

## Chapter Index

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## Pharaon Family (ch1)

### Ancient Origin

A branch of this dignified family now lives in the great city of Rome. The head of this family, his honor the noble Marquise You'hana Cassis Pharaon sent me a copy of a historic document in Italian, translated in 1786 from its original Arabic which was lost. This copy was kept by him since the time of his great grandfather Count Youssef Pharaon. Its author or translator prefaced it with an introduction in which he summarized the history of his family's ancient origin. I am now freely rendering it into Arabic as follows:

"According to testimonies by abbots and Franciscan, Eastern Roman, Maronite, and Armenian monks, as well as other persons of considerable status and position, characterized by piety, righteousness, as well as knowledge of seals and signatures, as to their validation as belonging to their owners, and the ability to attest to their authenticity and genuineness, the Pharaon, the priest family, was - and still is - an ancient one of noble origins. Its grandfathers originated from a noble family with the name of The House of al-Ahmar, or al-Ahmary. It is a Catholic Christian family belonging to the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church. In all ages, there has always been a family member belonging to the good clergy whether as abbots, monks, and head priests of religious zeal, and sound faith, [working for] the supremacy of God, and the preeminence, beauty, and embellishment of His Church. Thanks to their preaching and education, they brought many persons back to the sacred Faith, and the obedience of the Roman Pope, and kept their kinsmen in it.

Because of the destruction and plunder that befell Damascus, the homeland of this family, dates and records referring to them have been lost. Hence it became so difficult to compile a chronological complete history for them later on.

However, it is established and known by tradition, within the family, and by all who came in contact with it, that priests belonging to this family persevered in preaching for the laymen among them, teaching them what they needed to know by way of faith and Christian good deeds. Owing to this, Christian zeal, harmony, and love persisted in this blessed family. Among them was a priest called Mikha'il characterized by his zeal, piety, good management and sound reason in an outstanding way. He was respected and dignified by Sheiks, and prominent figures, and feared by rogues and ignorant youths. He was so courageous, valiant, and fearless in his deeds that he was held in high esteem by all people, and obeyed by the obstinate and the audacious.

He was also much appreciated by the Patriarch. If the latter had difficulty managing any issue, he referred it to Father Mikha'il, who then handles it in the best way possible. If the Patriarch also lost patience in his endeavors to reform a group of people, he used to threaten and daunt them with him and by delegating him in all matters concerning any dispute among them. By way of intimidating them and daunting them, he used to call him Pharaon [meaning Pharaoh], hence he, and his progeny were mostly known by this name.

The said person thus lived in the fifteenth century. Hence, the great grandfather of the house of Pharaon was called Ne'ma, and had a son called Mikha'il Pharaon, who is the aforementioned abbot, who had a son called Atta or Attallah. The said Attallah had a son called Youh'ana, who had a son called Atta as well. This Atta, also, had a son called Youhana, who is his firstborn, named after his grandfather Atta, then he had Ibrahim. This latter, Ibrahim, gave birth to Franssees and his two brothers Youssef and Anton Pharaon in the city of Damascus, where they received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, by virtue of the Greek rite conducted by the then Catholic priest, as verified by the signature of witnesses at the end of this document.

### Ancient Origin (ch3)

#### Another Version

The Abbot Athnasious al-Serougy from Zehla died as a reverend priest in al-Mokhales monastery in 1910. He was endowed with a beautiful voice and was well-versed in Church music. He held many high ranking clerical positions. He was a capable narrator of sharp memory. He narrated the origin of his family to Habeeb Moussa al-Sorougy in Nazareth with which I became acquainted during my visit to him in 1927. Such narration of the family's

origin, quoted by priest Ass'ad Mansour in his 234 page book about the origin of Nazareth, is quoted below, along with annexes which he added about the house of al-Sorougy, as mentioned in Habeeb al-Sorougy's notebook:

"The house of al-Sorougy is an ancient family from Hauran, where they were known with the surname of Pharaon in reference to their great grandfather Pharaon who lived in the middle sixteenth century, and was survived by a son called Abdullah, who died in 1605, survived, in his own turn by a son called Pharaon. Pharaon was survived by four sons: Iskandar, Youssef, Fransees and Abdullah. Those, travelled, after their father's death, from Khabab to Damascus, where they resided and practiced the profession of saddle-making [in Arabic: *Soroug*], in which they succeeded and from which they got their surname. Because of their worldly success, they were envied by some people who spoke ill of them to the governor Hussein Bacha Abaza, hence the latter imposed hefty taxes on them and collected money from them in every way possible. This situation forced them to leave Damascus for al-Farzal in al-Baqaa plain of Baalbek. At the time, Princes of the famous al-Harfoush dynasty were the rulers of BaalBek and its villages. And as a dispute erupted between the all Roman Catholic people of al-Farzal, and the princes, in which a prince was killed, they were forced to leave al-Farzal for fear of the princes' sudden retribution. Among those who immigrated at the time were the sons of Pharaon who then resided in Machgara at the edge of the Western Azizi Beqaa. In 1710, one of them, Ibrahim, left Machgara and took residence in Zahla. His brother, Grees, immigrated to Tarsheeha in the country of Safed. His son Fodoul took residence in Nazareth during the time of Sheikh al-Omar al-Zeidany, and his progeny were many there, where there is an alley there named till our present time after them as "the alley of the al-Sorougys".

## Status of the Priest in Ancient Sects

To understand the social status which the Pharaohs enjoyed in the seventeenth century and before, we should know that people at the time lived throughout the area of the Levant following a tribal system, just as is the case today in Hauran and in most of the inner cities. And, if not all the members of a tribe originated from a certain person as was the norm, some off-spring and smaller clans joined the ranks of a large tribe through sharing a neighborhood, marriage, or a pledge of brethren-hood making up with such alliance for the alliance of blood in which they lacked. Thus, the original family that formed the backbone of the tribe was referred to as the original family, and when allied with others, it enjoyed a great stature. And this group of original families and whoever is attributed to it, is referred to as a sect or tribe.

It is known that the word "household", linguistically, refers to all the dependents which a man supported of his relatives, kinsmen, slaves, or servants. And it is less inclusive compared to the word "family". The word "Sect" was used to refer to a number of clans before it came to refer to the known religious communities, and it was synonymous with "tribe".

Heads of the major Christian clans, chose among the members of the original family, one who was endowed with high-stature, righteousness, wisdom, knowledge, and piety, to act as their priest. They asked the Patriarch or Archbishop to ordain such person, pledge to obey him, and fulfill all the duties that are due to him by virtue of his honorable clerical position<sup>1</sup>. The priest acted among his people or sect as the most senior leader of the tribe. All of them, whether old or young, kissed his hands, implored his blessings and satisfaction, and obeyed his orders. He was like a president of a small Christian republic amidst the Islamic Sultanate. His aids and ministers were the heads of the clans who were characterized by wisdom, sound opinion and righteousness. His house was the house of the nation, the congress and its forum on which he presided, he had the final say and his orders were to be obeyed. He adjudicated in all their issues following the directions and rulings of God, after holding council with their elders acting as his advisors<sup>2</sup>. Also, he had to be religiously married and a respectable father before being ordained.

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<sup>1</sup> It was nonsensical and unbecoming to mention in the deed of election what the elected person demanded to receive as a living for himself and his family

<sup>2</sup> The Arab historians and authors say about Qess Ibn Sa'eda Al-Ayady, who was known for his eloquence among them that he was "the bishop of Najran, the wise man, judge, and interlocutor of the Arabs. He was the first to write [in correspondence] "from so and so to so and so, the first to write the expression "and afterwards, and was the first to give a speech leaning on a stick". All these characteristics can be attributed to any Christian priest among the Arabs, be him a bishop, such as bishops of cities, or a priest of a village, also referred to as abbot or vicar. Probably, the said Qess Ibn Sa'eda was the first priest among his people in Najran as his name suggests [Qess means priest].

A priest was not to be elected from an idle strange family that was not dignified or esteemed. He was never one of the riff-raff or young men who were lacking in age, intellect, or knowledge because his social status among his people, not to mention his religious position, so required. Any shortcoming of his character was a disgrace to his people, and his clerical honor was extended to all of his family.

Members of the original family never gave up their right to the honor of priesthood, neither did they obey a person they hadn't elected. Thus, it was the norm that an abbot's son was to be elected to succeed his father so as to keep this in the family, and honor it. And an abbot's son had to be educated on the hands of his father in whatever a priest had to know, whether in worldly or religious matters. This was inevitably the position of Priest Mikha'eel Pharaon in his family and sect, the Pharaons. And this was the case of his predecessors in priesthood.

No one should think that this was the habit only among the Christian Arab tribes at old times in Hauran and other cities that were not part of the Roman civilization and urbanism, but it was also the habit in Damascus itself, other cities and even in Lebanon, till the nineteenth century. This was the habit of not only the Catholics but also, the Maronites as well as others. It is a known fact that the house of Al-Khazen never lacked a bishop and a number of priests. So was the case with the houses of Hebeesh, Al-Dahdah, Al-Dowehey, Awwad, and Al-Rozy. It is also known that the Patriarchate of the Nestorians in Iraq has remained within one family for hundreds of years.



## Hauran, the First Homeland

It is historically established as proved by the second narration, and others, that the origin of this family is Hauran, which was conquered by the Romans shortly before Christianity, and its people gradually entered into the civilization of the Romans, and embraced Christianity as is established by the true history, and relics of the Romans still standing till this day in Hauran, including fortresses, high-rising towers, luxurious churches, and writings engraved on its rocks. And it was named by them as "The Roman Arabia" (L'arabie Romaine).

It is no secret that Hauran was among the first lands on which the horses of the Muslims had trodden, as they conquered it in the seventh century as is historically established. We cannot explain here the reasons that led to the destruction of the urbanism of this country and consequently the departure of its people, and caused its houses, palaces, and churches to be deserted, and their embellishments to disappear. Those reasons don't elude the intelligent readers that are aware of what the Arab nomads, who launch raids with the aim of looting and ransacking, do, not to mention what they did when aided with the arms of the Sultan by way of religious war.

If it is said that the Arabs are among the most loyal people to their covenants, we say that the ruffian nomads among them rarely kept their pledges and pacts, especially if those pacts are held with a weaker party with whom there is a religious discord making loyalty and reconciliation unlikely, as the most important requisite thereof is a desire for peace.

It is also no secret that Hauran is the homeland and the place of origin of many families which immigrated to Damascus, and other cities and villages of the Levant, as well as, the villages of Lebanon and Palestine among others. One cannot even enumerate those families because of their large numbers as is known by anyone having the least knowledge of the history of the origins of families in our country. Among those families is that of the Pharaons according to the second narration.

What increases the validity of this narrations is a nearly instinctive and constant influence in most members of this family, passed down from forefathers to grandsons, for most of them, in spite of taking up modern urban lifestyle and the luxury of civilized life, were still fond of equestrianism and breeding horses, that we can safely say that they were all horsemen. This reached the extent of an obsession for some of them, among who is Henry Pharaon who was known for this. He had been brought up on horse-back since an early age, and is a referee in the horse race committee, and one of its founders who established this agency with the aim of improving the breeds of Arab horses. His stables had no less than fifty horses, and favored traveling on horse-back more than riding a car. He did not find it difficult to travel for long

distances and sleep in nomads tents with the aim of acquiring Arabian horses. And so was his late father who was baptized as Youssef, thus named after his grandfather as was the habit of the Christians at the time, yet was later on known, for some reason that eluded us, with the name of Philip, which is a Greek name meaning "lover of horses", and he was indeed. This was the case of all the sons of Rufa'eel Pharaon and most of his kinsmen, notably the sons and grandsons of Ilias Pharaon who all received a military upbringing, and were all horsemen as we will see.

In this respect as well, the late Youssef Pharaon, the famous translator in Egypt during the time of Muhammad Ali Pacha had translated into Arabic a number of books in the field of veterinary which will be mentioned in detail below. He was also a famous vet known for treating horses.

Also, Florian Pharaon, who was a renowned author at his time as will be mentioned later translated from Arabic into French an interesting book about hunting, and horses which are one its specific requirements in desert, printed in Paris in 1884. All this indicate that the Pharaons are honorable Arabs, and people of blessings and were all horsemen in all times and in all countries.

## The Pharaon Family in Damascus (ch7)

One cannot decisively say in which time the family of Pharaon immigrated from Hawran, to Damascus, where they took residence such that it came to be referred to as the homeland of the root of their family as well as all its branches, the members of which immigrated later on to Beirut, the Cherished Beqaa, Palestine, Egypt, and other nations in Europe, as will be described herein as appropriate. However, it is likely that this took place in the fifteenth or sixteenth century after the Ottoman Sultan, Selim, took hold of this land in 1516, or after the Turks had consolidated their power and strengthened their rule, as this is the time to which goes back most Syrian and Lebanese families the forefathers of whom immigrated from Hawran. We know from the history of the Antioch Patriarchate that the bishops of Hawran used to win the Patriarchate elections in Damascus during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries due to the presence of large number of people from Hawran in Damascus after the defeat of the former by Tamerlan in the early fifteenth century.

It is no secret that the people of Damascus were entitled at that time to elect the Antioch Patriarchs. This right was relegated to them after the Seat of the Patriarchate was transferred to Damascus following the last destruction of Antioch at the hands of Baybars al-Bunduqdari in 1268. The Antioch Patriarch came to act as a Bishop of Damascus, thus they had the right to elect him as do other Parishioners who elect their own Bishops, as in now the case with all Eastern people. Whereas, the election of a Patriarch for the Catholics was reassigned exclusively to the Bishops as this was a matter of agreement among them, and was approved by Rome as the conditions so required, because the Patriarch came to be considered, both chronologically and religiously, the head of the sect. This remains the case today with our brothers the non-Catholic Romans. This was the cause of the current schism among them that lead to the division of the sect, along with its bishops, clergy, and flock into Damascene, which submit to Patriarch Alexandros and non-Damascene which submit to Patriarch Arsanios.

That the bishops of Hawran won the votes of the Patriarchate during the fifteenth and sixteenth century entails that the people of Hawran had great power in Damascus by way of being of such a great number that a number of Bishops among them were elected for the Patriarchate.

It's also no secret to all those who know the history of the Ottoman Empire that the early Sultans among them were merciful and just towards their subjects, particularly, the Just Sultan

Suleiman. No wonder thus that Damascus during their reign enjoyed much safety and ease. In consequence, it was the refuge of all those to whom Hawran became unsuitable to live in as a result of the attacks of Arab Bedouins, since, as was known about them in all ages of their history, they used to attack and raid on people living safely.

What proves for how long back in history this family was present in Damascus is the fact that the Patriarch Thorotheus in the early seventeenth century, also known as *Ibn al-Ahmar*, came from it. And he was a highly esteemed master in his family before joining the clergy, which will be mentioned in detail.

This by no means is meant to criticize or deride the Arabs in general, or the Arabs of Islam in particular, but we are referring to the rouge Arabs known as Bedouins, not the urban Arabs who took up the Roman civilization, and who converted to Islam, thus giving rise due to their mingling with Islam a unique civilization known thus as the Arab Civilization. No one can but recognize and acknowledge the honorable Arabs and their kings among the Ghassanids in Balqa and Hawran. No one can deny the honor and glory of the kings of Himyar, the Muntherids of al-Hirah, and the Senates of Yemen. Who doesn't know the history of the people of Najran, their Archbishop Qess Ibn Saeda, the martyrs of Najran, the people of the Trench and their prince, al-Hareth Ibn Kalb, and other honorable Arabs.

