmann, Wilhelm Tzewers 180-183.

20 Hoade, Western Pilgrims 64.

21 Poggibonsi, Voyage 8.

22 Robinson, Account 216.

23 Cohen/Lewis, Population 95.

24 Salameh, Survey 236.

25 Cohen/Lewis, Population 96.

26 Ludolf von Suchem, Description 106.

27 Maundrell, Journey 107.

28 Skarlakidis, Holy Fire.

29 Hartmann, Wilhelm Tzewers 172-173.

30 Suriano, Treatise 48.

31 Dankoff/Kim, Ottoman 319.

32 Maundrell, Journey 107.

who still used the Julian calendar diverged most years, leading to separate weeks for Holy Week and Easter commemorations in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It seems that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was opened for free for Julian calendar Easter, but not for Gregorian calendar Easter, as e.g. in 1697 recorded by Henry Maundrell³³, who being a British Protestant still celebrated Easter according to the Julian calendar³⁴.

Other Taxes

In addition to the fee for admittance into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, pilgrims had to pay other special taxes, which varied over the centuries. One decree of the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Qansuh al-Ghuri dating to March 1513 and placed near the entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is exceptionally detailed³⁵. It stated that the Melkite and Jacobite monks and nuns should not be coerced by a tax or a duty or an oppressive measure during their entry to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The same for Georgian and Ethiopian monks and nuns, neither during their entry or exit to the port of Jaffa, or in the cities of Gaza or al-Ramla, coming by land or by sea and every direction to visit holy Jerusalem. Greek and Coptic monks and nuns are exempted from the tax in the above mentioned districts in ordinary times and holidays according to their custom.

But there are plenty of other records of Christian pilgrims having to pay. Those who came by ship were registered and paid a tax upon landing, usually in Jaffa, while other pilgrims who came overland would pay elsewhere, e.g. Nablus for those coming from Syria. The Franciscan Francesco Suriano from the early 16th century lists the expenses that Western Christian pilgrims needed to pay, including taxes upon landing at Jaffa and at the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre³⁶. Other fees could be charged, as for example the fee that pilgrims were also required to pay for a military escort to the Jordan River. As Henry Maundrell wrote in 1697³⁷, the fee was twelve dollars for each Frank pilgrim, or six for ecclesiastics, and about two thousand pilgrims of every nation and sex took part. Every pilgrim had to pay, whether they wanted to go to the Jordan or stay in Jerusalem, as two pilgrims found out in 1666³⁸.

The amounts that Christian and Jewish pilgrims had to pay to the Ottoman authorities upon landing in Jaffa, as well as various road tolls (*ghafar*) to the Bedouin tribes along the

way have been studied for the 18th century³⁹, although total revenues are not known.

Some of the *ghafar* road tolls were levied for all travelers⁴⁰. The Muslim pilgrim 'Abd Allah al-'Ayyashi, for example, paid it on the road between 'Aqaba and Gaza in 1633⁴¹. Henry Maundrell had to pay arbitrary and unreasonable sums repeatedly on his way from Aleppo in 1697⁴². But other *ghafar* road tolls were specific for Christian and Jewish pilgrims⁴³. Meshullam ben Menahem, who came in 1481, mentioned that there are seven toll houses between Hebron and Jerusalem. He avoided paying tax by taking a roundabout route⁴⁴.

Monks, nuns and the poor were supposed to be exempt from the *ghafar*. In one case in 1540, the Ottoman official in Nablus had collected the *ghafar* from some monks, but when they petitioned the Islamic law court in Jerusalem, the judge refunded their money⁴⁵.

Christians from Western Europe

The experiences of Christians who came to Jerusalem from Western Europe, whether Catholics or Protestants, are especially well documented in hundreds of pilgrimage accounts⁴⁶, and the nature of their pilgrimages has been well studied by modern scholars⁴⁷. Uniate Catholics, such as Maronites from Lebanon, are rarely attested. I know of only one pilgrimage account by an Arabic-speaking Christian similar to the hundreds of accounts by Western pilgrims – the unedited account of Ilyas Ghadban, a Roman Catholic from Aleppo who came on pilgrimage in 1755⁴⁸.

All the people coming to Jerusalem from Western Europe were either pilgrims or monks, i.e. Franciscans, who lived there as long-term residents; no European civilians were permanent residents, until the 19th century, as noted by the Franciscans Francesco Suriano in the early 16th century and Elzear Horn in the early 18th century⁴⁹.

Catholics

Roman Catholic pilgrims and long-term resident monks came from everywhere in Western Europe. Elzear Horn noted that the Franciscans included Germans, Belgians, English, Irish, Poles, Hungarians, Bohemians, Illyricans, Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese etc.⁵⁰.

33 Maundrell, Journey 66.

34 Maundrell, Journey 96

35 Van Berchem, Matériaux 377-402.

36 Suriano, Treatise 33-36.

37 Maundrell, Journey 77.

38 Burrell, Journey 100

39 Cohen, Palestine 256-259.

40 Cohen/Lewis, Population 58.

41 al-'Ayyāshi, Al-Riḥlah 392. 406.

42 Maundrell, Journey 4.

43 Cohen/Lewis, Population 72. 151. 165-167.

44 Alder, Travellers 189.

45 Salameh, Aspects 236.

46 Röhricht, Pilgerreisen. – Röhricht, Bibliotheca.

47 Newett, Canon. – Graboīs, Pelerine. – Chareyron, Pilgrims. – Penth, Reise, among many others.

48 al-'Asalī, Bayt 119.

49 Suriano, Treatise 78. – Horn, Ichnographiae 34.

50 Horn, Ichnographiae 34.

During the final decades of the Crusader period, with Jerusalem under Mamluk control since 1260, Western pilgrims could come, such as Burchard of Mount Zion in 1283⁵¹, but once Acre and the last Crusader territories fell to the Mamluks in 1291, few Western Christians came on pilgrimage; Odoricus in 1320 was one⁵².

But after Pope John XXII in 1328 permitted two friars to be sent to Jerusalem each year and the Mamluk rulers allowed the Franciscans to establish a permanent presence in Jerusalem starting in 1336, and the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land was entrusted with custody of the holy places in 1342⁵³, pilgrimage by Western Christians soon flourished. The Mamluk period became the golden age for Western European pilgrimage to Jerusalem, recorded in hundreds of surviving pilgrimage accounts – a rate of one or two or even more each year. One estimate calculates some 6000-7000 pilgrims in the 15th century⁵⁴. In the Jubilee years of 1400, 1450, 1475, and 1500 there was a peak in the numbers of pilgrims⁵⁵.

