

UNIVERSITY OF CRETE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

OTTOMAN RULE AND THE BALKANS, 1760-1850
CONFLICT, TRANSFORMATION, ADAPTATION

*Proceedings of an international conference
held in Rethymno, Greece, 13-14 December 2003*

Edited by Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos

Rethymno 2007

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PREFACE

The papers in this volume come from a conference entitled 'The Ottoman Empire and the Rise of Balkan Nationalisms, 1789-1832: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation'. It was organised by the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete, and was held in Rethymno, Greece, on 13-14 December 2003.

The aim of the conference was to investigate various aspects of the process of de-legitimation of Ottoman rule in the Balkans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries up to and including the Greek Revolution of 1821. Thus, in the volume which resulted from the conference, particular emphasis has been placed on two interrelated themes which share the examination of conditions in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire as their background.

The first theme has two aspects: one is agents, instances and acts of defiance or weakening of the Ottoman central control, and the other is the disaffection of provincial societies and their elites with Istanbul and its representatives. In this context, it is interesting to note that such phenomena were not single-handedly identified with particular religious or ethnic groups; on the other hand, it is also important to consider what the nature, extent, and implications of disaffection were, and, more specifically, if there was widespread discontent with Ottoman rule at the popular level and, if yes, of what kind, or if this was restricted to elite groups as part of power games which in the short term did not challenge Ottoman authority as such, but aimed at increasing one's personal and family power and wealth.

The second theme is the emergence of aspirations for secession from the Ottoman Empire and formation of nation-states among the peoples of the Balkan peninsula, and their impact on the region. The Greek Revolution¹ is often highlighted as the culmination of this aspect of de-

1 We refrained from imposing one single term for what is by different authors in this volume called the 'Greek Revolution of 1821', the 'Greek War of Independence', the 'Greek Revolt', or the 'Greek Rebellion', as we believe that the terms as such are indicative of the various interpretations and ideological/methodological stances towards this event. For a discussion of terms, see Christine Philliou's paper in this volume.

legitimation in the pre-Tanzimat period, but it cannot be examined in isolation from the broader phenomena which had characterised the political, economic, and social life of the Balkans in the half century prior to its outbreak, nor can it be dissociated from a more general discussion of the pace and ramifications of the spread of nationalism and other ideological currents in the region at around the turn of the nineteenth century.

Thus, it is only reasonable that a third theme which runs through the volume is methodological considerations, especially the limitations that have been imposed by national and nationalistic historiographies on the study of the Balkans in the Ottoman period.

It is our modest hope that this volume will contribute towards raising issues and suggesting new research vistas for a crucial, but not adequately studied, period of the history of south-eastern Europe on the road to breaking away from the imperial Ottoman polity towards the formation of national states.

*

The six papers, of which the first part of the volume is composed, explore conditions in the Balkans just before or around the turn of the nineteenth century. Gergana Georgieva focuses on the office of the governor (*vali*) of Rumelia in the late eighteenth and the first third of the nineteenth century, and points to several indicators of the weakening of central-state authority in the Balkans in that period; one of them and a symbolically important one is, in her view, the decline of Sofia, historic seat of the governor of Rumelia, in favour of Manastrir. Viorel Panaite, on the other hand, examines the juridical and political status of Wallachia and Moldavia within the Ottoman Empire, and suggests that the best term to describe it is as 'tributary-protected provinces/principalities', while he argues that Russian interference in the affairs of the two principalities from the 1770s onwards allowed the local nobility to increase their political autonomy from the Porte. Returning to the southern Balkans, Antonis Anastasopoulos studies the impact of the Nizam-ı Cedid reforms and 'Greek Enlightenment' on the district of Karaferye in the 1790s, and suggests that more interaction between 'Ottomanist' and 'national Balkan' historiographic traditions and approaches is a prerequisite to better understanding conditions in the late-eighteenth-century Balkans. Dimitris Dimitropoulos then turns our attention to Tepedelenli Ali Paşa of Yanya, and the fiscal management of the territories under his rule, and highlights the intricacies and delicate handling that maintaining and increasing a major *ayan*'s power in the early-nineteenth-century Balkans required. The last two papers of the first part refer to Osman Pazvantoğlu, another major Balkan *ayan*-pasha who contested central state authority in the years around 1800. Rossitsa Gradeva examines reports about the possible connection between him and another challenger of Ottoman state authority, namely Rhigas Velestinlis, and concludes that even though it cannot be ruled out that the two knew each other, their agendas were different and it is highly unlikely that they

collaborated. Rachida Tlili Sellaouti, without neglecting France's specific strategic and political interests in the eastern Mediterranean, discusses the approach to Pazvantoğlu by France in the late eighteenth century as an attempt to expand the cultural frontiers of the French Revolution by including a new element, the Ottoman Muslims, within the sphere of democratic, republican values.

The three papers of the second part of the volume focus on the pre-revolutionary Morea. Anna Vlachopoulou draws most of her examples from the 1760s, and suggests that the military in the peninsula had developed Mafia-like structures and networks, which terrorised and murdered those who refused to bow to their demands. Then, Martha Pylia and Demetrios Stamatopoulos study aspects of the balance of power and intra-elite competition in the Peloponnese in the decade before the outbreak of the Greek Revolution. Pylia focuses on the formation of two opposing factions among the Christian notables in the 1810s, while Stamatopoulos centres on competition over control of the office of the Dragoman of the Morea, that is, the only Christian who participated in the Ottoman governor's council.

The third part of the volume is dedicated to the Greek Revolution. Panagiotis Stathis explores what prompted klephts and *armatoloi*, i.e., Christian armed groups, of the pre-revolutionary period to participate in it, and points to a dual crisis, connected with financial and political factors, as a main reason behind their participation. Christine Philliou first discusses the term 'Greek Revolution' and its limitations, and then concentrates on the Phanariots and puts emphasis on the concept of 'ambition' as a useful tool for understanding Ottoman politics in the early nineteenth century. Christos Loukos discusses lacunae in our knowledge of the Greek War of Independence and its preconditions, and stresses the importance of Ottoman sources for its study, while also putting forward the idea of a working group aimed at locating and cataloguing the scattered sources about the Greek Revolution. Vassilis Dimitriadis takes as his starting-point the confiscation of the properties of executed, arrested or fleeing Christians in Crete during the same period, and argues that resistance to central-state control existed not only among the non-Muslims but also among the Muslims of the island. Finally, Hakan Erdem discusses another Muslim group with centrifugal tendencies, namely the Albanians, and the exasperation of high Ottoman officials at what they viewed as the Albanians' unreliability and cupidity, while certain Albanian chiefs came to be suspected among high state circles of seeking to gain self-rule or, like the Greeks, secede from the Empire.

The last two papers deal with specific aspects of the aftermath of early-nineteenth-century national liberation movements in the Balkans, and thus provide a sort of epilogue to the volume. Čedomir Antić invokes the example of Serbia in the first half of the nineteenth century, and recounts the difficulty of truly breaking free from Ottoman influence both at institutional and political level, even after emancipation from direct Ottoman rule had nominally been achieved, while Cengiz Kırılı focuses on reports by state informers from the 1840s as a source that allows historians to explore popular views, fears and hopes about the repercussions of current

political developments, as well as what informers thought to be of interest to their superiors and the Ottoman state.

*

The conference and the publication of its proceedings were made possible through grants received from the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, Alpha Bank, Emporiki Bank, the J. F. Costopoulos Foundation, and Piraeus Bank. We gratefully acknowledge their support. The Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete, as the organiser, also met a considerable part of the cost of the conference.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Christos Loukos (whose idea the conference was) and Socrates Petmezas, members of the organising committee, as well as to all those, associates and students, who were involved in the conference and the preparation of this volume, especially Eleni Perraki, who provided secretarial services, and Yorghos Vidras; Alexandria Publications (Athens) for their kind assistance with publishing this volume; Athena Skoulariki for her help with editing the papers in French; and Geoffrey Cox for his conscientious English language editing and his patience.

The editors

ABBREVIATIONS

AMAE: Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères, France
AN AE: Archives nationales de Paris – Affaires étrangères
BOA: Ottoman Archive of the Turkish Premiership (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi), Istanbul
GAK: General State Archives (Genika Archeia tou Kratous), Greece
NA: National Archives, Bucharest
OAH: Ottoman Archive of Herakleio, Vikelaia Municipal Library, Herakleio
PRO: Public Record Office, The National Archives, U.K.
TSMA: Archive of the Museum of Topkapı Palace (Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi), Istanbul

ArchOtt Archivum Ottomanicum
CEMOTI Cahiers d'études sur la Méditerranée orientale et le monde turco-iranien
EB Etudes balkaniques
EHSM Epeteris Hetaireias Stereohelladikon Meleton
EI² The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition (Leiden, 1960-2004)
IJMES International Journal of Middle East Studies
IJTS International Journal of Turkish Studies
JAOS Journal of the American Oriental Society
JOAS Journal of Oriental and African Studies
OA Osmanlı Araştırmaları
RMMM Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée
SI Studia Islamica
TSAB Turkish Studies Association Bulletin

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

All terms and phrases originally written in non-Latin alphabets have been transliterated into the Latin script.

Turkish, Arabic, and Persian words are transliterated in the simplest possible way with the fewest possible diacritical marks. The spelling suggested by the *Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary (Türkçe/Osmanlıca-İngilizce Redhouse Sözlüğü)* (1968 edition) has generally been used as a guide.

No final -s- has been added to plural nouns, such as *ayan* and *ulema*.

PART I

THE OTTOMAN BALKANS AROUND 1800

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT OF RUMELIA IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH AND EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURIES: THE FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE *VALI* OF RUMELIA

*Gergana Georgieva**

As a result of a long-term development in the Ottoman Empire from the end of the sixteenth until the end of the eighteenth century,¹ the decentralisation in the Rumelian provincial government increased and developed into disorder in the late eighteenth century. The transformation of the military, financial, and fiscal systems and the political circumstances in the Ottoman Empire caused some alterations in the provincial administrative system.

The purpose of this paper is to shed light on some specifics of Ottoman provincial administration and mainly on the functions and activities of the governor (*vali*) of Rumelia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The characteristics and specifics of the provincial administration were a product of transformations which manifested themselves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and disorder, which arose in the late eighteenth century in Rumelia. I will try to show how Ottoman provincial administration was influenced by those transformations and that disorder in the late eighteenth century.²

* Institute for Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

1 Different aspects of transformation in the Ottoman Empire are discussed in several studies, such as: H. İnalcık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 283-337; L. T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660*, New York 1996; Ö. L. Barkan, 'The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East', *IJMES*, 6 (1975), 3-28; Ş. Pamuk, 'The Price Revolution in the Ottoman Empire Reconsidered', *IJMES*, 33 (2001), 69-89; B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800*, Cambridge and Paris 1981; K. Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, Ithaca, N.Y. 1994; M. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*, New York 1983.

2 The documents used in order to draw a picture of the administration of Rumelia are extracted mainly from *kadı si-*

As a result of the changes in the military system, mainly the decline of the *timar* system,³ *valis* were no longer closely associated with the *sipahi* troops. Because of the fact that the *sipahi* army was not an efficient military power any more,⁴ the governors searched for new military resources on the basis of which they could man the provincial troops. Thus, the local Muslim population was incorporated into the provincial military system.⁵ Actually, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries those troops acted as private armies under the command of the *valis*⁶ and established the basis of the governors' power and the opportunity for decentralisation in the *eyalets*. Juchereau de Saint-Denys gives an account of the method of recruitment. According to him, while the Sublime Porte empowered governors to assemble and organise troops for a specific military campaign, they overstated the number of troops required and misused local finances. Even enforced recruitments were implemented in the late eighteenth century.⁷ Moreover, after the campaign, the *vali* did not release the soldiers but used them as a private army. In the late eighteenth century, *valis* continued to maintain large local armies and retinues as well. According to evidence for the officials included into *valis*' retinues in Anatolia in 1745, the number varied from 300 to 1,000 men.⁸

cils of Manastir, Salonica, Hacıoğlu Pazarçık, and Sofia, which are translated and published in *Turski dokumenti za makedonskata istorija* [Turkish Documents for Macedonian History]. Vol. 1: 1800-1803, Skopje 1951; Vol. 2: 1803-1808, Skopje 1955; I. Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za položienieto na naselenieto v evropeiskata chast na Osman-skata imperia (XVII-XIX vek)' [Documents on the Condition of the Population in the European Part of the Ottoman Empire, Seventeenth-Nineteenth Centuries], *Izvestia na Darzhavnite Arhivi*, 24 (1973), 201-36; P. Tivchev and I. Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za položienieto na naselenieto v jugozapadnite balgarski zemi pod turska vlast' [Documents on the Condition of the Population in the South-western Bulgarian Lands], *Voenno istoricheski sbornik*, 1 (1970), 49-83; 4 (1970), 68-83; *Osmanski izvori za istoriata na Dobrudzha i Severoiztochna Balgaria* [Sources on the History of the Regions of Dobrudzha and North-eastern Bulgaria], trans. and ed. S. Dimitrov, Sofia 1981; D. Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti za kardzhaliite' [Turkish State Documents on the *Kırcalis*], *Sbornik narodni umotvorenia*, 22 and 23/4-5 (1906-07), 1-71. Documents about the *kırcalis* from Vera Mutafchieva's book are also used: V. Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme* [The Age of the *Kırcalis*], Sofia 1977 (2nd ed.: Sofia 1993). There are also mainly single documents from different sections of the Oriental Department, National Library in Sofia. Diplomatic reports of the British consulate in Salonica are also used: H. Andonov-Poljanski (ed.), *Britanski dokumenti za istorijata na makedonskiot narod* [British Documents on the History of the Macedonian Nation]. Vol. 1: 1797-1839, Skopje 1968.

- 3 For the transformation of the provincial administrative system and *timar* system in the late sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, see Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 95.
- 4 For the reasons for the decay of the *timar* system, see İnalçık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation', 288-311.
- 5 The origin and composition of the local troops in Rumelia are explored by Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 27-36.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 7 *Osmanski izvori*, 11.
- 8 İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin merkez ve bahriye teşkilâtı* [The Central and Naval Organisation of the Ottoman State], Ankara 1948, 207.

As a result of the decay of the *timar* system,⁹ the *valis' hases*¹⁰ were considerably diminished and new sources of revenue had to be found. These were mainly new taxes imposed upon the local population, which covered costs for the *valis'* armies and retinues not only during wartime but also during peacetime. These taxes, called *imdad-ı seferiye* and *imdad-ı hazariye* (the former literally meaning 'urgent wartime contributions'),¹¹ were of differing magnitudes depending upon the specific needs. For instance, the size of *imdad-ı seferiye* collected from the *kaza* of Hacıoğlu Pazarcık (present-day Dobrich)¹² was considerably greater than *imdad-ı hazariye*.¹³

In fact, those taxes were part of the new fiscal system introduced in the Ottoman provinces under the name of 'local taxes' (*masarif-i vilayet*).¹⁴ The money necessary for the maintenance of the local administration – for instance, state officials and couriers' accommodation, maintenance of administrative buildings, bridges, roads, *menzils* (post stations) and water-mains, expenses of local officials (*voyvodas*, *şehir kethüdas*, *ayan*, *mutasarrıfs* and *valis*),¹⁵ as well as payments for the *valis'* armies – was entered in special registers, called *tevzi defters*, and was distributed and extracted under the supervision of *kadis* and *ayan*. The leaders of Muslim and non-Muslim communities in a certain *kaza* as well as the leaders of the local guilds also participated in the distribution of taxes.¹⁶ Thus, the system was to some degree decentralised. The only involvement of the central authority in the process of distribution and collection of taxes was ultimate control over the local registers. According to a *ferman* dated 1795, the central authority established a procedure for examining these registers created in the *kazas* in order to protect the *reaya* from abuses which

9 On the closing stages of the *timar* system, see S. Dimitrov, 'Politikata na upravliavashtata varhushka spriamo spahiistvoto prez vtorata polovina na XVIII vek' [The Policy of the Ruling Elite towards the *Sipahis* in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century], *Istoricheski pregled*, 5 (1962), 32-60; idem, 'Kam vaprosa za otmnianeto na spahiiskata sistema v nashite zemi' [About the Abolition of the *Sipahi* System in Our Lands], *Istoricheski pregled*, 6 (1956), 27-58.

10 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 83-84; E. Radushev, *Agrarnite institutsii v Osmanskata imperia prez XVII-XVIII vek* [The Agrarian Institutions in the Ottoman Empire in the Seventeenth-Eighteenth Centuries], Sofia 1995, 54, 87.

11 Radushev claims that the introduction of the new taxes started in 1718: Radushev, *Agrarnite institutsii*, 57.

12 The geographical names and terms are given according to their Turkish version.

13 *Osmanski izvori*, no. 377.

14 On the introduction of the new system in the Ottoman Empire in general, see İnalçık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation', 306, 317-27. For its application in Rumelia, see M. Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen im Osmanischen Reich am Vorabend der Tanzimat: Reformen der Rumelischen Provinzialgouverneure im Gerichtssprengel von Manastir (Bitola) zur Zeit der Herrschaft Sultan Mahmuds II. (1808-39)*, Berlin 1982.

15 *Osmanski izvori*, no. 381; Radushev, *Agrarnite institutsii*, 57; B. McGowan, 'The Age of the *Ayans*, 1699-1812', in H. İnalçık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, Cambridge 1994, 715.

16 For instance, see *kazas' defters* of Manastır and Hacıoğlu Pazarcık in *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 87-95; *Osmanski izvori*, no. 381.

could occur in the process of the registration, distribution and collection of taxes.¹⁷ This control, however, was rather irregular. As a result of this new system, *valis* relied on taxes and food supplies provided by the local population. But the relationship with the *ayan* was extremely critical, because actually governors were dependent on local notables who were responsible for collecting these taxes and supplies.

As compensation for the diminution of the *valis'* *hases*, *mukataas* were given to them as another source for meeting their expenses. Hence, the provincial governors also became involved into the *iltizam* system as *mültezims*.¹⁸

Valis' incomes were augmented further from an additional source, namely illegal taxes and supply of provisions, which were widespread in the Ottoman provinces. The governors forced the *reaya* to meet their expenses during their travels in the province and to provide food. For instance, *zahire bahası* initially was imposed as a supply of grain, which met the daily needs of the governors and their retainers, but later, *valis* started to require enormous amounts of grain and sometimes they demanded payments in cash instead of provisions in kind.¹⁹ A *ferman* of 1789 registered in a *sicil* of Hacıoğlu Pazarcık denounces the abuses of provincial officials and forbids the collection of unlawful impositions and gifts, called *tekâlif-i şakka*. Some of them are listed in it, for example, *kudumiye* (accommodation expenses), *teşriifiye* (welcoming fee), *mefruşat bahası* (fee for accommodation), *zahire bahası* (grain supply).²⁰ There are different reasons for this phenomenon. One of them is the insufficiency of financial resources available to local governors after the diminution of their *hases*. But the widespread corruption in the Empire²¹ and the lack of control from the centre over the provinces also contributed to the *valis'* constant abuse of authority vested in them.

In fact, the provincial governors became one of the (major) factors of abuse of power in the provinces and their malpractices became a constant problem from the seventeenth to the first half of the nineteenth century.²² In particular, the trips of the *valis* around the provinces, which caused

17 Uzunçarşılı, *Merkez ve bahriye teşkilâtı*, 322.

18 A. Abd Al-Rahim and Y. Nagata, 'The Iltizam System in Egypt and Turkey', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 14 (1977), 187-88; Y. Özkaya, *XVIII. yüzyılda Osmanlı kurumları ve Osmanlı toplum yaşantısı* [Ottoman Institutions and Society in the Eighteenth Century], Ankara 1985, 181.

19 *Osmanski izvori*, nos 380 and 382.

20 *Ibid.*, no. 287.

21 The *valis* were forced to increase their incomes because of the presents and bribes they were obliged to give to the Grand Vizier and other officials of the central bureaucracy for every annual appointment. For a comprehensive account of the appointment/promotion procedure, see Uzunçarşılı, *Merkez ve bahriye teşkilâtı*, 150-57, 202. Stanford Shaw also claims that the presents were a serious burden for *valis* which forced them to increase their incomes illegally: S. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807*, Cambridge 1971, 170.

22 These irregular taxes and illegal duties were preserved up to the Tanzimat period, as can be seen from a *ferman* of 1840 which orders their abolition: *Dokumenti za balgarskata istoria* [Documents on Bulgarian History], Sofia 1941, 253.

extra expense for the local population, were considered very destructive and were forbidden during Sultan Selim III's reign.²³ As a matter of fact, *fermans* with quite formal language (repeated phrases and clichés), which condemned officials' abuses, became frequent in *kadı sicils* in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.²⁴ *Valis'* local troops also became a factor of increasing disorder in Rumelia because of their possible involvement in *kırcaıs'* bands.

*

As a result of military and fiscal transformations, governors established close relations not only with the local population but also with *ayan* and, moreover, became dependent on them. First, they were dependent on local notables for recruiting, financing and provisioning troops. Because of their key position and prestige in provincial society, *ayan* became the most convenient agents of such tasks as distribution and collection of taxes, supply of provisions and recruitment of troops. There are numerous orders requiring from *ayan* the recruitment of local troops²⁵ and the execution of certain military tasks.²⁶

As a result of further development of their key position, *ayan* achieved legitimisation of their involvement in the provincial administrative structure, and the *ayanlık*²⁷ became a (semi-)official

23 Stanford Shaw quotes a *ferman* of 1796, which instituted a regional principle of governors' appointments in order to avoid distant journeys of the officials and their retinues. Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 170.

24 See, for instance, *Osmanski izvori*, no. 542; *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 4, 26-28, 29-31; vol. 5, 15, 114-15. It should be mentioned, however, that such a tendency existed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well; see H. İnalçık, 'Adaletnameler', *Türk Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi*, 2/3-4 (1965), 50-145.

25 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 66-68, no. 91; *Osmanski izvori*, nos 368, 374, 378, 397, 399, 468.

26 Evidence for their important position and involvement in local affairs are addressees of the documents, which include *ayan* together with provincial officials such as *kadı*s, *serdars*, *voyvodas*, etc. See documents in Sofia, Vidin, Manastir, Salonica, and Hacıođlu Pazarcık *sicils*.

27 Some studies of *ayanlık*: A. F. Miller, *Mustafa Pasha Bairaktar* [Mustafa Paşa Bayraktar], Moscow 1947; A. Suceşca, *Ajani: Prilog izuchavanju lokalne vlasti u našim zemljama za vrijeme Turaka* [The *Ayan*: Contribution to the Study of Local Authorities in Our Lands in the Time of the Turks], Sarajevo 1965; S. Dimitrov, 'Istorija na edin *ayan*' [The History of an *Ayan*], in *V chest na akad. D. Kosev*, Sofia 1974, 65-79; Mutafchieva, *Kardzhalıisko vreme*; H. İnalçık, 'Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration', in T. Naff and R. Owen (eds), *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, Carbondale 1977, 27-52; Y. Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda âyanlık* [The *Ayan* Institution in the Ottoman Empire], Ankara 1977; idem, 'XVIII. yüzyılın ilk yarısında yerli ailelerin *ayanlıkları* ele geçirişleri ve büyük hanedanlıkların kuruluşu' [The Appropriation of *Ayanlıks* and the Foundation of the Major Dynasties in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century], *Belleten*, 42/168 (1978), 667-723; Y. Nagata, *Materials on the Bosnian Notables*, Tokyo 1979; Y. Özkaya, 'Rumeli'de *ayanlık* ile ilgili bazı belgeler' [Some Documents Relating to the *Ayan* Institution in Rumelia], in *VIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Ankara 11-15 Ekim 1976: Kongreye sunulan bildiriler*, vol. 2, Ankara 1981, 1407-16; McGowan, 'The Age of the *Ayans*', 637-758; Y. Nagata, 'The Role of the *Ayans* in Regional Development during the Pre-Tanzimat Period in Turkey: A Case Study of the Karaosmanođlu Family', in Y. Nagata, *Studies on the Social and Economic History of the Ottoman Empire*, Izmir 1995, 119-33.

post in the provincial administration. The population in each *kaza* elected the principal *ayan*, as a representative of the inhabitants.²⁸ According to Halil İnalçık, the election of an *ayan* was registered for the first time in 1680 and, later, documents signed by *ayan* can be seen in *sicils*.²⁹ Furthermore, the relations between *valis* and local notables increased considerably because of the infiltration of the latter into provincial administration. Because of the *valis*' involvement in numerous military campaigns in the region, there was a need for deputies, *mütesellims*, who would administer the province during the *valis*' absence.³⁰ Those deputies acted as actual governors, as can be seen from *fermans* addressed to *mütesellims* in Sofia.³¹ Consequently, *ayan* were considered convenient agents of these duties because of their ability to control the region instead of *valis*' household personnel, who were regularly appointed as *mütesellims* in the seventeenth century.³² Because of their abilities in controlling the region, some *ayan* also were appointed *voyvodas*, their main task being to collect and manage the revenues of provincial governors.³³

Thus, many functions in local government were undertaken by *ayan* and the importance of Ottoman provincial officials was undermined. Moreover, at the end of the eighteenth century, notables were able to overlook provincial officials, run local government, and impose their domination on their regions. As a consequence of struggles between *ayan*, who tried to expand their domains, a state of disorder spread in Rumelia in the late eighteenth century. For instance, one of the rivalries of local notables in Rumelia was that between Ali Paşa of Yanya (Gk. Ioannina) and

28 The *fermans* for the appointment of *ayan* and the modification of the election procedure can be found in local *sicils*. Because of the importance of the post, numerous abuses in the process of election occurred. For instance, a payment from a candidate to the provincial governor in order to ensure the appointment was a widespread practice (see *Osmanski izvori*, no. 287). That is why the state ordered every appointment to be approved by the Grand Vizier (1765), but the regulation was ignored and the appointment continued to be ratified by the *vali*. The orders issued by the central authorities in the second half of the eighteenth century (1765 and 1779) for an improvement in the situation can be found, for instance, in *sicils* of Salonica: Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za položhenieto', 227-30 and its continuation in vol. 25, 129-30. For a comprehensive description of the transformation of the election/appointment procedure, see İnalçık, 'Centralization and Decentralization', 48-49.

29 *Ibid.*, 46-47.

30 For the appointment of local notables as *mütesellims* see Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti', 53, 59; *Osmanski izvori*, no. 585; McGowan, 'The Age of the *Ayans*', 714.

31 Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti', 18, 20, 26, 34, 49. The duties of a *vali*'s deputy, such as fighting *karcalis* and protection of *reaya*, are stated in a *buyruldu* for appointment, dated 1804, in *ibid.*, 53. On the activity of the *mütesellim* of the Silistra *eyalet*, see *Osmanski izvori*, no. 585.

32 İnalçık, 'Centralization and Decentralization', 35. The *valis*' deputies were appointed by the Sultan on the basis of the governor's proposal (see *Osmanski izvori*, nos 361, 406, 437). This fact can be regarded as evidence for a (personal) connection between the governor and his deputy, based on mutual interest, or dependence of the governor on the provincial government.

33 On the functions of *voyvodas*, see Uzunçarşılı, *Merkez ve bahriye teşkilâtı*, 321. On their abuses in collecting taxes, see *Osmanski izvori*, no. 542.

İsmail Bey, who controlled the area around Siroz (Gk. Serres).³⁴ Ali Paşa also clashed with the Buşatlis in İşkodra (Alb. Shkodër) for domination over Albanian lands.³⁵ Meanwhile, in another part of Rumelia, Osman Pazvantoğlu expanded the area under his control to Berkovitsa³⁶ and reached the centre of Rumelia (Sofia).³⁷

The distribution of lands among *ayan* brought an end to anarchy and set up a new hierarchy in Rumelia. A number of centres of the *ayan*'s domination in Rumelia such as Vidin, İşkodra, Yanya, and Belgrade were established and minor *ayan* became subordinate to them.³⁸ For example, a *ferman*, addressed to janissary commanders, *serdars*, in Rumelia in 1797, reveals the establishment of a network of officials subordinate to Osman Pazvantoğlu in the region around Vidin. According to this account, Osman Pazvantoğlu appointed some of his followers as *voyvodas*, *subaşı*s and *bölikbaşı*s in the adjacent *kazas*.³⁹

Moreover, *kırcalı*s also contributed to the state of disorder in Rumelia.⁴⁰ There are different hypotheses about the origin of the *kırcalı*s. According to A. Miller they were of Anatolian origin, but, on the other hand, Vera Mutafchieva stresses their local Rumelian origin.⁴¹ It is clear, however, that *kırcalı* bands primarily were composed of defectors from the irregular troops which operated in Rumelia. Because of the dissolution of the *timar* system, *valis* could not rely on *sipahis* and manned their armies mainly with local Muslim *reaya*. After a particular military campaign, those peasants did not return to their previous position but tried to preserve their new military status or became *kırcalı*s. Some of the janissaries stationed in the province also contributed to the *kırcalı*'s bands and Albanian bands were also a factor of disorder.⁴² The problem with Albanian bands,

34 There are many documents which recorded this opposition: Y. Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda dağlı isyanları (1791-1808)* [The Mountain Rebellions in the Ottoman Empire (1791-1808)], Ankara 1983, 24, 49, 68, 88, 97, 100, 102; I. Katardzhiev, *Serskata oblast (1780-1879): Ekonomski, politichki i kulturen pregled* [The Region of Serres (1780-1879): Economic, Political and Cultural Review], Skopje 1961; S. Dimitrov, *Sultan Mahmud II i kraiat na enicharite* [Sultan Mahmud II and the End of the Janissaries], Sofia 1993, 77-78.

35 The opposition between the Tepedelenlis and Buşatlis is comprehensively recorded by G. L. Arsh, *Albania i Epir v kontse XVIII-nachale XIX veka* [Albania and Epirus at the End of the Eighteenth-Beginning of the Nineteenth Century], Moscow 1963.

36 Hakkı Mehmed Paşa was appointed with the special assignment of releasing Berkovitsa from Osman Pazvantoğlu. The *ferman* for his appointment can be found in *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 59-64.

37 Jordan Ivanov claims that Sofia was attacked by Pazvantoğlu's forces: I. Ivanov, 'Sofia prez tursko vreme' [Sofia during Turkish Times], in *Jubileina kniga za grad Sofia* [Jubilee Book for the Town of Sofia], Sofia 1928, 39.

38 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 147; V. Grachev, *Balkanskie vladenia Osmanskoi imperii na rubezhe XVIII-XIX vv.* [The Balkan Domains of the Ottoman Empire at the Turn of the Eighteenth-Nineteenth Centuries], Moscow 1990, 77.

39 *Hristomatia po istoria na Balgaria* [Reader on Bulgarian History], vol. 3, Sofia 1982, 284.

40 For documents on *kırcalı*s, see Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*; Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda dağlı isyanları*.

41 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 34-36; Miller, *Mustafa Pasha*, 113-14.

42 There is evidence in Manastır's *sicils* that local *ayan* used Albanian soldiers in their rivalries: *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 20.

which organised frequent raids and plundered Rumelian territories, appears in numerous documents from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and persists in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴³ Bands of *kırcaks* controlled roads, attacked settlements and finally spread disorder in the region. Moreover, they were connected with *ayan* and sometimes became the core of their own military troops.⁴⁴

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Subsequently, at the end of the eighteenth century, *valis* appointed by the state were not able to impose their authority over Rumelia because they could not rely on their substitute provincial officials and their armies. The administration simply was not able to enforce its authority. *Kadis* and *voyvodas* were isolated and tried just to keep their power in a small region or were forced to accept the power of the local *ayan*,⁴⁵ who collected taxes, maintained troops and governed the area. Because of insufficiency of military power *valis* employed irregular troops as part of their armies, thus using elements of disorder against the disorder itself.⁴⁶ As a result, massive desertion can be seen, for example, during the war with Russia and Austria in 1787-92.⁴⁷ Local armies were supported by troops from Anatolian provinces,⁴⁸ which is also evidence for the inability of Rumelia governors to manage the situation in the province.

Valis were not able even to attain to the centre of the *eyalet* and preferred to settle in other towns of Rumelia. There are several cases which prove that this situation was typical for the late eighteenth century. For instance, Hakkı Paşa, who was appointed *vali* of Rumelia in 1796, settled in Edirne and organised his actions against *kırcaks* from there.⁴⁹ In 1797, the *vali*, Mustafa Paşa, was in conflict with the *ayan* of Sofia and also was not able to enter the town.⁵⁰ It was officially decided that he should settle in Filibe (Bulg. Plovdiv) and rule the province from there.⁵¹ In addition, Hasan Paşa, who was appointed *vali* of Rumelia in 1799, even settled outside the province, at Braila.⁵² Obviously, governors preferred to settle in more secure places which were not touched

43 Tivchev and Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za polozhenieto', no. 1, 71-73; Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za polozhenieto', no. 1, 71, no. 22, no. 23, 72, no. 24, 75, no. 28, 77, no. 30, no. 31. Vera Mutafchieva also claims, on the basis of a vast number of documents, that the problem with Albanian gangs appeared regularly in the sultanic *fermans* from the 1770s: Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 255.

44 For the process of development of *kırcak* bands, see Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*.

45 *Ibid.*, 126.

46 *Ibid.*, 161.

47 *Ibid.*, 72.

48 In 1797 the *vali* of Anatolia, Alo Paşa, appeared together with his troops to defeat *kırcaks* in Rumelia: *Ibid.*, 163.

49 *Ibid.*, 156.

50 *Ibid.*, 162.

51 Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti', 42-43.

52 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 217.

by the chaos in Rumelia. Probably, some of them preferred to remain in the areas of their previous positions or, as in the case of Ali Paşa of Yanya and İbrahim Paşa Buşatlı, they felt secure in the areas under their own control.⁵³

On the other hand, there were certain *valis* who took advantage of the situation of complete anarchy and abused their power in the province.⁵⁴ There are numerous cases which show *valis* of Rumelia acting against the central authorities or neglecting orders of the Sultan. Sometimes pashas who were dismissed refused to leave the province and remained there as rebels, as, for instance, Hakkı Paşa did in 1802.⁵⁵ Some of them imposed their authority on a region: for instance, in 1797, Alo Paşa, *vali* of Anatolia, came with his troops to fight the *kircahs* but settled in Edirne, enforced his control on the region, imposed illegal taxes and neglected the central authority's orders.⁵⁶ Occasionally, they even formed alliances with a rebellious *ayan*, like Abdi Paşa and Gürçi Paşa.⁵⁷

During the period of disorder, the central authorities focused on some crucial problems and appointed *valis* with particular assignments mentioned in the *fermans*. According to sources, the most important mission in the period in question was the overthrow of Osman Pazvantoğlu. Several *valis* were appointed with this assignment and, perhaps, some of them were dismissed because of failures in the military campaigns against Pazvantoğlu. Hacı Osman Paşa was entrusted in 1801 with the task of freeing Berkovitsa, which was under Pazvantoğlu's control.⁵⁸ Obviously he did not succeed because in March 1801 Hacı Mehmed Hakkı Paşa (former *vali* of Bosnia) was appointed with the mission of commanding an operation against Osman Pazvantoğlu.⁵⁹ It was declared in a *ferman* that he was appointed for a period of three years, which were extended later (in July 1801) to five,⁶⁰ but he was soon dismissed (in March 1802),⁶¹ deprived of his rank⁶² and sent into exile to the island of Sakız (Gk. Chios).⁶³ It was claimed that Ali Paşa of Yanya was also appoi-

53 Grachev, *Balkanskije vladena*, 9.

54 Miller, *Mustafa Pasha*, 105.

55 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 275.

56 *Ibid.*, 173.

57 *Ibid.*, 272-73.

58 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 43-44.

59 The *ferman* for his appointment is registered in Salonica's and Manastir's *sicils*: Tivchev and Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za položienieto', no. 4, 76; *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 59-64, no. 79. Mutafchieva also mentions the appointment on the basis of documents from the Oriental Department, National Library, Sofia: Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 251-52.

60 A *ferman* for his re-appointment and the extension of the period of government is registered in *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 66-68, no. 91.

61 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 275.

62 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 49, no. 132.

63 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 275.

nted (about 1802) with the mission of defeating Osman Pazvantoğlu.⁶⁴ Obviously, the central authority expected to oppose those two powerful separatists in Rumelia to one another in order to weaken their power, or even to have one of them defeated.

Other *fermans* ordered more general missions, such as the defeat of troublemakers or highwaymen (*dağlı eşkıyası*) and protection of *reaya*. Such were the *fermans* of Abdi Paşa in 1785,⁶⁵ Hacı Osman Paşa in 1801,⁶⁶ Mehmed Paşa in 1803,⁶⁷ and İbrahim Paşa Buşatlı in 1804.⁶⁸ Obviously, formulations of the tasks became clichés used frequently in the *fermans* for appointments of the *valis* of Rumelia. It is difficult to assess, however, how effective Rumelia governors were. On the contrary, the shortness of the periods of employment in the region proves their inability even to have a chance of influencing and improving the situation.

Some historians who have examined the period argue that the chaos reached its peak around 1802.⁶⁹ Perhaps the fact that two of the most powerful separatists (Ali Paşa of Yanya and İbrahim Paşa Buşatlı) were appointed successively as *valis* of Rumelia at this period with the mission of protecting the *reaya* and defeating the bandits confirms the peak of disorder and helplessness of the central authority. Or it was again an attempt to oppose powerful separatists to one another and make them weaker by means of provoking competition for the *vali*'s post.

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The protection of passes also turned out to be a special task for the *valis* of Rumelia in the period in question. In order to check the situation in the province, *valis* had not only to defeat *kurcalis* in Rumelia but also to block the Albanian raids into Rumelian lands, and prevent contacts between gangs.⁷⁰ As a result, the protection of the passes emerged as a special task, which later turned into a separate post. The *derbendcibaşı* (commander of the passes) was responsible mainly for the passes in Albania, but the *valis* of Rumelia organised protection around Sofia and Manastır (Bitola), and later Albanian notables were deprived of the position of *derbendcibaşı* and the post was closely attached to that of the Rumelia *vali*.

64 Ibid., 274-76. Some studies have mentioned the appointment of Ali Paşa as *vali* of Rumelia: Dimitrov, *Sultan Mahmud II*, 81; Arsh, *Albania i Epir*, 206. There are also *buyrulduş*, issued by him as provincial governor. See, for instance, Tivchev and Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za polozhenieto', no. 1, 75-76, and also the *ferman* for his re-appointment in *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 2, 5-6, no. 55.

65 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 63.

66 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 43-44, no. 50.

67 Ibid., 122-26.

68 Ibid., vol. 2, 60-62, no. 30.

69 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 288; Miller, *Mustafa Pasha*, 99.

70 Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti', 22-23.

Initially, the post of *derbendcibaşı* was given to local notables or, in the Albanian lands, *mutasarrıfs* supported by local Albanian troops.⁷¹ Actually, it seems that Albanian lands were regarded as a separate area, or at least quite distinct from Rumelia. The differentiation of the region was also caused because of the domination of local leaders who were much more powerful than their counterparts in other regions. Moreover, the *sancaks* in the region were defined on the basis of borders of the domains of Albanian notables and local notables ruled the region as legitimate governors, *mutasarrıfs*, even in earlier periods.⁷² These realms were hereditary and old Albanian families became local ruling dynasties.⁷³ For example, Ali Paşa's sons became governors of Thessaly, Morea and Karlıeli,⁷⁴ and the region of Prizren was governed by the Rotula family from the late eighteenth century until the 1830s.⁷⁵ Furthermore, fiscal detachment can also be seen as evidence for the Albanians' special status. For example, according to a document of 1819 dealing with the *vali*'s *saray* expenses, met by all the *sancaks* in Rumelia, the Albanian *sancaks* were separated from the others and probably the sums were extracted by the local governors, not by Ottoman officials as in the other *sancaks*.⁷⁶

According to Alexander Stojanovski, the position of *derbendcibaşı* appeared in the late eighteenth century and persisted until the nineteenth century (probably until the Tanzimat period).⁷⁷ Soon the institution became a source of wealth and power. First of all, the groups of *sekbans* were expanded and used to establish control over these territories. Second, illegal taxes for the maintenance of the troops were extracted from the local population,⁷⁸ which increased the financial resources of those persons who occupied the post. This tendency intensified in the period between 1787⁷⁹ and 1820,⁸⁰

71 C. Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda derbend teşkilâtı* [The Organisation of *Derbends* in the Ottoman Empire], Istanbul 1967, 133.

72 *EF*, vol. 1, s.v. 'Arnawutluk', 654 (H. İnalçık); *Britanski dokumenti*, 186, no. 20.

73 Arsh, *Albania i Epir*, 40.

74 *EF*, vol. 1, s.v. 'Arnawutluk', 650-58.

75 *EF*, vol. 8, s.v. 'Prizren', 337-41 (M. Kiel).

76 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 4, 35-37, no. 185.

77 A. Stojanovski, *Dervendzhistvoto vo Makedonija* [The Institution of *Derbendcis* in Macedonia], Skopje 1974, 71; Orhonlu, *Derbend teşkilâtı*, 71.

78 *Britanski dokumenti*, 186, no. 20.

79 John Vasdravellis claims that the post was given to Ali Paşa in 1783 with the special task of coping with *armatoloi* and klephts in the region (J. Vasdravellis, *The Greek Struggle for Independence: The Macedonians in the Revolution of 1821*, Thessaloniki 1968, 27), while S. Dimitrov points to 1787 as the year of the appointment of Ali Paşa to the post (Dimitrov, *Sultan Mahmud II*, 141).

80 Dimitrov, *Sultan Mahmud II*, 141. Ali Paşa was deprived of the post during the military campaign, which aimed at restoring the Ottoman administration in the region ruled by him. Subsequently, Ali Paşa and his sons were removed from the other official positions which they held as well. See Dimitrov, *Sultan Mahmud II*, 141-48; Arsh, *Albania and Epir*, 312.

when the post was occupied by Ali Paşa of Yanya. In fact, the position of *derbendcibaşı* gave him the opportunity to extend his influence over the Albanian territories.⁸¹

It is not clear when the post was given to Rumelia *valis* and how it was decided that it should be part of their functions in the province, but after the defeat of Ali Paşa in 1822, an almost constant connection between the *derbendcibaşılık* and the *valilik* was established. Actually, the position of *derbendcibaşılık* was given to the *vali* of Rumelia Hurşid Ahmed Paşa, who acted as commander-in-chief of the campaign against Ali Paşa, even before the defeat of the Yanya ruler. In some *fermans* addressed to Hurşid Ahmed Paşa in May and June 1821 he was already styled not only as former Grand Vizier and commander-in-chief (*serasker*) but also as *derbendcibaşı*.⁸² The position became almost an attachment to the post of Rumelia *vali*.⁸³

Moreover, the appearance of the post is connected also with the dissolution of the system of *derbendci* villages in the passes.⁸⁴ There were two simultaneous processes: first of all equalisation in status of *derbendcis* with the other *reaya* was realised. Because of the increasing need for money, the state deprived *derbendcis* of their privileged status and forced them to pay the regular taxes.⁸⁵ Second, there was a process of withdrawal from the *derbendci* institution. Because of the increasing disorder, which made the post dangerous, *derbendcis* refused to perform their tasks and left passes unguarded. A document recorded in a *sicil* of Hacıoğlu Pazarçık reads: "In the old times, some villages were exempted from taxes in return for the service that they carried out. Be-

81 On the development of the institution of the post until its occupation by Ali Paşa, see the report of the British diplomat in Salonica, J. P. Morier, of 30 June 1804 in *Britanski dokumenti*, 186, no. 20. There is a document, however, which contradicts the view that Ali Paşa was the sole occupant of the post of *derbendcibaşı*. According to a *ferman* of 1797 registered in the Sofia *sicils*, İsmail Bey Sirozli, the main opponent of Ali Paşa, was the commander of the *derbends* (the term is translated by D. Ihchiev as *nazır*, not as *derbendcibaşı* in his 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti', 51).

82 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 4, 60-61, 66-67.

83 For instance, in July 1825, Mehmed Reşid Paşa was styled "acting Rumelia *vali*, *mutasarrıf* of the *sancaks* of Yanya and Delvino, *derbendcibaşı*, and *serasker* with autonomous authority"; in December 1829, Mehmed Selim Paşa was styled "Rumelia *vali*, *mutasarrıf* of the attached *sancaks* of Yanya and Delvino, *derbendcibaşı*, and former Grand Vizier". In *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 4, 108, no. 50; vol. 5, 47-48, no. 76. Moreover, there are two *fermans* addressed to Reşid Mehmed Paşa which can be used as evidence for the attachment of the *derbendcibaşılık* to the Rumelian *valis*. The first, dated 23 August 1823, announced the appointment of the Rumelian *vali*, Mehmed Paşa, as *derbendcibaşı*. The second (December 1824) re-appointed Reşid Mehmed Paşa as Rumelian *vali* and gave him some additional posts, such as *serasker* of Rumelia, *mutasarrıf* of Yanya and Delvino and *derbendcibaşı*. See Tivchev and Kaludova, 'Dokumenti za polozhenieto', no. 1, 79; no. 4, 81-83.

84 On the history of the institution of the *derbendcis*, see Stojanovski, *Dervendzhistvoto*; Orhonlu, *Derbend teşkilâtı*.

85 According to Stojanovski, the process of the equalisation of the *derbendcis* with the rest of the *reaya* occurred in the seventeenth century simultaneously with the growth of *avarız* taxes: Stojanovski, *Dervendzhistvoto*, 120.

cause recently they do not perform any service but are exempted from taxes... the exclusion is cancelled and their registrations are erased".⁸⁶

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Another modification of the Rumelian administration triggered by the disorder in the late eighteenth century was the transfer of the provincial centre from Sofia to Manastir. The removal of the provincial centre from Sofia was a consequence of the situation in Rumelia. As a result of the disorder prevalent in the late eighteenth century, the more advantageous geographical position of Manastir was preferred as the seat of the governor over Sofia, which was in decline as an administrative, military and economic centre. This shift may be attributed to several factors. First, it has to be pointed out that Sofia was not well protected and was attacked several times by *kurcali* bands during the period of turmoil. Consequently, the town was not safe as a *vali*'s residence and some of the governors settled in other towns inside (or outside) the province. Second, because of its strategic position in relation to some problematic regions (Albanian and later Greek lands), Manastir started to operate as a military and governmental centre. It is not clear when exactly this transfer of the provincial centre happened. According to Michael Ursinus, who examined the social and economic history of Manastir, the centre of the province moved from Sofia to Manastir at the end of the eighteenth century. He asserts that the *sicils* of the *kadı* court of Manastir witness the development of Manastir first into a residence of the *valis* of Rumelia (in the course of the eighteenth century) and then into the official seat of the provincial government of the *eyalet*.⁸⁷ Obviously, there was a development of Manastir's importance from a military centre to the *vali*'s residence and the *eyalet*'s administrative centre, and as late as 1836 it became the capital, organised in the European manner.

However, for a period of time Sofia remained and was also used as the administrative centre of the province, which is obvious from the numerous *fermans* addressed to the Rumelia governor and registered in Sofia *sicils*.⁸⁸ Moreover, it is laid down in a *ferman* dated 1797 that the *vali* appointed should move immediately to Sofia.⁸⁹ Therefore, for the period covering the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Rumelia can be seen as a province divided into two regions with their own centres, Sofia and Manastir. Ursinus claims that Manastir was "the administrative centre of the western part of the Paşa *sancak* of Rumelia".⁹⁰ This statement is acceptable if Manastir

86 *Osmanski izvori*, no. 542.

87 *EF*, vol. 6, s.v. 'Manastir', 371-72 (M. Ursinus).

88 Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti'.

89 *Ibid.*, 40.

90 M. Ursinus, 'Za razdavaneto na pravosadie ot edno provintsialno upravlenie: rumeliiskiat divan v kraia na XVII-nachaloto na XVIII vek' [On the Administration of Justice by a Provincial Government: The Rumelia *Divan*

is considered as the centre for military campaigns against brigand bands, powerful notables in Albanian lands, and Greek rebels, and Sofia is regarded as a base for operations against Osman Pazvantoğlu and Serbian insurgents.⁹¹ The transformation means not only relocation of the geographical centre of Rumelia, but also re-organisation of the administration in the province. Therefore, it can be said that during the late eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century the situation was relatively complicated because of the existence of two towns which were used as governmental seats and residences of the provincial governor.

Let us then follow briefly the transformations in the position of both towns. During the late eighteenth century, Sofia was ravaged by the *kırcals* and seriously affected by the general turmoil.⁹² The town was attacked by troops of Osman Pazvantoğlu⁹³ and Kara Feyzi, one of the mightiest *kırcalı* leaders.⁹⁴ Around 1800 the central authority lost control over the territory between Nish and Sofia and the area was ruled by *kırcalı* gang leaders.⁹⁵ The continuing wars with Russia and Austria also affected the town and caused economic damage. Continual demands for money and provisions and the movement of troops in the region caused devastation to the local population.⁹⁶

As noted above, because of the disorder and the *kırcals*' domination in Rumelia, the governors were not able to reach the centre of the province, Sofia.⁹⁷ Moreover, some of them preferred to reside in more secure places, such as Ali Paşa Tepedelenli, who was appointed governor of Rumelia about 1802 but remained in Yanya, the centre of his own realms.⁹⁸ In addition, official approval of this shift of the governor's residence is affirmed by a *ferman* of appointment of Mehmed Paşa as Rumelia *vali* in 1803.⁹⁹ According to the document, the *vali* himself had to determine a place for his residence.¹⁰⁰

in the Late Seventeenth–Early Eighteenth Centuries], in R. Gradeva (ed.), *Sadbata na musulmanskite obshtnosti na Balkanite* [The Fate of the Muslim Communities in the Balkans], Sofia 2001, 19.

91 See page 12 in this volume for the special tasks ordered in appointment *fermans*.

92 B. Lory, 'Deux villes aux destins parallèles, croisés, divergents: Sofia et Manastır', *EB*, 1999/3-4, 114; Ivanov, 'Sofia prez tursko', 39.

93 *Ibid.*

94 *EF*, vol. 9, s.v. 'Sofia', 703 (S. Ivanova).

95 Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 251.

96 Ivanov, 'Sofia prez tursko', 44.

97 See examples on page 11 in this volume.

98 Ivanov, 'Sofia prez tursko', 39.

99 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 125.

100 The situation was quite complicated and unstable; for example, according to another appointment *ferman*, issued two years earlier, in 1801, the *vali* of Rumelia, Hacı Osman Paşa, had to stay in Sofia. See *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 2, 43-44, no. 50.

The collapse of Sofia continued in a later period. As a result of the Russo-Ottoman war in 1828-29, Russian troops reached Sofia and occupied it.¹⁰¹ This event caused some damage in the town and diminution of its population due to the fact that a large part of the Muslim population left the area.¹⁰² Later, in 1832, when the anarchy was considered to be terminated, Mustafa Paşa Buşatlı and Ali Bey, son of the same Kara Feyzi who attacked the town in the late eighteenth century, ravaged the town again.¹⁰³

Moreover, the economic importance of Sofia also diminished. This was because of the establishment of the border between Serbia and the Ottoman Empire in the early nineteenth century and the imposition of new custom duties, which affected the trade on the Via Militaris (from Istanbul through Filibe, Sofia, and Belgrade to Western Europe).¹⁰⁴ As a result of the new regulations, Sofia lost its importance as a connection between the Serbian lands and Rumelia.

All these events triggered the decline of the town's importance as an economic, military and administrative centre.

Manastır, on the other hand, was not seriously affected by the *kırcalı* raids and remained in good condition. Some Albanians and Vlachs moved from Moschopolis to Manastır in order to escape from the bandits' attacks.¹⁰⁵ It is stated that Manastır was spared from the demands of Ali Paşa Tepedelenli and İsmail Bey Sirozlı as well.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, the town became an important military centre, where the Rumelia *vali* assembled and organised his army during military campaigns in the region. For instance, in 1804 the Rumelia governor, İbrahim Paşa Buşatlı, spent the winter in Manastır preparing an operation against *kırcalıs*.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, the threat by Albanian bands against Rumelian territories caused the *vali*'s deputy to settle in Manastır, charged with controlling the region, where he helped local officials to cope with disorder.¹⁰⁸ Later on, Manastır preserved its military importance and became a centre

101 The event is recorded in Serbian documents as well. See the correspondence of Prince Milosh Obrenovich in *Gradzha na istoriu bugarskog naroda iz arhiva Srbije* [Documents on the History of the Bulgarian Nation in the Serbian Archives]. Vol. 1: 1820-1856, ed. K. Dzhambazovski, Belgrade 1987, 12-13, no. 13.

102 The Russian occupation is registered in the prayer book of the Kremikov monastery. See *Pisahme da se znae: Pripiski i letopisi* [We Wrote to Be Known: Chronicles and Notes], Sofia 1984, 145; M. Kiel, 'Urban Development in Bulgaria in the Turkish Period: The Place of Turkish Architecture in the Process', *IJTS*, 4/2 (1989), 120.

103 The plundering of the town by Ali Bey is recorded in April 1831 in the four-language lexicon of Zachary Ikonovich in *Pisahme da se znae*, 147; Kiel, 'Urban Development', 120.

104 *Ibid.*; Lory, 'Deux villes', 14.

105 In the eighteenth century, Moschopolis developed as a cultural and economic centre but was attacked and considerably damaged by Albanians in 1769 and 1788. Ali Paşa Tepedelenli finally destroyed the town in the nineteenth century. See M. Cohen, 'Monastır: Oasis of Civilization, 1839-1863', *TSAB*, 24/2 (2000), 3-22.

106 *Ibid.*

107 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 2, 62, no. 32.

108 Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen*, 139.

for campaigns against Ali Paşa Tepedelenli and Greek revolutionaries. Two *buyuruldus*, dated 14 April 1820 and recorded in the *sicils* of Manastır, are evidence for the preparation of the operation against Ali Paşa. According to the documents, the Rumelia *vali*, Hurşid Ahmed Paşa, requested the repairing of roads in the *kaza* of Manastır and the preparation of *konaks* (rooms, places) for his army during his journey from Sofia to Manastır.¹⁰⁹

As noted above, Manastır became capital of Rumelia, organised in the European manner, in 1836.¹¹⁰ It was a step further in the development of provincial government, because some new institutions, influenced by the trend of modernisation in the Empire, were introduced in the town. For example, a fire station, hospital, prison, and barracks for the army were established. The town was organised in a modern urban planning mode and new (European) architecture made its appearance.¹¹¹

During several decades from the late eighteenth century till 1836, Sofia and Manastır acted simultaneously as centres of Rumelia as will be obvious from the details given above. Consequently, Rumelian administration was organised around two centres and *valis* appointed two persons who acted as their deputies as well. These were a *kaymakam* in Manastır and a *mütesellim* in Sofia, who controlled those two regions and had their own administrative bodies.¹¹² According to the documents, they were military commanders of the local troops and maintained order in the province, but they also operated as administrative officials while the governor was absent from the provincial seat.¹¹³

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The reign of disorder was fomented by the central authorities' acts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the fact that large prerogatives in local government were given to the local *ayan*, and the *valis* were not only controlled but dependent on them in terms of collecting local revenues and taxes, recruiting troops, etc. Consequently, the governors' power in Rumelia was extremely limited, while local notables controlled large areas and clashed among themselves, which produced a state of chaos at the end of the eighteenth century. This situation seriously affected the state of the local Rumelian administration and generated several characteristics of its organisation.

109 *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 4, 47-48.

110 Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen*, 143.

111 For Manastır's development see Lory, 'Deux villes'; Cohen, 'Monastır'.

112 For example, there are several *buyuruldus* for *kaymakams*' appointments recorded in the Manastır *sicils*: *Turski dokumenti*, vol. 1, 35, 37; vol. 2, 13, 57, 79.

113 For the *mütesellims*' functions and prerogatives, see documents in the *sicils* of Sofia: Ihchiev, 'Turski darzhavni dokumenti', 20-21, 26-27, 34, 49, 52, 53, and 59.

The governors were not able to administer the province but operated in limited areas around the centres (Manastir and Sofia), or even governed the province from outside. The centre of the province itself was also affected by *kırcalı* attacks and general insecurity. Therefore, it gradually moved from Sofia, which was attacked and ruined by *ayan* troops and *kırcalı* raids, to Manastir, which appeared to be not only a more secure place but also a more important base for the *valis'* military campaigns in the region. This transformation of the provincial capital also caused a re-assessment of Sofia's importance not only as a military and administrative, but also as an economic centre in the region.

Probably, the *valis'* deputies, *kaymakams* and *mütesellims*, who were appointed in Manastir and Sofia, were responsible for the day-to-day administration of the province and coping with disorder in a certain region, while in the period in question the governors themselves acted more often as military commanders. The situation led to the allocation of some new functions and prerogatives to the *valis*, which later turned into special posts. The fact that the *valis'* deputies were chosen from among the local notables also contributed to decentralisation of the province and limitation of the *valis'* power, since they were a part of the local people, while the *valis* were outsiders who did not stay for a long time in the province and did not have real scope to affect the situation. Moreover, the *valis* could not rely on the lower officials in the province, such as *kadis*, *voyvodas* and *nazırs*, because they were either isolated or turned into rebels. The local troops were also untrustworthy because they were recruited from among local Muslims, frequently included rebellious elements, and were hired mainly by local *ayan*, not by the *valis'* officials.

Thus, in the late eighteenth century, the local notables became not only powerful lords in Rumelia who controlled the situation by means of their military power, but successfully infiltrated different levels of official provincial administration such as the offices of *voyvodas*, *kaymakams* and *mütesellims*, and even *valis*, and formally became state officials and representatives of the Sublime Porte. Meanwhile, the state officials appointed by the central government lost their influence and power in the province.

It seems that the *valis* just kept their position in the province, in order to balance one *ayan* against another and try to engage some of them who were considered loyal to the state in military operations against the others, who eventually appeared to be their enemies. It is true that the encouragement of competition among separatists was considered as one of the main responses of the Porte to disorder in Rumelia. Moreover, remarkably enough, some of the major separatists in Rumelia were appointed governors in the early nineteenth century, a fact which can be considered evidence for the incapacity of the central government to deal with the situation there.

WALLACHIA AND MOLDAVIA FROM THE OTTOMAN JURIDICAL AND POLITICAL VIEWPOINT, 1774-1829

*Viorel Panaite**

The juridical nature of the relations of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia with the Ottoman centre has been the main theme of Romanian historiography concerning Ottoman affairs. Some researchers have accepted only a *de facto* relation affected constantly by abuses.¹ This assertion comes into conflict with a large spectrum of juridical, political and administrative sources which prove the existence of a *de jure* status of the Romanian Principalities within the *pax ottomanica* system.

Romanian contributions on this topic have been obsessed with proving that the Romanian Principalities enjoyed a superior status in comparison with the Balkan countries. In order to fulfil this aim, several concepts have been invented – sometimes improperly and equivocally – to describe the status of the Principalities, such as ‘subject states’, ‘dependent states’, ‘vassal states’, ‘autonomous states’, ‘effective dependence’, ‘Ottoman domination’, ‘autonomy’, etc.

The concepts of ‘vassalage’ and ‘autonomy’ deserve special treatment. Most historians and jurists have defined the relations between tribute-paying princes and sultans from the European juridical and political point of view, seeing them as a vassal-suzerain relationship. In this respect, we must emphasise two observations. On the one hand, the concepts of ‘vassal’ and ‘suzerain’ were used belatedly to define the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the Romanian Principalities, i.e., especially in eighteenth and nineteenth-century European official documents, narrative writings, and translations of Ottoman documents.² As a matter of fact, Western histori-

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1 For instance, L. P. Marcu, ‘Idei despre stat si drept în opera lui Dimitrie Cantemir’ [Ideas on State and Law in Dimitrie Cantemir’s Works], *Studii si cercetari juridice*, 3 (1973), 497.

2 Moreover, in Western Europe this medieval notion would not have been used in nineteenth-century diplomatic terminology, except for defining the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria in the years 1878-1909 and

ans and jurists imposed the ‘vassal states’ idiom especially to characterise the political status of the Danubian Principalities with regard to the Porte in the nineteenth century. It was a formula complementary to the notion of suzerainty, defining the relation of dependency between a stronger state and a weaker one.³ According to Arthur de Claparède, secretary of the Swiss legation in Vienna and author of a work on diplomatic law, the ‘nominal vassalage status’ applied to the Danubian Principalities was defined by the fact that the state was subject but *de facto* sovereign, possessing the rights of concluding peace and of waging war, of negotiating and of being represented in foreign countries by a legation.⁴ The next step was the use of these terms to depict the power relations of the preceding centuries. Romanian historians adopted, in their turn, the concepts of ‘vassalage’ and ‘suzerainty’ to define the relationship between sultans and voivodas, without uniformity of chronology or content.⁵ It must be noted that these concepts were inappropriate to the Ottoman world. As a matter of fact, before the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829, one cannot find in the Ottoman documents an equivalent to the Western term ‘suzerainty’. It was only after 1829 that this term was abundantly used in the translation of the official Ottoman documents into the European languages.⁶

between Great Britain and South Africa. See J. L. Brierly, *The Law of Nations: An Introduction to the International Law of Peace*, 6th ed., Oxford 1963, 133-36 (1st ed.: 1928). Other manuscripts from the Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerned the vassal provinces and countries of the Ottoman Empire: *Mémoires et documents divers sur les provinces et sur les pays vassaux de l'Empire ottoman: originaux, copies et imprimés des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles sur la période de 1700 à 1839* (AMAE, *Mémoires et documents*, Tome 13); *Mémoires et documents sur la Moldavie et la Valachie: minutes, originaux, copies et imprimés du XIXe siècle sur la période de 1825 à 1855* (AMAE, *Mémoires et documents*, Tome 48).

- 3 In this respect, Henry Wheaton spoke about “the Principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia and Serbia, under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Porte and the protectorate of Russia”. H. Wheaton, *Commentaire sur les éléments du droit international et sur l'histoire des progrès du droit des gens*, vol. 3, Leipzig 1873, 36.
- 4 A. de Claparède, *Essai sur le droit de représentation diplomatique d'après le droit international moderne*, Geneva 1875, 113.
- 5 For instance, some of them came to ‘Westernise’ the political status of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia by adopting the notion of vassalage paradoxically for the period after 1538, a stage in which in fact the usual Ottoman practices had begun to penetrate the Danubian territories massively. Moreover, by the stages of the relationship between the Porte and the two tributary Principalities being defined first according to the Ottoman criteria and terms (for instance, tributaries) and then according to the medieval Western ones, i.e., vassals, an ambiguous image was created. See G. Zagorit, ‘Stabilirea suzeranitatii turcesti în Moldova; Cu argumente ca prima capitulatie atribuita lui Bogdan III a fost facuta de Stefan cel Mare la 1497’ [The Establishment of Turkish Suzerainty over Moldavia; with Evidence that the First Capitulation Considered to be Granted to Bogdan III Was Really Concluded by Stephen the Great in 1497], *Convorbiri Literare*, 48/7-8 (1914), 710-28; N. A. Constantinescu, *Inceputurile si stabilirea suzeranitatii turcesti în Moldova* [The Beginning and the Establishment of Turkish Suzerainty over Moldavia], Bucharest 1914.
- 6 For instance, in the French translation of the *ferman* of 24 October 1866 which confirmed Prince Carol of Hohenzollern and imposed on him the duty of observing the Ottoman suzerainty over the Unified Principalities as a part of the Ottoman Empire, the concept of ‘suzeraineté’ is ubiquitous: “A respecter dans leur intégrité mes droits de

Numerous tributary or non-tributary regions in the Ottoman Empire enjoyed larger or more limited self-government, depending on historical, geographical, political, diplomatic, and military circumstances. The notion of 'autonomy' was a creation of modern historians and jurists to define this reality. No serious specialist could contest the autonomy of Wallachia and Moldavia. Yet, at the same time, it is necessary to emphasise that this autonomy could exist only within another state, namely within the Ottoman Empire, and not outside it.⁷

It is important to emphasise that there was no contradiction between the terms 'tributary', 'protection', 'vassalage', and 'autonomy'. One can say that they were complementary, describing the same reality from different points of view. The notion of 'tributary' defines the juridical and political status from the perspective of the voivodas' duties and that of the 'protectorate' characterises the same status from the point of view of the Porte's responsibilities. 'Vassalage' and 'autonomy' describe the two aspects as a whole, the latter meaning in fact the protection that the Sultans had undertaken as their responsibility in return for the infidels' accepting to pay them a tribute.

In my opinion, the suitable method for finding and suggesting a proper terminology for the juridical and political status of Wallachia and Moldavia within the *pax ottomanica* is to return to the sources and not to invent other notions beyond them. After that, it is necessary to approach the subject not from a nationalistic political perspective but from the vantage point of Islamic law as practised and amended by the Ottoman legislators and rulers. In this paper, I am intending, first, to present the juridical bases of the political status of Wallachia and Moldavia (called *Eflak ve Boğdan voyvodalıkları*, or *Memleketeyn* in the Ottoman documents of the years 1774-1829), and second, to emphasise the position of the two countries within the system of the *pax ottomanica*, according to the Ottoman juridical, administrative and political terminology.

