

KÜÇÜK SULTANIN FİRARI: MEMLÛK SULTANI AZİZ YUSUF'UN KAHİRE KALESİNDEN KAÇMASI (1439)

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ÖZET

Bu makale 1439 yılında Sultan Barsbay'ın (1422-1437) vasiyetiyle daha henüz 15 yaşındayken tahta çıkarılıp altı ay iktidarda kalan fakat daha sonra öldürölme korkusuyla firar eden Memlûk Sultanı el-Melik el-Aziz Yusuf'un kaçış serüveniyle ilgilidir. Emir el-Kebir Çakmak tarafından tahttan edildikten sonra kendisi kaledeki odalardan birine hapsedilmişti. İşte bu mekân onun kaçış serüveninin başladığı yerdı. Onun firar etmesinin altında yatan en büyük sebep ise Sultan Çakmak'ın kendisi hakkında verdiği ölüm fermanı ile ilgili bir dedikodunun zuhur etmesiydi. Bu suretle, hizmetkârlarının da kışkırtmasıyla hayatını korumak için Yusuf, Kal'at ul-Cebel'den kaçmaya karar verdi. Onun bu firarı aynı zamanda dönem itibariyle Suriye'de zuhur eden isyanlarla bağlantılı olması yönüyle de mühimdir. Çünkü Halep Nâibi Emir Tagribermiş ile Dimeşk Nâibi Emir 'Aynâl el-Cekemî, Sultan Çakmak'ın iktidarına başkaldırmış ve Yusuf'a meyletmişlerdi. Her ne kadar Yusuf kaleden kendi hayatını kurtarmak için kaçmışsa da, Çakmak'ın hükümdarlığına karşı çıkan onun destekçileri bu fırsatı otoriteye karşı kullanmak istediler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aziz Yusuf, Sultan Çakmak, Eşrefiyye Memlûkları, Firar Planı.

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**ESCAPE OF A YOUNG SULTAN: THE RUNNING AWAY
OF THE MAMLÛK SULTAN AZÎZ YUSUF FROM THE
CITADEL OF CAIRO (1439)****ABSTRACT**

This article is concerning with the escape adventure of a young Mamlûk Sultan, al-Malik al-Aziz Yusuf, who was raised to the throne at the age of fifteen at 1439 by the testament of Sultan Barsbay (1422-1437) but then dethroned and be exposed to the escape for fear to be killed, had reigned for six months. After been banished from the sultanate by Amir Jaqmaq, he was imprisoned at a room of the citadel. This room was the place where his escape adventure began. The most important reason for the escape of the young sultan was the rumor arose at the citadel which was concerning with the death edict given by Sultan Jaqmaq. By the incitements of his attendants, he decided to escape from the Citadel of Cairo to save his life. This escape was critically important connected with the uprisings at Syria at that time. Because Amir Tagribirmish, viceroy of Aleppo and Amir Aynal al-Jakamî, viceroy of Damascus, who protested the reign of Sultan Jaqmaq, had leaned to Yusuf. Although Yusuf had just aimed to save his life by escaping from the citadel, the supporters of him, who objected to the reign of Jaqmaq, wanted to embrace this opportunity against the authority.

Key Words: Azîz Yusuf, Sultan Jaqmaq, Ashrafiyya Mamlûks, Escape Plan.

Almost termly, in the medieval periods, at the different Turk-Islam governments and the areas, it is coincided to the escape of the sultans or successors, who have a chance to come to power but abdicated by incitements, acted owing to the fear of to be killed, willing to have the throne of the sultanate, desiring to have the immense assets. Every escape has a notable reason and each of escapees have an interesting memoir during their desertions which were full of adventures, risks, threats and dangers. Here, we'll try to deal with an escape account of a young sultan of the Burji Mamlûks, Azîz Yusuf, who was raised to the throne at the age of fifteen by the

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testament of Barsbay but then dethroned and be exposed to the escape for fear to be killed, had reigned for six months. Before all else, I should here mention some of the points of the Mamlûks, which has a prominent place among the other Turk-Islam governments in the Middle Ages.

