



Disguise in Egypt during the Circassian Mamlūk Period (784- 923A.H/1382-1517 A.D)

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ABSTRACT

Disguise was a known trick during the Mamlūk era, particularly during the Circassian Mamlūks. The political unrest and conspiracies at that time were among the primary motivation behind disguise of some statesmen such as Sultans and prominent amīrs upon deposition. They used such a trick to escape from accusations and punishment. Moreover, some members of society also resorted to disguise for social reasons, such as committing obscenities and sins. This is what some Mamlūk sources recorded when mentioning cases of marital infidelity, in which some individuals resorted to disguising themselves to escape confronting society by committing these moral crimes, or by disguising oneself as a religious figure and engaging in fraud to obtain money through this disguise. This is in addition to some incidents were cited for administrative and charitable reasons at which they tried to be away from any suspicion of hypocrisy. According to the study, most of the causes behind disguise were illegal except few legal incidents. The study was concluded with a table presenting the cases of disguise during the Circassian Mamlūk era in Egypt, including the date of their occurrence, their reasons, the disguised person and the aspects of disguise.

KEYWORDS

Disguise, punishment, costume, Circassian, Mamlūk Period.

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التنكر في العصر المملوكي الجركسي (784- 923 هـ / 1382- 1517 م)

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الملخص

التنكر هو حيلة لجأ إليها بعض الأفراد من مختلف فئات المجتمع في العصر المملوكي وبالأخص فترة المماليك الجراكسة وما ارتبطت به تلك الفترة من اضطرابات سياسية ومؤامرات كانت دافع أساسي وراء تنكر بعض رجال الدولة من السلاطين وكبار الأمراء للهروب من التهم والعقوبات لأسباب عسكرية وسياسية. وعلي جانب آخر، لجأ أيضاً بعض أفراد المجتمع آنذاك للتنكر لأسباب ودوافع اجتماعية كارتكاب الفواحش والآثام. وهذا ما سجلته بعض المصادر المملوكية عند ذكر حالات خيانة زوجية لجأ فيها بعض الأشخاص للتنكر للهروب من مواجهة المجتمع بارتكاب تلك الجرائم الأخلاقية أو للتنكر في زي أحد رجال الدين ممن لهم كرامات وممارسة النصب والاحتيال للحصول علي الأموال من وراء هذا التنكر. هذا بالإضافة إلي بعض الحالات التي سجلت أسباب إدارية وأسباب تتعلق بالأعمال الخيرية حيث كان التنكر فيها لإبعاد شبهة الرياء عن صاحبها. وعلي هذا فنجد أن حيلة التنكر كانت تستخدم غالباً لأسباب غير مشروعة إلا أن بعض الحالات القليلة سجلت لنا أسباباً مشروعة للتنكر. ولقد دُيِّلت الدراسة بجدول يلخص حالات التنكر التي شهدتها العصر المملوكي الجركسي في مصر يتضمن زمن وقوعها وأسبابها والشخص المتنكر وكيفية التنكر.

الكلمات الدالة

التنكر، العقوبات، زي، الجركسي، العصر المملوكي

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Introduction

Despite the numerous studies on the Mamlūk era, it is noted that the term *al-tanakkur* disguise needs to be examined in a detailed study, especially in the Circassian Mamlūk era. Upon the course of searching for this topic, I noticed that disguise was tackled during the Umayyad era¹, during the Fatimid era², and during time of the Crusaders³. The thing that encouraged the researcher to fill the gap and tackle the topic of disguise during the Circassian Mamlūk period as it witnessed so many cases of disguise. The study explored disguise to present the meaning of the word in addition to the reasons and the aspects of disguise as well.

Significance of the Research

The topic of the research is of great importance as it deals with a trick that was used among members of society during the Circassian Mamlūk period, such as the ruling class, the prominent amīrs, the civilians and even slaves.

Methodology

The researcher followed a descriptive method to display the mentioned incidents of disguise. He also used the analytical methodology in analyzing and criticizing these incidents to get a comprehensive study. The research used internal criticism and focused on verifying incidents by referring to more than a manuscript as much as possible to guarantee its credibility.

Regarding the limitation of the study, it dealt with Egypt during the Circassian Mamlūk Period (784- 923 A.H /1382-1517 A.D). The research borrowed its incidents from most of the contemporary chronicles at that time.

Objectives

The study aims to explore disguise in Circassian Mamlūk Egypt in addition to its definition, reasons and aspects.

The Word *Tanakkur*⁴ Idiomatically and Linguistically

The root of the word “*tanakkur*” disguise is “*n-k-r*”. Disguise means that the one changed to an unknown state throughout his appearance or costume to impede recognition⁵.

¹ Ḥaidar Laftīyah Sa‘īd, *Dawā‘ī al-Tanakkur fī-l- ‘Aṣr al-Umawī (41-132/661-749): Dirāsah Tā’rīḥīyah*, Journal of Faculty of Arts, University of Kufa, no. XII/XLIII, 2020, 231-274.

² Wasīm ‘Abbūd ‘Aṭīyah, *Al-Tanakkur fī al- ‘Aṣr al-Fāṭimī: Dirāsah Tā’rīḥīyah (358-567/968-1171)*, Journal of the College of Education for Girls and Humanities, University of Kufa, no. LIII, 2019, 481-528.

³ Yāsir Kāmil Maḥmūd, *Al-Tanakkur fī Bilād al-Šām ‘Aṣr al-Ḥurūb al-Šalībīyah (1097-1192/490-588)*, Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Assiut University, no. XXIX/LXXXVIII, 2023, 742-814.

⁴ Sources used the same word *tanakkur* with a different significant as he changed his perspective towards something or someone negatively or he treated me badly. Ibrāhīm Anīs and others, *Al-Mu‘ḡam al-Wasīṭ*. Cairo: Al-Šurūq al-Dawliyah, 2004, II, 952. However, the research will only tackle the word *tanakkur* in terms of disguise.

⁵ Al-Rāzī, (d. 666/1267) Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr, *Muḥtār al-Šihāḥ* Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān, 1989, 597; Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311-1312) (Ġamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Makram al-Anṣārī), *Lisān al-‘Arab*. Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, n.d, VI, 4540; Al-Zabaidī, *Tāğ al-‘Arūs min Ġawāhir al-Qāmūs*. Kuwait: Maṭba‘at Ḥukūmat al-Kuwait, 1974, XIV, 291; Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al- Muḥīṭ*. Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān, 1987, 916; John Sample, *Methods of Disguise*. Paladin Press, 1993, 1.

Actually, disguise was known and used since the time of the Prophet and the beginning of Islam. In this context, we mention that Prophet Muḥammad knew about the conspiracy of the infidels to kill him through revelation. He asked his cousin ‘Alī to sleep on his bed, instead of the Prophet, upon the migration to al-Madīnah. So, he disguised himself by sleeping in the bed of the Holy Prophet and covering himself with the Prophet's green coat. The infidels were surprised by ‘Alī when they attacked the house of the Prophet, who emigrated safely to al-Madīnah⁶.

Disguise was also used during the successive periods, especially during time of conspiracies and political unrest by rulers and commoners for different reasons such as political, social, economic, and administrative.

Regarding the aspects of disguise under the Umayyads, they were varied in different outfits, such as disguise in a feminine costume to escape from political conspiracies. For example, after the death of Yazīd Ibn Mu‘āwīyah, the Umayyad ruler, his governor, ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Zīyād tried to disguise himself in a feminine costume to escape to al-Baṣrah⁷. Moreover, Caliph al-Walīd Ibn Yazīd disguised himself as an oil salesman on the back of a donkey to meet Salma, his lover. Anyhow, his disguise did not help him much as he was recognized and her father expelled him⁸. Among the aspects of disguise at that time was changing the identity and name to escape from the sentenced punishment, which happened when Caliph ‘Abd al-Malek Ibn Marawān ordered to arrest ‘Imrān Ibn Ḥaṭṭān, the poet who had offended the Caliph in his poetry⁹.

Disguise was also known during the ‘Abbasid era. It took different aspects as well. In this context, Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn, the founder of the Ṭūlūnīd dynasty in Egypt, ordered to distribute food to poor people, but he noticed a man of humble appearance who did not eat. He ordered to investigate him and he recognized that he was a disguised spy of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mūwaffaq¹⁰. Aspects of disguise were varied at that time, as some were disguised in a feminine costume. In this context, Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn checked a funerary of females. He figured out that two women of them were originally disguised men and they escaped from prison. But, Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn suspected them as they pretended to be sad at the funeral¹¹.