Nizam, Ahdnames, 'Capitulations'

The status of the Romanian Principalities between 1774 and 1829 was based on the following two fundamental sources:

a. Documents regulating the internal affairs of the Empire, such as imperial decrees (*hatt-ı şerif, ferman, sened*) and law-codes (*kanunname*).

suzeraineté sur les Principautés-Unies qui font partie intégrante de mon Empire, dans les limites fixées par les stipulations des anciennes Conventions et par le Traité de Paris de 1856". See G. Noradounghian, *Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'Empire ottoman*, vol. 3, Paris 1897, 258. This *ferman* was granted after the Grand Vizier Ali Paşa's notice of 19 October 1866 to Prince Carol, which included the conditions of his sanction as the hereditary prince of the Unified Principalities, and after Prince Carol's affirmative answer of 10 October 1866.

7 N. H. Biegman, *The Turco-Ragusan Relationship According to the Firmans of Murad III (1575-1595) Extant in the State Archives of Dubrovnik*, The Hague and Paris 1967, 29-45.

b. Peace treaties and agreements (*ahdname-i hümayun*) concluded between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, or Austria.

A third source was imposed step by step by the Moldo-Wallachian nobles in the diplomatic milieu of that time. It is the so-called ‘capitulations’, apocryphal texts with privileges established in the eighteenth century by local *boyars* and recognised for the first time in the Ottoman-Russian Treaty of 1829.

From Usual Practices to Nizams

In the Ottoman documents, the miscellaneous rules of the self-government status were generally called the ‘regulation of the country’ (*nizam-ı memleket*). These rules concerned the institution of *voyvodalık*, the collection of the poll-tax, the protection of the Wallachian and Moldavian territories and subjects against neighbouring Ottoman authorities, the juridical conditions for commerce and Ottoman merchants in the Principalities, and for Moldo-Wallachian subjects during their travels in Ottoman regions, etc.⁸ The Ottoman authorities did not codify in the form of ‘treaties’ (*capitulations*) the customary practices which appeared and functioned in their relationship with the two tributary principalities. On the other hand, the Sultans, considering Wallachia and Moldavia as Ottoman tributary provinces, confirmed the above-mentioned usual practices through imperial orders and laws (*hüküm, ferman, hatt-ı şerif, sened, kanunname*, etc.), i.e., documents by

8 M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, ‘L’origine des khatt-i sherifs de privilèges des Principautés roumaines’, *Nouvelles Etudes d’Histoire*, 6/1 (1980), 259-62. From the examination of other *fermans* one can deduce that the Ottoman subjects (especially merchants and soldiers) from the neighbouring territories and fortresses, e.g., Hotin, Braila, Vozia, Tighina, Turnovo, etc., were not allowed to enter Wallachia and Moldavia without a sultanic authorisation. See T. Gemil, *Relatiile Tarilor romane cu Poarta otomana în documente turcesti, 1601-1712* [Relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman Porte in Turkish Documents, 1601-1712], Bucharest 1984, doc. 190 (1691); V. Veliman, *Relatiile romano-otomane (1711-1821): Documente turcesti* [Romanian-Ottoman Relations (1711-1821): Turkish Documents], Bucharest 1984, docs 41, 143, 148, 158, 174, 184 (1720, 1760-61, 1766, 1775, 1782). In this respect, in a report of 1691 written by the *kadı* of Turnovo, Ahmed Reşid, one can read that “the interdiction of permitting somebody from the vicinity to enter without an order the countries of Moldavia and Wallachia was part of the regulation of the country” (*Eflak ve Boğdan memleketlerine etraftan kimesnenin bilâ ferman duhuluna ruhsat verilmesi egerçi nizam-ı memlekette olup*). This regulation was announced to the Muslims of Turnovo by the reading of the Sultan’s order and the letter of the Grand Vizier, which were afterwards copied into the *şeriat* registers. Report of 6 Receb 1102/5 April 1691 (Gemil, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 190). See, also, Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 143, 148 (*memleket-i mezburenin bu defa verilen nizamın istikrar ve istimrarı için*), and 158 (*memleket-i Boğdan’ın nizam-ı kadimi*). Moreover, the establishment of the reign of the voivodas for a period of three years in the eighteenth century was considered a “rule and regulation” (*kaide ve nizam*). Document of 1749 (Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 120). Finally, documents of 1776 and 1812 refer to the regulation (*nizam*) for the collection of the tribute (*cizye*) from the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia (Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 176 and 241).

which were regulated the internal affairs of the Empire. As a direct consequence of the local *boyars'* petitions and the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca with Russia, a constant process of establishing a new status of the two Romanian Principalities within the Ottoman Empire took place only after 1774, by enacting more basic decrees and laws (such as the *hatt-ı şerifs* of 1774,⁹ the *sened* of 1784,¹⁰ the *fermans* of 1791¹¹ and 1792,¹² the *kanunname* of 1793,¹³ and the *hatt-ı şerifs* of 1802,¹⁴ 1806, and 1826¹⁵).

Peace Treaties and Agreements (ahdname-i hümayun)

Between 1774 and 1829, the Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty influenced directly and decisively the political status of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. The Peace Treaty of 10/21 July 1774 signed at Küçük Kaynarca (a village on the right bank of the Danube, near Silistra) established the basic pattern of Russian-Ottoman relations for a long time. Implicitly, it inaugurated the Russian protectorate over the Romanian Principalities, and the intervention of Russia in the relations of the Ottoman Empire with its tributary principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia. According to Article XVI, the two Danubian Principalities were restored to Ottoman rule, after a Russian occupation for five years prior to the signing of this treaty.¹⁶ The above stipulations were confirmed by a detailed agreement, signed at Aynalı Kavak on 10 March 1779; accordingly, Russia obtained the right of intercession in favour of the Romanian Principalities.¹⁷

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- 9 M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti privind istoria Romaniei* [Turkish Documents Concerning the History of Romania]. Vol. I: 1455-1774, Bucharest 1976, doc. 292 (on Wallachia). The *hatt-ı şerif* for the Prince Grigorie Ghica of Moldavia was published in Romanian with the date 4 November 1774 (*Acte si documente relative la istoria renascerei Romaniei* [Acts and Documents Concerning the History of Romania's Revival], eds D. A. Sturdza and C. Colescu-Vartic. Vol. I: 1391-1841, Bucharest 1900, 139-45).
- 10 M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti privind istoria Romaniei* [Turkish Documents Concerning the History of Romania]. Vol. II: 1774-1791, Bucharest 1978, doc. 33; *Acte si documente*, 192-95 (the date 1783 is wrong), and 195-208 (in Italian).
- 11 M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti privind istoria Romaniei* [Turkish Documents Concerning the History of Romania]. Vol. III: 1791-1812, Bucharest 1986, 5-11.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 28-35; *Acte si documente*, 225-32.
- 13 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 24-27; Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 210.
- 14 T SMA, defter no. 9919; NA, mf. Turkey, roll 44, frames 862-64; Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 167-88; *Acte si documente*, 264-88.
- 15 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. I, doc. 292; vol. II, doc. 33; vol. III, docs 4, 10, 12, 109, 110; Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 210. See also Alexandrescu, 'Khatt-ı şerif', 262.
- 16 A. Iordache and A. Stan, *Apararea autonomiei Principatelor romane, 1821-1859* [Defending the Autonomy of the Romanian Principalities], Bucharest 1987, 210.
- 17 *Acte si documente*, 131-32; I. Ionascu, P. Barbulescu and G. Gheorghe, *Relatiile internationale ale Romaniei in documente (1368-1900): Culegere selectiva de tratate, acorduri, conventii si alte acte cu caracter international*

After the rebellion of 1821, led by Tudor Vladimirescu, the Porte abolished the Phanariot regime and re-established the rule of native princes, who became the basis for a greater internal autonomy of the two Romanian Principalities.

In the autumn of 1826, the Ottoman Empire concluded an explanatory agreement with Russia at Akkerman, which completed the Peace Treaty of Bucharest of 1812. Separate agreements referring to the Principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia and Serbia were concluded, too. The main stipulation of the arrangement concerning the status of Wallachia and Moldavia was that they might elect their princes from the autochthonous noble families for a period of seven years.¹⁸

The Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 stipulated that Ottoman 'suzerainty' over Wallachia and Moldavia should be maintained, but at the same time that they should come under the Russian 'protectorate'. Western European jurists outlined this new status too.¹⁹ The two powers agreed to preserve the privileges granted to the Principalities by illustrious *fermans* (*hatt-ı şerif*) or stipulated in the Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty. A separate detailed covenant referring to Wallachia and Moldavia was concluded. It, generally, confirmed the stipulations of the Akkerman pact, but it also made important changes. Thus, the princes were to be elected for life (not only for seven years); the fortresses of Giurgiu, Turnu and Braila would be restored to Wallachia, in this way the border being fixed on the Danube.²⁰

From Usual Practices to 'Capitulations'

After 1774, the local *boyars* put forward numerous claims in order to strengthen the distinct political entity of the Romanian Principalities. The Wallachian and Moldavian nobility realised that the prolonged customary practices which had been regularly observed in the relations between the Porte and its tributary principalities could provide a basis for recuperating a real internal autonomy. The codification of these customary practices was to be turned into 'treaties' (*capitulations*) concluded between the Porte and Wallachia, as well as Moldavia, a fact that implied simultaneously the elimination of 'new practices' established abusively during the eighteenth century.²¹ In this way, the myth of 'old and long-term privileges' granted to certain Wallachian and Moldavian princes on the occasion of their acknowledge-

[International Relations of Romania in Documents (1368-1900): Selective Anthology of Treaties, Pacts, Agreements and other International Documents], Bucharest 1971, 227-30.

18 *Acte si documente*, 310-18; Ionascu, Barbulescu and Gheorghe, *Relatiile internationale*, 279-80.

19 Thus, Wheaton spoke about "the Principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia and Serbia, under the suzeraineté of the Ottoman Porte and the protectorate of Russia". Wheaton, *Droit des gens*, 36.

20 *Acte si documente*, 321-31; Ionascu, Barbulescu and Gheorghe, *Relatiile internationale*, 284-89.

21 They were characterised as "vile practices" ("obiceiri spurcati" in Romanian) by the Moldavian chronicler Ion Neculce. See I. Neculce, *Opere: Letopisetul Tarii Moldovei si O sama de cuvinte* [Works: The Chronicle of the Country of Moldavia and O sama de cuvinte], ed. G. Strempele, Bucharest 1982, 736.

ment of allegiance to the Porte from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century was born and exaggerated.

The tradition of ‘old privileges’ – fabricated by the Wallachian and Moldavian noblemen – was also taken over by Western scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²² William Eton, for instance, in his book *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*, printed in 1798, suggested that the juridical status of Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as of Egypt, might be a result of a peace agreement: “They may be considered connected with the Porte rather by treaty than as integral parts of the empire”.²³ Let us note that this fiction became a strong myth in Romanian historiography during the Communist regime as well.²⁴

22 In 1674, somewhere in France, one wrote about “the old privileges of the country” (*les anciens privilèges du pays*), i.e., of the Principality of Moldavia. I. Hudita, *Recueil de documents concernant l’histoire des Pays Roumains tirés des archives de France*, Jassy 1929, 211, in S. S. Gorovei, ‘Cateva însemnari pentru istoria relatiilor romano-otomane în veacurile XV-XVI’ [Some Notes on the History of the Romanian-Ottoman Relations in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries], in *Romanii în istoria universală* [Romanians in World History], vol. I, Jassy 1986, 33. In his *Memoirs*, also published in English in 1785, Baron de Tott affirmed that Moldavia, as well as Wallachia, had been ruled for a long time “according to the faith of Treaties”. *Memoirs of Baron de Tott Containing the State of the Turkish Empire and the Crimea, during the Late War with Russia with Numerous Anecdotes, Facts, and Observations, on the Manners and Customs of the Turks and Tartars, translated from the French*, vol. II, London 1885, 27 (French ed.: *Mémoires du Baron de Tott sur les Turcs et les Tartares*, 2 vols, Maestricht 1786 [new ed.]).

23 W. Eton, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire in Which are Considered: I. Its Government, Finances, Military and Naval Force, Religion, History, Arts, Sciences, Manners, Commerce, and Population; II. The State of the Provinces; III. The Causes of the Decline of Turkey; IV. The British Commerce with Turkey*, London 1798 (reprinted in 1973), 287-88, 297; M. Baret, ‘Histoire des troubles de Moldavie’, in A. Papiu Ilarian (ed.), *Tezauru de monumente istorice* [Treasury of Historical Monuments], vol. II, Bucharest 1863, 68; Gorovei, ‘Însemnari’, 34: “The covenants granted by the Grand Seigneur when the Moldavians had submitted to his domination” (*les conventions accordées par le grand Seigneur, lorsque les Moldaves s’estoient soumis à sa domination*). The French scholar quoted from a supposed letter written by the Moldavian Voivoda Alexandru Movila (1615-16) to the Wallachian Voivoda Radu Mihnea (1611-16), recorded by Charles de Joppecourt, a foreign mercenary serving the Movila family. In the first part of the nineteenth century the tradition of old privileges was alive in French writings (where I have met the term “les conditions”). Bois-le-Comte emphasised in his report of 10 May 1834 on the Romanian Principalities that since 1460 (?) and 1536 (?) respectively, the legal status of Wallachia and Moldavia was based on those “terms”. “Les conditions qui furent accordées dans ce premier moment, aux Valaques et aux Moldaves, ont servis de base jusqu’à ce jour à leur constitution politique”. *Documente privitoare la istoria romanilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*. Vol. XVII: 1825-1846, Bucharest 1913, 328-34, doc. DXI: ‘Report on the Romanian Principalities’ to the Count of Rigny (10 May 1834).

24 According to the eighteenth-century annalists’ view, the Wallachian acknowledgements of allegiance, i.e., those assigned to Mircea the Elder and later to Basarab Laiota, would be conditional upon “obeying agreements” with the Sultans (“învoiala” or “tocmeală” in Romanian), dated 1391/93 and 1460. Their stipulations (*legături*), which defined a large self-government status, were listed by the *boyars* in memoirs addressed to Count Orloff in 1772. M. Cantacuzino Banul, *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor* [Genealogy of the Kantakouzenoi], ed. N. Iorga, Bucharest 1902, 67-70. See also *Istorie a Turii Românesti publicata de frații Tunusli* [A History of Wallachia published by the Tunusli Brothers], ed. G. Sion, 1863, 66. “The instruments of the sultans, by which they ratified the conditions, were formerly kept among the public records of Moldavia, but in my time by the command or permission of John Sobiesky King of Poland, in his invasion of Moldavia in the year 1686, they were taken, and I know not whether very wisely, burnt publicly at Jassy, with this Declaration to the crowds of people, *Behold! His royal Majesty thus frees you from the Turkish yoke*”. D. Cantemir, *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire*, London 1735, 455-60, 188-89 n. 32. Concerning Moldavia, the tradition of old privileges was

In the period 1774-1829, the Wallachian and Moldavian nobles – sustained by Russia – tried to impose the ‘old privileges’ of Wallachia and Moldavia, established in writing by the so-called ‘Capitulations’, as a “component part of the European public law”. Indeed, in the Peace Treaty of Adrianople of 1829, not only were the imperial orders (*hatt-ı şerif*) and Ottoman-Russian treaties, but also the Capitulations, invoked as juridical bases of the Ottoman sovereignty and the autonomy privileges.²⁵ On the basis of these apocryphal texts, they tried to build a new ‘political identity’ and to obtain international recognition. They were taken into consideration by the Ottoman and Russian peacemakers as a diplomatic source for the next political status of the Romanian Principalities, receiving European recognition, too.

Tributary Provinces and the *Pax Ottomanica* System

Ottoman Methods of Statecraft

The Ottoman system of government was not uniform in the whole Empire. Realising this, seventeenth to nineteenth-century European observers and then modern historians tried frequently to decipher, classify, and analyse it, all of them emphasising the pragmatism of the Ottoman statesmen. However, they did not use uniform criteria.

Certain historians, such as Halil İnalçık, Suraiya Faroqhi, and Metin Kunt, have defined the stages of ‘Ottomanisation’ of the conquered territories by emphasising the changes that occurred during the Ottoman process of expansion. In this respect, the study of the ‘Ottoman Methods of Conquest’, which was published in 1954 by Halil İnalçık, is famous.²⁶

built up especially by Nicolae Costin and Dimitrie Cantemir, who recorded as real the “instruments of the sultans, by which they ratified the conditions” with the sons of Stephen the Great, i.e., Bogdan the Blind and Petru Rares, in 1511-12 and 1529, respectively. Here are the main ‘articles’ of the old Moldavian ‘treaties’ in Dimitrie Cantemir’s view: “... Among other numberless privileges granted them according to the times, the chief was that wherein it was expressly said, that Moldavia voluntarily and without compulsion offered her obedience to the Turkish Empire, and therefore it is the Sultan’s will that all her Churches, religious Rites, and Laws be untouched, and nothing more required of the Prince, but that he send every year by faithful Boyars to the resplendent Porte four thousand gold Crowns, forty bred Mares, twenty four Falcons, in the name of Pishkiesh, a present of gift”. This tradition was to be continued by Alexandru Beldiman, from whom we have a manuscript based on excerpts from “the sources of Neculaiu Costin” and entitled *Tractaturile prin care s-au închinat tara, de catre Bogdan voevod, domnu al Moldoviei, imparatind Baizet al 2-lea* [The Compacts by which the Country was Submitted by Bogdan Voivode, Ruler of Moldavia, during the Reign of Bayezid the Second]. Romanian Academy Library, ms. 566, f. 126v-136. The manuscript was published by M. Kogalniceanu in *Arhiva Romaneasca* [Romanian Archive], vol. II (1845), 347-64 and then in idem, *Cronicele Romaniei seu Letopisetele Moldaviei si Valahiei* [Annals of Romania or the Chronicles of Moldavia and Wallachia], vol. III, Bucharest 1874, 450-59.

25 *Acte si documente*, 321.

26 H. İnalçık, ‘Ottoman Methods of Conquest’, *SI*, 2 (1954), 103; M. Kunt, ‘Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Policies and Problems: Introduction’, in M. Kunt and C. Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, London and New York 1995, 34-35.

Other historians have tried to provide us with a global picture of the Ottoman system of government. Thus, in Albert Howe Lybyer's opinion, the Ottoman Empire consisted a) of a great body of lands which were directly administered according to a system that was exceedingly intricate but more or less uniform; b) of a number of regions less directly administered under special regulations; c) of numerous tributary provinces; and d) of certain protected or vassal states. That was the Empire. Outside it lay a belt of neutral or disputed territory (no man's land), constantly raided by the Ottomans and their enemies, only less frequently and terribly in time of peace than in time of war. Outside the raided belt lay the *dar al-harb* (The Abode of War). This implies that the whole of the Ottoman Empire was considered *dar al-Islam*. "The order in which these several regions are mentioned, an order based on progressive diminution of control, corresponds in general to an increasing distance from Constantinople. While the Ottoman Empire was growing, each sort of territory tended to absorb the next, proceeding from the centre outward".²⁷

D. E. Pitcher has given us a comprehensive analysis of the political geography of the imperial administration up to the sixteenth century, but a little confusingly, by dividing the Ottoman system of government into two categories only: 'direct government' and 'vassal states'. The former consisted undoubtedly of the *eyalet* framework of government or the normal *sancak* system, applied by the Ottomans, first, during the fifteenth and sixteenth-century conquests in the Anatolian and Balkan territories, which became actually the 'core provinces' after the large-scale conquests of Selim I (1512-20). The latter, the 'vassal states', were in my opinion improperly so called, since this term came to characterise areas basically too different to be included in one category.²⁸ Taking into consideration the Treaty of Sztivatörök in 1606 as a turning-point, Pitcher distinguished more types of 'vassal states' which preserved their local-internal administration: First, regions that enjoyed a greater measure of autonomy, i.e., over which the Sultan retained rights of approving the ruler, of military assistance and tribute and controlling foreign relations, but without garrison rights. In this category he included the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia before 1606 (but,

27 A. H. Lybyer, *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent*, Cambridge Mass. and London 1913, 29-30. Actually, because of its large diversity, it is hard to make a rigorous typology of the Ottoman system of government. Here is Lybyer's attempt: "Crimean Tartary, Georgia, Mingrelia, and parts of Arabia were vassal territories, more or less lightly attached and paying no regular tribute. Venice's island of Cyprus, the Emperor Ferdinand's possessions in Hungary, the territories of Ragusa, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Wallachia, all paid regular tribute with occasional presents, for the privilege of maintaining their own administrations. Egypt was under a special government, adapted with slight changes from that of the Mamelukes, headed by a pasha sent out from Constantinople for a term of three years, and delivering a large part of its annual revenue to the imperial treasury. The Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, far from paying tribute, received a large annual subsidy at the cost of Egypt. North Africa, conquered by the Corsairs, was brought into the empire by Khairaddin Barbarossa principally for the sake of prestige and support; but, though in its organization it imitated the parent government, it was seldom in close obedience".

28 D. E. Pitcher, *An Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire from Earliest Times to the End of the Sixteenth Century*, Leiden 1972, 124-34.

in my opinion, this should be up to Kanuni Süleyman's reign), and Transylvania between 1541 and 1699. Second, regions with a diminished measure of autonomy, i.e., over which the Sultan retained the rights of claiming assistance in war and tribute, of controlling foreign relations, but imposed the rights of nominating and deposing the ruler, and of garrisoning certain forts. The classic examples are the tributary Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia since Kanuni Süleyman's reign (in Pitcher's opinion, after 1606) and the subsidised Crimean Khanate.²⁹

Using what can be convincing from the above classifications, one can say that the greater part of the Ottoman Empire consisted of the normal *sancak* system (called also the *eyalet* framework of government), including those lands – already mentioned above by Lybyer – which were directly administered by their partition into feudal units of *zemets* and *timars* (*dirlik*), e.g., Keefe, Siliştra, Budin, Temeşvar, etc. In addition, throughout the Ottoman period there existed various kinds of autonomous lands, communities, provinces, and states. According to their “constitutional position” or their “degree of subordination” (Pitcher's phrases), they were of two kinds: those within the above *eyalet* framework of government, and those outside it, as provinces and states that preserved their internal administration. Of course, there is enough room for nuances.

The Ottomans practised **local religious or ethnic autonomy**, by granting special privileges to certain Muslim or non-Muslim communities, e.g., religious groups from Mount Sinai and Mount Athos, or Albanian, Greek, Serb and Wallachian communities from the Balkan peninsula. Moreover, in certain areas of the Empire, especially in North Africa, there were for a longer or shorter period *eyalets* whose rulers were appointed by the Porte, but whose government was virtually independent, and which consequently can be called **autonomous provinces**, e.g., Algeria (*Cezayir*), Tunisia (*Tunus*), Libya (*Trablus Garb*), Egypt (*Mısır*), Yemen, etc. This kind of province is frequently called *salyaneli* province (*salyane* means ‘annual’); they were ‘areas of direct Ottoman rule’, with salaries and wages, as opposed to provinces with *dirliks*. This method of government implied that the revenue collected was used by the governors for the direct payment of all expenses within the province, e.g., the salaries of military and administrative dignitaries and the wages of the soldiers.³⁰

29 Third, Pitcher demarcated the states paying tribute for the whole of their territory, and recognising Ottoman suzerainty, e.g., the south-east European principalities from the end of the fourteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth century, the Aegean islands, like Chios and the islands of the Duchy of Naxos in the sixteenth century, and for a long term, Ragusa, the Lebanon and some Arab tribes of the Syrian border. Fourth, there were states recognising Ottoman suzerainty but without paying regular tribute (the Khan of Kazan, the *emirs* of Gilan and Şirvan, etc.). Finally, he distinguished “secondary vassals”, i.e., some tribes drawn within the Ottoman sphere of influence by their dependence on rulers already vassals to the Porte (e.g., the Nogay tribes, the Arab tribes from Africa, etc.). Pitcher, *Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire*, 124-34.

30 S. Özbaran, ‘Some Notes on the *Saliyane* System in the Ottoman Empire as Organized in Arabia in the Sixteenth Century’, *OA*, 6 (1986), 39-45; M. Kunt, ‘Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Policies’, 35; S. Özbaran, ‘Ottoman Naval Policy in the South’, in Kunt and Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age*, 68. Moreover, Pitcher

At the same time, for a shorter or longer period (sometimes for many generations or even for centuries), the Ottomans brought into their sphere of influence and control those regions where it was difficult to install a direct administration because of various reasons (terrain, distance, resistance, etc.), all included by Pitcher in the category of ‘vassal states’. In my opinion, the appropriate concept for this kind of status, considering both Ottoman and non-Ottoman official views, should be that of **tributary-protected provinces/principalities**, such as Ragusa, Wallachia, and Moldavia beginning with the reign of Kanuni Süleyman, Transylvania between 1541-1699, certain Aegean islands, such as Chios and the islands of the Duchy of Naxos in the sixteenth century, etc.

In any event, despite the differences of administration or government, and of the degree of subordination, autonomy or suzerainty, all the above-mentioned areas formed the Ottoman Empire.

Wallachia and Moldavia from the Ottoman Juridical and Political Viewpoint

Both Ottoman and non-Ottoman sources used a diverse juridical, political and administrative terminology relating to the status of the tributary principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia within the Ottoman Empire.

Standardising Terminology

On the one hand, the Ottoman chancery used a standardising terminology; accordingly, the tributary principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia had the same status as other Ottoman provinces. Starting with Kanuni Süleyman’s reign, the two Romanian Principalities (called in Ottoman documents for the interval of time analysed here *Eflak ve Boğdan memleketleri*, *Eflak ve Boğdan voyvodalıkları*, or *Memleketeyn*) were juridically and politically considered as being the ‘patrimony of the Sultan’ (*mülk-i mevrus*), territories from the Abode of Islam (*dar al-Islam*), and parts of the Ottoman Empire (*Devlet-i Aliye*, that is, The Exalted State, or *Memalik-i Mahruse*, that is, The Well-protected Dominions).³¹ These formulas were invoked by the Porte in order to protect its territories and inhabitants both against the interference of Ottoman officials and in order to reject the political claims of neighbouring Christian rulers.

Parts of *Devlet-i Aliye*, *Memalik-i Mahruse*, or *Muzafat-ı Memalik-i Mahruse* (annexes of the

included in the category of autonomous lands the hereditary *sancaks* and the *sancaks* whose *beys* were always local, and therefore outside the normal rule whereby a *sancakbeyi* could be transferred from one province to another; Pitcher, *Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire*, 124-34.

31 According to certain historians, all these formulas were used to express only the Ottoman suzerainty: İ. H. Uzunarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* [Ottoman History], vol. IV/1, Ankara 1956, 6; Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, 13.

Well-protected Dominions) were the usual labels applied to the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, assimilating them to the entirety of the Empire as provinces.³² Let us note that in the period analysed here, the last two phrases were replaced with other terms, such as *Devlet-i Aliye*. According to the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) and the Agreement of Aynalı Kavak (1779), “the countries [of Wallachia and Moldavia] were ascribed to the rule of the High State” (*Devlet-i Aliye'nin taht-ı tasarrufuna irca olunduğu*).³³

The ‘Sultan’s patrimony’ (*mülk-i mevrus*) tradition originated in Kanuni Süleyman’s reign and was frequently stressed in the centuries which followed. In a *hükiim* of 1749, for instance, Sultan Mahmud I reconfirmed Grigore II Ghica on the throne for another three years, basing his right to name voivodas on the following argument: “The country of Wallachia is my estate left as inheritance (*mülk-i mevrusum olmak*) from my glorious ancestors”.³⁴ Even in the early nineteenth century, Wallachia and Moldavia were considered “properties [left as] imperial inheritance” (*mülk-i mevrus-ı şahane olan*), an official statement voiced by the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, Abdurrahim Muhib Efendi, in a report of 1808.³⁵

The ‘Abode of Islam’³⁶ also included the territories under the Sultan’s suzerainty, i.e., tributary states and provinces, even if no Muslim lived there. In Wallachia and Moldavia the Muslim religious cult was not practised in public and the sharia did not represent a guide to jurisprudence. Yet, considering that the Ottoman juridical view theorised only the disjunction ‘Abode of War’ v. ‘Abode of Islam’,³⁷ one can logically conclude that the two tributary principalities of the North Danube were included in the *dar al-Islam*. The Ottoman authorities frequently displayed this conception.³⁸

32 *Kanunname* of 1793 (Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 210). See also Gemil, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 72: “... Wallachia, which belongs to my Well-protected Dominions (*Memalik-i Mahrusenden olan Eflak*)”; *ibid.*, doc. 196.

33 *Redhouse yeni Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlük/New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*, 12th ed., İstanbul 1991. See also the other meanings of the words *taht* (sovereign’s throne) and *tassaruf* (possession).

34 Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 120.

35 Document of 21 Ramazan 1223/10 November 1808 (*ibid.*, doc. 237).

36 One of the important attributes characterising a territory belonging to the Abode of Islam – underlined by the Hanefi jurists – was the protection and the defence of the life and the assets of the Muslims. See Shaybani, *Kitab as-Siyar*, in M. Du Caurroy, ‘Législation musulmane sunnite: rite hanéfi’, *Journal Asiatique*, 4/17 (1851), 218.

37 *Ibid.*

38 There is more information in narrative and administrative sources which contradicted this view. Hence, one can consider from a different point of view – beyond the military and strategic motivations – the information to be found in the Ottoman chronicles which insists on the retreat of the Ottoman army, for reasons of safety, to the right of the Danube. Thus, even after the 1538 campaign against Moldavia, which Kanuni Süleyman firmly claimed to have conquered, he, eager to reach the Abode of Islam, which was the safest place for any Muslim, hurried to the south of the Danube. “Then, the Sultan of Islam left without delay Suceava, and marching without stopping and covering great distances – Lütfi Paşa wrote – went back to the Danube”. Lütfi-paşa, *Tevarih*, in *Cronici turcesti privind Tarile romane: Extrase* [Turkish Chronicles Concerning the Romanian Countries: Excerpts]. Vol. I: *Sec. XV - mijlocul sec. XVII* [Fifteenth to mid-Seventeenth Century], ed. M. Guboglu and M. Mehmet, Bucharest 1966, 248.

The juridical distinction between the 'Abode of War' and the Provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia was underlined in the eighteenth-century orders that prohibited the export of certain wares.³⁹

Demarcating Terminology

On the other hand, the Ottoman chancery also used a demarcating terminology which stressed the autonomous position of Wallachia and Moldavia within the Empire, without coming into conflict with the statements which defined the tributary principalities as parts of the Empire. Here are the most frequent juridical and administrative terms and locutions applied to Wallachia and Moldavia to emphasise their distinct status: *dar al-zimmet* (The Abode of Tributary Protection), *serbestiyet* (Freedom), and *eyalat-ı mümtaze* (Privileged Provinces). These formulas were as a rule invoked especially when Wallachian and Moldavian princes and nobles asked Sultans and Grand Viziers to protect their countries against Ottoman officials and subjects from the neighbouring *sancaks*.

As a matter of fact, Wallachia and Moldavia were not the only cases whose status was characterised by these concepts, which were generally used to designate various aspects of financial, administrative, religious, and juridical autonomy in the Ottoman Empire.

The Abode of Tributary Protection (dar al-zimmet)

The Shafii concept of *dar al-ahd* (Abode of Peace, Abode of the Pact) has frequently been adopted by modern historians and jurists in order to define the tributary status, being considered capable of covering a contradictory and intermediary reality situated between *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*.⁴⁰ Two reasons should make us avoid using it to characterise the juridical status of the

39 Documents of 1750-51 and 1764. The former stated clearly that "the Hungarian and German and Venetian and Ragusan... countries are territories of war" (*dar al-harb*). Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 122. In the second order, the idea was taken over by Mustafa III who again forbade merchants who came from the Abode of War (*dar al-harb*) to purchase products from Wallachia and Moldavia and to carry them to Poland (*Leh*), Hungary (*Macar*), the Habsburg Empire (*Nemçe*), Venice (*Venedik*), and Ragusa (*Dubrovnik*). Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. I, doc. 265.

40 For example, to define the legal status of the tributary states in South-eastern Europe, including Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Ragusa, and certain Aegean islands (Biegman, *Ragusa*, 30-32; *EF*, vol. 2, s.v. 'Dar al- 'ahd', 118-19 (H. İnalçık); I. Matei, 'Quelques problèmes concernant le régime de la domination ottomane dans les Pays roumains (concernant particulièrement la Valachie)', *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, 10/1 (1972), 66-81; 11/1 (1973), 81-95; M. Maxim, *Tările Române și Înalta Poartă: cadrul juridic al relațiilor romano-otomane în evul mediu* [The Romanian Countries and the Sublime Porte: The Legal Framework of the Romanian-Ottoman Relations in the Middle Ages], Bucharest 1993.

tributary principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. First, the concept of the *dar al-ahd* did not belong to the Hanefi juridical school, which was adopted by the Ottomans, and consequently it was not theorised in their juridical sources.⁴¹ Second, considering the historical changes occurring throughout the long period of Ottoman-Romanian relations, it is not possible to describe the juridical status with regard to the Porte by the single concept of the ‘Abode of Peace’ (*dar al-ahd*).

The Hanefi jurists al-Shaybani (d. 805) and al-Sarahsi (d. 1090) defined on the criterion of sovereignty two categories of intermediary territories, i.e., *dar al-muvadaa* (‘Abode of Reconciliation’, or ‘Abode of Truce’) and *dar al-zimmet* (‘Abode of Submission’, or ‘Abode of Tributary Protection’). I must point out that in the Hanefi jurists’ opinion these concepts did not describe territories outside the Abode of Islam or the Abode of War, but only distinct areas nevertheless included in these two basic spheres.

Dar-i muvadaa, where *muvadaa* means reconciliation or truce, was the label applied to the territory inhabited by enemy infidels (*harbi*) who had an engagement with Muslims. This sector remained, however, a constitutive part of the Abode of War (*dar al-harb*), as the peace concluded between the Muslim sovereign and the non-Muslim prince was only temporary.⁴²

Dar-i zimmet was conceived by the Hanefi jurists as defining those regions where non-Muslim communities were living and had concluded a pact of tributary protection (*ahd-i zimmet*) with the Muslim sovereign. First, *dar-i zimmet* came to delimit a zone of the Abode of War whose non-Muslim population was tributary to the Muslim sovereign by the agency of a local prince chosen from among them, and did not observe the sharia but their own laws and usages. Second, *dar-i zimmet* was a label for a section of the Abode of Islam whose non-Muslim inhabitants had agreed

41 As a matter of fact, the Shafii scholar al-Mawardi himself admitted that he had not found such a concept in the Hanefi works, emphasising that Abu Hanifa had included the above-mentioned territories in the Abode of Islam: “Abu Hanifa says their territory becomes *dar al-Islam* by treaty (*bi’l-sulh dar al-Islam*), that they themselves become *zimmis*, and that the *cizye* is taken from them. Mawardi Aboul-Hasan Ali, *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyah (Les Statuts Gouvernementaux ou règles de droit public et administratif)*, trans. and notes E. Fagnan, Algiers and Paris 1915, 290-91. See also A. Decei, ‘Tratatul de pace – sulhname – încheiat între sultanul Mehmed al II-lea și Ștefan cel Mare la 1479’ [Peace Treaty – Sulhname – Concluded between Sultan Mehmed II and Stephen the Great in 1479], *Revista Istorică Romană*, 15 (1945), fascicule IV, 465-94.

42 The infidels became ‘peoples of truce’ (*ehl-i muvadaa*). Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ach-Chaibanî, *Le Grand Livre de la Conduite de l’Etat (Kitab as-siyar al-kabîr); commenté par... as-Sarakhsî*, trans. M. Hamidullah, vol. IV, Ankara 1989-91, 65-66 n. 1; Caurroy, ‘Législation’, 222-24; A. Özel, *İslam hukukunda ülke kavramı: dar ül-Islam, dar ül-harb*, İstanbul 1988, 147-48. It is worth pointing out that the Abode of Truce status was also applied to a territory conquered or made a vassal by a non-Muslim leader who had previously concluded an agreement, and therefore his territory already belonged to the *dar al-muvadaa*.

to pay tribute, to obey the Muslim power, but had obtained the privilege of being ruled by a native leader, chosen and appointed by the Muslim sovereign.⁴³

Serbestiyet (*freedom*)

Serbestiyet (freedom) was constantly invoked – together with *muafiyet* (immunity, autonomy, privilege) and *istiklaliyet* (independence)⁴⁴ – to define the eighteenth-century administrative autonomy of Wallachia and Moldavia, without cancelling the Sultans' right to interfere in their internal affairs.⁴⁵ The term is usually found in the phrase “being separated at chancery, spared of violations and free in all respects” (*mefruzü'l-kalem ve maktuyü'l-kadem min-küllü'l-vücuḥ serbest olub*).⁴⁶

43 Because of the fact that the term *zimmət* has more than one meaning (e.g., obligation, duty, contract, protection), it is difficult to find a proper translation for the concept *dar-ı zimmət*. Moreover, the ambiguity becomes more intense because of the fact that the term designated two zones with many common features and few perceptible differences. Actually, the concept of the *dar-ı zimmət* came to define the various conditions of a territory ruled by a tribute-paying ruler, whether an *ahd* had been granted by the Muslim sovereign or not. Caurroy, 'Législation', 219-23; Özel, *İslam Hukuku*, 146-47; *New Redhouse Dictionary*, 1286. There is no evidence for the use of the above legal concepts, or the notion of *dar al-ahd*, in official sources directly regarding Wallachia and Moldavia. But they can be deduced implicitly from the terms *muvadaa*, *ehl-i zimmət (zimmī)*, *cizye*, *harac*, etc., used constantly in Ottoman official sources. It is our task to find a suitable correspondence between legal formulas and historical reality, even if the former cannot cover exactly the real political condition of the three tributary principalities. From Kanuni Süleyman's era, the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia were seen – from the Ottoman legal viewpoint – as parts of the Abode of Tributary Protection (*dar-ı zimmət*), as a section of the Abode of Islam, because of the fact that their inhabitants had agreed to pay tribute and obey the Muslim power, but had obtained the privilege of being ruled by a native leader, chosen and appointed by the Sultan.

44 *Serbest* means free, independent (*New Redhouse Dictionary*, 1001-02). *Muafiyet* means also immunity, exemption, and *muaf* exempted. Tahsin Gemil translated *serbest* by 'autonomy' in a document of 1099/1687 (Gemil, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 178). *İstiklaliyet* means also complete sovereignty and *istiklal* independent (*New Redhouse Dictionary*, 556).

45 Concerning the phrase quoted above, two observations may be allowed. First, the term *serbestiyet* (freedom) acquired a complete political and legal denotation only in the nineteenth century, as Bernard Lewis has already shown. Before that, the concept had more a fiscal signification. This is why it is necessary to avoid the use of such concepts to characterise the sixteenth and seventeenth-century legal and political status of the tributary principalities to the north of the Danube. Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 93, 104, 107, 112, 140, 117, 118, 121, 127, 130, 141, and 210; B. Lewis, 'Serbestiyet', *Ord. Prof. Ömer Lütfi Barkan'a Armağan*, İstanbul 1985, 47-52.

46 Here are several significant cases which occurred during Mahmud I's reign in the 1740s. In 1740, "as the above-mentioned country has been for long free, separated at the chancery and spared of being violated" (*memleket-i merkume öteden berü mefruzü'l-kalem ve maktuyü'l-kadem serbest olduğu ecilden*), Mahmud I interfered in the establishment of the amount of the *cizye*, after the re-annexing of the Hotin fortress and its environs to Moldavia.

Certain historians have constantly invoked this sentence as an argument in strong support of the autonomy status of Wallachia and Moldavia as well as their position outside the Empire, in contrast to the status of Ottoman provinces.

By analysing correctly the phrase “being separated at chancery and spared of violations and free in all respects”, one can recognise the following features ignored by these historians. First, this formula was applied to the units of the Empire which had a certain degree of financial and administrative autonomy, to landownership exempted from taxes, or to the sources of revenues that benefited from privileges and immunity (like the imperial *hases*).⁴⁷ Second, this statement was incompletely quoted, omitting to emphasise that this juridical position was applied to the tributary principalities “since the imperial conquest” (*feth-i hakaniden berii*).⁴⁸ As a matter of fact, neither Ottoman authorities nor autochthonous princes and nobles invoked as a rule the conquest of their countries in a negative sense.⁴⁹ Moreover, even Moldavian and Wallachian voivodas and *boyars* invoked – during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – the idea of the imperial conquest in order to preserve or revive old practices concerning self-government.

Privileged Provinces (eyalat-ı mümtaze)

In the Prime Minister’s Archives in Istanbul there is a great number of documents gathered under the label “orders concerning privileged Provinces”, the formula *eyalat-ı mümtaze* being used to

In 1742, the “country of Wallachia . . . , being separated at the chancery and spared of violations and free in all respects” (*Eflak memleketi mefruzü’l-kalem ve maktuyü’l-kadem min-kiüllü’l-vücuḥ serbest olub*), Mahmud I confirmed that the litigations that had occurred between Wallachian subjects or between them and foreigners had to be judged by their Hospodars. Three years later, in 1745, because of the fact that “the country of Wallachia has been from of old separated at the chancery and spared of violations and enjoys freedom” (*vilayet-i Eflak kadimü’l-eyyamdan berii mefruzü’l-kalem ve maktuyü’l-kadem serbestiyet üzere*), the same Sultan ordered the Ottoman dignitaries from Braila to Ada Kale to do away with any actions that would harm the territory and the inhabitants to the north of the Danube. Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 93, 104, 112. See also docs 107, 117, 118, 121, 127, 130, 141, 210, etc.

47 For instance, Mehmed IV in 1077/1667 invoked this status as being applied to the territory occupied by the Nogay Tatars of Bucak (Southern Bessarabia): *min kiüllü’l-vücuḥ mefruzü’l-kalem ve maktuyü’l kadem serbestiyet üzere zabt olunagelmeḡin*. Gemil, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 147. Or, in 1705, this phrase defined the immunity of a *mukataa*, part of sultanic incomes (*havass-ı hümayun*) from the *sancaks* of Silistra and Nikopol: “they are ruled taking into account their freedom to be in all respects separated at the chancery and spared from interferences”. Gemil, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 227. *Mukataa* designated a farming-out of public revenue.

48 Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 93, 104, 107, 112, 140, 117, 118, 121, 127, 130, 141, 210, etc.

49 Most modern Romanian historians have firmly rejected the idea of conquest of the Romanian Principalities. See P. P. Panaitescu, ‘De ce n-au cucerit turcii Tarile Romane’ [Why the Turks Did Not Conquer the Romanian Countries], in S. S. Gorovei and M. M. Székely (eds), *Interpretari romanesti: Studii de istorie economica si sociala* [Romanian Interpretations: Studies in Economic and Social History], Bucharest 1994, 111-19 (1st ed. in *Revista Fundatiilor Regale*, 11/5 [1944]); Maxim, *Tarile Romane*, 111-42.

describe those provinces which were joined to the Ottoman Empire by agreements with special privileges and had a large internal autonomy.⁵⁰

In the second part of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century, as a counterweight to the constant emancipation of the Principalities after 1774 and to the interference of Russia, the Porte more firmly and constantly stated that Wallachia and Moldavia were parts of the Ottoman Empire.⁵¹ Yet, they were not like other Ottoman provinces; they were privileged provinces. In this regard, the Ottoman official view was fully illustrated by Midhat Paşa's 'Fundamental Law' (*Kanun-ı Esasi*), promulgated on 7 Zilhicce 1293/23 December 1876.⁵² It stated that "the Ottoman Empire includes the actual territories and possessions and the privileged provinces", the latter being called *eyalat-ı mümtaze* in Ottoman Turkish, and referring to Romania, Serbia, and Egypt.⁵³

Autochthonous and Western Views

A complete picture concerning the position of the tributary principalities within the *pax ottomani-ca* system can be drawn by calling in evidence the autochthonous and the Western views as well.

On the one hand, the European powers considered and treated Wallachia and Moldavia as provinces of the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, the diplomatic and consular reports are significant.⁵⁴ On

50 *Eyalat-ı mümtaze iradeleri*: BOA, Cevdet Tasnıfı, Eyalet-i Mümtaze, which contains documents from 1700-1880 on Wallachia, Moldavia, the Crimean Khanate, Egypt and Dubrovnik. See *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi*, Ankara 1992, 333-34. If one considers the historical sources, it should be underlined that this formula was applied only to certain of the above-mentioned provinces and only during the nineteenth century. Actually, the documents quoted in this category refer to Bulgaria between 1839-1909, Egypt between 1839-1912, Lebanon between 1842-1909, Crete between 1839-1909, and Samos between 1840-1909. The category of *eyalat-ı mümtaze* includes in the long term the following regions: *Eflak ve Boğdan Voyvodalığı*, *Dubrovnik*, *Kırım Hanlığı*, *Mısır Hıdivlığı*, and in the short term the following: *Erdel Krallığı*, *Mekke Şerifliği*, *Sisam Beyliği*, *Cebel-i Lübnan Mutasarrıflığı*, *Kıbrıs Adası*, *Bulgaristan Prenslığı*, *Bosna-Hersek* and *Aynoroz Emaneti*.

51 Such testimonies are to be found even in the years around the time of the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-78, which has been considered a 'war of independence' for the Romanians. In this respect, in October 1874, the Ottoman Foreign Minister, Ârifî Paşa, replied to the Agent General Ion Gr. Ghica in Istanbul in the following terms: "The Principalities are not a distinct state from Turkey, despite all the autonomy rights that they enjoy, granted by certain *fermans*, but... they are provinces of the Ottoman Empire"; *Independenta Romaniei: Documente* [Independence of Romania: Documents]. Vol. IV: *Documente diplomatice (1873-1881)* [Diplomatic Documents (1873-1881)], Bucharest 1978, doc. 6.

52 The first French edition of the 'Fundamental Law' was *La Constitution Ottomane du 7 Zilhidjè 1293 (23 Décembre 1876)*, ed. A. Ubicini, Paris 1877.

53 This formula drew a strong protest from the Romanian authorities expressed by the note of 20 January 1877. *Independenta Romaniei: Documente*, vol. III, 19.

54 In 1612, the French Ambassador to the Porte, Achille de Harlay, noted that "all these three provinces have long been tributaries of the Grand Seigneur (*toutes ces trois provinces sont depuis un long temps tributaires du Grand Seigneur*)". Report of 21 April 1612 from Pera (*Documente Hurmuzaki*, Suppl. I/1, doc. CCXXVII).

2 September 1804, for instance, the French Consul N. Fleury in Jassy wrote a report on the ‘Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia’.⁵⁵ In the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, European observers made fewer distinctions between Ottoman provinces. In his work on the Ottoman Empire published in 1798, William Eton spoke about “the pashaliks or governments most immediately connected with the seat of the empire” and “the more distant provinces”, in the latter category including Egypt, Wallachia and Moldavia, which “may be considered connected with the Porte rather by treaty than as integral parts of the empire”.⁵⁶ A few years later, in *The Present State of Turkey* published in 1809, Thomas Thornton presented first the general *system of Turkish government towards the tributary subjects*, explaining the order of government which the Turks substituted in the place of the institutions which they abolished throughout their new conquests: “While the Turkish power was in a state of progressive aggrandizement, it was the constant policy of the government to expel the nobles and great landed proprietors from those countries which they have incorporated with their empire, and to make a new division of the lands according to the arrangements of their peculiar civil and military system”. In Thornton’s view, this was the rule. In some cases, the Ottomans applied *exceptions to the usual mode of Turkish government*, so that the tributary provinces of the Empire, like Egypt, Wallachia, and Moldavia, were created.⁵⁷

On the other hand, since the age of Kanuni Süleyman, the Wallachian and Moldavian princes and nobles came to recognise increasingly that their supreme ruler was in Istanbul and their countries belonged to him.⁵⁸ After 1774, in the circumstances of diplomatic actions for national emancipation, the autochthonous *boyars*’ view became increasingly inconsistent with the Ottoman and Western conceptions. In this respect, in 1846, Prince George Bibescu of Wallachia was eager to express his consternation before the French Consul Doré de Nion in Bucharest over the attitude of the most liberal and “worthy of respect” governments of Europe: they “only see the Danubian Principalities as Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, their leaders as Turkish pashas, and their inhabitants as *reaya*”.⁵⁹

55 *Documente Hurmuzaki*, vol. XVI: *Les Provinces Turques de la Moldavie et de la Valachie*.

56 Eton, *Turkish Empire*, 287-88, 297.

57 Thomas Thornton, *The Present State of Turkey or A Description of the Political, Civil and Religious, Constitution, Government and the Laws of the Ottoman Empire... Together with the Geographical, Political, and Civil, State of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia; From Observations Made during a Residence of Fifteen Years in Constantinople and the Turkish Provinces*, vol. II, 2nd ed., London 1809, 298-307.

58 In the circumstances of an impending Polish expedition against Moldavia, Petru Rares clearly affirmed, in a letter of 24 April 1537 sent to the Polish King, that “this country belongs to the All-high and victorious Turkish emperor, my All-generous Lord, and has given us to rule over it: long live His Imperial Majesty... And we hope that the Turkish army will come to defend the Emperor’s country”. N. Iorga, *Scrisori de boieri: Scrisori de domni* [*Boyars’ Letters: Princesses’ Letters*], 2nd ed., Valenii-de-Munte 1925, doc. XXIII.

59 The Wallachian Prince invoked a whole series of arguments to prove that “this opinion is not grounded either *de jure* or *de facto*”. The series of questions that Doré de Nion presented to George Bibescu, alluding at the same time to the Russian danger, reflects the attitude of the European powers in relation to the Ottoman Empire, in their inte-

Wallachia and Moldavia as Buffer-Protectorates

In international law, a protectorate relation implies the existence of three parts and special relations between them. First, the 'protectorate relation' between a 'protected state' and 'protecting state' is based on bilateral agreements. Second, the 'protectorate status' must be recognised by a third power.⁶⁰

Protection was constantly used as a political and juridical concept in official documents which tried to regulate future relations between Wallachian and Moldavian princes and neighbouring Christian sovereigns.⁶¹ The Ottomans did nothing other than accommodate the Islamic-Ottoman concepts of 'protected peoples' (*zimmi*) and protection (*himaye*) to the European customary rules. The essence of the engagements (*ahd*) concluded between Sultans and Princes was the exchange between protection and tribute paying.

From the perspective of the Islamic-Ottoman law of peace and war, but according, also, to the local princes' and *boyars*' view, a relationship of temporary tributary protection was initially built up between the Porte as protecting state and the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia as protected states. This relation lasted approximately until the third or fourth decade of the sixteenth century. It implied, according to the engagements taken on in that period, a temporary ransom for peace and the annulment of Ottoman plundering raids.

According to the official Ottoman view instituted during Kanuni Süleyman's reign, Wallachia and Moldavia enjoyed, like other parts of the Empire, permanent protection against both viola-

rest in keeping alive the 'sick man' of Europe. For us, these questions are a reason to think about the international status of the Romanian Principalities, especially during the nineteenth century: "But the actual reality in particular is the one taken into account and that must be taken into account by political practice, the venerable politics that is supported, on the one hand, by the immovable rules of the law of nations and, on the other side, by the reality of facts. And, in this legality, in this reality, what would be today the international existence of the Danubian provinces, if they stopped being considered as constitutive parts of the Ottoman Empire? In what other quality, different from this one, are they known by the Christian powers? What would be the basis of the commercial and neighbourhood relations that Europe has with you, if [Wallachia] gave up the definite and favourable position that the treaties with Turkey guarantee? This relation, which attaches you to Turkey, does not connect you to Western Europe, and is not it the one that guarantees you positive warrants and an efficient protection, in exchange for a modest tribute and a more apparent than real dependency?" *Documente Hurmuzaki*, vol. XVII, doc. MXLI. See also Iordache and Stan, *Autonomie*, 94. Actually, Western observers described in similar terms the tributary status of Ragusa within the Ottoman Empire. In a 1766 report to the French King Louis XV, the Consul André Alexandre Le Maire wrote about the "total and formal subjection of the Ragusans to the Ottoman Porte" and described the legal status of the inhabitants of Dubrovnik as "a subject people to their sovereign" and the Sultan's *reaya* ("this term does not imply a tributary but a subject as well"). Z. Zlatar, *Between the Double Eagle and the Crescent: The Republic of Dubrovnik and the Origins of the Eastern Question*, Boulder and New York 1992, 1.

60 Brierly, *Law of Nations*, 133.

61 See the 'diploma' of 10 December 1603, by which the Habsburg Emperor Rudolf II granted the Wallachian throne to Radu Serban (1602-11, 1611) and his successors. *Documente Hurmuzaki*, IV/1, docs CCXCVII, CCXVIII.

tions of authorities from the neighbouring *sancaks* and attacks from the Christian powers. In the investiture diplomas (*berat*), the concept of *himaye* was particularly used to designate protection over tributary countries.⁶² The statement of imperial protection has been preserved in other documents as well, such as *fermans*, *hüküms*, *hatt-ı şerifs*, etc.⁶³ Protection of the tributary principalities was invoked by the Ottoman authorities whenever a neighbouring state had declared its intention, albeit a simple claim of rights, to annex a part of them.⁶⁴ Moreover, during conflicts with Christian powers, such as Austria and Russia, which in their turn kept an eye on the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, the Sultans and Grand Viziers would firmly declare – having more or less real arguments – that these countries were under Ottoman protection and that any attack directed against their territories was equivalent to an attack on the Sultan.⁶⁵ The safekeeping of Wallachia and Moldavia would become a principle of Ottoman politics affirmed during military conflicts and peace negotiations.⁶⁶

62 To be exact, on 22 Ramazan 994/17 September 1585; M. Maxim, *Culegere de texte otomane* [An Anthology of Ottoman Texts]. Fasc. I: *Izvoare documentare si juridice (sec. XV-XX)* [Official and Legal Sources (Fifteenth to Twentieth Centuries)], Bucharest 1974, doc. 14.

63 Here is a passage from a Mahmud I's *hüküm* of 1158/1745, referring to Wallachia: "Neither his land nor his subjects and taxes should suffer any intervention and attack from the Grand Viziers and generous *mirmirans* and *sancakbeyis*, their men and *mütesellims*, the *zabits* of *hases* and *vakıfs*, the *emins* and collectors and *nazırs*...". Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 112.

64 Protection of the territories belonging to the realm of Islam against any intrusion from outside was one of the main responsibilities that the sharia ascribed to the Muslim sovereign. This protection was also extended to the tributary states and provinces. *Mihai Viteazul în constiința europeană* [Michael the Brave in the European View]. Vol. 1: *Documente externe* [External Documents], Bucharest 1982, doc. 2.

65 *Documente Hurmuzaki*, Suppl. II/1, doc. XXVIII (*name-i hümayun* of 29 December 1532/26 January 1533 to Sigismund I); *ibid.*, Suppl. II/1, doc. XIV (letter of 12 October/10 November 1531 to Sigismund I).

66 For instance, in view of "protection against enemies", in 1150/1737, Mahmud I ordered the heads of the Danubian fortresses (Braila, Rusçuk, Giurgiu, Nikopol, etc.) to send Ottoman troops to defend the capital of Bucharest and to guard Prince Constantin Mavrocordat. Later, in November 1769, that is, just before the decisive war with Russia, Mustafa III was aware that he had to protect the integrity of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, asserting that "I inherited [them] from my great ancestors". We should notice that although the 1718, 1775-76 and 1812 territorial concessions from Wallachia and Moldavia to the Habsburg Empire or Russia were unsuited to the "imperial and burning desire... that no plot of their land and no individual from their subjects shall remain in the enemy's hand", the military and political circumstances were stronger than ideology. The provinces of Banat and Oltenia were ceded to the Habsburg Empire by the Peace Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, the former coming back to Wallachia in 1739 by the Treaty of Belgrade. See Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 83, 84, 164, 167. In 1775 Bucovina, a part of Moldavia, was ceded to the Habsburg Empire, too; *ibid.*, docs 182, 206. Bessarabia was ceded to Russia by the Treaty of Bucharest in 1812; *ibid.*, docs 239, 240, 243. Certain Romanian historians have described the territorial concessions of 1775 and 1812 especially as moments at which the Porte did not observe its obligation to protect Moldavia and Wallachia; N. Adaniloaie, 'Despre suveranitatea otomana și nerespectarea de către Poarta la 1775 și 1812 a obligațiilor de apărare a teritoriilor Țărilor Române' [On the Ottoman Sovereignty and the Breaking of the Obligation to Defend the Territories of the Romanian Countries by the Porte in 1775 and 1812], *Revista de Istorie*, 35/8 (1982), 950-55.

On the other side, ‘protection’ was a concept constantly present in the political thought of Wallachian and Moldavian princes and nobles. Considering the constant need of a protector, the sources frequently reveal local statesmen searching for him among neighbouring rulers.⁶⁷ To accept paying the tribute implied – not only in the Ottoman official view but also in the Moldo-Wallachian conception – entering Ottoman protection. According to this view, the local Princes and *boyars* considered themselves entitled to ask Sultans and Grand Viziers – most frequently through petitions (*arz*, *arzuhal*, *arz-ı mahzar*) – to guard their subjects, properties and territories against both the attacks of neighbouring Christian states and violations by subjects of the Sultan.⁶⁸ As a result of the new, nineteenth-century power relations, Wallachian and Moldavian sources stressed equally the concepts of ‘autonomy’ and ‘protection’. Thus, in a petition of 1821 written by Wallachian refugees in Brasov, which was to be delivered to the Russian authorities, obeisance and tribute-paying had as a *quid pro quo* – among other advantages – that “the Ottoman Porte shall not interfere on our land by any means at all”.⁶⁹

The notion of ‘protection’ was also frequently used by foreign observers (travellers, envoys, merchants, etc.) or in early Western books and newspapers to define the relations between the Porte and its tributary principalities to the north of the Danube.⁷⁰

Finally, according to a notorious practice, when two great powers were directly interested in establishing the political status of a buffer-territory, the bilateral agreements also included clauses related to it. Wallachia and Moldavia represented such a case during the eighteenth and the first

67 Here, a comparison with the case of Ragusa is significant. The Ragusan patriciate accepted Hungarian protection in the middle of the fifteenth century. However, after the disappearance of the Hungarian protection following the battle of Mohács (1526), and especially after the fall of Buda (1541), the Ragusan patriciate embraced Ottoman protection, which was needed and was used for commercial activities, in the context of the Venetian menace. For details, see Zlatar, *Dubrovnik*, 107-18.

68 Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, docs 41 (1720), 49 (1723), 61 (1728), 145 (1760), 217 (1795), 244 (1813), 257 (1821), etc.

69 N. Iorga, *Studii si documente cu privire la Istoria Romanilor* [Studies and Documents Concerning the Romanians' History]. Vol. XI: *Cercetari si regeste documentare* [Researches and Documents], Bucharest 1906, 192.

70 “Luy accorda sa protection moyen d’un tribut annuel”; De la Croix, in *Calatori straini despre Tarile Romane* [Foreign Travellers in the Romanian Countries], eds M. Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru and P. Cernovodeanu, vol. VII, Bucharest 1980, 254-56; F. Babinger, ‘O relatiune neobservata despre Moldova sub domnia lui Antonie Voda Ruset (1676)’ [An Ignored Account of Moldavia under Antonie Voda Ruset’s Reign (1676)], *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Sectiunii Istorice*, 3/19 (1937), 123; Gorovei, ‘Însemnari’, 34. In the English newspapers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the concept of ‘protection’ was constantly used to define the political status of Wallachia and Moldavia with regard to both the Sublime Porte and the victorious Christian powers, i.e., Austria or Russia. For example, letters from Krakow written in March 1684 inform us that “the new Hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia were with the assistance of the Poles and Cossacks established in their Governments, and that it was hoped the Transylvanians would follow their Example and put themselves under the Protection of the Crown of Poland”. *The London Gazette*, no. 1914 (20-24 March 1684) [1683 in the newspaper]; *ibid.*, no. 2096 (17-21 December 1685).

part of the nineteenth century.⁷¹ From the last quarter of the eighteenth century, in conformity with the treaties concluded with the Ottoman Empire, Russia assumed a protecting role over Wallachia and Moldavia. At the same time, all Ottoman-Russian peace agreements concluded in the years between 1774 and 1829 confirmed the autonomy status of the Romanian Principalities within the Ottoman Empire.

Taking in consideration the Islamic-Ottoman terminology, I have avoided describing the power relationship between Sultans and Princes as a vassal-suzerain one, and labelling Wallachia and Moldavia either as 'vassal states' or 'autonomous states' in terms of their status vis-à-vis the Ottoman state. In order to avoid the confusion created by the use of the concepts of vassalage and suzerainty in mélange with notions belonging to the Islamic law of peace, I have preferred to collect the abundant information and terminology of Ottoman and non-Ottoman sources under the cover of two locutions, i.e., **tributary provinces** and **buffer-protectorates**, which can be expressed also in a single idiom, i.e., **tributary-protected provinces/principalities**.

71 Clauses regarding Wallachia and Moldavia were included in the Ottoman-Habsburg Peace Treaties of 1718, 1739 and 1791. Copies of the treaties are to be found in BOA, Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri, 57/1, Nemçelü Ahid Defteri, 975-1210/1567-1795; İstanbul Belediye Kütüphanesi, Muallim Cevdet, K. 4; NA, mf. Turkey, roll 53, frames 894-1004 (*1567-1796 Osmanlı devleti ile Nemçe ve sair devletler arasında akd olunan bazı muahedeler*). For the 1718 Treaty of Passarowitz, see *Acte si documente*, 32-40; *Relatiile internationale*, doc. 44. For the 1739 Treaty of Belgrade, see *Acte si documente*, 48-58; *Relatiile internationale*, doc. 44. For the 1791 Treaty of Shishtov, see *Acte si documente*, 79-81; *Relatiile internationale*, doc. 47. See also the Ottoman-Russian peace treaties or special agreements concerning only the Romanian principalities of 1711, 1774, 1791/92, 1812, 1826, 1829, etc. Ottoman copies of the treaties are to be found in BOA, Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri, 83/1, Rusya Ahidname Defteri, 1113-1249/1701-1833. For the treaty of 1711 see Czartoryski Library, Krakow, Poland, ms. 1685/35, 491-92; *Documente Hurmuzaki*, vol. VI, doc. XLV.

APPENDIX

List of the main documents concerning the status of the
Romanian Principalities between 1774 and 1829

- 10/21 July 1774: Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca; the separate articles on Wallachia and Moldavia.⁷²
- 10/21 March 1779: Ottoman-Russian Convention of Aynalı Kavak; Article VII stipulated certain modifications in Article XVI of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca on Wallachia and Moldavia.⁷³
- Evasıt-ı Şevval 1188/15-24 December 1774: *Hatt-ı Şerifs* of Sultan Abdülhamid I communicating to Princes Alexandru Ipsilanti of Wallachia and Grigorie Ghica of Moldavia that the Porte is granting them certain privileges, as a result of the Ottoman-Russian Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca.⁷⁴
- 15 Safer 1198/9 January 1784: *Sened* communicating to the Russian Ambassador – as a result of the common note presented by the Habsburg and Russian envoys – that the Porte committed itself to observe certain conditions in its relationship with Wallachia and Moldavia.⁷⁵
- 4 August 1791: Ottoman-Austrian Peace Treaty of Shishtov.⁷⁶
- Evail-i Safer 1206/30 September-9 October 1791: *Ferman* of Selim III to Prince Mihail Sutu of Wallachia, granted after the conclusion of the peace treaty with Austria, confirming the old privileges of Wallachia.⁷⁷
- 9 January 1792: Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty of Jassy.⁷⁸
- Evasıt-ı Ramazan 1206/3-12 May 1792: *Ferman* of Selim III, granted after the conclusion of the peace treaty with Austria and Russia, to Prince Alexandru Moruzi of Moldavia, confirming the old privileges and adding new conditions.⁷⁹

72 *Acte si documente*, 125-39; *Relatiile internationale*, 227-30.

73 Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 181, 495-98.

74 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. I, doc. 292 (for Wallachia). The *hatt-ı şerif* to Prince Grigorie Ghica of Moldavia was published in Romanian with the date 4 November 1774. *Acte si documente*, 139-45.

75 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. II, doc. 33; *Acte si documente*, 192-95 (the date 1783 is wrong); 195-208, in Italian.

76 *Acte si documente*, 71-79.

77 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 5-11.

78 *Acte si documente*, 219-25.

79 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 28-35; *Acte si documente*, 225-32.

- 15 Şaban 1207/28 March 1793: Law-code (*kanunname*) establishing the financial and material obligations of Wallachia and Moldavia towards the Porte.⁸⁰
- Evahır-ı Cemaziyülevvel 1217/19-28 September 1802: *Hatt-ı şerif* of Selim III granted on the appointment of the new Prince Constantin Ipsilanti; more old privileges of Wallachia were renewed and completed with new ones, as a result of the Russian Ambassador's petition (V. S. Tomara); Evail-i Cemaziyülahır 1217/29 September-8 October 1802: A similar order was sent to the new Prince Alexandru Moruzi of Moldavia.⁸¹
- 17 Cemaziyülevvel 1227/29 May 1812: Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty of Bucharest signed by Mahmud I (1808-39) and Alexander I (1801-25).⁸²
- 7 October 1826: Ottoman-Russian Agreement of Akkerman, explaining in detail articles from the Treaty of Bucharest on Wallachia and Moldavia.⁸³
- 29 September 1829: Ottoman-Russian Peace Treaty of Adrianople; separate Agreement on Wallachia and Moldavia.⁸⁴

80 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 24-27; Veliman, *Documente turcesti*, doc. 210.