Most Western pilgrims would travel to Venice or some other port either as individuals or in groups and around 200-300 Roman Catholic pilgrims would book passage each year – around 100 passengers on each of one or two galleys that sailed from Venice in the spring, typically leaving just after Easter as a Spring Voyage, and perhaps on another galley in the fall. The trip typically involved five or six weeks' sea travel and then two weeks in the Holy Land, followed by the trip back to Venice. A number of pilgrims typically would die in the course of the months-long journey, often one or two would drown in the Jordan River while visiting the Baptism Site.

Some figures for the number of pilgrims on ships from Venice are available for the years from 1382 to 1388⁵⁶: over 300 in 1382; 300 in 1383; over 400 in 1384; 380 in 1385; 340 in 1386; 323 in 1387; about 390 in 1388.

The pilgrims might land in Jaffa, or else in Beirut or Akko and then take a smaller coastal ship to Jaffa, from where they could proceed in smaller groups to Jerusalem. For example in 1477 Wilhelm Tzewers' ship with a large number of pilgrims first reached Jaffa, but they had to turn back to Cyprus. He eventually landed in Beirut and continued his journey on a small ship from there to Jaffa with only 19 pilgrims and 14 Franciscans from Candia with the Guardian from Beirut⁵⁷.

The number of pilgrims on board was roughly matched by the number of crew. For an example, in 1494 Pietro Casola came with 170 pilgrims, including 24 monks and 20 women, along with a crew of 140⁵⁸. The ship captains sometimes are attested as staying in the Franciscan monastery on Mount Sion, but what the rest of the crew did while the pilgrims were

in Jerusalem is not stated in the pilgrim accounts, and they presumably stayed on board the whole time. Any galley slaves would scarcely have been let on shore where they might have an opportunity to escape. Only starting in the 19th century are sailors and ship crews attested as having received shore leave, enabling them to come to Jerusalem as well.

Many pilgrims signed up for the package tour that the Franciscans offered, while others traveled independently, including some who traveled via Alexandria and the Sinai Peninsula. Others traveled overland from Syria, such as Henry Maundrell, who came from Aleppo with 14 other Englishmen around Easter in 1697⁵⁹. The numbers who came by ship seem to have substantially outnumbered those who came independently.

While in Jerusalem monks or other VIP pilgrims like the ship captains stayed in the Coenaculum, the complex around the Tomb of David and the Upper Room of the Last Supper on Mount Sion, where the Franciscans had their center. Others stayed in the Muristan, lower quality accommodations in the increasingly run-down former compound of the Knights of St John Hospitaller, just south of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which some pilgrims, e.g. Wilhelm Tzewers in 1477⁶⁰, estimate could accommodate a thousand pilgrims. Other pilgrims found private accommodations on their own⁶¹.

The Ottomans expelled the Franciscans from the Coenaculum in 1523⁶², but in 1559 they were able to reestablish themselves in the St Savior Monastery to the north of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Western pilgrims, both Catholic and Protestant, were accommodated for the rest of the Ottoman period until the Casa Nova hospice was built in 1847 to house the increasing numbers of pilgrims.

Some pilgrims would have travelled alone or in small groups, while rulers or nobles would have travelled with large entourages. Newett provides a few examples⁶³: in 1398 the Lord of Mantua travelled with an entourage of 35; in 1305 the son of King of Portugal traveled with an entourage of 25; and in 1414 the brother of the mayor of Bruges travelled with four friends and 13 servants. In 1464 Eberhard in Bart came on pilgrimage with an entourage of 40 people, 25 of whom were nobles, and including a chaplain, a doctor, a tailor and a cook⁶⁴.

After the standard tour of two weeks in the Holy Land, only a handful of intrepid pilgrims stayed longer and traveled to St Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai and on to Egypt. Other pilgrims might have wanted to go to St Catherine's, but were unable to do so due to unsafe travel conditions.

A consul from Venice was established in Jerusalem in 1415 – Genoa's was even earlier – to protect all European

51 Röhrich, Bibliotheca 55-61.

52 Röhrich, Bibliotheca 61-71. – Röhrich, Pilgerreise 85-87.

53 Amico, Plans 40-41.

54 Fouquet, Reise 21.

55 Van Schaik, Weite Reisen 213.

56 Newett, Canon 160-161.

57 Hartmann, Wilhelm Tzewers 25. 126-127.

58 Newett, Canon 160-161.

59 Maundrell, Journey.

60 Hartmann, Wilhelm Tzewers 180-183.

61 Schein, Latin Hospices.

62 Cohen, Expulsion.

63 Newett, Canon 46-47.

64 Faix/Reichert, Eberhard 142-143. 165.

Christians in the Holy Land⁶⁵. Henry Maundrell came to Jerusalem in 1697 in the company of the French consul at Sidon, who was also the Consul of Jerusalem and who in that capacity made a visit to Jerusalem each year at Easter to protect the interests of the Christians⁶⁶.

The Ottoman overthrow of the Mamluk sultanate in 1516 and especially the Ottoman capture of Rhodes in 1522 led to a drop in the number of Western European Christians who came on pilgrimage because shipping through the hostile Ottoman-controlled Eastern Mediterranean was no longer as safe as it had been earlier. The Counter-Reformation also led to a reduction in the number of Catholic pilgrims, as more emphasis was placed on pilgrimage to Rome.

Protestants

Protestants had less interest in pilgrimage than Roman Catholics and so as the numbers of Protestants grew since the 16th century, the numbers of pilgrims from Western Europe dropped. But some Protestants are known to have come.

One of the first was Henry Timberlake, a staunch anti-Catholic who came in 1601⁶⁷. He was a ship captain who had transported a ship-load of passengers from North Africa to Alexandria including Muslims on their way to the Hajj, but because he could not sell his cargo, he went first to Cairo and then decided to join a large caravan of more than 1000 people and 750 camels heading for Damascus; among the group were 22 Greeks and Armenians on their way to Jerusalem⁶⁸. When he and a travel companion reached Jerusalem, they had to identify themselves before being admitted through the city gates. His companion stated that he was Greek, so he was let in, while Henry Timberlake, who insisted on identifying himself as English, was arrested and put in prison because the Ottomans denied ever having heard of his prince or country and they thought he might be a spy.

A Moor of his acquaintance intervened and secured his release. He was brought to the Franciscan St Savior Monastery, where he explained to the Father Guardian that he had said what he did to avoid wronging his conscience by going to Mass, although he agreed to carry a candle. The Father Guardian mentioned that the Englishmen who had come previously were Catholic and told the Turks guarding the gates that they were French, because the Turks did not know who Englishmen were; Britains, however, were well-known to the Turks⁶⁹.