The Arabic word “*mamlûk*” means “*slave*” and states origin of the Mamlûks, who were brought from the steps of Central Asia as slaves to Egypt.¹ This slavery system was not only to maintain the requirement of the Mamlûk army, but also formed the base of the state.² In consideration of the characteristic structure of the Mamlûk Government, first of all it is of use to imply this: As is known, if it is considered that the accession to the sultanate throne at Mamlûks bore no relation with the heredity as the other governments and apart from some of the exceptions, mostly Mamlûk sultans didn't belong to a dynasty in terms of a lineage, it can be clearly seen that Mamlûks state system differs from the other medieval governments and thus has a originality.³ This originality is not only restricted by the medieval Islamic world but also valid for all over the world history. The *amirs*, officiated at different duties, had all passed from this slavery system steps⁴. The more talented and the ambitious one among these *amirs* could ascend to the most important offices even could have the sultanate throne.

Most of Mamlûk sultans could summon the caliph, *qâdî al-qudâts*⁵ and amirs to the presence before their death and nominated

¹ Claude Cahen, *Der Islam I, Fischer Weltgeschichte*, vol. 14, Frankfurt am Main, 1968, p. 307.

² David Ayalon, “Studies on the Structure of the Mamlûk Army”, *Bulletin of the School of the Oriental and African Studies*, XV/2 (1953), p. 223-258, XV/3 (1953), 448-476, XVI/1 (1954), p. 57-90.

³ Ali Aktan, “Bahrî Memlûklerden Sultan Kalavun ve Hanedanı”, *Belleten*, LIX, Ankara, 1995, p. 607.

⁴ For the Mamlûk system, see: Ulrich Haarmann, “The Mamlûk System of Rule in the Eyes of Western Travelers”, *Mamluk Studies Review*, 5 (2001), p.1-24.

⁵ Establishment of *qâdî al-qudat*, *qâdî* or *cadi* had juristic and religious importance at Mamlûks. Until Sultan Baybars, there were two *Qâdî al-Qudâts* at Egypt and Syria officiated. Then Baybars appointed four *cadis* for Shâfîtes, Hanafîtes, Hanbalites and Malikites sects at 1264. *Qâdî al-Qudâts* generally joined to the assembly of sultan and they had been advised on religious affairs and decrees, see: Ahmed b. ‘Alî el-Kalkashandî, *Subh al-A‘şâ fî Sînâ‘at al-Înşâ*, V, Cairo, 1919-1922, p. 43-45; Hasan Ibrahim, *al-Nuzum al-Islâmiyye*, Cairo, (no year of print given), p. 273.

their sons as the heir by taking *biat* ⁶ from them. After death of the sultan, generally his son was seated to the throne by the amirs for a short time to perform the testament of him. Even though the sultan nominated his son as the heir, the concept of a dynasty, which didn't suit the Mamlûk system, couldn't be established - with one exception- the Qalawun Dynasty.⁷ Assigning their sons as the successor can be proof to the tendency of the Mamlûk rulers to the *sultanic rule*.⁸ Although this kind of a manner was contradictory to the Mamlûk slavery system; conflictions, interests and the competitions among the amirs urged them to abide the testament of the sultan even his son was young or incapable for the throne. If the newcomer ruler has the competence of the administration and he was sapient and powerful, he could save his throne against the amirs and could reign for a long time, but this wasn't a prevalent situation at Mamlûks.⁹ If ever newcomer was young and lack of governing skills that it was a frequent case, a male server in charge of a boy could appoint as *mudabbir al-mamlaka*¹⁰ and this amir governed the sultanate on behalf of young sultan. After a brief time, one of the powerful amirs took over the throne by dismissing the young ruler, who was generally *mudabbir al-mamlaka*. Because of the lack of a dynasty, the way to

⁶ *Biat* means to accept one's dominance, to promise and abide by this promise. At the medieval Islamic world, every emperor and sultan took a promise (*biat*) from the high officers for his son before their death, when he nominated his son as the heir.