81 TSMA, Defter no. 9919; NA, mf. Turkey, roll 44, frames 862-64; Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 167-88; *Acte si documente*, 264-88. See also the document of 1 Safer 1217/3 June 1802. *Acte si documente*, 289-92 (the date 1 June 1804 is wrong).

82 Mehmet, *Documente turcesti*, vol. III, 361-66; *Acte si documente*, 296-301.

83 *Acte si documente*, 310-18.

84 *Ibid.*, 318-32.

KARAFERYE (VEROIA) IN THE 1790s: HOW MUCH CAN THE *KADI SİCİLLERİ* TELL US?

*Antonis Anastasopoulos**

For many Ottomanist and non-Ottomanist students of the Ottoman period, the 1790s represent a time of turbulence and a precursor to Westernising modernity, even if for different reasons. From a strict Ottomanist point of view, the reform programme of the Nizam-ı Cedid and ‘conservative’ reaction to it are the highlights of this decade.¹ For a national Balkan historiography, such as the Greek, on the other hand, the 1790s are important as the aftermath to the French Revolution. The Revolution by itself, as well as through propaganda activity actively undertaken by French agents and sympathisers in the Ottoman lands, gave fresh impetus to the movement known as the ‘Modern Greek Enlightenment’ and its adherents,² and eventually contributed to the national ‘awakening’ of the Balkan peoples and their breaking away from the Ottoman Empire; like the reforms introduced by the Ottoman government, so the rationalist ideas of the Enlightenment annoyed and provoked reaction among ‘conservative’ Christian circles.³ Thus, if we may put it in rather sketchy terms, both on the Muslim and the non-Muslim sides, the closing decade of the eighteenth century saw forces representing a new Western-oriented spirit striving against traditionalists.

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1 S. J. Shaw’s *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971 is still the standard textbook for this period, rich in information but old-fashioned in its approach.

2 On the Modern Greek Enlightenment, see K. T. Dimaras, *Neohellenikos Diaphotismos* [Modern Greek Enlightenment], 3rd ed., Athens 1983. On pp. 1 and 5-6 Dimaras defines Modern Greek Enlightenment as an optimistic intellectual tendency (but not a proper philosophical system), marked by faith in the power of reason, in the ability of humankind to evolve and achieve happiness, in progress, in education and religious tolerance, as well as in the dignity of all human beings. Modern Greek Enlightenment extends over the last decades of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth century, that is, roughly over the period from 1774 to 1821.

3 According to Philippos Iliou, the 1790s were marked by the first big crisis caused by the reaction of the Greek Orthodox Church to Enlightenment (P. Iliou, *Koinonikoi agones kai Diaphotismos: he periptose tes Smyrnes (1819)* [Social Struggles and Enlightenment: The Case of Smyrna (1819)], Athens 1986, 41 n. 67).

Obviously, these two developments, namely the Nizam-ı Cedid and the spread of the philosophical and political ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, did not occur in two separate worlds; they were phenomena which – no matter how imperfect or shallow one may argue that their impact or understanding was – concurrently affected the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which are our particular point of reference in this paper. However, one may be led to think otherwise, since they are often studied independently of one another.⁴ Leaving this point aside for the time being, we will first proceed to an overview of the major phenomena of the 1790s.

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The 1790s started with the Ottomans fighting against the Russians and the Austrians in the Balkans and ended with the Ottomans fighting to ward their traditional ally, France, off Egypt with the assistance of Britain and their former and future enemy, Russia.⁵ However, the 1790s are thought of today as an important landmark in Ottoman history not really for the wars against the Austrians, the Russians or the French, but because of the accession of the reforming Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) to the throne. The advent of the thirteenth century of the Muslim era coincided with a new sovereign who introduced the *nizam-ı cedid*, the new order army, in 1794.⁶ Selim's initiative was the most significant reforming attempt to that day (and was later interpreted as the culmination of traditional reform and a precursor to the sweeping reforms of the Tanzimat era), but did not emerge out of thin air.⁷ On the one hand, it responded to an urgent and alarming pro-

4 There are several studies of the impact of the French Revolution on the Ottoman Empire, but most of them are either restricted to diplomatic contacts and the impact of the Revolution on Istanbul or focus on the Muslim elite and inhabitants of the Empire or refer to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; see, for instance, B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London 1963, 53-72, as well as the collections of articles in *RMMM*, 52-53 (1989) and *CEMOTI*, 12 (1991). Gérard Groc admits that concrete information about the reception of the French Revolution in major Ottoman urban centres other than Istanbul is scarce (G. Groc, 'Les premiers contacts de l'Empire ottoman avec le message de la Révolution Française (1789-1798)', *CEMOTI*, 12 [1991], 21).

5 Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 21-68, 262-82; E. Z. Karal, *Selim III'ün hatt-ı hümayunları* [The Imperial Rescripts of Selim III], Ankara 1942, 23-80. See I. K. Vasdravellis (ed.), *Historika Archeia Makedonias. B. Archeion Veroi-as-Naousses 1598-1886* [Historical Archives of Macedonia. II. Archive of Verioia – Naoussa, 1598-1886], Thessaloniki 1954, 249, no. 254 (28 March 1799) for a decree announcing the alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, and Lewis, *Emergence*, 67 for an anti-French proclamation.

6 The term *nizam-ı cedid* is used to describe both the new-style army formally introduced in 1794 and the whole reform programme of Selim III inaugurated in 1792 (E. Z. Karal, *Selim III'ün hat-tı hümayunları – Nizam-ı Cedit – 1789-1807* [The Imperial Rescripts of Selim III, Nizam-ı Cedit, 1789-1807], 2nd reprint, Ankara 1988, 29; *EF*, vol. 9, s.v. 'Selim III', 133 [V. Aksan]). According to Karal, the French Revolution provided the source of inspiration for the term (Karal, *Hat-tı hümayunları – Nizam-ı Cedit*, 88; see also Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 98). The *nizam-ı cedid* army was really established in 1792, even though it was officially proclaimed in 1794 (*ibid.*, 127-31).

7 For the notion of traditional reform, see S. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. Volume I: *Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808*, Cambridge 1976, 169ff.

blem, that is, repeated lack of effectiveness of the Ottoman troops on the battlefield. On the other hand, its foundations lay on long-term phenomena that had been building up for decades, such as coming to terms with the idea of adopting Western practices and organisational methods both in everyday life and in the army despite resistance from the so-called 'conservative' circles and interest groups, such as large sections of the janissaries and the *ulema*.

The 1790s were, however, much more than the mere introduction of a military innovation. They were also marked by other phenomena and events that established themselves as important features of Ottoman life in the decades which followed: one was further intensification of contacts with the West both at state and social level, as is demonstrated, for instance, by the establishment of the first permanent Ottoman embassies abroad and the closer incorporation of Ottoman commerce into world commerce.⁸ Contact with the ideas of the Age of Enlightenment and the French Revolution resulted in the dissemination of new political and cultural ideas in the Balkans, as evidenced by the political vision of Rhigas Velestinlis⁹ and other works of this period, which often expressed their discontent with several aspects of the Ottoman system of administration.¹⁰ Another significant phenomenon of the 1790s was the struggle between the Ottoman government and another form of centrifugal forces, that is, powerful *ayan* warlords, best exemplified in Osman

8 On the Ottoman embassies of the reign of Selim III, see T. Naff, 'Reform and the Conduct of Ottoman Diplomacy in the Reign of Selim III, 1789-1807', *JAOS*, 83 (1963), 303-06. See also E. Kuran, *Avrupa'da Osmanlı ikamet elçiliklerinin kuruluşu ve ilk elçilerin siyasi faaliyetleri, 1793-1821* [The Establishment of Permanent Ottoman Embassies in Europe and Political Activities of the First Ambassadors, 1793-1821], Ankara 1968, esp. 13-46; F. R. Unat, *Osmanlı sefirleri ve sefaretnameleri* [Ottoman Embassies and Ambassadorial Reports], Ankara 1968, 168-81; M. A. Yalçınkaya, 'İsmail Ferruh Efendi'nin Londra büyükelçiliği ve siyasi faaliyetleri (1797-1800)' [İsmail Ferruh Efendi as Ambassador in London and his Political Activities (1797-1800)], in K. Çiçek (ed.), *Pax Ottomana: Studies in Memoriam Prof. Dr. Nejat Göyüncü*, Haarlem-Ankara 2001, 381-407. On commerce, see the overview given by B. McGowan, 'The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge 1994, 724-39, as well as R. Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century*, Albany 1988, 18-23.

9 There is extensive bibliography on Rhigas. From among the scholarly production of the last few years, one may consult P. Kitromilidis, *Regas Velestinlis: theoria kai praxe* [Rhigas Velestinlis: Theory and Action], Athens 1998, in conjunction with the remarks in his 'Epistemonikes proypotheseis tes meletes tou Rega' [Presuppositions of Critical Scholarship on Rhigas], in M. Efthymiou and D. Contogeorgis (eds), *Time ston Rega Velestinle/Homage to Rhigas Velestinlis*, [Athens] 2002, 45-56; A. I. Manesis, 'He politike ideologia tou Rega' [Rhigas's Political Ideology], in Efthymiou and Contogeorgis (eds), *Time ston Rega Velestinle*, 13-33; C. M. Woodhouse, *Rhigas Velestinlis: The Proto-Martyr of the Greek Revolution*, Limni Evias 1995. For a brief survey of older bibliography, see Kitromilidis, *Regas*, 15 n. 1, and the other works cited here.

10 See, for instance, a report written in 1796 as well as the comments by the editor: S. I. Asdrachas, 'Pragmatikotes apo ton helleniko IH' aiona' [Realities from the Greek Eighteenth Century], in *Stathmoi pros te nea hellenike koinonia* [Milestones Towards Modern Greek Society], Athens 1965, 1-47. The existence of such a text is very interesting for our purposes because its author probably lived in İstife (Gk. Thiva), that is, in a town which, similar to Karaferye, our case study, was not a major cultural or commercial centre.

Pazvantoğlu of Vidin.¹¹ Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, who was methodically expanding his authority in the 1790s, was another such figure with a heavy impact on life in the Balkans in the early decades of the nineteenth century.¹²

The 1790s also witnessed attempts at centralisation and increased efficacy of the state mechanism. These attempts had mixed results, depending as always on the ability of the state to make local societies, their leadership but also its own agents respect and implement the provisions of its decrees.¹³ One such attempt with an impact on Ottoman provinces was the creation of the so-called Grain Administration (*zahire nezareti*) in 1793. This was a special agency with its own treasury; its aim was to guarantee the proper supply of Istanbul with cereals and to supervise both the supply system and the bread market in the capital.¹⁴

Another special treasury was set up by Selim III in order to meet the cost of building a new army. This treasury was appropriately called the New Fund (*irad-ı cedid hazinesi*); several sources of income were accumulated under its umbrella.¹⁵ At the same time, Selim and his advisors tried to increase state income in general and to put state finances into better shape, partly through closer inspection of accounts.

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Karaferye (Veroia in Greek), seat of a *kadı*, was a rather small provincial town lying some 75 kilometres west-north-west of the district's (*sancak*) administrative centre, Salonica. Felix Beaujour, who served as the French consul in Salonica, estimated on the basis of *cizye* receipts, military recruiting rolls and corn consumption that Karaferye's population amounted to around 8,000 inhabitants in the 1790s.¹⁶ According to another contemporaneous source, a Geography published in Greek in 1791, Karaferye was an old, big town, seat of a metropolitan, inhabited by more Chri-

11 D. R. Sadat, 'Âyân and Ağâ: The Transformation of the Bektashi Corps in the 18th Century', *Muslim World*, 63 (1973), 206-19; R. Zens, 'Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791-1807', *IJTS*, 8/1 & 2 (2002), 89-104. Cf. the papers of Gradeva and Tlili Sellaouti in this volume.

12 K. E. Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece*, Princeton 1999.

13 See examples in Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 117, 120, 126-27, 133-34, 171, 178.

14 T. Güran, 'The State Role in the Grain Supply of Istanbul: The Grain Administration, 1793-1839', *IJTS*, 3/1 (1984-85), 27-41.

15 Y. Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım ve değişim dönemi (XVIII.yy dan Tanzimat'a mali tarih)* [The Period of Depression and Change in Ottoman Finances (Financial History from the Eighteenth Century to the Tanzimat)], [Istanbul] 1986, 155-207.

16 F. Beaujour, *A View of the Commerce of Greece, Formed after an Annual Average, from 1787 to 1797*, trans. T. Hartwell Home, London 1800, 82-86. Beaujour estimated that the ratio of city dwellers to peasants in south-western Macedonia and Thessaly was 1 to 3. Concerning the accuracy of his estimate, he himself pointed out that the data of Ottoman registers should be used cautiously (*ibid.*, 82).

stians than Turks (sic), renowned for its towels (*peşkir*), which were distributed all over the Ottoman territories and in many other places, too.¹⁷

What is the reflection of the brief textbook overview given in the previous section on Karaferye of the 1790s? How was life in this Balkan region affected by the administrative innovations and ideological developments of this period? Owing to the survival of the *kadı sicilleri* of the town of Karaferye, it is admittedly much easier to discern reflections of the former rather than of the latter. *Kadı sicilleri* (hereafter *sicils*), the registers of the Islamic court of justice, where incoming orders were also copied, are expected to reflect social and economic conditions in the Ottoman provinces, the local balance of power as well as relations between centre and periphery, and have been extensively – and fruitfully – used as a source for Ottoman history for several decades now.¹⁸ For instance, the *sicils* of Karaferye reflect the war conditions of the 1790s: one of the very first surviving entries from the 1790s refers to the dispatch of pioneers (*beldaran*) to the imperial army for the war against the Austrians and the Russians (*Nemçe ve Moskov seferleriyçün*),¹⁹ while several entries of 1798 and 1799 refer to the French invasion to Egypt.²⁰

The *sicils* of Karaferye from the 1790s have survived in a very rudimentary state, as they amount to only 81 pages in total; very few come from 1790 and the rest cover the years from 1794 to 1796 and from 1798 to 1799. Even though it would be desirable to have many more *sicil* folios at our disposal, the existing material provides sufficient evidence concerning the situation in the region in the 1790s. In this paper I will restrict myself to the mid-1790s, and discussion of the *sicil* material will revolve around two basic questions. One is what the general picture given by the *sicils* is. The other is whether echoes of the reforming spirit of the 1790s can be found in them.

Generally speaking, the *sicil* of 1794-96 does not seem to significantly differ from the registers of the preceding decades in terms of contents; I do not imply that all *sicil* volumes are identical, but that the main categories of entries found in the *sicils* of the second half of the eighteenth

17 D. Philippidis and G. Konstantas, *Geographia neoterike: peri tes Hellados* [Modern Geography: On Greece], ed. A. Koumarianou, Athens 1970, 140.

18 There is a multitude of studies based on *sicils*. For a list of studies published from the 1950s up to 1996, one may consult *EF*, s.v. 'Sidjill: 3. In Ottoman Administrative Usage' (S. Faroqhi).

19 Karaferye Sicil (hereafter KS) vol. 100/page 2/entry 2 (30 April 1790). The *sicils* of Karaferye are kept at the Imathia branch of the General State Archives of Greece in Veroia.

20 Vasdravellis, *Historika Archeia*, 243-45, no. 250 (29 July 1798); 246-48, no. 252 (23 December 1798); 248-49, no. 253 (9 March 1799); 249, no. 254 (28 March 1799). The fact that the *imdad* for the Muslim year 1214 was defined as *hazariye* (instead of *seferiye*) in a decree of the *divan* of Salonica may be an indication of the distance which in fact separated the *sancak* from the theatre of war (KS 102/467/1 [11 June 1799]). The emphasis on religion in decrees about the French invasion of Egypt is by no means surprising and continues a very long state tradition, but may be seen, on the ideological level, as one indication – even if incidental in nature – of why, at a time of growing pressure from Christian powers and dissemination of nationalist ideals in the Balkans, non-Muslims felt increasingly estranged from the great Islamic empire whose subjects they were.

enth century remain more or less the same throughout, even if actual content and distribution vary depending on the particular events, needs and developments of a given year. As in earlier years, incoming orders alternate with lists of local expenses to be distributed among the population of the region (*masarif-i vilayet defterleri*) and other entries. Several of these entries refer to tax issues, such as tax collection and tax farming, but there are also entries about debts, either personal or communal, some of them actually being related to taxation. A particular form of taxation, for which a number of entries survive, is the obligatory sale of cereals for the needs of the population of Istanbul (*mubayaa*). Another group of entries concerns brigandage and action to be taken against brigands. Other entries refer to the appointment of officials, such as governors of the *sancak* of Salonica. A few entries have to do with *timars*: allocation, subletting, and one about a *timar* holder complaining to higher authorities that the villagers had not paid tithe in three years. Finally, as is typical of the surviving Karaferye *sicils* of the late eighteenth century, there are very few entries which relate to what theoretically constituted the bulk of everyday activity of the court of justice, that is, litigations, as well as registrations of such events as real estate transactions, the fixing of market prices, the distribution of the estates of the deceased among their heirs, and conversions to Islam.²¹

However, if we turn to a closer investigation of the contents of particular *sicil* entries of 1794-96, we will discover reflections of the administrative reforms of the 1790s. For instance, a sultanic decree that was received by the Karaferye court of justice on 9 October 1795 and copied in the *kadi's* register does reflect the spirit of the new era. This decree referred to issues concerning the proper collection of the tax on alcoholic liquors, the so-called *rüsum-ı zecriye* (or *zecriye resmi*).²² After setting the rate of the tax at 2 *paras* per *okka* for wine and 4 *paras* for raki and other drinks and allowing a tax-exempt quantity for own use by non-Muslims only, a great deal of emphasis was placed on and space dedicated to following the proper accounting procedure and preventing embezzlement. The collectors (*âmil*) were required to compile detailed inventories of their daily activity; these inventories should include the details of those selling spirits, the quantity taxed, as well as the place of origin and the destination of the vendors. Depending on the distance of the region from Istanbul a copy of the inventory was to be sent daily or weekly or monthly or at least once every two or three months to the capital for inspection. The collector was also required to compile a final register with the total of the tax revenue at the end of the year and submit it for inspection by the principal collector (*muhassıl*), a tax-farmer, who had to verify the register's accuracy locally. If the tax revenue from a particular region was found to be below a set rate (40 *kises*=20,000 *guruş*), a 10% fine was to be imposed on the collector's salary and expense allowan-

21 Cf. B. A. Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)*, Leiden-Boston 2003, 33-43 and n. 5.

22 For this tax, see Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım*, 183-86.

ce. If the tax revenue was found to be above the expected rate, a cash bonus would be paid to the collector (25 *guruş* per *kise*). After this procedure had been completed and the due amount of money had been paid to the state, the result of the inspection would be registered locally and a copy would be given to the collector. In the event of the collector being found to have embezzled money, then punishment would be severe, ranging from dismissal and confiscation of his property for the simpler cases to execution for more sinister tax collectors. Before instructing the local collector in Karaferye to start collection for the Muslim year 1210, another part of the decree was dedicated to stressing that no one was to be exempted from the tax regardless of their status and place of residence.²³

The reason for citing this decree in some detail is that I find it to be quite characteristic of the spirit of Selim's reforms. For one thing, it is stated in it that collection of the tax on alcoholic liquors is arranged in accordance with the terms of the new order (*nizam-ı cedid*). More importantly, however, it exemplifies the administrative tendency towards stricter state control by means of all the checks imposed on the tax collector.

Manifestations of reform inroads upon the life of Karaferye as well as of the co-existence of old and new forms which was, according to some, one of the reasons for the eventual dethronement of Selim III, can in fact be detected in several categories of entries. *Timars*, one of the core institutions of the so-called 'classic Ottoman administrative system', still existed in the late eighteenth century, even though they were moribund. An entry dated 1 March 1795 referred to farming out a number of vacant *timars* in the region of Karaferye. Farming out *timar* revenue was by no means a novelty of the 1790s; on the contrary, it had been going on for centuries.²⁴ What was a touch of novelty was the fact that the particular *timars* in Karaferye were farmed out by the *irad-ı cedid* to which they had been transferred by sultanic decree.²⁵ The procedure was like the farming out of any other sort of revenue: Timur Hasan, the tax-farmer, signed a promissory note (*deyn temessüğü*) and took control of the *timars*' revenues for one full year starting in March and ending in February. The decree contains a remarkable contradistinction between the new law (*kanun-ı cedid*), according to which the *timars* were farmed out,²⁶ and the old law (*kanun-ı kadim*), according to which Timur Hasan was entitled to enjoy their revenues, on condition of respecting the rights of the *reaya*.²⁷

23 KS 101/36/2 (June-July 1795; the exact date of issue is illegible).

24 L. T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire 1560-1660*, Leiden-New York-Köln 1996, 123-36, 139-40. See also H. İnalçık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 327-33.

25 Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım*, 174-83; cf. Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 120, 125, 129.

26 Selim issued a decree about the reform of the *timar* system (*timar kanunu*) in 1791/92 (Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım*, 177).

27 KS 101/22/2 (1 March 1795).

This kind of blending between old and new forms is evident throughout the *sicil*. One can find recurrent references to the *nizam-ı cedid* and the *irad-ı cedid* in entries which otherwise may not differ from older ones in their general outlook. As noted above, the tendency towards closer inspection of the financial affairs of the district by the imperial centre must have been another observable change for the society of Karaferye, or at least its leadership. A reflection of this tendency may also be found in the periodic registers which contained the communal expenses of the region and their distribution among the local population. State inspection of these registers antedated Selim III, but it seems that there was an (abortive?) attempt at a more rigorous application of this measure during the 1790s.²⁸ The presence in Karaferye of a state inspector whose task was to check local registers of distribution of the tax burden must have been a living reminder of this centralising tendency.²⁹

Mubayaa was another procedure that was affected by the policies of Selim III, and imperial decrees about it bear the marks of reform. For instance, two major innovations of the 1790s, that is, the purchase of cereals at market price (*rayic*) and not from the *kaza* as a whole but directly from specifically named notables and officials who were big landowners, tax-farmers of the tithe and granary owners (*ashab-ı alaka ve aşar ve erbab-ı çift ve ziraat* [or *çiftlik*] *ve enbar*),³⁰ are reflected in two surviving decrees of 1795.³¹ Moreover, one of these two decrees is very lengthy, which seems to be a general tendency of the 1790s, and rather elaborate about procedural issues as far as securing the proper dispatch and sale of cereals is concerned.³² Finally, those familiar with state hierarchy may not have failed to notice that the superintendent of cereals (*zahire nazırı*) had now been awarded the prestigious rank of Third Treasurer of the Imperial Treasury (*sıkk-ı salıs*), which was an expression of the increased concern of the state for the provision of Istanbul with cereals.³³

28 Y. Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda âyânlık* [The Institution of Ayaniship in the Ottoman Empire], Ankara 1994, 259, 262-65, 280-81; H. İnalçık, 'Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration', in T. Naff and R. Owen (eds), *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, Carbondale 1977, 51.

29 KS 101/9 (13 June 1795). This inspector's title is cited as "dergâh-ı muallâm gediklülerinden kaza-ı mezbur tevziat defatiri nazırı" in a decree addressed to him (KS 101/43/2 [31/1-9/2/1796]). This latter entry has been translated into Greek by Vasdravellis, *Historika Archeia*, 240-42, no. 248. For reaction to the appointment of such an official, see Özkaya, *âyânlık*, 293.

30 Güran, 'The State Role in the Grain Supply', 30-31. The author remarks that "rayic purchasing was begun only after the foundation of the Grain Administration" (ibid., 30), but then refers to decrees which were issued prior to its establishment and dealt with rayic purchase of cereals (ibid., 31 n. 20 and 21; 33 n. 30).

31 KS 101/27 (9-17 July 1795); KS 101/33 (5-14 September 1795). Even though most of the cereals were to be provided by specific individuals, certain quantities were allocated to the people of Sidrekapsi and Karaferye collectively.

32 According to KS 101/27, smuggling and mixing of *mubayaa* wheat with other cereals, such as barley, rye, straw, and wild oats, were two of the problems facing the state.

33 Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 175-76. This official and his rank were cited in both decrees.

Where do these observations lead to in terms of the impact of the Nizam-ı Cedid on a Balkan region such as Karaferye? Karaferye *sicil* entries suggest that not long after the promulgation of Selim's innovations, the new administrative spirit reached the Balkan provinces through imperial decrees of a mostly financial and fiscal nature. On the other hand, nowhere is to be seen a radical departure from older forms as was to be the case in the middle of the nineteenth century with the much broader Tanzimat reforms.³⁴ It is undeniable that at least certain circles in Karaferye must have wondered what exactly this new thing, the Nizam-ı Cedid, was, but they must not have felt that their life was seriously upset.³⁵ The registers for the distribution of local expenses and taxation provide some indication as to this: as seems to be the case in other regions too, even though the regular register was inspected by the state agent, another register of the same year concerning the payment of fees to the governor of Salonica contained no reference whatsoever to the new regime.³⁶ Even if inspection of the regular register was indeed very rigorous, what prevented local notables from transferring illegal exactions to the other register?³⁷

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Undoubtedly, a more systematic examination of the Karaferye *sicils* of the 1790s will lead to further elaboration of the picture concerning the effect of the Nizam-ı Cedid on the region. But if *sicils* are a valuable source for the study of administrative reform as such, what about its possible impact on the mentality of Ottoman subjects, and what about other contemporaneous phenomena, such as the impact of the Enlightenment on Karaferye? Changes in mentality and ideological currents are intangible, but this does not mean that they do not leave any marks behind. It is very doubtful though that these can be found in court records; it is much more likely to trace them where research on the Enlightenment has focused and still focuses, that is, in the publications of scholars, merchants and revolutionaries, in the dissemination of books and pamphlets, in memoirs, in letters, in architecture, decoration and other forms of material culture.

34 In fact, the extension of the authority of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa to the district of Karaferye in the last few years of the eighteenth century (1798) may have proved for the region a much more critical change than the Nizam-ı Cedid.

35 See, in this context, Shaw's concluding remarks concerning the limitations of Selim's concept of reform (Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 405-07). See also how the report of 1796 (n. 10 above) describes the situation in Thiva concerning continuing fiscal oppression of the local population (P. Ph. Christopoulos, 'He peri ton Korinthiakon perioche kata ta tele tou IH' aionos' [The Area around the Corinthian Gulf in the Late Eighteenth Century], *EHSM*, 3 [1971-72], 457-60).

36 KS 101/20 (16 July 1795).

37 Cf. M. Ç. Uluçay, *18 ve 19. Yüzyıllarda Saruhan'da eşkıyalık ve halk hareketleri* [Brigandage and Popular Movements in Saruhan in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries], Istanbul 1955, 53-55.

Paschalis Kitromilidis, a specialist in the Modern Greek Enlightenment, has suggested that the social roots of “revolutionary mentality” in the Balkans were “slender”,³⁸ but it is reasonable to assume that news about the French Revolution had reached a town such as Karaferye, given the activities (such as the planting of ‘trees of liberty’) of French agents and sympathisers in Istanbul and elsewhere.³⁹ Even if we suppose – for the sake of our argument – that the people of Karaferye had no knowledge whatsoever of the dramatic events in France, is there any chance of them being unaware of the struggle between the Church and the ‘philosophers’, given the various pamphlets and books published and circulated by both sides?⁴⁰ Even if we admit that it might have been so for lack of concrete evidence, it is beyond any doubt that the inhabitants of Karaferye heard about the French invasion to Egypt, since state decrees about the event were received by the local court of justice, while the Orthodox Patriarchate also issued anti-French encyclicals.⁴¹ As a matter of fact, a true propaganda war broke out in 1798; the Ottomans, the Russians, the French, the British, the Orthodox Patriarchate, as well as private individuals sympathising with (or working for) one or the other side, were involved in it.⁴²

Even though scattered and few in number, still there are some pieces of information which

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- 38 P. M. Kitromilidis, *He Gallike Epanastase kai he notioanatolike Europe* [The French Revolution and South-eastern Europe], Athens 2000, 46-47, 133-34. Y. Cezar puts forward a similar argument in his ‘Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun çağdaşlaşma sürecinde Selim III dönemi: Nizâm-ı Cedid reformları’ [The Period of Selim III in the Process of Modernisation of the Ottoman Empire: The Nizam-ı Cedid Reforms], in J.-L. Bacqué-Grammont and E. Eldem (eds), *De la Révolution française à la Turquie d’Atatiürk: La modernisation politique et sociale. Les lettres, les sciences et les arts. Actes des Colloques d’Istanbul (10-12 mai 1989)*, Istanbul-Paris 1990, 57-70, esp. 57-63. Viewed as a whole, the contributions in this volume seem to confirm the view that the ideas of the French Revolution truly had an impact on the Muslim elite of the Ottoman Empire only in the course of the nineteenth century, and not in its early decades either.
- 39 Kitromilidis, *Gallike Epanastase*, 33-40; Groc, ‘Premiers contacts’, 21-34, 37; Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 197-98.
- 40 As Kitromilidis notes, even conservative, traditionalist propaganda against the Enlightenment and the French Revolution contributed to the propagation of the new revolutionary ideas, as it was formulated by necessity in a modernist context and unwittingly advertised the names and ideas of its opponents (Kitromilidis, *Gallike Epanastase*, 80-82).
- 41 Greek translations of decrees concerning the French invasion can be found in Vasdravellis, *Historika Archeia* (see above, n. 20); cf. Karal, *Selim III’in hatt-ı humayunları* (1942), 50-52. Excerpts from patriarchal encyclicals have been published in *Historia tou hellenikou ethnous* [History of the Greek Nation], vol. 11, Athens 1975, 449.
- 42 Even though state and church were primarily concerned for those areas that were more exposed to the French ‘menace’, i.e., the western Balkans, the Peloponnese, the Aegean islands, and Crete (Lewis, *Emergence*, 65), several decrees and encyclicals were dispatched all over and reached (or must have reached) Karaferye. A useful overview of pro- and anti-French propaganda from the 1790s can be found in L. Vranousis, ‘Agnosta patriotika phylladia kai anekdota keimena tes epoches tou Rega kai tou Korae. He philogallike kai he antigallike propaganda’ [Unknown Patriotic Pamphlets and Unpublished Texts from the Time of Rhigas and Korais. Pro- and Anti-French Propaganda], *Epeteris tou Mesaionikou Archeiou (Akademia Athinon)*, 15-16 (1965-66), 125-330.

suggest that Karaferye Christians in fact were not impervious to the social and ideological developments and struggles of the late eighteenth century. For instance, the Bishop of Campania, Theophilos,⁴³ a liberal scholar acquainted with the ideas of the Enlightenment, passed through Karaferye in 1773 and the local teacher Stamatios Bekellidis composed an epigram in his honour on this occasion.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the surviving correspondence of Theophilos demonstrates that he had contacts from and in Karaferye, and that he once asked the Metropolitan of Karaferye to find him lodging for the duration of a short stay in the town.⁴⁵ The epigram of Bekellidis is in itself an indication that there existed in the town literate men familiar with classical culture, since it was composed in a language and style drawing on ancient Greek models. Besides, Esprit Marie Cousinéry remarked that he was entertained in Karaferye by a certain “Békéla”, who was knowledgeable in scholarly Greek (“savant dans la langue grecque littérale”); the French diplomat and numismatist does not specifically cite when this happened, but it most likely was before 1793.⁴⁶ This Békéla must have been a relative of Bekellidis. At least one member of the same family was a merchant who settled in Hungary. Merchants often were promoters of learning and indeed Békéla was a superintendent (*ephoros*) of the Greek school of Pest and sponsored the publication of books.⁴⁷ There is some information on books for which this Békéla and others from Karaferye

43 The Diocese of Campania was situated in the plain between Salonica and Veroia.

44 On Theophilos, see D. S. Ginis (ed.), *Nomikon poiethen kai syntachthen eis haplen phrasin hypo tou panierotatou ellogimotatou episkopou Kampanias kyriou kyriou Theophilou tou ex Ioanninon (1788)* [Law Book Composed and Arranged in the Common Language by his Most Erudite Holiness the Bishop of Campania Theophilos of Ioannina (1788)], Thessaloniki 1960, 1-11; the epigram was published by S. Efstratiadis, ‘Ho Kampanias Theophilos ho ex Ioanninon’ [Theophilos of Ioannina, Bishop of Campania], *Epeirotika Chronika*, 2 (1927), 72. A catalogue of books that Theophilos must have consulted in the course of his life can be found in D. S. Ginis, ‘He vivliotheke tou Theophilou Kampanias (ho pneumatikos kosmos henos phileleutherou despote)’ [The Library of Theophilos, Bishop of Campania (The Intellectual World of a Liberal Bishop)], *Ho Eranistes*, 1 (1963), 33-40.

45 M. A. Kalinderis, *Ta lyta egrapha tes Demotikes Vivliothekes Kozanes 1676-1808* [The Unbound Documents of the Municipal Library of Kozani, 1676-1808], Thessaloniki 1951, 62-63, 71-72, but also 60-61, 126; Efstratiadis, ‘Kampanias Theophilos’, 70, 76-77, 246, 256, 259, 261-62; V. A. Mystakidis, ‘Theophilou Kampanias erga kai hemerai’ [Works and Days of Theophilos, Bishop of Campania], *Theologia*, 7 (1929), 54-55, 116-17, 119-20. Theophilos also sent a petition to the Metropolitan of Salonica on behalf of a monk in Karaferye (Efstratiadis, ‘Kampanias Theophilos’, 258). Theophilos and two of his correspondents, Daniel, Metropolitan of Karaferye, and Theophilos, the Veroiot Metropolitan of Servia and Kozani, were contacted by a Russian agent in 1789 in the context of the war between the Ottomans and the Russians (*Historia tou hellenikou ethnous*, vol. 11, 91).

46 E. M. Cousinéry, *Voyage dans la Macédoine*, vol. 1, Paris 1831, 68. Compare with three eighteenth-century Greek inscriptions of a stilted linguistic style published by T. Papazotos, *He Veroia kai hoi naoi tes (11os-18os ai.)* [Veroia and its Churches (Eleventh-Eighteenth Centuries)], Athens 1994, 89, 147-49, 156-57. However, most eighteenth-century Greek inscriptions from Veroia are brief and contain spelling mistakes. We may note here that Papazotos discerns in some eighteenth-century church frescoes and icons, concepts and styles that in his view announce the Greek Enlightenment (*ibid.*, 231-32, 295-96).

47 G. C. Chionidis, ‘He ek Veroias katagomene oikogeneia Vikela’ [The Vikelas Family of Veroia], *Makedonika*, 7 (1966-67), 213.

subscribed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but this is scarce.⁴⁸ Finally, we do know that there were local merchants under foreign protection in Karaferye, which presumably presupposed and entailed some form of contact with the West;⁴⁹ on the other hand, there is hardly any systematic information on late eighteenth-century domestic architecture in connection with the rise of a Christian bourgeoisie.⁵⁰

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Karaferye was neither a big urban centre nor a junction, while very little is currently known about the social, economic and intellectual conditions in the town and its countryside during the eighteenth century. The point in evoking its case in the context of a paper that seeks to locate the imprint of the Nizam-ı Cedid and Greek Enlightenment on the Balkans is that it is comparable to several other little-studied towns in this part of the Empire with mixed populations of Muslims and non-Muslims. Having made this remark, I should make clear that I by no means suggest that the study of a Balkan region in the 1790s is or should be exhausted in the study of the impact that the Nizam-ı Cedid and the Enlightenment had on it. The reason I have chosen to focus on these two phenomena is only because of their emblematic character as dominant themes of what schematically might be called ‘Ottomanist’ and ‘national Greek’ historiographies, which form the point of reference for the last section of this paper.

Undoubtedly, in recent decades national historiographies have begun to take the Ottoman context into consideration; Ottomanists, on the other hand, have moved beyond the study of the state and its institutions towards analysing Ottoman society and economy. However, a lot still needs to be accomplished. For instance, where do the realities of what has been called the Age of Greek Enlightenment by Greek historiography and the period of the Nizam-ı Cedid by Ottomanists meet

48 Myaris has compiled a list of subscribers from Karaferye. Six titles and eight subscribers (two metropolitans) are recorded for the period 1792-1807. Three persons subscribed to one title of interest in 1797 (a “Thesaurus of Grammar”), the other book published in the 1790s being a religious one. Subscribers from Karaferye subscribed between 1804 and 1807 for a book on Logic, Metaphysics and Ethics, Thucydides’ Peloponnesian War edited by Neophytos Doukas, a History of Greece and a book on mathematics and natural science. It is noticeable, though, that most of the eight subscribers did not reside in Karaferye (G. K. Myaris, ‘Syndrometes vivlion apo ten Veroia kai te Naousa metaxy 1758 kai 1839’ [Book Subscribers from Veroia and Naoussa, 1758-1839], *Makedonikon hermerologion Sphendone*, 70 [1995], 245-46). As was to be expected, the number of publications and subscribers increased significantly from about 1805 onwards.

49 A. Anastasopoulos, ‘Building Alliances: A Christian Merchant in Eighteenth-Century Karaferye’, *Oriente Moderno*, 25/1 n.s. (2006), 65-75.

50 N. Kalogirou, *Hellenike paradosiake architektonike: Veroia* [Greek Traditional Architecture: Veroia], Athens 1989, 19, 36; N. Moutsopoulos, *He laïke architektonike tes Veroias/The Popular Architecture of Verria*, Athens 1967.

in historical writing? This paper does not purport to be exhaustive or conclusive, but aims at suggesting research possibilities that have not been fully exploited yet.

Admittedly, sometimes incompatibility between national Balkan historiographies and Ottomanist approaches to the same period and area seems to originate in differences in the nature and purposes of available sources. For example, the Karaferye *sicils* of the 1790s give very limited information on non-Muslims: they are presented as traditional imperial subjects, whose activity was more or less limited to paying taxes and following their traditional daily routine (with all its hiccups, including brigand attacks, to which we will soon turn our attention). On the other hand, non-Ottoman sources of the same period suggest that even though Christian communities remained traditional in their outlook, they exhibited willingness to accept new ideas and practices.

The case of Tasos Karatasos could be cited here as another local instance of discrepancy between Ottoman and non-Ottoman sources. Karatasos, who was a renowned *martolos* of Karaferye and its region, and one of the principal defenders of Ağustos (Naoussa) against Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, according to Greek sources and scholarship,⁵¹ could be one of the “Ağustos people” (*Ağustos kasabası ahalileri ehl-i zimmetden iken*) whom Ottoman authorities praised for attacking brigands, but treated as anonymous subjects, not being keen on identifying them by name.⁵²

More interaction between different historiographical fields is a prerequisite to overcoming the particularities of the source material in order to be able to view a town such as Karaferye as a whole rather than as the place of residence of two distinct, unrelated socio-religious groups, Muslims and Christians – even if it is ultimately demonstrated that Christians took little notice of the Nizam-ı Cedid reforms⁵³ and Muslims were not really interested in the French Revolution and its ideas, or that there was limited ideological interaction between the two groups (or as far as other relevant pursuits were concerned).

Furthermore, there are several research issues that await a more open and meaningful approach by both Ottomanist and non-Ottomanist historians. Brigandage is, I believe, one of them. This particular topic carried very special weight in Greek historiography for several decades and does

51 G. C. Chionidis, ‘Schediasma peri tou Gero-Karatasou kai tes oikogeneias tou’ [Preliminary Information about Gero-Karatasos and his Family], *Makedonika*, 9 (1969), 299; I. K. Vasdravellis, *Hoi Makedones kata ten Epanastasin tou 1821. Ekdosis trite me tas neas historikas pegas* [Macedonians during the Revolution of 1821. Third Edition with the New Historical Sources], Thessaloniki 1967, 36, 45-46.

52 KS 101/22/1 (24 July 1795). According to Chionidis, Karatasos and his family lived in Dihalevri near Ağustos. They moved to Ağustos around 1798 (Chionidis, ‘Schediasma’, 309-10).

53 Cf. J. Strauss, ‘Ottoman Rule Experienced and Remembered: Remarks on Some Local Greek Chronicles of the Tourkokratia’, in F. Adanır and S. Faroqhi (eds), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, 217-19, on how major political developments may be absent from local chronicles; observe a similar phenomenon in Christopoulos, ‘He peri ton Korinthiakon perioche’, 439-71 (nevertheless, maybe its references to “νέον τράξιον” [new tax] are related to the fiscal measures of the Nizam-ı Cedid).

to a lesser degree even today, as brigands have often sweepingly been treated as heralds of Greek independence and ascribed a concrete national identity and national motives.⁵⁴ However, this picture changes when one studies the Ottoman *sicils*. For instance, the *sicils* of Karaferye demonstrate that brigandage was a perennial problem in the district, and groups of brigands occasionally upset local life and created a general feeling of insecurity beyond religious or ethnic boundaries.⁵⁵ Most incoming decrees give us very little specific information on the exact activities and motives of brigands, who are usually referred to simply as “heyadid [ü] eşkiya”, while only a few brigands – mostly band leaders – are mentioned by name. Even though there were undoubtedly Christians among them,⁵⁶ several brigands whom we know by name were not Greek freedom fighters, as traditional Greek historiography would have them to be, but Muslim Albanians; Albanians were in fact often targeted by state decrees as agents of disorder and destabilisation.⁵⁷ Thus, entries from 1794-95 refer to Albanian brigands who had established themselves in the countryside of Karaferye and attacked travellers,⁵⁸ while after an attack on a village they even passed through the town of Karaferye along with their hostages.⁵⁹ *Sicils* clearly are biased state documents with an interest in restoring order rather than in investigating the deeper roots of brigandage or exploring the motives of brigands, and thus one could argue that it is only natural that outlaws are usually depicted by Ottoman court records as common criminals devoid of any higher (let alone national) ideals. On the other hand, as examples from various times and places prove, this does not always preclude the possibility of *sicil* entries which provide evidence of brigands and outlaws whose mo-

54 This concept is epitomised in the textbook treatment of klephts and *martoloses* in *Historia tou hellenikou ethnous*, vol. 11, 417-22. It is interesting to juxtapose *Historia*'s (1975) and Stanford Shaw's (1971) approaches. Shaw also speaks of brigands and bandits in the Balkans, but in a very different light: for him, bandit and brigand bands were primarily actors in the antagonism between the state and the provincial Muslim notables (Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 212, 227-28, 235-38, 242-46, 301-04).

55 Vasdravellis has published several *sicil* entries related to brigandage (Vasdravellis, *Historika Archeia*, *passim*).

56 See, for instance, KS 101/54/1 (24 August 1795).

57 See, for instance, A. Anastasopoulos, 'Lighting the Flame of Disorder: Ayan Infighting and State Intervention in Ottoman Karaferye, 1758-59', *IJTS*, 8/1 & 2 (2002), 83-84 (unfortunately this article was printed with mistakes: Thus, the first sentence of the second paragraph on p. 83 should read: "At this point the Ottoman authorities connected the problem in Karaferye with the issue of Albanian presence in the region"; the fifth sentence of the second paragraph on p. 84 should read: "According to the document, Mustafa borrowed money from Hasan, transferred the debt to the population of the *kaza* by forcing them to sign notes of acceptance, then Hasan terrorized them for its repayment"; p. 84 n. 44: it is not "document no. 18" and "document no. 161" but "entry no. 18" and "entry no. 16"). See also F. F. Anscombe, 'Albanians and "Mountain Bandits"', in idem (ed.), *The Ottoman Balkans, 1750-1830*, Princeton 2005, 87-113.

58 KS 101/8 (25 October 1794). This entry has been translated into Greek by Vasdravellis, *Historika Archeia*, 233-34, no. 241.

59 KS 101/22/1 (24 July 1795). I assume that they are the same brigands as above, because they were heading to Karataş, where the Albanian brigands had established their base. This entry, too, has been translated into Greek by Vasdravellis, *Historika Archeia*, 236-37, no. 244.

tive was enmity towards the state and its agents; still, whether discontent with the established order goes hand in hand with ethnic or national consciousness is at best debatable.⁶⁰

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To conclude, closer interaction between Ottomanist and national Balkan historiographies will certainly result in a more balanced picture of the last decades of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth century, a crucial period, which still remains relatively obscure, at least for the southern Balkans. The 1790s were not a time of revolutionary changes, but, when examined as part of a long continuum, they contributed to breeding phenomena that were later to fully develop and dominate the early part of the nineteenth century (to name but a few: rise of nationalism, revolts and revolutions for national liberation, state reforms, issues of orientation and identity).⁶¹ Moreover, we should aim at also broadening our scope by fruitfully combining studies of the major phenomena of this period with case studies of particular Balkan regions, based on as wide a spectrum of sources as possible.

60 Ibid., 112-14, nos 139-140 (25 April 1705-21 June 1705); S. Faroqhi, 'The Life and Death of Outlaws in Çorum', in I. Baldauf and S. Faroqhi with R. Veselý (eds), *Armağan-Festschrift für Andreas Tietze*, Prague 1994, 59-76; cf. Uluçay, *Saruhan'da eşkıyalık*, 94.

61 Dimaras treated the decade 1791-1800 as a precursor to the phenomena that dominated the first two decades of the nineteenth century as far as Greek Orthodox society was concerned (Dimaras, *Diaphotismos*, 245-62, esp. 246-47). Dimaras focused on issues of ideology, culture, social etiquette, and fashion, and spoke of "phenomena that signalled modernity" in the period 1800-20.

ASPECTS OF THE WORKING OF THE FISCAL MACHINERY IN THE AREAS RULED BY ALI PAŞA

*Dimitris Dimitropoulos**

On 5th February 1883, during a debate in the Greek Parliament, N. Tarpazis related how his home village of Zarkos, in the Trikala area, had been converted from a *kefalochori* (the main village of a district, where the land was farmed by freeholders) to a *çiftlik* belonging to Ali Paşa. In 1814, he said, Ali Paşa had summoned three of the village notables to Yanya (Gk. Ioannina) and asked them to transfer the ownership of the village to him in exchange for his protection. When the villagers learnt of Ali's demand they refused to comply, and in 1816 Ali sent bands of armed Albanians to intimidate them and to demand a tribute of part of the next harvest. Local tradition has it that the armed bands yoked one of the notables to a cart like a beast of burden and forced him to drag the cartload of grain to Ali Paşa's granary, after which the unfortunate man committed suicide out of shame and the villagers submitted to the new situation.¹

This account of the incident was given by the local Member of Parliament about seventy years after the event, but it came from a source with a demonstrably sound knowledge of local af-

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The stimulus for writing this paper came from the Ali Paşa Archive in the Gennadius Library, Athens, a collection of some 1,500 incoming and outgoing documents from the secretariat of Ali Paşa's court covering the period 1783-1822. These papers are being edited for publication by Vassilis Panayotopoulos, who has been working on them for several years, and Panayotis Michailaris and I have been lucky enough to be involved in that task. The preparatory work is now in its final stage and the edition is almost ready to be published by the Institute for Neohellenic Research. So the thoughts that I shall be voicing here are largely based on the contents of the Ali Paşa Archive, though I am also indebted to Vassilis Panayotopoulos' editorial work and his opinions, some of which are set out in the notes to be included in the published edition.

1 See the transcript of N. Tarpazis' speech of 5 February 1883, in the *Ephemeris ton syzeteseon tes Voules* [Journal of the Debates in Parliament], 8th session, 2nd sitting, *Parartema* [Annex], Athens 1883, 1426-38. For an extensive report on the incident, see N. Yannoulis, 'Ta tsiphlikia kai pos demiougethekan' [The *Çiftliks* and How They Came Into Being], *Trikalino Hemerologio*, 11 (1987), 46-47.

fairs. I mention it here because it seems to me a good example of the later interpretation of events connected with Ali Paşa and of the way in which the fiscal methods employed in the areas under his rule have been stored in the collective memory. The traditional story, which has strongly influenced subsequent historiography, is in my opinion a mixture of fact and legend in which a kernel of truth is shrouded by a fog of inaccuracies and misunderstandings.

In this particular case of the Zarkos incident it is possible to discern figments of the imagination and distortion of the facts. Suffice it to say that Zarkos was indeed a *çiftlik* of Ali Paşa, or rather of his son Veli,² but it was already a *çiftlik* before Ali came to power.³ On the other hand, this same story makes it possible for us to identify some constant parameters of Ali Paşa's methods: for example, his unceasing efforts to enlarge the territory under his rule and increase his revenue; his practice of building up an extensive network of clients indebted to him for jobs and favours of various kinds, in combination with his cultivation of personal relations with the local Christian notables; his offers of protection to remote villages; his use of force as a constant reminder of his supremacy. Some aspects of these methods of his will be touched on in the following pages.

Ali Paşa was for about thirty years one of the most powerful Ottoman rulers in the southern Balkans. He held his position as Pasha of Yanya from 1788 until he was killed by the Sultan's forces in 1822. During that time he imposed his rule on a wide area covering southern Albania and western and central Greece⁴ – a region extending well beyond the frontiers of the *paşalık* of Ya-

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- 2 Zarkos is mentioned as one of Ali Paşa's *çiftlik*s in the list compiled by C. Filitas: see S. P. Aravantinos, *Historia Ale pasa tou Tepelenle* [History of Ali Paşa of Tepedelen], vol. 2, Athens 1895 (photoreprint: Athens 2000), 605. Zarkos, together with the village of Tzigoti, is also included in a list of Veli Paşa's *çiftlik*s compiled in about 1819. There, however, it is noted that the two villages constituted a *malikâne* of Veli Paşa's which he had subleased to his father, Ali Paşa, for 12,500 piastres, with the comment that if Veli Paşa had kept it in his own hands it would have brought him in twice that sum: see V. Panayotopoulos with the collaboration of P. Michailaris and D. Dimitropoulos, *Archeio Ale pasa* [The Ali Paşa Archives], in preparation by the Institute for Neohellenic Research, no. 320, undated; cf. I. Yannopoulos, 'Ta tsiphlikia tou Vele pasa yiou tou Ale pasa' [The *Çiftlik*s of Veli Paşa, Son of Ali Paşa], *Mnemon*, 2 (1972), 155. N. B. All references in these pages to the Ali Paşa Archives in the Gennadius Library identify a document by its accession number in the Archives and its date, since the documents have yet to be given their final serial numbers in the edition of the Archives now in preparation.
 - 3 The village of Zarkos was probably already a *çiftlik* in 1779, when it was visited by the Swedish traveller J. J. Bjornstahl, who wrote that it was a large village and an episcopal see: see J. J. Bjornstahl, *To hodoiporiko tes Thessalias 1779* [Travelling in Thessaly, 1779], trans. Mesevrinos, Thessaloniki 1979, 62. See also D. K. Tsopotos, *Ge kai georgoi tes Thessalias kata ten Tourkokratian* [The Land and Farmers of Thessaly during the Turkish Period], 2nd ed., Athens 1983, 205: in his opinion, the existence of a *subaşı* proves that Zarkos was a *çiftlik* before the period of Ali Paşa's rule in the region and that Ali simply bought or seized it from its former owners.
 - 4 Ali Paşa won supremacy – either in person or through close relatives of his, and for longer or shorter periods – over the *sancaks* of Yanya, Tırhala (Gk. Trikala), Valona (Alb. Vlorë), Karlıeli, İnebahtı (Lepanto, Gk. Naupaktos), Eğriboz (Negroponte, Gk. Chalkida) (except for the *kazas* of Athens, Thebes, Chalkida and Karystos) and the Morea (from 1807 to 1812): see Yannopoulos, 'Ta tsiphlikia', 140–41.

nya.⁵ His career was characterised by a mania for enlarging his dominions,⁶ an object which he strove to achieve chiefly by pulling strings at the Porte to ensure that his sons, grandsons and other relatives and friends completely subservient to him⁷ were appointed to administer the territories around Yanya.⁸ But the area under his control was not coterminous with the lands that had been granted to him and his minions by official acts of the central government, because his economic power and his policy of ruling with an iron fist enabled him to extend his rule beyond those boundaries. In pursuit of his ends he relied mainly on the exaction of taxes of various kinds.

The administration of state revenue was the backbone of the Ottoman Empire's economy. In the areas ruled by Ali Paşa, the tax-collecting system in force was an amalgam composed of the time-honoured rules and procedures developed over the past centuries in Ottoman-ruled territories with an admixture of unconventional measures devised by Ali Paşa and his officials to increase the flow of revenue into his coffers.

The collection and assessment of fiscal dues were characterised by contrary tendencies. In the

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- 5 The predominant feeling among his contemporaries about the extent of the territories under his control was of their 'vastness'. This is reflected in a description probably written shortly after his death and included in a memorandum in a codex at the Proussos Monastery in Eurytania: see K. Konstas, 'Aitoliko-Epeirotika: palaiographika symmeiktta, me gnostes kai agnostes historikes eideseis' [Aitoliko-Epeirotika: A Palaeographic Miscellany with Known and Unknown Historical Information], *Epeirotike Hestia*, 3 (1954), 782.
 - 6 Ali Paşa's approach to the matter is clearly illustrated by a document setting out his proposed distribution of the territories between himself and his sons, which he wrote in May 1811 when the relations between them were strained: see Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 373 (21 May 1811).
 - 7 Their degree of dependence and subservience is made abundantly clear in letters to him from his sons – chiefly Muhtar and Veli – in which they declare that they are following his instructions faithfully and assure him of their absolute obedience: see, for example, Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 803 (23 January 1807), no. 779 (25 February 1807), no. 788 (26 June 1807), etc. Another letter that speaks for itself is Veli Paşa's reply to a veiled request from his father for financial assistance following the destruction of his palace at Tepedelen by lightning: Veli simply says that there is no point in his offering assistance since "Your Highness is my lord and master in all things" and he considers himself his father's slave: *Ibid.*, no. 305 (21 December 1818). That the exchequers of the family's various *paşaliks* were regarded as a single entity is further evidenced by Ali Paşa's orders to his sons to grant tax exemption to his protégés: see, for example, *ibid.*, no. 608 (20 February 1819).
 - 8 These territories changed according to circumstances and the amount of pressure Ali Paşa was able to exert on the central government. See, for example, the offices held by members of his family in 1819, in P. A. P. [=P. Aravantinos], *Chronographia tes Epeirou* [Chronicle of Epirus], vol. 1, Athens 1969 (original edition: Athens 1859), 319-20. On the appointment of Ali Paşa's relatives to administrative posts in the vicinity of Yanya, see also G. Arsh, *He Albania kai he Epeiros sta tele tou VIII kai stis arches tou IX aiona: ta dytikovalkanika pasalikia tes Othomanikes Autokratourias* [Albania and Epirus in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: The West Balkan Paşaliks of the Ottoman Empire], trans. A. Dially, ed. V. Panayotopoulos, Athens 1994, 273-74; M. Kokolakis, *To hystero gianniotiko pasaliki: choras, dioikese kai plethysmos sten tourkokratoumene Epeiro (1820-1913)* [The Later Yanya Paşalık: Territory, Administration and Population in Epirus under Turkish Rule (1820-1913)], Athens 2003, 125.

first place, revenue was very fragmented because there were so many different taxes and charges. The basic unit for assessing nearly all kinds of taxes was a geographical one, though its liabilities did not necessarily fall on any one person. Thus, a village or district was required to pay a variety of taxes imposed by the central government, levies for the maintenance of the local government officials, extraordinary charges and imposts, and dues payable to the *sipahi* of the village or to the owner of the *çiftlik* if the village belonged to a *çiftlik*.⁹ The collection of these tax liabilities was assigned or farmed out – and sometimes subcontracted – to various individuals. But whereas the taxable resources were highly fragmented, the opposite tendency is apparent in the fact that the rights to collect all the taxes from a village or district were concentrated in the hands of a single powerful man and that the taxes were paid by the community as a lump sum. A typical example of this is provided by an agreement signed on 11 January 1814 between the notables of the *kaza* of Karaferye (Gk. Veroia) and Ali Paşa's agent Ömer Luteri, whereby the former assigned to the latter all the taxes for the year 1814 – except those relating to state procurements and the victualling of the armed forces on imperial campaigns – payable by the *çiftliks* of Choropani, Tourkochori, Tripotamos, Vassova, Oredi Abat, Pozart, Axarmeni, Londzipor, Kastania, Korinos and Stoupi for 21,500 piastres and the *çiftlik* of Vromeri for 2,000 piastres.¹⁰

- 9 This fragmentation of the taxes owed to three main authorities – the Sublime Porte, the *vilayet* and the *sipahi* – is clearly described in an agreement signed between Ali Paşa and the villagers of Dervendista (Metsovo district) on 30 October 1797. In it Ali Paşa undertakes, in return for a payment of 2,500 piastres per annum, to settle the village's liabilities to the *vilayet*, including one called the *imoro*. However, the agreement does not cover the taxes payable by the village directly to the Porte – specific mention being made of the *haraç* (poll tax), the *nüzül* (a tax for the victualling of the army in the field), the *ağnam* and the *maliatika* (taxes on sheep and sheep's wool) – nor the dues of the *sipahi*. This being the case, it is not clear exactly what the *imoro* was, nor what was the village's status after the agreement had been signed. At all events, Kostas Mitrou (1815-90), one of the notables of Dervendista, recorded it in his notebook as an agreement altering the village's status to that of a *çiftlik*: "In the year 1795, on 20th October, Ali Paşa made us slaves and took our village as a *çiftlik*, and we are in a woeful plight to this day. First they signed an agreement to pay him 2,500 thousand [sic] piastres – it remained in force for about ten years – so that Ali Paşa would pay the money they had to pay to Tırhala". See K. Vlachos, 'Tourkika eggrapha aphoronta eis to chorion Nterventista (nyn Anthochorion) Metsovou' [Turkish Documents Concerning the Village of Dervendista (now Anthochorion) in the Metsovo District], *Epeirotike Hestia*, 22 (1973), 322-23. It should also be mentioned that Dervendista is listed as one of Ali Paşa's *çiftliks* in the list compiled by C. Filitas: see Aravantinos, *Historia*, vol. 2, 602.
- 10 See I. Vasdravellis (ed.), *Historika Archeia Makedonias. B'. Archeion Veroias-Naousses 1598-1886* [Historical Archives of Macedonia II: Archives of Veroia and Naoussa, 1598-1886], Thessaloniki 1954, 257-58, doc. 266. The taxes of the *vilayet* of Yanya were also paid according to the *maktu* system, as evidenced by an agreement signed with Ali Paşa on this subject: see S. Kougeas, 'To epeirotikon archeion Staurou Ioannou' [The Epirot Papers of Stavros Ioannou], *Epeirotika Chronika*, 14 (1939), 102-03, doc. 110 of 1820. The same method is implied by the sale to Athanasios Psalidas of the *iltizam* (tax-farming) rights for the village of Kridzounista for 3,500 piastres in 1801: *ibid.*, 137-38.

Ali Paşa made systematic efforts to rent the tax-collection rights from the central government. This was arranged for him by trusted friends living in Istanbul, especially his *kapu çuhadarı* (personal agent), who undertook delicate negotiations with officials of the Porte sufficiently highly placed to have a say in the disposal of revenue-collecting rights.¹¹ Bribery and corruption were the means used to sweeten the officials, and firm evidence of such graft is to be found in Ali Paşa's correspondence with his agents in the capital. In 1814, for example, when Ali Paşa was trying to arrange for one of his men to be appointed *voyvoda* of Ağustos (Gk. Naoussa), he was reported to be prepared to pay a bribe of 10,000 piastres, but the official concerned was demanding 10,000 zecchini, equivalent to about 140,000 piastres.¹² A few years later, in 1818, Veli Paşa's agent in Istanbul advised him to send 25,000 piastres to the Grand Vizier, and other gifts to lower-ranking officials as a reward for their successful mediation in tax affairs concerning the *sancak* of Tırhala.¹³

Another of Ali Paşa's stratagems was to rent tax-collection privileges in the name of relatives and friends who relied on his patronage and acted on his orders,¹⁴ or even of non-existent persons.¹⁵ This was a ploy he used again and again, and in that way he managed to control the revenue derived from a great many different taxes. A letter to Ali Paşa from his *kapu çuhadarı* in Istanbul, Süleyman Efendi, written in September 1810, sheds light on the intrigue and delicate negotiations that were required. Süleyman informs his master that he has been unable to cover up the death of his nephew Adem Bey, in whose name Ali Paşa had purchased an unspecified lifetime lease (*malikâne*). He is therefore negotiating to have the *malikâne* transferred to another of Ali

11 A rich source of information concerning the methods used by Ali Paşa and the role of his agents in Istanbul exists in the letters to Ali and Veli Paşa from Hüseyin Efendi, Süleyman Efendi, Elmaz Medze, Saitis and others: see Panayotopoulos, *Archeio, passim* and Index.

12 *Ibid.*, no. 50 (13 January 1814). At that time the so-called *venetiko* or Venetian gold florin was worth about fourteen piastres, having been devalued: see E. Liata, *Phloria dekatessera stenoun grosia saranta: he kyklophoria ton nomismaton ston venetokratoumeno kai tourkokratoumeno helleniko choro, 15os-19os ai.* [Fourteen Florins Make Forty Piastres: The Circulation of Coins in Greek Territories under Venetian and Turkish Rule, Fifteenth-Nineteenth Centuries], Athens 1996, 246; G. A. Siorokas, 'Europaika nomismata stis epeirotikas agores (1812-1814): sykrisis kai diapistoseis' [European Coins in Epirot Markets (1812-1814): Comparisons and Findings], *Dodone*, 13 (1984), 214.

13 See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 1050 (30 November 1818). Evidence of similar cases of bribery is to be found in Ali Paşa's correspondence with his agents in Istanbul: *ibid.*, no. 12 (10 March 1819), no. 68 (4 March 1818), no. 231 (undated), etc.

14 A typical instance of this practice is evidenced by a letter from the Divan Efendi informing Ali Paşa that he has managed to have the taxes for Prilep rented out in the name of a certain Celaleddin Bey, as Ali had suggested: *ibid.*, no. 26.

15 According to Aravantinos (*Chronographia*, 286), in 1796 Ali Paşa was given the *voyvodalik* of Narda (Gk. Arta) in the name of "Mustafa" – a non-existent person – and he retained it in that name until his death in 1822.

Paşa's puppets at the old price, in other words without having it put out to tender again, which would have been the correct official procedure. He adds, however, that he has thought it necessary to bribe the *deftedar*.¹⁶

By these means Ali Paşa succeeded in building up an extensive network of agents who had contacts in all departments of the official hierarchy and were bound to him by ties of mutual interest or dependence. It is worth noting that Ali Paşa himself kept regularly in touch with the notables of small villages in Epirus, Thessaly, Macedonia and Central Greece and with other low-ranking local government officials.¹⁷ All these people communicated with the Pasha in person whenever they wanted to pass on information, to offer him their services, to lodge a complaint, to ask him a favour or to request his assistance over some unresolved grievance.¹⁸ In these matters a crucial role was played by the family and the ties of kindred around which the systems of solidarity and fiscal revenue management were constructed – systems whose operation is clearly apparent in the allocation of positions of rank and power.¹⁹

In this way Ali Paşa had created and set in motion a mechanism that collected revenue from various sources and then redistributed it between the persons involved. In such a context the Christian notables both in the country and in the towns enjoyed a higher standing, with the result that we find some of them renting or administering substantial amounts of tax revenue.²⁰ On the other hand, at least according to some accounts, the Muslim merchants suffered financially, some of

16 See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 27 (28 September 1810). On the procedure for leasing out a *malikâne*, see M. Genç, 'Sygkritike melete ton stoicheion tes isovias ekmisthoses prosodon kai tou ogkou ton emporikon kai viotechnikon drasterioteton sten Othomanike autokratoria kata to deuterio miso tou 18ou aiona' [A Comparative Study of the Particulars of the Lifetime Leasing of Revenue and the Volume of Commercial and Manufacturing Activities in the Ottoman Empire in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century], in V. Panayotopoulos (ed.), *Eksyghronismos kai viomechanike epanastase sta Valkania ton 19o aiona* [Modernisation and Industrial Revolution in the Balkans in the Nineteenth Century], Athens 1980, 281-83.

17 Ali's familiarity with all sorts of low-ranking officials was noted by Leake: see W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, vol. 4, Amsterdam 1967 (reprint), 223-24; cf. Arsh, *He Albania*, 300.

18 There are many examples of letters about such matters from local officials to Ali Paşa: see, for example, Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 1462 (28 April 1804), no. 412 (12 May 1805), no. 1407 (12 February 1807), no. 118 (14 February 1807), no. 406 (15 July 1807), no. 483 (20 January 1808), no. 450 (22 January 1808), no. 802 (5 February 1808), no. 160 (1 May 1815), etc.