In the aftermath of the English Civil War in the 1640s, the radical Quaker sect appeared in England, and a new type of traveler came to Jerusalem: an 18-year-old, aggressively

anti-pilgrim Quaker from London named George Robinson, who, in what is easily the most bizarre of all recorded travels to Jerusalem, was sent by the Holy Spirit to Jerusalem in 1657-1658 to proclaim God's Kingdom to the nations and specifically to the ruler of the city⁷⁰.

In the view of the radical Quakers like George Robinson, proclaiming God's Kingdom involved denouncing the Satanic practices of the organized Church – whether the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church – such as having an ordained priesthood instead of the »priesthood of all believers« and worshiping »holy places«. So the Franciscans in Jerusalem in charge of the orderly conduct of Western Christian pilgrimage, who had never encountered someone like him before, viewed him as a blasphemer and did everything they could to thwart his plans. George Robinson records in his testimonial, among the plot twists of his struggles with the hostile Franciscans, how he repeatedly explained that he was not a pilgrim and had no intention to sin against God by worshipping such »holy places« as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Franciscans finally figured out how to deal with him by enabling him to meet privately in the Franciscan St Savior's Convent with the Islamic law court judge, who, however, was actually a Franciscan servant in disguise pretending to be a judge. The Franciscan hoax succeeded in fooling George Robinson, who went back to England thinking that he had fulfilled his mission to proclaim God's Kingdom to the ruler of Jerusalem.

The Ottoman officials who at one point had to register George Robinson had not been aware that there were Christians from the West who were not Roman Catholics⁷¹.

In 1669 14 Protestant Englishmen from the English factory in Aleppo came and stayed with the Franciscans without any such incidents⁷². The Franciscans had them sign a guestbook, which 158 other Englishman had signed since 1601⁷³. In 1697 The Protestant Henry Maundrell and his companions, from the English factory in Aleppo as well, also got along well with the Franciscans⁷⁴.

The European Enlightenment also brought a new type of visitor to Jerusalem – explorers and scientific researchers, such as Carsten Niebuhr who visited Jerusalem in August 1766 as the last surviving member of the pioneering Danish scientific expedition to explore Egypt, Arabia and Syria⁷⁵. But even earlier, pilgrims showed an interest in recording non-religious aspects of what they saw, such as Henry Maundrell in 1697, who devotes as much space in his account to antiquities and other interesting things he saw along the way as to religious matters and the various holy places he visited⁷⁶.

Tourists started coming to Jerusalem in significant numbers only in the 1830s; Buck Whaley, a British nobleman

65 Heyd, *Consulats*.

66 Maundrell, *Journey* 45.

67 Timberlake, *Strange*. – Taylor, *Englishman*.

68 Timberlake, *Strange* 57.

69 Timberlake, *Strange* 61-62.

70 Robinson, *Account*. – Villani, *Calzolaio* for the Franciscan version of events.

71 Robinson, *Account* 213.

72 Burrell, *Journey* 79-105.

73 Burrell, *Journey* 103.

74 Maundrell, *Journey* 66. 90. 109.

75 Niebuhr, *Reisebeschreibung*.

76 Maundrell, *Journey*.

who came to Jerusalem in 1789 as a result of a wager over whether he could actually get to Jerusalem and back, was one of the first to come without religion being a primary motivation⁷⁷.

Other Christians

While Catholic and Protestant pilgrims from Western Europe are extensively documented, that is not the case for other Christians. Establishing what numbers of pilgrims came with any precision or thoroughness is a frustrating task. My short remarks here are restricted to some prominent pilgrims who reveal the sorts of people who came to Jerusalem and the few occasions when large numbers, i. e. hundreds, of pilgrims are attested.

Orthodox

The Orthodox were the largest group of Christians in the city and the region of Palestine and they maintained ties with the Orthodox Christians throughout Eastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, continuing with little change under Ottoman rule. In addition to Arabic and Greek-speaking Orthodox, a Serbian monastery is attested in Jerusalem in the late 15th century⁷⁸. Orthodox Christians in the eastern Mediterranean could more easily travel back and forth to Jerusalem than Western Europeans could, and there was constant movement of pilgrims, monks and clerics⁷⁹.

In addition to visiting the holy places in Jerusalem, the Orthodox pilgrims, unlike Catholics, also had an interest in visiting the Orthodox monasteries to the east of Jerusalem, like the Monastery of Mar Saba⁸⁰. Among the pilgrims were monks or laymen who came with the intention of staying on long term as monks. To cite one example, St Sabas the Younger was a monk from Mount Athos who spent the years between 1310 and 1325 in Jerusalem and the monasteries to the east⁸¹. Another such example was Paul Tagaris Palaiologos, who had a most remarkable career. Born around the 1320s in Byzantium, he came to Palestine and became a monk around the 1340s. Later he returned to Constantinople and then in 1363 he travelled back to Palestine where he became a deacon. Then sometime around 1368-1375 he went to Antioch where he was ordained a priest and became exarch, then bishop of Taurezion and in 1376 the Catholic Patriarch of Constantinople, with his seat at Negroponte⁸².

Perkidas of Ephesus, the personal secretary to the metropolitan of Ephesus, was another noteworthy pilgrim who came to Jerusalem in the 14th century. He witnessed the Holy Fire ceremony and wrote a verse description of the holy sites⁸³. Other Orthodox travelers came to Jerusalem as a part of trips undertaken for other reasons: such as Andreas Libadenos (c. 1325-1328), who was part of a diplomatic mission from Constantinople to Egypt, in the course of which he made a round trip from Cairo to Jerusalem⁸⁴, and Daniel, the Metropolitan of Smyrna and later of Ephesus, who in 1480-1481 went on an inspection trip to the three Oriental patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem⁸⁵.

After the Ottoman capture of Constantinople in 1453, substantial numbers of Orthodox pilgrims continued to come, as demonstrated in the second half of the 18th century, when an agent for the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem would charter one or two ships each year to bring pilgrims from Istanbul (said by Panzac to be for Christmas), averaging 150 pilgrims for the five or six week trip by sea. Armenians and Jews also chartered ships to bring pilgrims⁸⁶.

Among the Orthodox pilgrims who came in the Mamluk and early Ottoman periods were many from Russia, including monks and clerics, as well as merchants and others on diplomatic missions⁸⁷. There are also cases of monks traveling in the other direction on fund-raising trips: Clement, a monk from Mount Sinai who traveled to Moscow in 1519⁸⁸, and Gregory and Sophronius, monks from Mar Saba, in 1547⁸⁹.