⁶ Ibn Hišām (d.218/733) Abī Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Malik al-Ḥimayrī, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah*. Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah lil-Ṭibā‘ah wa-l- Naṣr, 2019, 415, 416; Ḥaidar Laftīyah Sa‘īd, *Dawā‘ī al-Tanakkur*, *Journal of Faculty of Arts*, University of Kufa, no. XII/XLIII, 2020, 483.

⁷ Ibn Qutaibah al-Dīnūrī (d.276/889) Abī Muḥammad ‘Abdullah Ibn Muslim, *Al-Imāmah wa-l-Sīyāsah*. Iran: Amīr- Qumm Press, 1992, II, 27; Ḥaidar Laftīyah Sa‘īd, *Dawā‘ī al-Tanakkur*, *Journal of Faculty of Arts*, University of Kufa, no. XII/XLIII, 2020, 238, 239.

⁸ Al-Aṣḥāhānī (d.356 /967) Abū’l Farağ ‘Alī, *Kitāb al-Aḡānī*. Beirut: Dār al-Ṭaqāfah, 1956, VII, 26, 27; Ḥaidar Laftīyah Sa‘īd, *Dawā‘ī al-Tanakkur*, *Journal of Faculty of Arts*, University of Kufa, no. XII/XLIII, 2020, 247, 248.

⁹ Al-Ḍahabī (d. 748/1347) Šāms al-Dīn Abī ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uṭmān, *Sīyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*. Beirut:Mū’sasat al-Rīsālah, n.d, IV, 214.

Ḥaidar Laftīyah Sa‘īd, *Dawā‘ī al-Tanakkur*, *Journal of Faculty of Arts*, University of Kufa, no. XII/XLIII, 2020, 245.

¹⁰ Al-Balawī (d. 400/1000) Abī Muḥammad ‘Abdullāh b. Muḥammad, *Sīrat Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn*. Cairo: Mū’assasat Hindāwī, 2023, 81,82; Wasīm ‘Abbūd ‘Aṭīyah, *Al-Tanakkur fī al- ‘Aṣr al-Fāṭimī*, *Journal of the College of Education for Girls and Humanities*, University of Kufa, no. LIII, 2019, 483.

¹¹ Al-Balawī, *Sīrat Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn*, 81, 82, footnote no. 151; Wasīm ‘Abbūd ‘Aṭīyah, *Al-Tanakkur fī al- ‘Aṣr al-Fāṭimī*, *Journal of the College of Education*, University of Kufa, no. LIII, 2019, 483.

Muḥammad Ibn Ṭuġġ al-Iḥšīdī used disguise to secure his life. He used to move from one tent to another during his travels or even sleep in the tent of the maids and servants¹².

Regarding the Fatimid era, disguise was used widely for different reasons. For example, the mother of Caliph al-Mu‘izz asked her son to delay his conquest so that she could perform the pilgrimage in disguise, as going to pilgrimage was through the lands of Egypt. Anyhow, when Kāfūr al-Iḥšīdī knew about her arrival, he welcomed her and offered his maids to serve her as well¹³. Disguise took different reasons as well. In this context, Caliph al-Zāfir used to disguise to meet Naṣr Ibn al-‘Abbās, the son of his vizier, who had an illegal relationship with him. So, he disguised himself to keep this relationship a secret¹⁴.

Disguise was continued under the Ayyubids, especially during the time of the Crusaders. It was mentioned that when King Richard the Lionheart of England passed through an Islamic ambush. He switched disguises with one of his guards. So, they thought that the disguised guard who wore a fancy costume was the king and captured him¹⁵. Language was amongst the ways of disguise at that time. For example, the leader of the Egyptian Fatimid fleet chose his team of those who were good at Latin; they even dressed in the Frankish costume. The thing that facilitated capturing ships belonging to the Crusaders were loaded with supplies¹⁶.

Regarding the Circassian Mamlūk era, there were different reasons behind disguise (table 1). The researcher categorized incidents of disguise according to these different reasons as follows:

Military Reasons

Disguise was used widely as a trick during the Circassian Mamlūk period in military life (table 2). Mainly, it was used by Sultans and prominent amīrs to escape in case of conspiracies and military coups. In this context, al-Ṣayrafī mentions that Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraġ ibn Barqūq arrested a group of amīrs¹⁷ among them Aristāy¹⁸ rā’s nawbah kabīr,¹⁹ Timrāz al-Nāṣirī,²⁰ Timurbugā al-Mingākī ḥāġib Maisarah,²¹ Yalbuga al-

¹² Al-Nūwairī (d. 732/1333), Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 2006, XXVIII, 28.

¹³ Ibn Taġrībīrdī (d. 874/1470) Ġamāl al-Dīn Abū-l-Maḥāsin Yūsuf, *Al-Nuġūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhirah*. Cairo, 2005, IV, 71.

¹⁴ Ibn Taġrībīrdī, *Al-Nuġūm*, V, 288, 289.

¹⁵ Abī Šamah (d.665/1266) Šihāb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥman Ibn Ismā‘īl, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī Aḥbār al-Dawlatain*. Beirut: Mū‘asasat al-Rīsālah, 1997, IV, 282; Yāsir Kāmil Maḥmūd, *Al-Tanakkur fī Bilād al-Šām*, *Journal of the Faculty of Arts*, Assiut University, no. XXIX/LXXXVIII, 2023, 764, 765.

¹⁶ Al-Qalānisī (d. 555/1160) Ḥamzah Ibn Asad, *Ḍail Tārīḥ Dimišq*. Beirut: Maṭba‘at al-Ābā’ al-Yāsū‘iyyīn, 1908, 331, 332; Yāsir Kāmil Maḥmūd, *Al-Tanakkur fī Bilād al-Šām*, *Journal of the Faculty of Arts*, Assiut University, no. XXIX/LXXXVIII, 2023, 779, 780.

¹⁷ Al-Ṣayrafī, (d.900/1495) Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Ġuhārī ‘Alī b. Dāwūd, *Inbā’ al-Ḥaṣr bi-Abnā’ al-‘Aṣr*. Cairo, 2002, II, 11-13

¹⁸ Saif al-Dīn Aristāy ‘Alī ibn ‘Abdullah al-Zāhirī died in 811/1408. See: Hiba Yusuf, Le chef de la ronde des rondes au temps des Mamlūks (Ra’s nawbat al-nawb), *Journal of Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality*, no. VIII/II, 2011, 92, no. 38.

¹⁹ Rā’s nawbah or chief of the corps of mamlūks: He was responsible for the royal Mamlūks, supervised their conduct, and executed the Sultan’s or the amīrs’ orders applied to them. He was also responsible for the army parades before leading expeditions. See: Al-Qalqaṣandī (d.821/1418) Šihāb

Aḥmadī al-Mağnūn²² the ustadār in addition to some amīrs of al-Ṭablaḥānah²³ in 801/1399. The reason behind this was a military coup. So, the amīrs agreed about making the son of Sultan al-Ašraf Ša‘bān disguise in a costume of a woman then to enthrone him. They decided to attack anyone would oppose them. But a person called Ġaqmaq al-Ḥāškī al-Zāhirī revealed the scheme on the day they gather at the Iwān²⁴. The Sultan ordered to incarcerate some of the previous mentioned amīrs then to send them to Alexandria and Damietta. Only, Yalbuğa al-Aḥmadī al-Mağnūn was incarcerated at the stable²⁵ till he paid money²⁶. The previous incident shows the power

al-Dīn Abū-l-‘Abbās Aḥmad, *Šubḥ al-A‘ša fī Šinā‘at al-Inšā*. Cairo: Al-Maṭba‘ah al-Amīriyah, 1914, IV, 18; Al-Saḥamāwī (d. 868/1464) Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad al- Saḥamāwī, *Al-Ṭağr al-Bāsim fī Šinā‘at al- Kātib wa-l- Kātim*. Cairo, 2009, I, 392, 393; David Ayalon, Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army, *BSOAS*, III, 1954, 60; Hiba Yūsuf, Le chef de la ronde, *JAAUTH*, no. VIII/II. Cairo, 2011, 87-89.

²⁰ He served during the reign of Sultan al-Zāhir Farağ as an amīr Ṭablaḥānah, then was upgraded under Sultan al-Nāšir to be a deputy. He was suffocated to death in 814/1411. Al-Saḥāwī (d. 902/1496-1497) Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Al-Ḍaw‘ al-Lāmi‘ li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi‘* Beirut: Dār al-Ġīl, 1992, III, 38, no. 156.

