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Author(s): Yvette Talhamy

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THE KISRAWAN EXPEDITIONS AGAINST HETERODOX RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN SYRIA UNDER MAMLUK RULE

YVETTE TALHAMY

In 1260 the Mamluks conquered Greater Syria after their victory over the Mongols in the 'Ayn Jalut battle, and thus gained control over this area as well as Egypt. Yet, in spite of their defeat in 1260, the Mongols never gave up hope to re-conquer the region. They made several attempts to do so and even succeeded in conquering several districts over which they ruled for several months until driven out once again by the Mamluks. Their attempts continued till the beginning of the 15th century.

In addition to the Mongols, the Crusaders (1096-1291)¹ also endeavoured to control the area and for thirty years, from 1260 till 1291, both Crusaders and Mamluks shared the control of Greater Syria. The former mainly ruled along the Mediterranean coast, but in 1289 Tripoli was conquered by the Mamluks, while Acre was not conquered till 1291; soon afterwards, the cities of Tyre, Sidon and Beirut were also captured. The year 1291 also marked the end of the Crusader presence, but like the Mongols, they never gave up hope to re-conquer the region¹. Besides this, several districts in Greater Syria were held by the Ayyubids, such as al-Karak (1263), Homs (1264) Sahiun (1271) and Hamah, which was ruled by the Ayyubids, by permission of the Mamluks till 1341. (Poliak 1977:16) The areas surrounding some of the districts that were not under Mamluk rule were inhabited by different heterodox religious minorities who were accused by the Mamluks of collaborating with the Crusaders and the Mongols against the Muslims. After defeating the Crusaders and the Mongols, the Mamluks decided to

¹ The Crusaders conducted several expeditions into the region in an attempt to conquer Jerusalem, which they took in 1099 and held till 1187 after being defeated in the Battle of Hattin by the Ayyubid Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. The Crusaders left the region in 1291.

subject these minorities to their rule, with the help of local leaders, the Tanukhids and their warriors together with Shaykh Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya.

In this paper I will present the different military expeditions that were launched at the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century against the heterodox religious minorities that had settled in the district known as Mount Lebanon, mainly Kisrawan, al-Jird and al-Dinniyya.

The first expedition was launched in 1292, the second in 1300 and the third in 1305. Did they have a religious purpose, and were they against the extreme religious minorities as some historical sources imply? Why were they launched against specific districts such as Kisrawan, al-Jird and al-Dinniyya? Why were other districts that were also inhabited by religious minorities not attacked, such as Wadi al-Taym inhabited by the Druze, the 'Akkar inhabited by the Shi'ites (Matawila), or the area surrounding Latakia where the Nusayris had their missionary centre since the 11th century? Why did the emirs of the Gharb, the Druze Tanukhids, fight side by side with the Mamluks and what were their motives? Another question concerns the role of Shaykh Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya in these expeditions. Did the Mamluks use him in order to give these expeditions the religious sanction of a *Jihad* against the "extreme" heterodox religious minorities, or did he use these military expeditions to serve his own religious purposes?

The Religious Minorities in the Attacked Districts

According to various chronicles, the three expeditions were aimed against the religious minorities that had settled in the district of Kisrawan², al-Jird³ and al-Dinniyya.⁴ They mention that the inhabitants belonged to minority populations such as the Rawafid (Matawila or Shi'ites),⁵ the Druze (Tayamina or Hakimiyya), and the Nusayris (or

² Kisrawan is the region found to the northeast of Beirut; its southern border is Nahr al-Kalb, with Nahr Ibrahim in the north, the Mediterranean in the west, and Ba'labakk in the east.

³ Al-Jird is the region south of Kisrawan, with al-Shuf as its northern border, Beirut in the west, and the Biqa' in the east.

⁴ Al-Dinniyya is located in North Lebanon, its northern limits is the 'Akkar, with al-Hirmil in the east, Bsharri in the south, and Tripoli in the west.

⁵ Mutawila is the name of the Ithna 'ashri Shi'ites who settled in the region of south Syria, north Lebanon of today. See: Ende 1993.

'Alawis), which were considered to be followers of extremist Muslim creeds. According to Poliak, after the Mamluk conquest of Greater Syria there were still two districts that maintained their independence and were ruled by their local chiefs. These were the Druze part of Kisrawan that was subdued in 1300, and the district of al-Dinniyya, which lies between Masyaf and Famiya⁶ and which was inhabited by the Nusayris, that was subdued in 1306. (Poliak 1977:16)

Al-Qalqashandi (1355-1418) in his chronicle *Subh al-A'sha fi sina'at al-insha* ('Dawn for the Blind concerning the Technique of Correspondence') mentions that the inhabitants of Kisrawan and its surroundings were Druze. (Al-Qalqashandi 1918, vol. 13:248) According to 'Isa Iskandar al-Ma'luf, the region of North Lebanon in the area surrounding al-Batrūn as far as the district of Kisrawan was inhabited by the Nusayris, who moved there from the 'Akkar and al-Dinniyya. (Al-Ma'luf 2003, vol. 1:203) Ibn Kathir (1301-1372), and later Henri Lammens, claimed that the district of Kisrawan was inhabited by the Tayamina (Druze), and that the Christians began to settle in this district in later times, after the Druze had fled. (Lammens 1921:13-16) Louis Cheikho also confirms this claim. According to him, after the famous expedition of 1305 against the Kisrawan Mountains, the district was almost totally depopulated until the Christians began to arrive to settle it.⁷ However, contrary to these authors, Kamal Salibi claims that the Maronites had settled in different parts of Kisrawan during the period of Crusader rule, and that they had suffered from these expeditions just like all the other religious minorities there. (Salibi 1957:297-298) Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) mentions that the expeditions were against the Druze. (Ibn Khaldun 1958:415)

The Extremist Creeds: the Rawafid according to Ibn Taymiyya

Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya (1262-1328) (Kohlberg 1995), born in Syria during Mamluk rule, was a prominent Hanbali Shaykh who obtained the title of Shaykh al-Islam.⁸ Ibn Taymiyya launched a wide-scale attack against the "extremist creeds". He wrote extensive

⁶ Famiya or Afamiya is in North-East Syria, 56 km from Hamah. Near the city is the Famiya Citadel or Al-Madiq Citadel.

⁷ *Al-Mashriq* 1902, Beirut, p. 415.

⁸ Connotes religious preeminence especially training in the Islamic religious law. See: Gordon 1995:54.

theological tracts mainly to explain their danger and the necessity of fighting them since they endangered the very existence of Sunni Islam. Amongst his many works, Ibn Taymiyya wrote *Minhaj al-Sunna fi Naqd al-Shi'a w-l-qadriyya*, *Baghyat al-Murtad* as well as other books, letters and *fatwas* mainly intended to warn against those extremist creeds.