But the total numbers of pilgrims who came from Russia remain to be analyzed in non-Russian publications. Certainly, by the 19th century as many if not more pilgrims came from Russia than other Orthodox territories, and a large Russian compound was built to accommodate them in the 1860s outside the Old City walls.

Georgians

The Georgians had a presence in Jerusalem since the early Byzantine centuries, and in the Mamluk period, the Georgian Kingdom replaced Byzantium as the patron of the Chalcedonian Melkites in Jerusalem. The Georgians had especially good relations with the Mamluk state, which was manifested in Georgian pilgrims being exempt from paying the pilgrim taxes that others paid. The Georgians had a major presence in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, especially in the 14th century, as well as in the Monastery of the Cross to the west of the Old City, where there were over 300 cells. But when the

77 Whaley, *Memoirs*.

78 Mujir al-Din, *Uns* 2: 40.

79 Pahlitzsch, *Networks*.

80 Frenkel, *Mar Saba*.

81 Congourdeau, *Terre Saint*. – Talbot, *Pilgrimage* 103. – Pahlitzsch, *Networks* 136-137.

82 Nicol, *Confessions*.

83 Skarlakidis, *Holy Fire* 188-189. – Baseu-Barabas, *Perdikas*. – Külzer, *Peregrinatio* 27-28.

84 Külzer, *Peregrinatio* 21-24. 312-317. – Pahlitzsch, *Networks* 131.

85 Külzer, *Peregrinatio* 28-29. 337-351. – Kuezer, *Byzantine*. – Pahlitzsch, *Networks* 132-133.

86 Panzac, *Affruteurs* 169-170.

87 de Khitrowo, *Itinéraires*. – Seemann, *Wallfahrtsliteratur*.

88 de Khitrowo, *Itinéraires* 267-268. – Seemann, *Wallfahrtsliteratur* 302.

89 de Khitrowo, *Itinéraires* 269-275. – Seemann, *Wallfahrtsliteratur* 302.

Georgian Kingdom broke up in the 15th century, the Georgian presence in Jerusalem also sharply declined and the community was unable to maintain its position in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Monastery of the Cross; which were taken over by the Greek Orthodox in the 17th century. There seem to have been no Georgian pilgrims in any significant numbers in the early Ottoman period⁹⁰.

Armenians

There was always a sizable Armenian community in Jerusalem, centered in their own compound around the Church of Saint James, and pilgrims always came, but a definitive history of the community in Jerusalem, including how many pilgrims may have come, and how their numbers may have fluctuated over the centuries, has yet to be written⁹¹. The compound had more than three hundred guest rooms⁹².

A few prominent pilgrims are recorded in historical sources. For example, in 1266 Levon, an Armenian prince, was taken prisoner by the army of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars in Cilician Armenia. He was held one year and ten months in captivity in Egypt, although he was allowed on one occasion to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem⁹³.

The Armenian community in Jerusalem was supported by the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia up to 1375, when the kingdom was conquered by the Mamluks under al-Malik al-Ashraf Sha'ban. At that time King Levon V and other members of the royal family was imprisoned on 13 April 1375 by the Mamluks during a military campaign in Cilicia. They were ransomed on 7 October 1382, although earlier the dowager Queen Mariam had been allowed to go to Jerusalem, where she died in 1377. As soon as the others were released in 1382, they went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Levon later went to Europe, while his wife and daughter stayed on in Jerusalem after their pilgrimage in 1382, both died in 1405. They are buried in the Armenian compound⁹⁴.

When the sultan of Egypt al-Zahir Jaqmaq (1438-1453) forbade the Latins to rebuild their churches in Jerusalem, he also prohibited the emir of Jerusalem, Abu al-Kheir ibn al-Nahas, from harassing the Armenians with unnecessary taxation⁹⁵. An inscription of Jaqmaq to that effect is placed at the entrance to the Armenian compound.

The numbers of Armenian pilgrims would have fluctuated over the centuries. The English traveler Buck Whaley in 1789 understood that in the past one thousand pilgrims had been

lodged in the compound at times, »but that of late years, the impositions, to which they were subjected on the roads thro' Arabia, were such, that many had been obliged to relinquish their pious intentions of visiting the Holy Sepulchre, and consequently that the number of pilgrims was greatly diminished«⁹⁶.

Syrian Orthodox (Jacobites)

Non-Chalcedonian, Syrian Orthodox Christians also maintained a presence in Jerusalem over the centuries⁹⁷, but an attempt to determine numbers of pilgrims is difficult. The importance that pilgrimage held for the community is shown by a treatise on the ethics of pilgrimage to Jerusalem that Bar Hebraeus wrote in the 13th century⁹⁸. The community was centered at the Church of Saint Mark, which they acquired from the Copts in the late 15th century⁹⁹. The 15th century seems to have been one of increased pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as demonstrated by many Syriac inscriptions on the columns at the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; most of the ones that can be dated are from the early 15th century¹⁰⁰.

One historical account of a group of pilgrims coming is in 1494, when the priest Addäi of Ba Sabrina in Tour 'Abdin came on pilgrimage with a group of 40 people from his village¹⁰¹. They put themselves under the protection of an amir with a military escort.

Copts

Copts from Egypt always had a presence in Jerusalem and Copts could always travel back and forth, as for example, the future patriarch Matthew I (1378-1408) who sojourned in Jerusalem as a young monk¹⁰². But the Mamluk period was one of decline and conversion to Islam¹⁰³, including a phase of martyrdom before 5th November 1393, when four Latin priests were martyred while on pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the soldier-priest and monk Musa and six companions, also soldiers, were martyred between Gaza and Jerusalem¹⁰⁴.

There are some indications of Coptic pilgrimages to Jerusalem on a large-scale. Yusuf ibn Abu Dhaqn (Josephus Abudacnus), a Copt who wrote a history of the Copts in Latin in the early 17th century described the Coptic pilgrims who traveled by caravan to Jerusalem, although his figure of 60,000 participants is scarcely credible¹⁰⁵.

90 Janin, Géorgiens. – Abu-Manneh, Georgians. – Rose, Native Christians. – Müller/Pahlitzsch, Sultan Baybars. – Pahlitzsch, Mediators. – Pahlitzsch, Documents.

91 Irvine, Women. – Hintlian, Travelers.

92 Terian, Writers 146.

93 Ghazarian, Kingdom 59.

94 Terian, Writers 145. – Ghazarian, Kingdom 163.

95 Ghazarian, Kingdom 182.

96 Whaley, Memoirs 210.

97 Brock, Syriac. – Meinardus, Jacobites. – Palmer, History 1. – Palmer, History 2. – Palmer/van Gelder, Syriac. – Murre-van den Berg, Center.