## Glorious Damascus, Destination of the People of Hauran

Some authors who are fond of patriotism repeat the saying of the Prophet of Islam "loving one's country is part of faith". However, any man of wisdom and vision can see that loving one's country is an instinct of man acquired before any creed or faith. Man's love of his country is a trait that remains in one's heart as long as it is alive, till this instinct is put to death, either with death, or because of extreme injustice or abject degradation that mars life and overpowers all instinct.

It is known that in Hauran, known for its fertile land, its people cannot suffer from dearth and shortage, as crops are shipped daily on land and by sea to the ends of the world, for all the regression and destruction which it currently suffers. However, there can be no good in a country where its produce is abundant but security is scarce, and its people fear [the transgression of its] neighbors and in which injustice by every ruler prevailed.

It is known that the country most similar to Hauran is the Glorious Damascus, which the Arabs deem as a paradise on Earth, on and around which rivers run. It is their first trade post since old times, and to which come the produce of their land and the products of their cattle of different kinds. From there they also got all their needs which they did not have in Hauran such as fabrics and all artifacts. For them, it was the only city in the Levant. The people of Hauran, knew no other city that comes before, or is greater, than Damascus. Thus, they referred to it as "the city", which no further descriptions. For them, it was all of the Levant. It was the destination of their travels and immigration from their homeland. It was the abode of their kings and their capital before Basra.

It is not secret that immigration, in the past, was not a personal or individual affair, as it is mostly nowadays. Rather, it involved the family with all its members. It could also involve a number of clans, related through marriage, neighboring residence, or religious community, as they all together form a sect. There are many examples of this in our ancient oriental history from the time of Abraham and the sons of Israel till the eighteenth and nineteenth century during which individual immigration commenced with the aim of personal freedom, and seeking wealth in Egypt, America, and other places, and in such immigration, one did not care about his kinsmen and countrymen. Or, perhaps one could not find peace away from them, and they could not find peace without him. Thus, we can fairly say that the Pharaons immigrated from Hauran to Damascus as a large extended family, large in number, not as a small immediate family as will be explained.

A stranger in Damascus could not make a living except by way of trade or taking a profession or a craft among its many famous crafts, as he would not have a constant source of income

with which he can support himself and his family. Usually, one would opt for what he had a previous knowledge of, or what would bring sufficient revenue for himself and his family. The gates of trade and crafts abounded before strangers, especially those coming from Hauran, as we had previously mentioned, and as is known to anyone having any knowledge of Damascus, its trades, crafts, and professions.

One can see that some of the Pharaons, when first residing in Damascus, traded in cereals, which was among the most important produce of Hauran, most marketable, and it was also the most extensive trade in Damascus. Another group traded in cattle and sheep produced by Hauran. Whereas, another faction traded in what the people of Hauran needed of fabric and other Damascene artifacts. Also, no wonder that a group among them practiced the profession of making horse saddles, as is mentioned in the second narration, because of what befell them of hardship and oppression. And they perhaps had practiced it before in Hauran, as they were all horsemen.

## Patriarch Dorotheus Ibn al-Ahmar (ch 9)

Belonging to this family was a patriarch with this name, famous in the history of the patriarchs of Antioch. He was mentioned by Patriarch Macarius of Aleppo in his history of the patriarchs of Antioch, along with other historians who came later<sup>3</sup>. And here we mention what has come to our knowledge about him on our readings in some rare manuscripts and famous publications.

His predecessor, Yowakeem ibn Zeyada, lived in Damascus, as was the habit of his ancestors at the time after the destruction of Antioch in 1268 as mentioned before. As he grew old, he lost his eyesight and was incapable of accomplishing the tasks of his position and managing the affairs of his subjects. Hence, the Christian elite of Damascus, asked him [MISSING PART-2 pages)

Of the priests and monks and reprieved the people of the financial levies of taxes and alleviated the injustice of the rulers.

He then freed the Christians from the yoke of the Muslims by paying the tax money of the foreign communities or the taxes paid for the prince, and he assigned the task of collecting this money to Christian men who then collected the money from those who should pay it and delivered it to the ruler or Prince. Then he resisted some rulers because of their injustice to Christians, he travelled to Asitane conveying a complaint against the governor of Antioch, and he did not return till the former was removed from his position.

As consequence, he had enemies among the Muslims and lowly Christians as well, who paid a lot of money to have him removed from his position, but they failed to. But eventually, they poisoned him resulting in his sudden death.

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<sup>3</sup> See what was mentioned about him in the history of the Patriarchs of Antioch, written by the abbot Mikha'eel Boreek, and printed in Egypt by Seleem Kab'een, in 1903, p.54. See also what came about him in the Journey of Patriarch Macarius, by his son, deacon Boulus, which we printed in 35 pages with its comments.

## The Devotion of all of the Pharaons to the Catholic Faith (Ch 12)

As we mentioned before, the Pharaons immigrated from Hawran to Damascus as a large family with a lot of offspring, some among whom traded there in what was popular among the people of Hawran, and practiced the industries of which they had prior knowledge in Hawran, in order to make a living. They have succeeded in their business and their trade (which brought them the envy of many people as mentioned in the first version), because of their righteousness in business with their fellows, and it is well known that the righteousness is the first cornerstone of success, especially among the people of Hawran. They were all simple unsuspecting people, known as "peasants" who were not tainted by mingling with the urban people, among whom cunningness, fraud, and lying prevailed, particularly the Jews, who were present in every market of Damascus.

They had a qualified priest among themselves to hold service for them and care for their religious and worldly affairs out of religious zeal and blood commitment, being a family member. He also unified their ranks, as did every priest with a sense of commitment towards his family and sect. An evident proof of this was father Elias Pharaon, during the early eighteenth century, who was known in the history of that age for his works as will be described in detail in a special chapter of this book. He was characterized by his zeal for the Catholic faith, as well as his influence among his people and the great number of his followers. Following in his footsteps was father Pharaon, father of Youssef and Francis Pharaon, in adherence to old tradition in this blessed family and in observance of its old customs.

We came across a letter written by the elites of the Roman Catholics in Damascus to the renowned Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1723, and kept in Register of the said Congregation. This letter was signed by many of the Pharaons, first among whom was Nichola Pharaon, followed by Ne'matallah Pharaon, Ibrahim Pharaon, and Gerges Pharaon. And we have in the appendix of the History of Damascus, published in 1930 in 114 pages, the statute of the election of abbot Serafeem Tanas as Patriarch of Antioch in 1742, signed by the priests and the elites of Damascus, among whom were priest Elias Pharaon, then Lotfy Pharaon, Ne'matallah Pharaon, Fadlallah Pharaon, and Mikha'eel Pharaon.

Then we found in the register of the Congregation of the Propagation of Faith, a letter from the elites of Damascus, dated on May, 15<sup>th</sup>, 1726, in which they conveyed the election of the said Patriarch Kirolos Tanas, and implored the said Congregation for his confirmation by the Pope. This letter was signed by Ne'matallah Pharaon, and Lotfy Pharaon.



We also found in the register of the said Congregation, a copy from a message sent by the elites of Paris to the ambassador of France in Constantinople, conveying their complaint against the oppression dealt at them by Patriarch Selvestros the Cypriot, and imploring his help to save them from the evil of the intruding Patriarch. It was signed among them by Moussa Pharaon, his son Rizkallah, and Gibran Pharaon who is brother of aforementioned Mikha'eel.

In a statement submitted by the said Patriarch Selvestros to the minister of the Levant in which he complained against the Roman Catholic priests and elites in Damascus, the name of priest Elias Pharaon was mentioned among the names of the priests, and that of Gibran Pharaon was mentioned among the names of the elites.

After carefully considering the content of the letters which the Pharaons signed or in which they were mentioned we can fairly easily, and correctly deduce that, first: Many, if not all, of the Pharaons were explicitly devoted to the Catholic Faith. Second: as after our long research we haven't found a branch of the Pharaons belonging to the Roman Orthodox faith, we can decisively judge that they were all explicit followers of the Catholic faith, when the Roman sect was divided into Catholics and non-Catholics in 1724 and beyond, this is attributed undoubtedly, to Ne'matallah and the influence of the priests among whom were priest Elias Pharaon and his successor priest Ibrahim Pharaon.

### Priest Elias Pharaon (ch13)

We have previously said that this father was ordained to priesthood at the early eighteenth century to serve his sect of the family of Pharaon, by Patriarch of Aleppo who died on the last day of the year 1719. The said priest was a man of profuse knowledge, wise judgment, fervent religious zeal, and great influence among his family. The elite of the Pharaon family were in Damascus at the time.

What attests to his religious zeal and his prominent social status among his family and sect is that the Constantinopolitan, Alexandrian, and Jerusalemite Roman Catholics<sup>4</sup> informed on him at the court of the Topkapi Palace that he is a foreigner who is loyal and subject to the Pope, and that he is advocating this among his people in connivance with Avtimious al-Seify, Bishop of Tyre and Sidon.

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<sup>4</sup> They all resided in Constantinople at the time

It is no secret to anyone who knows about the history of the Church at the time that the Pope was the head and leader of the Catholic Kings of Europe. And, they all were considered, except for the monarchs of France, in the creed of Islam to be people of war, as the Greek authors and translators close to the Topkapi palace made it appear that the Catholics, regardless of their origin, are traitors to the state and the Sultan, and that they follow the orders of the Pope, in the name of religion, which is a fallacy that any sound mind rejects, and was not to be found credible except by the Ottoman Sultans at the time.

Accordingly, a decree was issued by the Sultan to the minister of the Levant, and the minister of Sidon to arrest the said Bishop of Sidon, as well as his brother Mansour Seify, his nephew Serafeem Tanas, the abbot who then turned Patriarch under the name of Kirolos, the abbot Khaleel Khabeebah, and the priest Elias Pharaon, all of whom were in Damascus, in addition to the abbot Faragallah Nasr of Acre<sup>5</sup>, the abbot Suleiman Bahooth from Shefa 'Amr near Acre, who is the grandfather of famous Patriarch Aclemendous Bahooth.

And as Acre fell at the time under the jurisdiction of Sidon Eyalet, the Levant's most important port at the time, they were all brought to Sidon and were incarcerated in its castle following the orders of its minister the Ottoman Bacha Aby Tawq who reported to the Topkapi Palace, in their respect, that they were arrested due to an unjust calumny by the Greek Patriarchs because of religious animosity for no rightful reason.

To clear them of the crime that came in this calumny, he sent to the Topkapi palace a legitimate deed issued by the court of Sidon Eyalet signed by its judge, the honored religious magistrate indicating the falsehood of this allegation and its refutation by clear evidence. The judge made his testimony and called trusted persons to witness to the fact that all the defendants are Roman Catholic people of *Zima* who have been paying taxes for a long time. Also, that they are not foreigners and are not subject to the

Pope except by way of religious order only. However, they differ from the Greek Patriarchs in that they refuse to prostrate to the fire on the tomb of Issa, i.e Jesus, in that they allow a man to take a third wife after the death of his first and second wives, and in that they regard it as obligatory to prostrate to God in their churches at the time of prayer.

When the Patriarch Selvestros the Cypriot arrived at Damascus, he presented to the Minister of the Levant a memorandum with a complaint against the priests and the elite of the Roman

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<sup>5</sup> Among his family or progeny, the house of Nasr, who are among the elite of the Sect in Beirut to which they travelled from Acre after its destruction in 1775

Catholics of Damascus pleading with him that they be arrested or banished to Adana by virtue of a decree from the Sultan, of which he got hold, because they are foreign Catholics who are subjects to the Pope and insubordinate to himself, and the Sultan, and are enemies of the state.

In this memorandum, Priest Elias Pharaon is mentioned among the monks who are to be arrested and banished as mentioned before.

### The Pharaons in Egypt (ch 16)

We noted that among those who migrated from Damascus to Egypt in this migration was a number of generations of the Pharaon family who constituted a substantial sect owing to their large number of men and women, wealth, affluence, and status as made apparent by the names of the renowned persons among them in Egypt which we know of, and whom will be mentioned in a special chapter

They were accompanied by their priest and the head of their sect, Priest Ibrahim Pharaon, who succeeded Priest Elias Pharaon, along with his wife, three children, Anton, Youssef, and Franssees, his sister and her children from the Kassab family, and their cousins, because the said Priest Ibrahim was particularly targeted and meant by such oppression instigated by the Patriarch Selvesteros the Cypriot against the Roman Catholics in Damascus as he was one of the elite of the Roman Catholics and head of his family, the Pharaons. Hence this poor father had to leave Damascus to flee this oppression based upon the Saying of Jesus, if you are oppressed in a country then flee to another.

In Egypt, the said priest served the Roman Catholics who emigrated with him from Damascus, among the Pharaons and others, hence he became the abbot of all the sect of the Levantines. Thus, he gained extreme honor and prestige among his sect and elsewhere. This was also the reason behind his children's prosperity and success in their positions owing to his rank and status in the hearts of everyone, particularly the senior merchants who in their collaboration were the best brethren aid for each other<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>We cannot in this instance elaborate concerning the success of the Roman Catholic sect so as not to digress, by such elaboration, from our main topic, and we have fully tackled this subject in a special lecture we gave in the Catholic club in Egypt, on February,

## Success of the Pharaons in Egypt (ch 17)

Most of the administrations of the Ottoman government at the time, even the rule of the governor, were awarded on basis of a one-year term, which can be renewed more than once. Customs was among the most important of these administrations, particularly in Egypt. This administration always rested in the hands of the Jews due to their large experience in the requirements of its management and investment, and none among the Turks, the Copts, the Mamluks, the Greeks or others, were to vie with them for its management, or to compete to outdo them. They clandestinely guaranteed that it would be assigned to them through a mayor in return for thirty sacs [of money] to be paid as nominal fee or in an official way. In addition to this, they paid the multiples of this amount to the influential Mamluks by way of servitude or slavery. In return, they were entitled to receive a fee for all the imports coming by sea from the Kingdoms of Europe and elsewhere. And for all the imports coming through land by the caravans from the countries of North West Africa, that is, from Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, and Marrakesh, as well as [those coming from] Hijaz, Yemen, India, Iran and other places, [They received] three to five percent. Moreover, [they received a fee] for all the exports of the produce of the lands of Egypt, Sudan, and the inner African countries. Hence, they gained large amounts of money beyond any estimation or reckoning. A sac of money, at the time, was estimated as equivalent to 500 Egyptian piasters of the present time.

Also, being the gateway to Trade as it is known, it was through customs that the Jews controlled the Trade in, and out of, Egypt and also whatever, passed through it, in absence of any other route from the East to the West and vice versa, prior to the inauguration of the Suez Canal. And as they were aware of the profit brought to them by this management, they didn't employ as clerks, supervisors, workers, or servants, in Damietta, Beaulac, Rosetta, Alexandria, and elsewhere, except their brethren, of the sons of Israel.

However, the despotism of the Mamluks in Egypt tempted them to usurp the wealth of Egypt for themselves, and take hold of most of its trade through managing the Customs, which is almost a constant characteristic of them in every age and country. We need not elaborate on such a thing as this fact is well known about them. Their acts to satisfy their greed brought about their destruction on the hands of Ali Bek Al-Kabir after reigning Egypt in 1766, as he killed their leader Master Ishaq, and took 40 thousand beads of gold, being the currency of the time. Ever since this instance, the Jews lost the management of the Customs to the Levantines

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27<sup>th</sup> 1930, which is independently printed and sold in the bookstores of Egypt and Beirut. What concerns us in this respect is the success of the Pharaons in particular as we will see in the next chapter.

in whose hands it remained till the days of Mohammad Ali Pasha<sup>7</sup> as long as it was assigned according to the system of suretiship and commitment to pay.