19 Ties of kinship and family networks played a crucial part in the formation of bands of *armatoloi*: see D. Tzakis, 'Armatolismos, syggenika diktya kai ethniko kratos: hoi oreines eparchies tes Artas sto proto emisyo tou 19ou aiona' [Armatolism, Family Networks and Nation State: The Mountain Provinces of Arta in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Panteio University, Athens 1997, 27-69. The importance of kinship is illustrated by the prevalence of the blood-brother relationship, which imposed binding ties of 'artificial' kinship.

20 For instance: Georgios Marinoglou, who in 1798 was administering the taxes of Zagori (see Panayotopoulos,

them so badly that they were forced to leave Epirus.²¹ A memorandum dated 26 September 1814 bears eloquent testimony to the impression this made on Ali Paşa's contemporaries: "He drove the *ağas* out of their houses, their homelands and their villages, and he did the same to the people of Tsamouria and many others. And he looks after the Christians, and may God look after him".²²

It may be of interest to look at some of the methods Ali Paşa used in the management of his tax revenue. For example, he might either rent a *sipahi*'s rights over a specific *timar* or a share in a *timar*,²³ or he might take it upon himself to pay in cash, on behalf of the community, the dues owed by a community to the timariot.²⁴ By these transactions he alienated the timariots from the community, minimised the chances of their meddling in local affairs and broke up potential pockets of resistance to his absolute power in the region. The same thinking explains his attempts to buy *malikânes* from their owners (those that he had not managed to acquire for himself) in the names of his own henchmen.²⁵

Another of Ali Paşa's ploys was to arrange where possible for communities to pay their tax liabilities themselves under the *maktu* system (i.e., as a lump sum). This he achieved either by instructing his agents to make the necessary applications to the central government or by persuading the communities to send their own delegates to apply for them. Ali Paşa was in favour of such arrangements because it was to his advantage to deal with the local notables – mostly Christians but with some Muslims also – who were within the range of his influence or were at any rate

Archeio, no. 1149 dated 6 February 1798, no. 1163 dated 23 February 1798); Konstantinos Priskos, lessee of the *celep* for Yenişehir-i Fenar (Gk. Larissa) in 1801 (*ibid.*, no. 857 dated 21 November 1801) and for Salona (Gk. Amfissa) in 1802 (*ibid.*, no. 868 dated 19 March 1802); Alexis Noutsos, lessee of the Zagori sheep tax in 1804 and general administrator of the Zagori taxes in 1810 (*ibid.*, no. 629 dated 22 March 1804 and nos 564, 561, 562, 560 dated 6, 10, 11, and 16 March 1810 respectively); Stergios Zotoglou, responsible for collecting the *celep* for Thessaly in 1808 and for Thebes in 1813 (*ibid.*, no. 797 dated 1 May 1808, no. 31 dated 23 July 1813), etc. See also the report by Kostas Grammatikos on the revenue that he and other Christians had collected through the exercise of their *iltizam* (tax-farming) concessions: E. Sourlas, 'Kostas Grammatikos', *Epeirotika Chronika*, 13 (1938), 5, 43-44.

21 See Arsh, *He Alvania*, 278.

22 See Athinagoras, 'Neos Kouvaras etoi chronika semeiomata anapheromena eis ten polin idia ton Ioanninon, eis monas autes kai tas eparchias autes' [Neos Kouvaras: Chronicles Relating Especially to the Town of Ioannina, its Monasteries and its Provinces], *Epeirotika Chronika*, 4 (1929), 34.

23 See, for example, the receipt for the rental of a share in a *timar* held by the *sipahi* Latif Ağa Glipios at Souvala in the Parnassida province (Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 693 dated 11 July 1818).

24 Cf. the payment order made out to Malko Tava for 750 piastres in settlement of the timariot's dues owed to him in respect of Broufliani in Phthiotida (*ibid.*, no. 660 dated 1 August 1814).

25 In 1805, for example, he tried to buy half the *malikâne* for Zitsa from its holder, Arif Efendi, by outmanoeuvring the other bidders. Apropos of this *malikâne*, Ali Paşa's *kapu çuhadarı* in Istanbul, Hasan Efendi, notes that *malikânes* were much sought-after at that time and everyone with money wanted to buy one: *ibid.*, no. 598 (31 August 1805).

bound to him by ties of mutual interest or dependence. A case in point occurred in 1806, when he sought to ensure that the community of Aitolikon would be responsible for the *mukataa* of the district under the *maktu* system (even though it had been granted to a Muslim) and arranged for a delegation from the community to go to Istanbul to submit an application to that effect, thus undermining the holder of the *mukataa*.²⁶

A further reason for Ali Paşa's preference for the *maktu* payment of taxes was that it strengthened his ties with the village notables. In 1809, for example, the notables of Kolindros in Pieria, a village which – on Ali Paşa's instructions – had undertaken to pay its taxes according to the *maktu* system, petitioned him to send them an armed guard of his own men, partly to back them up in collecting the taxes and partly to protect them from local bandits.²⁷ At the same time, however, the *maktu* payment of taxes by the villages strengthened the hand of the local Christian notables, who administered their communities' fiscal liabilities and gained for themselves the consequent advantages. It was therefore quite natural that the Muslim *ağas* should object, as they did, when some villages took steps to take the payment of their taxes on themselves under the *maktu* system. Some interesting facets of the situation are revealed by two letters written by a village notable in 1808, describing the violence with which the Muslim *ağas* of Vodina (Gk. Edessa) reacted on learning of the steps taken by the inhabitants of the hamlet of Pozarko, in the Almopia district, to institute *maktu* payment of their taxes to Ali Paşa, following the example of other villages in the area.²⁸

Controlling the Christian communities was again the object of the methods chosen by Ali Paşa for the financial administration of tax liabilities. Sometimes he would ask the communities to pay off his debts to merchants or craft guilds in Yanya as advance payments towards their ordinary tax liabilities.²⁹ In this way he set his own accrued debts against the communities' future taxes. In 1804, for example, the notables of Vendza (Grevena district) were requested to pay 7,500 piastres to the goldsmiths' and weavers' guilds and two craftsmen in Yanya, this sum being offset against the village's tax liabilities.³⁰ A tactic of a different kind is exemplified in the scheme he adopted

26 Ibid., no. 387 (3 November 1806).

27 Ibid., no. 465 (12 May 1809).

28 Ibid., nos 109 and 1404 (28 April 1808).

29 S. I. Asdrachas, 'Gaioprosodos kai ypochreotikos ekchrematismos ton agrotikon oikonomion' [Land Revenue and Compulsory Monetisation of Agricultural Economies], in *Hellenike koinonia kai oikonomia, XVIII kai XIX ai.: hypotheses kai proseggiseis* [Greek Society and Economy, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Hypotheses and Approaches], Athens 1982, 123-24, referring to the methods of paying communities' tax liabilities, believes that these transactions with the guilds amounted to a sort of loan contracted indirectly by the communities.

30 See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 682 (17 May 1804). A similar case is referred to in a decree issued by Ali Paşa, ordering the community of Souvala (Parnassida province) to pay to the guilds of Yanya the sum of 21,115.37 piastres, owed to Ali Paşa by the community in respect of his dues and the tithe for 1814 (ibid., no. 704 dated 6 March 1815).

towards the village of Kalliani (Kozani district) in 1808:³¹ he himself lent the villagers cash to settle certain specific tax liabilities of theirs, with the result that all their old liabilities were consolidated into a single debt to him.

This last scheme of Ali Paşa's is directly connected with a complex issue that is beyond the scope of the present paper.³² I refer to the practice of converting indebted villages or parts of villages into *çiftlik*s,³³ a practice which – together with that of buying up existing *çiftlik*s at low prices³⁴ – Ali Paşa and his sons are said to have embraced with great fervour.³⁵ However, it has to be said that the catalogue of cases cited as evidence of 'çiftlikisation' is an indiscriminate list of all kinds of contracts and methods of appropriating the fiscal or other revenue of the villages suppo-

31 Ibid., no. 666 (13 July 1808).

32 The vast bibliography on the *çiftlik* is not cited here. Suffice it to say that the term *çiftlik* covers various forms of landowner-tenant relationships and various methods of collecting taxes and other revenues, which makes it impossible to formulate a sufficiently precise definition of the villages described as *çiftlik*s. To cite just one small example of the great variety of relationships, the Christian inhabitants of Paramythia avowed that as individuals they were "*reaya* and *tsiflikiotēs*" of Ali Paşa, even though no *çiftlik* existed as a geographical entity, which implies that their arrangement with him was some kind of 'protection agreement': *ibid.*, no. 411 (1 August 1809).

33 In many cases the possession of a *çiftlik* did not cover the whole of a village but only a part or parts of it (*alâka*): see D. Tsopotos, 'Anekdotos allelographia tou Vele pasa yiou Ale pasa Tepelenle: symvole eis ten georgike statistiken tes Thessalias epi Ale pasa Tepelenle kai eis ten historian tou ploutou kai tes geoktesias autou kai ton yion tou' [Unpublished Correspondence of Veli Paşa, Son of Ali Paşa of Tepedelen: A Contribution to the Agricultural Statistics for Thessaly under Ali Paşa of Tepedelen and to the History of the Wealth and Landed Property of Him and his Sons], *Epeteris Philologikou Syllogou Parnassos*, 10 (1914), 58-59; *idem*, *Ge kai georgoi*, 203, 273-75.

34 For evidence of purchases of *çiftlik*s by Ali Paşa and his sons, see, for example, Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 623 (20 October 1813), no. 51 (20 February 1814), no. 748 (21 December 1818), etc. Some very interesting information on the ways of buying *çiftlik*s, the *çiftlik*s available for purchase, their productivity and selling prices is given in an undated letter written to Veli Paşa (some time between 1807 and 1812) by his business manager in Thessaly, Pramōs: it is published in Tsopotos, 'Anekdotos allelographia', 42-48. The letter makes it clear that Veli and his brother Muhtar bought "*çiftlik*s" in Thessaly from Ottoman officials when they came up for sale at low prices. But what were the terms of ownership of these "*çiftlik*s" and what exactly were the rights of their owners? The answers to questions of this kind are not self-explanatory, in spite of the glib assertions made by some historians on the subject of *çiftlik*s, and in my opinion the matter remains open.

35 See, for example, Leake, *Travels*, vol. 4, 282; I. Lambridis, *Epeirotika meletemata* [Epirot Studies], no. 2. *Ho Tepelenles Ale pasas* [Ali Paşa of Tepedelen], Athens 1887 (2nd ed.: Athens 1993), 47-52; *ibid.*, no. 7. *Pogoniaka*, Athens 1889 (2nd ed.: Athens 1993), 68-74; *ibid.*, no. 9. *Zagoriaka*, Part II, Athens 1889 (2nd ed.: Athens 1993), 73-77; Arsh, *He Alvania*, 273-79; Kokolakis, *To hystero gianniotiko pasaliki*, 68-69 (citing other references and examples). The widespread conversion of villages to *çiftlik*s by Ali Paşa has been called in question by some scholars, including Tsopotos, *Ge kai georgoi*, 199-229, and D. Zotos, *He dikaiosyne eis to kratōs tou Ale pasa* [Justice in the Territory Controlled by Ali Paşa], Athens 1938, 74-84. First-hand testimony to the incorporation of *çiftlik*s in Ali Paşa's property is supplied in an undated letter from his son Veli (written in 1812 or 1813) telling him that "the *alâka* [share in a *çiftlik*] has grown and multiplied since last year and a number of villages here have become Your Highness' *çiftlik*s" (see Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 267, undated).

sed to have been converted into *çiftliks*. Consequently it seems to me that the actual scale of the phenomenon, both in total and in each particular case, can only be ascertained by further research aimed at clarifying the terms on which the villages in question were attached to the family property of the Pasha of Yanya.³⁶

Violence and insecurity were two ever-present features of everyday life in the rural areas. Force, or the threat of force,³⁷ was a common means of extorting money and goods and, more particularly, of enforcing arbitrary demands by state officials, local administrators and gangs of armed men who switched effortlessly between being law-abiding citizens and outlaws. It was quite common, and more and more so as time went on, for the inhabitants of Christian villages to seek the protection of powerful *ağas*, mostly Muslims, for their own security. Sometimes they even agreed to have their villages reclassified as *ağaliks* (i.e., incorporation in the domain of an *ağa*), for which they paid an annual tribute. The amount of the tribute was assessed in cash but sometimes it was paid in kind, as a percentage of the village's agricultural produce – an arrangement that foreshadowed the conversion of the village into a *çiftlik*.³⁸ In one contract, drawn up in 1788, the people of Kato Soudena (Dodoni district) declared that they were turning their village over to Ali Paşa as an *ağalık*, citing the high-handed behaviour of the *sipahis* who possessed timariots' rights as well as that of the guards of the nearby *derbend* as their reasons for placing themselves under his protection.³⁹

The position of Commander of the *Derbends* [i.e., the passes], which Ali Paşa had held for

36 Whatever the truth of the matter, it has to be said that Ali Paşa's contemporaries were well aware of his and his sons' unceasing efforts to wring all kinds of revenue out of more and more villages. The words used in 1813 by the Abbot of the Olympiotissa Monastery vividly express the general feeling: "He [Veli Paşa] made a business of seizing villages through the use of menaces, honeyed words or coercion, and then taking them and making them his own by acts of treachery which he justified with specious excuses". See E. Skouvaras, *Olympiotissa*, Athens, 1967, 441; cf. Yannopoulos, 'Ta tsiflikia', 141-42.

37 The threat of force is a recurring theme in Ali Paşa's *buyruğdus* to the villages: see, for example, Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 682 (17 May 1804), no. 350 (15 June 1813), no. 51 (20 February 1814). One of the threats used again and again by him and his sons was that in the event of non-compliance "the snake will eat you". See C. Charalambopoulos, 'Panagia Ampelakiotissa ta stauropégiako monasteri: eggrapha 1708-1820, eggrapha 1829-1965 b seira, thymeseis' [Panayia Ambelakiotissa, the Stauropégic Monastery: Documents 1708-1820, Documents 1829-1965 2nd series, Memoranda], *Naupaktiaka*, 4 (1988-89), 621, doc. 88; Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 954 (25 September 1816).

38 See Kokolakis, *To hystero gianniotiko pasaliki*, 67-68. According to Lambridis, this practice started before 1720 but only became general near the middle of the eighteenth century: see Lambridis, *Epeirotika meletemata. Ho Tepelenes Ale pasas*, 7-9, listing some of the villages in question.

39 See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 414 (15 March 1788). Complaints about the behaviour of the *derbendcis* were by no means infrequent. A vivid description of the capricious conduct of the local *derbendci* is contained in a letter sent to Muhtar Paşa by the notables of Siatista on 19 January 1815: see Kougeas, 'To epeirotikon', 72-73, doc. 54.

many years,⁴⁰ certainly placed him at the centre of that cycle of violence and insecurity.⁴¹ Since he was responsible for raising and controlling the armed bands stationed in mountain passes, defiles and other strategic locations to guard the roads, he was ideally placed to offer protection and to become involved in local affairs. The importance of the position is demonstrated by the frequent letters written by the notables or inhabitants of various places, either protesting at the actions of their local *derbendci* (commander of the local *derbend* guard)⁴² or asking him to send them armed guards to protect them from the despotism of local officials and the depredations of brigands.⁴³ At the same time, by virtue of his office the Commander of the *Derbends* was in an excellent position to expand his power into the neighbouring territories on the pretext of providing security.⁴⁴

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- 40 He first held this office in April 1787: see Arsh, *He Albania*, 151-53. This tallies with the testimony of the Olympiotissa Monastery to the effect that he became “Derbend ağa” in 1787-88: see E. Gougoulaki-Zioya, ‘Axiosemeiota gegonota kai alla symvanta sten perioche Trikalon kata ten periodo tes Tourkokratias, opos martyrountai apo diaphores enthymeseis’ [Noteworthy Events and Other Occurrences in the Trikala Area during the Turkish Period, as Attested by Various Memoranda], *Trikalina*, 13 (1993), 249. Veli’s successor in the *paşalık* of Tirhala, Süleyman Paşa, is said to have declared on 7 January 1820, when it was suggested that he should take over the *derbends*: “They have been in Ali Paşa’s hands for thirty years now”, and “No one but him will administer them”. See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 19 (7 January 1820). In fact Süleyman did take over the position a few months later when Ali Paşa was finally removed from office: see Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 1031 (20 April 1820), no. 25 (25 May 1820); Vasdravellis (ed.), *Historika Archeia*, 266-67, doc. 275.
- 41 On the post of Commander of the *Derbends* in general and the significance of Ali Paşa’s occupancy of the post in particular, see C. Orhonlu, ‘He organosis tes phroureseos ton stenopon eis ten Othomaniken autokratiorian’ [Organising the Guarding of the Passes in the Ottoman Empire], trans. S. Emin, *Deltion Tourkikes Vivliographias*, 10 (1970), 61-64; D. N. Skiotis, ‘Apo lestes pasas: prota vemata sten anodo tou Ale pasa ton Gianninon (1750-1784)’ [From Brigand to Pasha: The First Steps in the Rise of Ali Paşa of Yannina (1750-1784)], *Thesaurismata*, 6 (1969), 275-78; Kokolakis, *To hystero gianniotiko pasaliki*, 124-25.
- 42 For examples of letters on this subject, see Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 418 dated 26 June 1801 (letter from the people of Kapsi in Phthiotida), no. 430 dated 19 October 1818 (letter from the notables of Leskoviki), no. 1144, undated (letter from eight *ağas* of Tsamouria to the notables of the village of Menina in Souli), etc. Ali Paşa’s use of the armed bands guarding the passes for the settling of accounts is graphically described with reference to his liquidation of the Sismanis family: see K. Diamantis, ‘Kodix Iatridou (Genika Archeia tou Kratous, Chph. arithmos 242)’ [The Iatridis Codex (Hellenic Public Record Office, Ms 242)], *EHSM*, 2 (1969-70), 287-88; see also earlier publications of the same manuscript: [G. Iatridis], ‘Historika semeiomata’ [Historical Notes], *Deltion tes Historikes kai Ethnologikes etaireias tes Hellados*, 2 (1885), 114-16; S. Lampros, ‘Enthymeseon etoi chronikon semeiomaton sylloge prote (ar. 1-562)’ [First Collection of Memoranda or Chronicles (nos 1-562)], *Neos Hellenomnemon*, 7 (1910), 251-52.
- 43 See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 394 dated 27 April 1803 (letter from four monasteries and the village notables of Talantio), etc.
- 44 According to a document of 1797, the office of Commander of the *Derbends* yielded an annual income of 200,000 piastres, yet Ali Paşa paid less than 50,000 piastres to have himself appointed to the post: *ibid.*, no. 99 (28 April [1797]). The following case is typical: on the pretext of guarding the passes in his capacity as Commander of the *Derbends* – or so, at least, it is alleged in a letter written by his agent Hüseyin Efendi (*ibid.*, no. 20) – Ali Paşa col-

That the imperial government was worried about such misuses of the office is abundantly clear from a document of 1814 addressed to Ali Paşa's *kapu çuhadarı*, in which a high-ranking official of the central government alleges that Ali has brought all the *kazas* in the region under his control.⁴⁵

In conclusion, I should like to draw attention to what seems to me to be a lacuna in Greek historiography. Training in the school of Ali Paşa, which later historians have tended to treat disparagingly, was a fact of life for a considerable number of men who occupied a variety of positions in his entourage: *armatoloi*, secretaries, financial and fiscal administrators and so on. It was the first time that Greeks had played such an active part within the nucleus of the Ottoman administration, been accepted for service in the uniformed military, occupied official positions, supplanted the traditional Ottoman elite to some extent and acquired experience and skills in walks of life hitherto closed to them.⁴⁶

On the outbreak of the Greek Revolution in 1821, some of these persons came to the fore, rose to high office and were key figures in the deliberations leading to the development of the new government institutions. But besides these few illustrious personages, there were many others in Ali Paşa's wider entourage about whose subsequent careers we have no precise information. In my opinion, systematic research to identify these men and trace their careers in the early post-revolutionary years remains a desideratum, for it may shed light on one facet of the influence exerted by Ali Paşa's many-tentacled network on the formation of the modern Greek state.

English translation by Timothy Cullen

lected the export duty on the tobacco, wheat, barley and butter shipped from all ports in the *sancaks* of Tırhala, Selânik (Gk. Thessaloniki) and Eğriboz. Equally interesting is his quarrel with the governor of the *sancak* of Selânik, in some of whose *kazas* Ali Paşa had installed his own agents (*ibid.*, no. 54, undated). Ali also used his position as a means of achieving some of his other aims, as when he forced the inhabitants of Karpenisi to write a letter to the Patriarch of Istanbul in 1798, asking him to use his good offices to ensure that Ali Paşa should not have to take the field in person against Pazvantoğlu, on the grounds that his absence might lead to a fresh outbreak of banditry in the area: see [Iatridis], 'Historika', 116-17.

45 See Panayotopoulos, *Archeio*, no. 52 (20 February 1814). In 1805 there had been a similar reaction from another senior official, who informed Ali Paşa's agent Hasan Efendi that he was not prepared to allow Ali to extend his authority to Ağustos, which was not in his *sancak* – Ali having pleaded the necessity of doing so because of Ağustos' proximity to the mountain passes and his need to protect his territory from bandits (*ibid.*, no. 597 dated 9 August 1805).

46 For lists of some of the more important people who gained positions in Ali Paşa's service, see, for example: Aravantinos, *Historia*, vol. 2, 459-74; A. Petala, 'Axiomatouchoi sten aule tou Ale pasa' [Officers of State at the Court of Ali Paşa], *Mnemon*, 2 (1972), 266-68; S. Papageorgiou, 'To kratos tou Ale pasa ton Ioanninon: mia leitourgike periptose enischyses tes kentrikes exousias kai apodynamoses ton periphereiakon dynameon' [The Polity of Ali Paşa of Ioannina: A Practical Instance of Strengthening the Central Government and Reducing the Powers of the Regions], *Italohellenika*, 4 (1991-93), 120.

**SECESSION AND REVOLUTION IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY:
OSMAN PAZVANTOĞLU AND RHIGAS VELESTINLIS**

*Rossitsa Gradeva**

Passavanoglou, why dost thou so long remain impassive?
Rush towards the Balkans, it is there that thou shouldst like the eagle build thy nest.
Let not owls nor crows worry thee.
Join the rayas if thou wishest to conquer.
Silistrie, Braila, Ismaila and Chile,
Bensderi and Chotzin stretch out their arms to thee.
Send reinforcements and they will fall at thy feet
As they no longer bear to live under tyranny.
Georgian! Sleep no longer, leap up,
Here is the occasion to do like the one from Broussa.
And thou who in Aleppo dreamst of liberty, rise.
Pasha! Appear forthwith on the battlefields.
Rise at the head of thine armies,
Otherwise thou wilt remain under the orders of Stamboul.
Lions of Egypt, above all elect a king from among your beys.
Let not the kharatch from Egypt appear in Stamboul
So that perishes the wolf that tyrannises you.

Rhigas Velestinlis, *Thourios* [Battle-Song]¹

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1 I would like to thank the anonymous translator of the *Thourios* into English. He will recognise his piece of work. Cf. also A. Daskalakis, ‘Thourios Hymnos’ le chant de la liberté de Rhigas Velestinlis’, *Balkan Studies*, 4/2 (1963), 347; Rhigas Velestinlis, *Revolutsionno* [Revolutionary], Sofia 1998, 113-23 (parallel edition in Greek and Bulgarian).

In the dreams of Rhigas Velestinlis this must have been a list of the centres of discontent and secession, nuclei of resistance against the central authority among the Ottoman governors and potential allies of the Greeks in the struggle for freedom and for the subversion of the Ottoman state. This stanza of the *Thourios* composed by Rhigas, along with stories related by some of his contemporaries,² has given grounds for speculation concerning the close relations between the Greek revolutionary and Osman Pazvantoğlu, an Ottoman provincial notable in Vidin, a town on the Danube in what is now north-western Bulgaria, who led one of the most dangerous secession attempts at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century.

In the present essay I shall analyse the elements of this potential ‘alliance’, as well as the reasons why some of the major secessionists, especially in the Balkans, were excluded from Rhigas’ vision. The second part I devote to the appeal to Osman Pazvantoğlu, the only historical figure who is clearly recognisable in the song, my primary objective being to examine his contacts, imaginary or real, with the Greek revolutionary movement and Rhigas in particular, as well as the channels through which they might have been effected. In this undertaking I shall rely exclusively on Russian, Austrian and French diplomatic correspondence, which, until more documents of local issuance are discovered, will remain the main body of sources about the complex international relations in the region and about the role of the leading provincial notables in them.

Scholars assign the date of writing of the *Thourios* to between 1796, when Rhigas began the practical preparations for the revolution, and December 1797, the time of his arrest by the Austrian police. According to Notis Botzaris, Rhigas sang the hymn in front of his companions as early as October 1796.³ On the basis of content analysis, Apostolos Daskalakis offers a more precise dating – before or around August 1796, when Rhigas moved to Vienna, where in September he recited the *Thourios* in the houses of friends. In terms of the activities of Pazvantoğlu this makes sense

2 C. Nicolopoulo, ‘Notice sur Rhigas (Notice sur la vie et les écrits de Rhigas, l’un des auteurs principaux de la révolution qui a pour but l’indépendance de la Grèce)’, *Revue Encyclopédique* (Paris), 21 (janvier 1824) (reprint: Delphi 1998), 275-80; I. Philimon, *Dokimion historikon peri tes Philikes Hetairias* [Historical Essay on the *Philiki Hetairia*], Athens [n.y.] (reprint of the original edition, Nauplio 1834); C. Perraivos, *Syntomos viographia tou aoidimou Rega Pheraiou tou Thettalou* [Concise Biography of Rhigas Pheraios of Thessaly], Athens 1973 (reprint of the original edition, Athens 1860); idem, *Apommoneumata polemika* [War Memoirs], Athens 1836, quoted in L. Vranousis, *Regas Velestinles*, Athens 1954. I would like to thank Prof. Nadia Danova for having translated the Greek texts used in this study and for sharing with me her knowledge of Greek society and the Greek revolutionary movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

3 N. Botzaris, *Visions balkaniques dans la préparation de la révolution grecque (1789 - 1821)*, Geneva and Paris 1962, 20. 1796 is adopted also by Danova in N. Danova and A. Hristakoudis, *Istoria na nova Gartsia* [History of Modern Greece], Sofia 2003, 100.

and I am inclined to accept this date.⁴ Other authors are less confident, setting only the *terminus ante quem*, prior to Rhigas' arrest and his death in 1798.⁵ The time of its composition is important in view of identifying the personae in the revolutionary anthem. Later versions of the *Thourios* sung during the Greek War of Independence do not contain references to these potential allies among Ottoman provincial notables and to Muslims in general.⁶ At that time most of them, the "lions of Egypt" in the first place, were either inappropriate or obsolete, or both. Thus the verses cited above should be regarded mainly as representing Rhigas' perspective and as a momentary picture of the enemies of centralism in the last years of the eighteenth century.

Let us now turn to these centres of dissent. The cities – which, according to Rhigas, were ready to surrender to Pazvantoğlu, if he joined the *reaya* and sent reinforcements, and were therefore considered potential allies in the Greek liberation struggle – confront us with difficult moments. Data corroborating Rhigas' statement that Silistra, Braila, Ismail, Kilia, Bender and Hotin were ready to fall at his feet are scanty. At the beginning of November 1797, Kara Mustafa, one of Pazvantoğlu's 'generals', mentioned in front of his friends in Bucharest that the fortresses of Silistra and Braila were about to surrender. Two months later, Dimitri Turnavity, a trusted messenger of Pazvantoğlu, also claimed that the Pasha of Vidin had received letters from these two cities in which they declared their willingness to do so.⁷ It is not clear who had sent these letters. Moreover, the information about them dates from around a year after the supposed compilation of the *Thourios*. None of the cities ever fell into the hands of Pazvantoğlu. Actually, around 1794-95, Silistra, along with Deliorman, was occupied by the former *kırcalı* ringleader Yılıkoğlu in his new capacity of *ayan*. He became one of the most faithful allies of Osman Pazvantoğlu till the death of the Pasha.⁸ According to Russian diplomatic sources, in December 1797, again in the course of

4 Daskalakis, "Thourios Hymnos", 320-21. Indeed, despite the growing tension in Rumelia in 1796 – between the central authority and the *kırcalis* – the Vidin rebel was not directly involved in the conflict. He had just withstood the first siege of Vidin (late 1795-January 1796), which concluded with his official amnesty in February 1796. In July 1796, the Sultan's army began an offensive against the *kırcalı* ringleaders who were generally associated with Pazvantoğlu, but he himself remained quiet. He started a counter-offensive only in February 1797. See V. Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme* [The Age of the *Kırcalis*], Sofia 1977, 125-41.

5 Cf. K. Staikos, *Greek Books from the Time of the Neohellenic Enlightenment: Catalogue of an Exhibition Accompanying the International Symposium 'From Enlightenment to Revolution: Rhigas and his World'*, Athens 1998, 274.

6 Daskalakis, "Thourios Hymnos", 344-45, v. 101-14.

7 *Documente privind Istoria României: Collectia Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki (seria nova)* [Documents on Romanian History: Collection of Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki (New Series)]. Vol. 4: *Rapoarte diplomatice Ruse, 1797-1806* [Russian Diplomatic Reports, 1797-1806], Bucharest 1974, doc. 27, 101, and doc. 34, 117.

8 On Yılıkoğlu, see İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli âyanlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılıkoğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa* [Tirsinikli İsmail Ağa and Yılıkoğlu Süleyman Ağa, Famous *Ayan* of Rumelia, and Alemdar Mustafa Paşa], Istanbul 1942; V. Grachev, *Balkanskije vladenia Osmanskoi imperii na rubezhe XVIII-XIX vv.* [The Balkan Possessions of the Ottoman Empire at the End of the Eighteenth and the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century], Moscow 1990, 62; Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme*, 195, and *passim*.

Pazvantoğlu's campaign, the Tatars who had settled in the vicinity of Ismail in Bessarabia sent messengers to assure the Pasha that they wanted to live under his rule.⁹ Silistra may then be regarded as somehow related to the Vidin rebel; the information about Ismail and Braila is rather uncertain; for the rest of the cities even such evidence is lacking.

The identity of the "Georgian" is enigmatic. I consider it highly improbable that Rhigas would be interested in events in Georgia proper, as is usually suggested in the analyses of the song. At that time the Caucasus was gradually being incorporated into the Russian sphere of political influence and no secession movement of any importance is known there. One of the possible identifications is with Tayyar Mahmud Paşa, grandson of Canikli Ali Paşa (1720-85). While not ethnic Georgians, throughout the eighteenth century the family was involved in the administration and military affairs in the region and in Georgia in particular.¹⁰ During the war of 1787-92, Tayyar Paşa and his father, Battal Hüseyin Paşa, were assigned to defend the Caucasus and Anapa against the Russians, but switched sides and entered the Russian service, under General Suvorov. However, in 1793, Tayyar Mahmud was dismissed and imprisoned on accusations of being in secret correspondence with the Porte and attempting to organise a revolt of the Crimean Tatars against Russian rule. Within a year he managed to escape and father and son found asylum with İbrahim Efendi, the governor of Bender. In 1798, their host managed to secure the position of governor of Trabzon and Erzurum for Battal Paşa.¹¹ The stay of Tayyar Paşa in Bender fits perfectly with the time of writing of the *Thourios*. It might also be a clue to the insertion of this fortress among the potential allies of Pazvantoğlu. No doubt his complicated relations with the Porte were well known in the region. In 1798, however, he served the Sultan in the Balkans, presumably in collaboration with Gürci Osman Paşa against Pazvantoğlu and the *kırcalı* bands. Only later, in 1801, was he appointed governor of Canik and Samsun, inheriting also the family possessions. In 1802 he captured the rebellious Gürci Paşa and surrendered him to Sultan Selim III. However, his conflict with the central authority did not wane. He expanded his territory, made himself completely independent in his provinces and ravaged adjacent lands. In his proclamations, Tayyar Paşa declared his opposition to the Nizam-ı Cedid reforms, refusing to allow the levy of men or provision of funds or supplies for the new army from his domain. After his initial successes, he was defeated by the rival families of the Karaosmanoğlus and the Çapanoğlus, who officially supported Sultan Selim III's reforms. This forced him again to flee to Russia (in 1805) while some of his relatives sought asylum in Varna, on the present-day Bulgarian Black Sea coast, expecting,

⁹ *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 28, Anexa IV, 106.

¹⁰ On the founder of the family and his descendants, see R. Karagöz, *Canikli Ali Paşa*, Ankara 2003, and the bibliography quoted in it; on Tayyar Paşa, see in particular *ibid.*, 150-53.

¹¹ *Ibid.* See also S. J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III (1789-1807)*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971, 216-17. According to Karagöz, *Canikli Ali Paşa*, 147-48, 150, father and son were war captives (*esir*) rather than voluntarily seeking asylum with the Russians.

according to Russian diplomatic sources, “support from Pazvantoğlu’s party”. Many of his contemporaries, as well as modern scholars, compare and seek similarities between the rebel of Vidin and Canikli Tayyar Paşa as the major opposition to the reforms, and secessionists.¹²

Another ‘candidate’ for Rhigas’ “Georgian” (Gürçi, in Turkish), at least in terms of sobriquet, would be Gürçi Osman Paşa, the Pasha of Silistra who was engaged in two subsequent sieges of Vidin in 1797-98 and 1800 (against Pazvantoğlu) and served as governor (*vali*) of Silistra and Rumelia. It was only in 1801 that he was accused of collaboration with the Vidin rebel and the Porte tried to remove him from Rumelia. In 1803 the Pasha lost his life, first having been repulsed from Silistra by its *ayan* and citizens, and then captured by Tayyar Paşa in Anatolia.¹³ I have not been able to identify any other contemporary Ottoman statesman of importance bearing the same nickname or who could be associated in any other way with Georgia. It seems, however, that Tayyar Paşa’s biography most closely fits the chronology of the events in the region and the description in the *Thourios*.

The reference to separatism in the region of Bursa is opaque,¹⁴ as is the identity of the one “in Aleppo”. At the end of the eighteenth century the pashas or governors of Aleppo were changed far too often to be able to exercise any real power, being only nominees of the central authority in Istanbul. The strong personality in the region was not the pasha but the tax collector (*muhasıl*) in the province (*vilayet*), İbrahim Ağa Katarağası, obviously of local background. He was appointed pasha of Aleppo only in 1803 but was actually ruling the city and the region before that date, being an important factor there as early as 1791. Although İbrahim Ağa was recognised by the Porte as the master of the city, in fact he was not absolutely so – not only because he had yet to become the official holder of the position, but also because he had both the janissaries and the local *eşraf* (descendants of the Prophet) to contend with. Emerging as a powerful local figure, he never openly challenged the central authority, and often resorted to the support of his influential friends in the capital. What he aimed at was self-government within the confines of the *vilayet*, but his actions never challenged the Ottoman ‘cloak’.¹⁵

Actually, one of the most prominent local semi-independent rulers was Ahmed Cezzar Paşa, governor of Acre (1775), Sidon (1775), and Damascus (1785). He expanded his authority and influence throughout much of Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. After defeating Napoleon with

12 Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 283-85, 398-400; A. Miller, *Mustafa Pasha Bairaktar*, Bucharest 1975, 110-11.

13 Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani* [Ottoman Register], ed. S. A. Kahraman, vol. 4, Istanbul 1996, 1305 (s.v. ‘Hacı Osman Paşa’). On the relations between the secessionist in Vidin and this high Ottoman official and on the latter’s conduct in Rumelia, cf. Mutafchieva, *Kardzhaliisko vreme, passim*.

14 Among the more important and long-lived families in the region, Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 215, mentions the Nazuhoğlu in Gediz and the Kalyoncuoğlu in Bilecik, but none in Bursa itself, and certainly no one that would be worth mentioning among the most outstanding local notables at the time of Sultan Selim III.

15 Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, vol. 3, 783-84. On the situation in the region, see H. Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760-1826*, Chapel Hill 1963, 116-21.

British assistance in 1799, he became the master of the coastline between Tripoli and Sinai.¹⁶ According to A. Djika, the Russian Consul General in Ragusa in 1789-99, around 1794 Cezzar Paşa of Damascus, Buşatlı Mahmud Paşa of Shkodër and Ali Paşa of Tepedelen formed a kind of triumvirate of the most powerful governors who usurped authority in large parts of European and Asian Turkey. In his opinion, the Porte could do nothing to limit their power.¹⁷ Neither İbrahim Ağa Kataragası nor Ahmed Cezzar Paşa, nor any other powerful local notable, however, corresponds fully to the description in the *Thourios*, and it is not quite clear why Aleppo, and not Damascus, for example, should be singled out among the provincial power centres in the Ottoman Empire.

The situation is probably clear only with the “lions of Egypt”, the Mamluks who had been causing serious problems for the Porte for nearly a century. According to Stanford J. Shaw, by 1671 the transition from Ottoman to Mamluk control over Egypt had been by and large completed, with most of the administrative and military positions being filled by members of the Mamluk factions. Only the post of governor (*vali*) continued to be reserved for viziers appointed by Istanbul. By 1783 a Mamluk faction had emerged victorious in the internal strife and stopped the payments to the capital. It was only then that Istanbul intervened and sent a military expedition to curb them and restore the *status quo*, that is, the payment of the annual taxes. As a result of the re-established rivalry between Mamluk factions, by 1798 Egypt was in political, social and economic turmoil. The French intervention in 1798 additionally complicated the situation, with Mohammed Ali emerging victorious in local power struggles only much later.¹⁸ Obviously the problems of the Ottoman sultans with the Mamluk factions and the process of gradual detachment of Egypt from the Empire were well known and they seem to have been reflected in the *Thourios*.

Although at a first glance this ‘list’ may appear to be some sort of an alliance of the oppositional elements in the Empire at the time, it is clear that it is far from being so. These appeals might have resulted from the often exaggerated, probably even invented, news about ‘revolutions’ and rebellions published in contemporary media, and especially in the Greek newspaper in Vienna, which presented the Ottoman Empire as a state on the brink of dissolution.¹⁹ In fact, with few exceptions, the list hardly suggests anything beyond the desires of an ardent revolutionary seeking help for the liberation of his co-nationals in all possible directions. Interestingly, except for Pazvantoğlu, none of the leading *ayan* in Rumelia are included. Furthermore, in his battle-song Rhigas refers to the defeats inflicted by the *kırcahs* on the Ottoman troops, but only to prove that

16 Ibid., 121-22; Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 218-19, 258, 291-92.

17 Quoted in G. L. Arsh, *Albania i Epir v kontse XVIII-nachale XIX veka* [Albania and Epirus at the End of the Eighteenth and Beginning of the Nineteenth Century], Moscow 1963, 187.

18 Shaw, *Between Old and New*, 217-18.

19 Daskalakis, “Thourios Hymnos”, 344-45, v. 95-100.

the Ottomans are not invincible.²⁰ Two of the major power centres in European Turkey, however, seem to have been consciously left out: those of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and the Buşatlıs – but also İsmail Tırseniklioğlu in Rusçuk, İsmail Bey of Siroz (Gk. Serres), among many others of local importance.

Here I shall not explore in depth the similarities and differences in the policies of the three most powerful pashas in Rumelia; this I shall do elsewhere. The reason for referring to some of them is only with a view to the analysis of why two of them should have been omitted from the *Thourios* and one should have been considered a major ‘ally’.²¹

The Buşatlıs assumed power in the region of Shkodër in 1756, and with a few short breaks kept it till the 1830s. Under the most famous member of the family, Kara Mahmud Paşa (1775-96), the *paşalık* became more or less a state within the state. Twice (in 1787 and 1793) the Porte undertook large-scale military campaigns to remove him from his bastion and twice it was defeated and had to confirm him in his post of governor with the title of vizier. Like most of the Rumelia governors who were his contemporaries, Mahmud Paşa pursued a specific domestic policy, mainly in the field of taxation and religious affairs, earning him strong support among local Catholics – merchants, religious functionaries, and Albanian tribes. Yet, like the other two pashas he remained a staunch Muslim, a fact he emphasised in all his international and domestic acts and initiatives. He played a careful game with the international powers, trying to achieve his goals at home with foreign support.

Whereas the Buşatlıs were descendants of the old Albanian feudal clan of the Dukagjins, Kara Mahmud chose to declare himself an heir of the national Albanian hero, Skenderbeg. His message still needs to be analysed against the backdrop of his ‘internal’ policy, but he does not seem to have envisaged the establishment of an independent Albanian state. On the contrary, whatever his proclamations announced or whatever intentions he expressed in front of representatives of foreign countries and despite his military confrontation with the central authority, he invariably declared his subordination to the Sultan. In turn, this occasionally would lead to conflicts with the Christians living in his dominions. What he probably aimed at was the establishment of an autonomous hereditary principality within the empire, without openly challenging its integrity. Also of no less importance is the fact that despite the widely acknowledged religious ‘tolerance’ shown by the Buşatlı family, and by Mahmud Paşa in particular, it concerned only their ‘subjects’. On several occasions Mahmud Paşa tried without success to expand his semi-independent *paşalık*

20 Velestinlis, *Revolutionsomno*, 121.

21 This overview is based mainly on Arsh, *Albania i Epir*, and on S. Dimitrov and K. Manchev, *Istoria na balkanskite narodi* [History of the Balkan Peoples], Vol. 1: *XV-XIX vek* [Fifteenth-Nineteenth Centuries], 2nd ed., Sofia 1999, 154-56; Grachev, *Balkanskite vladania*, 36-42; K. Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece*, Princeton, N.J. 1999; D. Skiotis, ‘From Bandit to Pasha: First Steps in the Rise to Power of Ali of Tepelen, 1750-1784’, *IJMES*, 2 (1971), 219-44.

at the expense of the Montenegrin tribes whom elsewhere in the song Rhigas lists among the potential allies of the Greeks. In fact, the Pasha perished in a battle during his last campaign against them, in July 1796. Chronologically his death fits in perfectly with the writing of the *Thourios*, as the news of this event would have, no doubt, very quickly reached the Danubian Principalities. It was followed by turmoil in which the central authority tried to restore its grip on northern Albania. Finally, his brother İbrahim managed to take over the post of governor, but this took him more than a couple of years, actually long after Rhigas was arrested.

The situation with Ali Paşa is only slightly different. His road to power was more difficult – he had to earn it himself and, as was often the case at that time, from being a ringleader, he was soon appointed to fight with his former companions. He obtained the rank of a pasha in 1783-84 and his rule lasted until 1822. Ali Paşa showed an admirable political flair and gradually built up a quasi-state. Throughout his life, although preparing for an eventual final clash, he carefully avoided open confrontation with the Sultan. During his half-century rule, the Pasha of Yanya often refrained from fulfilling his military obligations, sometimes even sabotaging the Porte's acts, but he always managed to soothe his strained relations with the central authorities and never failed to submit the taxes due from his province to the capital. It was only when the central authority finally decided to smash him that he engaged in armed conflict with it.

In the process of expansion he established a quasi-independent principality with several 'dependent' territories ruled by his relatives, including most of present-day Greece, and parts of Macedonia and southern Albania. Ali Paşa also built up an enormous financial empire based on landed estates (*çiftlik*), customs duties, extortion, and confiscation. He pursued a complex foreign policy, flirting with the international powers involved in the politics of the region, in which he was assisted mainly by leading Greek religious functionaries, merchants, and scholars. Within his domain, Ali Paşa seems to have enjoyed some support from his subjects, mainly among the upper social strata of Christians but also to a certain degree among Albanian peasants. This may be attributed to the relative security he, like Mahmud Paşa and Osman Pazvantoğlu, ensured in his possessions, providing better opportunities for trade.²² The troops of both Albanian pashas consisted of Albanians, primarily Muslim, but also Catholic and Orthodox, as well as Greeks. Some of the administrative positions in Ali Paşa's council (*divan*) were also occupied by Christians. Like Mahmud Paşa and Osman Pazvantoğlu, Ali Paşa allowed some limited 'freedom' of religious beliefs, and gave permissions for the restoration, and even construction of new churches. He also promoted Greek education and under his rule Yanya became one of the major centres of Greek scholarship. Ali Paşa, too, clearly felt the need to construct a 'dynastic' mythology. According to Russian diplomatic correspondence, he circulated 'prophecies' about himself through wandering

22 This seems to have been a general pattern with the most significant *derebeys* and *ayan* in Anatolia, the Arab lands, and the Balkans. See R. Clogg, 'Aspects of the Movement for Greek Independence', in idem, *I Kath'imas Anatoli: Studies in Ottoman Greek History*, Istanbul 2004, 241.

Bektashi dervishes: that “in his time he would become the greatest and most powerful among the Muslims”, that “he would conquer Venice and would implant the religion of Muhammad there”, that “he was destined to found an independent Albanian kingdom”.²³ Yet, Ali Paşa was not considered an ‘ally’ by Rhigas.

What could be the reasons for this obvious neglect or negative attitude? In the first place, he ruled over Greeks, who actually formed the bulk of his subjects. This made him a rival, rather than an ally of an eventual Greek state. Such an attitude on the part of Rhigas was justified also by Ali Paşa’s wars on Souli (1792, 1800-03), and on Himara (1785, 1797-98). Souliots, as well as “Albanians from Epirus”, were among the groups to whom Rhigas addressed his appeal for a rebellion against the Ottoman authority. The bitter conflict between the Pasha and these two groups must have made him more an enemy than a potential ally.

Why then should Osman Pazvantoğlu be attributed such a central position in Rhigas’ *Thourios*? Greek sources give an outright answer to this question. As early as 1824, Konstantinos Nikolopoulos,²⁴ a librarian at the *Institut de France* and member of the pro-Korais circles, wrote in the first known systematic biography of Rhigas that “Rhigas parvint, on ne sait comment, à faire entrer dans sa société plusieurs Turcs puissans, entre autres le fameux Passvan-Oglou, qui résista si long tems à toutes les forces de la Porte”.²⁵ Further, the author relates that, fearing that Pazvantoğlu would free these “honorable victims”, the Ottoman authorities in Belgrade threw them into the Danube.²⁶ This, to my knowledge, is chronologically the earliest published reference to connections between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu. The author does not specify his sources, but we may assume that he might have heard rumours about them during his stay in Bucharest shortly after the arrest of the Greek revolutionary.

The theme was further developed by Ioannis Philimon, himself a member of the Friendly

23 I shall not discuss the issue of Ali Paşa’s belonging – or not – to the Bektashi *tarikât*. Until recently this was considered a truism. It was convincingly subjected to criticism by N. Clayer, “The Myth of Ali Pasha and the Bektashis: The Construction of an ‘Albanian Bektashi National History’”, in S. Schwandner-Sievers and B. Fischer (eds), *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, London 2002, 127-33, who claims that Ali Paşa’s special attitude to the Bektashis was a later invention aimed at forming an Albanian national identity associated with the Bektashi religious affiliation. Contemporary Russian diplomatic correspondence, however, mentions Bektashi dervishes as propagators of these prophecies (quoted in Arsh, *Albania i Epir*, 273). This does not necessarily contradict Clayer’s conclusions but probably reflects the popularity of the Bektashi *tarikât*, whereby all wandering dervishes would be classified as its members.

24 Nikolopoulos (1786-1841) was born in Smyrna, studied in Bucharest mainly under Lambros Photiadis, and then moved to Paris. There he stayed during the Greek War of Independence and until the end of his life. He was among the editors of the literary journal *Melissa* [The Bee]. See more on him in K. T. Dimaras, *Neohellenikos Diaphotismos* [Modern Greek Enlightenment], Athens 1982, 102, 326, 368-70.

25 Nicolopoulo, ‘Notice sur Rhigas’, 276. I have kept the original orthography in rendering the quotations from the documents.

26 *Ibid.*, 278.

Society (*Philiki Hetairia*), in his major work on the Greek national liberation movement, published in 1834, and particularly by Christophoros Perraivos in his memoirs and in the biography of Rhigas Velestinlis. Their texts are essential in construing the Greek national narrative immediately after the War of Independence. The two authors relate a more or less similar story about the friendship and collaboration between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu, but Perraivos, an associate of Rhigas from 1793, provides its most developed version: that the actual acquaintance of the Greek revolutionary with the future Pasha dated from the time of the war of 1787-91; at that time Rhigas, as the 'governor' of Craiova, saved the life of young Osman when he was pursued by the Wallachian Prince; on the death of Prince Mavrogenis, the rebel, who had been in hiding around Vidin, came in person to Bucharest in order to pay his homage and to endow his saviour with rich gifts. This, according to Perraivos, was the time when Rhigas initiated Pazvantoğlu into his ideas and instructed him to rise up against the Sultan and against the *beys* and the *ağas* who had caused trouble in Vidin. Then Osman returned to Vidin, where he seemingly followed Rhigas' advice. Unfortunately, the authors do not discuss the mechanisms of communication between the two men. Pazvantoğlu is again mentioned by the two authors in relation to the arrest and death of Rhigas and his companions, when he presumably tried to save them.²⁷ Philimon claims that the Ottoman notable was assigned a significant role in the military plans of Rhigas. He was expected to divert the Sultan's army from Epirus and Thessaly, where the Greek Revolution was to break out, supported by 20,000 French soldiers.²⁸ Interestingly, in the 1820s the plans of the Friendly Society concerning Ali Paşa of Tepedelen were similar. An example in this respect is the conduct of Ioannis Paparrigopoulos, a trusted advisor of the Russian Consul General in the Morea. At a secret meeting in April 1820, he assured the Pasha of the Russians' full support in the event of an armed conflict with the Porte, despite the fact that this did not square with the Tsarist policy of preservation of the *status quo*. The purpose was to encourage the Pasha in his opposition to the Sultan and thus divert the Ottoman armed forces from the regions of the planned Greek uprising.²⁹ To this Perraivos adds that Rhigas sent the statutes of his organisation (*organismos*), along with his plans explaining the reasons for his rebellion (*sic!*).³⁰ So far no traces of such documents have been found.

Many of these stories are repeated or even further elaborated on by later authors.³¹ Without

27 Some of these issues are also discussed in A. Velkov, 'Ti stekeis Pasvantoglou, toson ekstatikos' [Pazvantoglou, why dost thou so long remain impassive], in *Praktika III diethnous synedriou 'Pherai-Velestino-Rhigas'* [Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference 'Pherai-Velestino-Rhigas'], Athens 2002, 617-21.

28 Philimon, *Philiki Hetairia*, 91.

29 Arsh, *Albania i Epir*, 315-16.

30 Perraivos, *Viographia*, 39.

31 See, for example, G. Gazis and K. Sathas, quoted in G. Zoidis, *Rhigas Velestinlis*, Sofia 1973, 48; G. Kordatos, *Ho Regas Pheraios kai he valkanike homospondia* [Rhigas Pheraios and the Balkan Federation], Athens 1945, 109-10.

referring to new sources, they sometimes add fabulous new details about the relationship between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu. A typical example is the story told by Notis Botzaris to the effect that “according to tradition” the Pasha of Vidin was the founder of a masonic lodge in Vidin as a branch of the *Société des Bons Cousins* established in 1780 in Vienna. The Society’s main goal was to set up masonic lodges across the Balkans in order to encourage the preparation for the liberation from Ottoman domination. The Society was dissolved in 1798, after the arrest of Rhigas, who was among its members. By the end of the century masonic lodges seemingly also existed in Belgrade, Athens, Corfu, and elsewhere.³²

It is difficult to judge which parts of these stories were true and which invented, to what extent reality was adorned. However fabulous the story of the lucky encounter between the Greek revolutionary and the Ottoman rebel may sound, it seems that Pazvantoğlu had indeed crossed the border, chased by the enemies of his father in Vidin, and had found asylum in Austria where “il fut fort bien traité”.³³ Other evidence may place this event a little earlier, at the time of the execution of his father or shortly afterwards, that is, around 1788, but this has yet to be researched. Pazvantoğlu did indeed have problems with the Wallachian Prince and took part in the war with the Austrians in 1787-91. Taking into account his family and friendship ties across the Danube, which I shall discuss elsewhere, it is likely that he spent some time in the Banat. Thus, there is every likelihood that the story about Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu is true, at least where the physical meeting is concerned. The conditions in the border area along the river make such an encounter probable. For these reasons I tend to agree with Leandros Vranousis that although no positive data exist even for the ‘physical’ acquaintance of the two men, Rhigas could indeed have saved the life of the rebel from Vidin.³⁴ As other instances of cross-religion and across-the-border friendships show, history abounds in such ‘improbable’ stories and the plausibility of ours should not be rejected outright. There is also some evidence as to the existence of contacts, probably indirect, between the two men, which needs to be analysed in this context. Below I shall discuss some of this.

The *Thourios* is not the only text where Rhigas refers to Pazvantoğlu. Russian diplomatic sources from Bucharest relate that: “[W]e are informed from Vienna that, dreaming of freedom, one of the local Greek citizens, Rhigas, has published a manifesto in the Greek newspapers in which, *announcing the contemporary affairs of the Porte with Pazvantoğlu* and the French ideas concerning Turkish oppression, he advises all his nation to take measures to liberate their fatherland from the yoke. The Turkish ambassador complained to the Caesar’s government [about this]

32 Botzaris, *Visions balkaniques*, 72.

33 Austrian sources date this to 1792, when he was about 20 years old: L. Popov, ‘Prinos za izuchavane na minaloto na balgarskoto otechestvo’ [Contribution to the Study of the Past of the Bulgarian Fatherland], *Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniya, nauka i kultura*, 24/1 (1908), doc. 10 (April 1797), 6.

34 Vranousis, *Regas Velestinles*, 24.

and demanded that the author mentioned be taken [under arrest] and that publications of newspapers in Greek be forbidden in the future. This was taken into consideration and the propagator is kept in custody".³⁵ This text refers, in all probability, to the revolutionary proclamation which, along with the republican constitution and the *Thourios*, was included in the first brochure Rhigas published in preparation for the revolution shortly before his departure for Trieste in November 1797.³⁶ Its compilation indeed coincides with the time of one of the largest-scale expansion campaigns undertaken by Pazvantoğlu, a fact that in itself has been regarded as proof of the close cooperation and collaboration between the revolutionary and the rebel. This could have been a mere coincidence, but also good information about developments, resulting from direct and deliberate contact or just 'floating in the air'.

Another argument in favour of the plausibility of communications between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu is provided by the activities of Dimitri Turnavity. One of the numerous interesting personalities of the time, a real 'border-area' figure, he was well known to contemporary diplomats and the authorities in the Ottoman capital and the Danube Principalities. Here I do not aim to draw a comprehensive portrait of this colourful person, but only to bring forward facts that relate to the issue in question. Turnavity was one of the richest merchants in Bucharest,³⁷ supplying provisions to the Wallachian army and to Pazvantoğlu's troops.³⁸ He was a favourite of two Wallachian Princes and served as their envoy to Vidin. As Russian diplomats in Jassy reported: "[Turnavity] a été souvent employé par les Princes de Valachie dans les affaires qui concernoient les Turcs; sous les deux derniers princes Ipsilanti et Hangerli il fut envoyé plusieurs fois auprès de Pazwand-oglou; et se fut à son dernier retour de là, que le nouveau Prince de Valachie l'a expédié à Constantinople sous prétexte que le grand visir lui-même s'étoit proposé de le charger de quelques commissions auprès de Pazwand-oglou".³⁹ It was this mission that ended with his strangulation. Rumours named Turnavity as the connection between Hangerli and Pazvantoğlu even before the appointment of the former as Wallachian *gospodar* (Hospodar). Public opinion in the Principalities held that the Wallachian Prince had sent the merchant to the capital in the hope of concealing his "evil deeds". Accordingly, local sources blamed Pazvantoğlu for having submitted the correspondence to the Porte, which entailed the Prince's death sentence.⁴⁰

For contemporaries, French and Russian diplomats including, however, he was primarily asso-

35 *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 34, 117, containing news from the region for the period prior to 10 January 1798. The translation from Russian and emphasis are mine.

36 Daskalakis, "Thourios Hymnos", 315. French diplomatic sources in Bucharest also speak of this proclamation without providing details of its contents. *Ibid.*, 316.

37 *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 41, 133.

38 Turnavity was also involved in collecting revenues from the salt mines in Wallachia. *Ibid.*, doc. 34, 148; doc. 37, Anexa III, 124-25; doc. 51, Anexa IV, 148; doc. 122, 246.

39 *Ibid.*, doc. 41, 133.

40 *Ibid.*, doc. 114, 240.

ciated with Pazvantoğlu,⁴¹ on whose behalf, until January 1798, he communicated with Russian and French diplomats.⁴² As Carra St-Cyr put it: “il m’a paru que Passavan-oglou n’a mis confiance entière qu’en un seul homme, et ce qui paraîtra le plus supprenant à qui connaît les Turcs”.⁴³ Turnavity seems to have been Pazvantoğlu’s preferred messenger in his attempts to establish contacts with the French Republic. The Greek merchant was the perfect man for this purpose. He seems to have become ‘*barataire*’⁴⁴ of France at the time of General Aubert du Bayet, the Republic’s ambassador at the Sublime Porte, that is between December 1796 and December 1797.⁴⁵ The first contact known so far of Turnavity on Pazvantoğlu’s behalf with the General dates from the beginning of October 1797, roughly coinciding with the last stage of Rhigas’ preparations for the Greek revolution. Wallachian *boyars* suspected that Turnavity’s moves were also coordinated with the former French consul in Bucharest, Carra St-Cyr.⁴⁶

Available information does not allow an unequivocal statement that Turnavity had indeed served as a link between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu. The only source bringing together the Greek

41 Russian sources call him “the old friend of the rebel”. *Ibid.*, doc. 27, Anexa IV, 107.

42 See, for example, *ibid.*, doc. 28, Anexa IV, 107, for Turnavity as a messenger of the Wallachian Prince and the Ottoman authorities to Pazvantoğlu; *ibid.*, doc. 30, Anexa 1, 109, for him bringing a letter in Turkish from Pazvantoğlu to Kirico, the Russian Vice-consul in Bucharest. See also Popov, ‘Prinos za izuchavane na minaloto’, 133, for Turnavity bringing a letter from Pazvantoğlu to the French ambassador. *Ibid.*, doc. 16, 138, for him being sent by Pazvantoğlu to the capital to negotiate on his behalf with the Ottoman authorities and with the French diplomats.

43 *Ibid.*, doc. 11, 136, and doc. 24, 142-43, also calling him “son ami et son confident”.

44 ‘Barataire’, or ‘baratais’, from the Turkish *berath*, holder of a *berat*, a patent. See a detailed explanation of the term in A. de Groot, ‘Protection and Nationality: The Decline of the Drogmans’, in F. Hitzel (ed.), *Istanbul et les langues orientales: Actes du colloque organisé par l’IFEA et l’INALCO, Istanbul, 29-31 mai 1995*, Paris and Montreal, 1997, 235-55. The *berats* and *fermans* granted to the interpreters of foreign diplomatic missions and their servants afforded considerable privileges, particularly with regard to taxation, and rendered their holders virtually immune from Ottoman jurisdiction. For this reason they were much sought after by the *reaya* merchants, who were willing to pay high prices for them. As the British ambassador to the Porte, Sir Robert Liston, put it to Lord Grenville, the British Foreign Secretary, in a dispatch of April 1795, trafficking in *berats* was the “universal practice ... It was natural that a patent which raised a tributary subject from a state of degradation and procured respect to his person, security to his property and the patronage of an Ambassador at the seat of Government should soon become an object of ambition”. The going rate for a Russian *berat* which carried with it the valuable privilege of trading to the Black Sea was as high as 10,000 *gurus*. Liston himself was able to make between £2,000 and £3,000 a year through selling *berats*. Clogg, ‘Aspects of the Movement for Greek Independence’, 244 n. 3.

45 Popov, ‘Prinos za izuchavane na minaloto’, 136, doc. 11. As Carra St-Cyr informed the French Consul in Bucharest, Turnavity’s being a French *berat*-holder became a bone of (some) contention between the Porte and the French diplomatic representative. According to Russian diplomatic sources, the Porte insisted that Turnavity himself had denied being under any foreign protection. This was only done in order to avoid French intervention in his defence as a French “*berat* and patent” would imply. *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 46, 136.

46 *Ibid.*, doc. 46, 137.

revolutionary and the Greek merchant from Bucharest, but only in the field of speculations, are the reports of the Austrian *internuntius* in Istanbul. In them H. von Rathkeal urged the closer inspection of Turnavity's papers in his house in Bucharest: "Un autre qui doit avoir été en relation avec les conjurés [that is, Rhigas and his arrested associates] est le nommé Demetrius Tournaviti, le confident de Paswandoglou dont le Capitan-Pascha vient de tirer une si prompte vengeance; je suggère, tant ici qu'à Bukarest, de faire examiner soigneusement les papiers de cet homme, qui pourroient fournir des traits de lumière; son frère par exemple, établi à Trieste, ne feroit il pas des révélations intéressantes, s'il étoit examiné adroitement, et si l'on prenoit inspection de ses écrits avec les ménagements nécessaires pour la réputation et le crédit d'un homme qui peut-etre n'est point coupable".⁴⁷ During his stay in Bucharest, Rhigas maintained contacts with French diplomats there and with his co-nationals working for them. Turnavity, too, had close relations with some of these same people, both in Bucharest and in the Ottoman capital. The conduct of many Christian associates of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, who, while serving him, actually pursued and defended the interests of the Friendly Society, shows that double 'affiliations' were possible and certainly this was not a unique case in those troubled times.

Chronologically, the merchant's murder coincides with the arrest of Rhigas and his companions but is not necessarily related to it. This is also the time of the expansion campaign launched by Pazvantoğlu. Turnavity was in the capital as a special envoy of the rebel while the Porte was preparing its counter-offensive. His relations with the French, and the imminent danger of uniting the French and the Vidin forces were sufficient reasons for the physical removal of the Greek merchant.

Again in the opinion of contemporaries, Turnavity had lost his life solely because of his connections with Pazvantoğlu: "On prétend que le malheureux Tournevit avoit fait des grandes découvertes d'une conspiration bien étendue en Turquie parmi les premiers d'entre les Turcs, fait contre le Grand Seigneur, et que cette conspiration tenoit à la rébellion de Pazwand-oglou; et que le grand visir, ou bien pour venger les malheurs qui alloient fondre sur tant de têtes en Turquie, ou bien les prévenir, a fait ce pas envers Tournevit".⁴⁸ The murder of Turnavity and of a "Turk belonging to Pazvantoğlu's party" frightened many citizens of Bucharest⁴⁹ but it is not clear whether that

47 E. Legrand, *Anekdotă egrăphă peri Regă Velestinle kai ton syn auto martyresanton ek ton en Vienne archeion exachthenta* [Unpublished Documents from the Vienna Archives about Rhigas Velestinlis and his Co-Martyrs], Athens 1996, doc. 46 (24 February 1798). See also docs 42 (14 February 1798) and 52-54 (10 March 1798). Obtaining the papers along with the entire property of Turnavity became a goal also for other parties engaged in regional politics. See *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 61 (April 1798), 163, about an official of the Porte sent to inventory the inheritance; *ibid.*, doc. 139 (August 1799), 265, about Pazvantoğlu's claims on the property.

48 *Ibid.*, doc. 44, 133.

49 *Ibid.*, doc. 46, 135 (before February 1798).

was because of their association with the conspiracy, or because of the imminent danger that Pazvantoğlu would strike back in revenge. Some arrests in Wallachia were also attributed to the arrest and interrogation of Turnavity when he “revealed all secrets”. In effect others were also compromised.⁵⁰ Hangerli, the Wallachian Prince, was also accused of collaboration with Pazvantoğlu via Turnavity.⁵¹ None of those people seems to have been associated with Rhigas, though. This, certainly, is not sufficient grounds to refute his possible involvement in Rhigas’ organisation. The indirect evidence and the documents cited above do indeed leave certain room for conjecture as to the possible points where the roads of the three men could have crossed. As summarised by the Austrian *internuntius* on the occasion of Turnavity’s murder, “ever since the Svishtov peace treaty he has played a dangerous role in Wallachia, dedicated to the French, employed by the princes, and making frequent trips to Vidin”.⁵²

It should be pointed out that in his communications with French diplomats, via Turnavity or through other channels, Pazvantoğlu does not refer in any way to any contacts with Rhigas or to the eventual Greek revolution.⁵³ It is only in 1801 that Pazvantoğlu refers to his presumably close connections with Rhigas. We learn about this from two documents related to a mission, sent by Pazvantoğlu to Paris in the hope of establishing direct contact with Napoleon and the Directory.⁵⁴ In front of Talleyrand his two agents, Nedelko Popovich and Polisoï Condon, told the story of Pazvantoğlu’s attempts to establish contacts with France.⁵⁵ Among other interesting details, the two related that:

Il [Pazvantoğlu] n’est dans aucune relation avec l’Autriche et la Russie. Il fait seulement que cette dernière Puissance n’entreprendra rien contre lui, si elle a l’assurance qu’il ménagera la Moldavie. Quant à l’Autriche, elle se borne jusqu’à présent à servir les inquiétudes de la Porte en lui envoy-

50 Ibid., doc. 51, Anexa IV, 148.

51 Ibid., doc. 116, 240 (1799).

52 Popov, ‘Prinos za izuchavane na minaloto’, doc. 6, 26. In the publication the text of this account is translated from German into Bulgarian.