98 Bar Hebraeus, Ethnikon.

99 Pringle 2007, 322-326. 386-389.

100 Brock/Goldfus/Kofsky, Syriac.

101 Fiey, Pèlerinage 114.

102 Swanson, Coptic 107.

103 Swanson, Coptic 101-103. 114.

104 Swanson, Coptic 115-117. 133-134.

105 Abudacnus, History 27.

»The Jacobites are used to go on Pilgrimage upon a Religious account: for to say in a word, there are many places in Aegypt, where the Bodies of Saints, and Images of the blessed Virgin are kept, which they believe to perform many extraordinary Miracles. But about the middle of Lent for the most part, they are wonted to travel to Jerusalem, and because the Road is infested with Thieves and Arabs, they use all to gather together in the Metropolis of Aegypt, whether Jacobites, Greeks, or Europeans, Merchants or Artificers, Pilgrims, etc. and there joyn in one Body, or Caravan, as they call it, and the number of the Pilgrims is so great that it sometimes exceeds sixty thousand Men. And after in this manner they are assembled together, they ascend their Camels and begin their Journey, and in twelve or fifteen days space reach the City of Jerusalem. [...] and they live in a sort of Hospitality together, as long as they stay at Jerusalem, where all the Holy Week they visit the Holy places.

The first day of Easter being past, they visit the Holy Places which are out of Jerusalem, as Bethlehem, the River Jordan, and the rest of the Holy Places of the Passion, which they do throughout the whole Week of Easter, and after this, every one returneth into his own Country.«

Elsewhere an organized caravan of around 100 Copts is attested for some years in the early Ottoman period. That caravan, paralleling the Muslim Hajj caravan, on occasion proved to be too ostentatious and so led to Muslim riots in Cairo in 1709 and 1748¹⁰⁶.

Ethiopians

There was a small Ethiopian community in Jerusalem with a presence at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, as mentioned by many Western pilgrims¹⁰⁷.

Some historical accounts tell of substantial numbers of pilgrims coming from Ethiopia to Jerusalem in caravans. One such example is the large group, who came for Easter in 1516¹⁰⁸. The entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was open for 16 days then¹⁰⁹. Another caravan of 336 pilgrims from Ethiopia on their way to Jerusalem in 1520 was attacked by Bedouins and almost everyone massacred¹¹⁰.

There are occasional references to Nubians in Jerusalem separate from Ethiopians¹¹¹.

Nestorians

The Nestorians maintained a presence in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Mamluk period up to at least 1575, but the community disappeared in the course of the Ottoman period¹¹². The presence of Nestorian pilgrims is scarcely traceable, except for the case of Rabban Sauma and Markos, two monks from western China who attempted to come on pilgrimage in 1283, but they were ultimately unsuccessful. They got as far as Baghdad, before they were sidetracked. Markos eventually became Nestorian patriarch and Rabban Sauma a Mongol ambassador to Europe¹¹³.

Jews

Jews formed a large community in Jerusalem throughout the Mamluk and early Ottoman periods, roughly equal in size to the Christians in the city¹¹⁴. A proper study of Jewish pilgrimage to Jerusalem, however, requires command of Modern Hebrew, so I will confine myself to just a few remarks.

The question of how many Jews came to Jerusalem on pilgrimage requires a decision about how to regard pilgrims who came with the intention of staying, i.e. Jewish immigrants such as Nahmanides, who immigrated to Jerusalem from Spain in 1267-1268. There were also influxes of Jewish immigrants in the 14th and 15th centuries¹¹⁵. The Hasidic followers of Yisrael ben Eliezer in the 18th century are another example of Jews coming in groups with the intention of founding permanent communities¹¹⁶.

A few Jewish pilgrims wrote travel accounts¹¹⁷. Isaac Chelo, who came in 1334, remarked that the leading men and principal rabbis of the Jewish community came from France¹¹⁸, while Obadiah da Bertinoro, who immigrated in 1487 and stayed until his death around 1500, mentions that for a time no Jew was allowed to travel to Jerusalem through Venice, but in his day the edict to that effect had been repealed, and »every year Jews come in the Venetian galleys and even in the pilgrim ships«¹¹⁹. He also wrote that »people come hither from Egypt, Damascus, Aleppo and other places to prostrate themselves before the Lord«; there were also Jews from Aden¹²⁰. The Jewish population included many aged, forsaken widows from Germany, Spain, Portugal and other countries¹²¹.

106 Armanios, Coptic 91-115.

107 Cerulli, Etiopi.

108 Cerulli, Etiopi 379-394.

109 Cerulli, Etiopi 389-390.

110 Cerulli, Etiopi 399-405.

111 Werner, Verbindungen 297-305.

112 Baum/Winkler, Kirche.

113 Fiey, pèlerinage 114. – Budge, Monks 17-24.

114 See especially Alder, Travelers. – Carmel, Settlement. – Meri, Cult 214-250.

115 Schein, Between 33-34.

116 Barnai, Jews.

117 Alder, Travellers. – Basola, In Zion.

118 Alder, Travellers 133.

119 Alder, Travellers 243.

120 Alder, Travellers 246-247.

121 Alder, Travellers 235.

Muslims

For the case of Muslim pilgrims to Jerusalem, a discussion of how to define pilgrimage is in order.

Muslim Pilgrimage

For Muslims a pilgrimage to any holy place other than to Mecca is called a »*ziyārah*« or »visitation«. The motivation for a *ziyārah* is commonly identified as »seeking the pleasure of God« or to gain blessings.

A *ziyārah* is typically performed at a tomb shrine¹²². A *ziyārah* does not need to be elaborate and could be little more than briefly reciting what comes easily from the Quran or other prayers and performing a ritual prostration. As an example, the diplomat al-Miknāsi (see below), who took advantage of an unexpected opportunity in 1788 to »visit (*ziyārah*) Jerusalem and gain blessings by seeing it, the Masjid al-Aqsa and the prophets who are there«, had limited time at his disposal, so as he passed the Shrine of the Prophet Samuel (Nebi Samwil) just north of Jerusalem on a hill off the main road, he merely stopped on the road and faced the direction of the shrine as he recited the *Fatihah* (the opening verses of the Quran) and prayed; he did the same thing as he passed by Bethlehem¹²³.