The first one to assume the management of the Customs, according to the narration of the French author, Volney, was Anton Cassis Pharaon. But it was said that such [first] person was Mikha'eel al-Gamal, or Youssef Farahat. Also, it was said that [the first to assume this position] was Youssef Kassab the Levantine, cousin of the said Anton. Yet, Whoever was the first to assume it, Anton Pharaon assumed the management of the Customs of Egypt for a long time, or for many years, during the rule of Ali Bek al-Kabeer, and during the reign of Mohammad Bek Abi al-Zahab, Ibrahim Bek, Murad Bek, and Isma'eel Bek till 1784. Their remuneration was raised at the beginning to 100 sacks, and eventually reached 1000 sacks.

Friendship and Affection are among the reasons for Success and Happiness. (Ch 18)

Anton Pharaon, and others among his sect, upon assuming the position of manager of Customs, appointed his brothers, cousins, and his fellow Levantines as assistants working as clerks, supervisors, workers, and servants, in the branches of this administration in Damietta, Beaulac, Rosetta, Alexandria, and other places, as did the Jews before, and as did the Copts in the administration of crops taxes since the manager depended on the loyalty of his kinsmen to serve in this administration which they deemed a matter of public interest in which they should share its service, the profit and benefits. The manager treated the merchants in an empathetic way especially when it came to estimating the price and quantities of merchandize at the Customs, which didn't take place meticulously and accurately as is the case today. Rather, it used to take place on basis of consensus between the Master and the owner of merchandize in an arbitrary way.

The bonds of friendship and affection have grown between those working in the field of trade and different industries. Moreover, their offspring were connected by spiritual, physical, and social connections through baptism, confirmation, matrimony and marriage. Hence, they were intertwined in a large family bringing together their family members and offspring in strong unison consolidated by their common interests, the unity brought about by the Catholic faith to which they were all devoted, and the unity resulting from their shared lineage that brought their hearts together in natural affection, along with the unity of belonging to the old homeland in the Levant together with the unity of sharing the new Egyptian homeland. This unity is a requirement of their being in a country of immigration, where an expatriate is a kinsman of his fellow expatriate.

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<sup>7</sup> In the house of the late gentleman George Eid in Cairo, we came across a deed of assigning the Customs of Alexandria and Rosetta for three years, from 1245 Hijri to 1248 Hijri, to the late George Botros al-Taweel who built the Patriarchate in Alexandria, and also to his partner the late Anton Eid, thanks to the benevolence of whom the Church of Debanna was constructed there.

In this, they followed the example of the Jews who are well known for their prejudice for one another. Also, [the example] of the Muslims, who came from different nations and origins brought together by their religion which makes it mandatory for a Muslim to always stand by his brother if oppressed, and [prevent him from transgression] if oppressor. Moreover, they, in this respect, followed the perfect example of the Westerners with whom they came in contact during their business and religious meetings in the monastery of the Mar Francis Monks, which was considered an institution for all the Catholics all over the world, because, by virtue of the statements they held from the Roman Popes, they alone had the clerical rights over all the Eastern and Western Catholics, of all nations and sects, as there were no Catholic bishops or archbishops.

And as most of those monks were Italian, in their schools they taught the basics of the Italian language which was more popular in the East during that time, on their hands, and the hands of other missionaries. Also, [it was spread] on the hands of merchants, and owners of and workers on trade ships, most of whom hailed from Venice, Genoa, Livorno, and other Italian cities. And it is no secret to smart leaders that the strong relations between those who have various interests brought about and facilitated friendship among them, in addition to the success of their businesses to make their living and live in affluence, not to mention spreading the Italian language.

The trade referred to here is the extensive trade with the people of Egypt, the Levant, and Europe. Hence, they were referred to as the Levantine merchants, or the sect of the Levantine merchants, a nomenclature frequently used by the public in Egypt, as well government officials, and historians, whether Christians or Muslims, as was the case with Aburrahman al-Jabarty, Nikola al-Turk, and other historians at the time.

### The Status of Pharaon Family in Egypt (ch 19)

The Director of the Customs in Egypt, as in other Ottoman countries, held the title of Master, or the General Master of the *Diwans* of Custom either in the whole of Egypt, or in a specific city. None of the people of *Zimma*, [Non-Muslim citizens], whether Christians or Jews in the Ottoman countries, did not hold any title of honor other than that of Master, unless he was a general ruler in Wallachia or Moldova, in which case he holds the title of Bek. However, the titles of Emir, Bek, Pasha, or Agha were restricted to Muslims.

None the less, this Master, enjoyed a great esteem by the government officials, whether Mamluks or the General People, particularly, chiefs of trade, naval ships, and owners of trading caravans as is required by his positions and relationship with them. For, he had power over the greatest financial source for the government, which is its first cornerstone, whether was it just, or despotic and unjust as was the Mamluk government in Egypt at that time of unrest and wars. The ruler was not satisfied with the standard customs money, no matter how exorbitant, but imposed exorbitant fines as aid as a result of their personal avidness and the unrest prevalent during that era. For the men of combat among the low-ranking Mamluks refused to throw themselves in wars and combat except for generous offerings by their colonel or leader. Hence the ruler would ask the Master of the Diwan of Funds for the money he needed to finance a military campaign against an opponent that fought him over his rule. The Master of the *Diwan* was usually assigned the task to divide this money among the different merchants, since he was in constant contact with them, either individually or collectively, and knew them better than anyone else.

It is no secret that for the said Master to divide and collect these amounts, he needs to have a sound knowledge of the individual merchants, and their financial, and social status, as well as extensive awareness, cajolery, persuasion of and good management with them, as well as with the ruler, who is usually reckless and only concerned with having his way, as is the case with any despotic ruler.

There were a number of squadrons of soldiers under the supervision of the Master to protect the money of the authority and to collect fines, if necessary, from those who try to evade or put off paying them. In this respect, the General Director of Customs in Egypt in the Mamluk government acted as the Minister of Finance in Egypt in these times.

Out of this general description, one realizes the status of the Director of Customs at that age, whether it was the Master of the Grand General Diwan or a Particular one, especially when holding the position of Director for more than a decade as was the case of Anton Pharaon, as previously mentioned.

Since he held the position of the Grand Master or the General Director of Customs, he lived in Old Egypt, or Cairo of Egypt, with his brother Franssees, who was the Master of the Diwan in Beaulac, whereas their brother Youssef was the Master of Customs in Damietta, which was the main and most important port in Egypt at that time. The Master of the Diwan of Customs in Alexandria was their cousin Ilyass Pharaon, and each will be talked about in detail in place.

## Departure from Egypt and Its Reasons (ch 22)

After the sudden death of Ali Bek Abulzahhab at the gates of Acre, the dispute for the rule of Egypt grew stronger between Isma'eel Bek, and Murad and Ibrahim Bek as previously mentioned. The fight persisted for a long time among the two factions. No sooner had one of the two settled in power than the other attacked him seizing power through battles and war or through deception and scamming, taking his place only till his opponent gathered his men to overthrow him. Upheavals were also frequent to the extent that the markets of Cairo would turn into a war zone and field of combat among the different factions of Mamluks. It is no secret that this greatly harmed the merchants and artisans, who feared the attacks of the Mamluks and the mobs, on themselves, their money and traditions, particularly the famous wealthy ones among them, notably the Christians like the Pharaons, known for their wealth and status.

It is known that at times of public unrest and turmoil, or at times of revolution when persisting for a long time, people of dignity are left without dignity or esteem. Also, no soldiers, among their followers, even if loyal, are left to defend them, especially, when the ruler or whoever claims to have the right to rule, explicitly declared hostility towards them, or if he had his doubts about them. The circumstances in Egypt, at the time, especially in Cairo, were that of a public revolution, targeting first of all, the money of merchants and people of wealth, particularly the Christians, being the oppressed sect. Isma'eel Bek drowned Youssef Kassab in the Nile, and banished his brother Anton from Egypt to Jaffa under the pretexts that he corresponded with the in-landers, meaning his enemies Murad Bek and Ibrahim Bek in 1790 at the time when he was the manager of Customs, and appointed Youssef Gibr'aeel Pharaon in his place. For these reasons, among others, the Pharaons feared for their lives, money, and honor. And they feared being victimized by this revolution and by the tyranny of the Mamluks. Hence, they took great care and caution to save themselves of such hazards. Anton sought through his powerful friends<sup>8</sup> to be awarded the title of Count by Joseph II, Austria's

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<sup>8</sup> During the time of Ali Bek al-Kabir, there was in Egypt an Italian merchant called Carlo Rossetti, who enjoyed great influence and was endowed with rare wisdom and intelligence, accompanied with perfect righteousness, wealth, and generosity. (He remained there till the time of Mohammad Ali Pasha). He thus enjoyed the love and respect of all the merchants of Egypt, regardless of their origin or rank, as well as all the rulers of Egypt, regardless of their interests. Ali Bek and Mohamad Ali Pasa relied on his opinion in financial and business matters. He was appointed as General Consul for the government of Tuscany, the government of Venice, and the Austrian Tsar till the end of his life. The government of France also assigned him its Consulate in Egypt, as it wasn't capable of sending a special consul there. Moreover, he was assigned the works of the British Consulate for a long time. This said Carlo was the



Emperor. Through this title, he and his family were entitled to receive protection and aid by the officials of the Ottoman government, as far as their power and influence allowed, and also by Consuls, and captains of Italian and Austrian ships as well as ships of other countries raising the Austrian flag or subject in any other way to the sovereignty of the said emperor.

It is no secret that the city of Livorno of Tuscany, in Italy was the most important, and nearest, port to the East. It was the resort of any Easterner who feared for his life or money<sup>9</sup>. And there were a considerable number of Syrian and Levantine merchants. The country of Tuscany at the time was under the sovereignty of the emperor of Austria, and its ruler, the Archduke belonged to imperial progeny. The merchants of this city, particularly the Jews, had extensive business relations with Egypt and its merchants. There was also a special church for the Roman Catholics where they performed their rituals in Greek, and it is still standing till the present day. There was also a priest, of our devoted brethren who performed service, who was archimandrite Youssef Shalhoub.

After Anton making his arrangements, Anton left Cairo secretly with his wife Tekla, daughter of Moussa Gabara, whose photo you can see, along with her children. Then, a little later, he was joined by his son Youssef along with his wife and children, and they stayed for some time in Livorno. Anton, however, chose to live in Trieste, while Youssef and his children remained in Livorno. As for Francis, he stayed in Egypt with his wife, mother, and children. However, the first to travel to Italy was Nicola Gerges Pharaon who left Egypt for Venice. There, he wrote a letter to the Cardinal who was the head of the Congregation For Propagation of Faith in Rome asking him to allow Father Kirolos Dabbas, one of the monks of al-Mokhales monastery living at the time in Rome with his brother Athnasious, to join him in Venice and reside in his house to act as a priest for his family.

<sup>1</sup> Among the most famous, and most important men who fled Lebanon to Livorno was prince Fakhrredin al-Ma'ny II, known as al-Kabeer (The Great) in 1613. After having lived there for some time, he moved to Florence, the capital of Tuscany where he lived for a few years, then returned back to Lebanon as is well known.

### Continuation of the Previous Chapter

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friend of Anton Pharaon, his family, and his sect. Also, his wife, Rahma al-Bitar, belonged to the Roman Catholic sect and was probably related in blood and kinship to the said Anton, thus Anton Pharaon was the godfather of all his children, even the females among them. Even after the departure of Anton from Egypt to Italy, he didn't let anyone act as godfather for his daughter Rose other than Anton or someone he delegates. Hence, he delegated Anton al-Bessereeny to act as godfather by proxy for the baptized girl, and it was thus registered in the register of Baptism on January, 26<sup>th</sup>, 1788. We, hence, deduce that Carlo Rossetti was the first, and most important, to seek to fulfill the request of his friend Anton Pharaon by his Master, the Austrian Tsar, Joseph II

<sup>9</sup> Among the most famous, and most important men who fled Lebanon to Livorno was prince Fakhrredin al-Ma'ny II, known as al-Kabeer (The Great) in 1613. After having lived there for some time, he moved to Florence, the capital of Tuscany where he lived for a few years, then returned back to Lebanon as is well known.

## Leaders of the Children (ch 23)

Hananiah Pharaon: He died in Egypt on July, 29<sup>th</sup>, 1783, at the age of sixty. He fathered Ilyass with his wife Katrina who originated from Istanbul. He is the origin of the branch the members of which gained fame in Paris as we will describe in detail.

The said Hananiah had male and female children in Egypt. Of his children, we know Anton Pharaon, baptized in 1776, whose godmother was his sister, Mariam, the wife of Youssef Al-Qudssy. And Youssef, baptized in July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1781, will be mentioned later. Members of this house mostly lived in Alexandria.

Nichola Pharaon: We could not find out his father's name for certain but we know from a letter he sent to the Head of Congregation for the Propagation of Faith after he traveled from Egypt from Venice in 1782, that he is the cousin of Anton Cassis Pharaon. This letter is repeatedly referred to. Before this he, along with the prominent figures of the sect in Egypt sent another letter to the head of the said Congregation in 1775. He died in Venice and was survived by children, among whom we mention Fransees Pharaon, begot with his wife Cecilia, daughter of Ne'ma al-Shamy of Armenian origin. The said Franssees was baptized in Egypt in 1775, his godfather was Youssef Debana, and he died in Alexandria in 1841. He is the head of the family's branch in Alexandria. Some of his children and grandchildren moved later on from Venice to Izmir, and will refer to them soon in a dedicated chapter.

Youssef Gibra'il Pharaon: He was known in Egypt by the name of Bassem Youssef Pharaon, and the name of his father was mentioned before (Page 55) as Gebra'il, who is the same as Gibran Pharaon.

Youssef Pharaon, along with the prominent figures in the sect, signed the aforementioned petition sent to the Head of Congregation for the Propagation of Faith in 1775. He was referred to by his cousin Anton Cassis Pharaon as one of the prominent persons in the letter he sent them in 1790. He was appointed Director of the Customs by Ismaeel Bek in 1790 after the ill fortune of Youssef Kassab and his son Anton, who were assigned the directorate of the Customs. He had several sons in Egypt with his wife Mariam, daughter of Gergeos Kotta the Damascene, who died there in his life. He then died of Hemiplegia on April, 27<sup>th</sup> in Rosetta, where he was on his way there from Cairo of Egypt via the Nile. He was about 80 years old, while his wife survived till the time of Mohammad Ali Pasha. She endowed as a *Wakf* her share of her home, known as the House of Pharaon, in al-Hussein Avenue, to the monastery of al-Mokhalass and the Nuns monastery that falls under its administration in 1816. Also, so did Theresa Pharaon, mother of Anton and Hanna Sassy, sister of the said Youssef Pharaon, with her share of the house as well.

## Continuity of the Leaders among the Children (ch 24)

Hanania Pharaon: He died in Egypt in July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1783 at the age of sixty. He is the father of Elias Pharaon, whom he had with his wife Katrina who originated from Istanbul. Also, he is the origin of the branch the members of which became famous in Paris as will be described later in detail.

The said Hanania had both male and female children in Egypt, of whom we know Anton Pharaon who was baptized in 1776, with his sister Mariam, wife of Youssef al-Qudsy, as his godmother. And Youssef, who was baptized in July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1781, and will be mentioned later. Members of this house lived mostly in Alexandria.