53 Russian diplomatic sources register the interest in one of the detained Greeks displayed by Napoleon: “On écrit de Vienne aux marchands de Jassy qu’il s’y trouve un Grec parmi les compromis pour lequel le général Bounaparte s’intéresse beaucoup auprès des deux Cours, celle de Vienne et celle de Constantinople, mais on n’a rien dit de son nom”. *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 42, 132. It is not clear if that was Rhigas or another person, but this makes it clear that French authorities were, too, aware of the developments.

54 I. Pavlović, ‘Ispisi iz frantsuskih arhiva o Pazvantoğlu (od 1795 do 1807)’ [Excerpts about Pazvantoğlu from the French Archives (from 1795 till 1807)], *Spomenik Srpske kraljevske akademije*, Pt. 3 (1890), docs 20 and 21 (22 September–22 October 1801), 121–26.

55 Some of the issues discussed below I have analysed in R. Gradeva, ‘Osman Pazvantoğlu of Vidin: Between Old and New’, in F. Anscombe (ed.), *The Ottoman Balkans, 1750–1830*, Princeton 2006, 136–46.

ant de tems en tems des Grecs résidents en Allemagne, et dont on découvre les intelligences avec le Pacha de Vidin.

Il y a quelques années, on découvrit à Vienne une vaste conspiration contre la Turquie dont les agens de Passavan-Oglou conduisoient les ressorts. Polisoï Condon en étoit, huit Grecs furent livrés au Pacha de Belgrade qui les fut étrangler. Polisoï assure qu'ils étoient les plus grands hommes de sa nation. Quinze ou vingt furent exilés dans différentes provinces de la maison d'Autriche. Lui, Polisoï ne fut que soupçonné et il fut seulement privé de sa chaire de Littérature grecque à Vienne.

La découverte de Cette Conspiration fut l'effet de la mission d'un homme que Passavan-Oglou envoyoit au Premier Consul et qui fut arrêté. Les papiers dont il étoit porteur conduisirent l'inquisition Autrichienne à rechercher les Agents du Pacha et leurs Correspondances. Depuis cette échec Passavan-Oglou a sans cesse envoyé des députés, mais sans munir de papiers. Ils ont tous été arrêtés ou assassinés. Nedelko est le seul qui soit parvenu à exécuter les ordres de Son Maître.⁵⁶

The exposé of the emissaries may be regarded as a kind of *post factum* corroboration of the more 'physical' contacts between Pazvantoğlu and Rhigas, as it relates in brief the story of the destruction of Rhigas' *hetairia*. Greek sources invariably assign the initiative and the leading role to Rhigas, who had managed to introduce into his organisation several influential Turks, Pazvantoğlu including. The Pasha of Vidin turns this perspective upside down. In his envoys' version, Rhigas and his *hetairia* formed part of the rebel's vast conspiracy against the Ottoman state. He even asserted that the Greeks were detained following the arrest of one of Pazvantoğlu's messengers to the First Consul. The papers he was carrying allegedly led to the discovery of the members of the network. Greek sources actually speak of a betrayal in Trieste,⁵⁷ while Russian ones point to a Greek bishop who had informed the Patriarch of the preparations.⁵⁸

This contradictory information raises the problem of whether the story told by the emissaries was merely a ploy on the part of Pazvantoğlu. He could easily have been informed about the events and used them for his own ends. Judging from the diplomatic correspondence, the news of the tragic death of Rhigas and the fate of his *hetairia* spread immediately throughout the Balkans.⁵⁹

Another detail also makes the story of Pazvantoğlu's close involvement with Rhigas' *hetairia*

56 Pavlović, 'Ispisi iz frantsuskih arhiva o Pazvantoğlu', 125.

57 Zoidis, *Rhigas Velestinlis*, 62.

58 *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 33, 115 (8 January 1798).

59 Shortly after these events the Russian diplomatic representatives in Bucharest and Jassy informed their government about the arrest and the fate of Rhigas and his companions. *Ibid.*, doc. 33, 115 (8 January 1798); *ibid.*, doc. 34, 117 (10 January 1798).

suspicious. It is the personalities of the two men who met Talleyrand on Pazvantoğlu's behalf.⁶⁰ Below I shall summarise the data we possess about them with a bearing on the topic.

Nedelko Popovich, one of Pazvantoğlu's envoys to Napoleon, declared that he was living in Vidin as the *bazirgânbaşı* of the governor, his official title being 'doctor of the pasha'. In his own words, his main obligations in the Pasha's "government" were to conduct his finances and international correspondence. Apparently, he was a merchant with important deals in Vienna amounting to tens of thousands of *guruş*, and a name known to Russian and Austrian diplomats in the Ottoman capital and in the Danubian Principalities. He was a "Russian subject" (probably 'barataire'). His importance is made clear by the documents issued by both Russian and Austrian chancelleries concerning his business and trips, which confirm that he had special relations with Pazvantoğlu and enjoyed the protection of Hyspilotis. Popovich was also involved in supplying provisions for the troops of Pazvantoğlu. He obviously stayed in Paris after his audience with Talleyrand. In 1802, again on behalf of Pazvantoğlu, he visited Count Markov, the Russian ambassador in the French capital. This time his main objective was to seek the benevolence and protection of the Russian Tsar for his master.⁶¹ Unfortunately, I have been unable, for the time being, to retrieve more consistent evidence about Popovich, except for the fact that after the death of Pazvantoğlu he stayed in Vidin and in 1807 served as an agent of the Ottoman government to Karageorge.⁶² After a decade of active participation in politics and in the economy of the region, he disappears from the available documentation. Turnavity and Popovich seem to have been among the most trusted associates of Pazvantoğlu in his contacts both with the French and the Russians. The similarities between the two allow me to delineate the portrait of the affluent merchant, engaged in international trade, in supplying provisions for the Vidin rebel but also in the economy of the Principalities and the deals of the Wallachian princes, one of the numerous 'trans-border' persons who also played so important a role in regional diplomatic relations.

It should be pointed out that they were not unique in their diverse occupations. Most of the grand notables in the Balkans – Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, Mustafa Paşa Buşatlı, İsmail Tırseniklioğlu, Alemdar Mustafa Paşa – relied in their contacts with neighbouring states, with the Great Powers and with the central authority almost exclusively on the services of a group of affluent merchants, mainly non-Muslims – Christians of different ethnic backgrounds and denominations, Orthodox,

60 See in more detail Gradeva, 'Osman Pazvantoğlu'.

61 See Popov, 'Prinos za izuchavane na minaloto', doc. 27, 34 (1798); P. Oreshkov, 'Niakolko dokumenta za Pazvantoglu i Sofroniya Vrachanski (1800-1812)' [Some Documents Concerning Pazvantoğlu and Sofronii of Vratsa (1800-1812)], *Sbornik na BAN*, 3 (1912), doc. 2, 34, and doc. 7, 37-38; *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 297 (1803), 507; S. Vankov, 'Osman Paspanoglu, Vidinski Pasha: Stranitsi ot istoriata na Iztochnia Vapros' [Osman Pazvantoğlu, Pasha of Vidin: Pages from the History of the Eastern Question], *Voennistoricheski sbornik*, 62 (Sofia 1947), 115.

62 *Ibid.*, 114.

Catholic, Armenians, and Jews, most of whom would also be *beratls* of some foreign state. This fact should probably be attributed to their well-placed contacts and good knowledge of the situation in the region, their command of several languages, and to their being part of various networks that brought together people living in many countries and were a pool of information about current events. What made merchants all of a sudden such an active group and factor in regional politics, however, is a phenomenon that still needs to be researched into. The provincial notables obviously valued them highly, providing the traders with security within their own domains and many privileges.

Pazvantoğlu's other envoy to Paris, Polisoï Condon, claimed to have been a member of Rhigas' organisation. According to his own account, he was a priest and professor in Greek and Latin literature in Vienna. His personality presents us with no fewer surprises than Nedelko's. In all probability, this was Polyzois Kontos,⁶³ a well-known Greek intellectual of the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. In Vienna, Polyzois Kontos had been teacher of the sons of Prince Adam Czartoryski, who was to become Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. In 1795 he was invited by the Orthodox community in Pest to serve as a priest and teacher in the Greek school, and then moved again to Tokay and Vienna. In 1801-02 he was in Paris, where he probably served as Pazvantoğlu's emissary. There he wrote an ode dedicated to Napoleon, which he read in the presence of the First Consul and the academicians. He was among the outstanding representatives of the 'reaction' against the ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution in Greek society. Among his most famous works is the *Dialogues of the Dead*, published in 1793 and regarded as an open indictment of Voltaire, who is held responsible for many evils. In 1802, he informed the Austrian authorities about Adamantios Korais' intention to disseminate in the Ottoman Empire his own translation of Cesare Beccaria's *Crimes and Punishments*, published during the same year. The Austrian government reacted immediately, ordering the police in Vienna to prevent the dispatch of the books.

Russian diplomatic correspondence, however, mentions another name as Nedelko Popovich's companion in Paris – a Hazo. In a letter to Count Hypsilantis in Bucharest, the Bishop of Vidin also speaks of a "Hazo" who "n'avait ni mission, ni même connaissance de celle dont Popowitch était chargé".⁶⁴ If we take into account the name of the envoy as rendered to Talleyrand and the 'Russian' version, as well as the fact that the Hazo in question was not informed about the "Russian mission", this might take us to Dimitrios Chatzi Polyzou (Polyzos). He, too, moved in Greek educational circles, being a teacher in Pest, in Hungro-Wallachia, in Leipzig, and Vienna. He is the author of several works that bring him closer to the Greek circles influenced by the ideas

63 About him, see Staikos, *Greek Books from the Time of the Neohellenic Enlightenment*, 62, 92, 125, 130, 170, 175.

I wish to thank Prof. N. Danova for having helped me identify Polisoï with Polyzois.

64 *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 397, 507.

of the Enlightenment, but is not known as a member of the revolutionary organisation of Rhigas.⁶⁵

Although Polyzois Kontos can hardly be associated in any way with the conspiracy and with the ideas of the ardent admirer of the ideas of the Enlightenment and the Revolution, he more closely corresponds to the person described in Talleyrand's accounts of the meeting to Napoleon. Though with a certain degree of insecurity, I am more inclined to regard him as the more probable candidate for Pazvantoğlu's emissary. Other Orthodox clerics, too, were deeply involved in some of the schemes of the Pasha, mainly in the contacts with Russia and Wallachia. Kontos could have easily pretended to be a member of the Greek revolutionary network. It must have been equally easy for Pazvantoğlu to present himself as a revolutionary. In his contacts with French diplomats – through Turnavity, through Popovich, and probably others – Pazvantoğlu skilfully employed the revolutionary rhetoric, the slogans of the French Revolution and showed himself well-versed in developments in the French Republic. For this, however, he did not need instruction from Rhigas, but simply good informants.

The rebel seems to have grasped correctly the configuration of the Powers in the region and tried to exploit it in his favour. At that time the policy of Austria and Russia, the traditional enemies of the Ottoman Empire and its immediate neighbours, had undergone a radical change. The danger presented by the expanding French Republic and the political upheaval caused by the ideas of the Revolution turned the two monarchies into staunch supporters of the preservation of the *status quo* in the Balkans and of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. For the Austrians, Pazvantoğlu was an immediate danger. They regarded him as a promoter of the ideas of the Revolution, a true 'montagnard'. It was not just a tentative or an abstract threat. The Austrian authorities truly feared that his seemingly revolutionary ideas would spread across the border among their Slavic subjects.⁶⁶ Russia manifested a more sober attitude. She was aware that Pazvantoğlu was not a revolutionary but rather considered him a barrier to her eventual expansion in the Balkans. Russian

65 About him, see Staikos, *Greek Books from the Time of the Neohellenic Enlightenment*, 140, 142, 160. Russian diplomats mention also of a Polyzo, a physician, who was suspected of being involved into Rhigas' network. Following a letter from the Ottoman ambassador in Vienna on 12 February 1798, he was detained by the police in Jassy, but was soon released and managed to escape, probably with the help of his influential uncle Andrei Paoli, banker of the Prince. *Documente Istoria României*, vol. 4, doc. 35, 119, and doc. 37, Anexa II, 123. Polyzo Chirița (Poliso Kirico Kiryca) was exiled in 1799 from Jassy to Yanya, where his father also lived, because he was found in possession of books in line with the ideas of the French Revolution. *Ibid.*, doc. 130, Anexa I, 256.

66 The Austrians were not unique in finding the germs of the revolution everywhere. The British Minister to the Porte, Spencer Smith, for example, was convinced of the French influence on the Smyrna rebellion of the janisaries in 1797 ("a contagious consequence of the destructive doctrines so progressive in the present day"), which turned into an orgy of violence against the local non-Muslims and destruction of their property (quoted in Clogg, 'Aspects of the Movement for Greek Independence', 242).

diplomats also carefully followed his relations with the local Christians, who were regarded as potential allies. For the French, initially he was too distant and they relied on their traditionally good relations with the Ottomans as an ally against the other European Powers. The preparation for Napoleon's campaign in Egypt brought to the fore along with Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, also the rebel from Vidin. This is probably one of the main reasons for the establishment of direct contacts between Pazvantoğlu and the French diplomats around late 1797.

In my opinion, however, international relations were only of secondary importance for the rebel. His ambitions were directed at the Ottoman state, which was undergoing a painful transformation. In his manifestos to the Ottoman Muslims he announced as his mission the restoration of the Empire's former glory along the lines of the classic state structure of the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-66). In some of his encounters with foreign visitors he even referred to the rule of the first caliphs, playing on the coincidence of his name with that of Caliph Osman and emphasising his own 'Muslimness' and pre-occupation with the glorification of Islam.⁶⁷ From that perspective he regarded it as his major objective to remove the injustices and the innovations of more recent times, the Nizam-ı Cedid in particular. The subversion of the Ottoman Sultan was never proclaimed as a goal in itself and it would not have earned him the massive support among the Muslims he enjoyed. He made it clear that he was struggling only with the "evil advisors" of Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) and the "infidel" innovations, but that the Sultan had already turned into an obstacle to the well-being of the empire. Yet, he was aware of the special status of the Tatar Girays as legal heirs to the Ottoman dynasty in the event of its becoming extinct, and he used the name of one of the members of that family for his purposes.

Though aiming at the preservation of the Ottoman Empire and its strengthening on the basis of the principles of 'ancient' times until roughly 1805, Pazvantoğlu relied largely on the services of 'Greeks' to carry out his foreign policy, as well as in his relations with Wallachia and the central authorities. To ensure their support and in line with the 'ideal' rule of the Ottoman Classical Age, Pazvantoğlu tried to regulate the position of his non-Muslim subjects, offering 'baits' to the various strands among them. In the short run, he might even have regarded an uprising of the Christian population in the Balkans as another destabilising factor that would eventually shatter the Sultan's position and cause a radical change in the rule. His attitude to the First Serbian Uprising (1804-13), however, is revealing as to his true feelings with regard to Christians' attempts to gain independence. It became the turning point in his relations with 'his' Christian *reaya* when he not just lost any support he must have had from any group of them – clerics, merchants, or peasants, Russo- or Francophiles – but found himself in isolation, surrounded by a hostile Christian majority. And he did not hesitate to strike back and order the murder of the local elders and priests and even that of one of his closest associates, Bishop Kallinikos, on the charge of being in secret contact with the Serbian rebels. Certainly the Serbian Uprising presented a grave

67 Interestingly, his father's name was Ömer (Umar in Arabic) while his son's was Ali.

danger for Pazvantoğlu's projects. From its outset it was directed against his allies, the janissaries in the Belgrade *paşalık*. An eventual Greek uprising was expected to begin far from Vidin and this probably made it more acceptable for the Pasha. What is more difficult to agree with is the possibility of Pazvantoğlu's involvement in Rhigas' organisation and, even less probable, his sincere association with the ideas of the French Revolution. Rhigas' plans for the restoration of the Greek state within boundaries that encompassed the entire Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor did not square at all with Pazvantoğlu's views about the future of the Empire.

Rhigas, too, may have seen in this co-operation a useful instrument, but for the purposes of the Greek revolution. Certainly the rebel in Vidin was not as dangerous for his purposes as the other powerful pashas in the Ottoman European provinces. Yet, it is much more likely that, if there was any intentional co-operation at all, both parties were interested in the other's collaboration only to achieve their own ends.

When discussing the possible relations between Pazvantoğlu and Rhigas, one should not forget that all stories about their earlier and later contacts could have been a mere invention. In the case of the Vidin rebel this would be closely related to the pressing need for him to establish direct contacts with France and receive, if nothing else, at least international recognition, providing him with a kind of protection against Austria, Russia and even the Sultan, as well as some financial and military support.

An explanation of the eventual fabrication of the story by Greek contemporaries can be sought in various directions. I suppose the very inclusion of those Muslims must have perplexed them. If we look carefully into the text written by Nikolopoulos, it actually repeats the contents of the *Thourios*, but taking the next step. From an appeal to them, he has made them part of Rhigas' 'society', mentioning Pazvantoğlu in particular, who is also the only one clearly identifiable person among the listed 'powerful Turks' in the *Thourios*. Such an explanation was even more important for Philimon and Perraivos, as participants in the Greek Revolution. Interestingly, Philimon, for example, declares Pazvantoğlu to be a "defender of the one who has stamped on the Koran and protector of the *reaya*",⁶⁸

68 Philimon, *Philiki Hetairia*, 91. Excerpts from Philimon's history of the Greek national revolution were also translated into Bulgarian, probably by Neophyt Bozveli, to which the translator added his comments, mainly with the purpose of glorifying Bulgarians at the expense of Greeks. The manuscript remained unpublished. Yet it is very interesting from the viewpoint of myth-creation on 'Bulgarian territory'. Bozveli is very selective in choosing parts that served his ideas in the struggle for a Bulgarian ecclesiastical hierarchy independent of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Besides, he declares Rhigas' father a "Slav" but bitterly criticises the image of Pazvantoğlu as protector of the Bulgarians and as a notable who levied fewer taxes, which presumably had earned him his Christian subjects' love. See in detail N. Danova, 'Malko poznat rakopis na Neofit Bozveli?' [A Little-Known Manuscript of Neophyt Bozveli?], in R. Damianova and H. Manolakev (eds), *Vazrozhdenskiat rakopis: prochiiti na literaturata i kulturata na Balgarskoto vazrazhdane. V chest na 70-godishninata na Prof. Docho Lekov* [The Revivalist Text: Perusals of the Literature and Culture of the Bulgarian Revival. In Honour of the 70th Anniversary of Prof. Docho Lekov], Sofia 1998, 301-08.

which is very much in line with the information contained in the Austrian diplomatic correspondence of the time, and probably the news in the contemporary newspapers, but also in a way justifies his being regarded as an ally by Rhigas.

The national narrative usually insists on the independent development of the nation as a homogeneous entity without any contacts with the ‘national other’. Such contacts would only be permissible in those cases when ‘we’ had a powerful beneficial influence on the ‘other’, usually treated as a backward or underdeveloped group.⁶⁹ The stories about the friendship between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu would indeed have served the glorification of Rhigas, who at the time of the Greek War of Independence was beginning to turn into a national icon. They further adorned his image, showing the powerful impact of his ideas even on an Ottoman pasha, who was also a celebrity of the time. One should not forget that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were a time of massive myth-construction.⁷⁰

Whatever the reality, Pazvantoğlu seems to have been an independent factor, and his interests and aims ran contrary to the plans of Rhigas. Be the connection between Rhigas and Pazvantoğlu a real fact or imaginary, in the minds of many contemporaries they were somehow connected as the two major preoccupations of the Porte at the end of the eighteenth century: “d’un côté à détruire la révolte de Paswandoglou, et de l’autre à opposer une digne à l’esprit révolutionnaire qui commence à s’introduire en Grèce ou plutôt partout”.⁷¹ During the nineteenth century the Ottoman sultans managed to stamp out most of the rebellious pashas, but it was the ‘revolutionary spirit’ among the subject peoples that finally brought about the demise of the Empire in the Balkans.

69 For a general framework, see A. D. Smith, *National Identity*, London 1991 (I have used the Bulgarian translation: *Natsionalnata identichnost*, Sofia 2000). For Bulgarian realities, see N. Aretov, ‘Balkanski identichnosti v balgarskata kultura ot modernata epoha (XIX-XX vek)’ [Balkan Identities in Bulgarian Culture of the Modern Age, Nineteenth-Twentieth Centuries], in N. Aretov and N. Chernokozhev (eds), *Balkanski identichnosti v balgarskata kultura ot modernata epoha (XIX-XX vek)* [Balkan Identities in Bulgarian Culture of the Modern Age, Nineteenth-Twentieth Centuries], Sofia 2001, 5-53.

70 For a collection of such inventions, see volume 58/1 (2003) of the *Annales*, devoted specially to *Histoire croisée* and *Imaginaires nationaux: origines, usages, figures*.

71 Popov, ‘Prinos za izuchavane na minaloto’, doc. 3, 22 (10 January 1798), report by Rathkeal.

LA FRANCE REVOLUTIONNAIRE ET LES POPULATIONS MUSULMANES DE LA TURQUIE D'EUROPE AU MOMENT DE L'EXPEDITION D'EGYPTE : UNE MISE A L'EPREUVE DU COSMOPOLITISME

*Rachida Tlili Sellaouti**

En tant que valeur révolutionnaire, la fraternité proclamée universelle aurait-elle joué tant soit peu ce rôle de « transfert culturel » que la Révolution aurait voulu réaliser ? Tenant lieu d'alibi, pouvait-elle assurer le pari du dépassement des frontières culturelles et de la réalisation de « la levée d'interdits et de contraintes séculaires »¹ pour une insertion de l'humanité dans son ensemble aux mêmes valeurs nouvelles ? Mise à l'épreuve dans le cadre de la Grande Nation, la fraternité a rapidement montré ses limites dans les relations avec l'étranger, pour se mouvoir à l'extrême limite, en violation du droit des peuples, notamment à l'égard plus visible encore à l'endroit des peuples non européens – certains épisodes, en l'occurrence l'expédition d'Égypte, ne sauraient mieux attester du processus par lequel la France révolutionnaire a laissé se dégrader l'usage de la fraternité, ce qui justifierait, vraisemblablement, le retournement de ces peuples à l'égard de la Révolution. Mais au-delà d'un antagonisme classique peu opérationnel entre aires culturelles distinctes et exclusives les unes des autres, les usages de l'altérité peuvent encore se prévaloir de l'existence d'un troisième espace qui laisserait la place à des dépassements pour des échanges possibles. A ce titre, plus que l'expédition d'Égypte, nous avons cru voir dans l'épisode de Pazvantoğlu, chef de la rébellion bosniaque, une tentative d'élargissement de cet espace de la fraternité, dans ce sens que cet épisode, au-delà des intérêts stratégiques et politiques qu'il présente, prêterait à croire à une volonté d'intégrer des populations ottomanes musulmanes dans la sphère de la République aux limites jusque là occidentales et chrétiennes. Rien en effet ne prédestinait au départ, dans la Révolution, à recueillir l'héritage musulman de l'Empire ottoman, la Révolution

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1 M. David, *Fraternité et Révolution française*, Paris 1987, 79.

étant, de par son essence, laïque. Dans cet épisode de rébellion contre la Porte, pourtant, tous les symboles de la Révolution comme processus de transformation ont été mobilisés à travers tout un discours qui tente de définir le personnage et son projet. S'agissant d'une aire géographique plus proche et donc probablement moins marquée d'étrangeté, la Révolution française est-elle en meilleure posture pour élargir ses valeurs et intégrer divers éléments ethniques et des identités culturelles distinctes dans un même espace démocratique ?

En même temps et pour nous recentrer davantage sur la problématique retenue dans le cadre de ce colloque, il s'agirait d'examiner dans ce contexte balkanique très riche en événements, jusqu'à quel point la France révolutionnaire aurait aidé, soit à travers son action politique, diplomatique, voire militaire, ou tout simplement à travers le discours et l'imaginaire, à l'émancipation des peuples dans cette région et à la promotion de la souveraineté nationale. Partant de cet épisode d'ailleurs sans lendemain, l'action politique de la France dans cette région se réfère-t-elle au principe d'appartenance « nationale » ? Était-elle en mesure de promouvoir un éveil de nationalité, ou bien son discours émancipateur relève-t-il d'une rhétorique banalisée, mise au service d'un projet politique d'une nature différente ? Se faisant, dans un sens comme dans un autre, il resterait à expliquer le paradoxe de la République entre sa position d'allié traditionnel et deux fois séculaire de l'Empire ottoman et le soutien largement apporté aux mouvements de rébellion contre la Porte ?

Plus généralement, cet épisode nous a également interpellé dans le sens d'un élargissement de la réflexion à l'ensemble de la politique extérieure de la Révolution française et de ses rapports aux peuples, afin de pouvoir relever – ou non – à ce niveau une concordance entre les principes fondateurs de la République et son action de politique étrangère.

Nous tenterons d'examiner toutes ces questions aussi bien à travers la presse, principalement *le Moniteur Universel*, qu'à travers la correspondance diplomatique, sachant que l'histoire diplomatique, au-delà des aspects purement factuels, pourrait encore offrir une perspective à l'étude des relations entre les peuples et leur redéfinition au prisme des nouveaux principes de droit public et des nouvelles valeurs conçues par la Révolution.

Rébellion bosniaque et expédition d'Égypte : une opération conjointe ?

Une information relativement abondante à travers *le Moniteur Universel* a suscité de prime abord notre curiosité quant à l'intérêt accordé par la France à cet épisode concomitant à l'expédition d'Égypte. Il s'agirait dès lors de tenter de comprendre la signification du soutien apporté par la France au mouvement de Pazvantoğlu.² Comment peut-on interpréter ce choix particulier à un

² Pour la biographie et l'ensemble du mouvement de Pazvantoğlu, cf. en particulier, E. Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, Paris 1904, 46 et suiv.

moment où la scène balkanique était un champ d'action dans lequel évoluaient de nombreux prétendants à l'autonomie ?

L'information relative à Pazvantoğlu et à l'Empire ottoman de manière générale reste en effet assez exhaustive à travers *le Moniteur Universel*. En tant qu'organe officiel et voix autorisée du Gouvernement, le *Moniteur* se présenterait à ce titre, comme le reflet et l'expression de cette politique. Ainsi, l'analyse de l'ensemble de cette information permettrait de définir le projet politique que le Directoire nourrit autour de cette région et à travers le soutien largement affiché et apporté à ce personnage.

Si l'évaluation statistique des articles du *Moniteur* rapportant cette information reste somme toute modeste, elle n'en est pas moins significative au niveau de sa répartition chronologique et de son contenu sémantique. Dès les débuts de la Révolution, le Journal tient ses lecteurs régulièrement informés de l'évolution de la situation dans les Balkans et autour de Vidin particulièrement. L'information se concentre néanmoins au cours des deux années de 1798 et de 1799 ; elle disparaît au-delà pour reprendre de manière épisodique au cours des premières années de l'Empire jusqu'en 1807, suivant dans l'ensemble l'évolution de la conjoncture politique. L'année 1798 enregistre la plus forte fréquence, tandis que l'année 1799 voit une décrue notable dans cette déferlante médiatique. En effet, c'est au cours de l'année 1798 que le *Moniteur* prend l'habitude de consacrer une rubrique presque régulière au déploiement de Pazvantoğlu. Sur un total de soixante cinq articles consacrés au chef rebelle entre 1795 et 1799, l'année 1798, du 6 janvier au 31 décembre, compte quelque quarante huit articles se rapportant directement au rebelle, c'est-à-dire plus des trois quarts du nombre total des articles. Sur l'ensemble de cette année, les trois mois de mai, juin et juillet connaissent la plus forte concentration, regroupant un peu plus de la moitié des articles pour atteindre un point culminant au cours du mois de juillet et reprendre avec plus de régularité et de concentration encore vers la fin de l'année, avec une dizaine d'articles entre fin octobre et décembre de la même année. Mais si l'année 1799 connaît une baisse quantitative notable avec seulement seize articles se rapportant directement au rebelle de Vidin, les articles gagnent cependant en approfondissement : ils sont plus longs et plus détaillés. C'est ainsi que l'analyse du contenu de cette information serait encore plus édifiante.

Un premier examen de ce contenu permet en effet de constater que l'évolution de l'information suit de très près les changements intervenus dans les orientations de la politique du Directoire à l'égard de la Sublime Porte. Dès ses premiers numéros, abondant, dans sa rubrique « politique », la situation de la Turquie, le *Moniteur* évoque l'état de troubles et d'agitation qui règne en Bulgarie et autour de Vidin.³ Au moment où les relations entre la France et la Porte restent encore marquées par une amitié traditionnelle, le Sultan Sélim III est représenté, à l'occasion, en sultan éclairé, luttant contre l'anarchie dans ses Etats, à coup de réformes, au sein d'un entourage

3 *Le Moniteur Universel*, réimpression, vol. 26, no. 149 (20 mai 1790), 289.

d'opposants hostiles et fanatiques, tandis que les agitateurs dans les provinces sont qualifiés de brigands.⁴ Au cours de cette première période et jusqu'au 15 mai 1798, Pazvantoğlu est ainsi représenté comme un rebelle, dont l'action relève du brigandage contre lequel lutte vaillamment l'armée ottomane.⁵ Plus qu'une analyse de fond, le Journal se limitait à transmettre le récit des opérations militaires. Malgré son contenu purement évènementiel, cette information provenant des différentes villes balkaniques et des gazettes des régions voisines et frontalières, n'a rien d'objectif ni d'anodin. A un moment où la République est assaillie de toute part, elle a cherché à faire prévaloir son alliance avec la Porte, présentant l'Empire ottoman sous un meilleur jour, ce dernier continuant malgré tout à faire figure d'un grand Etat et à avoir un poids conséquent dans l'ordre européen. Ainsi, la France cherchant à renforcer ses positions continentales, tenta de donner de son allié une image de puissance : à cette fin, il semblerait que « des lettres astucieusement datées de Constantinople sont imprimées dans les gazettes nationales – en l'occurrence *le Moniteur Universel* – et en même temps que l'on y exagère les revers du rebelle de Vidin, on enchérit sur les préparatifs militaires de la Porte et sa maîtrise de la situation ».⁶

A partir du mois de mai 1798, *le Moniteur Universel* allait changer complètement de ton, donnant l'avantage au rebelle de Vidin. En cela, le Journal se fait, plus que jamais, le fidèle interprète du revirement politique du Directoire à l'égard de la Porte. En effet, une fois la position de la République mieux consolidée au sein de l'Europe, devenu, de surcroît, son voisin direct à la suite de Campo-Formio, le Directoire nourrissait à l'égard de la Porte plus qu'une véritable alliance, une amitié utile, voire de plus en plus, de l'indifférence.⁷ Après la paix de Campo-Formio, la République débarrassée de la guerre continentale, n'avait plus besoin d'afficher cette alliance ottomane qui devenait à la limite encombrante et peut-être même préjudiciable à ses intérêts. Les temps ont changé et la politique aussi : dans son impérieuse avancée, la politique ambitieuse de la République va se transformer inévitablement en hostilité déclarée, ce qui correspondait au commencement des préparatifs de l'expédition d'Egypte. Dès lors, une véritable stratégie discursive va être déployée par le *Moniteur*.⁸ Ainsi, au moment où l'information relative à l'expédition d'Egypte est complètement occultée du moins en fréquence numérique, la médiatisation de Pazvantoğlu semblait battre son plein. A partir du printemps 1798, *le Moniteur Universel* commençait à livrer une image améliorative du « fameux » Pazvantoğlu, éclipsant tous les autres chefs qui,

4 *Ibid.*, vol. 28, no. 193 du 2 avril 1796 (13 germinal an 4), 101.

5 *Ibid.*, no. 215 du 24 avril 1798 (5 floréal an 6), no. 218 du 27 avril 1798 (8 floréal an 6) et no. 236 du 26 floréal an 6 (15 mai 1798).

6 AN AE B III 196, « *Sur la Turquie* », Rapport du 25 germinal an 6 (14 avril 1798) remis au Ministre des Relations Extérieures.

7 Mémoire pour servir d'instruction à l'ambassadeur Aubert-Dubayet, ventôse an 4, cité dans : E. De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople ; La politique orientale de la Révolution française*, Paris 1927, vol. 2, 260, et note du 17 ventôse an 4 (7 mars 1796), 262.

8 Voir par exemple, *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 29 du 20 octobre 1798 (29 vendémiaire an 7).

simultanément, menaient des mouvements de luttes similaires dans la région. On rapporte, ainsi, ses moindres faits et gestes, son parcours, ses origines, l'organisation de ses forces, sa conduite et celle de ses armées... Si ses origines font l'objet de quelques doutes, elles sont très vite compensées par son mérite personnel qui lui permit de gravir rapidement la hiérarchie militaire et sociale. A travers les victoires remportées sur les armées ottomanes,⁹ il apparaît désormais comme un chef militaire redoutable ayant courageusement résisté à une armée de plus de 180,000 hommes, selon les supputations du *Moniteur*.¹⁰ C'est effectivement au cours des mois de juin et de juillet notamment que Pazvantoglu remporta des victoires retentissantes et décisives sur les armées ottomanes, le *Moniteur* lui prêtant ainsi des projets de grande envergure : « son entreprise devient chaque jour plus importante et il paraît destiné à jouer incessamment un rôle plus grand encore que celui qu'il a soutenu dans les premiers temps de sa prospérité... ».¹¹ On le croit « chef apparent d'un parti puissant qui ne tendrait à rien moins qu'à changer la face de la Turquie et d'une partie de la Russie ».

Ainsi, on peut constater d'après la fréquence des articles, leur répartition chronologique ainsi que leur contenu sémantique que l'information rapportée par le *Moniteur* reste dans l'ensemble assez révélatrice de la conjoncture politique ; elle suivrait au plus près le déroulement des événements. La régularité dans la publication de cette information selon le rythme observé traduirait on ne peut mieux l'orchestration d'une véritable campagne médiatique qui semble avoir été organisée pour accompagner l'expédition d'Egypte depuis les premiers préparatifs et tout au long de son déroulement ; parallèlement, le *Moniteur* livre une information parcimonieuse des événements d'Egypte, usant au besoin d'informations mensongères et surannées relativement à cet événement : « Alexandrie, ler floréal. Il vient d'arriver ici de Constantinople des Grecs accompagnés de Français... ; ils ont des ordres du Grand Seigneur pour qu'on leur fournisse tout ce qu'ils demandent pour les besoins de l'escadre et des troupes de débarquement qui doivent arriver ici... pour une armée qu'on porte à 60,000 hommes... Un firman du Grand Seigneur ordonne de fournir aux Français en payant tout ce dont ils auront besoin... On annonce que c'est le Général Bonaparte qui commandera cette armée et qu'il est chargé d'une expédition qui étonnera l'univers ».¹²

Surtout, le *Moniteur* présente les exploits de Pazvantoglu comme le résultat de la puissante diversion que lui offre l'expédition française en Egypte en vue de fortifier ses positions et de mettre en échec les forces ottomanes : « Cet intrépide pacha songeait de son côté à opposer aux Turcs la plus vive résistance et à se mettre en état de profiter de la puissante diversion des Français »,¹³ ce qui lui a permis de remporter une victoire complète et décisive sur l'armée ottomane lors d'une troisième attaque qui lui permit de devenir le maître de la Valachie.

9 *Ibid.*, no. 262 du 22 prairial an 6 (10 juin 1798)

10 *Ibid.*, no. 29 du 20 octobre 1798 (29 vendémiaire an 7).

11 *Ibid.*, no. 90 du 30 frimaire an 7 (12 décembre 1798).

12 *Ibid.*, no. 288 du 18 messidor an 6 (6 juillet 1798).

13 *Ibid.*, no. 65 du 5 frimaire an 7 (25 novembre 1798).

En fait, devenue sa voisine immédiate, la Porte n'était plus tranquille sur les vues pacifiques de la France. Pressentant une offensive française et en vue de la prévenir, la Porte a déjà entrepris un grand effort de guerre visant à réprimer les soulèvements dans les provinces européennes de l'Empire, en particulier la rébellion de Pazvantoğlu, celui-ci étant devenu effectivement assez redoutable. D'après le *Moniteur*, depuis le début de la révolte, en février 1798 et à plusieurs reprises, la Porte envoya des ministres pacificateurs auprès de Pazvantoğlu, sans résultat.¹⁴ Avec la grande concentration des forces militaires françaises à Toulon, la menace française se précisait.¹⁵ Vraisemblablement consciente des difficultés auxquelles l'exposerait un double front, la Porte chercha rapidement à ouvrir des négociations avec le rebelle, pour négocier un accommodement. Le danger de l'expédition se confirmant, « la Porte, décidée à tourner toutes ses forces contre les Français en Egypte, avait résolu d'enlever Widdin... et de se débarrasser de l'incommode diversion de Passwan Oglou ». ¹⁶ Le Sultan donna ses ordres au *kapudan paşa* Hüseyin Paşa pour ménager au mieux le rebelle. Mais, à chaque fois que la rébellion semble toucher à sa fin et qu'on semble s'acheminer vers un accord définitif, tout est de nouveau remis en cause et la révolte se raviva. A ce propos, le *Moniteur* présente Pazvantoğlu comme un chef intransigeant : « il ne s'agit rien de moins que de la chute de l'Empire ottoman, refusant de traiter avec le Sultan que sur les débris de Constantinople ». ¹⁷ Les négociations traînèrent en longueur et ce n'est que vers la fin du mois d'avril 1799, qu'un accord est intervenu entre Pazvantoğlu et la Porte ; celle-ci, voulant à tout prix se débarrasser de cette diversion, se serait montrée très conciliante avec le rebelle, le gratifiant du titre de pacha qui lui accorda une totale autonomie dans la région ; ¹⁸ son autorité fut dès lors reconnue sur tous les pays qu'il a occupés. ¹⁹ Malgré cet arrangement, l'entente n'était que de façade : jusqu'à la fin, la Porte continua à manifester à l'égard du pacha de Vidin une défiance constante et ne lui confia presque jamais le commandement de ses armées dans les provinces danubiennes.

La confrontation des faits, la simultanéité de l'action donneraient tout lieu à croire plutôt à une manœuvre inversée : le mouvement de Pazvantoğlu, soutenu de près par la France aurait été récupéré pour servir de diversion à l'expédition d'Egypte. L'intervention de la France dans les Balkans et son fort probable implication dans les mouvements de révolte et de rébellion et notamment dans le mouvement de Pazvantoğlu, tendrait, parallèlement à un détournement de l'opinion

14 *Ibid.*, no. 158 du 8 ventôse an 6 (26 février 1798), no. 269 du 29 prairial an 6 (17 juin 1798), no. 282 du 12 messidor an 6 (30 juin 1798) et no. 285 du 15 messidor an 6 (3 juillet 1798) : « on croit que cette rébellion touche à sa fin... ».

15 *Ibid.*, no. 298 du 28 messidor an 6 (16 juillet 1798).

16 *Ibid.*, no. 65 du 5 frimaire an 7 (26 novembre 1798).

17 *Ibid.*, no. 158 du 8 ventôse an 6 (26 février 1798).

18 Le Journal reproduit à l'occasion l'Acte de réconciliation entre la Porte et Pazvantoğlu : *Ibid.*, no. 193 du 13 germinal an 7 (20 avril 1799).

19 Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, 47.

à l'intérieur, à créer une puissante diversion visant à détourner la Porte de l'Égypte. De plus en plus, avec la déclaration de guerre par la Porte à la République et devant le refus du Sultan – sous l'influence certes des Russes et des Anglais – d'acquiescer aux allégations du Directoire, dans sa veine tentative de justification de l'expédition, ainsi que la difficulté de triompher de la coalition, il n'est pas impossible que la France, de connivence avec les chefs rebelles, ait cherché activement à stimuler ces mouvements, à les attiser et en tirer profit pour neutraliser l'action de la Porte et de ses alliés. Tout au moins, le fait d'avoir envisagé l'ouverture d'un double front, dispersa forcément les armées ottomanes et paralysa la force d'intervention de la Porte : d'après le *Moniteur*, vers le 23 mars 1799, la flottille ottomane, arrivée l'année précédente de Constantinople sur le Danube pour coopérer au siège de Vidin, vient de retourner à Constantinople pour être employée contre les Français sur la côte de Syrie.²⁰ Le 2 juillet 1799, Pazvantoğlu se révolta de nouveau ;²¹ si cette nouvelle se confirme, il ne peut manquer de faire des progrès rapides maintenant que l'armée du Grand Vizir est partie pour la Syrie avec presque toutes les troupes disponibles qui étaient dans la Rumélie.

Sans révéler explicitement les complicités de la France, plusieurs allégations du *Moniteur* vont dans le sens de cette hypothèse, celle d'une grande implication française dans le mouvement de Pazvantoğlu, la rumeur renchérissant sur l'éventuelle jonction des troupes de Pazvantoğlu avec l'armée de Bonaparte. D'après le *Moniteur*, un grand nombre d'officiers attachés au chef des insurgés est effectivement déjà en marche pour l'Égypte comme vraisemblablement ce Grabinski, colonel polonais engagé comme volontaire dans l'armée d'Orient et qui fut reçu avec enthousiasme par le général Desaix,²² sachant par ailleurs qu'un grand nombre de brillants officiers polonais se sont effectivement engagés dans les troupes de Pazvantoğlu : des lettres de Semlin donneraient la clef de l'« énigme » des exploits militaires de Pazvantoğlu. Il est certain que ce rebelle ait sous ses ordres plusieurs milliers de Polonais, commandés par le général Deniski, « ukrainois » ; les officiers polonais qui se rendaient dans l'armée de Pazvantoğlu étaient employés en qualité d'adjudant près du chef de l'insurrection où ils dirigeaient non seulement tous les plans militaires mais aussi la conduite que devait tenir le pacha pour accroître le nombre de ses partisans.

Par ailleurs, devant les exploits militaires qu'il a réalisés et l'importance de ravitaillements dont il dispose et qui lui permit de résister face aux armées turques, le *Moniteur* ne peut s'empêcher d'insinuer que ce chef rebelle fut certainement soutenu dans ses entreprises par une puissance étrangère : « on assure qu'une puissance que l'on ne nomme pas passait des secours pécuniaires à Passwan Oglou »²³ et « qu'il porte avec lui des sommes énormes » qui lui permettent d'entre-

20 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 183 du 3 germinal an 7 (23 mars 1799) et no. 269 du 29 prairial an 7 (17 juin 1799).

21 *Ibid.*, no. 284 du 14 messidor an 7 (2 juillet 1799).

22 AMAE, CP Turquie, vol. 201, fol. 293, sans date – mémoire rédigé vers mars 1800.

23 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 274 du 4 messidor an 6 (23 juin 1798).

tenir dans une grande discipline des troupes de plus en plus nombreuses.²⁴ Déjà, dès le début de son ascension, le *Moniteur* tente de le situer dans la zone d'influence française, le Pacha rebelle lui-même manifestant tout haut son admiration pour Bonaparte : « il veut être – dit-il – un second Bonaparte ».²⁵

Au même moment, la correspondance diplomatique vient comme corroborer les allégations et les assertions du *Moniteur*. Elle permet de constater de manière avérée l'implication de la France dans les affaires balkaniques et ses intelligences avec Pazvantoğlu au moment de l'expédition d'Égypte, dans une opération de diversion servant vraisemblablement à voiler et à faciliter son entreprise égyptienne. En effet, la campagne médiatique sert largement de relais à l'ensemble de l'action diplomatique au cours de la même période. Elle permet de suivre tout d'abord ce revirement dans les relations entre la République et la Porte et l'acheminement vers une défection à l'égard de l'alliance turque. Dès 1795, le Directoire se tenait régulièrement informé de l'évolution de la situation en Moldavie et en Valachie tombées sous le contrôle des Russes et des Autrichiens, par des agents français placés dans les provinces danubiennes en particulier, le plus actif d'entre eux, Constantin Stamaty,²⁶ un grec naturalisé français qui fut nommé le 8 ventôse an 3 (1795) agent secret à Iassy et Bucarest où il devait se rapprocher des patriotes polonais ; ces derniers vont se retrouver aux commandements de l'armée de Pazvantoğlu, cherchant à exploiter la situation explosive dans ces provinces européennes de l'Empire ottoman.²⁷ Stamaty fut placé d'ailleurs le 24 brumaire an 7 (14 novembre 1798) à la tête de la fameuse agence d'Ancône du commerce français dont « le véritable objet était de soulever les Grecs d'Albanie, de Morée contre la domination ottomane ».²⁸ Bien plutôt encore, en pluviôse an 4 (janvier 1796), le ministre des Relations Extérieures, Delacroix, probablement dans l'esprit de susciter des ennemis à la Russie, conseillait à l'ambassadeur français auprès de la Porte, Verninac, de soulever les populations mahométanes sur la frontière russe²⁹ préconisant en même temps l'occupation de positions méditerranéennes et en particulier l'Égypte contre la promesse d'une redevance en blé pour la nourriture de Constantinople, assez suffisante, pense-t-il pour déterminer la Turquie à céder l'Égypte.³⁰

Comme pour justifier les changements diplomatiques qui s'annonçaient par l'expédition projetée contre l'Égypte, province ottomane, la France reprochait à la Porte son système d'alliance dilatoire à l'égard de la République au moment où celle-ci avait le plus besoin d'être soutenue.³¹

24 *Ibid.*, no. 139 du 19 pluviôse an 7 (7 février 1799).

25 *Ibid.* no. 149 du 29 pluviôse an 6 (17 février 1798).

26 Cf. De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 115 et suiv.

27 *Ibid.*, 176 : note du général Bonaparte du 27 fructidor an 3 (13 septembre 1795) relative à une mission militaire en Turquie pour contrecarrer l'influence russe ; Doucet lui aurait suggéré cette recommandation.

28 AMAE, CP Turquie, vol. 201, fol. 281 r.

29 De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 258.

30 *Ibid.*, 259.

31 AN AE BIII 196, Rapport du 25 germinal an 6 (14 avril 1798) remis au ministre des Relations Extérieures, déjà

En même temps, du côté de la Porte, face aux reproches formulés au sujet du soutien apporté par la France aux mouvements de révoltes dans les provinces européennes de la Turquie et en particulier ses intelligences avec le Pacha de Yanya (Ioannina) et Pazvantoğlu ainsi qu'avec les Grecs aspirant à l'indépendance, les milieux diplomatiques français taxaient cette attitude de successibilité exagérée, ce qui nécessita malgré tout l'adresse de protestations officielles de la part de l'ambassadeur français auprès de la cour de Constantinople en guise de démentis. Mouradgea d'Ohsson, représentant de la légation de Suède, ami des Ottomans et des Français, dans son infini espoir de voir les deux nations se rapprocher, voulait bien assurer qu'il « regarderait comme une vérité constante et la donner pour telle à qui le jugerait à propos que la Porte a été trompée lorsqu'on lui avait fait croire que le Gouvernement français avait entretenu des intelligences avec Passwan Oglou, chef de l'insurrection bosniaque ».³² En même temps, Descorches, un autre ami des Ottomans, Envoyé de la République auprès de la Porte, assurait que le ministre des Relations Extérieures, Talleyrand, lui avait expressément recommandé d'éviter dans son itinéraire la route de Vienne malgré sa commodité, afin de ne pas ajouter « aux soupçons que la Porte pourrait concevoir d'intelligences avec les insurgés bosniaques » ainsi que ses craintes d'un soulèvement que la France penserait à fomenter en Morée,³³ tout au moins pour les instances officielles, toute initiative dans ce sens resterait une démarche individuelle à laquelle n'était point associé le Directoire qui, lui, voulait loyalement la conservation de l'Empire ottoman. La nécessité pour la France à réfuter toute implication dans cette affaire est ainsi récurrente : plus qu'une infirmation, ces protestations officielles, ces démentis et ces précautions tiendraient lieu d'aveu, à savoir la grande implication de la France dans les mouvements balkaniques.

En réalité, les milieux diplomatiques français ne cessaient de manifester leurs sympathies envers le mouvement de Pazvantoğlu : « si cet insurgé sait profiter de la victoire, il ne serait pas impossible qu'il parvienne jusqu'aux portes de Constantinople : depuis longtemps on prévoit la chute de l'Empire ottoman ; ce ne sont plus les Autrichiens et les Russes qui doivent l'effectuer : un simple et jeune aga de janissaires semble appelé à opérer cette grande révolution ».³⁴ Bien plus, faisant l'état des forces en présence et présumant de la position avantageuse de Pazvantoğlu, les agents du Ministère exhortaient le Directoire à faire « des recommandations à ses agents dans ces contrées de répondre avec politesse aux égards que Passwan Oglou pourrait leur témoigner ».³⁵

cité. Ce Rapport, « Sur la Turquie », fut établi en vue de déterminer le système de conduite à tenir envers les Puissances qui n'ont pas pris part à la coalition et qui vise ici la Turquie : en fait, de plus en plus, l'idée d'une révision de la politique traditionnelle de la France à l'égard de l'Empire ottoman devient une réalité irréversible à partir de cette période.

32 De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 338.

33 *Ibid.*

34 AN AE BIII 197, « Pour le Directoire », Rapport du 5 messidor an 6 (24 juin 1798) remis au Ministre relativement à Pazvantoğlu qui s'est insurgé.

35 *Ibid.*

En pleine expédition d’Egypte, le ministère des Relations Extérieures toujours en quête de renseignements sur ces pays, ne négligea aucune piste. Le colonel polonais Grabinski, délivré après neuf mois de détention à Constantinople, de retour d’Egypte vers la fin de l’année de 1799, ayant traversé l’intérieur des pays ottomans et l’archipel pour se rendre en France, a pu faire « quelques observations ». D’après un *mémoire* qu’il a rédigé à la demande du Ministère, il constate que « ce qui est sûr c’est que Passwan Oglou est maintenu par quelque puissance étrangère. Les dépenses, il n’y a pas de doute en comparant le pays occupé par lui, les revenus qui peut en tirer prouve qu’il n’est pas en état de se maintenir par lui même ». Ses opérations semblent obéir à des consignes : « tant de fois il était le maître de marcher tout droit vers Constantinople mais on lui prescrit où il peut et où il doit faire halte... [il] aurait fait depuis longtemps la paix avec la Porte mais... chaque fois que Passwan Oglou voulait se réconcilier avec la Porte, ce sont les Russes qui empêchaient cette pacification... ». ³⁶ Ne pouvant peut-être saisir toute la complexité du jeu politique qui se tramait, l’auteur du rapport imputa cette action de soutien aux Russes et aux Anglais, se référant aux aspects les plus visibles des transactions avec une nette contradiction cependant dans l’analyse de certains faits mais sans pouvoir s’empêcher de faire un rapprochement entre Bonaparte, les aspirations des Grecs, l’expédition d’Egypte, la révolte de Pazvantoğlu, et l’influence française dans cet espace géopolitique.

Le *Mémoire* d’un certain M. de Fourrière attesterait également de l’existence d’actions parallèles et de tractations secrètes menées par la France dans la région. Se faisant prévaloir d’une grande expérience en la matière pour avoir déjà accompli des missions analogues précédemment, l’auteur du *Mémoire* offre ses services au Gouvernement, lui suggérant de tenter une action de provocation dans la région : « ...C’est surtout à Constantinople qu’on peut trouver le moyen de rétablir l’équilibre de l’Europe... on pourra obtenir la cession de l’Egypte qui déjà nous avait été accordée en 1776 pour être l’entrepôt de notre commerce avec l’Inde et si la Porte nous refusait cette province, on pourrait en lui suscitant en Europe de nouveaux embarras par le moyen de Passwan Oglou, du Pacha de Scutari et des Monténégrins, l’obliger de rappeler le Grand Vizir qui est en Syrie à la tête d’une armée... N’oubliez pas que pour maintenir l’équilibre provisoire en Europe, le contrepoids du levier politique est à Constantinople... la Porte ottomane se refusait-elle à un accommodement, il est encore d’autres ressources politiques pour la contraindre à se rapprocher de nous et lui interdire les moyens de secourir l’Egypte. Passwan Oglou n’attend qu’un signal bien dirigé pour s’armer de nouveau contre le Sultan... La diversion ne me serait pas impossible... ranimant les espérances de Passwan Oglou et des Monténégrins, je rallumerais une guerre mal éteinte au sein de l’Empire ottoman ». ³⁷

36 AMAE, CP Turquie, vol. 201, doc. 302 du 12 ventôse an 8 (3 mars 1800), Rapport adressé au Ministre.

37 AMAE, CP Turquie, vol. 201, doc. 94 du 18 brumaire an 8 (?) (9 novembre 1799) : Extrait d’un mémoire de M. Fourrière, adressé au Consul, et doc. 95 du 13 frimaire an 8 (3 décembre 1799), du même Fourrière, adressé à Bonaparte, Consul de la République.

A travers la concordance de tous ces éléments, l'expédition d'Egypte et le mouvement de Pazvantoğlu semblent relever d'une action conjuguée, ou tout au moins une opération de connivence, réversible, à utiliser à double sens, la France cherchant visiblement à créer une diversion et à profiter de l'agitation bosniaque pour créer un surcroît d'embarras et de difficultés à la Porte ottomane pour neutraliser sa réaction face à l'invasion de l'Egypte : la campagne médiatique à travers *le Moniteur Universel* en faveur de Pazvantoğlu ferait partie de l'exécution du projet de l'expédition.

Desseins impérialistes et dimension unitaire

Au départ, comme les motifs anti-britanniques invoqués pour justifier l'expédition d'Egypte, le but avoué de cette politique de soutien aux mouvements de rébellion dans les Balkans serait dirigé davantage contre l'Autriche et surtout la Russie plus qu'à l'encontre de l'Empire ottoman. Depuis 1796, le ministre Delacroix insistait sur les mesures à prendre pour éviter la ruine de la Turquie et l'aider militairement dans son effort de guerre. De son côté, Talleyrand considérait que « la Russie, sans commerce et sans colonies, est à peine attaquable par une puissance qui ne lui soit pas limitrophe ». Ainsi, la France s'intéresserait au mouvement de Pazvantoğlu pour des considérations stratégiques, entre autre, susciter des ennuis à ses ennemis.

En effet, l'enjeu stratégique restait important pour la France. Dans l'ensemble, les pachas du Danube étaient mal disposés à l'égard de la France ; ils affectaient leur mauvaise foi à lui apporter un éventuel soutien militaire. Ils avaient entre autre manifesté leur hostilité à l'envoi projeté de l'armée française de Dalmatie vers le Danube, alléguant que celle-ci une fois victorieuse apporterait son soutien à la Porte pour achever la mise en place du Nizam-ı Cedid et transformer le corps des janissaires.³⁸ Il est vrai que le pacha de Yanya, à ses débuts, se présentait comme un ami de la France, et Bonaparte lui avait offert même un traité d'alliance... Mais, de plus en plus, le pacha de Yanya, voulant assurer son indépendance, se défia de la France surtout après l'épisode égyptien et se rapprocha des Anglais. Il en fut de même un peu plus tard du prince de Morousi, en Moldavie, qui avait contacté Talleyrand sollicitant la France pour l'aider à fonder une Confédération du Danube, capable d'opposer à la Russie une solide barrière ; néanmoins, tout au long de la période, la France ne lui accorda guère sa confiance, le soupçonnant de connivences avec les Russes.³⁹

Plus sérieusement, le pacha de Travnik en Bosnie semblait avoir de réelles sympathies pour la France ; les Bosniaques certes aimaient la France ; ils se présenteraient comme un « peuple loyal et brave » mais leur nombre et leurs moyens ne répondaient guère à ce qu'il fallait pour devenir des alliés utiles.

38 Pour tous ces éléments, cf. Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, 160-67.

39 AMAE, CP Turquie, vol. 213, doc. du 1er janvier 1807 et doc. 26 du 11 janvier 1807.

Plus grave encore, les positions de la France souffriraient de la défection des populations chrétiennes en Orient depuis le traité de Küçük Kaynarca, du 21 juillet 1774 qui faisait apparaître la Russie comme la protectrice de ces populations. La position de la France ne devait guère s'améliorer pendant la Révolution dans la mesure où les ordres religieux dont les intérêts étaient négligés voire combattus par les agents révolutionnaires, avaient recherché la protection d'autres puissances, en l'occurrence, la Russie. Les Grecs qui redoutaient les Russes autant que les Turcs manifestaient de meilleures prédispositions envers la France. De son côté, la République avait largement encouragé les aspirations à l'autonomie de la Grèce dont la résurrection forme une pensée chère à tout républicain ; l'imaginaire révolutionnaire reste en effet nourri par le souvenir intellectuel de la Grèce antique, immuable et mythique, mais l'image des Grecs modernes n'est guère reluisante dans le regard de la France révolutionnaire et l'actualité est plus prosaïque.⁴⁰ En définitive, les Grecs se rendaient rapidement compte qu'ils devraient travailler eux-mêmes pour leur indépendance, ce qui expliquerait leurs affinités et celles des populations chrétiennes en général avec la Russie comme espoir de libération du joug ottoman. L'attitude et l'action des Serbes furent encore plus nuisibles aux positions de la France révolutionnaire dans les Balkans : pour garantir leur liberté ces derniers cherchèrent plutôt l'alliance de la Russie : des embouchures du Danube aux frontières de la Bosnie et de l'Albanie, par Bucarest, l'armée russe et les Serbes tenaient une longue ligne d'opérations militaires menaçant de près la présence française dans ces terres de l'Empire ottoman... Pour toutes ces parties, l'alliance franco-ottomane n'était pas bien considérée ; dans la mesure où la République, ensuite l'Empire, restèrent favorables à l'Empire ottoman et de ce fait, capables de renforcer la domination ottomane sur ces populations, celles-ci vouèrent une hostilité constante à la France. C'est ainsi que, dans l'ensemble, les populations chrétiennes ne secondèrent pas forcément les démarches et les menées françaises dans la région et tout au long de cette période. D'où l'intérêt que présentait Pazvantoglu : en tant que musulman, ce dernier manifestait du mépris aux *reaya* et en particulier à l'égard des Serbes dont il était un ennemi redoutable ; à ce titre il pourrait constituer un précieux allié, une aile militaire pouvant au besoin seconder les opérations de l'armée française. De plus, il était solide militairement : parmi tous les pachas révoltés, le mouvement de Pazvantoglu fut de loin et pour longtemps le plus puissant et le mieux structuré ; jusqu'à la fin, il apparaissait encore fort et riche en vivres et en munitions.⁴¹ Pour un bon moment, il fut le maître tout puissant de toute la Bulgarie et de la Serbie orientale, une région importante de par sa situation, à la fois proche de Constantinople et presque indépendante ; sépa-

40 Cf. D. Nicolaïdis, *D'une Grèce à une autre : représentation des Grecs modernes par la France révolutionnaire*, Paris 1992.

41 AMAE, MD Turquie, vol. 16, doc. 24 bis. Voir aussi *ibid.*, doc. 29 : Rapport adressé à Napoléon (par Mériage ?), Vidin 1er avril 1808 : « Osman Passwan oglou Pacha de Viddin fut un des plus célèbres rebelles de l'Empire ottoman, son nom pénétra en Europe, [attirant] l'attention des principales puissances ; il fut également fort par son audace, ses talents et sa fortune... ».

rée de la Russie par le Danube, elle est au croisement de routes et d'influences rivales qui se disputaient la domination des Balkans. En fait, au-delà de l'expédition d'Égypte, les relations de la France avec le chef rebelle sont restées constantes et l'influence de la France était grande sur son action : encore vers 1806, quand il voulut de nouveau se révolter contre la Porte, il fut retenu par l'ambassade française avec laquelle il entretenait toujours des relations amicales.⁴² Jusqu'à l'extrême fin de sa vie, le pacha de Vidin s'est comporté en fidèle et docile allié de la France : en janvier 1807, dans le conflit qui l'opposait à la Russie, la France devait encore recourir à cet instrument : en vue d'assurer la continuité des communications dans cette région du Danube, réputée dangereuse, le colonel Sébastiani, l'ambassadeur français auprès de la Porte, dépêcha auprès du pacha de Vidin l'un de ses secrétaires pour l'engager « à ne point abandonner la cause de son souverain dans une circonstance où son zèle était nécessaire à l'Etat » et surtout pour le déterminer à assurer la communication et la maintenir praticable entre la Porte et l'armée française. Le vieux pacha fait l'ultime promesse d'assurer la sécurité des officiers et des missionnaires français sur son territoire, et de leur faciliter la communication.⁴³ De même, autour de Tilsit, au moment où la France cherchait à infléchir l'Empire ottoman pour conclure avec elle une alliance offensive contre la Russie, elle était toujours en quête d'appuis. Evaluant les forces politiques et militaires des différents chefs et mouvements de rébellions dans les provinces danubiennes de l'Empire ottoman, notamment celle d'Ali Paşa, de Pazvantoğlu et des Serbes, les agents français estimaient Pazvantoğlu comme le plus crédible de tous les chefs militaires actifs dans la région : « sa puissance politique et militaire est sous tous les rapports, infiniment la plus importante et la plus considérable que celle du Pacha Ali ».⁴⁴

Cette donne militaire expliquerait vraisemblablement le fait que la France, au-delà de l'expédition d'Égypte, garda longtemps les yeux rivés sur Vidin. Sous l'Empire, à Vienne et même après à Austerlitz, Pazvantoğlu aurait eu ses députés auprès de Napoléon, celui-ci s'intéressait particulièrement aux affaires du Danube⁴⁵ : par la force ou par la diplomatie, toute la politique française visait à contenir les Russes et à leur fermer le chemin vers la Méditerranée pour y régner en maîtresse.

42 Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, 48.

43 A. Boppe, « La mission de l'adjudant-commandant Mériage à Widdin (1807-1809) », *Annales de l'Ecole libre des sciences politiques* (15 avril 1886), 267.

44 AMAE, MD Turquie, vol. 16, doc. 24 bis, fol. 88 : Puissances politiques et militaires, d'Ali Paşa de Yanya, de Pazvantoğlu et des Serbiens.

45 *Ibid.*, 267. Après la disparition de Pazvantoğlu, en février 1807, l'adjudant commandant Mériage envoyé à Vidin, réussit à obtenir, grâce à l'influence de Sébastiani la reconnaissance par la Porte du Molla Ağa (plus tard, İdris Paşa) comme *nazır* de Vidin en remplacement de Pazvantoğlu, ce qui fait de lui la « créature de l'ambassadeur de France ». En contre partie, le nouvel agha consent notamment à agir contre les Russes pour empêcher leur jonction avec les Serbes.

Ainsi, au-delà des objectifs affichés et bien plus qu'une simple implication dans ces mouvements de rébellion qui aurait visé l'organisation d'une diversion pour assurer le succès de l'expédition d'Égypte, l'action de la France pourrait s'intégrer dans la conception d'un projet politique beaucoup plus vaste, de nature hégémonique qui commença à se dessiner sous le Directoire pour se confirmer de plus en plus sous l'Empire : après les Républiques-Sœurs, cette politique expansionniste entend s'étendre aux dépendances de l'Empire ottoman, exploitant les signes prémonitoires de sa chute.

Pour avoir été longuement méditée, cette perspective est largement évoquée à travers la correspondance ministérielle : comme pour justifier l'expédition d'Égypte, un rapport du Ministère exprime tout l'intérêt de la France à hâter la dissolution de la Turquie d'Europe dont une expédition contre l'Égypte en serait une première étape. L'idée serait d'opérer ensuite une jonction entre les deux parties de l'Empire ottoman séparées par la Méditerranée en vue de les englober dans un même espace sous domination française, jugée plus appropriée.⁴⁶ En mars 1798, la politique étrangère du Directoire ayant déjà largement évolué vers les principes de l'intérêt national et de la Raison d'État,⁴⁷ le ministre des Relations Extérieures estimait que franchement « la puissance ottomane n'ayant plus, dans la balance de l'Europe, le poids qu'elle y avait auparavant... la France ne pouvait plus considérer l'amitié du Grand Seigneur comme un moyen efficace en politique et qu'elle devrait se borner à retirer les avantages du riche commerce que les provinces ottomanes présentaient aux Français ». ⁴⁸ L'ancien Envoyé de la République auprès de la Porte, Descorches de Sainte-Croix, en bon connaisseur de la politique orientale du Directoire et de la situation de l'Empire ottoman, percevait le projet d'ensemble dans lequel s'intégrerait l'expédition d'Égypte : « ... le Directoire qui, voyant les défaites subies par la Turquie dans ses guerres précédentes, les désordres de son administration et l'épuisement de ses finances, l'agitation qui régnait dans plusieurs de ses provinces... la révolte et l'insubordination de la plupart des pachas, croyait fermement que l'Empire ottoman touchait à sa dissolution. Reprenant les doctrines de Choiseul et de Vergennes, le Directoire pensait donc qu'il était de l'intérêt de la France de se faire une place dans les dépouilles de la Turquie et de prendre même les devants ». ⁴⁹ Contre des plans de partage européens, il préconisait l'instauration d'une politique de coopération sincère qui serait plus utile aux intérêts de la République. Pour son ministre Talleyrand cependant, l'Empire ottoman court indubitablement à sa dissolution et il « serait chassé de l'Europe et relégué en Asie » ; il ne se cachait pas le fait qu'il fallait déjà envisager la possibilité de « marcher sur Constantinople » : préoccupé par la

46 AN AE B III 196, Rapport remis au Ministre le 25 germinal an 6 (14 avril 1798) déjà cité.

47 Cf. M. Belissa, *Fraternité universelle et Intérêt national ; La cosmopolitique du droit des gens*, Paris 1998.

48 *Correspondance Diplomatique de Talleyrand sous le Directoire*, Paris 1891, 336-37 : « Projet de Mémoire pour servir d'instructions au ministre plénipotentiaire de la République auprès de la Porte ottomane, présenté au Directoire le 26 ventôse an 6 (16 mars 1798) ».