In addition to an individual activity, a *ziyārah* could be a group activity at a specific time of year, such as a major festival like the Nebi Musa festival in the spring when Muslims from around Palestine gathered in Jerusalem and then went in a grand procession for around four hours to the tomb shrine of Moses near Jericho, where they could stay for a week, before processing back to Jerusalem¹²⁴.

But of particular importance for the question of who to count as a pilgrim is that a *ziyārah* can be performed as an incidental part of a journey undertaken for another purpose, and so need not be the primary motivation for the trip. Depending on how broadly to define pilgrims, any Muslim government official, merchant or other traveler who came to Jerusalem could be considered a pilgrim if they stopped to perform a *ziyārah* at some wayside shrine or at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound once in the city. Identifying as a pilgrim every non-resident Muslim visitor who went to the al-Aqsa Mosque compound during his stay because he performed a *ziyārah* there would lead to the conclusion that the number of Muslim pilgrims vastly exceeded the number of non-Muslim pilgrims.

But one may prefer to restrict the numbers of Muslim pilgrims to those for whom a religious motivation was the pri-

mary reason for the trip to Jerusalem. But there are plenty of borderline cases. For example, the *amir* Amin al-Din 'Abd Allah, a high-ranking Mamluk official in Damascus, who sponsored the construction of a theological institute, al-Madrasah al-Amīniyah¹²⁵, along the north perimeter of the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in 1329-1330 and traveled to Jerusalem in 733/1332 to inspect the madrasah and its endowments.

An account of Amin al-Din's trip was written by Ibn Nubatah, one of the staff who accompanied him¹²⁶. Ibn Nubatah was the superintendent of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Christian pilgrimage in the 1330s. He was normally resident in Damascus for much of the year, but would come to Jerusalem periodically, especially around Easter. Unfortunately, his travel account says nothing about Christians or the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

As another borderline example, in 1571 after a report had reached the Ottoman sultan in Istanbul that the Christians in Jerusalem had illegally renewed their church and demolished a nearby mosque, the chief judge of the Islamic Law Court in Damascus was charged with looking into the matter, and so he arranged to stop over in Jerusalem during a previously scheduled trip to Egypt. Along the way, the judge and his entourage visited the shrine (*mashhad*) of Zakariah and John the Baptist in Sebastiya and the *mashhad* of Ma'adh ibn Jabal, a Companion of the Prophet Muhammad, and »the other famous places of enlightenment«. After a few days in Jerusalem, the chief judge investigated the matter of the church, the Monastery of the Cross to the west of the Old City, where the chief judge noted the recent renovations and the nearby mosque whose walls the infidels had demolished. He ordered the renovations to be demolished and the mosque walls rebuilt, which was carried out on the spot. After thus putting the infidels in their place, the group went to the Nebi Musa shrine near Jericho for two days and after spending a total of ten days in Jerusalem, performing the Friday noon prayers one week in the Dome of the Rock and on the second Friday in the al-Aqsa Mosque, they went to Hebron, where they spent two days, before proceeding on their way to Gaza and Egypt¹²⁷.

A third example of a borderline case is Rajab Pasha, an Ottoman wazir who was the governor of Jerusalem between December 1714 and March 1716. His time as governor was the subject of a lengthy panegyric from which one gets the impression that the governor did little else besides visit Islamic shrines during his year and a half as governor¹²⁸. Among other visitations, when Rajab Pasha arrived in Jerusalem, the first thing he did was to visit (*ziyārah*) the prophets (*anbiyā'*) and the messengers (*rusul*) and to visit the saints (*awliyā'*) and the righteous ones (*ṣāliḥīn*), done to seek the pleasure

122 For Ottoman Palestine see Grehan, *Twilight*.

123 al-Miknāsi, *Riḥlat*.

124 For the Nebi Musa festival see Kahle, *Gebräuche*. – Spoer, *Nēbi*. – Hartmann, *Nebi*. – All translated in Schick, *Palestinian*.

125 Burgoyne, *Mamluk* 249-257.

126 Ibn Nubātah, *Riḥlat*.

127 Al-Ḥamawī, *Hādī*. See Yerasimon, *Voyageurs* 290-291. – al-'Asalī, *Bayt* 82-83.

128 Al-Khalīlī, *Tārīkh*.

of God¹²⁹. »He did not know of any place where there was a prophet or a saint (*wali*) or that was famous for prayers being answered, without going there and having the Quran recited and saying prayers and proclamations of God's unity, beyond description«¹³⁰.

One Friday after the noon prayers, Rajab Pasha held a large session in the Dome of the Rock, filled beyond capacity without parallel for the recitation of the Quran and the 99 divine names, prayers and praise¹³¹. He did the same thing in Hebron for Abraham, his wife Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. He went to Hebron at the time of the arrival of the Hajj pilgrimage caravan back from Mecca »for no other purpose than for prayer and supplication ...and stayed there for 15 days, doing nothing except praying day and night«¹³². Rajab Pasha went on a second trip to Hebron for ten days for visitation.

When he went to the Nebi Musa shrine near Jericho,

»he stayed there for three days with an unmentionable amount of petitionary prayers, submission, humility, and slaughtering of sacrifices and supplication to the Lord of the Worlds in the presence of the scholars and the righteous and the sufis and the possessed, with everyone praying for the victory of the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims and that the word of the ones proclaiming the unity of God would be raised and then the infidels and polytheists would be humbled and that 'Ali Pasha, the one who was the greatest of the administrating ministers, would undertake the organization of religion. He repeated his visit a number of times and each time he did what was mentioned and more«¹³³.

Muslim Pilgrims

But to turn to cases where pilgrimage was the primary reason for a Muslim's trip to Jerusalem, there are a substantial number of travel accounts of Muslim pilgrims to Jerusalem, even though the desire to write travel accounts was not nearly as prevalent among Muslims as was the case with Western Christians. Many of those travel accounts, however, remain unedited and only a few have been translated into a European language¹³⁴. Most of the many travel accounts of Muslim pilgrims from Morocco, for example, remain unedited¹³⁵. Some of the accounts, especially starting in the Ottoman period, include details of the pilgrim's personal experiences.

Those Muslim pilgrims who wrote accounts were elite Muslims, usually prominent religious figures, who were members of the same Islamic culture as Jerusalem's majority population, and so they fit in easily. While in the city, they wanted to meet their peers, and so their accounts often contain much

biographical information about the religious scholars they met. That is a feature of pre-modern Muslim historical writing in general, where biographies of religious scholars take a prominent place. That makes the Muslim travel accounts different from the accounts of Western Christian pilgrims, who came to visit the Christian holy places, but not to meet Christian clergymen; Orthodox pilgrims, however, commonly wanted to visit the Orthodox monasteries to the east of Jerusalem.