In most of the chronicles we find the use of the term *Rafida* or *Rawafid* ('Rejecters') as synonymous for the extremist creeds, with main emphasis being on the Shi'ite. (Al-Baghdadi 1997:22) According to Ibn Taymiyya, "since Zayd left the Shi'a they were split into Rawafid and Zaydiyya. When Zayd was asked about Abu Bakir and 'Umar [the two Rashidi caliphs] he said: 'May God bless their names'.⁹ This is why those who had accepted him before refused to accept him now (*Rafadhu qawmuhi*). He then told them: 'You refused to accept me!' This is why they were called rejecters (*Rafida*), because they refused to accept him, and those who did accept him were called the *Zaydiyya* (supporters of Zayd), because they supported him." (Ibn Taymiyya 1962:35)

Amongst the extremist creeds that Ibn Taymiyya mentions in his various works are the Kharmiyya, the Batiniyya, the Qaramita, the Isma'iliyya, the Nusayriyya and other "hypocrite" creeds that according to him were all part of the Rawafid.¹⁰ According to Ibn Taymiyya, the adherents of these creeds supported the Mongols, since they did not oblige them to live in accordance with the Muslim religion. (Al-Bukhari 2005:121) In a letter he sent to the Mamluk Sultan, he mentions that amongst those who were attacked during the Kisrawan expedition there were people who were waiting for the return of a two-, three- or five-year old child¹¹, which according to them had disappeared, and

⁹ They refused to accept him because he refused to denounce the first two caliphs, Abu Bakir and 'Umar as do the Shi'ites, the Nusayris-'Alawis and the other extremist creeds.

¹⁰ Al-Bukhari 2005:120-122. This book includes, in addition to the first book that gives it its title, four other ones: *al-'uqud al-Dariya fi manaqib Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya*, *al-kawakib al-Dariya fi manaqib Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya*, *al-Rad al-Wafir 'ala man za uma an man sama Ibn Taymiyya Shaykh al-Islam Kafir*, *al-A'lam al-'aliya fi manaqib Ibn Taymiyya*.

¹¹ The child is the twelfth Shi'i Imam Muhammad ibn Hassan al-Mahdi (the 'Guided one' born in 868) that according to the Shi'a is living in occultation since 872 and will one day return.

whoever did not believe in him was considered as a heretic. The religious leaders (*imams*) of those people are called “Bani al-‘awd” are considered as the Shaykhs of this mountain [Kisrawan] who issued a *fatwa* to encourage their people to fight the Muslims. Ibn Taymiyya also mentions that they resort to *Taqiyya* (dissimulation) and hypocrisy (Al-Hadi 1995:182-194) and regards Bani al-‘awd and their supports as Rafida and heretics. In his book *Manahij al-Sunna*, Ibn Taymiyya mentions that one of the Shaykhs of the Rafida was Ibn al-‘awd al-Hily with whom he had extensive religious arguments. In his chronicle, Ibn Kathir also mentions this Ibn al-‘awd al-Hily. According to Ibn Kathir: “Abu al-Qasim al-Hussayn Bin al-‘awd Najib al-Din al-Asadi al-Hily who is known as Ibn al-‘awd al-Rafidi, the Shaykh and the *Imam* of the Shi‘ites, was born in 581/1184 and died in 596/1279”. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:201) From all the above-mentioned sources we understand that Ibn Taymiyya included the Shi‘ites among the Rafida, that they had settled in the Kisrawan district, the target of the Mamluk military expeditions, and that they were one of the targeted creeds. We may therefore assume that in the Kisrawan district the attacked creeds were mainly the Shi‘ites, the Nusayris and the Druze, and perhaps the Maronites as well.

A brief reminder is necessary here of the targeted creeds, when they appeared, and what was their doctrine.

The Shi‘ites

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (632), the first split in the Muslim community occurred over the question as to who had the right to inherit the Prophet’s position as leader of the Muslim community. Most of the Muslims said that they should not prefer one Muslim over another as long as he was a true Muslim, and those who supported this claim were called the Sunna. Another part of the Muslim community supported the right of ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Muhammad’s cousin and son-in-law, to inherit the Prophet’s position, claiming that it was the Prophet himself who had proclaimed him as his successor. Those who supported Ali’s right to be the Muhammad’s successor were called the Shi‘a, meaning “supporters”, the political supports of ‘Ali. Contrary to the Sunna, the Shi‘ites believe that ‘Ali was the legitimate heir of the Prophet, who actually proclaimed him as such prior to his death in accordance with a heavenly order. In Shi‘ite Islam there is the

principle of the “Wilaya” — loyalty to ‘Ali and his family, and the belief that ‘Ali is “Wali Allah” (the friend of God) and the sole legitimate heir of the Prophet. As the years passed, the Shi‘ites became a separate religious creed that believed that *ahl al-bayt* (the people of the house, i.e. the Prophet’s family), the descendants of ‘Ali and Fatima (Prophet Muhammad’s daughter) were chosen by God to lead the Muslim community, thus rejecting the principle of choosing the leader, since he had already been chosen by God. According to them, the first *Imam* was ‘Ali, who was supposed to lead the Muslim community after the Prophet’s death but was denied his right, and therefore they reject the legitimacy of the three Rashidi caliphs. At the base of the Shi‘ite doctrine stands the principle of loyalty to the *Imams*. The Shi‘ite creed became an organized creed during the Umayyid (661-750) and the ‘Abbasid Khilafa (750-1258).

The Shi‘ites introduced into Islam the messianic idea of the Mahdi (‘the guided one’). They reject all those who rejected ‘Ali’s right to be the Prophet’s successor, and those who fought against him, those who hunted him and the *Sahaba* (Companions of the Prophet) who did not support him. Since they were persecuted throughout history by the Umayyads and later by the ‘Abbasids, they resorted to dissimulation (*taqiyya*) according to which, if faced with danger, they could hide their religion to avoid persecution. The principle of dissimulation was also adopted by other extremist creeds such the Nusayris (or ‘Alawis) and the Druze. The main denomination within the Shi‘ite Islam is the Twelvers (*Ithna ‘Ashariyya*), (Naser 1960) which is also called *Imamiyya* and *Ja‘fariyya*.¹²

The Nusayris or ‘Alawis¹³

The Nusayri creed first appeared in the 9th century during the lifetime of the eleventh *Imam* al-Hassan al-‘Askari (d. 874). A man called Abu Shu‘ayb Muhammad Ibn Nusayr al-‘Abdi al-Bakri al-Numairi (d. 883) (Al-Razi 1978:92; Al-Shahristani, vol. 1:189; Al-Zahiri 1985, vol. 5:50), who was close to Imam al-‘Askari, claimed that he was his ‘Gate’ (*Bab*) and claimed that ‘Ali bin Abi Talib was actually

¹² Ja‘fariyya is derived from the name of Ja‘far al-Sadiq the sixth Imam (d. 765) who developed Shi‘ite jurisprudence during his lifetime.