⁷ The unique exception for this procedure was Qalawun Dynasty. After the death of Qalawun (1279-1290), except the terms of Sultan Qatboga (1294-1296), Sultan Lajin (1296-1299) and Sultan Baybars al-Jashnikir (1309-1310), all the sultans were descendants of Qalawun at Bahrî Mamlûks Period (1250-1382). But we don't coincide to a dynasty like that at Circassian Period (1382-1517), see: Samira Kortantamer, *Bahrî Memlûklarda Üst Yönetim Mensupları ve Aralarındaki İlişkiler*, İzmir, 1993, p. 25.

⁸ At *sultanic rule*, sovereignty descends from father to son.

⁹ Al-Malik an-Nasîr al-Dîn Mohammad b. Qalawun, who was the son of Sultan Qalawun, had all the competence of the administration and rulership. So he had gained the mastery over the amirs and reigned from 1310 till 1341, for more information about this sultan, see: Amalia Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun*, Brill, 1995.

¹⁰ *Mudabbir al-mamlaka* was the amir, who governed the sultanate on behalf of young sultan, had a power on administration, see: David Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamlûk Army", *Bulletin of the School of the Oriental and African Studies*, XV/2 (1953), p. 223-258; Samira Kortantamer, "Memlûklarda Devlet Yönetimi ve Bürokrasi", *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, I (1983), p. 38.

the top of the state - position of the sultan - was open to all the high ranked officers of the army.

Among the most conspicuous sultans of the Mamlûks, al-Malik al-Ashraf Sayf al-Din Barsbay¹¹ (1422-1437) died at 1437 and his son, al-Malik al-Azîz Yusuf, who was nominated as the heir, came to the power. After Barsbay's death, Qâdî al-Qudât Zayn al-Din Abd al-Bâsit, Amir Aynal al-Shad, *Davadar*¹² Temirbay came together at *Qal'at al-Jabal*¹³ and they charged Qâdî al-Qudât Sharaf al-Din b. al-Ashkar to summon the caliph to the presence of Yusuf for *biat* celebration. And also other qâdî al-qudâts were summoned to the citadel. Amir Cevher took the new sultan to *Bâb al-Sitare*¹⁴, where the throne existed and Yusuf seated the throne. Amir Jaqmaq and also the other amirs came to Bab al-Sitare and the mamlûks exited from their *tibâk*¹⁵ for the celebration. In this ambience, the caliph proclaimed Azîz Yusuf as the new sultan of the Mamlûks.¹⁶ His accession baksheesh was magnificent and all the mamlûks satisfied with this.¹⁷

¹¹ For the term of Sultan Barsbay, see: Ahmed Darrag, *L'Egypte sous Le Regne de Barsbay 825-841/1422-1438*, Damascus, 1961.

¹² *Davadar* was the executive secretary, who held the ink holder to the sultan when a document would be signed. At Mamlûks the executive secretary has an important position at the office even some davadars had become sultan, for more information, see: İ.H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatına Medhal*, Ankara, 1984, p. 356-358.

¹³ *Qal'at al-Cabal* or citadel of Cairo was the centre of the state of Mamlûks. The Citadel is one of the world's greatest monuments to medieval warfare, as well as a highly visible landmark on Cairo's eastern skyline. Particularly when viewed from the back side (from the north), the Citadel reveals a very medieval character. It is still at Salah Salem street at Cairo, see: Sa'îd Abd el-Fettâh 'Âşûr, *al-Mucteme' al-Misrî fî 'Asr Selâtin al-Memâlik*, Cairo, 1992, p. 67; Nasser O. Rabat, *The Citadel of Cairo*, Leiden, 1995, p. 9.

¹⁴ *Bâb al-Sitâre*, was one of the gates of *Qal'at al-Jabal*.

¹⁵ *Tibâk*, was a kind of military barracks for the mamlûks. A mamlûk taken from steps of Central Asia as a slave was disciplined at tibâks, for more information about the lifes at tibâks, see: David Ayalon, "Memlûk Devletinde Kölelik Sistemi", trans. Samira Kortantamer, *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, IV (1989), p. 211-247.

¹⁶ Takîy al-Din Ahmed b. Ali al-Makrîzî, *Kitâb al-Sulûk li-Ma'rîfet Duvel al-Mulûk*, ed.: Sa'îd Abd el-Fettâh 'Âşûr, IV/3, Cairo, 1973, p. 1053.

