5.

But as human wickedness grew stronger (and often it cannot even endure what is good), many began to murmur against Barquq, because he had been a slave and had, without the consent of the true Caliph, who was a higher ranking priest, been bold in the treacherous way we have described above. They constantly and secretly planned to make an attempt against him, as against a tyrant.

Among others had been promoted a certain slave of Barquq by the name of Mintāš, a Tartar whom Barquq had bought for 3000 ducats. He was so proud that he showed no respect for his elders or for higher officials. For he was bold and wild, very proud, virtuous and manly. Now this Mintāš Barquq wished to assign honorably to a different place to avoid scandal. One morning, when he made other promotions, he promoted Mintāš too, telling him that he wished to give him some authority. He assigned him, with the title of his own vicar, to the city of Malatia, near Sebastia and Armenia. This offended Mintāš, because he enjoyed life at the court and had been all along expecting something much better. To make him even more bitter, the rumor reached his ears that Barquq, because of some suspicion of his virtue—which perhaps could take the Sultanate away from him—was sending him away from the court. All this Mintāš, who was vain and naive, credulously accepted and went off to Malatia. He received an elaborate welcome, and for a time ruled admirably. Malatia is about thirty days' journey from Cairo, not far from Aleppo, the great country in which a certain person by the name Nāširī was living in Barquq's place. Aleppo was nearer

1. This was Tamurbugā al-Afdall, known as Mintāš (d. 1393). Our author spells his name always Mentax. About him there are available very extensive biographical sketches by all the leading Mamlūk historians in connection with his revolt against Barquq in 1389/90. See Wiet, No. 772, 'Ibar, V, 500 ff., Ta'rif 326 ff., and Nuğüm, V, passim.

2. This refers to Yalbuga al-Nāširī (d. 1391) who was appointed viceroy of Damascus and played a very ambiguous role in the various rebellions against Barquq. See Wiet, No. 2677, 'Ibar, V, 475 ff., and Nuğüm, V, 610.
to Cairo and Damascus than Malatia was. After a while, the whole place was subject to Nasiri's will, and not undeservedly. For he was strong and mature in years, and they considered him their master. But now that Barquq was Sultan in Cairo, it did not please Nasiri but made him jealous because Barquq was his junior, and secretly he began to conspire against Barquq. Finally, he completely won over to his designs against Barquq a certain mighty Arab by the name of Nu‘ayr (whom I knew well) along with Mintāš. So there were three of them of whom two were strongly bound together against Barquq: Nasiri who was experienced and very skillful in military matters, old as he was; and Nu‘ayr, who was an active and influential noble and had a great reputation. All three of them held offices and benefices from the Sultan; the Arab, Nu‘ayr, received a large stipend from the Sultan to keep the desert safe, on account of the traders who brought spices to Damascus and from whom Nu‘ayr demanded large tributes. And so those three men (Nasiri, Nu‘ayr, and Mintāš) joined together, and with them were many trusted agents throughout the countries over which they ruled. They proceeded to Syria and Egypt to destroy Barquq, whom they called not the Sultan but 'the tyrant'. They roused their peoples to a kind of unconditional revolt: Hama, Homs, Tripoli and all the other countries up to and including Damascus. These were joined in an alliance; they went from Damascus to Cairo, letting no one go without getting his allegiance, and then shouting in a loud voice, "Death to Barquq!" and "Long live the true Sultan!" Nasiri was anxious to be near the Sultan at the head of the government. Nu‘ayr, since he was of old Saracen stock, hated his master, Barquq, because he had been a Christian and sold into slavery when he knew him as a young man. The other one, namely Mintāš, was full of bitterness day and night. He was luxurious and took no care of money. He felt nothing but vengefulness.

They captured much in Egypt, and coming to the city itself they entered it (that is, Cairo) at a pre-arranged signal. Barquq went to meet them and with his army he resisted as well as he could. Many fell on both sides in that battle, and finally Barquq capitulated. He went to the dwelling of a certain cobbler who was loyal to him, and secretly stayed there. So then, they entered the castle of Cairo, which is huge, and there put the young Sultan

1. In the Latin text Nu‘ayr is rendered as Nahir or Nair. Behind this name is Nāṣr al-dīn Nu‘ayr b. Hayyār b. Muḥannā (d. 1406), the "Emir of the Arabs", the chief of the Al-Fadl of Syria, a very powerful figure. See Wiet, No. 2391; 'Ibar, V, VI, 10-11 (trans. de Slane, Vol. I, p. 22), and Ta‘rif, 328.

2. This might be regarded as a reference to the Kārimite merchants whose far-flung commercial activities were the backbone of the Egyptian economy during the Mamlūk period. About them see the present writer's study, The Spice Trade in Mamlūk Egypt, in Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient, 112, 1957, pp. 157-174, and G. Wiet, Les Marchands d'Épices sous les Sultans Mamlouks, Cairo, 1955 (Cahiers d'Histoire Égyptienne).

3. This word is intended to stress the Arabic-Bedouin descent of Nu‘ayr and his clan.

4. The revolt of Mintāš against Barquq in which Nu‘ayr and Nasiri joined was the object of detailed descriptions by most of the Muslim historians of the time. The earliest and most detailed source, however, is that by Ibn Ḥalūn in 'Ibar, V, pp. 482-505, and Ta‘rif, pp. 312-331. For a Persian written source on these events, see H. Giesecke, Das Werk des Asis ibn Ārdasīr Āstarābādī, Leipzig, 1940, pp. 68 ff., and 122 ff., who describes the events in Egypt, the relationship of Mintāš to Barquq and the role of Yalbugā al-Nāṣiri during the rebellion against Barquq.

5. According to Nūḥūm (V, 451-452), Barquq went into hiding in the house of an Emir Abū Yazid; according to another version in Nūḥūm, V, 452, Barquq stayed in the house of a tailor near Abū Yazid's house; a cobbler is not mentioned in the sources.