¹³ About the Nusayri creed see: Bar Asher and Kofsky 2002; Matti 1986.

the essence (*Ma na*-meaning-God), and the Prophet Muhammad was second in hierarchy and functioned as the Name (*Ism* or veil), and Salman al-Farisi, one of Prophet Muhammad's Companions and a major supporter of 'Ali, was his Gate (*Bab*). The main principle of the Nusayri doctrine is the Trinitarian concept of 'A.M.S ('Ali. Muhammad. Salman). The Nusayris believe in metempsychosis (*Tanasukh*) according to which after a person dies, his soul leaves the body and enters a new one; this could be a human body, an animal, plant or a lifeless object, depending on his degree of faith. Like the Shi'ites, in times of danger the Nusayris can resort to the principle of dissimulation. They do not have buildings for religious worship, and according to Ibn Batutta (1304-1377) who visited Syria in 1326, the Mamluk Sultan al-Zahir Baybars (1260-1277) forced the Nusayris living along the Syrian coast to build mosques in their villages. He states that they did in fact construct the mosques but built them outside the villages and never attended them for prayers. (Ibn Batutta 1991:45-46) The Nusayris have their own religious books and their own festivals. The Nusayris, like the Shi'ites, denounce the three Rashidi caliphs. The Nusayris first appeared in Iraq and had a small circle of believers that grew in time, and they established their first missionary centre there, which functioned until it was destroyed in 1258 by the Mongols. During the 11th century the Nusayris opened a new missionary centre in Latakia, which remained the only one left after the destruction of the Iraqi one. (Al-Tawil 1979:264)

During the 8th century the Isma'ili creed appeared. Their adherents believed that the succession of the sixth *Imam* Ja'far al-Sadiq was supposed to have been passed on to his son Isma'il who died before his father, since he was the first born and that Muhammad, Ismail's son, was supposed to succeed his father as *Imam*. But contrary to them, the Shi'ite mainstream believed that the 7th *Imam* was Ismail's brother, Musa al-Kazim. During the 9th century there was a sectarian split among the Isma'ilis, and the Qaramita appeared, and later there was another sectarian split by the Fatimids. During the 10th century the Fatimid Caliphate (969-1171) was established in Egypt and later ruled over Greater Syria. Until the 11th century there were thus three main streams in Islam — the Sunna, the Shi'a and the Isma'iliyya.

The Druze

The Druze creed first appeared during the reign of the Fatimid Sultan, al-Hakim Bi-Amr Allah (996-1021). During this period two propagandists — al-Darzi and Hamza Bin ‘Ali — claimed that al-Hakim was the awaited Mahdi. These claims caused disturbances that ultimately led to the murder of al-Darzi (1019). Hamza Bin ‘Ali succeeded al-Darzi as the leader of the movement and propagated the new doctrine within and beyond the centre of the Fatimid state. The adherents of this movement were called the Druze, derived from al-Darzi, the first propagandist. In 1021 al-Hakim disappeared and those who succeeded him persecuted his supporters. Hamza claimed that al-Hakim had distanced himself in order to test his supporters and that he would return in the future. In that same year Hamza also disappeared, and the Druze believed that he was to return with al-Hakim. Prior to the disappearance of al-Hakim, Hamza propagated the new doctrine mainly in the region of Greater Syria, far from the centre of the Fatimid state.

According to Druze belief, God last appeared to the people in the person of al-Hakim and would return at the end of time in his image. The Druze believe in reincarnation (*Taqamus*), that when a person dies his soul transfers to a new human body. They also believe that history is divided into seven cycles, and that in each cycle a prophet appears and next to him there always was a mysterious figure, a man, who transmitted the true religion. All the prior religions are false ones that were sent to punish the human race. Similar to the Shi‘ites and the Nusayris, the Druze also resorted to the dissimulation principle. Since they were persecuted, the Druze found refuge in the mountains of Greater Syria.

Mamluk Rule over Syria

After the death of the Mamluk Sultan al-Zahir Baybars in 1277, he was succeeded by his son al-Sa‘id Baraka, who in turn was succeeded by his brother al-‘Adil Sulamish, and in 1279 was overthrown by Sayf al-Din Qala‘un (1279-1290) who named himself as Sultan and began to deal with the external problems concerning the Mongols and the Crusaders. In 1281 the Mamluks defeated the Mongols in a battle near Homs, after which Sultan Qala‘un took advantage of the internal disputes among the Crusaders and began capturing districts that had

been under their rule. (Makki 1979:202-204) Ihdin and Bsharri were conquered in 1283, the al-Marqab citadel in 1285, and Latakia in April 1287.

In 688/1289 the Mamluks attacked Tripoli, which had been held by the Crusaders since 503/1104. The Mamluk military forces were headed by Sultan Sayf al-Din Qala‘un himself. (‘Ashur 1995:191) They besieged the city of Tripoli for thirty-three days before they managed to capture it. Mamluk soldiers then attacked the city and killed many of its residents. Many of those who tried to flee drowned in the sea, and women and children were taken into captivity.¹⁴ After the city was pillaged, the Sultan ordered them to destroy it and to build a new city far from the original spot. (Abi al-Fida’, vol. 4:23) According to al-Duwayhi the inhabitants of al-Jird and Kisrawan came to aid the Crusaders against the Mamluks. This was the reason the governor of Damascus, Husam al-Din Lajin,¹⁵ decided to send a military expedition against them. (Al-Duwayhi 1980:265; Al-Maqrizi 1997, vol. 2:234) After the conquest of Tripoli, the Mamluks continued to fight the Crusaders, defeating them and conquering Enfe, al-Batrun, Tyre, Saida, Acre, Beirut and Jubayl (Byblos). By 1291, the Crusaders were driven out of these districts, now entirely under Mamluk rule. (Hatif 1986:74-83)

The decision to conquer and reform the Kisrawan district was taken in 687/1288 by Sultan al-Mansur Sayf al-Din Qala‘yn, who decided to dispatch a military expedition — or a punitive expedition as it is described in the various sources — headed by the emir Shams al-Din Sunqur al-Mansuri, which was supposed to be reinforced by the armed forces of the emirs of the Gharb, the Tanukhids (1147-1516).¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibn Kathir, vol. 9:201; Abi al-Fida’ 1997, vol. 4:23. Abi al-Fida’, who was then 12 years old, accompanied his father, al-Malik al-Afdal, and his cousin al-Malik al-Muzfir, the governor of Hamah, on this expedition.

¹⁵ Husam al-Din Lajin al-Mansuri was the governor of Damascus in the years 1280-1291. He was appointed as Sultan and called “al-Malik al-Mansur” between the years 1296-1298.

¹⁶ The Tanukhids were a confederation of tribes that settled in the region of Greater Syria prior to the appearance of the Druze creed. One of the Tanukhid tribes settled in the hills near Beirut in the Gharb (West) region, and thus were called ‘umara’ al-Gharb (the ‘Princes of the West’). When the tribes converted and became Druze they changed their name from Tanukhids to Druze and only ‘Umara’ al-Gharb kept their title. See: Salih and others 1999; Abu ‘Iz al-Din 1985:184-226; Al-Basha 1990.

The Emirs of the Gharb

The emirs of the Gharb form the southern branch of the Tanukhids, which later became known as the Buhturids/Bani Buhtur. When Beirut was conquered by the Crusaders (1110) these emirs moved to the southern part of Beirut, and thus were called the emirs of the Gharb ('Umara' al-Gharb or 'Princes of the West'). (Salibi 1961:79) The Tanukhids were always *Iqta'* (revenue fief) holders, and during the Ayyubid rule (1171-1250) their *Iqta'* was even enlarged thanks to the aid they provided against the Crusaders. In July 1161 al-Malik al-'Adil Nur al-Din Mahmud Zinki (1118-1174), the governor of Aleppo and Damascus, gave Zahr al-Dawla Krama Bin Buhtur¹⁷ a few villages as *Iqta'*, including four villages located in the district of al-Jird and al-Shuf. (Abu 'Iz al-Din 1985:195) The emirs of the Gharb maintained good relations both with the Ayyubids and the Crusaders and even with the Mongols after they had conquered the region. While some of the emirs assisted the Mamluks, others assisted the Mongols, and while some assisted the Mamluks others assisted the Crusaders, thus adopting a very balanced position. By adopting this strategy the emirs of the Gharb managed to maintain their *Iqta'* for hundreds of years. (Al-Basha 1999:114-115)