¹⁷ Andre Clot, *Kölelerin İmparatorluğu Memlûklerin Mısırı*, İstanbul, 2005, p. 121.

He was just at the age of fifteen, for this reason Amir Jaqmaq was appointed as *mudabbir al-mamlaka* of the new ruler.¹⁸

Before his death, Barsbay had gotten *biat* from the high ranked officers for his son. Now Young Yusuf was the sultan but lack of administrating the sultanate. So he wouldn't save the throne from his Mudabbir al-Mamlaka Amir Jaqmaq.¹⁹ After turning the conditions to his pims, Amir Jaqmaq hold an assembly and summoned the Caliph al-Mutazid Billah, all *qâdî al-qudâts* and amirs to the presence and proclaimed himself as sultan by pleading age of Yusuf and lack of his administrative ability. Therefore, by supporting everyone at assemble, Jaqmaq became the new sultan of the Mamlûks and Barsbay's son dismissed from the ruling. Sultan Jaqmaq had the throne on Wednesday, 9 September 1438 and given him "*al Malik al-Zâhir*" as an epithet.²⁰ He was at the age of sixty-five. Consequently, a usual case was repeated by this and a powerful amir had come to the power in accordance with the amirs instead of young and inexperienced one.

The main affair among the other issues engaged in Jaqmaq early on his sultanate was the escape of Yusuf by supporting his attendants from Qal'at al-Jabal where he was confined. After dethroned, Yusuf had been imprisoned at *Berberiyye*, which was a room at the citadel. Jaqmaq had also appointed some attendants for Yusuf to supply his requirements. Among these attendants, there were Nadim al-Habeshi, who was always joining to the assembly of sultan and also Sandal, whose race was Indian. After been brought from India, Sandal was castrated and charged at the citadel.²¹ He was famous for his intelligence and perspicacious and he was very brilliant.²² Sandal never neglected his service; in consideration of being close to Yusuf, he knew all cases of him. He was also informing on Yusuf about the situations and what was rumored at the citadel. Therefore, Sandal was like an eye and ear of Yusuf at Qal'at al-Jabal.

¹⁸ William Muir, *The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt AD-1260-1517*, Amsterdam, 1968, 149; Makrîzî, *Sulûk*, IV/3, p. 1054.

¹⁹ K. Y. Koprman, "Mısır Memlûkleri (1250-1517)," in *Doğuştan Günümüze Büyük İslâm Tarihi*, VI, İstanbul, 1992, p. 520.

²⁰ Abû Abdullah Mohammad b. Ali b. Mohammad Havlânî Şevkânî, *al-Bedru't-Tali' bi-Mehâsîn men Ba'de'l-Karni's-Sabi'*, I, Cairo, 1929, p. 184.

²¹ Sa'îd Abd al-Fettâh 'Âşûr, *al-'Asr el-Memâlik fî Mısır ve l-Şam*, Cairo, 1976, 182; Muir, *The Mameluke*, p. 151.

²² Abû'l Mehâsîn Yusuf b. Tagriberdi, *al-Nucûm al-Zâhira fî Mulûk Mısır vel-Kahira*, ed.: Ibrahim Ali Tarhan, XV, (no year of print giving), p. 296.