²¹ Ḥāğib means chamberlain. He was one of the prominent offices that appeared with the beginning of Islam and developed throughout the different Islamic eras. It was a military office whose holder was responsible for guarding the access to the ruler, so that only authorized visitors would approach him. Al-‘Umarī (d. 749/1348) Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Yaḥya, *Masālik al-Absār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*. Cairo: IFAO, 1985, 57; Ibn Ḥaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, translated by Rosenthal Franz. Princeton, 1969, 195; Ḥasan al-Bāšā, *Al-Funūn al-Islāmīyah wa-l- Waṣā‘if ‘ala al-Ātār al-Arabīyah*. Cairo, 1965, I, 381; Maḥāsin Muḥammad al-Waqqād, *Al-Ḥiğābah Zaman Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk*, *Journal of Medieval and Islamic History*, III. Cairo, 2003, 111; Marwa Hamdi Taha, *Al-Ḥiğābah and al-Ḥuğğāb in Mamlūk Egypt and their Most Important Architectural and Artistic works*, M.A. Thesis, unpublished, Faculty of Arts, Tourist Guidance section, ‘Ain Šams University. Cairo, 2006, I, 2.

²² Yalbuğa al-Aḥmadī Saif al-Dīn al-Zāhirī known as al-Mağnūn. He died in 844/1440. Al-āt (d. 807/1405) Nāšir al-Dīn b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, *Tārīḥ Ibn al-Furāt*. Beirut: Al-Maṭba‘ah al-Amrikānī, 1942, IX/II, 466; Ibn Duqmāq (d.809/1406) Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. al-‘Alā‘ī, *Al-Naḥḥ al-Miskīyah fī -l-Dawlah al-Turkīyah*. Beirut: Al-Maktabah al-‘Ašrīyah, 1992, 302-303; Ibn Iyās, (d. 930/1523) Abū-l- Barakāt Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Ġawāhir al-Sulūk fī Amr al-Ḥulafā‘ wa-l- Mulūk*. Cairo: Al-Dār al-Ṭaqāfiyah lil-Našr, 2006, 277.

²³ Amīrs of Ṭablaḥānah were the second rank in the military ranking. Usually, they were amīrs of forty knights. It could be more but not less. Al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Absār*, 28, Al-Qalqašandī, *Šubḥ al-A‘ša*, IV, 15; Iğlāl ‘Alī Surūr, *Umarā‘ al-Ṭablaḥānah ‘Ašr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk bi-Miṣr (648-923/1250-1517)*. Cairo: Al-Hay‘ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Āmah lil-Kitāb, 2024, 13, 14.

²⁴ The *īwān* of the citadel (Known also as *Al-īwān al-Kabīr* and *Dār al-‘Adl*, means hall of Justice). It was built by Sultan al-Manšūr Qalāwūn within the citadel, it was renewed by his son Sultan al-Ašraf Ḥalīl. It was the main throne hall during the Mamluk period. it was used as the place of the ceremony of mamluk parade reviewed by the Sultan, as the reception hall for receiving ambassadors and guests, and a judicial function the hall of justice or *Dār al-‘Adl*. It was pulled down during the reign of Sultan al-Nāšir Muḥammad and covered it with a magnificent dome. Al-Maqrīzī (d.845/1441) Taqī al-Dīn Abū-l-‘Abbās Aḥmad, *Al-Mawā‘iz wa-l- I’tibār bi-Dīkr al-Ḥiṭaṭ wa-l- Ātār*. London: Mūssasat al-Furqān, 2003, III, 659; ‘Abd al-Raḥman Zakī, *Qal‘at Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī wa mā Ḥawlaha*. Cairo: Al-Hay‘ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Āmah lil-Kitāb, 1971, 54-55; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, The Citadel of Cairo: Stage on Mamluk Ceremonial, *Annals Islamologiques*, XXIV. 1988, 35-37; Nasser O. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo*. Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities, 2009, 14-15.

²⁵ The Stable (the sultanate stable): There were different types during the Mamluk period such as: the honored private stables of the Sultan, the stable of the bimāristān of the weak horses, stable of the mules, stable of the postal system. Etc. Ibn Šāhīn al-Zāhirī (d.873/1468) Ġars al-Dīn Ḥalīl, *Zubdat Kašf al-Mamālik wa Bayān al-Ṭuruq wa-l- Masālik*. Paris: Al-Maṭba‘ah al-Ġumhūriyah, 1894, 125.

and authority of the Circassian Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraġ against the descendants of the Baḥārī Sultans. The amīrs were punished although they did not implement their scheme. So, the conspiracy itself of the military coup was an enough reason for the punishment.

Moreover, the followers and supporters of the previous Sultan al-Aṣraf Ṣa'bān were firmly supporting their master. Especially that corruption and conspiracies prevailed during the reign of al-Nāṣir Faraġ²⁷. On the other hand, it is noted that costume of women was amongst the perfect ways of disguise. It was totally away of people's mind that any amīr would dress as a woman. The common feminine undergarment at that time was a pair of drawers which could be knee-length knickers *izār* (known also as *mi'zār*) or longer pantaloons *sirwāl*. Both the *izār* and *sirwāl* were often known as *libās*²⁸. That *izār* was an ample wrap which covers the entire clothes. It was in white for Muslims²⁹. They wore on the head a *niqāb*. Most of women were entirely wrapped and veiled from head to toe. The *niqāb* had three types at that time: a veil of black net covering the entire face, a veil of black net leaving two holes for the eyes, and a white or black face veil covering the face up to the eyes. It was common for women at that time to cover up their faces, except for dancers and singers³⁰.

Ibn Taġrībīrdī provided us with an example of disguise³¹ when amīr Ġānībak al-Ṣūfī³² fled from Alexandria to Cairo and stayed there for years, hiding in its alleys in 839/1435. Then, he left it in disguise and went to the Levant and then to the lands of the Romans. News of him reached Sultan al-Aṣraf Barsbāy that he appeared in Tokat³³. He allied with so many prominent amīrs of Turkmen to support him against the Sultan in a military coup. But the Sultan ordered to arrest Ġānībak and to imprison him in the port of Alexandria³⁴. Unfortunately, sources did not mention how he disguised as. Mostly, the manuscript focused on the incident itself. Anyhow, it is worth mentioning the common costume of an amīr like Ġānībak al-Ṣūfī at that time. Starting with their head-gear, the Mamlūk amīrs wore embroidered *kalawtah* (*kalawtah zarkaš*)³⁵ during the Baḥārī era. They also innovated wearing a head gear called *kalawtah* with a turban wrapped around it. The *kalawtah* was in red. This name has been changed into the Circassian *kalawtah* or "*al-kalawtah al-ġarkasīyah*" during

On the other hand, the Sultanate stable was one of the places were used for incarceration. Rānia Ossāma 'Alī Fikri, *Al-Ta'wīq Zaman Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk* (648-923A.H/1250-1517 A.D), *Bulletin of Center of Papyrological Studies*, no. XXXIV/I. 2017, 331.

²⁶ Al-Ṣayrafī, *Inbā'*, II, 12-13; Rānia Ossāma, *Al-Ta'wīq*, BCPS, no. XXXIV/I. 2017, 309, 310.

²⁷ 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Fathī 'Abd al-Fattāḥ, *Fasād al-Dawlah al-Mamlūkīyah fī 'Ahd al-Sultān Faraġ ibn Barqūq*, *Nadwat al-Tārīḥ al-Islāmī*, Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom Journal, Cairo University, no. XXV/XXVI. 2012, 304.

²⁸ Yedida Kalfon Stilman, *Arab Dress: From the Dawn of Islam to Modern Times*. Leiden, 2003, 75.

²⁹ Leo Aryeh Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*. Genève, 1952, 70; Stilman, *Arab Dress*, 82.

³⁰ Mayer, *Mamluk Costume*, 73; Stilman, *Arab Dress*, 82.

³¹ Ibn Taġrībīrdī, *Al-Nuġūm*, XV, 66.

³² He escaped from the prison in Alexandria and the Sultan kept searching for him. He was killed in 841/1437. Al-Saḥāwī, *Al-Daw'*, III, 57, no. 230.

³³ Tokat is a town locates nowadays in northern Turkey, in the interior of Pontic Region. *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Leiden, 2000, X, 558.

³⁴ Unknown, *Ḥawliyyāt Dimīšqīyah*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Anġlo al-Miṣrīyah, 1968, 151, 152.

³⁵ Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy; *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les arabes*. Amsterdam, 1845, 387-388; *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*. Paris, 1927, I, 589; II, 491.

the reign of Sultan al-Zāhir Barqūq as it became much bigger than before³⁶. The Circassian *kalawtah* was used by the Sultan as well as his amīrs till the end of Mamlūk era³⁷.