In 1271, during the reign of Sultan Baybars, three Tanukhid emirs — Jamal al-Din Hajji Bin Muhammad al-Tanukhi, his brother Sa'd al-Din Khadir and his cousin Zayn al-Din Bin 'Ali — were imprisoned after being accused of collaboration with the Crusaders, who had until that year ruled over many cities in the region of Greater Syria especially over Beirut; they were also charged with assisting the Mongols in the battle of 'Ayn Jalut (1260). The three were imprisoned in three different prisons and later were taken to Egypt. According to Salih Bin Yahya, one of the emirs of the Gharb, the three were imprisoned because of the treachery of the emirs of Bani Abu al-Jaysh who were the enemies of the emirs of the Gharb. According to him, Bani Abu al-Jaysh sent a letter to the Crusader governor of Tripoli in

¹⁷ Buhtur had two sons, Zahr al-Dawla Karama and Sharaf al-Dawla Karama. The eldest was Zahr al-Dawla who succeeded his father as holder of the *Iqta'*. When Zahr al-Dawla died his son, Hajji, was too young to succeed his father and so his uncle, Sharaf al-Dawla was temporarily appointed as holder of the *Iqta'*. Many years later, during the reign of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi the *Iqta'* was returned to Hajji.

the name of Zayn al-Din, Jamal al-Din and his brother Sa'd al-Din, offering their help to the Crusaders against the Mamluks. Ibn Yahya adds that Bani Abu al-Jaysh made sure that the letter sent from the governor of Tripoli in answer to the alleged letter reached the hands of the Mamluks. When Baybars received this letter, the three emirs were imprisoned under the charge of collaboration with the Crusaders, but the Sultan did not confiscate nor abolish their Iqta'.¹⁸ In 1277/8 a Mamluk military expedition was sent against the Gharb district that lasted for seven days. The reason for the expedition was the murder of Qatab al-Din Sa'di, one of the Mamluks who had been granted the Iqta' of the village of 'Amaya,, although it had originally been part of the Iqta' of the emirs of the Gharb. During the expedition, the Tanukhids villages were robbed, many of their inhabitants were killed, and women and children were taken in captivity and later sold in the markets as slaves. (Bin Yahya 1969 :67-69)

After the death of Baybars (1277) the three emirs were granted pardon and the women and children previously sold as slaves were returned to their villages. (Makki 1979:216) Once again in 1288, a few months prior to the conquest of Tripoli by the Mamluks, Sultan Qala'un confiscated the Iqta' of the emirs of the Gharb. (Salibi 1961:88-89) When the Crusaders left the region in 1291, the Tanukhids became loyal allies of the Mamluks, (Makki 1979:216-217) and in 1292 Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil returned some of their confiscated Iqta'. In 1294 the Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad, the brother of Sultan al-Ashraf, gave the Tanukhids the rest of their unreturned Iqta'. (Salibi 1961: 89) From 1289 the position of the Tanukhids changed: in addition to being local leaders they also began to work in the service of the Sultan. They were nominated as *Jund al-Halqa*, which was one of the three most important units of the Mamluk army, which included cavalry forces that were not Mamluks in the Sultan's service. One of the main responsibilities of the Tanukhids was to supervise the main roads and the coast of their region. (Salibi 1961:89-90)

As mentioned earlier, according to Ibn Sibat (d. 1520), who worked as a clerk for the emirs of the Gharb, the inhabitants of al-Jird

¹⁸ Bin Yahya 1969:63. Salih Bin Yahya was one of the Princes of the West, he died in 840/1437 and he is considered the main source for the history of the Princes of the West. In his book Bin Yahya does not stress that the Tanukhids were Druze, but rather presents them as Muslims.

and Kisrawan were accused of helping the Crusaders against the Mamluks, and this is why the governor of Damascus, Husam al-Din Lajin, ordered Qarasunqur to prepare a military expedition against them. In addition, a letter was sent to the two emirs of the Gharb, Emir Jamal al-Din Hajji Bin Muhammad al-Tanukhi¹⁹ and Emir Zayn al-Din Ibn ‘Ali in which they were informed that Sunqur al-Mansuri, the governor of Tripoli, was leading his troops towards the districts of Kisrawan and al-Jird, and they were asked to send him reinforcements. (Al-Duwayhi 1980:266)

It seems that there was an old hatred between the Tanukhids and the inhabitants of Kisrawan, according to Ibn Yahya. On 6 Rabi‘ al-Thāni 640 [October 2, 1242] Emir Najm al-Din Muhammad Bin Hajji and his brother Sharaf al-Din ‘Ali, the father and uncle of Emir Jamal Hajji, were killed in the district of Kisrawan, (Bin Yahya 1969:50) probably by inhabitants who were the allies of the Crusaders, or by the Crusaders themselves. (Salibi 1961:84) Thus, in addition to being part of the *Jund al-Halqa* in this expedition, Jamal Hajji was granted the opportunity to revenge his father and uncle’s murders. To encourage the warriors to join the Mamluks in this expedition, each warrior was promised that every woman they caught from that district would become his slave, and every child would be his Mamluk (slave), and for every head they brought they were to be granted a dinar. (Al-Duwayhi 1980: 266) Al-Duwayhi mentions that this order was sent to the emirs of the Gharb after the conquest of Tripoli (1289) and before the conquest of Acre (1291). Ibn Yahya also mentions that there was such an order to launch a military expedition against Kisrawan and al-Jird and that the two emirs, Jamal al-Din Hajji Bin Muhammad al-Tanukhi and Zayn al-Din Ibn ‘Ali, were asked to send reinforcements to aid the Mamluks. (Bin Yahya 1969:53-54) Although all the preparations were made for the expedition, it was postponed due to several reasons—the war with the Crusaders, the death of Sultan Qala‘un (1290) and the accession of al-Malik al-Ashraf Salah al-Din Khalil Bin Qala‘un (1290-1293), as well as the new Sultan’s different military expeditions. The expedition against the district of Kisrawan and al-Jird was postponed till 1292. (Laoust 1940:100)

¹⁹ Prince Jamal al-Din Bin Muhammad al-Tanukhi was one of the three princes who were accused of collaboration with the Crusaders and the Mongols against the Mamluks. See: Al-Basha 1990.

Like his father Sultan Qala'un, the new Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Khalil also fought the Crusaders and the Mongols and conquered the districts still in their hands. According to the historian Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, after the conquest of Little Armenia²⁰ some of the defeated Crusaders sailed back to their countries while others fled to the region of Mount Lebanon. Those Crusaders encouraged the local inhabitants to revolt against the Mamluks. These, in turn, feared that this revolt might affect their rule in the region and so decided in 1292 to send a military expedition under the command of *na'ib al-Saltana* (viceroy of the Sultan) Badr al-din Baydara to subdue the rebels. (Kurd 'Ali 1969, vol. 1:131)

The First Expedition 691/1292

The expedition was launched by order of Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Salah al-Din Khalil after his successful battles in Little Armenia. The expedition was under the command of Emir Badr al-Din Baydara,²¹ viceroy of the Sultan in Egypt²² who was accompanied by Emir Shams al-din Qarasunqur al-Mansuri,²³ Emir Shams al-Din Sunqur al-Ashqar,²⁴ and other emirs from al-Sham. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 13:387) The

²⁰ Small Principalities which were established by the Armenians in Cilicia.