Nicola Pharaon: We did not manage to know the name of his father for certainty, but we know that he is the cousin of Anton Cassis Pharaon of a letter that he wrote to the head of the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith after he had traveled from Egypt to Venice in 1782. We have repeatedly mentioned this letter. Also, prior to this letter, he, along with the elites of the sect in Egypt, sent another one to the Head of the said Congregation in 1775. He died in Venice and was survived by his sons, of whom we name Francis Pharaon, whom he had with his wife Cecilia, daughter of Ne'ma Ashamy, of the Armenian origin. The said Francis was baptized in Egypt in 1775, with Youssef Debana as his godfather. He died in Alexandria in 1841, and he is the origin of the family in Alexandria. Some of his children or grandchildren moved from Venice to Izmir later on, and we will talk about them soon in a special chapter.

Youssef Gibra'eel Pharaon: He was known in Egypt by the name Youssef Pharaon, as was previously mentioned (in page 55). His fathers' name is Gibra'eel, who is the self- same Gibran Pharaon. Youssef Pharaon, had signed, along with the elites of the sect in Egypt, the petition sent to the head of the Congregation for Faith in 1775, to which we had previously referred, and he was mentioned as one of the elites of the sect in Egypt by his cousin Anton Cassis Pharaon in the letter he sent them in 1790. He undertook the management of the Customs in his own name from Isma'eel Bek in 1790 after the misfortunes of Youssef Kassab and his brother Anton, for they had undertaken the Customs in their own names. In Egypt, he had several children with his wife Mariam, daughter of Gergers Kotta of a Damascene origin, all of whom died before him there. He, however, died of hemiplegia in Rosetta on April, 27<sup>th</sup>, 1797 as he was traveling to it on the Nile. He was about eighty years of age. His wife, remained alive till the time of Mohammad Ali. She had bequeathed her share of her house, known as the house of Pharaon, in al-Hussein St. to al-Mokhales Monastery, and its Nuns' monastery in

1816. And so did, Tereasa Pharaon, mother of Anton and Hanna Sassy, sister of the said Youssef Pharaon, with her own share in the said house.

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## The Pharaon Family (ch 25)

### Branch in Venice and Izmir

We do not know much about members of this branch. What we mostly know for certain is that Nichola, son of Gergeos Pharaon, the grandfather to whom they are traced back, left Cairo of Egypt in 1782 with his wife and children, to live in the City of Venice in the Country of Italy which, along with all the cities and islands under its jurisdiction in the Mediterranean, was then under the rule of Emperor of Austria, with a certain degree of autonomy. Venice was privileged with extensive ancient trade in the East since a time when Turks, with all their glory, paid no weight to any of the European Kingdoms except the Thalassocracy and government of Venice. Its properties were, in many places adjacent to those of the Turks. And the Venetians had in Cairo itself a district carrying their name till this day called *Darb al-Banadeka* [Avenue of the Venetians].

The said Nichola was a man of rank, wealth, sound reason, and righteousness. He had vast trade with the Venetians, and total proficiency in their Italian language similar to many of his kinsmen of the family of Pharaon. He preceded others in leaving Egypt to take residence in Venice. Being of a strong faith in the Catholic creed, keen to observe his religious duties, and fond of the rites of the Greek Church in which he was brought up, he wrote to the head of the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith in Rome beseeching him to allow Father Kerolos al-Dabas al-Demashky<sup>10</sup> to reside with him in his home in Venice to act as a priest for him and his family. We viewed this letter kept in the records of the said Congregation for the Propagation of Faith written in his own hand and with his own seal. It is dated on December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1783. He states in it that "he had arrived from Egypt at Venice a year and a half ago, and that he is the cousin of Count Cassis Pharaon and is of his honorable family". Nothing is known about him, or any of his progeny, other than this. We believe that the Pharaons, some of whom were renowned in Izmir in the nineteenth century, are of his progeny, and that their grandfather came to Izmir from Venice where he resided as did many Venetian merchants, and where they

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<sup>10</sup> A monk at al-Mokhalas monastery who was then living in Rome with his brother Father Athnasios who was repeatedly mentioned before.

were numbered at thousands. Among whom is the deceased Anton Pharaon, who was a senior clerk in the Ottoman Bank in Beirut, at its beginnings, then the first manager of the said Bank in Damascus, and is considered as the founder of the Ottoman Bank in Damascus. He was well known by many Sheiks in Damascus and Beirut. He died and was not survived by any children.

He had a brother, whose name is not known to us, and who was slaughtered in Damascus in 1860 with the deceased Hanna al-Anhory in his home as he was residing in Damascus as his guest at the time. His children and grandchildren all left Izmir to America on the wake of the war that erupted between the Turks and the Italians as a result of the occupation by the Italians of West Tripoli in 1911. As we could not contact any of them since we did not know their place of residence, our information about them remains sparse.

## The Pharaons

### Cairo of Egypt Branch (Ch26)

The forefather of this branch is Mikha'eel son of Rizkallah son of Moussa Pharaon, and was born in Damascus in the first half of the eighteenth century<sup>11</sup>, and in the second half of the eighteenth century, he left Damascus for Cairo of Egypt, where he was preceded<sup>12</sup> by most of his relatives. He lived there till 1824 residing in a house owned by al-Mokhales clergy in Cairo of Egypt. The name of his father, Rizkallah, was mentioned in page (55) of this book. We don't know at which year either of them died. However, we knew that Hanna, wife of Mikha'eel Pharaon died in 1841 at the age of sixty in Cairo of Egypt as mentioned in the necrologies.

Perhaps the said Mikha'eel is the poet who used to write to Nikola al-Turk and Botros Karama. Among his poetry is [verses of] congratulation for the marriage of Swasan, daughter of Germanos al-Bahary to Youssef Kheir:

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<sup>11</sup> We depended in writing this chapter on a narration by the late Rizkallah, grandchild of the said Mikha'eel Pharaon, and on the narration of his nephew Mr. Nasr Mikha'eel Pharaon who will be mentioned in the text above. Also, [we relied] on the register of baptism, necrologies, and marriages in Egypt, as well as the notebooks of some of our loyal children who were in contact with the members of this honorable house.

<sup>12</sup> See pages 69 and 73

By God Sawsana [meaning a Lily] in honor has smiled

From Germanos to Goodness she grew up

The Sea has created her, the pearls have begotten her,

Pharaon chronicled her marriage to Youssef.

We know none of the children of the said Mikha'eel other than Moussa.

Moussa, son of the said Mikha'eel, traveled to India in 1848 at the age of 33 for business and site seeing. He was preceded there by his uncle, who was a man of great wealth which he left him. Moussa then came back to Egypt where he lived and possessed large property at al-Mahmashah on the suburbs of Cairo. He also built a vast house there, and in one of its parts, he built a chapel or church which he visited each Sunday. He brought a priest there to hold sermons for the Pharaons as well all the Catholics living in al-Mahmashah. Moussa was survived by five sons, not to mention his daughters. Those were Mikha'eel, Youssef, Rizkallah, Habeeb, and Botros.

Mikha'eel, son of the said Moussa Pharaon, married in 1878 and was survived by three sons, who are Rizkallah, George, and Nasry, the lawyer on whose statement, along with the statement of his uncle, Rizkallah, we relied in writing this chapter.

Youssef, son of Moussa Pharaon, was born and baptized in 1850. His mother is Warda, daughter of Mikha'eel Massdeya. He was survived by a son called Anton.

Rizkallah, son of Moussa Pharaon, was born and baptized in 1852, and got married in 1878. He was survived by a son called Moussa, named after his grandfather as was the habit among the Christians at the time.

Habeeb, son of Moussa Pharaon, was baptized in 1855, and was survived by a single son named George.

Botros, son of Moussa Pharaon, was baptized in 1858, and was survived by two sons, Emil and Alfred.

## The Pharaons

### Alexandria Branch (ch 27)

Members of this branch can be traced back in origin to Hanania Pharaon, who died in Egypt, on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1783. His children lived in Alexandria to manage the administration of Customs there. And there they took residence, along with their children and grandchildren till the present day. Among those was Elias Pharaon, whom Napoleon has appointed as a personal interpreter when he came to Egypt on head of the famous French campaign as will be mentioned in the following chapter. Of the said Hanania's children, Francis remained in Alexandria and died there in 1841 at the age of 80. We know none of his children other than Mikha'eel, mentioned below.

Mikha'eel Pharaon: He married Menna 'Anhoury, and together they had Francis, his firstborn, Youssef, Iskandar, and Barbara.

Francis, son of Mikha'eel, married Warda Maksoud. With her, he had Mikha'eel, who is still alive, thank God, and he is the elder of this branch<sup>13</sup>, Gibra'eel who is dead, Seleem, also is still alive, then, Menna, Zobaida, Catherine, and Victoria. Francis was among the members of the first commission of the sect established in Alexandria by the reverend Patriarch Aclemendous Bahouth in 1862.

Youssef son of Mikha'eel<sup>14</sup>: Married Ms. Eliza Metry, and with her he begot Ibrahim, Caissar, Botros, and 'Aida. Of them, Botros is dead, while the others are, by God's Grace, still alive.

Iskandar, son of Mikha'eel Pharaon: He married Mariam Zananeery, and with her he had 'Aboud, who is dead, Naguib, who is still live by God's grace, Zobaida, and Nazly, may god protect them.

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<sup>13</sup> We relied in writing this chapter on his statements about his relatives in Alexandria, and on the registers of baptism, necrology, and marriages in Cairo and Alexandria.

<sup>14</sup> Among his well-known acts of benevolence, was donating a large piece of land among his property in Arraml in Alexandria to build the church that was constructed there to worship God, as an act of benevolence towards his sect of the Roman Catholics, as this was the habit of the Pharaons at all times and places.

## The Pharaons (ch 28) The Parisian Branch

No one among the readers doesn't know the name of Napoleon Bonaparte and a few doesn't know that he occupied Egypt, and it is a known fact for anyone who has some knowledge of his and Egypt's history that he was keen to getting close to the Muslim and pretended that he loved Islam to eliminate hatred and grudge they bore in their hearts towards himself and his men. And as he needed men of sound mind, experience and power among the people of Egypt upon whom to rely in smoothly governing the country and its people, and whom he can trust, he relied upon prominent figures there among the merchants of the Roman Catholic sect who mastered both spoken and written French and Italian. He had more trust in them than he had in foreign merchants whose kings and rulers were with war at him in Europe.

In Alexandria, upon entering the city, he made the acquaintance of Elias Hanania Pharaon who was at the time, the manager of the Diwan of the Customs as mentioned above. He was born in Damascus in 1774 and wed Warda, daughter of Nickola al-Shoheery, his relative on his mother's side, on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1796 in Alexandria. He mastered both written and spoken Italian, French, Turkish, and Greek, in addition to Arabic, as required by his high position in the Customs of Alexandria. And, he is probably the first one among the people of Egypt to welcome this great leader on his advent with his army to occupy Alexandria. Hence, the French Consul there, Charles Magallan, must have previously introduced the said Elias, and mentioned his knowledge, education, ethics, and righteousness, to Bonaparte, hence the latter appointed him as his own interpreter and confidante. After getting to know him for a while he found that, to his liking, he was wise, intellectual, courageous, intelligent, and alert, hence he deemed him as irreplaceable and never parted with him during his travels, and all of his military battles.

Elias accompanied him as he headed with his army towards Palestine, and he was even at his side at the famous Battle of Tabour, when he was injured, perhaps, in an attempt to protect his master at whom the attack was targeted, and he was treated by Dr. Larray, head physician of the campaign. He regained his health and returned with his master to Egypt, as will be mentioned when quoting the witness of the said doctor, among others, in place.



What indicates the high status of the said Elias among the prominent figures of Egypt is that when the elite of the Major Diwan in Cairo, among whom were some of the greatest Sheikhs of Islam, wanted to congratulate Napoleon for conquering Jaffa they couldn't but refer to the said Elias in the message they had wrote with this purpose saying "We send our greetings to our son Elias may Allah protect him with the intercession of Ibn Al-Abbas"<sup>15</sup>

On leaving Egypt heading to France, Napoleon was accompanied by the said Elias onboard of the same boat on which he travelled from Alexandria. So he confided in him about his departure and assigned him to carry his final orders in this respect to General Kleber and the rest of his leaders, telling him that he appointed the said General as his successor as leader of the army. He also told Elias to keep the company of the said General acting in his same position. He also recommended him to General Kleber. Hence, Elias remained in his position as the personal interpreter of General Kleber till his assassination by Ibrahim al-Halabi [i.e from Aleppo] and was succeeded as leader of the army by General Abdullah (Menou). Elias remained in his position as a personal interpreter till the final settlement in 1801 between the Turks and the French, and the departure of the latter from Egypt along with their followers. Elias, however, remained there with his family and no one, whether among the enemies of the French or among the Muslims mobs, harmed him despite the turmoil and commotion that prevailed in Egypt at the time after the departure of the French, as a result of the actions of the Turkish soldiers and their internal conflicts as well as their conflicts with the people and the Mamluks

Bonaparte, none the less, was not oblivious of Elias's loyalty. When he became the ruler of the whole of France, upon his promotion to the position of First Consul, he did not let him stay in Egypt for long, as, upon sending Le Colonel Sebastiani as his first Ambassador to the East, he prompted him to ask about the said Elias upon his arrival in Alexandria, in order to inquire about the circumstances in Egypt, and what had been going on there after the departure of the French, and also to call upon him, on behalf of the First Consul, to go to France, to be assigned the position he deems appropriate <sup>16</sup>

Elias thus traveled to France. On reaching Paris, he met with his Master, the First Consul, who received him well, and appointed him in one of the administrations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, being a polyglot. He also arranged for him a salary of six thousand francs for life, and awarded him the title of "Consul of France at the government of Greek Islands". Elias, thus,

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<sup>15</sup> This message was quoted by Professor Hafez Awad on page 342 of his book "*The Recent Conquest of Egypt*", and he commented on the name of Elias in his notes saying "we don't know who said Elias is, and he is perhaps one of Napoleon's followers and close entourage. He was mentioned in the diary of Rostum saying that Monsieur Elias took me to the General. May be the mentioned phrase was originally "the intercession of the nephew of Al-Abbas" meaning the Messenger of Peace.

<sup>16</sup> Correspondance de Napoléon, Nom 6308 et Egypte de 1802 à 1804 par Douin, p.7

brought his wife, children and brother Youssef, from Egypt to take residence in the city of Paris.

In his battles with Italy, Bonaparte had taken hold of Venice and all the inland and maritime properties that fell under its jurisdiction and government. Among those were the Greek Islands in the Mediterranean, of which he made an independent state under his protection, with the island of Corfou as its capital, naming it Republique de Spet Iles. It was his intention to establish it as a Naval base in the Mediterranean along with Malta to obstruct the route to India before the British. Nonetheless, the latter, with the help of the Turks, and thanks to the cunningness of Ali Bacha al-Tablany, the then renowned ruler of Albania, frequently attacked the French in those Islands. Hence, it remained under the control of their military leaders, and it was not possible for Elias to assume his position there till the adversities that befell Bonaparte after the alliance of the Europe's monarchs against him with the complicity of a number of his leaders and foes among the French elite, resulting eventually in ripping him of his power and his exile to Sainte Helene Island in 1815 till his death there in 1821.

Elias remained in his position after the coup by Bonaparte's imperial government and the restoration of the monarchy. In 1820, King Louis XVIII awarded him the title of honor of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher, which is a military and religious order at the same time awarded only to men of faith, piety, valor, and benevolent deeds. We will publish a copy of the deed awarded to him with this effect, still kept by one of his grandchildren, at the end of this book.