49 De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 354.

priorité de restaurer la paix européenne, il estimait que la négociation d'un tel équilibre européen nécessiterait forcément des concessions qui pourraient être comblées par des compensations orientales prises sur les dépendances européennes de l'Empire ottoman.⁵⁰ Ainsi, à la limite, les implications françaises dans les Balkans, au même titre que l'expédition d'Égypte, relèveraient d'un plan d'ensemble qui vise le partage de l'Empire ottoman pour garantir la paix européenne.

De son côté, une fois de plus, *le Moniteur Universel* se fait le relais et l'amplificateur des intentions et de la politique du Gouvernement. En pleine expédition d'Égypte, Volney, la voix la plus autorisée et probablement sur la demande de Talleyrand,⁵¹ spéculé sur ces idées. Voulant hâter la perspective d'une paix généralisée, et pour avoir toujours prédit, à travers ses écrits, la chute prochaine de l'Empire ottoman, il publia dans la foulée de la campagne d'Égypte un article au *Moniteur*, « Sur Bonaparte », sous forme d'un récit fantasmagorique qui ne constitue pas moins un plan pour un projet d'invasion de l'Empire ottoman en se basant sur les soulèvements ethniques. L'utilité de la France, dit-il, à travers l'expédition d'Égypte n'est point les comptoirs de Madras et de Calcutta ; c'est vers l'Europe qu'il faut ramener le théâtre de la guerre à partir de l'invasion de l'Empire ottoman... dont la finalité essentielle consisterait à imposer la domination de la République à la Russie et à l'Autriche ; l'Angleterre poussée vers l'Archipel quittera d'elle-même la Méditerranée.⁵² L'inspiration fait des émules. L'article d'un certain David, vraisemblablement le consul français en Bosnie, anticipe déjà ce dessein en annonçant *la conquête probable de l'Empire ottoman* : « Bonaparte, suivi de vingt mille combattants, outre l'armée française, après avoir conquis la Syrie, rendu plusieurs peuples à la liberté, a pénétré dans l'Anatolie, et qu'au départ du courrier le quartier général de ce conquérant était à Angouri, à 85 lieues de Constantinople... Bonaparte avait de plus vastes desseins et peut-être le parti le plus glorieux et le plus salutaire qu'il puisse tirer de l'expédition d'Égypte, est-il en effet de marcher sur Constantinople, pour jeter delà l'épouvante dans Vienne et dans Pétersbourg ». ⁵³ L'auteur confond probablement à dessein les positions militaires de l'armée française en Syrie avec les forces et les milices de Pazvantoğlu en Anatolie. Cette confusion consciente ou inconsciente, dévoile clairement l'évolution vers une politique d'expansion, l'attrait irrésistible de l'Orient s'explique par la prise de conscience des intérêts qu'il présente et des avantages considérables qui résulteraient d'une éventuelle jonction entre les deux armées – celle de Pazvantoğlu et celle de Bonaparte – pour une grande entreprise qui, à partir de l'Égypte et en faisant la liaison avec le chef des rebelles des provinces danubiennes, aboutirait à la conquête de Constantinople.

Entamé sous le Directoire, ce dessein expansionniste allait prendre des formes et des propor-

50 Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, 56.

51 J. Gaulmier, *L'idéologue Volney, 1757-1820 ; Contribution à l'histoire de l'Orientalisme en France*, Genève et Paris 1951, 406.

52 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 59 du 20 brumaire an 7 (10 novembre 1798), 240-41.

53 *Ibid.*, no. 279 du 9 messidor an 7 (27 juin 1799).

tions démesurées sous le Consulat et l'Empire. Le 11 octobre 1801, au moment où l'épisode égyptien prenait fin avec les préliminaires de paix à Paris, le Premier Consul chargea le futur ambassadeur auprès de la Porte, le colonel Sébastiani, d'accomplir une première mission à Constantinople ayant pour instruction officielle « de tranquilliser le Sultan à propos d'accusations (qui en réalité étaient bien fondées) sur une participation active d'agents français aux agitations anti-ottomanes qui se produisaient au sein des populations du Danube ». ⁵⁴ En même temps que cette mission officielle, le diplomate devait effectuer en secret une sorte de visite d'inspection pour évaluer les potentialités des chefs des mouvements anti-ottomans ; au cours de son passage, il fera remarquer notamment que Pazvantoglu était particulièrement puissant dans les pays du Danube, autour de Vidin. ⁵⁵ En 1802, de nouveau, le même diplomate accomplit une mission d'inspection analogue en Egypte. Elle donna lieu à son fameux rapport publié probablement intentionnellement au *Moniteur*, en pleine paix d'Amiens : ⁵⁶ le rapport dévoila sans équivoque les visées et la politique orientale du Premier Consul, ce qui ne manqua pas de soulever rapidement les inquiétudes des Anglais et provoquer de nouveau la rupture.

Ainsi, l'expédition d'Egypte et les implications avec les chefs des mouvements de révoltes dans les provinces européennes de l'Empire ottoman, en particulier auprès du fameux Pazvantoglu, ne seraient sans doute pas de pures contingences. Elles relèveraient d'une même dynamique, d'une même force impériale, sur laquelle pronostiquaient déjà le ministre des Relations Extérieures et le général Bonaparte depuis Campo-Formio.

Paradoxalement, la France restait favorable à la sauvegarde de l'intégrité de l'Empire ottoman. Se basant sur une tradition diplomatique séculaire qui fait d'elle l'alliée naturelle de la Porte, toute la politique orientale de la France tendait à éviter le démembrement de l'Empire ottoman ; la sauvegarde de son intégrité devient même un élément essentiel de sa politique internationale : contre les convoitises de la Russie et de l'Autriche, elle oeuvrait à rendre à l'Empire ottoman son pouvoir absolu sur la Moldavie et la Valachie. Bien entendu, les desseins de la République et surtout de l'Empire n'étaient point désintéressés. Toute cette politique était actionnée dans le sens de ce dessein d'hégémonie et de puissance sous couvert de la Grande Nation, poussé à l'extrême, sous l'Empire, dans le cadre d'une domination globale. En effet, contrairement aux plans de partage proposés par Talleyrand, le projet de Napoléon, lui dépassait de loin le strict cadre européen, embrassant une perspective d'envergure mondiale dans laquelle s'intégrerait le domaine oriental. Ce rattachement à l'Orient qui a été souvent interprété comme la part d'un « rêve inassouvi » chez Bonaparte, loin de relever d'un projet romantique peu concret, répondrait « à un dessein politique très précis et très froid. [Napoléon] usa des moyens de l'apparat et de la propagande pour réaliser

54 R. Rainero, « Napoléon et la grande stratégie diplomatique en Orient : la première mission d'Horace Sébastiani dans l'Empire ottoman (1801-1802) », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 57 (1998), 297.

55 De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 331 et Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, 24.

56 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 130 du 10 pluviôse an 11 (30 janvier 1803).

des desseins de puissance et de présence sur le plan non pas oriental mais mondial »⁵⁷ dans un système d'hégémonie universelle. Il développait ainsi la vision d'un monde unipolaire, sous la forme de la plus grandiose unité politique : il voulait en effet protéger l'intégrité territoriale de l'Empire ottoman et éviter à tout prix son démembrement afin de l'intégrer d'une seule pièce au seul profit de la France et du sien propre : « je ne veux point partager l'empire de Constantinople, le conserver tel quel et m'en servir contre la Russie ».⁵⁸ L'ordre de Napoléon se voulait un ordre mondial sur lequel il régnerait en maître, sans partage. A cet endroit, il est évident que la politique de la France n'est point orientée vers un quelconque éveil des nationalités anciennes ou nouvelles, loin s'en faut ; Napoléon en particulier se souciait moins du droit des peuples et de la fraternité universelle que de puissance et d'expansion territoriale. Toute sa stratégie tendait vers la réalisation d'un espace globalisant, sans frontières, de dimension mondiale, cosmopolite qui fait peu de place aux nationalismes.⁵⁹

« Agrandir le cercle de la civilisation »⁶⁰

Se faisant, la France semble s'être éloignée à jamais des principes qui devraient fonder la politique extérieure, notamment le respect du droit des peuples et la souveraineté des nations : le droit international en construction ne sera point calqué sur l'organisation interne de la République. Doit-on se résoudre définitivement à ne considérer le discours qui accompagne l'action diplomatique et militaire du Directoire que vaines incantations et rhétorique commode pour justifier cette politique de puissance et d'expansion ? Au-delà de cette diversion, au-delà des enjeux politiques et stratégiques, ne peut-on pas déceler tant soit peu, dans le soutien apporté par la République au mouvement de Pazvantoglu et au-delà, aux populations musulmanes, comme une action ou tout au plus, une tentative de « réalisation pratique » d'une « intégration par la dimension universelle du genre humain », englobant tous les peuples opprimés sous l'égide de principes partagés, indépendamment des frontières culturelles ?⁶¹ Pour la République, une telle attitude se justifierait aisément par « son option de prin-

57 Rainero, « Napoléon et la grande stratégie diplomatique », 289 et 291 : « même l'excellente et récente étude d'Henri Laurens insiste sur cette interprétation... En réalité l'empereur se comporta en homme d'Etat averti ».

58 Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoléon*, 60.

59 Cf. Y. Bénot, *La démence coloniale sous Napoléon*, Paris 1992 ; notamment 131-48 : « Partager ou ne pas partager l'Empire ottoman... ». Voir aussi : M. David, « La fraternité au temps du dénigrement (1800-1814) », *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 296 (1994), 1-18.

60 Pour reprendre le titre d'un article de M. Belissa, « 'Agrandir le cercle de la civilisation' : le débat sur les conséquences de la Révolution américaine », *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 46/3 (1999), 532-44.

61 A. Mattelart, *Histoire de l'utopie planétaire ; De la cité prophétique à la société globale*, Paris 2000, 73-103. Voir aussi, H. Laurens, *L'Orient arabe ; Arabisme et islamisme de 1798 à 1945*, Paris 1993, 42 ; idem, « La Révolution française et l'Islam », *RMMM*, 52-53 (1989), 29-34.

cipe en faveur de la fraternité des peuples », le principe de fraternité, tout autant que la liberté et l'égalité, étant après tout l'un des fondements éthiques de l'identité révolutionnaire.

Au moment où l'on s'attache à souligner la faillite des discours sur « la fraternité républicaine » et la cosmopolitique du droit des gens, où l'on note « le poids dérisoire du droit des peuples dans la conduite des affaires » extérieures de la République, une telle hypothèse de travail risquerait d'être inopérante. Mais plus qu'un questionnement purement abstrait, l'observation des faits historiques nous y contraint et nous confronterait ici réellement à une situation concrète, celle qui préfigurerait les conditions de possibilités de construire l'utopique universalité,⁶² sinon alors, comment comprendre, traduire toute la stratégie discursive déployée à travers le *Moniteur* pour justifier l'action politique de la République ? La récurrence du discours libérateur et annonciateur de l'émancipation des peuples nous incite à ne pas occulter entièrement la portée de ce discours qui, au-delà de sa sincérité, pourrait traduire des réelles préoccupations.

C'est ainsi que, à travers le *Moniteur*, nous retrouvons en effet Pazvantoğlu couronné de tous les signifiants de l'idéal révolutionnaire ; son action et son comportement sont décrits comme relevant d'un certain esprit d'efficacité, compatible avec le modèle d'organisation européenne, de portée rationnelle : « on ne concevait pas qu'un Turc, qu'un pacha qui toute sa vie a été entouré du faste oriental... se déterminât pour la liberté et l'égalité... Partout où il passe, le peuple se déclare pour lui parce qu'il lui promet de réduire à moitié les impositions ».⁶³ Il est aussi le protecteur des propriétés : « ce chef s'annonce partout comme le protecteur du commerce, des propriétés et des libertés » ;⁶⁴ « il ne prélève que les contributions dues au Grand Seigneur et diminue les impôts qui pèsent trop sur les pauvres ».⁶⁵ Il fait preuve d'égards « même envers ses ennemis » ;⁶⁶ contrairement à l'armée ottomane qui paraît d'un autre âge, Pazvantoğlu impose une discipline sévère à son armée ;⁶⁷ celle-ci est très bien entretenue. Dans quelques villages, il a fait des contrats pour ses approvisionnements... Cette rigoureuse discipline des troupes et la promesse de réduire les impôts lui attachent tous les habitants des campagnes. Les Arnauts, les plus vaillants guerriers de la Bulgarie au nombre de 70,000 se sont déclarés pour lui.⁶⁸

62 Cette interrogation a été formulée par H. Leuwers : « Théorie et pratique des relations internationales chez les hommes du Directoire », in P. Bourdin et B. Gainot (éds), *La République Directoriale*, Paris 1998, vol. 2, 937-38. Cf. aussi : Belissa, *Fraternité universelle et Intérêt national* ; S. Wahnich, « Le regard de la Révolution sur les peuples étrangers », in M. Vovelle (éd.), *Recherches sur la Révolution française*, Paris 1991, 357-65 ; David, « La fraternité au temps du dénigrement ».

63 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 165 du 15 ventôse an 6 (5 mars 1798).

64 *Ibid.*, no. 262 du 22 prairial an 6 (10 juin 1798).

65 AN AE B III 197 : Rapport pour le Directoire, remis au Ministre le 5 messidor an 6 (juin 1798) relatif à Pazvantoğlu qui s'est insurgé.

66 *Ibid.*

67 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 262 du 22 prairial an 6 (10 juin 1798) et no. 101 du 11 nivôse an 7 (31 décembre 1798).

68 *Ibid.*, no. 165 du 15 ventôse an 6 (5 mars 1798).

Toujours d'après le *Moniteur*, Pazvantoglu incarne aussi les conditions matérielles de la réussite, le progrès : il adopte les techniques militaires européennes ce qui lui garantit des succès prodigieux : « on concevait mal qu'un homme qui ne devait connaître dans les combats que la tactique des musulmans, eût acquis si facilement les connaissances militaires et les tactiques employées dans les armées des puissances des autres parties de l'Europe ». ⁶⁹ Ainsi, en plus de l'adhésion aux valeurs révolutionnaires promues par la Grande Nation au rang de valeurs universelles, il est aussi acquis aux innovations techniques : à côté des valeurs fondamentales en effet, le progrès est conçu comme une condition nécessaire au développement, « l'outil essentiel en mesure d'extraire l'humanité entière de sa préhistoire » ; ce faisant, Pazvantoglu est considéré comme propre à intégrer l'humanité, ce qui le rend recommandable et fréquentable. Situé déjà dans l'espace géographique européen et par cette adaptation au progrès moral et matériel de l'Occident, le *Moniteur* voudrait en quelque sorte le présenter comme un modèle d'intégration au système de civilisation européenne : la Porte ne pouvant plus rien opposer à ce vainqueur, « fier d'avoir franchi l'étroite enceinte de Widdin dans laquelle il était resserré depuis si longtemps, Passwan Oglou va promener enfin sur un plus vaste théâtre l'attention de l'Europe qui sourit à des succès mérités par une constance extraordinaire ». ⁷⁰

Le réveil des nationalités constitue un autre référent dans cette propagande médiatique. C'est cet argument qui rencontra en outre le meilleur répondant et le plus d'adhésion auprès des populations balkaniques et constitua l'élément le plus mobilisateur dans cette région complexe et multi-ethnique des Balkans. En effet, usant de cette rhétorique, le *Moniteur Universel* présente Pazvantoglu comme le chantre de la liberté des peuples dont l'étendard se répand dans l'Empire d'une manière alarmante. ⁷¹ A ce titre, on lui prédit de jouer un grand rôle parmi les peuples balkaniques : ⁷² « l'esprit de révolte se déclare, au reste, dans toutes les parties de l'Empire ottoman. En Bulgarie, en Bosnie, en Macédoine, en Albanie on commence à arborer l'étendard de la révolte. La capitale même est atteinte de cette contagion qui peut faire courir au gouvernement turc les plus grands dangers », ⁷³ mais aussi « la Morée, l'île de Candie et l'île de Chypre qui à leur tour secouent le joug sous lequel elles gémissaient pendant trois siècles et se sont déclarées libres après avoir fait de leurs oppresseurs une horrible boucherie ». ⁷⁴ Cette résurrection de l'esprit national, cette renaissance des nations, réelle ou supposée, semble être, d'après le *Moniteur*, en grande partie l'œuvre de Pazvantoglu, le qualifiant pour cela de « chef peu ordinaire » pour avoir « affranchi une partie des pays dépendants de la cour de Constantinople ». ⁷⁵ Surtout, le *Moniteur Universel* veut prése-

69 *Ibid.* Voir aussi le no. 329 du 29 thermidor an 6 (16 août 1798).

70 *Ibid.*, no. 65 du 5 frimaire an 7 (25 novembre 1798).

71 *Ibid.*, no. 134 du 14 pluviôse an 6 (2 février 1798).

72 *Ibid.*, no. 90 du 30 frimaire an 7 (12 décembre 1798) et no 101 du 17 nivôse an 7 (31 déc. 1798).

73 *Ibid.*, no. 134 du 14 pluviôse an 6 (2 février 1798).

74 *Ibid.*, no. 145 du 25 pluviôse an 6 (13 février 1798).

75 *Ibid.*, no.149 du 29 pluviôse an 6 (17 février 1798).

nter cette renaissance comme étant directement insufflée de l'esprit de la Révolution, Pazvantoğlu prenant pour cela « les Français pour modèle ». ⁷⁶

A ce chapitre des nationalités, l'enjeu est de taille pour la France.

En effet, dans le soutien ou tout au moins les sympathies affichées au mouvement de Pazvantoğlu, bien plus encore que son poids militaire ou ses convictions républicaines, la France aurait prêté davantage attention aux attaches ethniques du personnage et à son appartenance identitaire.

Le rebelle de Vidin, qu'on croit être un renégat grec, ⁷⁷ travaille semble-t-il, à produire dans l'Empire ottoman une révolution favorable à ses anciens compatriotes : maître de toute la Valachie à la suite du retrait de tous les pachas et même du hospodar devant son offensive, ⁷⁸ il est désormais regardé comme le protecteur des Grecs qui étaient dans l'armée du hospodar ; bien plus, à la suite de nouvelles révoltes de Serbes réprimées par le pacha de Belgrade, ceux-ci se mettent finalement sous ses drapeaux et font désormais partie, d'après le *Moniteur*, de son armée. ⁷⁹

Mais malgré ces attaches ethniques, Pazvantoğlu est présenté avant tout et constamment comme un fervent musulman.

D'abord, l'action du pacha de Vidin s'accompagne d'une véritable affirmation de l'islam, Pazvantoğlu ayant recours à la légitimation religieuse classique de la révolte. Dans ce contexte politique, il est en effet très souvent représenté en chef musulman, sa cause est aussi une cause de religion. ⁸⁰ Son combat contre la Porte se veut, théoriquement et tactiquement, un combat pour la défense et la protection de la foi musulmane contre les institutions nouvelles préconisées par Sélim III. Il rallie à son mouvement toutes les forces vives de la société turque, les ulémas, les janissaires et même la plupart des anciens ministres mais surtout le peuple. Ses partisans, provenant de toutes les classes et étant assez nombreux dans tous les Etats de l'Empire, sont tous mécontents des innovations introduites dans le système de l'Empire par la Nouvelle Ordonnance, ou le *Nizam-ı Cedid* ; on considère que ces innovations portent atteinte à la religion et « en général, le peuple regarde le système actuel de la Porte comme un système d'innovation contraire aux institutions établies par la loi du prophète ». ⁸¹

Malgré tout, cette volonté de décentralisation par rapport au pouvoir et ces velléités d'autonomie ne remettent nullement en cause le modèle impérial ottoman ; au contraire, cette effervescence de foi religieuse joue en même temps comme un facteur de cohésion de l'Empire. Pazvantoğlu semble en être fort conscient : il considère que cette révolte n'est pas orientée contre la Porte... mais contre un triumvirat qui maîtrise le Grand Seigneur ; il est surtout « trop fin pour afficher des vues

76 *Ibid.* ; de même, no. 145 du 25 pluviôse an 6 (13 février 1798) et no. 157 du 7 ventôse an 6 (25 février 1798).

77 *Ibid.*, no. 143 du 23 pluviôse an 6 (11 février 1798).

78 *Ibid.*, no. 261 du 21 prairial an 6 (9 juin 1798).

79 *Ibid.*, no. 49 du 19 brumaire an 6 (9 novembre 1798).

80 AMAE, MD Turquie, vol. 16, doc. 24 bis, fol. 88r.

81 *Ibid.*

d'ambitions qui pourraient lui aliéner toutes les cours musulmanes... ».⁸² Ainsi, on ne s'étonnerait guère, clamait le *Moniteur*, de l'avènement probable d'une *République Mahométane* sur les frontières de la Russie.⁸³ En outre, ce projet de former une fédération des populations musulmanes de la Turquie d'Europe était constamment présent dans les vues de la diplomatie française.⁸⁴

A ce titre, Pazvantoğlu offrirait pour la France, un double intérêt, à la fois en tant qu'instrument d'affaiblissement interne de l'Empire ottoman, mais aussi comme facteur d'unification des divers éléments ethniques de l'Empire, car en définitive et dans son dessein d'hégémonie, la France restait peu favorable à un partage de l'Empire ottoman. Grâce à sa double appartenance, Pazvantoğlu se présenterait comme l'élément le plus fédérateur de cet ensemble de populations très hétérogène, comme le plus à même à constituer un Etat indépendant unifié autour du royaume de Bosnie, sur les décombres de la Turquie⁸⁵ et sous la protection de la France.

Celle-ci aurait-elle voulu recueillir l'héritage musulman de l'Empire ottoman pour contrecarrer l'hostilité des populations chrétiennes à son égard dans la région et mieux faire face à ses ennemis ? Faire entrer en ligne de compte le facteur religieux, une telle approche, aussi purement tactique soit-elle, constitue à la limite une entorse aux valeurs républicaines, d'essence laïque.⁸⁶ En même temps, cette perspective pourrait être interprétée dans le sens d'une sécularisation de la société et pourrait trouver sa légitimation dans l'esprit universel propre à l'idéologie révolutionnaire. C'est peut-être dans cette indifférence vis-à-vis des identités et des religions que se réaliserait au mieux la laïcité. Mais surtout, cette tentative d'intégration de la composante musulmane dans la sphère républicaine dément l'incompatibilité entre islam et démocratie : celle-ci ne s'arrête pas aux marches de la chrétienté ; ici, la composante musulmane est considérée comme apte naturellement à s'intégrer dans l'espace démocratique. De par ces connivences, certes intéressées, et dans le regard des contemporains,⁸⁷ l'antagonisme entre islam et pensée libre ne semble pas se présenter de manière irréductible, et l'islam n'est pas considéré comme incompatible avec l'idéologie du progrès, les innovations techniques ayant pu trouver aisément une application concrète dans cet

82 AN AE B III 197, Rapport du 5 messidor an 6 (23 juin 1798), cité.

83 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 165 du 15 ventôse an 6 (5 mars 1798).

84 Jusqu'en 1806-07, « Le projet de former une puissante fédération... chez les musulmans même est définitivement arrêté dans le gouvernement français... sans doute pour la mettre en œuvre pour ou contre la Porte, selon les circonstances... » : Boppe, « Mériage à Widdin », 260.

85 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 149 du 29 pluviôse an 6 (17 février 1798) ; la correspondance ministérielle relayant les informations du *Moniteur* : le 10 janvier 1799 (21 nivôse an 7), Descorches avait déjà adressé une note au Gouvernement sur l'éventualité d'un tel projet. Cf. De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 327-31.

86 Cf. Wahnich, « Le regard de la Révolution sur les peuples étrangers », 357-65.

87 P. Y. Beaurepaire, *La République universelle des francs-maçons ; De Newton à Metternich*, Paris 1999, notamment 108. A titre d'exemple : en dépit de l'appartenance chrétienne de l'authentique franc-maçon, un musulman d'Alger fut reconnu par ses pairs « vraiment Maçon... il a été reçu avec les applaudissements... » par la loge de Saint-Louis des Amis Réunis des notables de l'orient de Calais, le 16 septembre 1784.

espace culturel. D'un autre côté, les divers témoignages de l'époque ne manquaient pas d'ailleurs de relever l'attitude des musulmans éclairés ; ces derniers, à leur manière, conscients de l'importance des enjeux, se déclaraient favorables à une union avec la République française.⁸⁸

Tout au moins, sans être forcément une supercherie et au-delà d'une habile instrumentalisation évidente, ne pourrait-on pas voir dans l'association de l'élément musulman un effort de moduler le rapport à l'Autre, rapport qu'il faut soustraire au registre unique de l'affrontement : par là pourrait s'exprimer en effet, la volonté de la République à réaliser une sorte d'intégration des peuples par un dépassement politique des facteurs d'exclusion, comme l'appartenance religieuse et ethnique, pour la construction d'un nouveau lien social universel – la République, malgré toutes les contradictions, n'étant pas complètement détachée de ses origines révolutionnaires.⁸⁹

Dans cette propagande mise au service d'une politique d'expansion, où se mêlent et s'entrecroisent des impératifs d'intérêt national et des considérations renouant avec l'idéal républicain, toutes les valeurs ont été en effet mobilisées. C'est ainsi que l'analyse du contenu des articles du *Moniteur*, nous permet de déceler d'autres formes discursives renvoyant au principe de la fraternité entre les peuples, principe qui surgit dans ce contexte où prédominent les enjeux stratégiques et l'action militaire, comme par surimposition mais qui ne manque pas de significations.

Le mythe de la fraternité universelle du genre humain et de la réalisation de la Nation Unique, mondiale, fusionnant tous les peuples en un seul, le peuple humain, hérité de la pensée iréniste du XVIII^e siècle,⁹⁰ fut très tôt considéré comme l'une des composantes de l'idéologie et du programme révolutionnaires, concrétisé dans une première étape en la forme de la Grande Nation. Or avec Condorcet, c'est précisément Volney qui fut l'un des rares hommes de la Révolution à faire preuve d'une réelle mentalité cosmopolite : il conçoit la paix par la réalisation d'une sorte d'« utopie planétaire » où « l'universalité du genre humain formerait une seule et même société... et où la propagation des droits de l'homme et du citoyen serait comme le garant du droit des nations ». Il récidive de nouveau sur les colonnes du *Moniteur*, décrivant, inlassablement, son projet.⁹¹ Son système s'annonce plus chimérique encore que le système de paix universelle préconisé par l'abbé de Saint-Pierre qui lui reste réalisable dans les limites des frontières géographiques de l'Europe ; tout autour, les autres nations formeraient des alliés. La République Universelle de Volney quant à elle, elle est beaucoup plus élargie. Elle réunirait tout à la fois les populations de l'Afrique et de l'Asie, de la Méditerranée jusqu'au golfe du Bengale, des Arabes, des Druzes et des Bédouins, des

88 AMAE, CP Turquie, vol. 201, doc. 293 : lettre du colonel polonais Grabinski au général Koszinski, cité.

89 Cf. H. Leuwers, « Républiques et relations entre les peuples ; Quelques éléments de l'idéal républicain autour de Brumaire an VIII », *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 318 (1999), 677-93.

90 Pour l'ensemble de ces éléments, nous nous sommes référée en particulier à A. Mattelart, *Histoire de l'utopie planétaire*, notamment 81-89.

91 *Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 61 du 26 brumaire an 7 (16 novembre 1798), 249. En fait, il s'agit de la deuxième partie de l'article publié au no. 59, déjà cité.

Grecs, des Maronites, des Arméniens... dans une sorte de Nation unique fusionnant toutes ces populations sur les ruines de l'Empire des Turcs ; une sorte de vaste plan de réorganisation de l'humanité dans un système de paix universelle dont Bonaparte, d'après Volney, libérateur des peuples opprimés, en serait le restaurateur. C'est la conception d'une société normalisée dont les vecteurs seraient les valeurs fondamentales et le progrès et où « la communication » en facilitant la propagation des techniques, effacerait « les frontières et les identités ».⁹²

Dans cet horizon virtuel élargi des frontières de la démocratie, pour Volney, la centralité de l'Europe sous l'égide de la République est tout simplement justifiée par des facteurs intrinsèques, liés aux effets de l'environnement : se référant à la fameuse thèse des climats, ces régions tempérées, autour de la Méditerranée, sont plus propices au développement de l'esprit universel, contrairement aux régions asiatiques désertiques ; justement, la région balkanique apparaît, d'après lui, comme la zone la plus favorable à l'extériorisation de l'esprit dans le temps, une région où la nature plus adoucie que dans les régions des plus grandes rigueurs climatiques de l'Afrique ou de l'Asie, favorise le mélange des différences et des transitions plus que ne sauraient le réaliser les contrastes des autres contrées. Ainsi, dans ce « programme de régénération » nationale des peuples de l'Orient conçu par Volney, les frontières virtuelles ou réelles de la République Universelle seraient en dépassement par rapport aux limites de la *Res publica christiana* et de la limite au monde chrétien de la démocratie, ce qui accroît la portée historique universelle de la Révolution française : celle-ci s'étant forgée une identité universelle concomitante à son identité nationale, la fraternité universelle acquière désormais une fonction essentialiste dans l'idéal républicain.

Dans cette marche vers une République universelle, Pazvantoğlu selon le profil esquissé et, par sa manière de s'adapter si rapidement aux valeurs morales et aux innovations techniques de l'Europe, serait pressenti comme le plus à même à réaliser ce rapprochement avec la civilisation occidentale, se plaçant désormais à l'avant-garde de l'émancipation du genre humain.

Sans lui accorder une importance exagérée, ce discours de l'idéal républicain que diffusait « la presse... n'est pas à négliger » totalement. Il est évident que la finalité première de cette rhétorique est de servir de justification toute trouvée à cette politique de puissance et d'expansion ; sa persistance dans le discours traduirait incontestablement chez les responsables politiques, la préoccupation constante d'une telle obligation de justification.

Cette préoccupation serait double.

Au-delà du programme idéologique, l'action de la France reste avant tout déterminée par la sauvegarde des intérêts particuliers de la République, ici d'ordre stratégique. Dans son souci permanent de défendre ses frontières, désormais la référence à des valeurs jugées supérieures et de portée universelle, de même que sa tentative d'intégrer, déjà par les mots, de nouvelles populations à son système de valeurs, seraient destinées avant tout à organiser autour de la République,

92 Cf. Beaurepaire, *La République universelle*, 95 et suiv.

une barrière naturelle aux limites de plus en plus élargies, formée au mieux, « de pays amis et alliés qui partageraient avec elle les mêmes valeurs politiques et sociales »,⁹³ élargir en somme, l'espace de la Grande Nation. Ce qui expliquerait que la France reste favorable à la sauvegarde de l'intégrité territoriale de l'Empire ottoman plutôt qu'à l'encouragement des aspirations d'autonomie des populations balkaniques qui entraîneraient la dissolution de l'Empire. Dans cette perspective, et de par son double jeu, Pazvantoğlu était par conséquent, le mieux indiqué à réaliser ces desseins géopolitiques d'envergure de la République car, contrairement à d'autres, notamment les Serbes,⁹⁴ Pazvantoğlu n'est pas sous la domination de la Russie ou de l'Autriche ; il se présente à la fois comme un facteur opérationnel de cohésion et de sauvegarde de l'ensemble du domaine ottoman, allié à la République et comme un instrument de guerre essentiel dans la réalisation de ce projet de société globale, préconisé par la République d'abord dans le sens de la défense de ses intérêts stratégiques.

Tout autant, la République se montre préoccupée par son image. Il va sans dire que l'intérêt de la France ne réside point dans le contenu idéologique de cette révolution supposée de Pazvantoğlu, aux antipodes de l'idéal révolutionnaire et des valeurs républicaines. La République ne se faisait guère d'illusion sur l'esprit révolutionnaire qui pourrait animer ce rebelle : à ce titre, les Grecs qu'elle avait lâchés plutôt seraient plus crédibles. Très vite d'ailleurs après 1799, les sources ne réservent plus de propos élogieux au rebelle de Vidin ; il est dès lors représenté sous l'aspect du plus sombre despotisme ; au lieu d'un chantre de la liberté, il n'est plus que le reliquat d'un ancien système désuet et irrationnel : en effet, Pazvantoğlu, à proprement parler « ne fait pas la guerre à la puissance ottomane mais au système actuel de la Porte », en particulier le Nizam-ı Cedid. D'après le colonel Sébastiani, il ne sait faire d'ailleurs ni la guerre ni la paix. Lui et ses alliés de toute nature seraient les protagonistes de l'échec de ce Nizam que la Porte venait d'engager sur la voie de la modernisation de la Turquie et dont certains amis de la Porte – en particulier Descorches et son ami Mouradgea d'Ohsson – estimaient la réussite fort possible. Mais du reste, la France se désolidarisait du Nizam⁹⁵ et ne semblait guère convaincue de l'intérêt de la Nouvelle Ordonnance ; à la limite, le soutien apporté par la France à Pazvantoğlu aurait même contribué à mettre en échec cette politique de réformes entamée par la Porte depuis 1792. Réellement, en aucun cas, Pazvantoğlu ne peut être porteur d'un quelconque message révolutionnaire.

N'étant guère assurée sur les convictions révolutionnaires du rebelle de Vidin, il est clair qu'à travers toute cette propagande, la France cherchait avant tout à diffuser, dans l'opinion internationale, les conquêtes les plus appréciées de la Révolution. En effet, plus qu'une réalité concrète et au-delà de leur véracité à travers le *Moniteur*, l'analyse des faits politiques et militaires évoque plutôt et renvoie une série d'images qui se voudrait comme l'incarnation du projet révolutionnaire.

93 Leuwers, « Théorie et pratique des relations internationales », 948.

94 AMAE, MD Turquie, vol. 16, doc. 24 bis, fol. 89v. cité.

95 De Marcère, *Une ambassade à Constantinople*, 218.

re. Naturellement ces images médiatisantes sont métaphoriques ; elles fonctionneraient comme autant de symboles et de messages, et traduiraient un souci de conformité et d'attache aux principes fondateurs de l'identité républicaine.

C'est tout l'intérêt de ce discours. Très médiatisé, il se veut clairement l'expression de la politique du nouveau Gouvernement : évoluer d'abord dans le sens de cette préoccupation essentielle et de ce choix politique majeur que sont l'intérêt national et la grandeur de la République ; en même temps, proclamer tout haut l'attachement aux principes fondateurs de la République, au moins dans les signes extérieurs, la symbolisation étant un impératif de l'action politique, même si ce discours, loin s'en faut, ne se reflétait pas nécessairement dans les pratiques, l'évolution étant devenue atypique sous l'Empire.

Dans un effet de retour, l'intérêt de ce discours résiderait également dans l'importance de l'incidence provoquée sur le mouvement des révoltes et les espoirs d'émancipation qu'il a insufflé aux populations balkaniques. Plus qu'ailleurs, ces populations étaient fort sensibles à la valorisation des concepts de nation, de patrie : ces notions forment d'ailleurs le vocabulaire de base de certains articles du *Moniteur* relatant les événements dans la région ; elles se présentent comme des référents dans ces mouvements de lutte anti-ottomans. Ainsi, probablement, sans avoir été déterminant dans le déclenchement du processus d'émancipation politique dans la région, plus que des actes concrets, l'engagement de la France résiderait dans la force de l'image et des représentations : toute cette période d'agitation, sous les auspices bienveillants de la République, aurait constitué comme un moment fort où une conscience nationale se révélait à elle-même. Le rôle du modèle français aurait joué par la force des principes annoncés et par son action initiatique à « éveiller à la liberté », ne serait-ce à travers le discours. Ce discours, récurrent à travers la presse, présente déjà, dans la forme, un « horizon éthique » à atteindre ; il engage définitivement l'honneur de la République dans « son rang de légitime parrain » de ces nouveaux principes déclarés. Par son principe optionnel du droit des peuples, la République aurait ainsi fortement contribué à faire naître des espoirs d'émancipation, même si pour l'instant, les peuples de l'Empire « n'allèrent pas au-delà d'une amorce de prise de conscience de leur identité communautaire ».

L'utilité se confondant prodigieusement à l'idéal républicain, la France de son côté, aurait été tentée d'encourager la renaissance des nations dans cette région au statut juridique particulier ; de ce fait, plus qu'ailleurs, ces populations ont été pressenties comme plus éligibles à accéder au nouveau modèle d'Etat-Nation. Paradoxalement, dans l'immédiat, il ne peut être, non plus question pour la République, d'affirmation nationale. A la limite, cette politique de la France qui vise la sauvegarde de l'intégrité de l'Empire ottoman ne se présente pas forcément comme une violation du principe du droit des peuples et donc comme visiblement en contradiction avec l'idéal républicain. Cette ligne politique reste même tout à fait conforme avec ce principe du droit des peuples selon l'acception que les révolutionnaires lui attribuaient, ce dernier étant reconnu aux seules communautés humaines constituées politiquement : « une province ne peut pas rompre d'elle-même le lien qui l'attache au corps de l'Etat dont elle fait partie et que ce lien ne peut-être

rompu que du consentement de cet Etat ».⁹⁶ Au moment où, dans le débat national, la France renonçait à la guerre de libération, au moment où triomphait le principe de la Raison d'Etat et de l'intérêt national, la souveraineté d'un peuple se confondait prodigieusement avec un Etat souverain.

Dans ce contexte d'effervescence des nationalités, l'universalité fait figure de donnée « atemporelle » ; la conception d'un tel projet de système mondial englobant semble pour le moment prématurée et reste beaucoup plus un modèle à construire. L'hégémonie des grands ensembles, en l'occurrence, celle de l'Empire ottoman – et plus tard, l'Empire de Napoléon – pesait encore de tout son poids sur les populations et reste vécue comme une oppression, la Révolution française ne faisant qu'attiser l'aspiration de liberté et d'émancipation. De même, dans cet ensemble très hétérogène, les questions religieuses fonctionnent comme une marque fondamentale des identités culturelles et de l'appartenance distinctive des ethnies ; elles restent, pour l'instant, difficilement contournables.

Malgré tout, dans la perspective d'une dimension universelle, de manière à la fois explicite et inédite dans les recherches autour de la Révolution française, s'illustre une situation historique spécifique des relations de la République aux autres peuples : prenant appui sur le mouvement de Pazvantoglu et au-delà des motivations sous-jacentes, la République intègre politiquement et de manière virtuelle, un élément culturel nouveau, les communautés musulmanes de l'Empire ottoman à l'espace démocratique, jugé d'essence occidentale et ce malgré ou à travers même l'épisode égyptien. Se basant sur l'analyse discursive, l'interprétation des faits historiques garde certes toute sa portée normative. Comportant une grande part de déductions empiriques, cette analyse des relations entre République et populations musulmanes de l'Empire ottoman et de sa politique précoce supposée d'ouverture et d'intégration, garde avant tout une valeur démonstrative. Elle est surtout destinée à dépasser une vision définitivement tranchée, unilatérale et irréversible des choses et invite à une réinterprétation « revisitée » des rapports entre l'Orient et l'Occident en général.

Enfin et en dernière analyse, dans une approche que nous aurions voulu plus globale de la diplomatie révolutionnaire, la définition des rapports aux peuples passe par des voies multiples et divergentes qui seraient comme autant de réponses et d'adaptations face à la diversité des situations et des contextes extérieurs.⁹⁷ La voie empruntée ici par la diplomatie républicaine, plus qu'une volonté délibérée d'intégration, serait à interpréter d'abord dans le sens de la recherche, menée à travers les formes discursive, avec des contradictions flagrantes et des motivations sous-jacentes, d'une certaine adéquation entre politique extérieure et principes fondateurs de la République, pour un degré minimum de conformité à l'idéal républicain dans la relation aux peuples et d'une certaine compatibilité entre droit interne et droit international, dans leur référence au droit naturel.

96 Cité dans Leuwers, « Théorie et pratique des relations internationales », 951 n. 44.

97 Cf. R. Tlili Sellaouti, « Du droit naturel au droit positif ; La diplomatie de la France révolutionnaire avec les pays musulmans de la Méditerranée occidentale », in *Révolution française et Méditerranée ; Actes des Journées d'Etudes : Droit des gens et relations entre les peuples*, en cours de publication.

PART II

THE CASE OF THE PELOPONNESE

LIKE THE MAFIA? THE OTTOMAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MOREA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

*Anna Vlachopoulou**

When I thought of a title for this paper on the Ottoman military presence in the Morea, I thought of making it sound appealing enough to provoke the interest of potential listeners and/or readers. Since I have been received with a few raised eyebrows from colleagues and friends about what I thought appealing, I would like to start with a reference to the title.

The use of the term ‘Mafia’ in this paper does not claim to be of a scholarly nature; the term will be used in a heuristic sense. What I refer to is what one could call the usual connotations of the term ‘Mafia’, an everyday idea of what Mafia means, often influenced or reproduced by popular books or movies.¹

When thinking about the Mafia we usually think of organised crime. We consider the Mafia to be a sub-society of its own, a close network of people with common interests or even common family background, but at any rate with strong ties among its members. It follows its own rules and regulations, its own dos and don’ts, based perhaps on something like a code of honour, which punishes those who violate the rules and takes revenge on those who upset its activities or leave the society. We consider all this to be in opposition to law and order and to be taking place outside the bounds of a ‘civil’ society with its legal codes. At the same time we think of a government which is not only unable to control these sub-structures but is also benefiting from them and sometimes even partaking in them.

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1 For example, Martin Scorsese’s famous movie ‘The Godfather’ or the TV series ‘The Sopranos’.

Let us now examine to what degree these terms can *mutatis mutandis* be applied to the military in the Morea in the eighteenth century.

The Military in the Morea

After having reconquered the peninsula from the Venetians in 1715,² the Ottoman authorities turned the Morea into a *vilayet* (province) and established the usual administrative institutions: the *Mora valisi* (governor of the Morea) served as the highest representative of the province, uniting both civilian and military functions in his person.³ The province was divided into *kazas* (administrative districts), each with a *kadı* who was in charge of all legal procedures. In addition, there were also a number of *muhafız*es, officers of the various fortresses such as Anabolu (Gk. Nauplio), Koron (Koroni) or Moton (Methoni).

So far things seemed to go their normal way: a province had been conquered and an administration installed. What made the situation in the Morea somewhat special is the presence of a number of castles, built in Venetian times, but still functioning and in use in Ottoman times, that had to be manned. This resulted in a high concentration of military personnel in certain areas of the peninsula, while, at the same time, others could never be brought completely under stable control. The most striking example of such an area is the Mani, which managed to maintain an actual independent state throughout the whole period of Ottoman rule.⁴ Thus, the Mani region played a major role both in the movement of klephts (brigands),⁵ and in the development of a group of local Christian notables, known as *kocabaşıs*, who in turn would either co-operate with the local

2 For the history of the Morea in general, see M. Sakellariou, *He Peloponnesos kata ten Deuteran Tourkokratian (1715-1821)* [The Peloponnese during the Second Period of Ottoman Rule (1715-1821)], Athens 1939. For the practical aspects of establishing administration in the case of Anabolu, see N. Göyünc, 'XVIII. yüzyılda Türk idaresinde Nauplia (Anabolu) ve yapıları' [Nauplion (Anabolu) and its Structures under Turkish Administration in the Eighteenth Century], in *İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan*, Ankara 1976, 461-85; C. K. Neumann, 'Anaboli Reconquered', unpublished paper read at the 3rd International Workshop of the Department of Middle East Studies, Ben Gurion University of the Negev (8 June 1997).

3 Those were the functions of *muhassıl* and *serasker*, respectively. On provincial administration, see the paper on the 'Administrative Structure and Government of Rumelia in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: The Functions and Activities of the *Vali* of Rumelia' by Gergana Georgieva in this volume.

4 This definitely contributed considerably to the fact that the Mani has become the subject of intensive research and many publications. It also contributed to a tendency to idealise the area and its inhabitants and miss the fact that not all *kocabaşıs* acted out of pure communal spirit, or can be called resistance heroes.

5 The bibliography on the klephts' movement is immense. For a discussion both of the topic and the most important works, see J. C. Alexander, 'The Klephts of the Morea: An Historical Essay', in L. Marcakis and P. N. Diamandouros (eds), *New Trends in Modern Greek Historiography*, Hanover, N.H. 1982, 31-37 and idem, *Brigandage and Public Order in the Morea 1685-1806*, Athens 1985.

Ottoman administration and military, or partake actively in uprisings against the latter, and often managed to amass surprisingly large landholdings and immense wealth.

The uprising of the Greeks in 1770, supported and to a certain extent initiated by two Russian officers, the Orlov brothers,⁶ aimed at dividing the sultanic forces in the on-going Russo-Ottoman war. This uprising was a major contribution to the worsening situation in the Morea. First it led to a further concentration of military personnel in the area, with about 10,000-15,000 Albanian soldiers being brought in to crush the rebellion. After the uprising was suppressed, the insurgents were punished and the Russians had retreated, the re-establishment of Ottoman rule did not work out smoothly. In fact it did not work out at all, because the Albanians went out of control. Claiming alleged payments, they started ravaging the countryside, terrorising Christian subjects as well as the Ottoman authorities, who totally lost power over their irregular forces and had to ask for help from outside the Morea to get rid of the 'Alvanokratia' (Albanian rule).⁷ It was only in 1779, when Gazi Hasan Paşa, who was appointed *Mora valisi*, while also holding the office of *kapudan paşa* (commander of the fleet), managed, in a horrible bloodbath, to crush the dominion of the marauding Albanian soldiers. In the meantime, the fortresses and fortified cities had become centres of helpless Ottoman administrators, military garrisons and refugees from the countryside.⁸

All this contributed not only to a decline in trade and agriculture in the peninsula, but also to the decline in the authority of the Ottoman state and its ability to guarantee law and order and the adherence to legal rules, to protect its subjects and to maintain control over officials in the province. These were prime conditions for the development of Mafia-like sub-structures. Combined with the general shift in power from the central government to local authorities, and the general decay of *boni mores*, by which the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were characterised in the whole of the Ottoman Empire, the situation in the Morea became explosive.

Claiming Rights and Righting Wrongs

According to Near-Eastern state philosophy, the most important task of the sovereign was to ensure that law and order were maintained, to guarantee justice to his subjects and to right wrongs.

6 The uprising is known as the Orlov Rebellion (*Orlophika* in Greek).

7 On the history of the Orlov Rebellion and the 'Alvanokratia', see Sakellariou, *Peloponnesos*, 162-206. On the Orlov Rebellion, see also Y. Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa ve âyânlık müessesesi* [Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa and the Institution of *Ayanlık*], Tokyo 1976, 39-66; T. A. Gritsopoulos, *Ta Orlophika: he en Peloponneso Epanastasis tou 1770 kai ta epakoloutha autas* [The Orlov Rebellion: The Revolution in the Peloponnese in 1770 and its Aftermath], Athens 1967.

8 C. K. Neumann, 'Sulaika at the Inn at the Pier: Local Elites and the Port in Anaboli, 18th Century', unpublished paper which describes vividly the 'overmilitarised' situation in Anabolu.

Correspondingly the most important and most noble task of the imperial council, the *divan-ı hümayun*, was to provide the oppressed with the means of bringing their complaints before the Sultan and having injustices corrected. Throughout the centuries, practical aspects of the functioning of the *divan* changed,⁹ but in principle its main task of righting wrongs as a high court remained.

Since complaints and decisions were registered, the *divan-ı hümayun* provides us with a special kind of source, which for the period under examination was recorded in separate registers (*defter*), known as *ahkâm defterleri*. Luckily the series of *Mora ahkâm defterleri* is almost complete and can be found in the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* in Istanbul.¹⁰

Anyone, regardless of their social status, religion or sex could submit a petition to the council, personally, by sending a representative or a delegation, or a letter of complaint,¹¹ the investigation of which was considered to be the most important responsibility of the *divan-ı hümayun*. “As a result, justice and security were greatest in the regions nearest the capital”.¹²

The *hüküm* (sultanic order) contains a description of each case – with the name and place of residence of the petitioner, a more or less short summary of what had happened to him/her and an order to the competent local authorities to investigate the issue or organise a court hearing on the basis of the sharia, the Holy Law. The addressee was usually the *kadı* of the petitioner’s district, and depending on the case also local administrative staff, the *mütesellim* (deputy governor), the *muhafız* or the *vali* himself.¹³ In many cases the petitioning of the *divan-ı hümayun* was not the first step taken to ensure a request. Often the petitioner had received a *fetva* (legal opinion) of the *şeyhülislam* (head of the religious hierarchy).

The *ahkâm defterleri* provide us with snapshots of problems, mistreatments, injustices and the like from which the population suffered. We cannot judge whether the claims made were justified or not

9 For example, the Sultan ceased to take part in person in the sessions of the *divan*. See H. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, London 1973, 89-100.

10 Before 1059 (1649) orders in response to petitions were written down along with other decrees in the *mühimme defterleri*. Later complaints were collected in separate *defters*, the *şikâyet defterleri*. These were in 1155 (1742) transformed into the *ahkâm defterleri*, which were classified on geographical criteria. For the *Mora ahkâm defterleri* see *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi*, Istanbul 1992, 53-54. Since the first two *defters* listed as *Mora ahkâm defterleri* in fact have to be considered *ecnebî defterleri*, the series of *Mora ahkâm defterleri* actually starts with *defter* no. 3, beginning with the year 1155 (1742). Compare H. G. Majer (ed.), *Das Osmanische „Registrierbuch der Beschwerden“ (Şikâyet Defteri) vom Jahre 1675; Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. mixt. 683. Vol. I: Einleitung, Reproduktion des Textes, Geographische Indices*, Vienna 1984, 17-18.

11 See H. İnalcık, ‘Şikâyet hakkı: ‘arz-ı hâl ve ‘arz-ı mahzarlar’, *OA*, 7-8 (1988), 33-54, here quoted after its reprint in idem, *Osmanlı’da Devlet, Hukuk, Adâlet* [State, Law, and Justice with the Ottomans], Istanbul 2000, 49-71. On the form of petitions, see pp. 50-54, which refer to *şikâyet defterleri* but can be *mutatis mutandis* applied to *ahkâm defterleri* of the eighteenth century.

12 Idem, *Ottoman Empire*, 91.

13 Idem, ‘Şikâyet hakkı’, 54-55.

and usually we do not know the outcome of the cases. But we do get quite a thorough picture of what the people of the Morea during the second ‘Tourkokratia’ (Turkish rule) considered to be unfair.¹⁴

Many of the complaints in fact concerned members of the military class (*askeri*).

Starting with Money

Money is an important thing and, as they say, when money comes in, friendship goes out. The number of complaints about debts is immense. We find all the combinations one can possibly think of: Muslims, *zimmi*s (largely meaning Christians, mostly Greeks), *yahudis* (Jews), *kocabaşıs*, and members of the military class themselves complaining about outstanding debts, or denying owing money to a creditor or doing their best to delay payment.

Apparently such bad habits were widespread among members of the military class in the peninsula, since (remarkably enough) in the majority of complaints at least one party involved belongs to this group. Of course, one could (and maybe should) take into consideration that the soldiers often received their pay late and at irregular intervals. One also could wonder if the term ‘lend money’ could actually be a euphemism for paying bribes or rates of protection and also whether lending was always extended voluntarily. However, even if the term was meant as a euphemism by the debtor-member of the military, the creditor may not have seen it that way. In such instances, the plaintiff made an effort to recover his money and took his case to the *divan-ı hümayun* to get his money back.¹⁵

As a first example of what one can find in the sources, I would like to introduce the following case: In *Mora ahkâm defteri* no. 4 we find the case of a Greek baker named Yorgi.¹⁶ He appeared before the *divan* to complain about Mustafa Paşa, the *muhafız* of İnebahtı (Lepanto, Gk. Naupaktos), and former *muhafız* of Mora. Mustafa Paşa, he said, owed him 3,375 *guruş*.¹⁷ Actually, this

14 For the sake of completeness, I should add that what applies to every historical source applies to the *ahkâm defterleri* as well: they must be subjected to examination by historical criticism. When dealing with this kind of source, one has to keep in mind that it reflects the needs of only a section of society, since taking one’s complaint to the *divan-ı hümayun* presupposed several factors like sufficient financial means, and that the complaints were so formulated as to achieve a certain goal. Still, the value of the *ahkâm defterleri* should not be underestimated. It is the closest we can get to everyday problems of the Empire’s population. Compare N. Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*, Stanford 1987.

15 Since there is often a chronological gap between the event and the time when the complaint was lodged, we do not know if a shift in the balance of power might have encouraged the moneylender to complain.

16 BOA, *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, 4, p. 158, *hüküm* no. 6, dated evası-ı S[after] [1]159 (4-14 March 1746): *Moralı etmekçi Yorgi nam zimmi gelüb*.

17 *Hala İnebahtı muhafızı olup bundan akdem Mora muhafızı olan vezirim Mustafa Paşa (...) etmekden zimmetinde olmak üç bin üçyüz yetmiş beş guruş*.

was the second time that the imperial council had to deal with the case, since the accused had presented a document that declared that he was debt-free.¹⁸ Now a second *emr-i şerif* (imperial decree) was issued to the *Mora muhassılı* (chief tax collector) and the *Anadolu kadısı* to investigate whether there was any outstanding debt or not.¹⁹

As usual, we do not know the outcome of the case. However, this seemed to me to be a good example in several respects. First of all it was a Christian subject – from the name *Yorgi* we can assume that he was Greek – complaining about a high-ranking Ottoman military officer. The debt was not from money lent but in this case from unpaid services. The fact that this was the second time the *divan* dealt with the case indicates that complaints were indeed being taken seriously. Also the complaint was lodged at a time when Mustafa Paşa had been transferred to another area. Maybe this was deliberate and *Yorgi* had waited until the *muhafız* was far enough away so as not to be able to get hold of him. What raises such a suspicion will be clearer if we take a look at other cases, too.

Suppression, Torture, Murder

Several cases can be found in the *ahkâm defterleri* concerning members of various military groups involved in alleged kidnapping, torture and even murder.

As an example I would like to refer to the case of Şeyh Hasan, who in 1173 (1760) appeared before the *divan-ı hümayun* to intervene on behalf of his brother. His brother, Mehmed Emin, was the representative of the *mütevelli* (trustee) of the *Haremeynü's-Şerifeyn vakfı* (the group of pious foundations established to support the Holy Cities).²⁰ The accusations were grave: according to Şeyh Hasan, an officer of the janissaries, Deli Mahmud, who was a client of the former *mütesellim* of the Morea, Ali, had teamed up with two individuals from Anabolu.²¹ Together they had kidnapped Şeyh Hasan's brother, Mehmed Emin, and, after beating him up, they dragged him to a

18 *Tahsili babında bir kat'a emr-i şerifim mukaddimen ısdar ve irsal olındığı (...) bu def'a müşarünileyh tarafından bir kat'a ibra hüccetiyle kaimesi derununda kethüdası merkum zimmetinde bir nesne kalmadığı (...).*

19 *Senki hala Mora muhafızı vezir-i müşarünileyhsin marifetinle mahallinde vukuf-ı tammi olan bivech kimesnelerden sual olunub vezir-i merkum kethüda-yı mezbur marifetiyle mesfura teslim olunmuş mudur yahud zimmetinde mi kalmışdır her ne güne ise marifet-i şer'le tashih olundukdan sonra tekrar ilâm eylemek için yazılmışdı.*

20 BOA, Mora Ahkâm Defteri, 7, p. 187, hüküm no. 3 – p. 188, hüküm no. 1, dated evasıt-ı Za [Zilkade] 1173 (25 June-4 July 1760): *Ulemeden eş-Seyh Hasan zide ilmehu geliüb bunun karındaşı kuzatdan Mehmed Emin nam kimesne Mora ceziresinde vaki Haremeynü's-Şerifeyn evkafından Arhos vakfının [!] yetmiş senesinde mütevellisi vekili olub.*

21 *Anabolu sakinlerinden mütegalibe ve ashab-ı ağrazdan ma'lümü'l-esami iki nefer kimesnel (...) icra için bi-asl ve bahane sabık Mora mütesellimi olub bazı husus için oltarafda misafireten mükün olan Ali nam kimesne tarafından mübaşir tayin ve sene-i mezburede Anabolu kal'asında yeniçeri zabıtı olan Deli Mahmud nam (...).*

fortress near the castle of Anabolu.²² There they left him, after having forcibly stripped the victim of all his personal belongings and money.²³ The case was reported to Istanbul and an order was issued to free Mehmed Emin without taking ransom money and to give him back whatever had been removed from him.²⁴ Not only did Deli Mahmud disregard this sultanic order, but other individuals took the opportunity to intervene in the case in order to make money. Ali, the alleged partner in crime, for example, obtained 1,050 *guruş* by promising to liberate Mehmed Emin, but did not live up to his promise. Altogether, Mehmed Emin paid 300 Venetian gold ducats to Deli Mahmud and an additional substantial amount of silver money to several individuals, amongst them the former *naib* (substitute judge) Hafız Mustafa, who all promised to free him without actually doing so.²⁵ But as if that was not bad enough, two agents were sent from the capital to Anabolu to investigate the case. The night before they arrived, Mehmed Emin disappeared, along with his alleged kidnapper Deli Mamud. From the point when Mehmed Emin went missing, his wife and children were desperate and destitute. Şeyh Hasan wanted the case to be investigated again, to be appointed guardian of the family and justice to be done.²⁶

Mehmed Emin was not unknown to the central bureaucracy. In the same *ahkâm defteri* we find a Mehmed Emin as *mütevelli* and also in various other offices but always located in Arhos (Gk. Argos). Since it is not very likely that there were other *mütevellis* in Arhos bearing the same name, we can assume that we are dealing with the same person. In earlier times Mehmed Emin had obviously been quarrelling with different members of the military caste about various topics, and had

22 Which is later in the text to be specified as a tower in the sea. So, we are dealing with the little fortress just offshore from the port of Anabolu known as Burzi.

23 *Karındaşının etbana sopalar ile darb ve muhkem kayd u bend ile Anabolu kal'ası havalisinde vaki kal'asına vaz u zecr ve ihafe ile yanında bulunan devat ve nukud ve kılınc ve sair emval ve eşyasını zabt edüb.*

24 *Keyfiyet-i mezbure Der-i Aliyeme ifade olundukda bir akçe alınmaksızın tılak ve zulmen ahz olunan akçe ve eşyasın ba'de't-tesviye kendiyne redd olunmak babında emr-i şerifim sadır olmuşiken.* The relevant order is to be found in BOA, Mora Ahkâm Defteri, 7, p. 51, *hüküm* no. 2, dated evahir-i C[emaziyyülahır] 1172 (19-27 February 1759).

25 *Zabıt-ı mezkur bir vechile itaat-ı emr-i âlî eylemedikden başka mütesellim-i merkum dahi ben tılak ederim deyü bin elli guruş akçesin almışiken ne tılak olunmayub ve kal'a-ı mezburda sabık naib olan Anabolu sükkânından Hafız Mustafa nam naib dahi üçyüz guruş yine Anabolu sakinlerinden Çukadar Osman nam kimesne dahi üçyüz guruş (...) ve yine Anabolu sakinlerinden ma'lum'ül-esami kimesnelerini dahi kimi yüz ve kimi altmış guruş ve yene üçeri zabıt-ı mezkûr dahi ma'lumü'l-mikdar ziy-i kıymet eşyasıyla üçyüz Venedik altunını cebren ahz ediniüb.*

26 *Ve tekrar murafaa-ı şer' olunmak üzere divan-ı hümayunundan ve ocakdan iki nefer mübaşir ile sadır olan emr-i şerifimle Anaboluya vüsulünde murafaadan firaren emr-i şerifimin vüsulü günü gecesinde vüsta-ı bahrda olan kule-i mezburdan karındaşını zayı ve nâbedid edüb sabahu firar eyledi halka işaat edüb lakin yetmiş bir senesinden berü karındaşının nam ve nişanı zahir olmayub hayat ve necatı nâma'lum olmağla hala vasisi olmadığı karındaşı merkumun sağır evlad ve iyalını zelil ve sefil kaldıkları bildirüb (...) sizki vezir-i müşar ve mevlana-yı mumaileyhümasız şer'le ihkak-ı hak ve keyfiyet-i ale'l-vechi's-sıhhat arz ve ilâm olunmak için ferman-ı âlişân yazılmışdır.*

been involved in several complaints brought before the *divan*.²⁷ Might this have contributed to his abduction and disappearance? We can only guess.²⁸

After we look at the cases which will follow, it will become more likely that Mehmed Emin was a victim of some kind of revenge because he had exchanged heated words with members of the military class.

Ottoman Sopranos?

By the examples which follow I hope to illustrate that encroachments by members of the military class did not simply occur in occasional isolated cases but, rather, followed a pattern.

It all starts with a member of the *ulema* (doctors of Muslim theology): In 1178 (1764) a certain Molla Ali appeared before the *divan* and complained about Mustafa Ağa, the *sercebeciyan* (chief armourer) of the Burzi in Anabolu.²⁹ He accused Mustafa Ağa of intriguing and bringing fake charges against him, as well as of having him robbed, oppressed and tortured.³⁰ Molla Ali had already received a *fetva* of the *şeyhülislam* and demanded that his alleged torturer be punished accordingly.³¹

We do not know how the conflict between Molla Ali and Mustafa Ağa developed nor do we know the outcome of the case. We do get more information, however, about at least one of the persons involved.

In *Mora Ahkâm Defteri* no. 9 we come across the case of a janissary of the 6th *bölük* (company) stationed in Anabolu, Halil.³² He made a petition on behalf of his brother Hüseyin Usta, a former member of the same company.³³ In 1179 (1765) members of the 27th *cemaat* (janissary regi-

27 See, for instance, BOA, *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, 7, p. 51, *hüküm* no. 1, dated evahir-i C[emazyülahır] 1172 (20 February-1 March 1758) with *mütevelli* Osman Ağa.

28 For the sake of completeness, I should mention that the story continued. Mehmed Emin himself showed up at the *divan-ı hümayun* about six years later, insistently accusing his kidnappers and others who had used the opportunity and made money by exploiting his desperate situation. See BOA, *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, 8, p. 346, *hüküm* no. 3 – p. 347, *hüküm* no. 1, dated evasıt-ı Ra [Rebiyülevvel] [1]179 (28 August-7 September 1765).

29 BOA, *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, 8, p. 286, *hüküm* no. 2, dated evasıt-ı C[emazyülahır] 1178 (6-16 December 1764): *Molla Ali demekle maruf kimesne gelüb.*

30 *Kastel-i Bahri sercebeciyanı olan Mustafa Ağa demekle maruf kimesne kendü halinde olmayub (...) tabi ehl-i örfе gamz ve iştika ve teaddi (...) hilâf-ı şer'-i şerif tecrim ve tahsil ve ziyade gadr ve zulm eyledikten.*

31 *Ve bu babda davasına müdafaa şeyhülislamdan fetva-yı şerife verildiğın bildirüb fetva-yı şerife mucibince şer'le görülüb.*

32 BOA, *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, 9, p. 140, *hüküm* no. 2, dated evail-i Za [Zilkade] [1]180 (31 March-9 April 1767): *Dergâh-ı muallâm yeniçerilerin ortalarından altı bölük neferatından Halil nam kimesne gelüb.*

33 *Anabolu kal'asında sakın bölük-i mezbur açılığında merfu karındaşı Hüseyin Usta demekle maruf.*

ment) stationed in Anabolu (amongst them two *odabaşıs*, middle-ranking officers) murdered a certain Molla Ali, using pistols, sabres, and knives.³⁴ The murderers apparently disappeared; at least it was not possible to enforce justice and call the villains to account.³⁵ Halil's brother Hüseyin Usta was then accused of having committed the crime. Halil therefore asked the *divan* to send agents to Anabolu to investigate the case, to find and punish those who had killed Molla Ali, since he claimed that his brother was innocent.³⁶

The most interesting person here is the victim. It seems very likely that the murdered Molla Ali is the same person who had accused the *sercebeciyan* of the Burzi of torturing him. The Anabolu military seem to have taken their revenge for involving the central administration in the case and, by complaining to the *divan-ı hümayun*, causing an investigation. The murderers did not even bother about a discreet action. With five assassins and different kinds of weapons involved we can assume that there was a fight, all this happening publicly. Might this be some sort of warning for those who did not intend to bow under the canon of the ruling military?

As for Hüseyin Usta: we do not know why and under what circumstances he was removed from military service. But it seems likely that his former comrades put the blame on him maybe to take some sort of revenge or just because not being a member of the military any more, he lacked the protection of his former position. Also the outcome of the investigation remains unknown to us, assuming that there was time for an investigation. There may have been some legitimate doubts, since the story apparently had a sequel.