²¹ Badr al-Din Baydara was close to the Sultan al-Mansur Sayf al-din Qala'un. In Muhamram 693/December 1293) Baydara along with other princes killed Sultan al-Ashraf Bin Qala'un while he was in a hunting trip outside Cairo. Baydara with the support of the other princes nominated himself as Sultan, and he was called al-Malik al-Awhad. Baydara was killed the next day by prince Zayn al-Din Kataibha. The head of Baydara was taken to Cairo where it was displayed in public.

²² The Mamluks ruled over Greater Syria and the Hijaz, they divided the region under their control into provinces (Mamalik) and every Mamlaka was divided into districts (A'mal). In Greater Syria there were six Mamalik — Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, Hamah, Safad and al-Karak. The Sultan had two viceroys, one in Egypt and one in Syria/al-Sham. In 1292 Baydara was the Sultan's viceroy in Egypt and 'Alam al-Din Sanjar al-Shija'i was the Sultan's viceroy in Syria.

²³ Prince Shams al-Din Qarasunqur al-Mansuri al-Juqndar al-Jarkasi was one of the Mamluk princes. He was appointed as governor of Aleppo in the reign of the Sultan al-Mansur Qala'un and his son al-Ashraf Khalil. He was later appointed as governor of Damascus; he collaborated with the Mongols and deserted to their camp in 1312. He died in 1328.

²⁴ Prince Shams al-Din Sunqur al-Ashqar al-Rumi was the governor of Damascus and in 1272 was named as "al-Malik al-'Adil". He was strangled to death by the order of the Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil in 1292.

declared aim of the expedition was to punish the inhabitants of al-Jird and Kisrawan who were accused of collaboration with the Crusaders.²⁵ When Baydara and his soldiers went up to the district of Kisrawan they faced fierce resistance and were defeated, and they had to retreat to Damascus. Rumours spread that Baydara withdrew his troops because he was bribed by the local inhabitants of Kisrawan.²⁶ In addition, Baydara also freed several local leaders of Kisrawan who were imprisoned in Damascus after they swore their loyalty to the Sultan. (Bin Yahya 1969:25)

The views regarding this expedition are divided. While some saw it as a successful expedition that managed to obtain peace and quiet in the district, (Laoust 1940:104) others regarded it as a complete failure. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:216) In some of the chronicles, Baydara was blamed for his failure to subdue the Kisrawan's inhabitants who, according to these chronicles, even dared to blackmail him and free their local leaders held in Damascus. The reasons that lay behind Beydara's behaviour are unknown. Was Baydara really bribed by the inhabitants of Kisrawan, which seems unlikely since he filled a high position as the Sultan's viceroy, or were his soldiers beaten on the battlefield? In the different chronicles there is no clear reason given for the expedition's failure or whether it really was a failure.²⁷ One might also speculate that the inhabitants of Kisrawan managed to convince Baydara that there was no just cause for the expedition against them, and that this may have been the reason for withdrawing his soldiers.

Over the last decade of the 13th century, the region remained unstable. It suffered from continuous attacks by the Mongols and the threat of a possible Crusader invasion still existed. In early 699 [October 1299] the Mongols headed by Qazan Khan (Ghazan), attacked Syria. They defeated the Mamluks lead by the Sultan himself at the battle of Khazindar. The defeated Sultan ran away and many of his emirs who participated in the battle were killed, in addition to many

²⁵ Al-Nuwayri (1278-1332) in his chronicle mentions that there was an expedition against the mountains of Kisrawan, but he does not mention the reasons for this expedition. See: Al-Nuwayri, 1998, vol. 33:240-241.

²⁶ According to Ibn Kathir: "when the soldiers besieged the mountain and all that they had to do was to kill its inhabitants, at night they [the mountain inhabitants] brought Baydara [Bandar] many things and he compromised, and then he and his soldiers left them and went back to the Sultan...". See: Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:216.

²⁷ The expedition is mentioned in the chronicles by al-Nuwayri, Ibn Kathir and al-Maqrizi but it is not mentioned by Abi al-Fida' and Ibn al-Wardi.

Mamluk soldiers and local inhabitants. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya played an important role in encouraging the local people not to surrender and to defend Damascus against the Mongols. But they managed to conquer Damascus, and they delivered the sermon in the mosques in the name of Qazan instead of the Mamluk Sultan. The Mamluks regained their control in the region in April 1300. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:247-254)

The Second Expedition 699/1300²⁸

After they regained control in Greater Syria, the Mamluks launched their second expedition against the inhabitants of al-Jird and Kisrawan. This time the reason for the expedition was the bad treatment shown by the inhabitants of these districts towards the Mamluk soldiers who had fled from the Mongols after the battle of Khazindar; the inhabitants of Kisrawan mistreated these soldiers, robbed them their weapons and horses, and killed many of them. Some even dared to take some soldiers into captivity and sold them to the Crusaders. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:254) According to Salibi (1957:299), this expedition was a sort of compensation for the defeat the Mamluks had suffered in the previous expedition (1292) headed by Baydara. In his *fatwa* against the Nusayris and in a letter that Ibn Taymiyya sent to the Mamluk Sultan prior to, or after the third expedition, he mentions this expedition and stresses that the inhabitants of this district collaborated with the Mongols against the Mamluks, that they captured several Muslim soldiers and ill-treated them and afterwards sold them to the Crusaders who took them with their horses and weapons to Cyprus and exhibited them for sale in the markets for eleven days. Another reason for the expedition was the corrupt religious beliefs of the inhabitants of this district who were considered as heretics. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:254) The Sultan therefore issued an order to Emir Jamal al-Din Aqush al-Afram,²⁹ the new governor of Damascus, to head a military expedition against the districts of al-Jird and Kisrawan.³⁰ Emir al-Afram was accompanied by

²⁸ This expedition is not mentioned in the chronics of Abi al-Fida' and Ibn al-Wardi.

²⁹ Jamal al-Din Aqush al-Afram was the governor of Damascus during the years 1300-1309.

³⁰ According to al-Nuwayri and al-Maqrizi the expedition was against the Druze who had settled in the district of Kisrawan. See: Al-Nuwayri 1998, vol. 31:407-408.; Al-Maqrizi 1997, vol. 2:331.

the governors of Tripoli, Hamah and Safad, and Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya also participated in this expedition, which according to Ibn Kathir included many volunteers from the Hawran. The inhabitants of these districts were informed about the attack against them and prepared themselves by entrenching themselves in their mountains. (Al-Tadmuri 1981, vol. 2:100; Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:254) The Mamluk soldiers, which according to al-Maqrizi amounted to 12,000, almost lost the battle, but Emir al-Afram and the other emirs reorganized their soldiers and succeeded in defeating the entrenched locals and captured the district. The local inhabitants “were defeated by sword and were obliged to ask for a ceasefire”. (Al-Maqrizi 1997, vol. 2:33) After six days of fighting, the leaders of the different creeds inhabiting these districts turned to Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya and asked for his forgiveness.³¹ In addition, these leaders promised to return the weapons and belongings that they had stolen from the Mamluk soldiers (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:255) and they were obliged to pay 100,000 dirhams to *Bayt al-Mal* (the treasury), (Al-Tadmuri 1981, vol. 2:100) according to al-Maqrizi (1997, vol. 2:331). The lands and villages of these districts were given as *Iqta'* to the Tanukhids as a reward for their aid to the Mamluk soldiers defeated by the Mongols in 1299. (Makki 1979:223) Contrary to the inhabitants of Kisrawan and al-Jird, the Tanukhids, such Emir ‘Ala’ al-Din ‘Ali Bin Hasan Bin Subih and Emir Nahid al-Din Buhtur Bin Zayn al-Din Salih Bin ‘Ali Arslan (d. 1300), helped the fleeing Mamluk soldiers, and Emir al-Afram rewarded them by a promotion to the rank of “Emir of *Tablikhana*”³² in 1300. (Bin Yahya 1969:78) According to Muhammad Makki, the real reason for the expedition was the wish of some Tanukhid emirs to have these districts as their *Iqta'*, and this is what eventually happened. (Makki 1979:223) Laoust

³¹ According to Ibn Kathir the leaders of the inhabitants of this district were the ones that turned to Ibn Taymiyya and asked for forgiveness and he asked them in return to abandon their corrupt beliefs. Ibn Kathir mentions that many did abandon their corrupt beliefs and chose the right path. See: Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:254.