Moreover, the so-called *tahḥīfah*, the “lighter one” was among the types of head gears at that time. It was first worn by Sultans then became for prominent amīrs as well. During the Circassian era, Sultan Barqūq wore *tahḥīfah ṣaḡīrah* (small *tahḥīfah*) on his head. According to Fuess, it could be worn by Mamlūk amīrs at certain public outings, but it was not acceptable to wear it at very official occasions³⁸. At the end of the Circassian era another type of *tahḥīfah* increased in popularity among the Mamlūk prominent amīrs, the *tahḥīfah kabīrah* (the big *tahḥīfah*). It was worn for special occasions. The amīrs even started to put horns on it. This head gear was developed to the last version known as *nā’ūrah* (literary means waterwheel). It was worn by the Mamlūk Sultans as a crown³⁹.

Regarding the body uniform of the Mamlūk amīrs; they wore the so-called Tatar shirt (*al-Aqbīyah al-Tatarīyah*). Such shirt was replaced by the *mallūṭah* loose shirt with broad sleeves. Over this shirt, they wore a shirt known as Islamic shirt *qabā’ Islāmī* as the external outfit⁴⁰. Later on, the amīrs began to wear over the *qabā’*, cloaks with short sleeves wider than the narrow sleeves of the *qabā’* underneath⁴¹, then wearing on the *qabā’* a special waist belt (*mintaqah*)⁴² called *ḥiyāṣah*⁴³. The *ḥiyāṣah* was at first strictly a military belt used by the amīrs, most of *ḥawā’iṣ* were of gold and could be inlaid with jade (*yaṣm*)⁴⁴. The finest ones could also be set with precious stones and might cost several hundred dinārs⁴⁵.

It was common for the amīrs to wear a sword girded on the left and a dagger (*kizlik*) on the right together with a black leather rucksack called a *ṣawlaq*⁴⁶. A scarf was tucked into the *ḥiyāṣah* and hung over the *ṣawlaq*. As for the footwear of the amīrs, it consisted mainly of boots called (*ḥuff*). The winter *ḥuff* was made of yellow leather (*adīm*) imported from al-Tā’if⁴⁷ or of a black one imported from Bulgaria. In summer, white boots used to be worn⁴⁸. The amīrs used decorative spurs (*mihmāz*) over their boots, and those who were feudal-holders in the royal guard used to wear spurs of gold⁴⁹.

³⁶ Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭat*, III, 328; Mayer, *Costume*, 29.

³⁷ Al-Qalqaṣandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 6, 39; Mayer, *Costume*, 28.

³⁸ Albrecht Fuess, Sultans with Horns: The Political Significance of Headgear in the Mamluk Empire, *Mamlūk Studies Review*, no. XII, 2008, 77.

³⁹ Albrecht Fuess, Sultans with Horns, *MSR*, no. XII, 2008, 77-78.

⁴⁰ Albrecht Fuess, Sultans with Horns, *MSR*, no. XII, 2008, 74.

⁴¹ Al-Qalqaṣandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 40.

⁴² Dozy, *Vêtements*, 420-421.

⁴³ *Ḥiyāṣah* is of an *Ayyūbid* origin. It is made of roundels and it was obviously the fashion in the 13th and 14th centuries. There was a market for the *ḥiyāṣah* called (*sūq al-ḥawā’iṣīyīn*). Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭat*, III, 329-330; Dozy, *Vêtements*, 145-147; Mayer, *Costume*, 27.

⁴⁴ Al-Qalqaṣandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 41; Stillman, *Arab Dress*, 64.

⁴⁵ Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭat*, III, 329; Stillman, *Arab Dress*, 64.

⁴⁶ The *ṣawlaq*: worn above the *qabā’* by all the military. It was made of black Bulgarian leather. Dozy, *Vêtements*, 248-249; Mayer, *Costume*, 27.

⁴⁷ Al-Tā’if is a town in Saudi Arabia to the south east of Mecca. See: *EI*. Art. al-Tā’if, X, 115.

⁴⁸ Al-Qalqaṣandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 41; Mayer, *Costume*, 34; Stillman, *Arab Dress*, 66.

⁴⁹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭat*, III, 704; Stillman, *Arab Dress*, 66.

Once again, disguise appeared in the Circassian Mamlūk period in an incident of deposing the Sultan who wanted to disguise and escape due to a military coup. In 905/1499 a group of amīrs agreed about deposing Sultan al-Zāhir Abū Sa‘īd Qānṣūh⁵⁰. Consequently, amīr Ġānbulāt al-Atābikī,⁵¹ Tūmānbāy,⁵² and other amīrs besieged the Sultan at the citadel⁵³. Then they attacked the citadel. The struggle was continued for three days, during which amīr Tūmānbāy attacked the citadel from the madrasa of Sultan Ḥassan⁵⁴ with catapults. The opposing amīrs showed a victory over the supporters of the Sultan. The thing led the Sultan to escape to the women’s section in the citadel and to disguise himself as a woman to escape. He wore an *izār* ample wrap and a *niqāb* veil, then he escaped to the cemetery at which he disappeared⁵⁵. So once more, men disguised in women’s costumes to be totally concealed as mentioned above.

⁵⁰ Ibn al-Ḥimṣī (d. 934/1527) Šihāb al-Dīn Ahmad, *Ḥawādīt al-Zamān wa Waḥyāt al-Šuyūḥ wa-l-Aqrān*, released by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Faīyād Ḥarfūš. Beirut: *Dār al-Nafā’is*, 2000, II, 381.

⁵¹ He started his career as a Circassian mamluk belongs to amīr Yašbak min Mahdī. He came to Cairo during the reign of Sultan al-Zāhir Abū Sa‘īd Qānṣūh. He was upgraded in high ranks and got married to the Sultan’s sister. He attacked the citadel in 905/1499 during the reign of Sultan al-Zāhir and was able to rule Egypt and was entitled as al-Ašraf Ġānbulāt. But soon he was killed in the next year. Ibn al-Zayyāt (d. 1061/1650) Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, *Al-Kawākib al-Sā’irah bi-A’yān al-Mi’ah al-‘Āširah*. Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah*, 1997, I, 172, 173, no. 357; Al-Ziriklī, *Al-A’lām: Qāmūs Tarāğim li-Ašhar al-Riğāl wa-l- Nisā’ min al-‘Arab wa-l- Musta’ribīn wa-l-Mustašriqīn*. Beirut: *Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malāyīn*, 2002, II, 107.

⁵² Tūmānbāy al-Dawādār, Saif al-Dīn al-Ašrafī, he was bought as a mamluk slave by Qānṣūh al-Yaḥyāwī then, introduced to Sultan al-Ašraf Qāitbāy. He was upgraded and held high position till he deputized Sultan al-Ašraf Ġānbulāt. In 906/1501, he attacked the Sultan and besieged him in the citadel. He ordered to suffocate him to death and to rule Egypt instead. But soon in the same year he was executed. See: Ibn Sibāt (d. 926/1520) Aḥmad b. Ḥamzah mentioned that he was found at the house of a man called Bašīr al-Baḥlāq in Cairo. *Tārīḥ Ibn Sibāt*. Tripoli: Gross Purse, 1993, II, 937; Ibn Ṭulūn (d. 953/1546) Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad, *I’lām al-Warā bi-man Walīya Nā’iban min-l- Atrāk bi-Dimišq al-Šām al-Kubrā*. Cairo: *Dār al-Fikr*, 1973, 125, 128; Al-Qurmānī (d. 1019/1610) Abū-l- ‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Yūsuf, *Aḥbār al-Dūwal w-Āḡār al-Owal fī-l- Tārīḥ*. Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kitāb, 1992, 323.

⁵³ The Citadel (citadel of the mountain): it was built during the Ayyubid period in between 572-579 AH/1176-1183 AD. It was built as a fortification with military towers and walls. It was built by Šalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī but, first inhabited by his descendant Sultan al-Kāmil Muḥammad. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, III, 644-646; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo*. Cairo, AUC Press, 2005, 78; Ayman Fū’ād Saiyed, *Al-Qāhirah Ḥiṭaṭuha wa Taṭwūrha al-‘Umrānī*. Cairo, 2015, 210.