In the same *defter* (*Mora Ahkâm* no. 9), dated just a few days later, we find a third case that seems to tell us about the fate of Hüseyin Usta.³⁷ Officers and rank and file of the janissaries stationed in Anabolu sent a written petition to the *divan-ı hümayun*: a certain Haşim Ahmed, a man who caused disturbances and provocation, they said, teamed up with three soldiers. Together they waylaid in front of the fortress and attacked a certain Hüseyin Usta, a member (probably) of the 6th *bölük* and killed him.³⁸ After the crime, Haşim Ahmed took refuge in the house of one of his

34 *Yine Anabolu sakinlerinden yigirmi yedi cemaatin Ali odabaşı ve karındaşı İsmail ve Çukadar Mustafa ve Kara Mehmedoğlu Ahmed ve Mehmed odabaşı demekle maruf kimesneler yüz yetmiş dokuz senesinde Ali Molla Efendi'yi hilâf-ı şer'-i şerif ve bi-gayr-ı hakk piştov kurşunu ve yatağan ve bıçağıyla başından darb ve katl etmeleriyile.*

35 *Bi'l-müdafaa icra-yı hakk murad olundukda mezburlar mütegalibeden olmağla itaat-ı şer'-i şerife etmediklerinden mukavemet ve icra-yı hakk mümkün olmayub.*

36 *Ocakdan mübaşir marifetiyle mahallinde şer'le ihkak-ı hakk olunmak babında hüküm-i hümayun rica ve mezbur Halil'in karındaşı nefsi'l-emre miyane-i mezburun eşkinciliği merfu ve kendü halinde iken mezburlar Ali Molla Efendi'yi alenen vech-i meşruh üzere bi-gayr-ı hakk katl ve gadr eyledikleri muhakkak olduğın ocak tarafına dahi (...) bigaraz ehl-i vukuf inha ve ihbar etmeleriyle.*

37 BOA, *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, 9, p. 146, *hüküm* no. 1, dated evasıt-ı Za [Zilkade] 1180 (10-19 April 1767).

38 *O[n]Jaltı bölüğü aşçılarından Hüseyin Usta nam kimesne kal'a kapusundan küşad ve kaşında göz ederken üç nefer âdemlerinin usta-ı merkuma taslit ve alet-i darb ile üzerine hücum ve bi-gayr-ı hakk katl ettirmekle.*

accomplices and remained there, threatening the safety and tranquillity of the area. The janissaries asked the *divan* to seize the murderer and punish him.³⁹

Again the most interesting figure is the victim. We can assume that our Hüseyin Usta is the same individual as the one accused of having murdered Molla Ali. We may assume that he was again a victim of revenge, taken by his former comrades for having involved the central administration and having caused an investigation.⁴⁰

Whether or not Haşim Ahmed was the real murderer or whether we are dealing with one more case of revenge must remain anyone's guess. An addition to the original *hüküm* tells us that Haşim Ahmed was popular with the local population.⁴¹ It therefore seems quite possible that this accusation is devoid of any foundation and that the blame was again put on somebody who, for whatever reasons, refused to play his part in the 'Mafia' game.

Crossover

Having dealt with debts, suppression, torture and a series of killings, let us now turn to the question of authorities. As we said in the beginning, thinking of the Mafia is usually associated with the inability of the state authorities to control it, but also their possible involvement in criminal sub-structures.

As a further piece of evidence for a widespread network of Mafia sub-structure consisting both of military and administrative staff in the Morea which had got out of control, I would like to refer to an additional testimony, this time not taken from the *ahkâm defterleri*, but a narrative source.

It is the well-known report *Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi*, written by Süleyman Penah Efendi.⁴² Süleyman Penah Efendi was born in 1740 in the Morea, probably at Gastouni. He studied in Istanbul

39 *Katiller taraf-ı şer'den ve zabıt tarafından taleb olundukda mezbur Ahmed katilleri hanesinde ihfa ve adem-i itaatından naşi ihkak-ı hakk olunmayub emniyet ve rahatları munkatı oldığın inha ve olbabda inayet rica etmeleriley senki vezir-i müşarunileyhsin mezkur Ahmed derun-ı mahzarda tahrir olunan evsaf-ı reddiye ile mutasarrıf ise bade'î-tahkik iktiza eden.*

40 In fact there is some uncertainty since the handwriting of the number of the company is not clear. Actually the word is either "onaltı" (16) with a *nun* missing, or "altı" (6) with an unnecessary *vav*. Since the numbers are either the same or close enough to make a mistake likely, I personally tend to believe that Hüseyin Usta was member of the 6th *bölük*.

41 BOA, Mora Ahkâm Defteri, 9, p. 146, *hüküm* no. 1 (*kenar*), dated 22 M[uharrem] [11]81 (20 June 1767).

42 A. Berker (ed.), 'Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi veya Penah Ef. mecmuası', *Tarih Vesikaları*, 2/7 (1942), 63-80; 8 (1942), 153-60; 9 (1942), 228-40; 10 (1942), 309-20; 11 (1943), 385-400; 12 (1943), 473-80. Greek translation: N. Sarriş, *Proepanastatike Hellada kai Osmaniko kratos: apo to cheirotographo tou Souleiman Penach Efente tou Moraitte (1785)* [Pre-Revolutionary Greece and the Ottoman State: From the Manuscript of Süleyman Penah Efendi of the Morea (1785)], Athens 1993.

and served in different offices in various places, some of them in the Morea.⁴³ He seems to have been in the Morea around 1770 and to have been an eyewitness of the events of the Orlov Rebellion and part of its aftermath. In 1785, shortly before he died, he submitted a report about these events. Not only was he an eyewitness, he also had knowledge of on-going preparations for the Orlov Rebellion, namely about the activities of Georgios Papazoli (or Papazoğlu), who played a major role in the planning and the rebellion itself.⁴⁴ Papazoğlu managed to bribe the *mütesellim* of the Morea, Ali Efendi. Süleyman Penah wanted to warn the senior official responsible, but he thought it a delicate situation and decided to take the official route. So, he wrote a report and sent it to Sarım İbrahim Efendi, a high-ranking bureaucrat in the *defterdarlık* (office of the Treasury). The report was then handed on from one office to the other: Sarım İbrahim Efendi passed the report over to Mirzazade Mehmed Said Efendi, the *şeyhülislam* who was at Tripoliçe (Gk. Tripoli) at that time. Mirzazade Mehmed Said Efendi handed the report over to the *naib* to check on the accuracy and the reliability of the information given. The *naib* called in Süleyman Penah Efendi, the author of the report, and told him that the information was correct and that there was no doubt about the truth of what was written in it. “If we send this to the capital, then the *mütesellim* mentioned and the commander mentioned together with the *kocabaşıs* are themselves going to write to the capital and the two of us might become the victims of an accident”, said the *naib*. Süleyman Penah Efendi added: “So he cancelled the report and what he passed on to the capital is not known to me”.⁴⁵

What kind of accident this could have been remains obscure, although what was meant seemed to be clear to the *naib* and also to Süleyman Penah Efendi. Bearing in mind the cases of kidnapping and murder we came across in the *ahkâm defterleri*, it seems more than likely that the scared *naib* might have been referring to something of this sort. In any case, this testimony indicates a clear awareness at least on the part of the local administrators that there was a danger in crossing the path of the *mütesellim* and the *kocabaşıs*.

Was There or Was There Not...

... Mafia in the Morea in the eighteenth century? Was it Mafia disguised as military? Military act-

43 Berker, ‘Mora ihtilâli’, 63-64; see also Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani yahut tezker-i mesahir-i Osmaniye*, vol. 3, Istanbul 1310 (1892), 87.

44 Papazoğlu was an officer in the Russian fleet and a personal friend of the Orlov brothers. See Gritsopoulos, *Orlophika*, 42 ff. and Sakellariou, *Peloponnesos*, 150 ff.

45 Berker, ‘Mora ihtilâli’, 67: *Lâkin tasdiki için israr olunsa mütesellim-i mumaileyh ve mîr-i mumaileyh kocabaşılar ile hilâfım Deraliyeve [Istanbul] tahrir iderler ve ikimiz dahi kazakeş oluruz deyüb tahriratı ibtal ve Asitâne tarafına ne yazdı ma’lûm olmazdı*. The English translation was made by the author of this paper.

ing like Mafia? Partial sub-structures with a Mafia-like character? Solitary crimes committed by single individuals?

When we recall the associations connected with the term 'Mafia' outlined at the beginning of this paper, we see obvious indications for the existence of such a structure established and operated by the military in the Morea.

Throughout history, the military has probably been the best organised group in every society. Inherent in the system are structures of strong group-feeling, with deep loyalty towards the unit, the army as a whole and the leaders of the units or the army. These structures are the main condition for turning the military into a Mafia once it leaves the lawful path.

In none of the cases we have examined in the *ahkâm defterleri* was the crime an act of a single individual. They were more often than not committed by an association of some higher-ranking officer with simple soldiers. Often former or current comrades teamed up, the network including former or current administrative staff.

Such was the officer Deli Mahmud, who joined forces with the former *mütesellim* Ali and, with his protection and the additional support of the former *naib* Hafız Mustafa, milked *mütevellî* Mehmed Emin. Deli Mahmud took care of the actual kidnapping with the assistance of two soldiers whose names are known but are not mentioned in the *hüküm*, probably because they were simple rank and file and were not considered to be important enough.

Although Molla Ali accused only the *sercebeciyan* Mustafa Ağa of torture, it seems unlikely that this man was indeed a single perpetrator since the act of kidnapping is best performed by a team. But admittedly we have no further indication of Mustafa Ağa indeed having accomplices.

On the other hand, in the case of Molla Ali's death we have the clear testimony that it was a group of at least five members of the military who committed the crime, while in Hüseyin Usta's case he was murdered by a group of at least four.

Obviously the military network in the Morea also follows some rules. One of them is apparently to avoid the public eye with the activities of the network and to prevent the involvement of central-state authorities. In the cases of Molla Ali, Hüseyin Usta and Haşim Ahmed, we have a series of cases of revenge taken on those who opposed the rules. Molla Ali complained to the *şeyhülislam* and later to the *divan-ı hümayun*. This was apparently a mistake for which he paid with his life. Hüseyin Usta, in being accused of Ali's murder, probably suffered a double revenge. On the one hand, he had been removed from military service and thus had lost the protection of the group; on the other hand, his brother drew the attention of the *divan-ı hümayun* to Hüseyin Usta's case. Eventually, Hüseyin Usta also paid with his life.

Mehmed Emin, the *mütevelli*, had been at odds with members of the administration. Whether this contributed to his fate remains unknown, but there might well have been a connection.

In cases where the crime is a source of profit, we find members of the civil administration involved. Mehmed Emin paid significant amounts of money not only to his kidnapper, who was a client of a former *mütesellim*, but also to various other individuals, amongst them a former and

a serving *naib*. The report of Süleyman Penah Efendi clearly indicates the existence of administrators who were bribed – such as at least one *mütesellim*.

We also have indications that the government was aware of this situation. The *divan-ı hümayun* had, for example, to deal at least three times with the case of Mehmed Emin. It must thus have occurred to the central government in Istanbul that sultanic orders were not being obeyed. Likewise the local administration was clearly aware of that fact. The testimony of Süleyman Penah Efendi speaks for itself: local representatives who preferred *not* to report an impending uprising to the central government, lest they attract the attention of the military, corrupt administrators and *kocabaşıs*.

Thus, the Mafia and the military resembled each other in many ways in the eighteenth-century Morea.

There were, however, also important differences of which one should be aware. The Mafia might not work without the help of corrupt government officials, but it remains a society on its own, acting outside and against ‘normal’ society. The Ottoman military in the provinces (not only the Morea) was, however, a part of a governmental structure. So, in a way, the state itself, represented by its military, acted in a Mafia-like way, whereas at the same time, when represented by the imperial council, its agents and other institutions (like the *şeyhülislam*), it served as a law enforcement body which fought against Mafia-like structures which another part of the same state’s officials had established.

Also the Mafia is usually a localised phenomenon. It is locals who shape the structure of organised crime, maybe even with a long-standing tradition and a system of patrimonial inheritance. The question whether and to what degree members of the Moreot Ottoman military saw themselves as being attached to the area and its population would be beyond the scope of such a paper, but this question brings us to yet another important difference.

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Leaving the discussion about Mafia sub-structures behind, I would like to end with one more remark, although once again it is one that cannot be discussed at length.

All the examples that we examined in this paper are taken from the time period before the Orlov Rebellion. We can assume that things went even more downhill after 1770. Furthermore, almost all the cases involved members of the Ottoman ruling class, be it military officers or civil officials. After having presented telling examples of how the ruling class acted towards its own, we can imagine how the *reaya* – the common Christian (or Muslim) subjects – with no influential friends and possibly no means to employ their right to complain to the Sultan himself may have lived under these conditions. To what degree this Mafia-like substructure of the Ottoman military in the Morea contributed to the discontent common in the peninsula which made a revolution ever more likely cannot be discussed here but must remain an open question awaiting further research.

CONFLITS POLITIQUES ET COMPORTEMENTS DES PRIMATS CHRETIENS EN MOREE, AVANT LA GUERRE DE L'INDEPENDANCE

*Martha Pylia**

Les cadastres, la correspondance ainsi que les *Mémoires* publiés des primats chrétiens, indiquent certaines caractéristiques stables de leur comportement politique. Il est évident que l'environnement politique en Morée pré-révolutionnaire, constitue une des conditions préalables à la guerre de l'Indépendance. J'essaye alors présenter ici certains aspects généraux de cette vie politique accompagnés des exemples indicatifs :

On sait bien que les primats moréotes chrétiens, installés à la périphérie de l'État ottoman, jouissaient, par rapport à leurs collègues des régions centrales, d'une autonomie considérable et géraient une grande partie des produits de cette contrée fertile. Cependant la bureaucratie centrale ottomane, désireuse de s'approprier des revenus toujours croissants, multipliait ses exigences et diminuait le temps de service des dignitaires, qui payaient leur nomination à prix d'or. Les notables locaux, musulmans comme chrétiens, responsables de la perception des revenus publics, se livraient à une concurrence constante pour assurer leur place, et, par ce biais, assurer et accroître leur profit. D'autre part, la Porte, afin de neutraliser les puissants locaux potentiellement dangereux, et avertir leurs successeurs, punissait lourdement les personnes jugées coupables d'abus et d'actes de tyrannie. Plaintes et rapports des parties adverses arrivaient massivement « à la Sublime Porte », et les décisions étaient plus influencées par les rapports de force que par l'application de la justice.

Dans le cercle vicieux des conflits locaux, la Porte, attisant systématiquement le mécontentement des parties adverses,¹ renforçait son propre pouvoir et encaissait des revenus supplémentaires

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1 M. Oiconomou, *Historika tes Hellenikes Palligenesias e ho hieros ton Hellenon agon* [Histoire de la renaissance grecque ou la lutte sacrée des Grecs], Athènes 1873, 28 ; İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli âyanlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılıkoğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa* [Parmi les célèbres ayan de Roumélie, Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılıkoğlu Süleyman et Alemdar Mustafa Paşa], Istanbul 1972, 7.

res. Étant donné que les confiscations et les amendes étaient dirigées vers le Trésor public ou impérial² et que les hauts dignitaires compétents recevaient des cadeaux généreux, le produit local se trouvait redistribué en faveur de la bureaucratie centrale.

La vie des primats, surtout la vie des primats chrétiens moréotes, semblait extrêmement trouble, pendant les 60 ans précédant la révolution grecque. Cependant, les sentences de mort infligées (généralement suivies de la confiscation des biens) n'étaient ni une exclusivité de la vie moréote, ni une forme de tyrannie exclusivement exercée contre la population grecque. Les célèbres notables d'Anatolie ont eux aussi subi la peine capitale,³ car, en fin de compte, la violence constituait une tactique généralisée chez les puissants. Quant aux notables chrétiens, leurs suites armées, la surveillance que les notables exerçaient sur les corps armés, nommés en Morée chrétienne « *cap-poi* » ou « *klephtes* », leurs relations avec les brigands,⁴ le prouvent suffisamment. Ces corps armés constituaient sans doute une des conditions qui ont préparé la guerre de l'Indépendance.

Il paraît que la violence, dont usaient les hommes du pouvoir à tous les niveaux, résultait de leur influence et imposait le droit du plus fort. Les peines infligées étaient, pour la plupart, provoquées par les machinations des parties adverses, car, partout dans les provinces ottomanes, les puissants locaux se trouvaient divisés en partis (*taraf*) opposés. La Porte contrôlait les forces locales, en appliquant le principe « diviser pour régner » et en évitant les abus qui risquaient de gravement déstabiliser la vie sociale et politique.

Le gouvernement de Veli Paşa, fils d'Ali Paşa de Jannina, en Morée (1808-12) a considérablement influencé les conditions de la politique régionale, même bien après son départ, et a tragiquement aggravé les relations des primats moréotes. En tout cas, il a défini le paysage politique de la Morée pré-révolutionnaire et facilité l'expression des oppositions extrêmes. Bien qu'initialement, Sotirakis Lontos et Giannis Déligiannis participaient à l'entourage du gouverneur, c'est à son époque qu'une haine meurtrière vient à opposer les deux *morayan*. Cependant, Veli ne jouissait pas longtemps de la confiance des Turcs, car, inspiré par les dispositions indépendantistes de son

2 I. Philimon, *Dokimion historikon peri tes Philikes Hetaireias* [Essai historique sur la Société des Amis], Nauplie 1834, 26.

3 Par exemple, Y. Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa ve âyânlık müessesesi* [Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa et l'institution des *ayan*], Tokyo 1976, 16, 32 ; Y. Cezar, « Bir âyanın muhalefatı, Havza ve Köprü kazaları âyanı Kör İsmailoğlu Hüseyin (musadere olayı ve terekenin incelenmesi) » [L'héritage de Kör İsmailoğlu Hüseyin, *ayan* des circonscriptions Havza et Köprü (la confiscation de ses biens ainsi que la présentation de son testament)], *Belleten*, 41/161 (1977), 54 ; Y. Özkaya, « XVIII. yüzyılın ilk yarısında yerli ailelerinin âyânlıkları ele geçirisleri ve büyük hânedânlıkların kuruluşu » [La prédominance politique des grandes familles des notables régionaux musulmans apparue pendant la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle], *Belleten*, 42/168 (1978), 667-714.

4 M. Pylia, « Leitourgies kai autonomia ton koinoteton tes Peloponnesou kata ten deutere tourkokratia (1715-1821) » [Fonctions et autonomie des notables moréotes chrétiens pendant la deuxième occupation ottomane (1715-1821)], *Mnemon*, 23 (2001), 91-92.

père, il favorisait les primats chrétiens, notamment une vieille connaissance de son père, Sotirakis Lontos.⁵

En effet, alors que le pacha de Morée était responsable de la distribution des *iltizam*,⁶ Veli a trop menacé les intérêts des *ayan*. Il avait, entre autres revenus publics, concédé aux primats chrétiens les *mukataa* des installations piscicoles et des salines.⁷ Sous son gouvernement, les notables musulmans sont tombés en disgrâce, notamment ceux de Vardounia et de Lala.⁸ Quant aux primats chrétiens, ils étaient eux aussi écœurés, en raison des impôts énormes exigés par Veli pour couvrir les dépenses de son expédition contre les Russes, au printemps 1811,⁹ lesquels s'ajoutaient aux présents luxueux destinés à la Porte,¹⁰ aux *kocabaş*,¹¹ et à ses éminents invités.¹² Veli finissait par tourner tous les notables moréotes contre lui, et, indirectement, contre son fidèle ami, Sotirakis Lontos.

Sous son gouvernement, des tendances séparatistes visant à gagner la protection de Napoléon, se sont secrètement manifestées en Morée. Deux lettres, adressées en novembre 1808 au « commissaire impérial Bessières » à Corfou, par « Glorieux Yakoub, Aga Salahor de la Sublime porte

5 K. Sathas, « He Alepasias tou tourkalvanou Hatze Sechrete » [Ali Paşa selon l'Albanais Hatzi Sechreti], in *Historikai Diatrivai* [Essais historiques], Athènes 1870, 287 et D. Stamatopoulos, « Kommatikes phatries sten proepanastatike Peloponneso (1807-1816) » [Parties et machinations politiques en Morée avant la révolution (1807-1816)], *Histor*, 10 (1997), 193.

6 « Ηξεύρω αυθέντα μου ότι οι μουκατάδες και μποξιάδες έρχονται του Μόρα βαλισί και όθεν θέλει τους δίδει » [Je sais, mon maître, que les *mukataa* et les *bohça* sont de la compétence de *Mora valisi*]. GAK, Collection de G. Vlachogiannis, sous série de Rigas Palamidis, dossier Γ1β/12, doc. 161, lettre du 2 avril 1820.

7 A. Phrantzis, *Epitome tes Historias tes anagenetheises Hellados archomene apo tou etous 1715 kai legousa eis to etos 1837* [Précis d'histoire de la Grèce renaissante, de 1715 à 1837], vol. 1, Athènes 1841, 46.

8 K. Déligiannis, *Apomnemeumata* [Mémoires], vol. 16/1, Athènes 1957, 51-56 ; G. Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes tou Moria* [Les brigands de la Morée], Athènes 1935, 184 ; P. Papatsonis, *Apomnemeumata apo ton chronon tes tourkokratias mechri tes vasileias tou Georgiou A'* [Mémoires de la domination ottomane jusqu'au règne de Georges I], Athènes 1960, 39.

9 « ...καθότι δεν ηδύνατο πλέον αυτός ο τόπος να υποφέρει τα βάρη και τας αρπαγάς αυτού του τυράννου και να πληρώση περιπλέον επτά εκατομμύρια γρόσια, τα οποία απαιτούσε δια τα έξοδα του πολέμου από την Πελοπόννησον » [... puisque la Morée ne pouvait plus supporter les charges et les usurpations de ce tyran, ni payer les sept millions de piastres qu'il exigeait pour les dépenses de la guerre]. Déligiannis, *Apomnemeumata*, 57.

10 « Για να υποστηρίξει όμως τη θέση του κοντά στην Πόρτα, έστελνε μεγάλα χρηματικά ποσά στην Πόλη, 6 χιλ. πουργιά το χρόνο, δηλαδή ποσό μεγαλύτερο απ'ότι πλήρωνε φόρους ο Μοριάς, κι αυτός φρόντιζε να τα επιστρέψει με τη βία από το λαό » [Pour se maintenir à son poste dans l'administration régionale, il envoyait annuellement à la Porte six milles bourses, somme bien supérieure à l'imposition totale de la Morée, qu'il percevait de force du peuple]. D'après le voyageur anglais H. Holland, *Travels in the Ionian Isles, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia*, Londres 1815, 260, cité par Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes*, 185.

11 Déligiannis, *Apomnemeumata*, 59.

12 Stamatopoulos, « Kommatikes phatries », 229.

en Morée », très exactement *ağa* de Gastouni et frère d'Ali Pharmakis,¹³ traitent de cette question et demandent l'intervention des Français contre « l'horrible tyrannie de Veli Pacha ». ¹⁴ Les lettres sont portées par l'expéditeur, le *bey* de Magne et par le fameux brigand, Théodoros Colocotronis.¹⁵ Il est étonnant que la deuxième lettre ait été signée par le primat de Gastouni, partisan du *taraf* de Sotirakis Lontos, Giorgos Sissinis.¹⁶

La participation de ce dernier aux mouvements d'opposition n'est qu'un des indices de l'instabilité politique. D'ailleurs, à cause de la peur et de la précarité des circonstances, l'hypocrisie et le double jeu étaient des pratiques habituelles.¹⁷ Sotirakis Lontos lui-même n'a pas osé se démarquer de la majorité des primats chrétiens qui demandaient le déplacement de son ami et protecteur, Veli.¹⁸

Quant aux chefs des grandes familles musulmanes et aux grands dignitaires (Kâmil Bey, Arnautoglu, Sehneçib, Mukabeleci¹⁹), bien qu'ils aient été parmi les plus affectés par la politique du gouverneur, ils ne participaient pas au mouvement séparatiste, conscients de leurs propres

13 Dans sa lettre, il apparaît comme le propriétaire d'une fortune immense ; il présente aussi sa famille illustre et ses alliés : « ...la plus riche et la plus fertile partie de la Morée est dans nos mains... Notre famille se compose de moi, de Ali Farmaki mon frère, de Hassem Ali Aga, mon beau-frère ; de Seyid Aga, mon gendre, et de Halemi Aga et Aziz Aga, mes parents. Nous avons sous notre dépendance : Gastouni, Pyrgos, Phanari, Karithéna, Lala et Kalavrita, avec toutes les terres et villages qui appartiennent à ces villes. Les amis avec lesquels nous sommes alliés et qui vous prêteront serment d'amitié dès que vous le voudrez sont : à Vardounia, Moussa Aga ; à Monemvasia, le fils de Hassan bey que le *vézir* a fait mourir ; à Patras, Sayid Aga et Cil Aga, et, à Coron, c'est mon gendre qui en est le bey... ». J. Savant, « Napoléon et la libération de la Grèce », *L'Hellénisme contemporain*, Athènes, juillet-octobre 1950, fasc. 4-5, 336.

14 « Accablés sous le poids de tant de maux et ne pouvant espérer aucun soulagement de la part de la Sublime Porte, les habitants de toute la Morée supplient le Grand Empereur des Français de prendre pitié d'eux ; de les délivrer de l'oppression de leur tyran et d'être ensuite placés sous l'aile de sa protection ». *Ibid.*

15 « Γενομένης γραπτής τοιαύτης συνθηκολογίας, απέστειλαν μίαν επιτροπήν εις τον αρμοστήν τον Γάλλον εις τους Κορφούς όπου ήτον, τον Μαυρομηχάλην πατέρα του Πετρόμπεη..., τον Γιακούπαγα από του Αάλα αδελφόν του Αλή Φαρμάκη και τον Θεόδωρον Κολοκοτρώνη, όπως αιτήσουν δι' αυτού την προστασίαν του Ναπολέοντος » [A la suite des accords écrits, une commission moréote, composée du père de Mavromichalis Petrobey, ... du frère d'Ali Pharmakis, Yakub Ağa, et de Théodoros Colocotronis, a été envoyée au commissaire impérial français à Corfou, pour demander la protection de Napoléon]. Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 40.

16 Savant, « Napoléon », 334.

17 Süleyman Penah Efendi, dans son rapport sur le siège de Calavryta par les chrétiens en 1770, écrit que le primat de la circonscription Zaïmis avait participé aux émeutes, par peur de ses compatriotes révoltés, alors qu'il y était opposé. A. Berker (éd.), « Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi veya Penah Efendi mecmuası » [Histoire du soulèvement de la Morée ou du fascicule de Süleyman Penah Efendi], *Tarih Vesikaları*, 2 (1942-43), 74, et traduction grecque, N. Sariris, *Proepanastatike Hellada kai Osmaniko kratos, apo to cheirographo tou Souleïman Penach Efende tou Moraïte* [La Grèce pré-révolutionnaire et l'État ottoman d'après le manuscrit de Süleyman Penah Efendi, originaire de Morée], Athènes 1993, 191.

18 Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 40.

19 Secrétaire contrôleur, chargé des cadastres.

intérêts et, surtout, de leur identité. Certes, ils se coalisaient contre Veli, avec l'entourage de Déligiannis, qui commençait à s'éloigner discrètement du pacha.

Pendant l'absence de Veli parti au front, les primats du Péloponnèse saisissent l'occasion de se plaindre de leur gouverneur au Sultan. Pour cette affaire, ils suivent les procédures de protestation habituelles : les rapports (*arz ve mahzar*) adressés au gouvernement par les *vekil*, et les manifestations à la capitale des moréotes mécontents.²⁰ C'est à ce moment-là que Sotirakis Lontos dénonce à Veli, son adversaire Déligiannis, qu'il accuse d'être l'instigateur des plaintes. Aussi, le gouverneur fait-il emprisonner trois des primats appartenant au parti de Déligiannis, à savoir son fils Théodorakis, le Drogman Théodossis Michalopoulos et Sotiros Cougias, avec l'intention de les mettre à mort.²¹ Ces notabilités, parmi les plus célèbres de Tripolitza (Gk. Tripoli), parents par alliance²² et liés par des intérêts communs, étaient depuis longtemps protégés par la sœur du Sultan Selim, Beyhan.²³ Le *vekil* Anagnostis Déligiannis, installé à cette époque à Constantinople, Papalexis, primat de Phanari, et Thanos Canacaris, primat de Patras, s'adressant à la Sultane Beyhan, parviennent non seulement à obtenir un blâme prononcé contre Veli et la libération des prisonniers, mais aussi la mutation de ce dernier à Trikkala, en Thessalie.²⁴ Dès lors, deux partis violemment opposés (*taraf*), rassemblent tous les primats chrétiens moréotes autour de deux chefs, Sotirakis Lontos et Giannis Déligiannis. Dorénavant, la lutte, attisée par la participation des *ayan*, s'aggrave à tel point que, dès le départ de Veli en août 1812, son successeur İnceli Ahmet ordonne la mise à la mort de Sotirakis Lontos (octobre 1812). Le vieux Déligiannis est décapité en février 1816, peu après l'arrivée (décembre 1815) du gouverneur suivant, Şakir Ahmed, favori du parti adverse.²⁵

20 « ...η Πελοπόννησος υπέφερε τοιαύτας τυραννικές καταπιέσεις υπό της διοικήσεως του τότε διοικητού της Βελή Πασά, ώστε αφού πολλάκις ανέφεραν ταύτας οι Πελοποννήσιοι εις την Πόρταν... απηλιτισμένοι ανεχώρουν πλέον εκατοπτές ομού εκ της Πελοποννήσου, και διευθύνοντο εις Κωνσταντινούπολιν διά να ζητήσουν έλεος από τον Σουλτάνο. Ακαταπαύστως δε παρουσιαζόμενοι οχλαγωγικώς εις τας οδούς αφ'όπου διέβαιναν ούτος, τω εξέθεταν δι' αναφορών και άλλων μέσων τ' ανυπόφορα δεινά... Ενοχλούμενος δε συνεχώς ο Σουλτάν Μαχμούτης, εξέτασεν ο ίδιος το πράγμα και απέδωκε μέχρι τέλους δικαιοσύνην εις τους αδικουμένους » [Le Péloponnèse a tellement souffert de la tyrannie de son gouverneur Veli Paşa que, désespérés, ses habitants se sont dirigés par centaines vers Constantinople, pour y implorer la pitié du Sultan. Ils n'ont cessé de manifester dans les rues où le Sultan passait, et, au moyen de rapports et autres, ils ont expliqué les maux insupportables dont ils étaient victimes... Le Sultan Mahmud II, ennuyé, a examiné la situation en personne, et, enfin, a rendu justice]. Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes*, 185, 186, d'après le journal *Athéna* du 16 mai 1856.

21 Déligiannis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 58.

22 E. Liata, *Archeia oikogeneias Déligiannes* [Archives de la famille Déligiannis], Athènes 1992, arbre généalogique.

23 Déligiannis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 26, 58.

24 *Ibid.* 59 ; Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 46.

25 Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes*, 192 ; Déligiannis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 64-66 ; Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 44, 50 ; Oiconomou, *Historica*, 26, 27.

Les sources signalent l'existence de deux partis chrétiens dans le Péloponnèse pré-révolutionnaire²⁶ et énumèrent leurs membres.²⁷ Une série d'articles²⁸ a déjà mis en valeur ces informations. Michail Oiconomou, témoin oculaire et secrétaire de Colocotronis, distingue le parti d'Achaïe, mené par les primats de Calavryta, de Vostitza, de Patras, d'Élide et de Corinthie, et celui de Messénie et de Carytène, dirigé par Déligiannis.²⁹ En réalité, il ne se réfère qu'aux intérêts particuliers des *kocabaş*, notamment à la coalition que l'administration des revenus de la Sultane Beyhan a créée dans les « provinces méridionales ».³⁰ Les membres les plus importants (Papalexis et Papatsonis), ainsi que le chef du parti de Carytène, Giannis Déligiannis, étaient en même temps procureurs de la Sultane et primats dans trois de ces provinces.³¹ En outre, ils comptaient parmi les plus célèbres *kocabaş* moréotes.

Certes, les intérêts communs ont resserré les relations entre primats musulmans et chrétiens. En réalité, c'étaient les intérêts communs qui ont contribué à former les alliances, ces dernières s'établissant naturellement sur des systèmes de protection communs. En effet, de la cour impériale jusqu'aux *kocabaş* et aux trésoriers des communes villageoises, les intérêts des hauts dignitaires, servis par les primats régionaux, ont fondé un système solide de clientélisme. Toutefois, les mutations entraînées par la mouvance des circonstances et les intrigues habituelles mettaient l'édifice en péril. Exactement comme dans le cas déjà mentionné de Veli Paşa, dont le déplacement a entraîné la décapitation de son favori, Sotirakis Lontos, l'emprisonnement de la suite du *morayan*

26 *Ibid.*, 26-28 ; Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 42, 50 ; Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes*, 192-94.

27 « Η μία φατρία ήτο η του Σωτηράκη Λόντου (προεστότος Βοστίτισης, όστις είχαν οπαδούς τον Ασημάκη Ζαΐμη εν Καλαβρύτων, Γεώργιον Σισίνη εν Γαστούνης, Γρηγόριον Παπαφωτόπουλον εξ Αρκαδίας, Αναγνώστην Κοπανίτσαν εν Μυστρά, και Γιαννούλην Καραμάνον εξ Αγίου Πέτρου). Η δε άλλη ήτο η του Γιάννη Δηληγιάννη προεστότος Λαγκαδιών (όστις είχαν οπαδούς τον Σωτήριον Χαρολάμπην εν Καλαβρύτων, Θάνον Κανακάρη εν Πατρών, Παπαλέξη εν Ανδριτσαίνης, Σωτήριον Κουγιάν εν Τριπόλεως και Πανούτσον Νοταράν εν Κορίνθου) » [L'un des partis politiques chrétiens était celui de Sotirakis Lontos (primat de Vostitza, soutenu par Assimakis Zaïmis de Calavryta, Georgios Sissinis de Gastouni, Grigorios Papaphotopoulos d'Arcadia (Triphyllie), Anagnostis Copanitzas de Mistra et Giannoulis Caramanos d'Aghios Pétrós). L'autre était celui de Giannis Déligiannis, primat de Lagadia (soutenu par Sotirios Charalampis de Calavryta, Thanos Canacaris de Patras, Papalexis d'Andritzaina, Sotiros Cougias de Tripolitza et Panoutzos Notaras de Corinthe)]. Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes*, 192.

28 D. Konomos, « Anekdotia keimena (1816-1820) apo to archeio tou Sotiri Charalambi » [Des documents inédits des archives de Sotiris Charalambis (1816-1820)], *Peloponnesiaka*, 6 (1968), 191-205 ; T. Gritsopoulos, « Symmeikta : Diamache ton kommaton tes Peloponnesou dia ton dragoumanon Theodosion to 1820 » [Conflit politique au Péloponnèse pour le drogman Théodossios (1820)], *Peloponnesiaka*, 10 (1974), 166-71 ; J. Alexander, « Some Aspects of the Strife Among the Moreot Christian Notables, 1789-1816 », *EHSM*, 5 (1974-75), 473-504 ; A. Photopoulos, « Hoi Dragoumanoi tou Moreos » [Les drogmanes de la Morée], *JOAS*, 1 (1989), 49-82 ; Stamatopoulos, « Kommatikes phatries », 185-233.

29 Oiconomou, *Historica*, 26.

30 *Ibid.*

31 Carytène, Phanari, Arcadia, Néocastro, Emlâk-ı Hümayun, Calamata ; Déligiannis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 58.

et la pendaison de son compagnon musulman.³² Évidemment, le *taraf* dominant réservait à ses membres les postes-clés, autrement dit, les charges communales auprès du gouvernement local (*drogman, morayan*), et, surtout, auprès de l'administration centrale et du Patriarcat (*vekil*).

Les familles des primats chrétiens moréotes renforçaient leurs coalitions par des mariages et des parrainages.³³ Toutefois, selon les règles morales en vigueur, les liens de parenté élargissaient et fortifiaient les systèmes de protection. Les enfants mineurs d'Anagnostis Papatsonis ont récupéré leur fortune confisquée et ont même tiré un grand profit des revenus publics du *kaza*, grâce à l'appui de leur gendre, Canellos Déligiannis.³⁴ La famille du Drogman Théodosios Michalopoulos jouissait également de la protection de Panaghos Déligiannis qui, en 1815, s'est marié avec la fille du drogman, Hélégo.³⁵ L'instabilité de la vie politique exigeait des alliances fortes et des réactions immédiates et coordonnées. Dans cet environnement, les grandes familles ayant une progéniture mâle, comme celle des Déligiannis, soudées par une solidarité renforcée par les liens de parenté, contribuaient à la survivance naturelle et politique des systèmes du pouvoir local.

Il apparaît donc que les partis des notables chrétiens n'avaient pas un caractère strictement géographique, d'autant plus que l'opposition, à l'intérieur de chaque commune, était indispensable pour justifier les accusations portées contre les chefs. En même temps, l'opposition était le seul moyen de promouvoir les primats provinciaux. C'est le cas de Constantis Alexandropoulos qui a conspiré contre Déligiannis, avec leur ancien ennemi et habitant de Lagadia, Ömer Ağa.

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'opposition se manifeste à tous les niveaux de l'organisation communale. La stabilité est en permanence menacée par le profit énorme tiré des charges publiques. En 1819-20, dans la ville de Tripolitza, Rigas Palamidis et son oncle Sotiros Cougias continuent à se heurter aux obstacles dressés par leurs ennemis.³⁶ En dehors de leur adversaire traditionnel, Varvoglis,³⁷ la corporation des forgerons, alliée au Métropolitain, leur est également hostile.³⁸ De surcroît, il ne faut

32 *Ibid.*, 65.

33 « Προς δε αύξησιν και διά πλειονοψηφίας υπερίσχυσιν, προσεπάθουν έκαστοι αείποτε διά συνάψεως συνοικειών, συμπεθερειών, κουμπαριών, ήτοι δι'αναδοχής των βαπτιζομένων παιδιών ή διά της εν γάμοις θέσεως παρ'ανύμφων εις την των νεονύμφων ένωσιν, προς δε τους αρματωλούς δι'αδελφοποιίας » [Les primats augmentaient le nombre de leurs partisans par les mariages et les parrainages ; quant aux *armatoloi*, ils préféraient fraterniser]. Oiconomou, *Historica*, 26 ; A. Photopoulos, *Hoi kotzampasedes tes Peloponnesou kata ten Deutere Tourkokratia* [Les *kocabaş* de la Morée pendant la deuxième occupation ottomane], Athènes 1995, 93-99.

34 Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 47.

35 E. Liata, *Archeia*, et Hetaireia ton Philon tou Laou [Association des Amis du Peuple], *Archeia Oikogeneias Déligianni* [Archives de la famille Déligiannis], III (Logariasmoi) [Comptes], dossier I, sous-dossier 3.

36 D'après la correspondance entre Sotiros Cougias et son neveu Rigas Palamidis, installé à Constantinople (mars 1819-juillet 1820). GAK, *op. cit.*

37 Alexander, « Some Aspects of the Strife », 484.

38 GAK, Collection de G. Vlachogiannis, sous série de Rigas Palamidis, dossier Γ1β/12, doc. 175, daté du 19 mars 1819 ; doc. 178, du 1er mai 1819 ; doc. 180, du 31 mai 1819 ; doc. 185, du 27 juin 1819 ; doc. 179, du 20 juillet 1819 ; doc. 182, du 27 décembre 1819.

pas oublier l'influence de l'Église, qui, parallèlement à l'organisation communale des chrétiens, joue, avec les corporations, un rôle décisif dans la vie régionale. La procédure suivie par les partis adverses est habituelle. Il s'agit toujours de rapports et de lettres (*arz ve mahzar*), signés par les « meilleurs chefs de famille », d'après les documents, et expédiés à Constantinople, accompagnés de grosses sommes d'argent.³⁹ En Morée, Sotiros Cougias est accusé d'être hostile à Kâmil Bey⁴⁰ en même temps que son collègue du *taraf* opposé, Andréas Lontos, à qui est adressé le même reproche.⁴¹ Cougias, terrorisé et économiquement ruiné par les machinations continuelles,⁴² demande la protection d'İzzet Bey, cousin de Kâmil Bey et fils d'un autre célèbre Turc moréote, Abu Bekir.⁴³ Finalement, les grands *ağa* moréotes pardonnent à Cougias qui, dès lors, jouit de leur

39 « ...προς τούτοις έγινε και μία αναφορά από τριανταπέντε οικοκυραίους τους πλέον χρήσιμους της πατρίδας μας » (*ibid.*, doc. 180) [les meilleurs chefs de famille, au nombre de 35 environ, les plus utiles à notre patrie, ont déposé un rapport] ; « ...έρχονται και αναφορές διά τους άνω εις την εκκλησίαν και κραταιών Δοβλέτι από τους εδó σημαντικούς », (*ibid.*, doc. 182) [les plus importants chefs de famille ont expédié des rapports au Patriarcat et à la Porte] ; Et encore : « Και ενεργείας γενομένης, χρηματικώς πάντοτε, εδέησεν ώστε να στείλουν τοβλέτ μουμπασιζήν από εκεί δια να φέρη τον Ακριδογλου, διά να απολογηθή... τότε καταδικασθείς... να πληρώσῃ... όσα κατά τον κατάλογον οπου υπέδειξεν επί ντιβανίου ο παππούλης αναβαίνοντα εις εκατόν χιλιάδων γροσιών περίπου και μη έχων... πωλήσας τα τζιφλίκια του όσα είχεν εις το Ζητούνι και συνάξας το ποσόν αυτό, το απέδωκεν εις τον παππούλην μου και τα όποία ως ερρέθη εδαπανήθησαν άπαντα, ίνα επέλθη το πέρας αίσιον... » [Après des procédures coûteuses, un envoyé a enfin été expédié de la Porte pour examiner l'affaire. Akridoglu a été jugé coupable et condamné à indemniser mon grand-père de la somme de 100.000 piastres, il a été obligé de vendre ses *çiflik* à Zitouni (actuellement Lamia). Après avoir rassemblé cette somme, il l'a donnée à mon grand-père, qui avait tout dépensé pour la réussite de notre affaire]. Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 34.

40 « Το γράμμα διά τον ένδοξον Ιτζέτ Μπέη εφένδη δεν ηξεύρω αν το έδωσες και αν έγραψε του εξαδέλφου του περί ημών. Ότι εγώ πάντα ευρισκομαι εις τον φόβον του με το να τον επότισαν οι ενάντιοι. Παρακάλεσε τον να γράψη περί εμού του πολυχρονίου Κιαμιλ Μπέη εφένδη, ωσαύτως του πολυχρονίου Αλή Μπέη εφένδη να είμαι εις το ναζάρι τους, ότι από τον φόβον μου ωσαν Εβραίος κάθομαι κλεισμένος εις το σπίτι μου » [Je ne sais pas si tu as donné la lettre à son excellence İzzet Bey et s'il a écrit en ma faveur à son cousin (Kâmil). Moi, je suis terrorisé à cause des calomnies de mes adversaires. Prie-le d'écrire à leurs excellences Kâmil et Ali Bey Efendi pour ma protection, car la peur me tient enfermé chez moi comme les Juifs]. GAK, Collection de G. Vlachogiannis, sous série de Rigas Palamidis, dossier Γ1β/12, doc. 179.

41 A. Lontos, *Historikon archeion tou strategou Andréou Lontou (1789-1847)* [Archives historiques du Général Andréas Lontos], vol. 1, Athènes 1914, 41, 42.

42 « Διά τα έξοδα του φερμανιού τον λογαριασμόν ως άνωθεν ει μεν στοχάζεσαι ότι μπορούν να γενούν έως διακόσια ή τριακόσια γρόσια το πολύ, τότε ακολουθάς την ζήτησιν διά σενετιών και το ενεργείς, ει δε διά περισσότερα ας λείψῃ. Κρέμομαι εις την απόφασιν του Αγίου Θεού και ας γένη το θέλημά του, επειδή το ζευγολατείον το επούλησα του Τζαμπή εφένδη, το σπίτι του Μουσταφάμπεη και σήμεραν πουλά και τα αμπέλια επειδή εστενοχωρήθηκα πολλά και διά τα καθημερινά έξοδα » [Je ne peux pas donner plus de 300 piastres pour le *firman*. Je n'ai plus d'espoir que dans le bon Dieu, que sa volonté soit faite, car j'ai vendu le *çiflik* à Cabi Efendi, la maison à Mustafa Bey et, aujourd'hui, je vends les vignes, puisque j'ai même des difficultés à faire face aux dépenses quotidiennes]. GAK, Collection de G. Vlachogiannis, sous série de Rigas Palamidis, dossier Γ1β/12, doc. 178.

43 Déligiannis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 68 ; Alexander, « Some Aspects of the Strife », 478.

appui,⁴⁴ si bien que, lorsque la révolution éclatera, il ne sera pas emprisonné, comme les autres notables chrétiens emprisonnés à Tripolitza.⁴⁵

Il est vrai que les célèbres *ayan* de la Morée, Arnavutoğlu, Sehneçib, et surtout la famille de Kâmil Bey, exerçaient une grande influence sur la vie politique de la région. Dans les *Mémoires* de Canellos Déligiannis, ils apparaissent comme les instigateurs du déplacement de Veli Paşa et de la condamnation à mort de deux *morayan*, Lontos et Déligiannis.⁴⁶ Leur pouvoir est assis sur leurs immenses fortunes et sur l'appropriation de la majeure partie du produit moréote, mais également sur leurs relations régulières avec les hauts dignitaires de la capitale. Dans la correspondance des primats chrétiens, les références à Kâmil Bey et à ses proches dénotent à la fois le respect et la crainte.⁴⁷

Il s'avère également que les notables moréotes, musulmans et chrétiens, avaient souvent des intérêts communs, stables ou occasionnels. Il est probable que l'entourage de Kâmil Bey a collaboré avec les primats chrétiens dans leur action contre Veli Paşa d'abord, puis, contre Sotirakis Lontos et Giannis Déligiannis. Il apparaît donc qu'il formait des alliances occasionnelles avec les deux partis chrétiens. Par ailleurs, au niveau strictement régional, la perception des impôts et le système des *iltizam* rendaient les collaborations nécessaires. Les bonnes relations avec les *voyvoda* qui appartenaient souvent à des familles d'*ayan*, garantissaient le profit et assuraient les postes des deux côtés.⁴⁸ En tout cas, les *ayan*, dignitaires régionaux très fortunés, avaient besoin de la collaboration des primats chrétiens qui représentaient la grande majorité de la population moréote. Andréas Lontos semble avoir eu des relations très harmonieuses avec certains des *ayan* et avec le *voyvoda* de sa région.⁴⁹ Le bey de Gastouni a apporté son soutien à Lontos par des lettres adressées aux *ağa* et au gouverneur, quand le parti chrétien adverse a demandé l'expédition de deux *vekil* auxiliaires à Constantinople, parmi ses sympathisants.⁵⁰ Rigas Palamidis, en tant que *vekil* de

44 « Προλαβόντος έλαβον... και τον ένδοξον κερύμ ναμέν του πολυχρονίου Μπέη εφένδη μας και ευχαριστώ οπού πάντοτε έχει την έγνοιαν του σκλάβου του... Σας δηλοποιώ λοιπόν ότι κατ'αντάς εξεκίνησαν απ'εδώ πεντέξι Τριμπολιτζιώτες... όμως ο σκοπός τους είναι να κινήσουν αγωγή διά πεντέξι ημάς...όθεν επί τούτου γράφω προς την μεγαλειότητά του να έχει την έγνοιαν, ωσάν οπού εγώ ησυχάζω καθώς και οι άλλοι εις τον φακήρ χανέ μας και κάμνομεν ντοάν διά να στεριώνη ο Θεός τους πολυχρονίους Μπέη εφένδηδες, και είμαι βέβαιος ότι καθώς μετά Θεόν έως τώρα με εφύλαξαν έτζι και εις το εξής » [J'ai déjà reçu la lettre de son excellence Bey Efendi et je suis très reconnaissant qu'il me prenne, moi, son esclave, sous sa protection... Je vous informe que cinq ou six habitants de Tripolitza ont expédié des rapports contre nous ; fais attention, moi, je reste tranquille chez moi et je prie que Dieu bénisse nos Bey Efendi ; je suis sûr qu'ils vont nous protéger comme auparavant]. GAK, Collection de G. Vlachogiannis, sous série de Rigas Palamidis, dossier Γ1β/12, doc. 182.

45 I. Zaphειropoulos, *Hoi archiereis kai hoi prouchontes entos tes en Tripolei phylakes en etei 1821* [Les évêques et les primats dans la prison de Tripolitza en 1821], Athènes 1890, 18, 56, 61.

46 Déligiannis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 59, 63-64, 68.

47 *Ibid.*, note 40 ; Lontos, *Historikon archeion*, 41-43.

48 Par exemple, Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 41, 43, et surtout, 47.

49 D'après leur correspondance, par exemple, Lontos, *Historikon archeion*, 17, 50-51, 53-69, 61-62.

50 *Ibid.*, 53-55.

Monemvassie à Constantinople, était également chargé de servir, auprès de la Porte, les intérêts de l'*ağa favori* de la commune chrétienne.⁵¹ D'ailleurs, selon Oiconomou, il y avait, à tous les niveaux de l'administration communale moréote, des partis mixtes composés de Turcs et de chrétiens.⁵²

Nous avons déjà vu que la lutte entre les puissants locaux, très souvent violente et meurtrière, usait nécessairement de certaines procédures, telles que les rapports signés par les primats et « les meilleurs chefs de famille ». Elle organisait aussi des manifestations où elle incitait la population à exprimer son mécontentement. C'était le principe des « *reaya prospères* » qui définissait la lettre de la légitimité ottomane et qui imposait ces démarches d'apparence démocratique. Les décrets impériaux et autres décisions habituellement fondées sur ce principe punissaient sévèrement les abus et les actes de tyrannie et justifiaient toutes les mutations de dignitaires ottomans. Pourtant, les procédures démocratiques ne sont très souvent que des machinations adroitement menées⁵³ par les plus puissants, et d'après Oiconomou, par ceux « qui pouvaient dépenser davantage ».⁵⁴ Giannis Vlachogiannis a souligné le rôle de « l'opinion publique », ou plutôt de « la rumeur publique », quant à l'application de la justice ottomane, la considérant même comme la cause de « la décapitation de milliers d'hommes, Turcs et chrétiens, pendant les siècles de l'histoire turque ».⁵⁵

51 Pylia, « Leitourgies », 86.

52 « Εοχηματίσθησαν δε επομένως και υπήρχον και μικτά εκ Τούρκων και προεστώτων κόμματα, ων προεξήρχον οι ισχυρότεροι εκ τούτων τε και εκείνων διακλαδιζόμενα και μέχρι των κωμών και των χωριών ». Oiconomou, *Historica*, 26.

53 « Εν τη απουσία αυτών ο Περωτής δεν ησύχαζεν, αλλ'ετάραττε την ησυχίαν της επαρχίας και έκαμεν ένα τζιμουχούρι λεγόμενον και εσύναξεν αρκετούς από την επαρχίαν και απήλθεν εις Τρίπολιν φωνάζων εις τον πασιά κατά του αδελφού μου Δημητρίου ότι δήθεν επεβάρυνε την επαρχίαν με πολλές δαπάνας και εξήτουν παρ'αυτού λογαριασμούς ενώπιον του Διβανίου του Μορέως να θεωρηθούν. Εκλήθη και ο αδελφός μου επί τούτου και συναθροίσας διπλασίους... και τριπλασίους ακόμα... βοώντες κατά του Περωτή... θεωρηθέντων και των λογαριασμών, όπως ο Περωτής εζήτηι, ευρέθει αυτός βεβαρυμένος και ουχί ο Παπατσώνης » [Pendant que nos beaux-frères Déligiannis étaient absents, Perrotis s'agitait et causait des troubles dans notre province ; il a rassemblé plusieurs de nos compatriotes et tous sont partis pour Tripolizza ; là, il a organisé une manifestation pour expliquer au pacha que mon frère prélevait de trop gros impôts dans notre province et pour demander le contrôle des comptes devant le gouvernement de la Morée. Mon frère a été convoqué pour se défendre et a rassemblé deux ou trois fois plus de gens mécontents pour manifester contre Perrotis ; après examen des comptes, c'est Perrotis qui a été jugé coupable]. Papatsonis, *Apomnemoneumata*, 52.

54 Oiconomou, *Historica*, 26.

55 « Είναι περίεργη της Τούρκικης τυραννίας η ψυχολογία, αρχίζοντας από το Σουλτάνο ως τον τελευταίο πασιά. Κάθε σημαντική απόφασή τους παίρνει ως στίλο και θεμέλιο της τη γνώμη του λαού, την κοινή φήμη, είτε αληθινή ή τεχνητά ωργανωμένη. Έτσι η δίκαια απόφαση έχει ως συνήγορο της όχι την ορθή κρίση αλλά τη φήμη... Μέ το σιάχτρο αυτό της λαικής φωνής χιλιάδες κεφάλια πέσανε Τούρκων και χριστιανών κατά τους αιώνες της Τούρκικης ιστορίας » [La psychologie de la tyrannie turque, du Sultan jusqu'au dernier pacha, est étrange. Chacune de leurs décisions est fondée sur l'opinion publique, la rumeur commune, vraie ou fabriquée.

En tout cas, les célèbres *ayan* moréotes jouent un rôle décisif dans le domaine de la politique locale. Quant aux primats chrétiens, ils y exercent une influence secondaire. Cependant, ces derniers, en tant que représentants de la population chrétienne, incarnent la lettre de la légitimité ottomane qui protège la « prospérité des *reaya* ». En tant que tels, les *kocabaş* sont indispensables à toute démarche légale. Dans une situation politique incertaine, dans la lutte pour l'obtention des postes publics, ou mieux, pour le profit qui en est tiré, les notables utilisent divers moyens, de la violence jusqu'aux présents de toute sorte et en toute quantité. On constate alors que la légitimité recule devant les intérêts personnels. L'administration centrale intervient pour « corriger » les circonstances dangereuses et l'orgueil des puissants. En bref, l'instabilité règne sur la scène politique en Morée jusqu'à la veille de la révolution, révolution mise en mouvement par l'« aristocratie » chrétienne, qui cependant n'a pas réussi de maître en mouvement l'économie.

Ainsi, la justice n'est pas affaire de droiture, mais est dépendante de la rumeur... A cause de cet épouvantail de la voix publique, des milliers d'hommes, Turcs et chrétiens, ont été décapités pendant les siècles de l'histoire turque]. Vlachogiannis, *Hoi klephtes*, 192.

**CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE PELOPONNESE:
THE CASE OF THE DRAGOMAN OF THE MOREA
GEORGIOS WALLERIANOS
AND SOME ASPECTS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS**

*Demetrios Stamatopoulos**

The configuration of pre-revolutionary conditions in the early nineteenth-century Peloponnese, which led to the secession of the region and the formation of the fundamental core of the modern Greek state, constitutes one of the most challenging fields in modern Balkan history. This is so because at this level differences and similarities may be diagnosed between the Greek case and that of the other Balkan national movements as regards the problem of the old Ottoman framework's corrosion. This took place at both levels: that of the overthrow of the hierarchy of cultural and social values as well as the transformation of economic and political structures which created the conditions for a generalised revolt.¹

In contrast with the regions of the Aegean Islands and continental Greece, where one must focus on the crucial role of Christian shipowners and bands of klephts, respectively, the catalyst for the

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I would like to thank Mr Savvas Tsilenis for his willingness to photograph the documents from the Holy Sepulchre's Archive during his stay in Princeton University.

1 For the complex processes which led to the outbreak of the Greek Revolution in connection with the application of theoretical models of revolutionary behaviour, particularly the model of 'rising expectations', as proposed by Crane Brinton in his *Anatomy of Revolution* (1938), see V. Kremmydas, 'He oikonomike krise ston helladiko choro stis arches tou 19ou aiona kai oi synepeies tes sten Epanastasi tou 1821' [The Economic Crisis in the Hellenic Lands at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century and its Consequences for the Revolution of 1821], *Mnemon*, 6 (1976), 16-33; idem, 'Methodologikes protaseis gia te melete tou 1821' [Methodological Proposals for the Study of the Revolution of 1821], *Theoria kai Koinonia*, 5 (1991), 67-82; and especially G. Hering, 'Schetika me to provlema ton epanastatikon eksegerseon stis arches tou 19ou aiona' [On the Problem of the Revolutionary Revolts at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century], *Ta Historika*, 13/24-25 (1990), 105-20.

revolutionary process in the Peloponnese was the increased political privileges enjoyed by the social class of notables.²

Thus was constituted a powerful network of pressure on Ottoman power for the advancement of the notables' own interests as well as those of their communities as a whole. This went beyond the level of the *paşalık*'s administration, extending to the autonomous mission of deputies (*vekil*) in Istanbul. The possibility of bypassing the *vali*'s authority allowed the interest groups of Peloponnesian notables, particularly those of politically and economically powerful families, to be linked directly with the centres of power in the Ottoman capital and to transfer to the palace lobbies the conflicts which frequently threatened the notables' unity. The faction with control of the plenipotentiaries in Istanbul had a greater chance of prevailing in controversies within this class.³

But the reverse process also obtained: administrative employees arriving in the Peloponnese from Istanbul were disposed to secure their interests over the long term, even if this meant the physical extermination or political marginalisation of their opponents.

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- 2 Their entanglement in the Russian-Ottoman war of the years 1768-74, most notably in the revolt of 1770, constituted a characteristic example of their political influence. The Peloponnese was re-occupied by the Ottomans in 1715. The second occupation put an end to Venetian sovereignty and also annexed the area as a particular administrative region (*paşalık*) ruled by a Pasha, named the *Mora valisi*. His power was political and military. Two councils functioned under him: the first, the *Mora divanı*, was composed of administrative employees, such as the *kahya* (deputy of the Pasha), the *defter kahyası* (the official who headed the provincial treasury), the *mukabeleci* (the controller of documents and accounts), the *kadis* (judges of the Islamic courts), etc., while the second council included two representatives of the Christian peninsula's notables (*Mora ayanları*), two corresponding Muslim notables, as well as the dragoman of the Morea. See M. Sakellariou, *He Peloponnesos kata ten Deuteran Tourkokratian (1715-1821)* [The Peloponnese during the Second Ottoman Domination (1715-1821)], Athens 1978, 80; A. Kyrkini-Koutoula, *He othomanike dioikese sten Hellada: he periptose tes Peloponnesou (1715-1821)* [The Ottoman Administration in Greece: The Case of the Peloponnese (1715-1821)], Athens 1996, 125-38. The notables' official duties, from which emerged the political privileges they enjoyed, concerned the collection of tax revenues, the distribution of regular and extra-ordinary tax-weights, the implementation and maintenance of beneficial public works, and the management of community, juridical and civil affairs (wills, marriage contracts, etc.); see M. Oikonomou, *Historika tes Hellenikes Paliggenesias e ho hieros ton Hellenon agon* [Historical Features of the Greek Regeneration or The Holy Struggle of the Greeks], in Emm. Protopsaltis (ed.), *Apomnemoneumata agoniston tou 1821* [Memoirs of the Fighters of the Revolution of 1821], vol. 1, Athens 1955, 22; I. Philimon, *Historikon dokimion peri tes Philikes Hetairias* [Historical Essay on the Friendly Society], Athens 1834, 46.
- 3 For an in-depth analysis of the pre-revolutionary conflicts among the notables, see A. Photopoulos, *Hoi kotzampasedes tes Peloponnesou kata te Deutere Tourkokratia* [The Notables of the Peloponnese during the Second Ottoman Occupation (1715-1821)], Athens 2005. On the same issue, see also J. Alexander, 'Some Aspects of the Strife Among the Moreot Christian Notables', *EHSM*, 5 (1974-75), 473-503; idem, *Brigandage and Public Order in the Morea, 1685-1806*, Athens 1985; D. Stamatopoulos, *Metarrhythmise kai Epanastase sten Othomanike Autokratoria: he periptose tes proepanastatikes Peloponnesou* [Reform and Revolution in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of the Pre-revolutionary Peloponnese], unpublished M.A. thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 1995; idem, 'Kommatikes phatries sten proepanastatiki Peloponneso (1807-1816): ho rolos ton 'Tourkalvanon' tou Lala hos paragontas politikes diaphoropoieses' [Party Factions in the Pre-revolutionary Peloponnese (1807-1816): The Role of the Muslim Albanians of Lala as a Factor of Political Differentiation], *Histor*, 10 (1997), 185-233.

Conflicts among the notables in the Peloponnese during the first two critical decades of the nineteenth century were a decisive contributing factor in the outbreak of the War of Independence.⁴

We could say that the pre-revolutionary structural distribution of power in the Peloponnese had three primary poles of support. First, it depended on the personality of each successive Ottoman governor (*Mora valisi*) appointed by the Sublime Porte (*Bab-ı âli*). A second pole consisted of the powerful families of Christian and Muslim elders; with regard to the Christians specifically, these included the two notables (*Mora ayanları*) who participated in the administration of the *paşalık* alongside the Ottoman governor in Tripoliçe (Gk. Tripoli). The third pole, though not appearing to have the authority and decisive role of the other two, acquired special weight in periods of political crises, chiefly as mediator between the two sides. Mediation in such cases could decide the winner. This position was that of Dragoman of the Morea (*tercüman bey*), the Pasha's Christian interpreter and the only non-Muslim who took part in the meetings of the council of the *paşalık* (*Mora Divanı*), that is, the advisory body in which only Ottoman administrative officials participated.⁵ The role of the Dragomans of the Morea has been generally noted in the bibliography in respect both to its easing as well as exacerbating of rivalries within the ranks of the notables. But many aspects of their activities remain shadowy.

The period following the arrival in 1807 of Veli Paşa, son of Ali Paşa of Yanya (Gk. Ioannina), as governor of the Peloponnese, was characterised by intense opposition between the two chief personalities among the Christian leaders then occupying the positions of *Mora ayanları*, Ioannis Papagiannopoulos-Deligiannis and Sotirakis Lontos. The former was the leader of a clan with interests closely connected with those of the Ottoman centre. It should be borne in mind that the Deligiannis family had assumed the supervision (*kahyalık*) of the large estates in the south-eastern Peloponnese, especially in the districts of Karytaina and Messenia, which had been bestowed as *malikâne* (lifetime usufruct) upon Beyhan Sultan, the sister of Sultan Selim III.⁶ We know that the second distinguished figure, Lontos (leader of a clan many of whose members were descended from the north-western part of the peninsula, and therefore called 'Achaean'), had proceeded to contacts with Ali Paşa, most probably with the ambition of himself assuming the role of its prince should the Peloponnese have seceded from the Ottoman state.⁷

4 On the economic and social dimensions of the history of the Peloponnese during the decades preceding the Greek Revolution, see Sakellariou, *He Peloponnesos kata ten Deuteron Tourkokratian*; V. Kremmydas, *Sygyria kai emporio sten proepanastatike Peloponneso (1793-1821)* [Conjuncture and Trade in the Pre-revolutionary Peloponnese (1793-1821)], Athens 1980.

5 For a thorough examination of the issue of the dragoman's rank, see A. Photopoulos, 'Hoi Dragoumanoi tou Moreos' [The Dragomans of the Morea], *JOAS*, 1 (1989), 49-82. See also Kyrkini-Koutoula, *He periptose tes Peloponnesou*, 135, 173-80.

6 K. Deligiannis, 'Aponnemoneumata' [Memoirs], in G. Tsoukalas (ed.), *Aponnemoneumata ton agoniston tou '21* [Memoirs of the Fighters of the Revolution of 1821], vol. 16, Athens 1956-59, 58-59.

7 Stamatopoulos, 'Kommatikes phatries', 193-94.

The withdrawal of Veli Paşa from the office of governor in June of 1812 weakened Lontos' position, with the result that in September of the same year, Veli's successor, İnceli Seyyid Ahmed Paşa, had Lontos beheaded. There is little doubt that behind the execution of Lontos may be discerned the covert role that was played by his great rival, Ioannis Deligiannis. In fact, the next four years up to and including 1816 were marked by the political ascendancy of the Deligiannis family and its allies. However, another change in governor that same year (after the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars) meant the end of this period as well, with the execution of Ioannis Deligiannis by the new Pasha, Şakir Ahmed.⁸

Mutual exhaustion of the two families led to a new balance of power. Apart from a comparison of the cases of the extermination of the *Mora ayanları*, it is of interest to clarify the role of the Dragoman Theodosios Michalopoulos, who was of Vlach descent and whom we know to have been the stepfather of Rhigas Palamidis.