Someday, a hearsay arose at Cairo. According to this, Sultan Jaqmaq was planning to move Yusuf to Alexandria Prison and intending to make him blind with a hot iron. When Sandal heard this, he suspected from being killed his master and hurried to Berberiyye room without delaying and told Yusuf everything what he heard. When Yusuf learned this, he was very anxious.²³ Especially, after a new rumor had arisen about Yusuf that a *fetva*²⁴ given for being killed him, his anxiety increased more and more. Thence, Sandal told him something about the necessity of escaping from the citadel and Yusuf accepted this. At that time there was a cook at the kitchen of Qal‘at al-Jabal, who was responsible for preparing meal to Yusuf, had been also charged at the term of Barsbay. His name was Ibrahim and he was also close to Yusuf. Sandal went to the kitchen and met with Ibrahim the Cook about the intention of Yusuf. Ibrahim also supported this idea and they began to devise an escape plan. Jaqmaq had forbidden to Yusuf exiting from his room. For this reason, Ibrahim told Sandal to dig a tunnel, where started from Yusuf’s room and lied to the kitchen. As can be see, Yusuf was under close supervision at the citadel, doubtless this plan was devised for getting rid of the guardians on the *dehliz* (corridor) charged by Sultan Jaqmaq. After digging the tunnel, Sandal met with several mamlûks such as Togan al-Zaradkash, Ozdemir al-Mushaddi from the notables of *Ashrafiyya groups*²⁵, who were the supporter of Yusuf and adversary to Jaqmaq. He told them about the situation of Yusuf and wished them to help him. They accepted this and guaranteed doing theirs possible. So they agreed on coming together at the time when Yusuf exited from the Citadel.

On 16 February 1439, it was the second day of Ramadan and all people was performing *teravîh* prayer. This time was proper moment to carry the escape plan out. Ibrahim the Cook came to Yusuf’s room, disrobed him and entered him on a naked basis from the tunnel. When they arrived to the kitchen, Ibrahim the Cook dressed him a black cook costume and put some oil on his face for

²³ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 296.

²⁴ *Fetva*, was the decision and a judgment of the qâdî concerning with an affair. Sultans of Mamlûks generally could need to fetvas to figure out the affairs and to decree.

²⁵ At Mamlûks, every sultan and amir had the mamlûk groups and these groups were called as the name of their masters who had bought them. For instance, the Mamlûks bought by al-Malik al-Ashraf Barsbay was called as *Ashrafiyya Mamlûks*. These mamlûk groups could play an important role for a sultan or an amir to save their ascendancy or authority against their rivals. Most of Mamlûk sultans became to the throne by supporting of their mamlûk groups, see: Kopraman, “Mısır Memlûkleri”, p. 500.

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camouflaging.²⁶ They also took abundant food supplies and started to walk bravely until they have arrived to the gate of Qal'at al-Jabal. Sometime, they saw a mamlûk coming from the *iftar*²⁷ dinner which was feasted by sultan. There was also a man with him, who was the cook as Ibrahim at the kitchen of the citadel. At that time Ibrahim told Yusuf to walk fast for fear that they should be seen. So, he started to run fast in a flurry. And they rapidly moved away from the citadel. In accordance with the escape plan; Ozdemir, Togan and Sandal were waiting at the outside of the citadel. When they came together, Ozdemir and Togan wanted to take Yusuf to their house. But Yusuf objected to this. In the meantime, Sandal cut in angrily and shouted to Yusuf: “ *All right then! Why have we gotten out of the citadel?*” The most important reason for abstaining Yusuf to go with them was probably that they had wanted to take him to a Copt's region, aimed to centre at there and battling with sultan until they have killed him and had the citadel. When Yusuf knew their plan, he was scared and objected to go with them and wanted to go back to the citadel. But it was impossible. Because Togan refused this and he persuaded Yusuf by promising to be with him and committed that he would always be on side of him with his *Khushdâshes*.²⁸ Yusuf was satisfied with this and they agreed on this purpose.²⁹ As can be seen, Yusuf had just thought to escape from the citadel to save his life. But the supporters of him, who objected to the reign of Jaqmaq, wanted to embrace this opportunity. Because most of the mamlûks were the sympathizer of Yusuf and by benefiting from this advantage, they could enthrone him again and could regain their positions as the term of Sultan Barsbay. By compromising, they hid at a place at the head of the night. After that, Togan went to his *Khushdâshes* to ask if they would be able to help themselves or not. But he returned without obtaining any result. So, escapees went to Sayda³⁰, which viceroy was from Ashrafiyya Mamlûks, in case they could be supported by him. But unfortunately, this attempt was also unsuccessful.

²⁶ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 297

²⁷ *İftar* means breaking time for the fast.

²⁸ *Khushdâshes* means classmates, with whom they spent many years in the military school (*tibak*), graduated and were set free together by the same sultan. They developed very strong bonds and a feeling of solidarity, which lasted throughout their whole lives, see: ‘Âşûr, *Mucteme*’, p. 19.