⁵⁴ It was attached to a dome that were built in 757/1356 by the Mamluk Sultan Ḥassan. The madrasa was also referred to as a mosque. The work there was continued daily for three years. Twenty thousand dirhams were daily dedicated for its construction. Sources mentioned that Sultan Ḥassan wished to stop working at the site as he paid such a large sum of money but he was afraid of his people to say shame!! Our sultan could not complete his mosque and dome. It locates near the citadel. Such location was occupied by the palace of Yalbuğā al-Yaḥyāwī and some other buildings. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, IV/I, 269, 270; Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Rāziq, *Al-‘Imārah al-Islāmiyah fī Mišr mundu-l-Faṭḥ al-‘Arabī ḥatta Nihāyat al-‘Ašr al-Mamlūkī*. Cairo: *Dār al-Fikr al-‘Arabī*, 2009, 298-300.

⁵⁵ Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’ al-Zuhūr fī Waqā’i’ al-Duhūr*. Cairo: Al-Hay’ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Āmah lil-Kitāb, 2008, III, 435, 436; Ibn Ṭulūn, *Mufākahat al-Ḥillān fī Ḥawādīt al-Zamān*. Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah*, 1998, I, 186.

Political Reasons

Disguise for political reasons was used frequently at that time (fig.1). Amīr Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad was killed in the house of his father Ġamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ‘Alī the ustadār⁵⁶ in 810/1407. That amīr escaped to the Levant after the crisis of his own father who confiscated people illegally and severely during the reign of Sultan al-Zāhir Barqūq. He stayed there for a while then, he came while disguised to Egypt but some people recognized him and eventually, he was murdered⁵⁷. Sources did not mention how he disguised as. Mostly, historians focused more on the incident itself. Anyhow, the punishment was for the political crisis of him and his father.

Disguise for political reasons was mentioned by Ibn Taġrībīrdī when a previous Sultan was detained after being dethroned so, he tried to escape in disguise. In this context Sultan al-‘Azīz Yūsuf was deposed and replaced by Sultan Ġaqmaq al-‘Alā’ī who was entitled as al-Zāhir⁵⁸. Upon his dethronement in 842/1439, he was detained in the Sultanate houses⁵⁹ in the hall of al-Barbarīyah⁶⁰ for a few months⁶¹. And then, he disguised to escape from the citadel upon the eve of the Bairam through a tunnel was dug especially for him. Sultan al-Zāhir was so annoyed and worry. He asked Fairūz al-Zammām⁶² to check the incident, he confirmed the fact that he escaped. Actually, he

⁵⁶ Maḥmūd b. ‘Alī, Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Zāhirī, known as b. Aṣḥar ‘Ainuh died in 799/1397. He was punished, arrested, and confiscated right before his death. Al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-l- Abdān fī Tawārīḥ al-Zamān*. Cairo: Maṭba‘at Dār al-Kutub, 1970, I, 454, 455; Marwa Ḥamdī Ṭahah, *Al-Ustādārīyah in the Mamlūk Period and their Architectural and Artistic Works in Egypt (648-923A.H/1250-1517 A.D)*, Ph.D. Thesis, unpublished, Faculty of Arts, Tourist Guidance Dept., Ain Šams University. Cairo, 2013, I, 403, 404.

⁵⁷ Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma‘rifat Dūwal al-Mulūk*, released by Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ ‘Āšūr, IV/I. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1972 66; Al-Ṣayrafī, *Nuzhat*, II, 245.

⁵⁸ Ibn Taġrībīrdī, *Mawrid al-Latāfah fī-man Walīya al-Salṭanah wa-l- Ḥilāfah*. Cairo: Maṭba‘at Dār al-Kutub wa-l- Waṭā‘iq al-Qawmīyah, n.d, II, 144,145, no. 2051; ‘Iṣām‘Alī Aḥmad, *Salṭanet al-Mamālīk al-Burġīyah*. Cairo: Nūr al-‘Ilm lil-Turāṭ al-Mamlūkī, 2024, 257-260.

⁵⁹ Sultanate Houses: There were a few houses at the citadel known as the Sultanate Houses “*al-Buyūt al-Sulṭānīyah*” to cover the needs and supplies of the Sultan along with his retinue. Therefore, the royal palaces had numbers of houses “*ḥawāṣil*”, each would supply a certain section of the royal palaces. Most houses were named by adding the Persian term “*ḥānqah*”, so that the whole meaning will be the house of something. These houses were as follows: *Al-Ḥawā‘iġḥānah* or (larder), *al-Šarābhānah* (buttery), *al-Ṭablaḥānah* or the drummer, *al-Rikābhānah*: which has the horses' equipment such as saddles and bridles, *al-Ṭiṣṭhānah* or the vestry, *al-Firāṣḥānah* or house of lumbars, *al-Silāḥḥānah*: (the arsenal), and *al-Maṭbaḥ al-Sulṭānī* or the royal kitchen. See: Al-Qalqaṣandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘ša*, IV, 9; *Ḍaw’ al-Ṣubḥ al-Musfir wa Ġani al-Dawḥ al-Muṭmir*. Cairo, 1906, I, 243, R.P.A. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*. Paris, 1927, I, 337; Marwa Ḥamdī Ṭaha, *Al-Ustādārīyah*, I, 127-147.

⁶⁰ The hall of al-Barbarīyah was one of the halls in the citadel. It was dedicated to the concubines of the Sultan. Ibn Šāhīn al-Zāhirī, *Zubdat*, 27. It was mentioned as al-Brunzīyah by al-Šaḥāwī. *Waġīz al-Kalām fī-l- Ḍail ‘ala Dūwal al-Islām*. Beirut: Mū‘assasat al-Risālah, 1995, II, 562; Hālah Nawwāf Yūsuf, *Al-Suġūn fī Miṣr fī-l- ‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī 648-923/1250-1517*, MA. thesis, unpublished, University of Jordan, Faculty of Graduate Studies. Amman, 2008, 137.

⁶¹ Ibn Taġrībīrdī, *Nuġūm*, XV, 254, 255.

⁶² Regarding al-Zammām, it was an office in the Mamluk court. He was among men of sword, amir of forty. See: Al-Qalqaṣandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV, 21; Ḥasan al-Bāṣā, *Al-Funūn al-Islāmīyah*, II, 567; Muḥammad Aḥmad Duḥmān, *Mu‘ġam al-Alfāz al-Tārīḥīyah fī-l- ‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī*. Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1990, 105; Ḥusām Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Faḍīl and Mu‘taz Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, *Al-Zammām wa-l- Zimāmīyah fī*

disguised in a costume of a cook's assistant with the assist and help of a cook named Ibrāhīm. He carried a utensil of food and escaped from the citadel. Al-‘Azīz Yūsuf disappeared along with Ibrāhīm the cook and Azdamur his mamlūk. He kept escaping from one place to another till he was arrested outside Cairo⁶³ while disguised in a costume of Moroccans in the same year. He was detained at the citadel for a while then, he was sent to the prison of Alexandria⁶⁴ in 843/1439⁶⁵. The previous incident presented disguise in two different ways due to the fame of the Sultan; once as a cook to escape from the citadel then disguise as a Moroccan to conceal his identity among people. Concerning the costume of a cook, sources did not refer to its details.

Regarding the costume of Moroccans, it was transferred to Egypt as part of their heritage since the Fatimid era and the emigration of the Moroccans to Egypt⁶⁶. It seems that such a costume was a good choice of disguise (fig.2). There were different Moroccan costumes as social markers in accordance with the status of the person; whether he was among royals, high officials, non-Muslims or ecclesiastics. Most likely, the Sultan disguised in a costume of a regular Moroccan person to be concealed⁶⁷. The so-called *burnus* was the common Moroccan outfit. It was somehow like a garment with a hood, mostly in white, or could be in black or blue for the elite⁶⁸. Disguise was also mentioned in military life for assassination. In this context, Ibn Iyās mentions in his chronicle⁶⁹ that Sultan Ṭūmānbāy was sitting in a tent in 922/1516 when a Turkmen entered, wearing a red hat *zamṭ* and holding a sword around his waist. The Sultan was surrounded by a small number of his men *al-ḥāṣṣkīyah*⁷⁰. When that person attacked the Sultan, some of the eunuchs pushed him away from the Sultan and discovered that he had breasts and was disguised as a woman from the Turkic tribe to kill him. They found her wearing a mail shirt *zardīyah* under her clothes and

‘*Aṣr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk*, Journal of the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels- University of Sadat City, no. V/I, 2021, 162-163.

⁶³ Ibn Sibāt, *Tārīḥ Ibn Sibāt*, II, 795.

