

172 HOS
Utariid G. Hociib. (v.3/624)

Afiy Abdurrahman
Museum's - Suava.

3685

212

date, as a base in the province of Asyūt for raids into Nubia, Selīm I having been content to leave Upper Egypt in the hands of the Hawwāra tribesmen. Towards the mid-16th century, the expansion of the Fundj [q.v.] kingdom there was seen as a threat not only to Upper Egypt but also to the still-fragile Ottoman hold on the Red Sea Coast at Sawākin and then Maṣawwa' [q.v.]. Pace Ewliyā Ćelebi's information, it was not 945/1538 when Özdemiş Paṣha [q.v.] left for the conquest of Nubia, on his return from Süleymān's naval expedition against the Portuguese in India, but some twenty years later, when in 962/1555 he attempted to penetrate into Nubia from Uswān, and some years later, certainly before 1567, all the region south of the town up to the Third Cataract passed under Ottoman control, becoming a new *sandjāq* with Ibrīm as its chef-lieu. However, in the last quarter of the century the Ottomans changed the administrative structure of the region on several occasions, reflecting their need to strengthen it as a source of manpower and provisions for the garrisons in Sawākin and Maṣawwa' of the *eyālet* of Ḥabesh. The Ṣa'īd A'lā (sc. the region between Ḳinā and Uswān) was attached to the *sandjāq* of Ibrīm, then briefly in 1573 was attached to the *wilāyet* or Ḥabesh; finally, in 992-3/1584-5, Nubia and the southern part of Upper Egypt became a separate province before passing once again under the Paṣha of Cairo's control.

In the course of the 17th century, the decline of the Ottoman presence in the southern Red Sea region and the waning of the threat from the Fundj marginalised the *sandjāq* of Ibrīm, and at an unknown date, Uswān was detached from it. When Ewliyā was there in 1083/1672, the office of *kāshif* there was granted out by the governor of Upper Egypt for 40 purses, and there was a *kādī* in the town at the head of a *kaḍā'*. In the early 18th century, the Hawwāra, all-powerful in Upper Egypt at that time [see AL-ṢA'ĪD], exercised their influence over the town, in alliance with the Arabised Bedja tribe of the 'Ababda. Militarily, Uswān remained an important post with a usual garrison of 150 to 200 Janissaries in its citadel under their *aqha*. Commercially, however, it now played only a marginal role, away from all the important routes, and in 1672 Ewliyā was struck by the absence there of any caravanserai, permanent shops, public bath or *maktab* for children. Its commercial influence was seen only in a weekly market for local villagers, and on the evidence of Sicard in 1720, a barter rather than a monetary economy was dominant there. But a certain liveliness developed in the course of the century from the transit trade borne from Nubia towards Cairo, since the First Cataract, immediately to the town's south, was not impassable for boats, although there was still a preference for unloading goods and transporting them a short distance along the rapids.

According to the surveys of the scholars attached to Bonaparte's Egyptian expedition, the town stretched along the Nile and extended over a rectangle 750 m/2,460 feet by 250 m/820 feet, with its houses built of mud brick, its citadel on the south side with mud walls, and beyond this last the ruins of the ancient and mediaeval town stretching over a vast space enclosed by granite walls. After October 1820, with Muḥammad 'Alī's conquest of Sinnār and Kordofān, Uswān recovered its pre-Ottoman period strategic role and also became an important commercial centre for trade with the Sudan. At the 1898 census, it had a population of 13,000 and a garrison of 781 troops. In 1902 the British completed construction of the first Nile barrage just above the First Cataract. This has now since the late

1960s constituted the head of Lake Nasser, the Egyptian part of the Aswan High Dam project jointly undertaken by Egypt and the Sudan; the project required resettlement of 90,000 Egyptian fellahin from the region to the south of Uswān, most of them to a new settlement at Kōm Umbū 52 km/30 miles north of the town. Modern Uswān is the chef-lieu of the southernmost *muhāfaẓa* or governorate of Egypt, with industries and commerce and a university of its own; in 1970 the population of the town was 206,000.