Every Muslim who came to Jerusalem from a far distance undertook the journey primarily to perform the Hajj to Mecca, to which they added a visit to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is out of the way of the most direct travel routes between Egypt and Syria or to Mecca for the Hajj, so that Muslim pilgrims would need to actively choose to come to Jerusalem, rather than merely pass through it on their way to somewhere else. Only a small portion of the Muslims who went on the Hajj to Mecca with the Egyptian or Syrian Hajj caravans also chose to come to Jerusalem as well.

One such example is Ibn 'Uthman al-Miknasi, a career diplomat for one of the rulers of Morocco in the second half of the 18th century¹³⁶. He went on a diplomatic mission to Istanbul in 1787, after which he went on the Hajj and travelled with the Syrian Hajj caravan on his way back in 1788. He had not originally intended to go to Jerusalem, but he decided to do so as an afterthought once he had reached the port of Acre on his way back to Morocco and learned that it would be a couple of weeks until the next ship sailed, so he had just enough time to make a rushed trip to Jerusalem and Hebron.

Every Muslim pilgrim who came to Jerusalem also visited the tomb of Abraham in Hebron. Nabi, who was in Jerusalem in early September 1678, is an exception¹³⁷. He travelled from Istanbul to Damascus and then on to Cairo in a small caravan of himself and a friend on horses or camels accompanied by people on foot (slaves?). He reached Ramla, where he stored his baggage and then went to Jerusalem, where he spent three days before returning to Ramla and continuing onward to Cairo. He did not visit Hebron, because »Unfortunately due to our fear of Arab highwaymen we could not visit the shrines of the prophets Abraham, Moses, and those buried at the cemetery of Abraham, namely Isaac, Jacob and Joseph«¹³⁸. Muslim pilgrims also commonly made a trip to the Nebi Musa shrine near Jericho, where Muslim tradition locates the tomb of Moses, but sometimes they chose not to go due to time constraints or fear for their safety on the insecure road there, both reasons applied in the case of al-Miknasi's hurried trip in 1788¹³⁹.

All travelers faced dangers on the road, but Muslim travelers were safer than non-Muslims, as shown by the case

129 Al-Khalili, *Tarikh* 139.

130 Al-Khalili, *Tarikh* 141.

131 Al-Khalili, *Tarikh* 142.

132 Al-Khalili, *Tarikh* 143

133 Al-Khalili, *Tarikh* 144.

134 Al-'Asali, *Bayt*. – Rafeq, Ottoman.

135 al-Tāzī, *Al-Quds*.

136 al-Miknāsi, *Rihlat*.

137 Coşkun, *Narratives* 160-165.

138 Coşkun, *Narratives* 165.

139 al-Miknāsi, *Rihlat*.

of al-'Ayyashi in 1633¹⁴⁰. He was with a group of Muslims on their way from Gaza to Jerusalem on a hot summer day, when they decided to make some shade, by cutting off some palm branches to hold over their heads. But once they had done so, al-'Ayyashi noticed some men on the road ahead of them who began to shout curses at them. When he asked his donkey-driver what was going on, the donkey-driver replied that those men were highway robbers getting ready to attack them, because they thought that al-'Ayyashi's group were Christians because holding palm branches in their hands as they approach Jerusalem was something that Christians do. It seems that al-'Ayyashi's group then avoided being robbed by showing that they were Muslims.

The travel accounts of Western pilgrims occasionally mention Muslim pilgrims as well. Niccolo of Poggibonsi in 1347-1350 wrote how Saracens who were unable to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca came to Hebron instead¹⁴¹. Wilhelm Tzewers in 1477 recorded that the ship from Venice he was on was unable to land at Jaffa because three large Turkish ships were already there. The Turks had come from Plataea in Greece to visit St Abraham¹⁴². Seemingly they were Turkish Muslim pilgrims to Hebron – and surely Jerusalem as well. In his description of Hebron, Wilhelm Tzewers wrote that each year a great number of Saracens and Turks stream to the graves of the Patriarchs and their wives, often in larger numbers than to Mecca¹⁴³. Such organized shiploads of Muslim pilgrims coming to Jerusalem from Ottoman territory during the Mamluk period and seemingly independent of the annual Hajj caravans are, to my knowledge, otherwise unattested.

In 1494 a group of Christian pilgrims on donkeys passed a caravan of around 400 horses and 100 camels near Ramla that was taking a Turkish woman pilgrim on her way to Mecca¹⁴⁴. That meeting was on 2nd August 1494 (29 Shawwal 899) or just over a month before the start of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah, so she would have had just enough time to get to Mecca for the start of the annual Hajj pilgrimage – the travel time from Damascus to Mecca was 34 days.

Another pilgrim worth mentioning here who came by a circuitous route was the sultan of Yemen¹⁴⁵. While in Mecca on the hajj in 1351, the Sultan of Yemen al-Malik al-Mujahid was arrested because he did not acknowledge himself as subject to the ruler of Mecca. He was taken to Cairo, but soon released. On his way back to Yemen, he was arrested again near Yanbu' and taken to al-Karak in Jordan. He was eventually released and then went on pilgrimage to Jeru-

salem and Hebron before returning to Yemen via Egypt in 1352.

Housing for Muslim Pilgrims

The Mamluk sultans, governors and other high officials built numerous pilgrim hospices, commonly named a *ribat* in Arabic on the north and west sides of the al-Aqsa Mosque Compound and elsewhere. The most splendid of the Mamluk buildings was the Madrasah al-Ashrafyah, constructed in 1482¹⁴⁶, where VIP guests could be housed in the Ottoman period, but other also ornately constructed buildings included the Ribat al-Basiri, constructed in 1267-1268 for the poor coming to visit noble Jerusalem¹⁴⁷; the Ribat al-Mansuri, constructed in 1282-1283 for the use of the poor and visitors¹⁴⁸; the Ribat Kurt al-Mansuri, constructed in 1293-1294¹⁴⁹; the Khanqah al-Dawadariyah, constructed in 1297, which among other functions provided hospitality for Sufis and disciples for up to ten days¹⁵⁰; the Zawiyah al-Aminiyah, mentioned above, built in 1329-1330¹⁵¹; the Ribat al-Nisa, constructed in 1330 for women¹⁵²; the Ribat al-Maridini, constructed in 1363 for pilgrims from Mardin¹⁵³; the Zawiyah al-Naqshabiyyah, first constructed in the 14th century to house strangers and feed the poor Muslims from Bukhara, Jawa and Turkistan and rebuilt in 1616¹⁵⁴; the Madrasah al-Jawhariyyah, constructed in 1440¹⁵⁵; the Ribat al-Zamani, constructed in 1476-1477 for Shafi'is¹⁵⁶, to name only the most prominent ones, in addition to other caravanserais, theological schools and sufi lodges.