⁶⁴ The Prison of Alexandria known as the prison of al-Ṭaḡr, was among the military prisons of Mamluk amīrs. ‘Alā’ Ṭahah Rizq, *Al-Suḡūn wa-l- ‘Uqūbāt fī Miṣr ‘Aṣr Salāṭīn al-Mamālīk*. Cairo: ‘Ain lil-Dirāsāt wa-l- Buḥūt al-Insānīyah wa-l- Iḡtimā’īyah, 2002, 32.

⁶⁵ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, IV/III, 1130-1133; Ibn Ḥaḡar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1448) Ṣihāb al-Dīn Abī-l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī, *Inbā’ al-Ġumr bi-Abnā’ al-‘Omr*. Cairo: Laḡnat Iḥyā’ al-Turāt al-Islāmī, 1998, IV, 111; Ibn Taḡribirdī, *Nuḡūm*, XV, 295-299, 311-315, 333; *Al-Manḥal al-Ṣāfi wa-l- Mustawfi ba’d al-Wāfi*. Cairo: Al-Hay’ah al-Miṣrīyah al-‘Āmah lil-Kitāb, 2006, XII, 207-210, no. 2703; ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī (d. 920/1514) Ibn Ṣāhīn b. Ḥalīl, *Nail al-Amal fī Dail al-Dūwal*. Beirut : Al-Maktabah al-‘Aṣrīyah, 2002, II/V, 73,74 ; Su’ūd Muḥammad Su’ūd al-‘Uṣfūr, *Al-Muṣrifūn wa-l- ‘Amilūn fī al-Maṭbaḥ al-Sulṭānī al-Mamlūkī, Miḡallat Waqā’i ‘Tārīḥīyah*. no. XXXX, 2024, 215.

⁶⁶ Ḥulūd Muḥammad al-Aḥmadī, *Al-Qāhirah ‘Aṣimat al-Ḥilāfah al-Fāṭimīyah (358-569 AH/ 969-1137AD)*, Ph.D, the University of Jordan, School of Post Graduate, 2010, 207.

⁶⁷ Amīrah Ibrāhīm Aḥmad, *Dalālāt al-Azyā’ wa Alwānuhā fī Miṣr al-Fāṭimīyah wa-l- Mamlūkīyah, Dār al- ‘Ulūm Journal*, Cairo University, no. XXXV/CXI. 2018, 275-277.

⁶⁸ Dozy, *Vêtements*, 74, 75.

⁶⁹ Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’*, V, 143.

⁷⁰ Al-Ḥāṣṣkīyah are those who accompany the sultan during his free time and lead the procession of al-Maḥmal. They were around forty during the reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn and reached to one thousand during the reign of Sultan al-Aṣraf Barsbāy. Some of them were office-holders while others were not. Ibn Ṣāhīn al-Zāhirī, *Zubdat*, 115,116. They were like bodyguards or the selected retinue. David Ayalon, The System of Payment in Mamluk Military Society, *JESHO*, I, 1958, 43.

hiding a large dagger. The Mamlūks then cut her up with swords and hung her naked on a shop near Bāb al-Naṣr⁷¹. She remained hanging there for two days until they allowed her to be buried⁷². So, the woman, who might be a professionally trained one or a hired killer, attacked the Sultan for a political reason to assassinate him. Regarding her costume, she wore a red *zamṭ*, which was a headgear of the lower class. Later on, it became a common and distinctive marker for an ordinary Mamlūk soldier that the Ottomans traced everyone wearing a red *zamṭ* on his head when they conquered Egypt⁷³.

Social Reasons

Disguise was also used to commit sins and enter into illegal relationship. In this context ḥawand daughter of Şuruq⁷⁴, the divorced wife of Sultan al-Nāṣir Farağ descended from the citadel in disguise in 814/1411⁷⁵. She spent the night with Aḥmad Ibn al-Ṭablāwī⁷⁶. When the Sultan knew that, he cut off her head and put it in a plate. The Sultan called on Ibn al-Ṭablāwī and showed him her head and asked him, “***Do you know her?***” He did not answer, and then the Sultan cut off his head as well and ordered to be buried together in the same place⁷⁷. Apparently, the Sultan took revenge as he felt furious for the sin that his ex-wife committed. Sources did not mention any details about this disguised.

It is worth mentioning here that the contemporary historian Ibn Tağrībirdī refers to the same incident with comments that clarify that the daughter of Şuruq could be a victim of a conspiracy in the royal palace or the like. He mentions that some people for a purpose accused her of meeting Ibn al-Ṭablāwī after the Sultan divorced her, and the Sultan believed them. He also adds “***God knows the truth***” in referring to being innocent, as his daughter was in a direct contact with her⁷⁸.

Sources mention that such a social reason for disguise occurred once again when a black slave disguised himself to have an affair with a married woman in 836/1432⁷⁹. The married woman fell in love with that black slave. She invited him to her house and told her husband who worked as a cloth merchant *bazzāz*⁸⁰ that a daughter of a great amīr would visit her. The truth is that the black slave disguised himself as a

⁷¹ Bāb al-Naṣr (Gate of Victory) was built during the Fatimid period. Then it was rebuilt and shifted during the reign of Caliph al-Mustanṣir in (480/1087) under the supervision of Badr al-Ġamālī. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, II, 271, 272. It is composed of a pair of rectangular towers which are solid almost in the lower part. It was also known as Bāb al-‘Izz. Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Rāziq, *Al-‘Imārah al-Islāmīyah*, 79.

⁷² Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i*, V, 143.

⁷³ Mayer, Mamluk Costume, 32; Albrecht Fuess, Sultans with Horns, *MSR*, no. XII, 2008, 83.

⁷⁴ Saif al-Dīn Şuruq ibn ‘Abdullah, one of the mamluks of Sultan al-Zāhir Brqūq. He was upgraded during the reign of Sultan al-Nāṣir Farağ till he became the viceroy of Damascus. His daughter was the wife of Sultan Farağ. Ibn Tağrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Şāfi*, VI, 346, 347, no. 1220.

⁷⁵ ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī, *Nail al-Amal*, I/III, 224.

⁷⁶ Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad known as Ibn al-Ṭablāwī, he was a governor of Cairo. Ibn Tağrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Şāfi*, II, 150, no. 289.

⁷⁷ Al-Şayrafi, *Nuzhat*, II, 291; Sāmyah ‘Alī Muṣailahī, *Al-Ġarīmah fī-l- Muğtama ‘al-Miṣrī fī-l- ‘Aṣr al-Mamlūkī (648-923/1250-1517)*, *Bulletin of Faculty of Arabic Language in Cairo, al-Azhar University*, no. XXVIII/III. 2010, 2382, 2383.

⁷⁸ Ibn Tağrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Şāfi*, VI, 346, 347, no. 1220.

⁷⁹ ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī, *Nail al-Amal*, I/IV, 329.

⁸⁰ *Al-Bazzāz* is the clothes seller or merchant. Ḥasan al-Bāṣā, *Al-Funūn al-Islāmīyah*, I, 301.

woman. The husband offered them a banquet and they spent the whole day together. The wife suggested to prepare a place for the guest to spend the night as well. The husband agreed as he thought she was a female. The couple drunk and spent the night together that they agreed about murdering the husband. The black slave attacked the husband but he could not kill him. The slave was arrested and the wife testified that she spent the night with her guest the daughter of the amīr and she did not know anything about the black slave. The husband believed her⁸¹. So, the black slave was arrested for attacking the husband but not for disguising and having an affair with the married woman as she denied everything. The comment of the author ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī **“God is the judge”**⁸². Apparently, the state here applied the Islamic law in such cases of adultery before judging them; confession *iqrār*, testimony *ṣahādah* of four witnesses, and sign or indication *qarīnah*⁸³. When the wife denied and adultery has not been proven, the man was punished only for attacking the husband at his home.

In 911/1505, a man called Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Nābulī al-Dimiṣqī⁸⁴ traveled to Egypt at which he showed himself as a Ṣūfī pious man, but unfortunately, he was not. Before the month of Ramadan, Muḥammad ibn Salāmah asked to get married to a man disguised in a costume of a girl. According to Ibn Ṭulūn, he knew that the spouse was disguised as a girl but basically, he is a man. The disguised man wore a veil and a garment then he went to one of the testifying centers in Egypt asking for marriage. A few days later, the neighbors complained to amīr Ṭarabāī⁸⁵ *ra’s nawbat al-nawb* about the disguised man. When women checked him, they found out that he is a man, although he claimed to be bisexual. Amīr Ṭarabāī ordered to hit both of them by *al-maqāri’* and then to be imprisoned at al-Maqṣarah prison⁸⁶. This incident was described by Ibn Ṭulūn as **“A strange thing!!”**⁸⁷. Actually, the comment of the author shows that such an incident was totally strange to the Egyptian society.