³² *Tablikhana* — the word *tabil* in Arabic means drum. This concept was first used during the Ayyubid period and it meant the place used for the storage of the drums and the musical instruments of the army. During the Mamluk period the meaning of the concept went a major change and came to be known as “Prince of *Tablikhana*”, and the holder of this rank had a high administrative position in the army. In time the concept underwent changes and became equal to a military rank. Forty Mamluks served under the command of the holder of this rank. Though this was a military rank its holders had a more administrative position than a military one.

(1940:102) explains that in this attack, the district of Kisrawan was subjected to the Mamluks' control for the first time. The role of the Tanukhid emirs was to govern the district as their Iqta', and to protect the coast and the main roads against any possible attack from their enemies. The fact that the district was given to the Tanukhid emirs as Iqta' intensified the hatred between them and the inhabitants of these districts. Moreover, the inhabitants of Kisrawan and al-Jird were still not completely subjugated.

The Third Expedition 705/1305

Ibn Kathir (1301-1372) in his chronicle *al-Bidayah w-l-Nihaya* ('The Beginning and the End') mentions that this expedition was against the districts of al-Jird, al-Rafid (usually meaning Shi'ites and other extremist creeds, as explained previously) and al-Tayamina (Druze).³³ Abi al-Fida'³⁴ (1273-1331) in his chronicle *al-Mukhtasar fi Akhbar al-Bashar* ('The Concise History of Humanity') mentions that the expedition was against the Nusayris, the *dinniyyin* (inhabitants of the Dinniya) and the *marikun* (those who departed from Islam). Al-Nuwayri (1278-1332) in his chronicle *Nihayat al-Arab fi funun al-Adab* ('Objectives in Classes of Good Conduct') mentions that the expedition was against the inhabitants of the Kisrawan and al-Jird districts. Al-Maqrizi (1364-1441) in his chronicle *al-Suluk li Ma'rifat Duwal al-Muluk* ('The Path of Knowledge of Dynasties and Kings') mentions only that the expedition was against the inhabitants of the Kisrawan district. (Al-Maqrizi 1997, vol. 2:384)

Ibn Kathir, al-Nuwayri (1998, vol. 31:97) and al-Maqrizi,³⁵ state that in Dhu al-Hijjah 704 [June 1305] Ibn Taymiyya and some of his supporters went to the districts in order to try and convince the

³³ Tayamina is derived from the name Wadi al-Taym, the people who settled in Wadi al-Taym and were Druze.

³⁴ Al-Malik al-Mu'ayd Abu al-Fida Isma'il Bin Mahmud Ibn Shahinshah Bin Ayub (a descendant of Salah al-Din al-Ayubi) was born in Damascus; he was a historian and geographer. In 1312 he was appointed as the governor of Hamah, and in 1320 he was granted the title "al-Malik al-Mu'ayd".

³⁵ According to al-Maqrizi: "during this year [704] Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya left Damascus along with Prince Baha' al-Din Qaraqush al-Mansuri, and went to the Kisrawan district and asked them to show their obedience, but they refused, and then they gathered the soldiers to fight them". See: Al-Maqrizi 1997, vol. 2:284-285.

inhabitants to convert to Islam. According to Ibn Kathir, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya and several of his companions along with Naqib al-Ashraf Zayn al-Din Muhammad Bin ‘Adnan (1229-1322) succeeded in convincing many of them to do so.³⁶

According to the Arslan *sijil* (record), Naqib al-Ashraf went to Kisrawan in order to reconcile the inhabitants of this district with the emirs of the Gharb.³⁷ As in the Arslan record, Ibn Sibat mentions that al-Afram, the governor of Damascus, first sent Naqib al-Ashraf to the inhabitants for two reasons. The first was to reconcile them with the Tanukhid emirs, (Al-Duwayhi 1980:286; Bib Yahya 1969:27. See also: Ibn Sibat al-Gharbi 1993:87) because hatred had been growing between them since the 1300 expedition when the emirs of the Gharb fought with the Mamluks against the inhabitants of Kisrawan, (Al-Basha 1999:115) and thus received the district as *Iqta'*. The other reason was to ask them to show their obedience to the Mamluks. It seems that Naqib al-Ashraf failed in his mission. Later, al-Afram sent Ibn Taymiyya along with Emir Baha' al-Din Qraqush, but they also failed in their mission. Due to the failure of the talks, the religious leaders issued a *fatwa* in which they permitted the attack against the inhabitants of these districts since they were “rebellious and they hurt the Muslim army”. (Al-Duwayhi 1980:286; Bin Yahya 1969:27; Ibn Sibat 1993:587) In addition, the inhabitants of these districts were again accused of collaboration with the Crusaders who had attacked the coast in 702/1302 and who had landed in al-Damur in Mount Lebanon (southern Beirut at that time was under the jurisdiction of the Tanukhids). The Crusaders attacked this region, killed the emir of the Gharb, Fakhr al-Din ‘Abd al-Hamid Bin Hajji, captured his brother Shams al-Din ‘Abdallah, and sold him back to his family five days later. (Bin Yahya 1969:95, 156-158)

Prior to the expedition, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya incited the local Muslims against the different religious creeds that had developed in the region of Greater Syria. Ibn Taymiyya sent a letter to Sultan al-Nasir

³⁶ Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:281. Contrary to Ibn Kathir, al-Nuwayri mentions in his chronicle that the inhabitants of Kisrawan refused to convert and as a result a military expedition was launched against them.

³⁷ Al-Basha 1999:115-116. *Naqib al-Ashraf* gave his daughter, Nafisa, in marriage to emir Sayf al-Din Mifrij Bin al-Amir Badr al-Din Yusuf Bin al-Amir Zayn al-Din Abi al-Jaysh Salih al-Arslani al-Gharbi (d. 747/1346) one of the emirs of the family of Arslan.