²⁹ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 298.

³⁰ Sayda: It is the city at the South coast of Lebanon. Sidon is the old name of it, see: Yâkut al-Hamavî, *Mu‘cam al-Buldân*, III, Leipzig, 1866-1870, p. 439.

Sultan Jaqmaq such saddened to the escape of Yusuf that even he couldn't believe, when he heard this. But understanding the essence of the affair, anyhow there was nothing to do on his hand. He has also no idea where he could go. Yusuf was very important for Jaqmaq. Because the Ashrafiyya Mamlûks, who had a wide influence at the government and the viceroys of Aleppo and Damascus, who rebelled against the authority, could lean to Yusuf. In other words, he could be a trump on their hand.³¹

Shortly after from their escape, Yusuf and his companies joined to a caravan, whom was owned by Amir Aynal al-Abu Bakrî and they hid a little while at there. When this report reached to Cairo, Sultan Jaqmaq was surprised that's why he didn't expect to Amir Aynal guarding them.³² All these happened at the end of the Ramadan, March 1439. The eve of a religious festival, *Muayyadiyya Mamlûks*³³ took to the streets of Cairo to seek Yusuf. Because Amir Aynal's residence was near to Qal'at al-Jabal and guarded Yusuf by him could cause a disorder among the people. Notably, supporters of young sultan could cause turmoil as well. At that night, Muayyadiyyas seized a group of mamlûks from Ashrafiyya parties in case they could be connected with the escape of Yusuf. In addition to this, Jaqmaq ordered to be closed all the doors of the housing at Cairo and banned to go out to the public for a short time. Amir Tanbek al-Bardibek was appointed as the amir of first class in place of Amir Aynal al-Abu Bakrî.³⁴

In fact, since Sultan Jaqmaq has come to power, the situation didn't become tranquil. Ashrafiyya Mamlûks were jealously begrudging to Jaqmaq and Muayyadiyya Mamlûks, so they had waited for an opportunity to banish Jaqmaq from the throne. Actually, it seemed that they had reached this occasion by escaping Yusuf. Nonetheless, Jaqmaq gathered all the Muayyadiyyas under the

³¹ At that time Amir Tagribirmish was the viceroy of Aleppo and Amir Aynal al-Jakamî was the viceroy of Damascus; to have a more information about their uprising, see: Abû'l-Fazl Şihâb ed-Dîn b. Hacı Al-'Askalânî, *İnbau'l-Gumr bi-Enbai'l-Umr fi't-Târîh*, ed.: Dar al-Kitab al-İlmiyye, IX, Beirut, 1986, p. 56; Al-Hatîb al-Cavharî Ali b. Davud al-Sayrâfî, *Nuzhet al-Nufûs ve'l Ebdân fi Tevârih al-Zamân*, ed.: Hasan Habashî, IV, Cairo, 1994, p. 118.

³² Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 299

³³ *Muayyadiyyas* were the Mamlûks which bought by Sultan al-Malik al-Muayyed Sayf al-Din Sheyh (1412-1421). For more information about this sultan, see: Kazım Yaşar Kopraman, *Mısır Memlûkleri Tarihi, el-Melik el-Müeyyed Şeyh el-Mahmudî Devri 1412-1421*, Ankara, 1980.

³⁴ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 300.

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authority by appointing them to the officials, whereas he tried to get away Ashrafiyya Mamlûks from Cairo. Especially, these events evidently showed that Yusuf was an important chance for the opportunists. Because Amir Aynal al-Jakamî, viceroy of Damascus, showed his intention by having the *khutbah*³⁵ read in the name of Yusuf at Friday Prayer during his riot and Amir Tagribirmish, viceroy of Aleppo, betrayed to Jaqmaq by leaning to the son of Barsbay. All these facts obviously showed the intentions of the rebels against the authority.³⁶ These viceroys and the mamlûk parties, opposed to the reign of Jaqmaq, were intending to dethrone him and enthrone Yusuf instead of him again.