Fraud Reasons

Ibn Iyās clarifies that disguise was also used to commit fraud⁸⁸. In 894/1488, a man was disguised in the character of Abd al-Qādir al-Daṣṭūṭī⁸⁹ the famous pious man. Sultan Qāitbāy asked ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn al-Rammāḥ, one of his confidants, to meet

⁸¹ Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Inbā’*, III, 500.

⁸² ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī, *Nail al-Amal*, I/IV, 329.

⁸³ Apriyanti Apriyanti, Proof of Adultery: An Islamic Legal Perspective on the Dilemma between Norms and Human Dignity, *Journal of Islamic and Social Studies*, no. IX/II, 2023, 159-161.

⁸⁴ Was mentioned as Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Hamadānī al-Šāfi’ī by Ibn al-Zayyāt and Ibn al-‘Imād al-Ḥanbalī (d. 1089/1678) ‘Abd al-Ḥaī b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad. See: *Al-Kawākib al-Sā’irah*, 51, no. 76; *Šaḡarāt al-Dahab fī Aḥbār man Dahab*. Beirut: Dār Ibn Kaṭīr, 1993, X, 79.

⁸⁵ Amīr Ṭarabāī al-Šarīfī *ra’s nawbat al-nawb* died in 917/1511. Hiba Yūsuf, *Le chef de la ronde*, *JAAUTH*, no. VIII/II, 2011, 97, no. 90.

⁸⁶ Al-Maqṣarah prison was built in 820/1417. It was located in between the gate of al-Futūḥ and the mosque of al-Ḥākim. The wheat was husked there and this is the reason behind the name al-Maqṣarah means (the peeler). Apart of this prison was a tower belonged to al-Futūḥ’s gate. This prison was dedicated to criminals. It was described as a horrible place at which prisoners suffered a lot. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, III, 601; Ḥālah Nawwāf, *Al-Suḡūn fī Miṣr*, 21, 22.

⁸⁷ Ibn Ṭulūn, *Mufaḥḥat al-Ḥillān*, I, 240.

⁸⁸ Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’*, III, 259, 260.

⁸⁹ Al-Saḥāwī, *Al-Daw’*, IV, 300, 301, no. 805.

with al-Daštūtī. He was told that he usually visited the Mahmoud Mosque in the cemetery at al-Muqattam⁹⁰. The Sultan told him, "**When he arrives, let me know**" 'Abd al-Qādir seized the opportunity and conspired with someone who looked like al-Daštūtī to disguise and impersonate him then to meet the Sultan as al-Daštūtī. The Sultan prayed al-'Iṣā' and went to meet the one claimed being al-Daštūtī. The Sultan kissed his foot and mentioned his battle with Ibn 'Utmān then he gave him five hundred dinars or one thousand as other mentioned and asked him to distribute this amount of money on poor people then he left. A few days later the Sultan knew that he was deceived by the man disguised and impersonated as al-Daštūtī. So, he ordered to arrest Ibn al-Rammāh, the disguised Daštūtī and the servant of the mosque to be punished⁹¹. Ibn al-Rammāh was hit by *al-maqāri* ' ⁹²then imprisoned in al-Maqṣarah prison. Ibn Iyās's comment on this, "**This was one of the strangest incidents that had never been heard about**"⁹³. Apparently, the man disguised himself to deceive and defraud the Sultan. He even obtained money from him. Moreover, he enjoyed a prestigious religious status for a while.

Administrative and Charitable Reasons

On the other hand, disguise was sometimes devoid of negative illegal reasons. For example, in 881/1476 Sultan Qāitbāy disguised in a costume of Moroccan and he checked the constructions he built⁹⁴ such as the *sabil*⁹⁵ and *kuttāb*⁹⁶ in addition to the *ḥān*,⁹⁷ *rab* ' ⁹⁸nearby and the stores underneath. He asked people there about their

⁹⁰ The mosque was described as an old mosque was built by Maḥmūd ibn Sālim ibn Mālik al-Ṭawīl. He was a soldier of one of the amīrs of Egypt. It was built after 200/815. Mūwaffaq al-Dīn 'Utmān (d. 615/1218), *Muršid al-Zūwār ila Qubūr al-Abrār*, Released and indexed by Muḥammad Fathī Abū Bakr. Beirut: *Al-Dār al-Miṣrīyah al-Lubnānīyah*, 1995, 428, 603; Friday sermon was held there till the time of al-Maqrīzī. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, IV/I, 179,180. Such mosque does not exist in the present time.

⁹¹ 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī, *Nail al-Amal*, II/IIIIV, 138.

⁹² *Al-maqāri* ' (Sing. is *maqra'ah* or a whip) is a tool that was used for punishment. According to Mamluk references, it seems that *al-maqra'ah* is somehow similar to a whip or a wooden flail. Al-Yūsufī (d.759/1358) Musā b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā, *Nuzhat al-Nāẓir fī Sirat al-Malik al-Nāṣir*. Beirut, 1986, 121, footnote no.1; Su'ūd Muḥammad al-'Uṣfūr, *Wasā'il al-Ta'dīb*, *Annals of the Faculty of Arts*, 'Ain Shams University, no. XXXI, 2003, 66-68.

⁹³ Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i* ' , III, 259, 260.

⁹⁴ Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i* ' , III, 121.

⁹⁵ Sabil (Public water dispensary) The word *sabil* derived from the verb *sabala*, means to let fall, drop or to let hand down. It was providing a public place supplies water to both men and animals implements one of God's commandments and follows the dictates of Islām regarding charity on behalf of God. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *Al-Awqāf wa-l- Ḥayāh al-Iḡtimā'iyah fī Miṣr 648-923/1250-1517*, Cairo, 1980, 148, 149; Saleh Lamie Mostafa, The Cairene sabil, *Muqarnas*, no. 6, .1988., 34-35; Tāmer Muṣṭafā Muḥammad, *Al-Asbilah al-Mamlūkīyah al-Bāqīyah bi-Madinat al-Qāhirah*, M.A Thesis, unpublished, Cairo University, Faculty of Archaeology. .Cairo, 2012., 21-22.

⁹⁶ Kuttāb (elementary school) it is often attached to a sabil or a mosque. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, *Al-Awqāf*, 261-263; Nicolas Warner, *The Monuments of Historic Cairo*, Cairo: The American University Press, 2005, 192.

⁹⁷ *ḥān*. (Caravanserai) It is a kind of a commercial establishment that has many stores. It was sometimes connected to a residential building for housing the merchants. Na'im Zakī Fahmī, *Ṭuruq al-Tiḡārah al-Dawlīyah wa Mahaṭātuhā Bain al-Šarq wa-l- Ġarb*. Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmah lil-Kitāb, 1973, 293; Jean- Claude Garcin, États, societies et cultures du monde Musulman Medieval, (Paris, 2002), II, 265, Rānia Ossāma 'Ali Fikri, *Les marchés du Caire au temps du*

conditions and even about himself⁹⁹. He also went to the mosque of al-Azhar¹⁰⁰, at which he distributed charity without recognizing him at all¹⁰¹. Apparently, he was ensuring that his high officials in the state fulfilled their duties towards completing projects and constructions. He was also ensuring that people are satisfied under his reign. Actually, the choice of disguise in a costume of Moroccan in al-Azhar mosque was the best costume to impede recognizing his royalty due to the large number of students there at the mosque. There was even a *riwāq* inside the mosque known as *riwāq al-Mağāribah* at which rich Moroccans and scholars used to distribute money as well¹⁰².

Table 1: The incidents of disguise, the date of their occurrence, their reasons, the disguised person and the aspects of disguise.

Serial	Date	Reason of Disguise	The Disguised Person	Aspects of Disguise
1	801/1399	Military	Son of Sultan al-Ašraf Ša‘bān	Son of the Sultan intended to disguise himself as a woman
2	810/1407	Political	Amīr Nāšir al-Dīn Muḥammad	Sources did not mention
3	814/1411	Social	Ḥawand daughter of Šuruq	Sources did not mention
4	836/1432	Social	A black slave	A man disguised himself as a woman
5	839/1435	Military	Amīr Ġānībak al-Šūfī	Sources did not mention
6	842/1438	Political	Sultan al-‘Azīz Yūsuf	The Sultan disguised himself twice; once as a cook then as a Moroccan man
7	881/1476	Administrative and Charitable	Sultan Qāitbāy	The Sultan disguised himself as a Moroccan man
8	894/1488	Fraud	Unknown man	Unknown man disguised and impersonated the

Mamluks Baharites (648-784/1250-1382), MA. Thesis, unpublished, Faculty of Arts, Tourist Guidance Dept., Ain Šams University. Cairo, 2006., 60.