As a reward for his works, he then acquired the title of "Count of Baalbek", with which he is known, even though we did not get a deed given to him with this effect. It is likely that he was awarded this title by the Holy Pope.

His children, to whose education and upbringing he paid great care, were known for their high education in the prestigious schools of Paris hence becoming among France's greatest authors in both Arabic and French.

## Youhanna (Joanny) Pharaon (ch 29)

Among the most well-known sons of Elias was his above-mentioned son Youhanna (Joanny). He was born in Cairo in 1801, and his mother is Warda al-Shoheery, from Damascus in the Levant. He was baptized in Egypt on January 10<sup>th</sup> 1802, according to the Eastern Calendar which our Church followed at the time. He then travelled as a child with his mother to France in 1803 as previously mentioned. He was taught French and Italian at a young age by his family, in addition to Arabic. As he grew up, he studied the French language and literature in the prestigious schools of Paris, and then graduated in the school of Living Eastern Languages. He was awarded his legal degree by famous orientalist Coussin Perceval, Jr.

He married Miss Melanie Eyries from Marseilles in 1825. He then succeeded the aforementioned professor as professor of Arabic in 1828 while his father still held his said position. Growing up, Joanny joined the French army and then volunteered in the Royal Guard troops in 1829.

As a campaign was formed for the invasion of Algeria in 1830, Joanny was appointed as the official interpreter of the campaign's Supreme military administration. He thus had to stay in the city of Algiers where he published most of his books, as will soon be mentioned, to spread the Arabic language among the French. Similar to his father, he was awarded the title of a knight of Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher as well as, the title of "Count of Baalbek". He died at the hospital of the city of Samour in France on March 24<sup>th</sup> 1864.

We have found a chart of the published books he authored. We chose to quote it here as an indication of his high status among scholars and the services he paid for the Arabic Language in every discipline in the fields of history, language, jurisprudence, and literature. As for the last book mentioned in this chart as no. 13, it exists in the Oriental Library of the Jesuit Friars in Beirut.

A chart of the said author's books that were printed but probably remained unpublished.

## Florian (ch 30)

Florian, who wrote his name in French as Florian Pharaon, is the son of the afore-mentioned Youhanna (Joanny) Pharaon. He graduated in the prestigious schools of Paris, notably, the school of Living Eastern Languages, where he received his degree attesting to his efficiency and brilliance. He then joined the field of military translation with his father in the government in Algeria. We don't know, however, at what year did he leave Algeria and came to Paris to join the editorial team of the official French newspaper, *Le Figaro*. He remained in his position for ten years as he was efficient and excelled in his editorial undertakings there. At the same time, he wrote many articles which he published in other Parisian newspapers, notably *Les Debats*.

When the French Emperor, Napoleon the third paid an official visit to Algeria in 1865, the said newspaper sent Florian Pharaon as its reporter to describe this country, along with its cities, monuments, and the celebrations held for the Emperor's reception. He was also accompanied by a photographer under his command to send it the photos of such celebrations. In an important interesting book, Florian published the description of this country as well as the celebrations held, in an interesting detailed book, adorned with its marvelous photos and citing its history, depending in this respect, on what his father had previously written as we referred to in the chart of his writings, and there is a copy of this book in the Oriental Library of the Jesuit Friars in Beirut.<sup>17</sup>

Hence, when Ismaeel Bacha, Egypt's Khedive celebrated the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869, in the presence of the world's monarchs led by the Empress of France, Empress Eugenie, the administration of the said newspaper sent Florian as its reporter to describe the rare historic celebrations held in the inauguration and the festivals that took place in Egypt and Upper Egypt. The said Empress stayed for nearly three months as a guest of Ismaeel Bacha. Florian published an important book describing these festivals and the countries he visited with the Empress, along with a description of its ancient and modern sites, also adorned with beautiful pictures. The book was published in 1873<sup>18</sup> after the demise of the rule of Napoleon and his wife by the defeat of France in its war with Germany in 1870.

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<sup>17</sup> Said book, which was presented to Napoleon, was entitled in French as "Voyage en Algérie de sa Majesté Napoléon III par Florian Pharaon Illustré par A. Darjou, Paris 1865."

<sup>18</sup> The title of said book is: Florian Pharaon. Cairo and Upper Egypt. Paris. Dentu, 1872, in-fol. Very rare and well researched with its 30 pages of Illustrations by A. Darjou in colored paper and framed in . triple net. Work written for the occasion of the inauguration of the Suez Canal. Illustrations by Darjou are an absolute beauty.

He also authored a French-Arabic dictionary printed in Paris in 1860 about the scientific terminology in human medicine, veterinary, and pharmacology, etc. entitled as follows as per its copy in the Royal Library in Cairo of Egypt.

"Vocabulaire francais-arabe a l'usage de meducins, veterinaux, sage-femmes, pharmaciens, herbriers, etc. Par Florian Pharaon et E.L. Barthmand. Paris -1860 in-8" (French-Arabic Vocabulary in use by physicians, veterinaries, mid-wives, pharmacists, herbologists, etc, by Florian Pharaon and E.L. Bartmand. Paris-1860 in-8)

This dictionary is perhaps the same work that his father had embarked on as mentioned in the chart of his works to which Florian had added some validations and explanations with the help of his partner whose name in mentioned in the title of the book.

Just like the rest of the Pharaons, Florian was fond of hunting and horse-riding, as a result of his upbringing and military position. He translated into French an interesting book in this field by Mr. Mohammad al-Manqaly al-Maghraby, entitled "Entertaining People by the Beasts of the Desert" which he printed in Paris in 1880, in its Arabic text with its French translation.

He held for a while the position of CEO and Editor in Chief of a magazine with the name of Gazette des Chasseurs [Gazette of Hunters]. He was helped in its editing by his son, whose name was also Florian Pharaon, Jr.

Florian was survived by a single son, named Louis, who died in 1932, also survived by a single son named Yacoub, who graduated in the high engineering school of Paris, the famous L'Ecole Politechnique.

## Youssef Pharaon, the Interpreter (ch 31)

Among the brothers of the afore-mentioned Elias Pharaon, known for their knowledge and literacy, was Youssef Pharaon, one of the major translators in the time of Muhammad Ali Bacha in Egypt, and one of the corner stones of the modern scientific renaissance that aimed at spreading knowledge and sciences. Youssef, son of the said Hanania Pharaon was born in Cairo of Egypt where he was baptized in 1781 as mentioned on page 100. He authored a number of scientific books translated by him from French into Arabic, and printed at the expense of the government of the said Bacha in the famous press of Beaulac there. Twelve of those books were mentioned by the late Youssef Alian Sarkees in his work entitled "Dictionary of Arabic Publications" under the chapter of "Pharaon" which he must have found in the bookstores of Egypt. The said writer tried to cite the biography of their author but failed to do so, just as he failed with respect to the biography of his kinsman the afore-mentioned Florian, as he thought him to be Florian's paternal grandfather and that he lived in Egypt in 1203 *Hijri* Calendar, 1788 A.D. I have repeatedly written to him, and if he is still alive, may God have mercy on him, I implored him to verify this and refer back to the sources which he quoted, but I received no reply from him.

What is proven to me is that the author of these books is Youssef, son of Hanania Pharaon, and he is the brother of Elias, grandfather of the afore-mentioned Florian. As the said Youssef graduated in the prestigious schools of Paris, he managed to study sciences in French and mastered this language, for which he was renowned to the extent that Mohammad Aly Bacha heard of him, and hence, brought him to Egypt among those whom he summoned whether foreigners or from the East. And since the knowledge of the said Pharaon of the Arabic language was not on a par with his knowledge of the French language having graduated in French schools at the heart of Paris, all his Arabized writings had to be proofread by a scholar that mastered the Arabic rhetoric, and whose name was mentioned along with that of Youssef at the beginning of each book.

Chart of books Arabized by Youssef Pharaon quoted from "Dictionary of Arabic Publications"

- 1- "Masterpiece in the Faculties of Diseases", by Mon. Prince, professor of medicine at the school of Abi-Zaabal, printed in the press of Beaulac in 1255 *Hijri*, 1839 A.D. The book is in the field of veterinary in 125 pages.
- 2- "Glorious Masterpiece in the Appearance of Apparent Organs", in the field of veterinary, printed in Beaulac in 1251 *Hijri*, 1835 A.D. in 147 pages.
- 3- "Explanation of Veterinary Anatomy Terminology", by Gerard, printed in Beaulac, 1249 *Hijri*, 1833 A.D., in 292 pages, and the translation was reviewed by Refa'a Effendi Rafe'.

- 4- "A Thesis in Veterinary", printed in Beaulac, in a second edition on 1260 *Hijri*, 1844 A.D. The first edition was printed in 1249 under the title of "A Thesis in the Science of Veterinarians"
- 6 \*"Orchard of Intellects in the Science of Veterinary Physiology", printed in Beaulac in 1256 *Hijri*, 1840 A.D.
- 7 "Precious Pearls in Animals Medications", by Amoun, printed in Beaulac in 1250 *Hijri*, 1834 A.D.
- 8 "Utmost Aim in Medications and Ailments", printed in 1262 *Hijri*, 1845 A.D.
- 9 "Veterinary Subject", printed in Beaulac in 1255 *Hijri*, 1839 A.D.
- 10 "Ultimate Vastness in the Field of Surgery", by Professor Prince with the help of Moustapha Hassan Kassab, printed in Beaulac, in 1255 in 360 pages.
- 11 "Promenade of People in Veterinary Anatomy", by Lafarge, printed in Beaulac in 1255
- 12 "Promenade in Orchards in Pathology", in 1285 *Hijri*, 1842.
- 13 A Manuscript in the Major Royal Library in Cairo of Egypt, entitled as "Most Important Means in the Origin of Gains", translated into Arabic by him, and edited by Sheikh Nasr Abu al-Wafaa, and it is in the handwriting of this said Sheikh.

On viewing this chart and the specialization of those books in the field of Veterinary, we deduce, first of all that their translator, Youssef Pharaon specialized in this science in which he excelled. Secondly, he was fond of breeding and caring for horses, similar to many of Pharaons". Thirdly, he was a pioneer, along with his nephew Youhanna (Joanny) Pharaon, in the military campaign sent by France to invade Algeria in 1830. Fourthly, after he gained fame owing to his experience and skill in the field of Veterinary he was summoned by Mohammad Aly Bacha to Egypt, in order to act as a professor of this discipline. Ibrahim Bach had by then conquered Acre, advanced into Syria and the inland of Anatolia, and hence was in much need of many veterinarians among his troops to care for the horses and mules on which they relied to transfer the equipment of the soldiers.

It should be known that the rule of the government of Algeria was purely military since its conquest till 1860 and beyond. Its governance rested in the hands of military personnel, even when it came to authors and translators, among whom were the Pharaons, Youhanna (Joanny) Pharaon, his son Florian, and uncle Youssef.

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\* [Note from translator: Incorrect numbering in the source]

## The Pharaons (ch 32)

### Branch of Trieste and Austria

We have said in a previous chapter that this branch goes back to Anton Cassis Pharaon who was mentioned repeatedly in this book as required by the historic context. He was blessed with wisdom, affluence, and power hence he enjoyed a unique status among the Christians in Egypt. That brought upon him the envy of many people to the extent that he feared for his life because of the animosity of the Mamluks. He found no other way to evade their evils except by fleeing Egypt to Italy in 1784. He was blessed with smart children like himself, with his first wife Warda, daughter of Gerges al-Mansoury<sup>19</sup>, and also with his second wife Tekla, daughter of daughter of Moussa Gabara, who originated from Damascus<sup>20</sup>, who aided him in his business in Trieste.

As Count Anton was a man of affluence and perfect business experience, and had many acquaintances among the most important merchants of Italy, Austria, Egypt, and the Levant, he opened a business store in Trieste larger than his previous store in Egypt, as he did not fear for his life and money there. He gained fame in this city for his honesty and righteousness in his business dealings with his fellows. The sphere of his business grew more and more till he came to be numbered among the greatest merchants of this city, and deemed the greatest Eastern merchant there.

This city harbored extensive trade in a way non-paralleled in any other city on the Mediterranean. It had a port where no fees were imposed on merchandise arriving there from East and West to be transported to the kingdoms of Germany and Netherlands, and departing from there. It was considered the first and most important port on the Mediterranean.

Anton imported, through his friends, Oriental merchandise which he promoted to his friends among the major merchants of Europe, namely, pearls, precious coral, ivory and different types of spices. He also exported to his fellows in Egypt what the workshops and factories of

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<sup>19</sup> The blessed marriage with her took place in Egypt in 1769, and she died in 1779. The house of Mansoury is an honorable family with ancient origins in Aleppo, and has branches in Aleppo, Egypt, Damascus, and Beirut. It is also known by the name of House of al-Hakeem [meaning doctor] because many of its members were famous of medicine and medical treatment, among whom were the late Patriarch Maximos al-Hakeem who died in 1761.

<sup>20</sup> The blessed marriage with her took place after the death of the first [wife] in 1780. She was of magnificent beauty as can be seen in her photograph next to that of her spouse. Moreover, she was endowed with wisdom, piety, generosity, and was benevolent to the poor and to churches. She died, after her husband, in 1830. The best witness to what we said [about her] is the late Patriarch Maximos Mazloum who remained as her guest in the Pharaons' palace in Trieste, along with his confidant, nearly two years from September 27<sup>th</sup> 1817 till April 30 1819 for the purpose of settling the inheritance of Patriarch Agabious Matar as will be mentioned later. He used to hold the sermon in the chapel if the Pharaons' palace attended by her and all who lived there. She, and her children, refused to note this stay in her accounts or receive any payment in return. Instead, she donated to the Church of 'Ain Traz school a magnificently- crafted altar made of marble that shipped from Trieste in three boxes.



Europe produced of baize, silk, embroider thread, silver and golden utensils, and different types of weapons.

Since he was known for his righteousness, honesty, and affluence, his store turned into a public bank and a place where the money of Eastern merchants, as well as that of others, was kept. It was known that signs of affluence, when showing on Christian merchants in all of the Ottoman countries, were the cause of confiscation of their money and their destruction. Hence, wealthy people among them used to hide their money or send it to a safe place in Europe. Among those were the monks who went to collect charity money from the believers in Europe to their relatives in. Among those we know of were priest Arsanious al-Kerdahy, the Maronite monk who was the delegate of the Maronite Patriarch in Rome and Egypt, and Father Agabious Matar, the delegate of al-Mokhales monastery, of which he became the general superintendent, bishop of Sidon, and then a patriarch. He died in 1812.

The said father Agabious was sent by his supervisors to France in order to collect charity from the believers to restore the monasteries that have first been despoiled and set to fire by Ahmad Pasha al-Gazar in 1777. He was accompanied by father Bassilios Atallah. The two said fathers have succeeded in their mission, thanks to recommendations of head of the Catholic missionaries in the East and their general superintendents in Rome, as well as the help they received in Paris from the king of France, its clergy, and its people.