Bin Qala'un³⁸ in which he explained the great danger of these creeds. Since the letter has no date, there is a controversy as to when it was written and sent to the Sultan, before or after the expedition. Some researchers claim that the Sultan requested the letter from Ibn Taymiyya in order to justify his attack against the inhabitants of Kisrawan. (Al-Kathiri 1997:634)

According to al-Nuwayri³⁹ over the years the attitude of the inhabitants of Kisrawan was so vitriolic and rebellious that they even dared to hurt the Mamluk soldiers after their defeat by the Mongols in 1299. They were never punished for their conduct, and since they had settled in their mountains, they believed that no one could reach them there. This was to some extent true, and this is why the Mamluks first sent them a delegation headed by Zayn al-Din Bin 'Adnan, and afterwards Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya and Emir Baha' al-Din Qaraqush al-Dahiri. (Al-Nuwayri 1998, vol. 32: 97-98) Laoust supposes that the delegation headed by Ibn Taymiyya had two purposes. The first one was to conduct negotiations similar to those that were held during the expedition of 699/1292 and to achieve a quiet surrender. The second purpose was to warn the inhabitants of Kisrawan of what awaited them if they continued to be rebellious. (Laoust 1949:104)

According to al-Nuwayri, Ibn Taymiyya and Emir Baha' al-Din asked the mountain inhabitants to show their submission and loyalty to the Mamluks, and to return to Sunni Islam. When they refused, a decision was taken to send a joint military expedition against them from the different districts of al-Sham. (Al-Nuwayri 1998, vol. 32, pp. 97-98) On 2 Muharram, 705 [July 24, 1305] Emir Jamal al-Din al-Aqush al-Afram left Damascus accompanied by 50,000 soldiers and headed towards Kisrawan.⁴⁰

³⁸ Al-Malik al-Nasir Bin Qala'un was appointed Sultan from 693/1293 till 694/1294 and from 698/1298 till 708/1308, and once again from 709/1309 till 741/1340. He died during his Sultanate.

³⁹ I am inclined to accept the story told by al-Nuwayri, since he was born in 1278 and must have witnessed or heard about the expedition, contrary to al-Maqrizi and Ibn Kathir who were born during the 14th and 15th century.

⁴⁰ According to Abi al-Fida' (1273-1331) the expedition was against the inhabitants of the mountain of al-Diniyyin (al-Diniyya lies between Tripoli and Damascus) whose inhabitants were rebels and were believers in sectarian creeds such the Nusayris and other sects. See: Abi al-Fida' 1997, vol. 2:392.

According to Ibn al-Wardi (d. 1349) the expedition was launched after a *fatwa* was issued by Ibn Taymiyya against the inhabitants of the district of Kisrawan. (Ibn al-Wardi 1970, vol. 2:363) Emir al-Afram was accompanied by the governors of Safad and Tripoli. According to al-Nuwayri, Emir Baha' al-Din Asndamar⁴¹ left Tripoli along with a military force after he was asked to do so by the Sultan. It is said that one of the reasons for his eagerness to head this expedition was to refute the claims against him that he secretly supported these creeds. (Al-Nuwayri 1998, vol. 31:97) Ibn Taymiyya accompanied the troops and the emirs in this expedition. His participation in this expedition marked it as a religious one, a *jihad*, against the extremist creeds. Shaykh Mar'i Bin Yusuf al-Karmi al-Hanbali (d. 1033/1624) in his book *al-Kawakib al-Darih fi Manaqib Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya*, stresses that Ibn Taymiyya called for the people of al-Sham to go out and fight the inhabitants of Kisrawan, and that this war was a “war for God” — a *jihad*. (Al-Bukhari 2005:347-348)

Ibn Taymiyya and the Kisrawan Expeditions

Ibn Taymiyya viewed the Kisrawan operations as religious expeditions against the extremist creeds that endangered the existence of Islam, and that fighting them was a more important mission than fighting against the infidels or the Jews and Christians. The participation of Ibn Taymiyya in these expeditions gave them a religious aspect that turned them into a religious war — a *jihad* — which somehow contributed to their success. After the expedition of 705/1305⁴² Ibn Taymiyya sent a letter to Muhammad Bin Qala'un the Mamluk Sultan, or the ‘Sultan of the Muslims’, as Ibn Taymiyya calls him in the opening of his letter, and explained the reasons which justified this expedition. According to Ibn Taymiyya:

There are two kinds of *jihad*, one against the tyrants such the Mongols who, despite being Muslims did not perform the duties of Islam, and there is *jihad* against the *munafiqun* ('hypocrites'),

⁴¹ Sayf al-Din Asndamar al-Karaji — the prince of Damascus. He was nominated as governor of Tripoli in 701/1302; he was killed in 721/1321.

⁴² Some of the sources stress that the letter was sent before the expedition and that this encouraged the Sultan to launch the expedition.

those who left the religion, the inhabitants of the Mountain, al-Jird and Kisrawan which were attacked due to the orders of the Sultan. These people believe that Abu Bakir, 'Umar and 'Uthman, ahl Badir [the battle of Badir, 624] and Bay'at al-Radwan [investiture of 628]), the Muhajirun⁴³ ('immigrants') and the Ansar⁴⁴ ('supporters')... they all [are considered by them] as greater infidels than the Jews and Christians, this is why they prefer the Crusaders and the Mongols over the people of the Qur'an [the Muslims] and the believers... when the Mamluks were victorious this day was a mourning day for them... they are brigands... they welcome the Christians of Cyprus and give them the weapons of the Muslims, whom they attack, kill or rob... they do not pray nor fast. We did not find in their Mountains any Qur'ans or a person that knows the Qur'an. They have their own beliefs that are contrary to the Qur'an and the Sunna according to which they permit the killing of Muslims. They have killed Muslims and took lots of money. ... Thank God that helped us conquer the district in the reign and order of the Sultan and helped us evacuate the mountain and expel them... many of them do not accept the prayer, fast, pilgrimage (Hajj), the small pilgrimage ('umrah), they do not forbid eating dead animals, blood and swine, and they do not believe in heaven and hell. So the Isma'iliyya, the Nusayriyya, the Hakimiyya (Druze) and the Batinijiyya are more heretical than the Jews and Christians in the view of all Muslims. ('Abd al-Hadi 1995:182-194)

According to Muhammad Bin Ahmad Bin 'Abd al-Hadi (1305-1343), who wrote *al-'uqud al-Darih min Manaqib Shaykh al-Islam Ahmad Bin Taymiyya*, prior to the last expedition, Ibn Taymiyya sent letters to different parts of al-Sham where he incited their inhabitants to fight against those of Kisrawan, and that fighting them was a religious war — a *jihad*. ('Abd al-Hadi 1995:179) According to 'Abd al-Hadi it was good to subdue the inhabitants of the mountain for two reasons:

⁴³ Muhajirun (immigrants) are the people of Makka who emigrated with the Prophet Muhammad to Medina.

⁴⁴ Ansar (supporters) are the people of Medina who supported the Prophet Muhammad when he arrived in their city.

1. The inhabitants of the mountain were Rafida *sababa* ('cursers') and should be fought.
2. When the Rafida attacked the Salihiyya Mountain [Damascus 1299], their leaders ordered them to rob the mountain, to take its inhabitants into captivity and to burn the houses because the inhabitants were Sunnis. This is why the punishment of the Rafida was similar to what they did to the inhabitants of the Mountain of Salihiyya. ('Abd al-Hadi 1995:180)

The first encounter between the two sides was in the village of 'Ayn Sawfar in al-Jird district. In this encounter the mountaineers were defeated and fled towards Kisrawan while the Mamluk soldiers chased them. (Salibi 1957:299-300) The soldiers of Emir al-Afram besieged the mountain and conquered it. In accordance with the emir's orders the trees were cut down, the vineyards uprooted, the houses destroyed, and many of the local people were killed. Some six hundred of the local inhabitants were taken captive and sent to Tripoli, while others managed to flee and scattered in different parts of Greater Syria. The Mamluk soldiers defeated the mountaineers after eleven days of fighting. The Mamluk soldiers also took much plunder from the mountain. (Al-Maqrizi 1997, vol. 2:389; Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:281; Ibn al-Wardi 1970, vol. 2:363)

According to Ibn Sibat, amongst the soldiers who accompanied Emir al-Afram were Tanukhid emirs such Emir Nasir al-Din al-Husayn Bin Sa'd al-Din Khadir and his relatives. In the battles, two of the Tanukhid emirs were killed, Emir Najm al-Din Muhammad and his brother Shihab al-Din Ahmad, two sons of Emir Jamal al-Din Hajji Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hajji al-Tanukhi, (Ibn Sibat 1993:589) in addition to twenty-three fighters of the Gharb who were killed in the village of Nibayya. (Bin Yahya 1969:96) Though the emirs of the Gharb were Druze, they fought against the other Druze residing in the attacked districts.