⁹⁸ *Rab‘* (tenement-house) or a residential apartment building, usually it has a row of shops on the ground floor to be used as a source of income especially an endowment. Nicolas Warner, *The Monuments*, 193.

⁹⁹ ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī, *Nail al-Amal*, II/IV, 166.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Azhar Mosque is the fourth congregational mosque to be built in Egypt. It was built by the Fatimids under the orders of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu‘izz in 359/790 and it was inaugurated for prayers in 361/972. It locates to the south east of Cairo. The mosque had so many additions and restorations starting from the Fatimid period throughout the different periods. See: Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭaṭ*, IV/I, 90-107; Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Rāziq, *Tārīḥ w-Āṭār Mišr al-Islāmīyah*. Cairo, 1993, 219-237.

¹⁰¹ ‘Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Zāhirī, *Nail al-Amal*, II/IV, 166; Ibn Iyās, *Badā‘i*, III, 121.

¹⁰² Al-Saḥāwī, *Al-Ḍaw‘*, VI, 159, no. 522; ‘Abd al-Raḥman Bal-A’raḡ, *‘Ilāqāt Dūwal al-Mağrib al-Islāmī bi- Dūwal al-Mamālīk Sīyāsīyan wa Taqāfiyan bayn al-Qarnayn al-Sābi’ wa-l- Tāsi’* *Hiğriya* 709/13-15, Ph.D, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, History and Archaeology Department, University of Abī Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen. 2012, 2013, 244, 245.

				character of a famous pious person
9	905/1499	Military	Sultan al-Zāhir Abū Saʿīd Qānṣūh	The Sultan disguised himself as a woman
10	911/1505	Social	Unknown man	A man disguised himself as a woman
11	922/1516	Political	A Turkic woman	A woman disguised herself as a man

Table 2: The reasons of disguise, the number of cases, and their percentage.

Reason	Number of cases	Percentage
Military Reasons	Three cases	27.3 %
Political Reasons	Three cases	27.3 %
Social Reasons	Three cases	27.3 %
Fraud	One case	9%
Administrative and charitable reasons	One case	9%

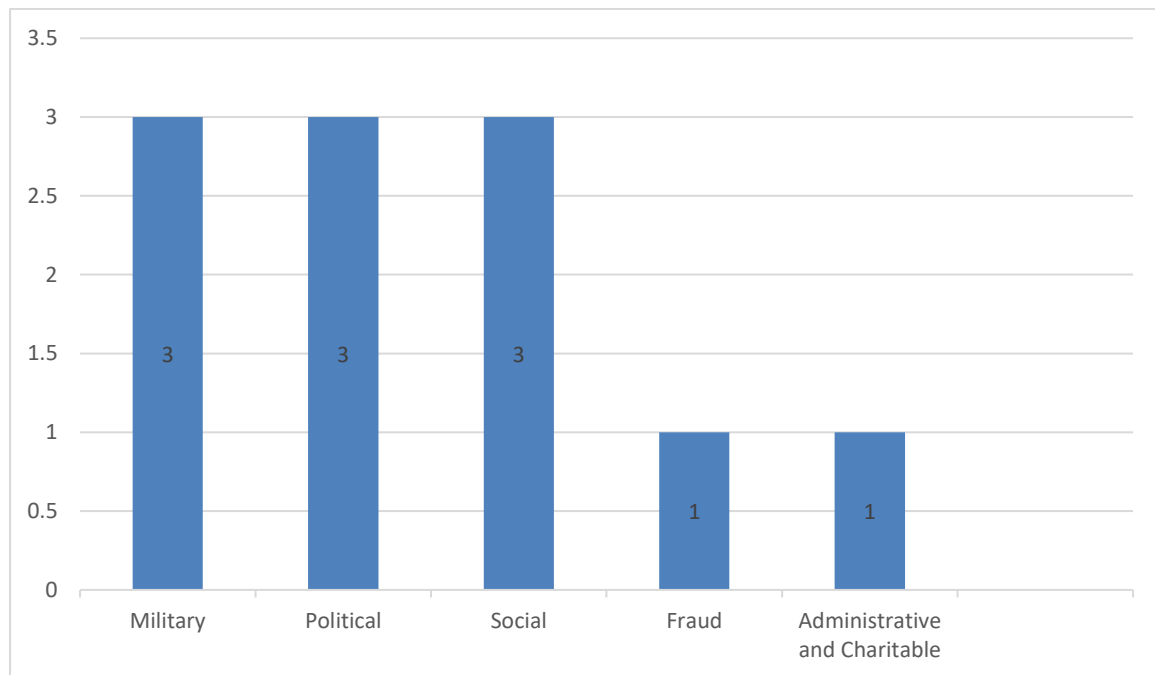


Fig. 1: A chart that shows the registered number of incidents for each reason.

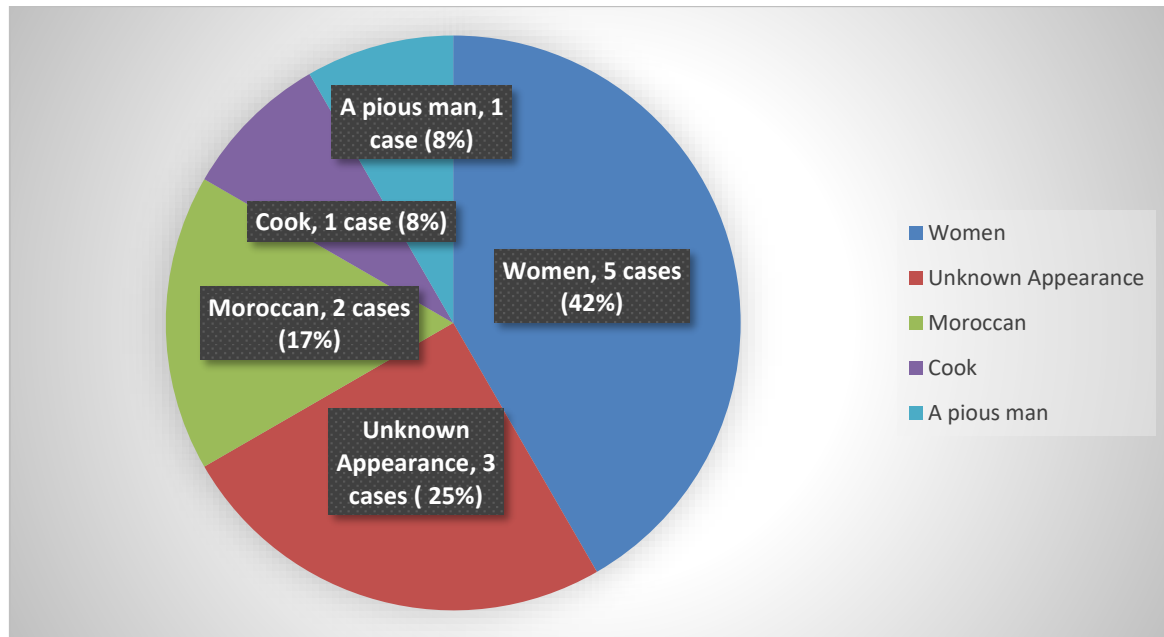


Fig. 2: A pie chart that shows the number of registered aspects of disguise and their percentage.

Conclusion

The study can conclude that most of the disguised cases occurred in the 1st half of the Circassian era. Sultans firmly controlled their amīrs in most of political and military cases of disguise.

Women were mostly unsuspected in conspiracies and military coups. Therefore, disguise in a feminine costume was repeated at that time.

Regarding the cases of unknown disguises (810/1407 and 839/1435) they were likely simple disguise in which amīrs changed their usual attire of their rank and wore ordinary clothing, covering their heads to conceal their identity. Consequently, the sources did not mention the ways of disguise, as it was not a specific costume. As for the incident of 814/1411, apparently most of the women were entirely wrapped and veiled from head to toe. So, when she wanted to hide herself, she concealed her identity, not her gender. Thus, the manuscripts did not mention the form of the disguise. In other words, she kept her appearance as a woman during the disguise, but she changed her identity which is also a type of disguise.

Moreover, most of the incidents of disguise were followed by punishment, not for disguise itself, but disguise at these incidents was mostly connected to committing sins, crimes, assassinations, military coup or marital infidelity.

The study registered cases of disguise among members of the ruling class, prominent amīrs, civilians and even slaves.

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