At the time, France, with its government and people, was purely Catholic, and generosity and benevolence were among the traits for which the French were famous at every age. The money he collected reached a large sum which is not known to us. What we know, though, is that a part thereof was sent to al-Mokhales Monastery for its restoration, as well as the restoration of the subservient nearby monasteries. The greatest part of this sum was kept as a bond at the bank of Anton Pharaon in Trieste in the name of father Agabious Matar who delivered the money to him<sup>21</sup>. The said father was then elected before his return as head of his monastery in 1789, was elected as Bishop of Sidon in 1795, and before long, he was elected Patriarch in 1796. Ahmad Pasha al-Gazar ruled Acre and the Levant in injustice and persecution for which he was known till his death in 1804. At this point, fear ended when the just Suleiman Pasha was settled in power. Then, Patriarch Agabious withdrew the money deposited in his name in the bank of Pharaon and spent it for the benefit of the patriarchate and the sect. First, he published, at his own expense, the book "Plucking Flowers of the Science of *Dzima* and Secrets" written by father 'Ammanwa'eel Shama' al-Mokhaleessy in the

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<sup>21</sup> He left a part of the money with his nephew [his sister's son] Gergers Sakr al-Demashky, a merchant of Livorno. And in 1815, Maximos Mazloum had withdrawn around 2000 Florins in his power as bailiff of the inheritance estate of Patriarch Agabious Matar according to his last will, registered in the account books of the estate written in the handwriting of Mr. Maximos Mazloum, which I have possession of.

press house of Mar Youhanna monastery originating from Ashweer in 1792. Secondly, he gathered all the bishops of the St. Antonios Monastery near the village of Kafr Sheema at the Western province near Beirut in 1806 at his own expense. Thirdly, he also printed at his own expense a large educational Christian book written by Mr. Gramnous, Bishop of Aleppo. He then printed the works and laws of the said Congregation at his own expense in the press house of Mar Youhanna monastery in 1801 in a special book. The Holy See, however, prohibited the laws of the said Congregation along with religious book as Bishop Gramnous had inserted therein false issues which are not accepted by the teachings of the Catholic Church. Fourthly, he bought the house of Sheikh Habeeb Ghandour Assa'd in the village of Ain Traz to serve as a clerical school for the children of all members of the sect in all parishes, as was decided in the congregation he held with them in 1811. Fifthly, he purchased the village of 'Ebra in Attofah province, near Sidon, and endowed its revenue for the said school. In 1820, Mr. Maximos Mazloum collected the remaining amount of money from the heirs of the said Anton Pharaon, which amounted to 14414 Florins, as noted in the account book of this inherited estate, which I have possession of, in the handwriting of Bishop Maximos Mazloum whom the said Patriarch Agabious had appointed as bailiff to execute his last will.

Anton bought a great palace in the suburbs of Trieste, with a vast garden next to it, still known till this day with his Name "Necker". He then established in this city, at his own expense, a vast building for the Customs, a theatre, and a public hospital for its inhabitants. Hence, he was awarded the title of "Patricien" by its government. Also, Pope Pius VI awarded him the title of "Comte Palatin". He enjoyed a high stature in Rome which he had acquired through his Christian works and benevolence. Consequently, Patriarch Agabious relied on him with respect to the important problems there which Anton handled with zeal as required. His palace in Trieste was a place of residence for the Eastern clergymen and whoever went to him among the Easterners, whom he hosted there for months and years, as mentioned about some of them earlier, among whom were Bishop Youssef al-'Aglouny, and the renowned scholar, abbot Saba Kateb, who spent a few years there in the position of priest for the Pharaons.

He died as a revered elderly man in this city in 1805, survived by eleven male and female children, not to mention those who died in his lifetime. He left them a large fortune and eternal glory and had spent a lot of money on their education and upbringing.

As for his house that he left in Egypt, he had endowed it to al-Mokhales Monastery by virtue of a deed in a copy of a letter dated on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1790 which he sent to the elites of the sect in Egypt in their own names, among whom were his brother Francis, and his cousin Youssef Gibra'eel Pharaon, informing them of this deed. The monks of al-Mokhales received the said house along with the chapel in it and the subservient cemetery by virtue of this deed and

another deed sent to the monks with this effect. Then, following a request by the elites of the sect in Egypt to the trinity of mercy, Patriarch Gregorios Youssef, abbot Sharoubim Hadad, and head of the monks of al-Mokhales in Egypt, the monastery relinquished its property rights in this house and its complimentary items to the sect, for no financial rumination by virtue of a deed dated on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1881 signed by the general head Abbot Sam'an Nasr and the four accompanying superintendents. The committee of endowments received it, and the wealthy among the sect made purchases in it and constructed luxurious cemeteries becoming of every family. The service of the religious cemetery remained in the hands of the al-Mokhales monks, unshared with any of the other monks till beyond the year 1900.

Anton's children grew up to be similar to their father, and, like him, they were enthusiastic about the interests of their sect, and its honor. They displayed, especially their eldest Count Mikha'eel, great resolve and zeal, worthy of eternal remembrance, in his endeavors to relieve the oppression which the sect suffered in Aleppo on the hands of Bishop Grassimos the Greek in 1818 and beyond. [The Bishop], by virtue of a Sultanic decree which he sought to get and execute, killed eleven of the Catholic elites, and banished their clergy to Lebanon, in addition to the large amounts of money, they had to pay to him, the ruler of Aleppo, and his men, to save their lives, but availed them nothing as is known. At the time, the elites of Aleppo, their clergy and Bishop Agnatiou Kattan, wrote to Bishop Maximos Mazloun, the sponsor of the Pharaons, and who was their guest at the time, describing their distress and petitioned him to urge the Pope and his congregation to mediate the Austrian Tsar at Topkapi Palace through his ambassador in Asitane, to relieve them of this great distress.

When Maximos Mazloun knew of this, he presented a petition to Pope Pius VII and the Congregation for Faith, and asked for a letter of recommendation from the Pope to the Austrian Tsar, Francis I, and also asked for a letter with the same effect from his aid Cardinal Conslavi to the famous Prince Metternich. He also sought a letter of recommendation with the same effect to the Archbishop of Vienna, Le Comte Hohenwarth, who was one of the closest and most influential persons to the Tsar. Bishop Mazloun received what he has requested. The Pope even wrote a letter to the French King Louis VIII X asking to mediate at the Topkapi Palace through his ambassador there, and exert his utmost effort to stop such oppression.

In April 17<sup>th</sup> 1818, the Austrian Tsar came to Trieste so he was met by Bishop Maximos along with Count Mikha'eel Pharaon who described to him in detail the oppression which his sect suffered in Aleppo and Damascus. The Tsar lent him an attentive and compassionate ear, as he didn't have much knowledge about this sect prior to that. He also treated him kindly and promised him that good circumstances will follow.

In the following month of May, the ambassador of Austria, Le Comte Sustow, also came to Trieste, on his way to Asitane, and met Bishop Maximos twice along with Mikha'eel Pharaon, and they talked extensively about this issue, mentioning to him what Tsar had promised. The Bishop also informed him of the recommendation he had then received from Rome in this respect. The Bishops also elaborated about what needs to be done in Asitane, Aleppo, and Damascus to remove this oppression and prevent it from being repeated in the future by prohibiting the Patriarchs of the defecting Romans from any interference with the affairs of the Roman Catholics. And also, making it clear to the Topkapi Palace and convincing him that the two factions differ with respect to the origin of the Christian creed. Such difference requires that each of them be independent of the other in all relations with the government. Else, the oppression of the Roman Catholics will not end except with their total destruction.

The ambassador talked nicely to him and promised him that he will exert his utmost efforts to end this oppression and prevent it from taking place once more, as his humanity, Christian Faith, and position so requires. He also gave him hope in the success of his efforts because of his past acquaintance and friendship with Khorshid Pasha since he was a prime minister in Asitane.

In July 30<sup>th</sup> 1818, the said Bishop traveled to Vienna and stayed there for three months during which he repeatedly met the Tsar and his prime minister. In October 27<sup>th</sup>, he returned to Trieste to the Pharaons palace with success. He was probably accompanied by one companion and an interpreter on meeting with the above mentioned men of government. The Pharaons were the best aid for him in his this respect. We cannot elaborate further in our explanation of this lest we digress away from our purpose in this book.

The said Mikha'eel died in Trieste and wasn't survived by any children. His brother Francis was born in Trieste in 1792 and died there in 1866. He was survived by a single son called Arthur, and two daughters, one of whom, with the name of Ada, is still alive in the city of Trieste,

Arthur, son of the said Francis, was born in 1859 in the city of Trieste, and died there in 1885. He had a son named Mubarak who died as a little child in 1877. Then in 1878, he had another son whom he called Leopoldo, and he lives today in the city of Milan in North Italy. Arthur was also survived by two daughters who still live in the city of Treviso in North Italy.

Anton's third son was named Youssef after his uncle. He was born in Trieste and was not survived by any children.

Anton's fourth child, and who is called Pompeii, was born in the city of Trieste in 1794, and died there in 1856. He was survived by six girls, of whom Leopoldina, born in 1874, is the only

one still alive, and four sons, all of whom died survived by no children, except Sigismondo who was born in 1854 and died in 1914, and had four children living today in Vienna, the Austrian capital. Those are Margeurite born in 1892, Dora, born in 1898, and Leo born in 1894, who gave us useful statements and important deeds about the members of this honorable branch. The fourth child is called Rodolphe, who is the youngest and lives with his brother in the city of Vienna, the Austrian capital.

We should not forget, however, that their great grandfather Anton, when awarded the title of Count from Tsar Joseph II, was given this title for himself and his progeny as per the wording of the Tsar's Statement given to him in this respect, and which was translated from German into French and sent to us by the said Count Leo. The origin thereof is still kept with his kinsman Count Leopoldo in Milan, and we will publish its French translation in another appendix of this book.

It is no secret that Italy didn't wage the last war except to free the Italian provinces, which had previously been under the jurisdiction of the Austrian Tsar, of the hold of Austria as their people are Italians and their official and public language is Italian. They referred to [such provinces] as Italia irridenta, meaning non-freed Italy in their own language. Thus, the greatest maritime battle between Italy and Austria took place there as after having been military conquered by the Italian troops in 1915, they had all been lost in a huge defeat before the German Austrian power. Italy then regained them with the help of its French and English allies. This greatly harmed the Pharaons as all of their property was in these provinces. This was the cause of their separation and dispersion since some went to live in Northern Italy where their wealth and source of living where, and became Italian subjects while another group among them lived in Austria, with their property and source of living, and remained subjects of the Austrian government, as they had generally been before the war.

## The Pharaon Family (ch 33)

### The Roman Branch (greek branch)

We said in a previous chapter that this branch goes back to Count Youssef son of Ibrahim Pharaon, the priest. We noted in another chapter previously that the Marquis Youhanna Pharaon sent us from Rome a historic document translated into Italian from its Arabic origin in 1786, which we quoted liberally in what concerns his family, thus we ought to liberally quote it here in what concerns Count Youssef. This, as one can see, further elaborates what had been introduced about Youssef along with his brothers:

The said Youssef Pharaon assumed the position of the Director of Customs, or Master of the Diwan of Customs in Damietta in 1772, following the orders of Mohammad Bek Abu Azzahab till his death at the doors of Acre, when he was succeeded by Ibrahim Bek and Murad Bek till Ismaeel Bek banished them out of Cairo and ascended to power in their place in 1777 till they came back and chased him out of Egypt and assumed power in his stead up till the year 1784. During this time, Youssef remained in his position maintaining public security and the safety of the people in Damietta against the harms of this continuous unrest which Egypt witnessed those days thanks to his personal power. As he was the chief financial official of the city, he exerted his effort in person and through his men for the welfare of the people of Damietta. He thus enjoyed, not only their appreciation and respect, but also the appreciation of all those said Mamluk rulers despite their various dispositions. Due to his diligence, he fulfilled all the people's needs in Damietta of grain, fish, fuel, and the like, and he also set their prices such that not even the least dispute might occur among vendors and buyers as frequently happens in times of unrest and public turmoil. Damietta survived this period without undergoing the hardship that the rest of Egypt suffered. Thanks to his wise management and great resolution, Youssef gained the love and respect of everyone.

Youssef saw the unjustness and insecurity which his Catholic brethren suffered with respect to their spiritual affairs, as their priests were obliged to conduct mass secretly in private homes for fear that their enemies might report to the government that they are establishing churches in homes-which was prohibited in the Islamic creed as it violates the ancient Omarian stipulations [that go back to] the dawn of the Arab conquest. Since they did not have their own cemetery, they had to abjectly plead, in all ways possible, with Romans of other creeds to allow them to bury their dead in the cemetery of the Romans who then agreed to let them bury [the dead], but in the tombs of criminals and bandits. A sacred religious zeal was stirred in Youssef for his brethren and he was determined to end their hardship and

degradation, so he purchased a suitable place to build a church and a cemetery. God ordained that he had his way.

It was agreed that the Romans of separate sects, complained to him, being the senior Christian figure in Damietta, that their church was about to collapse into ruin. Similarly, the heretic Copts complained to him about the dire state of their Church and their cemetery. He then met the *Mufti* of Islam and some prominent Sheikhs in Damietta and pleaded with them in this respect, and they were pleased by his speech, and granted him a *Fatwa* [religious ruling] that it was permissible to restore the two churches thanks to their love and respect for him because of the generous gift he offered them. And through his brother Anton, a decree was issued by the Sultan's deputy minister based on the *Fatwa* which he submitted to him as required. Thus, the Romans embarked on the restoration of their church, as expediently as they could, and so did the Copts with their Church and cemetery.

When Youssef had his way, he built next to the alley of the foreigners a Catholic Church which was accomplished in a year, and on which he spent a great amount out of his personal wealth seeking to please God and to help its sons to worship Him. After he had successfully accomplished this, he invited the prominent Catholic, Romans, and O.Coptic figures. When they gathered in his home, he addressed them saying what goes to the effect of: you have known how much effort and work did I exert to accomplish the restoration of the Roman Church, and the Coptic Church and cemetery, and I succeeded only with power of God, and none of you was even able to mend a hole in it... hence you must accomplish what I intended and wanted to achieve through my works. My aim that I am referring to is that God will enlighten your minds and guide you to the righteous path, and to approach each other in love and be unified in one Church bringing you all together.

## The Pharaons

### The Beirut Branch (ch 34)

As previously said, this branch goes back to Francis, son of priest Ibrahim Pharaon. It is explained above that the said Francis stayed in Egypt with his mother, wife, and children after the departure of his two brothers Anton and Youssef to Italy, and that he was still alive in 1790, as his name was mentioned in the letter sent this year by his brother Anton from Trieste to the elites of the Roman Catholic sect in Egypt informing them that he had endowed his house to the monks of al-Mokhales monastery. However, no further mention of him was found in the registers of Egypt. Therefore, we do not know at which year he had died. Yet, it is likely that he died during the turmoil that took place in Egypt during the rule of the French there that lasted from 1797 till 1801, as the Muslims revolted against them, and against the

Christians in general since they followed the religion of the foreign [occupiers]. As the French left Egypt, many Roman Catholics had to follow them to France. Some returned back to their homeland in Damascus, while others stayed in Acre, Sidon, Beirut, and other places. Among those were the children of Cassis Pharaon.

The first of the Pharaons whose name was to be found in the registers of Beirut is Lahoud Pharaon whose name was written in the Baptism register of the Mar Elias Roman Catholic Church, on the Baptism of his daughter Mariam there in 1820. No further mention of him was, however, found. Probably, he was an old man who died shortly thereafter, survived by no sons that further prolonged his mention. We believe that he was the son or the grandson of the said Francis Pharaon.