In the Ottoman period, small buildings were also built within the al-Aqsa Mosque compound itself on the upper Dome of the Rock platform, where VIP pilgrims could stay¹⁵⁷, and the largest charitable foundation in Palestine, the Tekkiyyeh of Haseki Sultan, the wife of the Sultan Sulayman the Magnificent, was constructed in the mid-16th century in the middle of the Old City¹⁵⁸.

Since Salah al-Din's capture of the city from the Crusaders in 1187, Muslims of North African origin, who were adherents to the Maliki legal tradition, had their own residential neighborhood with a pilgrims' hospice just west of the al-Aqsa Mosque compound, in the area of the current Western Wall Plaza.

Muslim pilgrims also came from India¹⁵⁹. An old Indian zawiyah (Zawiyat al-Hunud) identified by Mujir al-Din¹⁶⁰ was

140 al-'Ayyāshī, al-Riḥlah.

141 Poggibonsi, Voyage 58-59.

142 Hartmann, Wilhelm Tzewers 120-121.

143 Hartmann, Wilhelm Tzewers 274-275.

144 Fricke, Itinerarien 36.

145 Wüstenfeld, Geschichte 4:253-254 §254.

146 Burgoyne, Mamluk 589-605.

147 Burgoyne, Mamluk 117-126.

148 Burgoyne, Mamluk 129-140.

149 Burgoyne, Mamluk 144-153.

150 Burgoyne, Mamluk 154-166.

151 Burgoyne, Mamluk 249-257.

152 Burgoyne Mamluk, 240-243.

153 Burgoyne, Mamluk 412-414.

154 Auld/Hillenbrand 2000: 2:904-912.

155 Burgoyne, Mamluk 555-567.

156 Burgoyne, Mamluk 572-578.

157 Auld/Hillenbrand, Ottoman 2:742-746; 791-796; 797-801; 2:846-850; 948-952.

158 Auld/Hillenbrand, Ottoman 539-581 / 2:747-790.

159 Jabbāra, al-Muslimūn 57-61.

160 Mujir al-Dīn, Uns 2:48.

renovated by Shaykh Baba Farid Kanj, the shaykh of the Indian community in 963/1555. The Indian hospice, just south of Herod's Gate, was largely replaced by a new building in 1869-1870.

No attempt has been made to estimate the total housing capacity of all these Muslim facilities, but it would have easily been in the thousands. This elaborate infrastructure, built

by sultans and governors over centuries serves to highlight the conclusion that Muslims made up the solid majority of pilgrims in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. The historical visibility of Western pilgrims derived from the hundreds of pilgrim travel accounts greatly exceeds their actual importance based on numbers in comparison to the other Christian communities, Jews and Muslims.

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Zusammenfassung / Summary / Résumé

Wer ging in der Zeit der Mamluken und Osmanen auf Pilgerfahrt nach Jerusalem? Ein interreligiöser Vergleich

Dieser Artikel geht der Frage nach, wer unter der Herrschaft der Mamluken und Osmanen nach Jerusalem pilgerte. Anekdotische Berichte, insbesondere aus westlichen christlichen Pilgerberichten und in geringerer Anzahl auch verfasst von muslimischen und jüdischen Pilgern, zeigen uns zusammen mit gelegentlichen historischen Belegen und dokumentarischer Evidenz, welche Art von Menschen sich zur Pilgerfahrt nach Jerusalem aufmachten, woher und manchmal auch in welchen Mengen sie kamen. Unter den Christen waren Katholiken und Protestanten aus Westeuropa, Orthodoxe aus Byzanz und aus dem östlichen Europa sowie verschiedene Gruppen von Georgiern, Armeniern, Syrern, Kopten, Äthiopiern und Nestorianern sowie örtlich ansässige Gruppen. Jüdische Pilger lassen sich schwerer dokumentieren. Muslime bildeten den Großteil der Bevölkerung der Stadt und Umgebung. Und so kamen viele muslimische Pilger, zu denen auch muslimische Reisende gehörten, die die Heiligtümer besuchten, während sie eigentlich aus ganz anderen Gründen auf Reise waren. Muslimische Pilger wurden durch eine umfassende Infrastruktur von Pilgerherbergen unterstützt, die von den Herrschern errichtet worden waren.

Who Came on Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods? An Interreligious Comparison

This article examines who came on pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. Anecdotal reports, especially from Western Christian pilgrim accounts and a smaller number of Muslim or Jewish pilgrimage accounts, along with occasional historical references and documentary evidence reveal the sorts of people who came to Jerusalem on pilgrimage, where they came from and on occasion in what numbers. Christians included Catholics and Protestants from Western Europe, Orthodox from Byzantium and elsewhere in Eastern Europe and distinct groups of Georgians, Armenians, Syrians, Copts, Ethiopians and Nestorians, with local resident communities. Jewish pilgrims are harder to document. Muslims formed the bulk of the population of the city and region and so many Muslim pilgrims came, including Muslim travelers who would perform visitations of shrines during travels undertaken for other reasons. Muslim pilgrims were supported by an extensive infrastructure of hospices built by the rulers.

Qui vint en pèlerinage à Jérusalem au bas Moyen Age? Une comparaison interreligieuse

Cet article se penche sur l'identité des pèlerins de Jérusalem sous les Mamelouks et les Ottomans. Des récits anecdotiques, spécialement de pèlerins occidentaux chrétiens et d'un petit nombre de pèlerins musulmans et juifs, parallèlement à des références historiques occasionnelles et des sources documentaires, nous révèlent le type de pèlerins qui venaient à Jérusalem, d'où ils venaient et parfois en quel nombre. Les chrétiens comptaient des catholiques et des protestants de l'Europe occidentale, des orthodoxes de Byzance et d'autres régions d'Europe orientale, différents groupes de Géorgiens, Arméniens, Syriens, Coptes, Éthiopiens et Nestoriens, ainsi que les communautés locales. Il est plus difficile de documenter les pèlerins juifs. Les musulmans formaient le gros de la population de la ville et de la région, favorisant ainsi l'afflux de pèlerins musulmans, parmi eux des voyageurs partis pour d'autres raisons qui profitaient de visiter des sanctuaires en cours de route. Les pèlerins musulmans jouissaient d'un important réseau d'hospices construits par les dirigeants.