A short period of time after, a report reached from Sayda to Jaqmaq. According to this, while Amir Yashbak³⁷ and his army were on a campaign, Togan al-Ashrafî, who played an important role at escaping Yusuf, had come to Yashbak, mentioned the escape adventure of the young sultan and enforced him to obey Yusuf. He also specified about Ashrafiyya groups, who allied with Yusuf and the mamlûks at Sayda, who obeyed him as well, were invited to ally with themselves.³⁸ By meeting him, Togan overcame to persuade Amir Yashbak to obey Yusuf. Therefore, Amir Yashbak and all his troops took an oath for being faithful to the son of Barsbay. Sultan Jaqmaq ought to see that Togan would be able to go to Sayda to gather supporter, he had sent a report to the viceroy of Sayda and ordered to seize all the rebellious by raid against them. Upon this command, Yusuf Hassakî, viceroy of Sayda, guaranteed to the sultan to seize all of them by sending a letter to Cairo. Jaqmaq was also scared about the disobedience of Amir Yashbak, who joined to the side of Yusuf. At a term during the hearsays and the instigations increased at Cairo, Jaqmaq also attempted to initiate a new effort to seek the escapees at the frontier areas. Thereupon, all of the houses, farms and orchards were rummaged. Thus, many people from Asrafiyye groups were seized and tortured in order to make confess where the escapees hid.

³⁵ *Khutbah* is a kind of sermon which is preached by *imam* (prayer leader) at Friday prayers at the mosques. In the pre-modern Middle East, the mention of a ruler's name in the sermon was one of the two prerogatives of sovereignty (The other being the right to mint the coins). Mentioning meant accepting the sovereignty of the sultan, see: Bernard Lewis, *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 82-5.

³⁶ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 303.

³⁷ Amir Yashbak was the amir of the arms at Sayda.

³⁸ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 307.

Unfortunately, the more effort Jaqmaq spent to find out their place, the more successful the escapees hid out.

After a brief time, a joyful good report reached to the Cairo. Accordingly, Amir Yashbak, who abstained from disobeying to Jaqmaq, broke his oath, seized Togan al-Ashrafi and took him to Cairo. Sultan thanked to Amir Yashbak for his loyalty and offered to him. Togan was confined to the dungeon, where was at the bastion of Qal'at al-Jabal. He was exposed to all sorts of torture at there and all his bones had been broken forcing by press.³⁹ In this way, one of the escapees was seized at last. Togan al-Ashrafi was the mamlûks of Sultan Barsbay. During the sultanate of Jaqmaq, he obeyed for a while to the authority but then he collaborated with the rebels. After a few days, al-Nadim al-Habashi, who played an important role of escaping Yusuf as well, was also seized. A report given to the sultan about Nâdim that he was hiding himself at Cairo, was affected to be seized him. After this, Sandal was seized, who was the most important factor at escaping Yusuf.⁴⁰ Jaqmaq met with Sandal for a little while after taken to the presence, then asked to him where Yusuf was. But he told he had no idea where he was. Sandal was right. Because after escaping from the citadel, shortly they hid together, but then Yusuf had given to Sandal fifty *dinars* and had sent him away owing to the case under dispute. Likewise, Ibrahim the Cook had been dismissed by Yusuf by given him six hundred dinars as well. Still, Yusuf was just with Ozdemir but anyone, who had no idea where they were.⁴¹

Repressed and chased by the men of sultan, Yusuf was daunted and he got bored of hiding nook and corner. Therefore, he sent a report to his uncle, Baybars al-Ashrafi, who was the brother of Sultan Barsbay and asked if he would be able to patronize him or not. Baybars accepted his nephew's demand and committed to do his possible. But then, he recanted in order to be scared of the end of this responsibility. Because Yusuf was a rebellious against the sultan and he had collaborated with the Ashrafiyya Mamlûks. Although, he didn't want to leave alone his brother's son, especially while he was in trouble and in need, there was no other way to seize and deliver him to Cairo. He called Amir Yalbây from Muayyadiyya Mamlûks and ordered him to lurk at their route and waylay them. By this order, Amir Yalbây went to an obscure retreat and began to wait. When Yusuf and Ozdemir appeared, Amir Yalbây fled through them,

³⁹ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 310.