Many of the people of Beirut knew Menna and Mariam Pharaon who lived in a house they inherited from their father Francis, son of Abdullah Pharaon, located near the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate, and which they endowed to the poor of their sect. People knew of them that they were related to the children of Youssef Pharaon, but did not know the lineage of their relation to them. We believe that their father Francis was grandchild of the first Francis, who was the common grandfather of both the said Francis Abdullah Pharaon and Youssef Mikha'eel Pharaon who will be mentioned below. Hence, their father is the first cousin of Youssef Mikha'eel Pharaon. Therefore, it is likely that Lahoud Pharaon was the son or the grandson of the first Francis Pharaon. Mikha'eel, son of Francis Pharaon with his second wife Warda Fakassa, was born in Egypt, was baptized in the Church of the Franciscan monastery in January first 1771. His brother Abdullah was born with the third wife Mariam, daughter of Mansour al-Gohamy in Egypt and was baptized in the Roman Catholic chapel in the Pharaons house in November 21<sup>st</sup> 1782

Youssef, son of Mikha'eel Pharaon was born and grew up in Beirut, and died there as a reverend elder in 1879 known by many in Beirut for his virtue, piety, composure, good manners, and righteousness in all his dealings with his fellows. His speech had no traits of the Egyptian dialect, and was known with the nickname attributed to his firstborn son Mikha'eel, [i.e. father of Mikha'eel], who was named after his [Youssef's] father as was the habit at the time to perpetuate the mention of the name among his people. He traded in the different types of fabric, along with its paraphernalia, which the merchants of Beirut referred to as "Money of Zera' [unit used in measuring fabric], or Money of Manufatora"

In the accounts book of Elias Anton, we came across a business account that existed between himself and the said Youssef Pharaon from 1845 till 1856. The raw and bleached fabric that the store of the said Elias had imported amounted to a few thousands each year. This was



deemed a huge sum at the time, hence, it indicates the reputation his merchandise enjoyed with other merchants. Beirut, at the time, did not enjoy even a tenth of the extensive trade, and wealth of its people, that it enjoys today. And there wasn't even one financial institution, known as banks, there. Hence a merchant had to have enough money for his trade. And it was a shame, and unacceptable for a man to trade in other people's money without having enough capital himself for his trade. Those who had liquid money were few, and were mostly merchants, and did not accept to give their money with *Riba* [interest]. And whoever accepted to do that, as did the Westerners, didn't risk his money except out of greed for the excessive interest that was never less than 24% and reached 50% which usurped most of the profits, if not all of them along with the capital.

The Trade of Beirut was limited at the time to the trade of its people with nearby villages. It had no contact at the time with Damascus, and other Syrian cities, except through caravans of camels and mules, which were rare because of the lack of security on the roads. In 1840, its population was no more than 15000, and the houses they built did not reach beyond its fences, except in rare cases not far from its gates which are still known with their names in their places till today, such as Idris Gate, Yacqoub Gate, Addarka Gate, and Assaraya Gate.

Youssef had a house near the Church of Mar Elias sold by his children after each of them had built his own house outside the old fences.

Youssef spent some time in a business partnership with the late Hanna Ida, one of the major Maronite merchants in Beirut as we were told by some, and as we found in the account books of the late Elias Soussa in 1856 and beyond.

### The Pharaons chapter 35

And the rise of Beirut and the expansion of its commerce.

We must cast a historic glance at the progression of urbanism in Beirut and the expansion of its commerce owing to the strength of its connection with the history of the Pharaons who have always been among its major merchants.

Due to its geographic location on the Mediterranean at the foot of [Mount] Lebanon, and being the closest port to Damascus, it was deemed a first rate commercial city. However, during the beginnings of the nineteenth century, it fell under the jurisdiction of Eyalet of Sidon, which was governed by Ahmad Pacha Al-Jazzar, famous for his injustice and cunningness. Hence, Beirut was less important than Sidon, and its inhabitants did not even amount to ten thousands in 1804.

When the position of governor settled in the hands of Suleiman Pacha, one of the Al-Jazzar's Memluks, who was not like his master, the trade of Beirut expanded and its position improved owing to his accord with Prince Basheer Shehab whose domination and justice prevailed in Lebanon and encompassed Beirut from all directions just as a halo surrounds the moon

When Ibrahim Pacha took hold of Syria and Lebanon in 1831, he spread security and justice throughout the country of which Beirut got its share.

It became the destination of major merchants from Acre, Damascus, Aleppo, other Syrian cities, and Europe who chose to take residence there. And, by necessity, every country with which it traded had a general Consul to protect its merchants and trade. Because of the aid of some great countries to Turkey in ousting Ibrahim Pacha and bringing this country back under Turkish sovereignty in 1840, the influence of such consuls increased to such an extent that some acted as overseers on the Turkish rulers and governors. Turkey had pledged to those countries that it would implement the necessary reforms in its cities and remove all forms of injustice dealt by its men to Christians under the pretext of charity regulations. Beirut, at the time, became the abode of the rulers of Sidon.

As a result of the targeting by the Muslim riff-raff of the Christians in Aleppo in 1805, many of its major Christians merchants immigrated and took residence in Beirut. Also, as the events of 1860 erupted with its well-known misfortunes, many of the merchants of Damascus immigrated to it, where they found security, comfort, and means of achieving success in commerce and industry, to such an extent that no other place could offer, thanks to the presence of the consuls of great countries whom Turkey paid great heed to and feared to cross by any injustice of its men to their Christians protégées acting as translators and agents, all the more so after the Political International Conference had convened to ratify the ramifications of this year's events in Damascus and Lebanon. It also became the winter place of residence of the *Mutassaref* [governor] of Lebanon.

In 1861, a road for motor vehicles was paved between it and Damascus on which large vehicles, known by the name of Diligence, travelled at night transporting travelers between the two cities in comfort, ease, and order. Shipping trucks transported the produce of all inner cities to Beirut, from where they were transported by sea everywhere. Also, all that arrived there by sea from all places was transported from Beirut to all inner cities. The administration of the post and telegraph was established hence the commercial movement became more vigorous and expanded with the Syrian cities and all parts of the world.

Merchants of the Western world established commercial corporations with some of the individual most important local merchants experienced in local eastern trade, and who had

knowledge of the Italian, English, and French<sup>22</sup> languages. Hence, these corporations achieved the required success and our merchants acquired more experience in trade and in the expansion of their businesses including various fields, especially purely financial works or banking after the establishments of the branch of the Ottoman bank.

The money of those corporations was kept safe from the greed of the government officials and mean men, enjoying the protection of the consuls, one partner being a "protégée". Owing to such protection, the customs fees never exceeded 3.5%. Hence, the major local merchants strived to gain the title of translator for one of the consuls, or one monastery that falls under the protection of a foreign country, even if it was merely as a title in order to enjoy the protection of his country.

The most important merchants used to import foreign merchandise from the factories or workshops of Europe, such as broadcloth, silk, and calico. In return, they exported to Europe the produce of the country, most important among which was the cocoons and extracted raw silk. The trade in cocoons and extracted silk was the sign of wealth in Lebanon.

When the provinces of Ottoman Sultanate in 1862 were established on basis of centralization that required the annulation of the older Eyalets, Beirut was made into a *Motasslameya*" [subordinate province] that fell under the jurisdiction of the *Wilayah* [province] of Syria, and its governor was referred to as "*Motassalem*", then he came to be known as "*Motassaref*". The ruler of the Levant was obliged to spend a long time each year in Lebanon. Also, the Supreme Trade Council for both Syria and Lebanon had to be based there. As said before, it was also the place of residence of the *Motassaref* of Lebanon during the winter.

In 1888, it was separated from Syria and was made the center of a special *Wilayah* [province] under the jurisdiction of which fell the *Motassarefeyahs* of Tripoli, Latakia at the north, and Acre and Nablus at the South. In 1876, water was brought to it from river Al-Kalb, and it was distributed to its houses and markets, and constructions and urbanism extended outside its walls in all directions. Beautiful houses were established there belonging to some individuals, along with the high spacious buildings of monasteries, schools and others, such that the suburbs of Beirut became greater and more urbanized than the old city, notably, the all-inclusive college schools each of which became almost a city in its own right, along with its buildings, and inhabitants of teachers, students, and servants.

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<sup>22</sup> French began to spread before 1860 among the wealthy, and the most important merchants thanks to the Azarian fathers School in Aintoura, the Jesuit Fathers School in Ghazeer that was later on moved to Beirut, the Patriarchate School, and others.

### Sons of Youssef Pharaon (ch 36)

Ever since his young age, Mikha'il Youssef Pharaon was hot-tempered. His father placed him in the sect's school that was under the supervision of the Mar Ilyass Church, located next to his home and storehouse. He didn't spend but few years there for he left after having learnt basics of reading, writing, and math. A greater achievement was not possible, whether in this school or others, since there was not a better school in Beirut.

As he frequented his father's storehouse daily on his way to and from school, he grew a penchant for trade. He was fond of the storehouse more than school which he eventually dropped out of. For his father was his best tutor as he educated and trained him himself in accounting and reading in such a gentle and patient manner that he loved to stay with him. His father then gradually assigned him some work in his storehouse and with his friends till he eventually could rely on him in many things. And so was his second brother Gibran brought up as well.

Rufa'il, the youngest, was more fortunate than his brothers, as, thanks to his sharp mind, he learned French and the basics of business accounts in the old Jesuit Fathers School<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> The Old Jesuit School was inaugurated in 1841, to the East of the *Al-Burj* Square, and Italian was the language of instruction there. However, as the missionary of Beirut was attached to the province of Leon in 1843, it was replaced by the French language.

Rufa'il shared his brother Mikha'il's hot temper, sharpness, manners, and even his facial features. Thus, they were in perfect harmony in all their deeds till the last moment of their lives. Strange enough, such accord lasted even in their graves after their death. If one visits the famous Roman Catholic cemetery in Ra's Annabe' in Beirut, one would see at the forefront two persons [sculptured] in bright white marble, as the most marvelous sculptures ever, depicting to perfection two brothers looking perfectly alike. In their features, characteristics of manhood, and untainted nature are evident. One [statue] faces the other in an encounter of fraternity and accord, as if they were two stars [in the sky], inseparable in both life and death.

A Beirut progressed towards modernity and boom after 1860, and as the sons of Youssef Pharaon have reached the prime of their youth, they were on par with the senior merchants in trade, owing to their vigor and righteousness, hence they achieved success in their affairs. They worked in the same place, and in the same resolve, with their father. The eldest, Mikha'il, aka Nakhla, was the boss as they managed their father's store after his death, and his brother Rufa'il was his best aid, thanks to his knowledge of spoken and written French. Thus, he made it easier for them to directly conduct business with the European merchants.

In 1865, Mikh'ail married Rifka, daughter of Anton Yard, of one of the most noble Roman Catholic families in Beirut. She died on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1867 survived by a son named Naguib who died in celibacy in 1908<sup>24</sup>. He then married Warda, daughter of Matta Farah, one of Beirut's most important merchants, in 1870. With her, he begot seven daughters who were all married to good men among the most prominent figures of the sect in Beirut and Egypt<sup>25</sup>. Mikh'ail died in Beirut in 1906. His wife Warda died in Cairo of Egypt in 1932.

As the well-renowned Na'oom al-Khory had perfect contact through his business with the Pharaohs, and as he was a man of great wealth, vast trade, high-standing, and exceptional power, he asked Youssef Pharaon to have his youngest son Rufa'il oversee the accounts of his store. As he was pleased by his meticulous auditing of accounts, vigor, cleverness, and sharpness. Youssef and his son fulfilled his wish. Eventually, as the time went by, Na'oom<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> He is not the same person as Naguib Bek Pharaon, son of Bishara Mansour Shaool, Ne'ma al-Dirany the Maronite. This said Mansour was the manager of the house of Prince Besheer Shehab al-Kabeer, and he was the one in control of all issues related to the servants, their works, their life arrangements, their removal from their jobs, and their discipline by way of beating and incarceration. He was hence called Pharaon, and the name was given to his progeny.

<sup>25</sup> Hannah was married to Ibrahim Tekla, brother of Selim and Beshara Pasha Tekla. Shafika was married to Selim Badoura, one of the prominent figures of the Sect in Deir al-Qamar. Asseem was married to Selim Nahas and Elisabeth was married to his brother Naguib Nahas, both being among the prominent figures of the sect in Egypt. Hellana was married to Shukri bek Hemssy, also a prominent figure of the sect there. Rosa was married to Wadee' Tamara, a merchant of Jaffa.

<sup>26</sup> The said Na'oom al-Khourym, aka Ne'mattallah son of Shukrallah al-Khoury, originated from Aleppo, and one of the most important high-ranking merchants of Beirut. He was a man of wealth, vast trade, high-standing, dignity, generosity, and open handedness. He was the senior translator for the Russian Consul in the country. During the time of turmoil, he used to brought weapons, in hundreds, and distribute them for free to the poor Christian youth of al-Shof to protect themselves against the contrivance of their enemies as is well known. Also, he was among the most benevolent people to the victims of the 1860 incidents.

grew so fond and appreciative of Rufa'il that he revealed to his father his wish to wed him his daughter Asmaa' who was blessed with beauty, perfection and flawless manners. A young man of one the most honorable families of Beirut had asked her hand in marriage, but her father declined as he did not comply with an issue related to the marriage reception, which Na'oom found mean. Thus, his said daughter and his beloved clever clerk Rufa'il Pharaon were wed in 1865, when the latter was 22 years old. In the same year, his brother Mikha'il was united in marriage with Rifka, daughter of Anton Yard, and his brother Gibra'il with Mariam, daughter of Hanna Sheeha

In 1866, a daughter was born to Rufa'il and his said wife. She was baptized as Hanna, and died as a child in 1868

He then begot another daughter with his wife in 1867. She was baptized as Edma, and her godmother was her aunt Liza. Edma was married in 1883 to Anton Sheeha, one of the owners of the Bank known as Pharaon and Sheeha Bank. He died in 1903 and his wife died in 1916.

Then he begot a son with his wife in 1869, baptized as Youssef, and was later on known as Phillip. He was his firstborn son.

Then he begot with her a son in 1871, baptized as Youssef, and he is now the eldest among his living brothers after the death of his brother Phillip mentioned above. We relied on his information and numerous important statements about the [family] in Beirut to edit this chapter.

He then had with his said wife Asmaa in 1874 a daughter baptized as Adele who was married to Mikha'il Nichola al-Abbsy, a prominent figure of the Roman Catholic sect in Damascus, and he was the senior clerk of the trade council. After his death, she married her cousin Habeeb, son of Gibran Pharaon.

He then had a daughter with his wife named Mariam who was married to Shokri al-Jahel. And their mother Asmaa died in 1876.

Sheikh Ibrahim al-Yazegy has written some verses to commemorate her death published in his collections of poems in paper 116:

Rufa'il Pharaon weeps as goes

His spouse seeking her greatest bliss

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He was an affectionate friend with Sheikh Nasseef al-Yazegy, who wrote poems about him and his brother, published in his collections of poems. His son, sheikh Habeeb al-Yazegy was trained in trade on the hands of the said Na'oom al-Khoury and in his store. This friendship was extended to the deceased Rufa'il Pharaon and his sons. Also, the famous house of Yazegy in Beirut was transferred to their possession and is now owned by one of them, Mikha'il Pharaon.

A lass as fragile as a reed facing storms  
Of Destiny that plucked her unjustly  
Leaving sons of al-Khory suffering an ember of grief  
And her sons, before knowing her, knew orphanhood  
Their state called upon them to seek patience  
Asmaa has gone to the most sublime abode

Rufa'il then wed Ms. Hasseeba daughter of Hanna Nichola al-Absy, of one of the most honorable Roman Catholic families in Damascus in 1879, and with her he begot Emile in 1882, Michelle in 1886, and Albert in 1888.