According to Yusuf al-Dibs, approximately 10,000 Druze warriors headed by their emirs fought against the Mamluk soldiers (including the emirs of the Gharb), (Bin Yahya 1969:96) but they were defeated. Many of them were killed, some fled to the south towards Jizin and its surroundings, and to the east towards al-Bika' and Ba'labbakk, while others surrendered to the Mamluks and asked for pardon. Al-Dibs asserts that some of the fleeing Druze warriors were

accompanied by their wives and children and their belongings, and with three hundred other persons sought refuge in a cave east of Kisrawan, the Magharat Nibayya⁴⁵ ('the Cave of Nibayya'). (Al-Dibs 1987:143; Al-Duwayhi 1980:287) Emir al-Afram ordered that the entrance of the cave be sealed and put guards over it for forty days to make sure no one survived. (Al-Dibs 1987:143)

On 18 Jumada al-Aakhir 705 [January 4, 1306] the districts of al-Jird and Kisrawan were given as Iqta' to several emirs from Damascus — 'Ala' al-Din Bin Mu'bid al-Ba'labaki, Sayf al-Din Baktamar al-Husami, Badr al-Din Baktash, Husam al-Din Lajin and 'Iz al-Din Khatib al-'Iraki. They then left Damascus for these districts to build them anew. (Ibn Sibat 1993:590)

According to Ibn Yahya, Baha' al-Din Qaraqush was appointed as governor of Ba'labakk and Kisrawan, and he "purified" the mountain from its inhabitants, killed many of the local leaders, and granted pardon to the inhabitants who chose to leave the district and settle in another district. (Bin Yahya 1969:28) Some of the local people were employed as workers (*Jakmiyya*) in the service of Emir Sayf al-Din Asandmar for many years. (Al-Nuwayri 1998, vol. 31:97) Some time later the Iqta' was taken from these emirs and given to three hundred Turkoman cavalrymen, the Bani 'Asaf. These cavalrymen controlled the region from Antelias⁴⁶ near Beirut to the border with Tripoli along the coast and they were called the "Turkomans of Kisrawan". (Bin Yahya 1969:28-29, 37) Their main task was to guard the main roads and the coast from any possible invasion, mainly from the sea. (Poliak 1977:9)

During this same year, Ibn Taymiyya was asked to return from Damascus to Cairo, where he was charged with religious fanaticism and imprisoned. (Ibn Kathir 1999, vol. 9:282) After the last expedition, and contrary to Ibn Taymiyya's aspirations, the adherents of the extremist creeds targeted in the expeditions did not convert to Sunni Islam, but many Nusayris and other adherents of these creeds became part of Muslim society. They were recruited as soldiers in the Mamluk army, were employed in public service, married Muslim women, and were buried in Muslim graveyards. All this can be learnt from a late *fatwa* issued by Ibn Taymiyya against the Nusayris titled *Risala fi al-*

⁴⁵ The cave of Nibayya or Nabayya is a small village north-east Beirut.

⁴⁶ 5 km to the North of Beirut.

Rad 'ala al-Nusayriyya some years later. The contents of the *fatwa* are very similar to the letter that Ibn Taymiyya had sent to Sultan Qala un prior to or after the 1305 expedition. Though the title indicates that the *fatwa* deals with the Nusayri creed, in fact the *fatwa* dealt with *all* the extremist creeds. In this *fatwa* Ibn Taymiyya warned against any actions that might hurt Islam. (Ibn Taymiyya 1905:94-102) The expedition achieved its aim, which was to gain control over the districts of al-Jird and Kisrawan, but it failed to convince or force their inhabitants to convert. Although they lost their political independence, they managed to keep their religious independence.

Conclusion

The three expeditions mentioned above were against the different religious minorities that inhabited in the districts of al-Jird, Kisrawan and al-Dinniyya, the Shi'ites, Nusayris and Druze. The expeditions had three main objectives — political, religious and economic, and perhaps also vengeance. They were operations to subdue the districts that had, until these raids, enjoyed political, economic and religious independence. From the different chronicles we learn that up until these expeditions these districts were independent and that their inhabitants maintained close relations with the Crusaders and the Mongols.

Three main forces joined together to attack the inhabitants of these districts, and each force had its own reasons. Firstly, there were the Tanukhid emirs of the Gharb, a family of Druze Muqta'jis that had an economic interest in these districts. They aided the Mamluks and were employed as *jund al-halqa*, cavalrymen, at the disposal of the Sultan, which meant they were obliged to fight on his side whenever he asked them to do so. In addition, the Tanukhids wanted to have the districts of al-Jird and Kisrawan as their own *Iqta'*, a wish that came true after the second expedition. It also seems that there was a long-standing hatred between the inhabitants of Kisrawan and the Tanukhids ever since Emir Najm al-Din Hajji, the father of Emir Jamal al-Din Hajji, was killed in the district by the local inhabitants or by their allies, the Crusaders, so that their participation in the expedition could also be viewed as a vendetta. On one hand, the Tanukhids participated in the expedition because it was their duty to do so as employees of the Sultan, and on the other hand the Tanukhids wanted

to enlarge their Iqta‘, which would also enlarge their power and make them the most powerful leaders in the region.

Secondly, there were the Mamluks who, despite the fact that they had conquered the region in 1260, found that there still remained many districts outside their control. In spite of the expeditions of 1292 and 1300, the districts of al-Jird and Kisrawan managed to retain their independence until the last operation of 1305. The Mamluks feared that the inhabitants of these districts might collaborate with the Mongols or the Crusaders who, until the beginning of the 15th century, constantly tried to recapture the region.

Thirdly there was Ibn Taymiyya who, as a religious Sunni Muslim, regarded the expeditions against those districts inhabited by religious minorities as a religious war — a *jihad*. Ibn Taymiyya wrote extensive literature against the Rawafid and the extremist creeds, constantly warned the Muslims against them, and called upon them to fight them because they endangered the existence of Islam. He also issued several *fatwas* against these creeds. He wrote three *fatwas* against the Nusayris whom he declared as heretics, and that they should be fought against since they also endangered Islam. Ibn Taymiyya also issued *fatwas* against the Druze, whom he also considered as heretical as the Nusayris.

These three forces joined hands in the second expedition, and their collaboration was more intense in the third expedition due to the failure of the first two. But the achievements of these expeditions were limited, since the Tanukhids were given the Iqta‘ of these districts only for a limited time, and their inhabitants did not convert as Ibn Taymiyya had hoped. The only achievement of these expeditions was for the Mamluks, who finally managed to take control over these districts and the entire region of Greater Syria.

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