Bibliography: *Le voyage en Egypte du Vénitien anonyme août-septembre 1589*, in *Voyages en Egypte des années 1589, 1590 et 1591*, Cairo 1972; Ewliyā Ćelebi, *Seyahatnamesi. Misr, Sudan, Habeş (1672-1680)*, Istanbul 1938; C. Sicard, *Oeuvres, relations et mémoires imprimées*, Cairo 1982; James Bruce, *Travels to discover the source of the Nile*, London 1804-5; V. Denon, *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Egypte*, Paris 1802; E. Jomard, *Description de Syène et des cataractes*, in *Description de l'Egypte*, Paris 1821, i, 128-33; *ibid.*, *Planches*, i, pls. 30-1; T. Walz, *Trade between Egypt and Bilād as-Sūdān*, Cairo 1978; Laylā 'Abd al-Latīf Ahmad, *al-Ṣa'īd fī 'ahd al-Shaykh Humām*, Cairo 1987; V.L. Ménage, *The Ottomans and Nubia in the sixteenth century*, in *AI*, xxiv (1988), 137-54.

(M. TUCHSCHERER)

USYŪṬ [see ASYŪṬ].

UṬĀRID, the planet Mercury, Pers. *Tūr*, also called *al-Kātib* in Andalusian and Maghribī sources (see C.A. Nallino, *al-Battānī, Opus astronomicum*, Milan 1903, i, 291).

1. *Mercury's position, geocentric distance and size.* Islamic astronomers usually follow the Ptolemaic order of planetary spheres and place Mercury in the second, counted from the centre of the Universe, between the sphere of the Moon and that of Venus which is, in its turn, followed by that of the Sun. This order was discussed in al-Andalus in the 12th century by Ḍjābir b. Aflaḥ [q.v.], who established that the Ptolemaic models must produce transits of Mercury and Venus on top of the solar disc and that, as these transits had never been observed, these two planets should be placed between the spheres of the Sun and Mars. This is confirmed by the fact that Mercury and Venus have no perceptible parallax even though, in the Ptolemaic order, they are nearer the Earth than the Sun, which does have parallax (R. Lorch, *Arabic mathematical sciences*, Variorum, Aldershot 1995, no. VI). Ḍjābir's reference to the lack of transits implies that he was not aware of the presumed observations of such phenomena (probably sun-spots) made by a nephew of Ibn Mu'ādh al-Ḍjāyānī ca. 460/1068 (as reported by Ibn Rushd) and by Ibn Bāḍijda (as reported by Ḳuṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī) (B.R. Goldstein, *Theory and observation in ancient and medieval astronomy*, Variorum, London 1985, no. XV). The problem attracted the attention of al-Bītrūḍjī [q.v.], who explained the lack of visible transits by stating that both Mercury and Venus are self-luminous and cannot thus obscure the Sun under any circumstances (Goldstein, *al-Bītrūḍjī: on the principles of astronomy*, New Haven and London 1971, i, 125, ii, 319). Concerning planetary order, al-Bītrūḍjī, like Mu'ayyad al-Dīn al-'Urḍī (d. 664/1266) although for different reasons, placed Mercury below the sphere of the Sun and Venus above it (Goldstein, *Bītrūḍjī*, i, 124 ff., ii, 315-21; G. Saliba, *The astronomical work of Mu'ayyad al-Dīn al-'Urḍī, a thirteenth century reform of Ptolemaic astronomy. Kitāb al-Hay'a*, Beirut 1990, 59-61, 303).

The interest in planetary distances appears at an early stage and Ya'qūb b. Ṭāriḳ wrote ca. 161/777-8 a *Tarikh al-aflāk* in which he established the minimum (60 20/21 terrestrial radii), and maximum (251 3/7

1002
2000
16 OCT 91

Utarid
⊕
200171
(Mark)