Rufa'il died at the end of December 1901, and his death was commemorated by his neighbor and friend Ibrahim al-Yazegy in verses published in his collection of poems in paper 165

### The Success of the Pharaons in their Trade

At the beginning, sons of Youssef Pharaon worked with their said father in one storehouse as mentioned before. After each of them got married, it became necessary for each to have a house of his own where he was to live with his wife and children. Their old house could no longer accommodate all of them, hence, Youssef, gave each of them his share of the money to establish his own business, and he retired. Since Mikha'eel and Rufa'eel, were in complete accord with respect to their disposition and manners ever since their young age, they established a business corporation under the name of Mikha'eel and Rufa'eel Pharaon. Their business flourished due to their unity, vigor, perseverance, and righteousness, in addition to the latter's knowledge of the French language, not to mention their mutual absolute trust in each other.

Their brother Gibra'eel, however, was not their partner, but had his own business. He moved to Sidon, and stayed there in a partnership with one of its merchants of the Assyrans family. It appears that he was not as successful in his business as was his brothers, and he died in 1882, survived by Habeeb and Beshara, both of whom earned the title of Bek, along with their cousin Youssef, at the same time. Habeeb died in 1925 survived by a single son named Gibra'eel.

The business of Mikha'eel and Rufa'eel flourished with the progress and urbanization of Beirut. Their capital increased and the scope of their business expanded to include mass trade in Manifattura [cloth], fabric, and woven silk that they imported from France and England. Demand for such type of merchandise increased in Beirut and Syrian cities for the outfits of the wealthy as well as the middle classes in the cities and village, who followed the trend of people of Beirut. Then, their business incorporated the trade in cocoons produced by Syria and Lebanon. They purchased the cocoons through agents and extracted the silk in the old fashion methods, known as the Arabian silk, then exported it to the industrial cities of Syria such as Damascus, Homs, Aleppo, and Hama, as well as to Egypt. Also, they extracted parts of it in the modern way in foreign workshops, in what is referred to as foreign silk, and then exported it to Europe, to France in particular.

Silk at the time was one of the most important products of Lebanon, with products in Syria having equal importance. Trading in silk and cocoons at the time was an indication of wealth and one of the highly-esteemed fields of trade.

The great majority of silk and cocoons product were sent to France, as is still the case today, and factories and trade of France had come to a halt to a great extent in 1870, and beyond, because of its political turmoil following the defeat of its army in its war with Prussia. In consequence, demand for silk greatly decreased and its prices dropped drastically. This lasted for several years. The Pharaons used to buy the cocoons and the silk with their then current price, extract the silk on their own expense, and store it, selling nothing of it, till they had amassed a large amount by 1875. The prices of silk increased gradually till the price for a kilo in 1876 increased by 1000 golden Francs compared to its price in 1870 as per what is mentioned by many persons. Hence, the profit of the Pharaons of the silk they sold that year reached a great amount. During the time, they rented the silk extraction workshop of Saleem al-Gebely which was famous in Karantina, his place. It was one of the greatest silk extraction workshops in Beirut, so their trade in silk expanded, their status among the merchant became greater, and they enjoyed the trust of those merchants, to such an extent that many among the merchants of Beirut, as well as other places, wanted to conduct business with them.

In 1876, a corporation for a banking business was established in the names of Mikha'eel and Rufa'eel Pharaon, along with Anton Sheeha, Qazma, and Moss'ad for the duration of three years during which it achieved success. In 1879, it was renewed for another three years and it was dissolved in 1882. At such time, the corporation was established among Mikha'eel and Anton Pharaon, along with their in-law Anton Sheeha under the title of Pharaon and Sheeha Bank. It appears that this bank had lasted for more than fifty years. And it enjoyed the trust of the people, merchants and others. It might have been the only bank at the time. It may have



been the second oldest private Bank in Beirut still standing today after the Ottoman bank. It, as well as its owners, is worth of having a fifty year anniversary celebration, particularly its ex-manager Youssef Bek to whom the bank owes a lot owing to his management that steered the bank safely during time of numerous and intense financial crises notably during the times of war that led to the destruction and demise of many banks.

As the number of fabric traders increased in Beirut, the Pharaons gradually left it for the expansion of their trade in silk. And in 1877, they established in the village of Alqubyat in Akkar a silk extraction workshop, and their agents (contractors) imported for them the produce of cocoons from the cities of Akkar, Al-Hesn, and Safeeta. This silk extraction workshop remained in business with utmost success till 1914 when the war erupted, so its owners sold it a few months before war was declared.

In 1897, in the village of Mashta beet Al-Helw in the city of Safiata, a similar silk extraction workshop under the name of sons of Rufa'eel Pharaon, Habeeb Gibra'eel Pharaon, and Khaleel Essa was established, and it conducted business as much as the previous one till its revenue receded, so its owners sold it in 1925.

In 1894, they traded in coke and established a vast storehouse on the new port of Beirut, as well as others in Marseen, Jaffa, and other Syrian cities. They also owned a large steam boat to bring coke from England. At that time, the railway between Beirut and Damascus had been established, and steam boats arrived at Beirut from all over the globe, and workshops and factories that used coke for energy increased greatly, so their trade in this merchandise flourished till war erupted and their steam boat was exploded by a German submarine, as the boat flew a British flag. Since it was insured, its owners retrieved a part of its price.

## Sons of Rufa'il Pharaon (ch 38)

Rufa'il Youssef Pharaon had five sons as mentioned earlier in a previous chapter. Their father paid perfect care to their upbringing and education in elite schools. Deceased Phillip spent several years in the Patriarchate School in Beirut at the time of its prime. He completed his French lessons in the Eintoura School, and the Jesuit School, and so did Youssef, his brother. His father then sent him to Paris to study Law. After finishing his studies and getting his degree in Law, he returned to Beirut in 1891. He frequented his friend and neighbor Sheikh Ibrahim al-Yazegy, who taught him and trained him in Arabic composition. At the same time, the Sheikh sought his help in studying some scientific books in French.

On the other hand, Emile, Michelle, and Albert, graduated in the Jesuit College School where they completed their studies in both Arabic and French. They got a degree in Law from its Masters. They, then, spent two years in the American college to study the English language, along with its literature. After finishing their studies, they joined the business, being trained therein by their brothers.

After their fathers' death in 1901, their uncle the deceased Mikha'il Pharaon insisted to annul the contract of the company, previously concluded among him, his brother, and Anton Sheeha, his in-law, choosing to be relieved from the burdens of business. His older nephews were fully qualified to resume the business of their store and financial affairs, so they edited their accounts, and divided their money and wealth in total accord and amicability. Mikha'il withdrew from the company, while his nephews and Anton Sheeha, his in-law, remained and resumed the works of the bank under the name Pharaon and Sheeha bank. The deceased Anton Sheeha was appointed as his manager till his death in 1903, at which time, Youssef Bek Pharaon undertook its management. The store of Coke trade became in the name of Rufa'il Pharaon and Sons. Its management was assigned to the deceased Phillip Pharaon.

In 1897, he was married to Ms. Nabeehah, daughter of the deceased, Whaba Karam, of one of the most noble and most wealthy Syrian families in Alexandria. With her, he gave birth to a son in 1901 called Henry. Then, in 1904, he had a daughter called Margret, who was married in 1927 to her cousin Mikha'il Sheeha. Phillip died in 1923. He was a member of the administrative council of the province of Beirut during the period of the general war under the rule of Azmy Bek. He was wise, firm, and generous. But during those tough times, it was by no means possible for his talents for service and public welfare to show prominently.

Youssef Bek, his brother was also elected as a member of the administrative council of the province of Beirut in 1903 under the rule of Rasheed bek, and during the time of his successor, Khaleel Bek, who was their close friend and had great power in the affairs of the province. At that time, he was awarded, along with his two cousins, Habeeb and Beshara Pharaon, the title of Bek, of the second distinguished degree by Rasheed bek.

In 1903, Emile tied the knot with Ms. Mary daughter of Sam'an bek Sednawy, one of the owners of the large famous store in Egypt. The said Emile moved to Cairo of Egypt, and there he had a daughter called 'Aeda, who was married to her relative Ilyas son of the deceased Selim bek Sednawy.

In 1922, Michelle Pharaon tied the knot with Ms. Olga, daughter of the deceased, Beshara al-Asfar, one of the most important merchants of Damascus. In 1924, he had a son with her whom he called Rufa'il after his grandfather. He then had another son with her in 1926 called Botros.

In 1926, Albert Pharaon tied the knot with Ms. Eva, daughter of Albert Bestres, of one of the most honorable and wealthy families of Beirut. With her, he had a son in 1928, whom he named Alfred, then he had a daughter whom he called Maie.

One of the most prominent members of the Pharaon family today in Beirut is Henry Phillip Pharaon. As previously said, he was born in 1901. His father paid perfect attention to his education and cultivation in a way becoming of his family. He had thus sent him to the Dominican Fathers School in Lausanne (in Switzerland), where he graduated having studied the French language and its literature of which he gained profuse knowledge, as well as the other subjects taught there. He then had his diploma to this effect from its Masters. He then studied Law in the college of Leon, and he had his degree from its Masters having taken, and passed the exams before its deans, both in oral and written forms. In addition to Arabic and French, he is proficient in both German and English. He is known to be fond of Eastern antiques, as much as he is of Arabian horses. Whoever visits his Palace in Beirut, which is famous for its beautiful architecture, can see that its interior is embellished with the most valuable Eastern antiques. In its own way, it is similar to, and competes with, As'ad Pasha's famous palace in Damascus, and Prince Besheer Shehab's palace in Betdine, with the beauty of its ancient Damascene artifact. A visitor can hence deduce that the owner of this palace is greatly fond and proud of the East and the Eastern antiques, and that his lineage can be traced back to a noble origin in the East and Damascus to which he still yearns and explicitly takes pride in even if his social manners follow those of Western civilizations.

Him, and his kinsmen of the Pharaon family, are best characterized by their modesty, generous hand and benevolent souls, and their preference for hiding their good deeds.

Whoever knows the history of his noble family and the prominence of its members is not to be amazed by his intelligence and aptitude, for which he was consensually elected as the head of the welfare society of his sect which takes pride in his benevolence. Then for his sound reason, and zeal for its interests, he was elected as a member in its Senate. He was also appointed as a deputy representing the sect in the Lebanese Parliament. Moreover, He was appointed as a Secretary and Head of the financial committee of the said the parliament. He is endowed with wisdom, sound reason, knowledge, good manners, and vigor. He carries out all the useful tasks assigned to him with vitality similar to that of young men, and wisdom, similar to that of the elderly. And it is normal for a person to take after his father and his family, and to follow in their footsteps. He is well described by the poet's verse that goes:

A man taught by himself, and by his grandfathers

To surmount obstacles and sacrifice the coveted

He greatly encouraged me to accomplish this work of history to fulfill the desire of his deceased father and to honor his departed family members who no doubt deserve to have their good memories made known to the public.

### Conclusion and Supplement

This is what we could get hold of during our research in the history of this ancient blessed family that had many branches, and about the works of its famous members in East and West, which went down in the general history before it went down in this history of ours. God knows how much effort we exerted in our quest for its original copies and documents where we thought they would be found. Most of those were manuscripts and diverse papers scattered all over the globe. They were difficult to know of or reach except with great effort, and patience to examine these different original copies, compare them to each other, arrange them, and incorporate it in this book as they are now. We are aware that we haven't attained perfection in this work of ours, for inevitably some things that deserve to be mentioned here, eluded us and didn't come to our knowledge. But we also know for certainty that we have done all that we could, a fact that wouldn't pass unnoticed by anyone who had bothered to conduct research in this field, also which the members of this family whom we have consulted, who participated in this research with us, and whom we have mentioned each in his place are well aware of. They have been our best aid and we hereby acknowledge their help and express our gratitude.

We mention, in particular, the gracious lady Nabiha, widow of the late Philip Pharaon, who, in addition to her desire and interest in accomplishing this book in the best way possible seeking its news, and giving the required statements in all that concerns the Beirut branch, she was our best mediator and guide into knowing the Parisian branch about the members of which we knew nothing worthy of being written in this book, except what we knew about Florian Pharaon the writings of whom appeared in both the East and the West. She had met during her travels the wife of Louis Pharaon, and was friends with her and her husband, and deliberated with them the history of this honorable family. Of her accounts is what we had written about the members of this branch and its exceptional characters in a designated chapter along with the documents she had sent us from Paris that will be published at the end of this book as you will see.

We must also mention and thank Mrs. Shafiq, daughter of Mikha'eel Pharaon and wife of Saleem Badoura. She had given us a lot of information concerning her late father and her kinsmen, being the eldest of her surviving siblings. She has a strong memory and is proficient in Arabic, French, and English.

Those are the most particular branches of this ancient honorable tree, as came to our knowledge through our search for its numerous origins and branches spread in the East and West as we see in this book. No one today in Hauran, Al-Farzal, or Mashghara, is known by the family name of Pharaon, or Al-Ahmar, or Al-Ahmary. However, in the famous village of Sidnaya that falls under the jurisdiction of Damascus there is an old family known as "the house of Al-Ahmary", with all of its members belonging to the Roman Catholic sect, and they enjoy considerable status and wealth there.

Our friend Issa Iskandar Al- Ma'louf informed us that he found in the old deeds of the earnings of Sidnaya monastery the name of Suleiman Ibn Al-Ahmar, the monk as a witness in 1641.

Some of the Pharaons remained in Damascus till 1860, and their house was known by their name "The house of the Pharaons" in the well-known alley of Hanania. At the time, there lived Abdou, son of Moussa Pharaon. It was surrounded by the house of Anton Al-Akka from the South, the paved road from the East, house of Sam'aan Brimo from the West, and the house of Youssef Al-Saegh from the north. This house was burnt during the events that took place this year as we have found out in the registers of the Roman Catholic Patriarchate under the chapter of the places that were burnt down during this year. Nothing is known of its owner, Abdou, nor his sons, or whether all, or some of them, were killed during the events that took place this year, or if they had died later on.

The question that inevitably occurs to the mind of any intelligent reader after reading this book is that whether the members of those branches know each other today? Is there any sort of communication or correspondence among the members of those branches, as well as between the members of the same branch?

In our reply to this question we can say that heads of those clans who each formed the origins of those branches inevitably had contact communication at the beginning. However, now that several generations of their children, grandsons, and great grandsons had passed, this communication weakened as the time passed because of the large distance, this however remained as a matter of thought and remembrance only. The Alexandria branch, though, maintained a lot of communication with all branches of their family, being based in Alexandria, an intermediate location between all branches dispersed in Egypt, Beirut, Paris and Italian cities. So, when travelling to Europe, members of this branch used to visit their relatives in Paris and Trieste and held correspondence with them. Also, when Florian Pharaon came to Egypt in 1869 for the occasion of the inauguration of Suez Canal, he visited his kinsmen the Pharaons in Alexandria, and stayed as a guest in the house of Francis Pharaon, and such was the case of mutual visits and correspondence with the Beirut branch. We hope that this book of ours, after being published, will be a cause of connection and affection among them. And, it must pave the way for the renewal of past communication among all of them, bringing them back to their honorable origins.

We had previously thought the father of Francis, Anton, and Youssef Pharaon to be priest Ilias Pharaon, as we had previously mentioned in our lectures about the history of the Roman Catholic sect in Egypt before we came across the historic document sent to us from Rome by Marquis Joanny Cassis Pharaon, which revealed that their father is priest Ibrahim Pharaon, as we mentioned in page 161 in this history, hence, what had been otherwise previously mentioned in this respect is not to be taken into account.