⁴⁰ Ibn Tagriberdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 312.

⁴¹ Abû'l Mehâsin Yusuf b. Tagriberdi, *al-Menhel es-Safi ve'l-Mustevfi Ba'de'l-Vafi*, ed.: Mohammad al-Amîn, IV, Cairo, 1986, p. 292.

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attacked to Ozdemir and beat on his face. By the strength of beating, his face bled. By this ambush, escapees had seized very tightly.⁴²

When Yusuf was taken to Cairo, Sultan Jaqmaq pitied and ordered to be given him clothes and to be served foods.⁴³ Because, he had the old woolly clothes on, remained during the escape time from the citadel and he had no pattens on his foot. He was also desolate and exhausted. Until morrow, Jaqmaq had accommodated to him at a safety place under close supervision. In the following day, all the amirs came to the presence of Jaqmaq and congratulated him on seizing the escapees. After this, Jaqmaq took Yusuf to his wife's room, Hond al-Kubra, and entrusted him to her hands. As for Ozdemir, he was ordered to be imprisonment in the bastion of the citadel, where the other Asrafiyyes were sentenced to. Jaqmaq granted to Yalbây five hundred dinars for his effort at seizing Yusuf and also a hundred dinars to each khushdâshes of him.⁴⁴

On Saturday night, 22 August 1439, Sultan Jaqmaq confiscated all estate and assets of Yusuf at Cairo. Thereupon, precious goods consisting of gold, carpets and silken clothes were confiscated by the order of sultan. All of his assets were the amount of fifty-thousand dinars and the whole goods were carried to the citadel by seventy porters.⁴⁵

On 22 August 1439, Jaqmaq ordered to his amir to take Yusuf to Alexandria. By this command, Yusuf set out to that city under close controlled of the Muayyadiyya Mamlûks. Amir Canibek al-Karamanî was responsible for Yusuf during this travel charged by Jaqmaq. It was assigned about a thousand dinars for the journey expenditure from the *waqfs*⁴⁶ of Yusuf and it was also assigned a thousand dinars to be given him per a month as long as he stayed at there.⁴⁷

Consequently, escape of Yusuf after dethroned by gathering around Ashrafiyya Mamlûks from the citadel was the most important and conspicuous event among the other affairs in the period of Sultan Jaqmaq (1438-1453). When Jaqmaq became to the sultanate, he had encountered with the revolts at Syria. Especially, among these rebels; Amir Tagribirmish, viceroy of Aleppo and Amir Aynal al-Jakamî,

⁴² Sayrâfi, *Nuzhe*, IV, p. 98.

⁴³ Sayrâfi, *Nuzhe*, IV, p. 99.

⁴⁴ Ibn Tagribirdi, *Nucûm*, XV, p. 315

⁴⁵ Sayrâfi, *Nuzhe*, IV, p. 103.

⁴⁶ Charitable foundation.

⁴⁷ Sayrâfi, *Nuzhe*, IV, p. 153; 'Aşûr, 'Asr, p. 182.

viceroy of Damascus, objected to obey Jaqmaq and was also leaning to Yusuf. So there was a serious relation between this escape and the revolts. But by seizing the escapees shortly after the runaway event, Jaqmaq didn't enable the opportunists to have this chance. And he also ended the uprisings and strengthened his sovereignty and the authority. As for Yusuf, Jaqmaq showed him favour after he had been seized. Because he was a young boy and he attempted to escape so as to be incited and for fear to be killed owing to the rumors. The punishment of a rebel at Mamlûks was execution. As a matter of fact, Amir Tagribirmish and Amir Aynal al-Jakamî was executed as a result of insubordination to the authority whereas Yusuf was forgiven by Jaqmaq. Seeing that he was important for the sultan, why did Jaqmaq send away Yusuf to Alexandria? As we know that Ashrafiyya groups mostly populated at Cairo were all supporters of Barsbay's son and they all had ascendancies over the other mamlûk groups. In case they could cause a new turmoil, Jaqmaq decided to send Yusuf away to Alexandria where was a safer place than Cairo.

NOTES

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