Mecca (chapter 2); to arguments that the cross should be seen not as somehow a symbol of shame but rather of power and victory (chapter 3); to the attempts by some particularly creative Christian writers such as Abu Ra'itah, in the ninth century, to argue more positively that the cross should be seen as in some sense a Christian *Qiblah*, with all the positive associations which that term would have for his Muslim interlocutors (chapter 4). Important as the *Qiblah* is for Muslims, Abu Ra'itah argues, and deserving of honour, they certainly do not worship it, and by analogy the cross should be honoured because it points Christians towards Christ, and thus towards God, but Christians still do not necessarily worship it. Problematic as the practice might be in an Islamic environment, therefore, the author concludes that while it certainly played a crucial (no pun intended!) role in defining Christian identity in the Islamic World, it was not necessarily absolutely removed and distinctive from certain aspects of Muslim practice.

The book therefore provides a valuable account and summary of some significant Christian texts produced under Islamic rule which deserve to be better-known, not least because they address a theme which has been the focus of much misunderstanding and polemic over the centuries. The author is therefore to be congratulated for the thoroughness with which he has surveyed the texts and the accessible way in which they have been presented. May light thus be shed through his efforts on a theme concerning which not only much misunderstanding but also a large amount of vitriol has been expressed over the centuries.

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SIDE EMRE:
Ibrahim-i Gulshani and the Khalwati-Gulshani Order: Power Brokers in Ottoman Egypt.
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The first half of the sixteenth century was a turbulent era for the inhabitants of much of the Middle East, including Cairo. The Ottoman conquest of the Mamluk Empire brought an end to a polity that had dominated Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz for two-and-a-half centuries and that was an heir to a series of states that had ruled these lands since the tenth century. By the end of Mamluk rule, Sufism played a crucial role in religion and politics. Mamluk sultans placed great confidence in the religious authority of Sufis and granted them unprecedented access to political power. Although Sufis were also highly influential in the Ottoman Empire at this time, it was inevitable that the change of regime, which was followed by a period of instability, would pose a challenge for the existing religious elites of Cairo in their interactions with the new rulers of Egypt.

Side Emre's deeply researched and carefully argued study of one important figure, Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī (*c*. 1442–1534), examines the political role of Sufism in the period of transition, and even up to the beginning of the seventeenth century. Emre narrates the life and career of Ibrāhīm including his youth in Aqquyunlu lands, travel to Diyarbakir, residence in Cairo, brief stay in Istanbul, and return to, and death in, Cairo. She makes excellent use of a wide variety of Arabic and Ottoman narrative sources, placing these sources face-to-face with one another to reveal points of

tension and disagreement. Of particular importance are the chronicles of Diyārbakrī (in two manuscript recensions, d. 1542) and Ibn Iyās (d. 1522 or 1524), and the hagiography of Muḥyī-i Gulshanī (d. 1606).

Emre argues that Ibrāhīm and his followers were power brokers who attracted the attention of a series of sultans (al-Ghūrī, Tūmān Bāy, Selim) and governors (Khayrbak, Aḥmed Pasha, Ibrāhīm Pasha). This attention could be dangerous. Ibrāhīm was repeatedly accused of heresy (Emre's term) and found himself in an awkward position during the rebellion of Aḥmed Pasha "the Traitor" in 1524. He was not alone in this dilemma. A careful reading of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī's works shows that he is careful to present himself as having remained a loyal subject of the sultan during the failed rebellion, although it is impossible to test this claim since all of his works post-date it.

It is fascinating to observe Ibrāhīm's numerous interactions with prominent figures in sixteenth-century Egyptian society. The use of Ottoman sources allows Emre to cast new light on important figures such as ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Dashṭūṭī, a politically influential holy fool (*majdhūb*) who was active during the same period. The highly negative portrayal of Tūmān Bāy differs substantially from the tragic narrative of his fate by Ibn Zunbul (d. after 1552).

Ibrāhīm, or at least his successors, sought to present him as a spiritual leader parallel to the temporal ruler, without challenging the latter's authority. The Gulshanīs eschewed any messianic claims for Ibrāhīm. He was a very different kind of Sufi from that other adopted Egyptian, Niyāzī-i Miṣrī. Emre makes it clear that a Persian-speaking Sufi such as Ibrāhīm could make himself very much at home in Egypt, acquiring followers among the Mamluk and Ottoman soldiers, as well as among the civilian population of Cairo.

Later hagiographers such as Muḥyī portrayed Ibrāhīm as a prototypical Ottoman Sufi with unproblematic relations with the dynasty. Emre shows that this interpretation is a later retouching of the image of Ibrāhīm's relations with the Ottomans. In fact, Ibrāhīm avoided settling in the Ottoman lands and chose the Mamluk capital Cairo instead. His relations with the Ottoman rulers of Egypt were sometimes tumultuous and he repeatedly found himself caught up in factional politics. Only later, once Ottoman rule in Egypt solidified, could he be reinterpreted as a solidly pro-Ottoman saint.

Emre's account is extremely detailed, and sheds light on a host of issues in the history of sixteenth-century Egypt. At times, however, the details are so copious that Emre's argument is in danger of being obscured. The fact that the book is organized into chapters focused on specific incidents in Ibrāhīm's life facilitates comparison between different narrative sources, but makes it more difficult to determine the larger agendas of the narrators. Muḥyī, to cite the most prominent example, requires a dedicated monograph. Also, although Emre does discuss some aspects of Ibrāhīm's Sufi thought and practice, there is clearly a lot more to say on these subjects.

Emre rightly rejects a positivistic reading of her sources, and a number of hagiographical tropes that narrators employ to argue for Ibrāhīm's sainthood are common currency of the genre. It would be interesting to examine regional variants of hagiographical writing to see how much variation there is, and to what degree these variants cross linguistic and other barriers. Finally, the Gulshanī *sajjāda* (literally, carpet, but figuratively the office of head of the order) appears in the Egyptian court archives in subsequent centuries, suggesting that Ibrāhīm's successors continued to be active in Cairo in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is a testament to the richness of Emre's choice of subject matter that such a learned study does not begin to exhaust it.

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