

Wasif Jawharriyeh and the Identity-Forming Spaces of Late Ottoman Jerusalem

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Abstract : This paper scrutinizes the Ottoman years of Wasif Jawharriyeh's memoir, The Storyteller of Jerusalem, within the framework of citadinite, employed by the Open Jerusalem Project. Open Jerusalem Project uses the term citadinite to describe "the dynamic identity relationship city dwellers have with each other and their urban environment." While Jerusalem and Jerusalemite identity have usually been analyzed within religious, national, or colonial frameworks, citadinite offers a fresh perspective by turning its lens to the urban identity of its citizens in the 19th and 20th centuries to overcome the shortcomings of usual frameworks. Wasif Jawharriyeh is a proud Jerusalemite and a Greek Orthodox Arab, who spent his childhood and teenage years under the Ottoman Empire. His memoir reveals a great deal of urbanity and a strong sense of Jerusalemite identity which appears to be favored over other forms of identities - Arab, Christian - in the late empire years. Through citadinite, this paper aims to discuss aspects of Jerusalemite identity and key points of urban life in the late Ottoman holy city with the guidance of a very lively and social Ottoman citizen and at that time a young musician, Wasif Jawharriyeh.

Keywords : arab memoir, cityscape, jerusalem identity, ottoman city, urban life

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