Rhigas' father, Ioannis Palamidis, had assumed the office of dragoman during the years 1790-96, apparently with the support of both of the powerful notables, Deligiannis and Lontos. In contrast, Theodosios, the 'natural' successor of Palamidis both in the role of stepfather and that of dragoman, appears to have sided progressively with Ioannis Deligiannis. At any rate, this would seem to have been the case, to judge by his imprisonment together with that of other members of the Deligiannis family and of Sotiris Kougias (his wife's brother) by Veli Paşa in the summer of 1812 – that is, shortly before the latter was replaced, which, as we have noted, resulted in Lontos' execution. Consequently, Theodosios must be considered jointly responsible for the extermination of the Deligiannis family's great rival.

The death of Ioannis Deligiannis on 16 February 1816 would naturally have had consequences for Theodosios' position in the political affairs of the Peloponnese, while at the same time it made possible the dynamic appearance of new families on the political stage, as, for example, the Perroukas brothers. And in fact, at Theodosios' initiative not long afterwards, the region's most important leaders signed the famous '*Synposchetikon*' (Compromissum) on 1 April 1816. With its signing, the self-destructive rivalries of the previous period came to an end. The *Synposchetikon* constituted a victory for the Perroukas family, as well as for Sotirios Charalambis,⁹ who managed to send Demetrios, one of the three Perroukas brothers, as deputy of the Peloponnese to Istanbul. The latter replaced Theodorakis Deligiannis, son of Ioannis, then serving in the position of *vekil* in the Ottoman capital.

The Perroukas family's pre-eminent position was owed to its possessing a comparative advantage in relation to the Deligiannis family. In our view, this advantage consisted of the stronger and wider network the Perroukas family had established, while, of course, taking every advantage of the mutual extinction of its major rivals, the Deligiannis and Lontos families. The three

8 Ibid., 218, 224.

9 Alexander, 'Some Aspects of the Strife', 484-85.

brothers, established in Argos (Ioannis as notable), Istanbul (Demetrios as *vekil*) and the port of Patras (Charalambos as merchant), respectively, formed a network of influence the Deligiannis family could not penetrate.¹⁰ Although the family's members had managed to get rid of Sotirakis Lontos physically, by allying themselves with the local administrator and by always having Beyhan Sultan as their protector, and while they tried for the same reasons to regain their position and fortune after Ioannis Deligiannis' execution in 1816, nonetheless they could not match the terms of competition as these were set by the Perroukas family. And success in obtaining the right to maintain a permanent deputy (*vekil*) in the capital itself forced the Deligiannis family to participate in a different type of political organisation (for example, the *Philiki Hetairia*, or Friendly Society), the dynamics of which the family was naturally unable to control.¹¹

The question remaining is this: how did it come about, since we consider it probable that Theodosios was an ally of the Deligiannis clan, that he participated in the agreement of 1816, and on whose behalf did he take part? Was Theodosios perhaps to be found behind the execution of his major ally?

In fact, it seems that Theodosios remained a faithful ally of the Deligiannis family, even if he managed to survive the extermination of his distinguished protector. According to archival material brought to light by Tasos Gritsopoulos, the leading members of the rival faction, Andreas Lontos, son of Sotirakis, and Andreas Zaimis attempted to expel the Vlach dragoman from his position when he re-occupied the office in 1820, while on the other hand the Perroukas brothers tried to prevent this eventuality, without in the end accomplishing their goal.¹²

Seemingly, Theodosios remained in the ranks of the Deligiannis' faction, continuously and uneventfully, from April 1816 until June 1820. But this is not what in fact happened. We will see that after the death of the elder Deligiannis, Theodosios was attacked by the Perroukas family (because perhaps he really was faithful to the deceased Ioannis Deligiannis), which tried to exploit the economic situation and the presence of Şakir Ahmed in the office of governor. It appears that before they were gathered into the same camp, Theodosios and the Perroukas brothers clashed over who should dominate the leaderless faction of the great notable of Karytaina; it is very probable that his participation in the concluding of the *Synposchetikon* was designed to gain time.

In order to prove this, however, we must now turn to his chief rival, Georgios Wallerianos. Wallerianos was the offspring of an important Constantinopolitan family, other members of which had also held the position of dragoman of the Morea.

10 T. Gritsopoulos, 'Diamache ton kommaton dia ton Dragoumanon Theodosion to 1820' [Struggle of the Factions of the Peloponnese Concerning the Dragoman Theodosios in 1820], *Peloponnesiaka*, 10 (1972-73), 165-71 and especially 167. See also for the complicated theoretical problem of the power networks' structure in the Ottoman Empire, D. Stamatopoulos, 'From Machiavelli to the Sultans: Power Networks in the Ottoman Imperial Context', *Historiein*, 5 (2005) 76-93.

11 Stamatopoulos, *Metarrythmise kai Epanastase*, 81-95.

12 Gritsopoulos, 'Diamache ton kommaton'.

Athanasios Photopoulos reports the following concerning the person of Georgios Wallerianos: “Georgakis Wallerianos came from Istanbul as the successor of Theodosios around mid-1817. He was brother to the former dragomans Pantaleon¹³ and Grigorakis Wallerianos. He was old, frail, and politically imbued by conservatism.¹⁴ He did not remain uninvolved in political conflicts inasmuch as it appears he had aligned himself with the Arcadian party [he means the coalition between the Perroukas brothers and Sotiris Charalambis]. He left his position before the end of May 1819”.¹⁵

Pantaleon had been dragoman long before Ioannis Palamidis, from 1764 to 1781 (the year of his beheading), as had Pantaleon’s brother, Grigorios Wallerianos, in 1804, before Veli Paşa’s critical period of administering the Peloponnese.¹⁶ As a result, it would have been unlikely for the Wallerianos family not to have firmly opposed the side of Theodosios Michalopoulos and his representing their family’s interests in the Peloponnese, and it is certain that they enjoyed the favour of strong centres of power in Istanbul.

In the Archive of the Holy Sepulchre Metochion (a religious foundation in Istanbul which belonged to the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem), preserved in the Firestone Library at Princeton University, are two extraordinarily important letters to Georgios Wallerianos.¹⁷ The first was sent by the notables of the island of Tinos and is dated 28 July 1811,¹⁸ while the second was penned by nine of the most important leaders of the Peloponnese on 28 January 1817.¹⁹

The fact that both letters were found in the Archive of the Holy Sepulchre Metochion shows that the family must also have had close ties to representatives of the Orthodox Patriarchate of

13 The information that Georgios was brother of Pantaleon was also repeated by Kyrkini-Koutoula, *He periptose tes Peloponnesou*, 180. Both writers base this conclusion on the Rhigas Palamidis documents, included in the collection of G. Vlachogiannis in the General State Archives of Greece. However, in the letter published here, explicit reference is made to the period when the office of dragoman had been occupied by Georgios’ father and brother (“εις τους καιρούς των μακαρίτων πατρός της και αυταδέλφου της”). It is thus probable that Pantaleon was the father rather than brother of Georgios.

14 His abhorrence of the innovative spirit of the French Revolution is noteworthy. For this issue, see Photopoulos, ‘Hoi Dragoumanoi tou Moreos’, 63-64.

15 Idem, *Hoi kotzampasedes tes Peloponnesou*, 83. Photopoulos claims that this final information concerning the end of Wallerianos’ service comes from a letter written by Sotirios Kougias to the Peloponnesian plenipotentiary (*vekil*) in Istanbul, Rhigas Palamidis; see *ibid.*, 83 n.58.

16 *Ibid.*, 42-44.

17 To be more precise, according to the guide to Princeton University’s Firestone Library (Department of Rare Books and Special Collections), its title is ‘*Archive of the Constantinople metochion of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem*’. A complete inventory of the contents of this archive, drawn up by the writer of the present article, will be published shortly in the *Bulletin of the Historical and Paleographical Archive* of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation.

18 *Archive of the Constantinople metochion of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem*, box 8, folder 2.

19 *Ibid.*, box 7, folder 3.

Jerusalem in Istanbul, if Georgios himself did not fulfil for some period the responsibilities of the Patriarchate's own trustee in the city.

As we noted above, the second letter was sent in January 1817, shortly after the historic compromise between the warring factions.²⁰ In this letter the nine Peloponnesian leaders asked Wallerianos to assume the position of dragoman, given that his predecessor Theodosios had resigned of his own accord, "by reason of age and frailty". As can be seen from the contents of the letter, the decision to offer the office to Wallerianos was not taken by the Christian leaders alone, but in concert with the Muslim *beys* and *ağas*,²¹ and naturally with the Ottoman governor, Şakir Ahmed Paşa.

It is also obvious that the personality of Wallerianos was anything but unknown to the Peloponnesian notables, from the previous service of his father and his brother in the rank of dragoman ("ως γνωστός πάσιν ημίν, διά την φρόνησίν της, φιλοτιμίαν της και αγαθήν και χριστιανικήν διάθεσιν προτερήματα δεδοκιμασμένα, εις την πατριδα μας εις τους καιρούς των μακαρίτων πατρός της και αυταδέλφου της"). However, his candidacy to succeed Theodosios must surely have given rise to some concern, given that this was his first attempt to occupy this rank ("δεν αμφιβάλλομεν...").

The notables write that Şakir had already dispatched a letter to his *kapı kahyası* (his official deputy to the Sublime Porte), requesting that Theodosios be replaced. In addition, another two letters had also been sent by the notables to the capital, and these were already in the hands of the Morea's *vekil*, Demetrios Perroukas; it was anticipated he would forward them to their proper recipients. The first letter was addressed to the Sublime Porte. The second must be considered more important, as it was addressed to the overseer of the Morea (*Mora nazırı*), Ahmed Azmi Bey, head of the special service which Sultan Selim III had created in the capital to oversee the administration of the Peloponnese and the stewards (*kahya*) of Beyhan Sultan, Selim III's sister, to whom belonged as lifelong usufruct the districts (*kaza*) of Karytaina, Phanari, Nisi, Kalamata, Androusa, and Emliakika – those provinces, that is, whose exploitation provided the economic underpinnings for the Deligiannis clan.²² All decisions relating to the internal political affairs of the region required the approval of this powerful individual, who protected the interests of Beyhan Sultan in the Peloponnese.²³

The justification for the dragoman Theodosios' resignation advanced in the notables' letter ("age and frailty") is naturally not credible insofar as at a later date Theodosios again served as

20 See Appendix I.

21 For a detailed description of the most powerful Muslim families in the pre-revolutionary Peloponnese, see Kyrkini-Koutoula, *He periptose tes Peloponnesou*, 156-69.

22 See footnote no. 6 above.

23 The key role played by Azmi in the political affairs of the Peloponnese has been emphasised by other researchers; see, for example, Kyrkini-Koutoula, *He periptose tes Peloponnesou*, 218-19.

dragoman (after Wallerianos' dismissal in 1819), and in fact there was another attempt (in June 1820) to expel him from the post, as we noted above.

The Christian elders who signed the letter concerning the replacement of Theodosios included the following: Sotirios Charalambis, notable of Kalavryta and a faithful ally of the Deligiannis family who afterwards collaborated with the Perroukas brothers; Andreas Notaras, an extremely conservative notable of Corinth, who took an explicit position against the principles of the revolt in March of 1821; Anagnostis Kopanitzas, notable of Mystras, who belonged to the party of Lontos, but as to whom there is considerable evidence to suggest that following the *Compromissum* of 1816 he collaborated closely with the Perroukas family and its allies; Sotirios Kougias, notable of Tripoli, who, as we have noted, was Theodosios' brother-in-law and a traditional ally of the Deligiannis family; Nikolaos Perroukas, father of the three Perroukas brothers (Ioannis, Demetrios and Charalambos); Panagiotakis Zarifopoulos, notable of Andritsaina, who was well-disposed towards Sotirios Kougias;²⁴ Grigorios Papaphotopoulos, notable of Arkadia but also a member of the Achaean party under Lontos' leadership; Gerasimos Mantzavinis; Anagnostis Papazoglis (or Papazoglou or Papadopoulos), a particularly powerful notable in Hagios Petros (Kynouria), who was especially hostile to members of the Achaean faction, including Sotirakis Lontos and Asimakis Zaimis. However, Papazoglou was a close friend and collaborator of the notable of Tripoli Georgios Varvoglis (or Varvoglou), the great rival of Sotirios Kougias in the capital of the *paşalık*.

It is therefore obvious that the majority of signatures came from ex-members of the Deligiannis clan. The initiative for the expulsion of Theodosios in 1817 appears to have lain with the governor, Şakir Ahmed Paşa, as well as with the Perroukas family. This indicates that members of the old Deligiannis faction²⁵ continued to hold the initiative for action, as is shown by the absence of signatures by leading members of the Lontos clan, e.g., Andreas Lontos, Asimakis Zaimis and his son Andreas, or even Georgios Sisinis. The text is also signed by two old members of the Achaean party, Anagnostis Kopanitzas and Grigorios Papaphotopoulos, who after the Perroukas family's period of domination which was signalled by the *Compromissum* of 1816, appear to have continued on the family's side regarding critical political issues.²⁶

Consequently, we have every reason to believe that the execution of Ioannis Deligiannis did not signify the automatic predominance of the rival faction. Deligiannis' execution probably triggered an internal struggle for sovereignty between the Perroukas brothers and Theodosios; it was settled, however, by the necessarily decisive role of Şakir Ahmed.

Şakir Ahmed was the pasha who altered the balance of power at the expense of the Deligiannis family upon his arrival in the Peloponnese in 1815. Ioannis Deligiannis' son, Kanellos Deli-

24 *Megale Hellenike Egkyklopaideia* [Great Greek Encyclopaedia], vol. 11, 915-16.

25 On the members of the Deligiannis clan, see Stamatopoulos, 'Kommatikes phatries', 186-89.

26 Gritsopoulos, 'Diamache ton kommaton', 166, 170, and Stamatopoulos, 'Kommatikes phatries', 220.

giannis, described Şakir as “an Ottoman violently religious and fanatical”.²⁷ His appointment was the result of a general replacement of all provincial administrators undertaken by the new Grand Vizier, Mehmed Emin Rauf Paşa (1815-18).²⁸ Şakir was a personal friend of Mehmed. However, Mehmed was a major rival of Halet Efendi, one of the leaders of the conservative group at Istanbul, who was a favourite of Beyhan Sultan and one of the ring-leaders in the extermination of Ali Paşa.²⁹

Thus, Mehmed’s appointment signalled the temporary end of the protection the Deligiannis family had enjoyed from the circle of Beyhan Sultan and Halet Efendi. Ioannis Deligiannis’ execution should be viewed not only as the result of patient work by the new families, but largely as a consequence of changes unfavourable to the family that had occurred in the Ottoman capital. However, Theodosios’ survival in the post of dragoman and the fact that he took a leading role in the Compromissum of 1816 could also raise the suspicion that he may have been behind the execution of Ioannis Deligiannis. The letter we have discovered shows that following Deligiannis’ death, Şakir attempted to compel Theodosios to resign and to replace him with Wallerianos (a man most probably closer to the political orientation of Mehmed Emin Rauf). Thus he continued to consider Theodosios a risk to the centralised control the Ottomans had chosen to impose at that period. These developments did not, however, necessarily mean that the Lontos faction would prevail in the strife amongst the notables, but rather signified a progressive reinforcement of the Perroukas family once it had succeeded in expelling its main rival.

We do know that Wallerianos finally accepted the Peloponnesians’ proposal, but in the same year (1817) Şakir Ahmed was forced to withdraw from the position of governor of the Peloponnese. Kanellos Deligiannis describes his withdrawal as the result of conflict with his own family. It would appear that Şakir’s attempt to expel Theodosios proved fatal to his remaining in the position of *Mora valisi*, while the efforts by Theodoros Deligiannis and his allies (Thanos Kanakaris and the Papatsonis family) to regain the family’s former influence continued. In fact, Theodoros, through the intervention of Halet Efendi and Beyhan Sultan, and in spite of opposition by Mehmed Emin Rauf Paşa, managed to have the confiscation of his executed father’s property rescinded.³⁰

The other letter we uncovered in the Archive of the Holy Sepulchre Metochion, sent by the elders of Tinos,³¹ provides vital information concerning Wallerianos. As we noted, it is dated 28 July

27 Deligiannis, ‘Apomnemoneumata’, 67.

28 S. Shaw and E. Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2, Cambridge 1987, 57, 497.

29 *Ibid.*, 8-9; *EP*, vol. 3, s.v. ‘Halet Efendi Mehmed Said’, 90-91 (E. Kuran).

30 Deligiannis, ‘Apomnemoneumata’, 73.

31 For the history of Tinos during the period of Ottoman domination, see D. N. Drosos, *Historia tes nesou Tenou: apo tes Pemptes Staurophorias mechri tes enetikes kyriarchias kai ekeithen mechri tou 1821* [History of Tinos: From the Fifth Crusade to the Venetian Domination and thence to the Revolution of 1821], Athens 1870.

1811.³² According to this letter, Georgios Wallerianos had been appointed *kapı kahyası* of the island in the previous year (1810), that is, deputy of the island to the Sublime Porte, by the overseer (*nazır*) of the Royal Mint (*darbhane*).

We know that after its conquest by the Ottomans in 1715 (in the same year as the Peloponnese), Tinos belonged to an important *ulema*, named Velizade Efendi. However, after his death the Sultan assigned collection of island tax revenues to the overseer of the Royal Mint (*darbhane nazırı*). Consequently, it is clear that nomination of the island's *kapı kahyası* in Istanbul required the approval of the overseer.³³

Wallerianos bore the title *archontas kaminaris* (< *câminar*, a Romanian word), i.e., the special government employee charged with the collection of taxes on beverages.³⁴ The letter represents the delayed (by one year) establishment/recognition of Wallerianos in the post of *kapı kahyası* by the island's notables. This delay certainly implies reactions to his appointment, which were probably expressed on the part of the most powerful elders of Tinos. His establishment, however, was subject to acceptance on the part of Wallerianos of eight conditions included in the letter – in other words, it was a type of agreement between the two sides, whereby if Wallerianos did not observe the terms, he would forfeit the position.

These terms concerned the payment of many types of taxes to the Ottoman authority, the rendering of accounts regarding the management of funds to the elders, etc. Georgios was responsible not only for the advance payment of any tax obligation by the community to the Ottoman state and the timely notification of the notables (by sending them the requisite receipts of payment), but also for precluding any interference by Ottoman employees or envoys that could create various problems for the community's internal operation. At the same time, his jurisdiction included the settling of disputes or conflicts among those residents of Tinos living in Istanbul.

While the notables gave Wallerianos the right to defend the interests of the inhabitants of Tinos with the Ottoman authorities, they sternly forbade him to overturn decisions of the Chancery (as the local council of notables was called) regarding disputes between the island's residents. It is especially interesting that the terms explicitly provide that he was to remain strictly impartial in cases concerning both Orthodox and non-Orthodox ('Latin') residents of the island, which leads us to suspect that the name Wallerianos may have had some connection with Catholicism (“*ἐξίσου με αδιαφορίαν να φέρεται προς τε τους ρωμαίους και λατίνους*”).

Naturally, the letter also defined the economic profits that would accrue to Georgios if he accepted the terms imposed by the notables. His annual subsidy was fixed at 2,000 *guruş*, while the

32 See Appendix II.

33 I. Likouris, *He dioikesis kai dikaiosyne ton Tourkokratoumenon neson* [Administration and Justice on the Islands Occupied by the Ottomans], Athens 1954, 2.

34 With this title, he is likely to have been under the jurisdiction of the general overseer of the state mint.

possibility was left open of this sum being increased through additional financial contributions from the community, as had been the case with his predecessors.

In any event, the letter from the elders of Tinos proves that Georgios Wallerianos played a consistent role in representing the interests of the island's populations in Istanbul. But it also proves that his family was so powerful that it might frequently have exceeded its duties *per se* and ended up to all intents and purposes as a power unto itself, having direct access to high officials on the Ottoman political scene.³⁵

Returning to the case of the Peloponnese, Theodosios appears to have returned to the post of Dragoman of the Morea when Ispartalı İbrahim Paşa was appointed governor. When the latter withdrew in June 1820, the opponents of the Deligiannis family – chiefly Andreas Lontos and Asimakis Zaimis – once again attempted to have Theodosios removed from his office. But on this occasion, the position was filled by another important figure from Phanariot circles in Istanbul, Stavrakis Iovikis.³⁶

Thenceforth, Iovikis was supported by the co-ordinated efforts of the *vekils*, Demetrios Perroukas and Thanos Kanakaris, in opposition to the other powerful member of the former Deligiannis faction, Sotirios Kougias. The latter wanted Postelnikos Samourkasis, a member of the influential family of the same name in Istanbul, appointed to the position of dragoman for reasons of self-interest (his son, Vasilis Kougias, was to wed Helen, daughter of Ioannis Samourkasis). Both *vekils* managed to achieve their objective, once again in collaboration with the brother of Georgios, Grigorios Wallerianos.

Wallerianos and his family probably constituted another alternative ally of the Perroukas family in the endeavours by the latter to marginalise its major opponents. These now included not only the members of the Achaean party (the sons of Sotirakis Lontos and Asimakis Zaimis), but also former members of the Deligiannis faction. We could say that in contrast to the Achaean party, which maintained a heightened level of rallying of all its members, the leading personalities of the former 'Karytinomesseniako' party followed numerous paths after the 1816 Compromissum, shaping three poles of support: one round the personality of Theodoros Deligiannis (with core allies Thanos Kanakaris and Panagiotis Papatsonis), one around Sotirios Kougias, who as notable of the *paşalık's* capital had developed a network of alliances with powerful Muslim *ayan*, and a third pole round the Perroukas family (with faithful supporters Sotirios Charalambis and Asimakis Photilas).

35 It also renders highly probable a hypothesis which has been expressed elsewhere (Kyrkini-Koutoula, *He periptose tes Peloponnesou*, 23-26), namely that the Peloponnese, or some coastal areas of the peninsula, may have belonged to the *eyalet* of the Aegean Islands, and consequently been under the jurisdiction of the *kapudan paşa*. The fact that a single person represented both the Peloponnese and Tinos (regions conquered by the Ottomans in the same year) at Istanbul may be considered strong evidence in support of such a hypothesis.

36 Photopoulos, *Hoi kotzampasedes tes Peloponnesou*, 83-84.

The conflicts from that point on among these three poles for dominance within the old unified Deligiannis faction acquired acute form and resulted in members seeking allies in the Ottoman capital's influential power centres. This is demonstrated by the frequent alternations of dragomans after 1817.

The selection of Wallerianos in January 1817, seven months after the *Compromissum*, in which members of the Perroukas family as well as Sotirios Kougias had played a leading part, shows that they also wished to free themselves from the long shadow cast by Theodosios' personality, while of course exploiting latent dissatisfaction with the latter on the part of Şakir Ahmed. However, when in May 1819 Georgios abandoned the Peloponnese and the office of dragoman, Theodosios appears to have returned to his old rank. Photopoulos, who informs us regarding the precise period of Georgios' withdrawal from the position, relates that from September 1819, Stavrakis Iovikis was named dragoman and remained in the office up to the outbreak of the Revolution.

However, a letter published by Tasos Gritsopoulos, bearing the date 12 September 1820, with Sotirios Charalambis and Asimakis Photilas as senders and an unknown recipient (quite possibly Ioannis Perroukas), makes direct reference to the movements of members of the Achaean party to undermine Theodosios, who ought to have withdrawn from the position of dragoman in June 1820, following the removal of İbrahim Paşa as governor of the Peloponnese (unless the Charalambis-Photilas letter is not referring to Theodosios).

Consequently, Theodosios must, logically speaking, have succeeded Wallerianos, occupying once again the rank of dragoman for roughly a year (from mid-1819 up to mid-1820), while Stavrakis Iovikis succeeded him as the last dragoman of the pre-revolutionary Peloponnese. What however is important is that the nomination of Wallerianos in 1817 (in collaboration with conservative notables of Tripoli, like Kougias and Papazoglou), the likely reinstatement of Theodosios (despite the reaction by members of the old Achaean party), as well as assumption of the rank by Iovikis (in opposition to Kougias' wishes), were all actions that constituted greater or lesser victories by the Perroukas family, above all, Demetrios Perroukas, who as *vekil* in Istanbul (and certainly in collaboration with Thanos Kanakaris) could to a considerable degree advance – or block – the candidacies of those seeking to occupy the office of dragoman.

We could say that the preferential relationship enjoyed by the family with the Ottoman centre, like that of the Deligiannis family in earlier years, also determined the degree of rebelliousness manifested during the critical period of preparation of the Revolution. In a letter in the archive of the Perroukas family, probably written by one of the brothers residing in the Peloponnese to Demetrios Perroukas in Istanbul (it is dated February 1821, following the secret assembly of the elders in Vostitsa, in the presence of Papaphlessas as emissary of the Friendly Society, which is essentially considered the precursor to the Revolution in March), anything but a revolutionary spirit is apparent, to such an extent that the correspondent even accuses the other powerful families of the Morea openly because of their participation in such types of revolutionary activities: "The-

se [the notables] from Kalavryta (i.e., Andreas Zaimis and Sotirios Theocharopoulos), [Andreas Lontos from Vostitsa and Kanellos [Deligiannis] from Karytaina, uncritically agreed with the orders of Papaphlessas, and thoughtlessly began the recruitment [of fighters], which brought the situation to this point”.³⁷

For one of the Perroukas brothers to accuse the notables, Kanellos, for example, of revolutionary dispositions (it is well known that Kanellos once described Papaphlessas as a “despondent monk”) of course means that the Perroukas family had more to lose than the traditional class of Peloponnesian notables. And just as its predecessor in the leadership of the faction, the Deligiannis family, had to a considerable degree identified its fortunes with the covert or open support of Theodosios, so the Perroukas family knew very well that it would need to control the key position of dragoman if it was to reproduce the other family’s political hegemony. The Wallerianos family, with all requisite influence on the Ottoman political scene, was appropriate for this role.

An overall interpretation of the rise of the revolutionary process in the Peloponnese should therefore take serious account of the notables’ political strength – not, however, in the sense that because of this strength, the notables played a leading part in the process of national self-determination (such an approach could strengthen a linear interpretation of the Revolution to no purpose, if it replaces the traditional historiographical trend which would have the notables as simply ‘collaborators of the Ottoman tyranny’), but from the point of view of the internal differentiations and conflicts among them. These conflicts, which were enacted to achieve political and economic dominance by specific families, resulted in the marginalisation of others. And it was this marginalisation that would impose a change of political orientation among pre-eminent elders and bring about the need to disengage from Ottoman power. In contrast, the families that continued to enjoy the advantages of a preferential relation with the Ottoman centre appeared less willing to be drawn into a potentially revolutionary process.

Consequently, the economic crisis which beset Greek regions after the end of the Napoleonic Wars combined with a crisis of political orientation for many families of notables. Disengagement from the old Ottoman society’s hierarchy of values and formation of a nation-state appeared as the only viable possibilities on the political horizon.

37 Idem, ‘Ta politika tes Peloponnesou stis paramones tou Agona’ [The Political Situation in the Peloponnese on the Eve of the Revolution], *Peloponnesiaka*, 16 (1985-86), 583.

PART III

THE GREEK REVOLUTION

FROM KLEPHTS AND ARMATOLOI TO REVOLUTIONARIES

*Panagiotis Stathis**

Political and social revolutions are phenomena that involve considerable violence and often reach open military conflict. Consequently, the availability of an armed force is of great significance for the success of a revolution and this has been pointed out in the international bibliography which examines the issue of revolutions.¹ For instance, one of the significant reasons for the failure of the Russian Revolution in 1905 was the fact that the army remained loyal to the Tsar. On the other hand, the success of the Revolution of 1917 was to a great extent due to the fact that a large part of the army sided with the revolutionaries.² The significance of the attitude of the army towards the revolution and, in general, the existence of a competent revolutionary armed force are evident in other examples as well, such as the French Revolution,³ the Serbian Revolt (1804),⁴ the Latin American revolutions (c. 1810-25),⁵ the Mexican Revolution (1910-20),⁶ and the Greek Civil War (1946-49).⁷ Revolutionary armed forces may originate from the official state army, such as the

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1 M. N. Hagopian, *The Phenomenon of Revolution*, New York 1974, 157-58, 348-49; C. Tilly, *Les révolutions européennes, 1492-1992*, trans. P. Chemla, Paris 1993, 92-93; T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*, Cambridge 1979, *passim*.

2 J. Dunn, *Modern Revolutions: An Introduction to the Analysis of a Political Phenomenon*, Cambridge 1990, 40-41.

3 G. Lefebvre, *He Gallike Epanastase* [The French Revolution], trans. S. Marketos, Athens 2003, 146-48, 166, 170-71, 455-61, 645-48.

4 P. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804*, Seattle and London 1977, 245-47.

5 R. Romano, 'Hoi epanastaseis tes Kentrikes kai Notiou Amerikes' [The Revolutions of Central and South America], in idem (ed.), *Historia ton epanastaseon* [A History of Revolutions], Athens n.d., 186-87.

6 Pancho Villa had been a bandit before he became a leader of the revolutionary army. Many bandits, as well as officers of the regular army, joined the revolutionaries.

7 G. Margaritis, *Historia tou Hellenikou Emphyliou Polemou, 1946-1949* [History of the Greek Civil War, 1946-1949], 2 vols, Athens 2000-01.

army of the ruler or the national army, from which at least one section detaches itself and sides with the revolution. They may also originate from other armed groups, such as bandits or private sector armed guards of officials, etc., or even from the arming of civilians.

In the Revolution of 1821, the chief and most significant part of the revolutionary armed forces, for the duration of the Revolution, originated from the klephts and *armatoloi* of the pre-revolutionary period. Moreover, we may assume that, at the start of the struggle, klephts and *armatoloi* made up, in effect, the total of the armed forces.

The *armatoloi* were armed corps charged by the Ottoman authorities with maintaining law and order in the countryside and the prosecution of bandits; in return, they received a salary and were awarded tax exemption. The *armatoloi* were, in the overwhelming majority of cases, Christians. The klephts, on the other hand, were armed individuals who formed gangs and lived by banditry. The phenomenon of banditry gradually increased as of the seventeenth century, as a result of the multi-faceted crisis that the Ottoman Empire faced. In the eighteenth century, *armatoloi* and bandits intermingle, as the former arbitrarily taxed the country folk and co-operated with bandits whose predatory activities they covered up. At the same time, the klephts intensified their bandit activities as a means of pressurising the Ottoman authorities into appointing them to *armatoloi* posts. *Armatoloi* who had thus been made redundant would then in their turn engage in banditry with the chief goal of recovering their positions. Thus, klephts and *armatoloi* alternated, while banditry constantly increased.⁸

Their significance for the Revolution of 1821, however, is not limited solely to fighting. Klephts and *armatoloi* contributed significantly to the preparation and the outbreak of the Revolution. Several of the most important apostles of the Friendly Society (the secret society which organised the Revolution), who initiated a large number of members, were klephts, such as Anagnostaras, Theodoros Kolokotronis, Elias Chrysospathis, etc. Parallel to this, in many areas where the notables were hesitant to enter the war, as in the Peloponnese, for example, former klephts were those who initiated armed attacks against the Ottomans, and as a result compelled the notables to join the Revolution.⁹ In other areas, however, the local *armatoloi*, at first, avoided re-

8 F. Adanır, 'Heiduckentum und osmanische Herrschaft; Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte der Diskussion um das frühneuzeitliche Räuberwesen in Südosteuropa', *Südost-Forschungen*, 41 (1982), 43-116; R. van Boeschoten, *From Armatolik to People's Rule: Investigation into the Collective Memory of Rural Greece, 1750-1949*, Amsterdam 1991; M. Vasich, 'The Martoloses in Macedonia', *Macedonian Review*, 7/1 (1977), 30-41; A. Politis, 'Brigandage – excédents économiques – élevage: hypothèses pour une définition de l'interimbrication de ces éléments dans un circuit commun (XVIIIe-XIXe s.)', *Actes du IIe Colloque International d'Histoire; Economies méditerranéennes: équilibres et intercommunications XIIIe-XIXe siècles*, vol. 2, Athens 1985, 155-70; J. C. Alexander, *Brigandage and Public Order in the Morea, 1685-1806*, Athens 1985; S. Asdrachas, 'Quelques aspects du banditisme social en Grèce au XVIIIe siècle', *EB*, 4 (1972), 97-112.

9 A. Vakalopoulos, *Historia tou Neou Hellenismou* [History of Modern Hellenism], vol. 5, Thessaloniki 1980, 325-26, 328, 336.

belling and were dragged into the Revolution when they could not do otherwise, as in the districts of Aitolia and Acarnania.¹⁰

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Why, then, and under what conditions did the klephts and *armatoloi* participate in the Revolution? Greek traditional historiography took the national sentiments of the klephts and *armatoloi* for granted, even characterising their actions as the principal form of armed national resistance throughout the period of Ottoman rule. Consequently, it considered their participation in the Revolution to be self-evident and comprehensible.¹¹ On the other hand, more recent studies interpret the Revolution in the light of a series of interlinked factors: a) the economic – in fact mostly commercial – progress of the Orthodox Christian population of the Empire during the eighteenth century and the incidental financial crisis of the two decades prior to the Revolution, and b) parallel developments in education, and the formulation and dissemination of a modern Greek national identity and the revolutionary ideas of the French Revolution.¹² Klephts and *armatoloi* do not easily fit in with this interpretation. Although they did not remain totally immune to economic and intellectual developments or to the spread of revolutionary ideas, it seems that the influence of these factors was not so significant as to lead them to participate in the Revolution. There are very few contemporary studies on this subject; furthermore, their arguments and conclusions have not been adequately incorporated into the Greek historiography on the Revolution of 1821.¹³

It is my belief that klephts and *armatoloi* were prompted to participate in the Revolution because of a dual crisis having to do with:

A. The persecution that they had been subjected to by Ottoman and local authorities during the 30 years prior to the Revolution.

10 *Historia tou hellenikou ethnous* [History of the Greek Nation], vol. 12, Athens 1975, 112.

11 Vakalopoulos, *Historia*, 28-29; *Historia tou hellenikou ethnous*.

12 V. Kremmydas, 'Proepanastatikes pragmatikotetes: he oikonomike krise kai he poreia pros to Eikosiena' [Pre-Revolutionary Realities: The Economic Crisis and the Road to the Greek Revolution of 1821], *Mnemon*, 24 (2002), 71-84; G. Hering, 'Zum Problem der Ursachen Revolutionärer Erhebungen am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts', in *Nostos: Gesammelte Schriften zur südosteuropäischen Geschichte*, Frankfurt 1995, 363-78; K. T. Dimaras, *Neohellenikos Diaphotismos* [Modern Greek Enlightenment], Athens 1977; idem, *La Grèce au temps des Lumières*, Geneva 1969.

13 D. Skiotis, 'Mountain Warriors and the Greek Revolution', in V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (eds), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, London 1975, 308-29; N. C. Pappas, *Greeks in Russian Military Service in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, Thessaloniki 1991, 288-324. For the Souliots, a warlike Christian tribe of Epirus, see V. Psimouli, 'Hoi Souliotes sta Eptanesa' [The Souliots in the Ionian Islands], *Ta Historika*, 38 (2003), 27-48. The present study owes a great deal to Psimouli's outstanding paper, which served both as a source of inspiration as well as a guide in approaching the issue under study.

- B. The crisis caused in their areas by the conflict between the Sultan and Tepedelenli Ali Paşa in 1820-21.

The First Crisis¹⁴

As of the late seventeenth century, the Sublime Porte had taken various measures to deal with the problem of bandits and the insubordination of the *armatoloi*. In 1722 it proceeded to dismantle the institution of *armatoloi* in the northern Balkan regions, but in central Greece (that is, southern Macedonia, Thessaly, Epirus and Sterea Hellada¹⁵) the institution was maintained, while at the same time banditry became more widespread on a considerable scale, as in the Peloponnese after 1770.

In 1787, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa was appointed governor of Yanya (Gk. Ioannina) and *derbendat nazırı* (a position in which a pasha had under his jurisdiction all of the *armatoloi*, with the aim of fighting banditry throughout Rumelia). In the years which followed, he obtained all the *paşaliks* of southern Rumelia (Yanya, Tırhala, İnebahtı, Mora, etc.), while for a period he served as the *vali* of Rumelia. Ali Paşa persecuted the klephts and the *armatoloi* alike, particularly during the period between 1799 and 1810. The basic aim of his policy was to impose his absolute rule over the regions that he governed, by subjugating, controlling, or neutralising all opposing forces, such as the powerful Albanian *bey*s and *ağas*, the Christian notables, the powerful *armatoloi* or the semi-autonomous warlike tribes of the Tsamides (Çam) in Thesprotia, and the Souliots. At the same time, he sought to curb banditry effectively, as bandits caused serious economic damage to him personally, as well as to the economy of his *paşalık*. Furthermore, Ali Paşa aimed at the formation of military forces that would be fit for battle, but also loyal to him, and under his full control, as he harboured ambitions of territorial expansion towards the neighbouring *paşaliks* and the Ionian Islands. He was, however, obliged to draw the chief part of his military forces from the irregular ranks of the bandits and the *armatoloi*, Albanians and Greeks, Christians and Muslims alike. Within the framework of implementing the above stra-

14 Certain aspects of the first crisis have been sufficiently analysed by historiography. As far as I am aware, George Dimitrios Frangos and Douglas Dakin were the ones who initially observed the relationship between the unemployment of armed individuals who had found refuge in the Ionian Islands after the disbanding of the Ionian armed corps and their initiation into the Friendly Society; see G. D. Frangos, 'The Philike Etaireia, 1814-1821: A Social and Historical Analysis', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1971, 145, and D. Dakin, *The Greek Struggle for Independence, 1821-1833*, London 1973, 45. A thorough analysis of the issue has been made by Pappas, *Greeks in Russian Military Service*, in particular the chapter on 'The Veterans, the Philike Etaireia and the Greek Revolution' (pp. 293-324). About the persecution of the Souliots in the Ionian Islands, especially after the disbanding of the Ionian armed corps, see V. Psimouli, *Souli kai Souliotes* [Souli and Souliotes], Athens 1998, 336-448; eadem, 'Hoi Souliotes'. A more comprehensive analysis of the crisis, however, is the one by Skiotis, who draws conclusions that correspond to my analysis here. See Skiotis, 'Mountain Warriors', 315-19.

15 Sterea Hellada is a modern term which denotes the area bordering on Epirus, Thessaly and the Peloponnese. It roughly corresponds to the early-nineteenth-century *sancaks* of İnebahtı, Karlıeli, Ağrıboz and, in part, Tırhala.

tegy, Ali Paşa tried to control the klephts and the *armatoloi* on his own account: his aim was not their complete destruction, but their total submission to him, so that, on the one hand, the bandits could be curbed, and on the other, experienced warriors could be secured for his personal army.¹⁶ Thus, Ali Paşa chose to destroy or drive the most powerful among them out of his dominions and to replace them with other, less powerful *armatoloi* to whom he often conceded enough privileges to ensure their loyalty. Particularly during the period from the late 1790s up to approximately 1810, Ali Paşa wiped out a certain number of klephts and *armatoloi*, such as Georgios Vlachopoulos, Katsandonis, the Vlachavas family, the Tsaras family, and the Lazos family. Nevertheless, he forced most of the remaining klephts and *armatoloi* (Varnakiotis, Vlachopoulos, Grivas, Katsikogiannis, Kontogiannis, the Boukouvalas family, but also the Souliots and the Tsamides) to take refuge in the Ionian Islands, while some others took refuge in the Aegean Islands, and engaged in piracy. During the same period, Ali Paşa chose to support a new generation of *armatoloi*, such as Bakolas, Koutelidas, Tsongas, Giannakis Georgiou, Deligiannis, and Odysseas Androutsos. He also supported those of the older *armatoloi* who remained loyal to him, such as Karaiskos and Stornaris.¹⁷

At approximately the same time, mainly between 1802 and 1806, a systematic persecution of klephts was carried out in the Peloponnese. Following a sultanic decree (which ordered the wiping out of bandits) and the excommunication of the klephts by the Patriarch,¹⁸ the Ottoman authorities of the Morea, in collaboration with the local notables and, moreover, with manifest popular support, eliminated several klephts (among whom were the most powerful klephts of the Morea, such as Zacharias and many of the Kolokotronis family), and forced the rest to take refuge in the Ionian Islands.¹⁹

Short thereafter, the Sultan appointed Hacı Osman Paşa and Kütahyalı (or Kütahî) Reşid Mehmed Paşa as governors of Crete, with a mission to suppress the illegal activities of the janissaries (mainly the *yerli*) and the bandits. In fact, from 1812 up to approximately the Revolution of 1821, many bandits and janissaries were wiped out or forced to flee the island. Here also, the support of the locals proved decisive for the success of this policy.²⁰

16 See also *ibid.*, 317-18.

17 For these issues, see G. Arsh, *He Alyvania kai he Epeiros sta tele tou 18ou kai stis arches tou 19ou aiona: ta dytikovalkanika pasalikia tes Othomanikes Autokratourias* [Albania and Epirus in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: The Western Balkan *Paşaliks* of the Ottoman Empire], trans. A. Dialla, Athens 1994; S. P. Aravantinos, *Historia Ale pasa tou Tepelenle* [History of Ali Paşa of Tepedelen], vol. 2, Athens 1895 (reprint: Athens 2000); Psimouli, *Souli kai Souliotes*.

18 T. Kandeloros, 'Ho aphorismos ton armatolon kata to 1805' [The Excommunication of the *Armatoloi* in 1805], in *Ho armatolismos tes Peloponnesou* [The *Armatolos* System in the Peloponnese], Athens 1990, in the appendix with separate page numbering 3-10, reprinted from the journal *Malevos*, 36-38 (1924).

19 Alexander, *Brigandage and Public Order*, 89-101; M. Sakellariou, *He Peloponnesos kata ten Deuteron Tourkokratian (1715-1821)* [The Peloponnese during the Second Period of Ottoman Rule (1715-1821)], Athens 1939, 236-44.

20 N. Stavriniadis, *Ho kapetan Michalis Korakas kai hoi sympolemistes tou* [Kapetan Michalis Korakas and his Com-

Given that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, simultaneous and effective persecution of klephts, *armatoloi* and janissaries in southern Rumelia, the Morea and Crete is observed for the first time, it cannot be considered a coincidence, or be attributed simply to the capability of local authorities. It is obvious that that was a set of co-ordinated actions envisaged and executed in the context of reformatory efforts undertaken by sultans such as Selim III and Mahmud II with a view to modernising the Empire and its institutions. Part of this policy are also subsequent actions of the Sublime Porte, such as the disbanding of the janissaries in 1826, the abolition of the institution of the *sipahis* and the *timar* system in 1826-31, as well as the creation of a regular army in 1792 and again in 1826, the extermination of powerful provincial pashas, such as Ali Paşa of Yanya in 1820-22 and the Buşatlıs of İşkodra (Alb. Shkodër) in northern Albania in 1831-32, the elimination of bandit chiefs and *armatoloi* in Epirus and Thessaly by Kütahyalı Reşid Mehmed Paşa in 1829-32, etc.²¹ In the cases of the Peloponnese and Crete, sultanic *fermans* bear testimony to the intentions and involvement of the Sublime Porte, which initiated action. In central Greece, too, the correspondence and reports of Ali Paşa to the Sultan confirm that the Sublime Porte was very much interested and involved in solving the problem of banditry.²² However, the activity of the klephts and the *armatoloi* could not be curbed without the collaboration, or at least the consent, of the local communities where they operated. In the Peloponnese and in Crete a wide social alliance was actually formed, resulting in the klephts not being able to find asylum and refuge anywhere.²³ In Rumelia, too, in spite of the existence of greater resistance, Ali Paşa eventually managed to check local klephts and *armatoloi*. Taking into consideration the continuous flow of correspondence between the authorities of the Ionian Islands and Epirus, the problems caused by bandits to

rades-in-Arms], vol. 1, Herakleio 1971, 49-73; I. D. Mourellos, *Historia tes Kretes* [History of Crete], Herakleio 1931, 312-27; V. Psilakis, *Historia tes Kretes* [History of Crete], vol. 3, Chania 1909, 188-98.

- 21 B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London 1961, 55-104; S. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Selim III, 1789-1807*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971; B. McGowan, 'The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, Cambridge 1994, 645; D. Quataert, 'The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914', in İnalcık with Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History*, 765-69; Arsh, *He Alvania*, 317-55; P. Aravantinos, *Chronographia tes Epeirou* [Chronicle of Epirus], vol. 1, Athens 1856, 383-95; D. Tzakis, 'Armatolismos, syggenika diktya kai ethniko kratos: hoi oreines eparchies tes Artas sto proto emisy tou 19ou aiona' [Armatolism, Family Networks and Nation State: The Mountain Provinces of Arta in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Panteio University, Athens 1997, 199.
- 22 See, for instance, I. Vasdravellis (ed.), *Historika Archeia Makedonias. A. Archeion Thessalonikes, 1695-1912* [Historical Archives of Macedonia. I. The Archive of Salonica, 1695-1912], Thessaloniki 1952, 388-89 (decree by Ali Paşa [1803]); N. Sarris, 'Organose kai leitourgia ton dervenion' [Organisation and Operation of the *Derbends*], in V. Filias (ed.), *Problematismoi kai episemansois I* [Reflections and Remarks I], Athens 1997, 222 (report by Ali Paşa to the Sublime Porte [12 April 1811]).
- 23 Alexander, *Brigandage and Public Order*, 89-93; T. Kolokotronis, *Diegesis symvanton tes hellenikes phyles (Apo-mmoneumata)* [Narration of Events of the Hellenic Race (Memoirs)], ed. T. Vournas, Athens n.d., 120-28.

expanding commerce may be taken to be one of the main factors which contributed to the acquiescence of local populations in combating banditry. As the amount of commercial products which were transported from one region to another increased, and as more and more sections of society, from simple producers to high-ranking Ottoman officials, joined the chain of commerce, the lack of safety in the countryside constituted a serious factor in the constraints on commercial development.²⁴

The klephts, the *armatoloi* and the Souliots who took refuge in the Ionian Islands were faced with serious problems. There were a few chieftains who had bought houses in the Ionian Islands and even fewer who had bought land or small ships,²⁵ but the overwhelming majority had no means of survival and had no knowledge of other occupations, except those of warrior and shepherd. The Ionian Islands had little need for shepherds, though. Land for cultivation was granted to several Souliots, but highland warriors were not willing to change their way of life and become farmers. Many began to commit thefts, while others would make clandestine crossings to the coast across the water, carry out raids and then return to the safety of the islands. Their behaviour created problems and turmoil in the life of the islands, as well as with the Ottoman authorities. The European powers which occupied the Ionian Islands (Russians, French, and British) needed armed forces as, during this period of the Napoleonic Wars, a great part of their armies was occupied at other war fronts. So they took advantage of the large number of armed individuals available in the Ionian Islands in order to form military corps for the defence of the islands. In this way, they gained armed forces which were fit for battle and, at the same time, they curbed a source of disturbance on the islands, as they provided the unemployed armed refugees with means of survival. Likewise, those *armatoloi* from the regions of Macedonia and Thessaly who took refuge in Russia served in the Greek armed forces that the Russians formed. Yet others joined the corps which were being formed in the kingdom of Naples by refugee klephts. The Napoleonic wars generally offered a wide range of employment opportunities to klephts and *armatoloi*.²⁶ It appears that the num-

24 P. Rontogiannis, *Historia tes nesou Leukados* [History of the Island of Leukada], vol. 2, Athens 1982, 108-56; Politis, 'Brigandage', 159.

25 To the best of my knowledge, Georgakis Varnakiotis was the only *armatolos* who owned land in the Ionian Islands. He also had a small ship, as did Kostas Botsaris. See E. Protopsaltis, 'Politikai diaprugmateuseis kai synthekai metaxy Eptanesou Politeias kai Ale Pasa (1800-1807)' [Political Negotiations and Treaties between the Septinsular State and Ali Paşa (1800-1807)], *Praktika Tritou Panioniou Synedriou, 23-29 Septemvriou 1965* [Acts of the Third Panionian Congress, 23-29 September 1965], vol. 1, Athens 1967, 341; D. Oikonomou, *Archeion tou Strategou Kosta Botsare* [Archive of General Kostas Botsaris], Athens 1934, 189-90.

26 Pappas, *Greeks in Russian Military Service*; A. Boppe, *L'Albanie et Napoléon (1797-1814)*, Paris 1914, 219-69; Psimouli, 'Hoi Souliotes'; K. Rados, *Hoi Souliotai kai hoi armatoloi en Eptaneso* [The Souliots and the *Armatoloi* in the Ionian Islands], Athens 1916; idem, *Hoi Hellenes tou Napoléontos: ta hypo ton Napoléonta hellenika strateumata* [Napoleon's Greeks: Greek Troops under Napoleon], Athens 1916; K. Avgitidis, *Ethelontika stratiotika tmemata apo Hellenes tes Rosias kata tes Othomanikes autokratias prin kai meta to 1821* [Voluntary Mili-

ber of men who at any given time participated in such corps was quite large: in the years between 1800 and 1810 it must have exceeded 6,000 men.²⁷ If we bear in mind that during the Greek Revolution, except maybe during the first year, the number of armed people rarely exceeded 20,000 men at any time, we can understand the significance of this number. The largest encampment throughout the duration of the Revolution was the one which was set up by Georgios Karaiskakis around the besieged Acropolis of Athens in 1827: it consisted of approximately 10,000-12,000 men.²⁸

However, with the gradual occupation of the Ionian Islands by the British, between 1809 and 1814, and the end of the Napoleonic Wars, most of these corps disbanded sooner or later. Thus, in 1814, the Skirmishers of the East (Chasseurs d'Orient), which the French had founded, broke up, in 1814-17 the two Greek Light Infantry Regiments, which the British had formed, disbanded, and in 1820 the Macedonian Regiment of the Kingdom of Naples and the Two Sicilies, and the Greek Battalion of Odessa were also dismantled.²⁹

tary Corps of Greeks from Russia against the Ottoman Empire before and after the Greek Revolution of 1821], Athens 1993; L. Kallivretakis, 'Enopla hellenika somata ste dine ton Napoleonteion polemon (1798-1815)' [Greek Armed Corps in the Vortex of the Napoleonic Wars (1798-1815)], in V. Panayotopoulos (ed.), *Historia tou Neou Hellenismou, 1770-2000* [History of Modern Hellenism, 1770-2000], vol. 1, Athens 2003, 185-200; K. Nikas, 'Hoi Peloponnesioi sto 'Makedoniko Syntagma' ton Vourvonon tes Neapoleos' [Peloponnesians in the 'Macedonian Regiment' of the Bourbons of Naples], *Praktika tou 3ou Diethnous Synedriou Peloponnesiakon Spoudon* [Acts of the Third International Conference of Peloponnesian Studies], vol. 3, Athens 1987-88, 337-51; A. Papakostas (ed.), *Apomnemoneumata Souliotou agonistou tou Eikosiena (S. Tzipi)* [Memoirs of a Souliot Fighter of the Greek Revolution of 1821 (S. Tzipis)], Athens 1979, 42-43.

- 27 In 1807, 4,091 Greeks served in the Russian army in the Ionian Islands (see Arsh, *He Alvania*, 238 n. 156). During the same year, 500 men served in the French Battaillon des Chasseurs d'Orient (see Pappas, *Greeks in Russian Military Service*, 355). Four hundred or, according to other sources, 1,500 men served in the Greek corps, established by N. Pangalos, which participated in the Russian-Ottoman war in Wallachia in 1807 (see Avgitidis, *Ethelontika Somata*, 96). Approximately 670 men, excluding officers, served in the Greek battalion in Odessa, Russia, during the same period (*ibid.*, 56). In 1807 there were three more Greek military units in European countries: the Greek battalion of Balaklava in Russia, the Battaglione dei Cacciatori Macedoni in the Kingdom of Naples, and the Regimento Macedone also in the Kingdom of Naples (*ibid.*, 75-79; Pappas, *Greeks in Russian Military Service*, 354). By conservative calculations, the total number of men in the above mentioned corps came to at least 6,500. A majority among them later participated in the Revolution of 1821. Christians originating from the Ottoman Empire, who spoke various languages such as Greek, Albanian, Vlach, etc. are referred to as "Greeks" in the above corps. In the sources of the time, these units are called Greek or, alternatively, Albanian or Macedonian.
- 28 G. Margaritis, 'Ton kairo ton phtochon Hellenon' [In the Time of the Poor Greeks], weekly newspaper *He Epoche*, 27 March 1994; Vakalopoulos, *Historia*, vol. 7, 299-303; idem, *Ta hellenika strateumata tou 1821* [The Greek Troops of the Revolution of 1821], Thessaloniki 1991, 228; S. Papageorgiou, *He stratotike politike tou Kapodistria* [The Military Policy of John Capodistria], Athens 1986, 45-47.
- 29 Rados, *Hoi Hellenes*, 49-50; Pappas, *Greeks in Russian Military Service*, 284-86; Nikas, 'Hoi Peloponnesioi', 351; Avgitidis, *Ethelontika*, 56; Kolokotronis, *Diegesis*, 143; J. Capodistria, *Letter to the Tsar Nicholas I*, London 1977, 92-93 (first edition in French: *Aperçu de ma carrière publique depuis 1798 jusqu'à 1822*, St Petersburg 1868).

Many of the men who served in these corps were made redundant and were left with no means of survival. Thus, in the years between 1810 and 1820, many former klephts and *armatoloi* who had been discharged from these corps were obliged to return to Ali Paşa's dominion and declare their submission to him in order to regain *armatolikia* (districts under the control of *armatoloi*), or to serve in military corps that Ali had formed in Yanya, such as the *tsochadaraioi* (*çuhadarlar*).³⁰ However, by that time they had become totally dependent on Ali Paşa and had no scope for operating autonomously. They were directly subject to Ali's command, by whom they were appointed and dismissed. Furthermore, many relatives of chieftains were obliged to live in Yanya, functioning essentially as hostages who guaranteed the compliance of the appointed *armatoloi* with Ali's rule.

Nevertheless, large numbers of those warriors who had served in foreign military corps were unable to return and be employed in the service of Ali Paşa. They lived in the Ionian Islands, Russia, Wallachia and Moldavia, and many of them actually starved.³¹ Some of them made efforts to practise some occupation, usually without success: for instance, Theodoros Kolokotronis, later commander-in-chief of the Greek Revolution, became a butcher.³² Those of them who lived on the Ionian Islands were envious of those who had managed to regain *armatolikia* in the Ottoman territories, and sought ways to return to the glorious days of the past: in 1817 Theodoros Kolokotronis wrote a letter to G. Varnakiotis, who had obtained an *armatoliki* in Akarnania: "You have gained your fatherland and you eat meat without weighing it, while I have neither found it, nor is it likely that I am going to, and we weigh the meat we eat, and for this I bear a grievance against you, because one who is satiated does not believe one who is hungry. However, that is what the world is like, and I pray to God to hear that my friends and compatriots are doing well, even if they eat lamb while I eat cow meat".³³

As the borders between the British-controlled Ionian Islands and the Ottoman state were firmly and effectively guarded, unemployed warriors did not have the opportunity to carry out raids on Ottoman territories and then return to the safety of the islands. Still, small groups would enter

30 Characteristic is the case of Ali Paşa's campaign against Berat in 1809-10 in which, according to a folk song, the *armatoloi* Karaiskos, Grivas, Tsongas, Varnakiotis, Diakos, Panourgias, Boukouvalas, Skilodimos, Kontogiannis took part. With the exception of Diakos and Panourgias, the others had been cast out by Ali Paşa, taken refuge in the Ionian Islands and participated in Ionian military corps or in the unit that had been set up for the defence of Leukada against Ali Paşa. See C. Fauriel, *Greek Folk Songs*, ed. A. Politis, vol. 1, Herakleio 1998, 208.

31 Capodistria, *Letter*, 114; Psimouli, 'Hoi Souliotes', 45-47; I. Philimon, *Dokimion historikon peri tes hellenikes epanastaseos* [Historical Treatise on the Greek Revolution], vol. 1, Athens 1859, 132.

32 G. Vlachogiannis, *Historike Anthologia* [Historical Anthology], ed. A. Aggelou, Athens 2000, 322, 539.

33 N. Physentzidis, *Anekdotoi autographoi epistolai ton episemoteron hellenon oplarchegon kai diaphora pros autous eggrapha tes Dioikeseos* [Unpublished Handwritten Letters of the Greatest Greek Military Leaders and Several Documents of the Government to Them], Alexandria 1893, 49-50.

Ottoman territories and carry out small-scale banditry. In this way, though, they were in danger of being arrested, and the spoils were not adequate for them to subsist on.³⁴

Generally, of the klephts and *armatoloi* who up to the end of the eighteenth century had great power, in the days leading to the Revolution those who had been driven out from the continental regions were weakened and impoverished, while those who had *armatolikia* were totally dependent on Ali Paşa. On the Ionian Islands and in Russia, former klephts and *armatoloi* came in contact, albeit to a limited extent, with circles in which the revolutionary ideas spread by the French Revolution circulated. It cannot be claimed that they were influenced in essence by revolutionary French and national ideas, but at least these ideas were no longer foreign to them.³⁵ Besides, they served in armies which had been formed, to a certain extent, on European standards, they had acquired war experience, and had faced Ottoman and European military forces with a fair amount of success. In Yanya, the Ionian Islands and Russia, armed individuals from many different and remote regions came in contact with one another and created networks of contact and bonds of solidarity. Thus, they were susceptible to movements which could provide a solution to their problems, as well as opportunities for social ascent or, at least, return to the good old times.³⁶ Indeed, the Friendly Society, the organisation which paved the way for the Revolution, was fairly popular among the armed circles of the diaspora (Ionian Islands, Russia, Wallachia and Moldavia) and it is from those circles that it attracted distinguished cadres, such as Theodoros Kolokotronis, Anagnostaras, Elias Chrysospathis, Georgakis Olympios, who accomplished remarkable feats in proselytising new members. In contrast, it seems that the Society had a very small presence among the *armatoloi* who lived in central Greece (Sterea Hellada, Thessaly and Epirus). Kolokotronis, Anagnostaras, Chrysospathis and other chieftains along with certain other members of the Friendly Society, such as Papaphlessas, are the ones who eventually came to organise the Revolution in the Peloponnese and pushed for its urgent outbreak against the initial reluctance of the local notables.

34 The examples of the Souliot family of Tzipis and of the Petmezas family are indicative. See Papakostas, *Apomnemonemata Souliotou*, 51-55; A. Photopoulos, *Historika ton Petmezaion: anekdota egrapha ton Genikon Archeion tou Kratous* [Narrative Accounts about the Petmezas Family: Unpublished Documents from the General State Archives of Greece], Athens 1982, 12-13, 60.

35 The propagation of the revolutionary and national ideas in the Ionian Islands was widespread after their occupation by the Republican French in 1797. Although it was written many years after the relevant events, it is worth citing Kolokotronis' view: "The French Revolution and Napoleon opened up, in my opinion, the eyes of the people. Previously nations were not known, they considered their kings to be gods on earth, and whatever they did, they considered it well done. That is why it is now more difficult to govern the people"; see Kolokotronis, *Diegesis*, 144. Kolokotronis' memoirs were written down by G. Tertsetis in 1836.

36 Skiotis, 'Mountain Warriors', 319.

The Second Crisis

The second crisis that affected the klephts and *armatoloi* of Rumelia in the days leading up to the Revolution was marked by the juncture at which the Revolution occurred. More specifically, this crisis had to do with the armed conflict between Ali Paşa and the Sultan which broke out in the summer of 1820. The involvement of the *armatoloi* in this conflict seems to have played a catalytic role with regard to their participation in the Revolution.³⁷

At first, the *armatoloi*, being dependent on Ali Paşa, promised that they would help him and fight against the Sultan's troops.³⁸ However, when the Sultan's troops approached their regions, most of them declared submission to the imperial centre, with a view to maintaining their *armatolikia*, as the forces of the Sultan's army outnumbered them, and it seemed apparent that they would easily and quickly prevail over Ali Paşa's forces.³⁹ There were, of course, a few *armatoloi* who, since they had close ties to Ali Paşa, shut themselves in the castle in Yanya with him when the Sultan's army laid siege to it.⁴⁰ As Ali Paşa managed to successfully resist the siege for a long

37 Skiotis points out the decisive role of the conflict between Ali Paşa and the Sultan, but ascribes national motives to the activities of the Souliots, and the klephts and the *armatoloi* at the side of Ali Paşa, while he also ascribes a significant role to the organisation of the *armatoloi* of central Greece in active service and the Souliots from the Friendly Society, and to the role played by the members of the Friendly Society in the involvement of the *armatoloi* of central Greece in the Revolution (*ibid.*, 319-29); these views are not corroborated by my research. I believe that, on the contrary, the activities of the above armed individuals have to be attributed mainly to their individual strategies and tactics which were prompted by circumstances. Psimouli makes astute observations in her brief reference to the involvement of the Souliots initially in the war between Ali Paşa and the Sultan and later in the Greek Revolution, in her 'Hoi Souliotes', 47-48.

38 Philimon, *Dokimion*, vol. 2, 237-38; Aravantinos, *Historia Ale Pasa*, 281-84; F. C. H. Pouqueville, *Histoire de la régénération de la Grèce, comprenant le précis des événements depuis 1740 jusqu'en 1824*, vol. 2, Paris 1824, 40-41.

39 Aravantinos, *Historia Ale Pasa*, 288-89; A. Papakostas (ed.), 'Historia tes poliorkias ton Ioanninon 1820-1822 ex anekdotou cheirografou Ath. Psalida' [History of the Siege of Yanya, 1820-1822, from an Unpublished Manuscript by A. Psalidas], *Ho Neos Kouvaras*, 2 (1962), 62-64; E. Prevelakis and K. Kalliataki-Mertikopoulou (eds), *Epirus, Ali Pasha and the Greek Revolution: Consular Reports of William Meyer from Preveza*, vol. 1, Athens 1996, 154; A. Koutsalexis, 'Diaferonta kai perierga tina historemata' [Various Interesting and Strange Stories], in E. Protopsaltis, *Apomnemoneumata agoniston tou 21* [Memoirs of Fighters of the Greek Revolution of 1821], vol. 7, Athens 1956, 238; Arsh, *He Alvania*, 332-35.

40 The case of Odysseas Androutsos is indicative: he first tried to resist the Sultan's troops without success, and then went on to the castle of Yanya where he fought in support of Ali Paşa for a few months. See K. Sathas, 'Odysseus Androutsou', *Chrysallis*, 3 (1865), 228-29; Pouqueville, *Histoire*, 119-21; P. Aravantinos, *Perigraphe tes Epeirou* [Description of Epirus], vol. 2, Ioannina 1984, 221, 224; A. Mufit, *Ali Pasas o Tepelenles* [Tepedelenli Ali Paşa], trans. A. Iordanoglou, Ioannina 1993, 126-27, 133-34; T. Lappas, *Odysseas Androutsos*, Athens n.d., 64-68. Other cases were those of the chieftains Thanasis Vagias and the Souliot Kostas Botsaris, who remained with Ali Paşa until his death.

period of time, hopes were raised of his possible victory over the Sultan's forces.⁴¹ On the other hand, it seems that the new pashas, that is, Ali's successors, favoured replacing certain *armatoloi* with new ones, such as Athanasios Diakos,⁴² Panourgias,⁴³ Dimitris Makris,⁴⁴ and Kostas Poulis.⁴⁵ In any case, the future of most of the *armatoloi* (both older and more recent ones) in the regions formerly under Ali's authority seemed uncertain under the new regime that would follow his fall.⁴⁶ Moreover, the fact that the Sultan's troops lived at the expense of the local population, demanding increased contributions in money and food from them, increased the discontent of the local people, which was conveyed to the local elite, including the *armatoloi*.⁴⁷

When, in May 1821, the Revolution broke out in the Peloponnese, several *armatoloi* felt that its possible spread to their regions could endanger their position. Rival chieftains who did not have *armatolikia* could take advantage of the war and financial crisis and proceed to carry out revolutionary activity in the areas under the responsibility of the appointed *armatoloi*. This threatened the position of the incumbent *armatoloi* in two ways. On the one hand, with regard to the Ottoman authorities, since in this way their ability to maintain peace in their *armatolikia* was being disputed;⁴⁸ on the other hand, to the extent that the Revolution would prevail in their regions, they would lose the power and authority that they had possessed under Ottoman rule to the benefit of the chieftains who had participated in the Revolution. Within this framework, most of the *armatoloi* overcame their reservations and decided to actively participate in the Revolution, assuming the leadership of revolutionary forces in the regions that they controlled.

*

In conclusion: systematic persecution and the imposition of checks on bandits and *armatoloi* by the Ottoman authorities over the twenty-year period immediately before the outbreak of the Greek

41 Prevelakis and Kalliataki-Mertikopoulou, *Epirus*, 255.

42 T. Lappas, *Thanases Diakos*, Athens 1949, 49-56; idem, *Roumeliotes sten Epanastase: B. Demetrios Ainianas, Gero-Panourgias* [Roumeliots in the Greek Revolution: II. Dimitrios Ainianas, Old Panourgias], Athens 1958, 22.

43 Philimon, *Dokimion*, vol. 3 (1860), 421.

44 D. Kambouroglou, *Armatoloi kai klephtes* [Armatoloi and Klephts], Athens [1916], 49-53; P. Paparounis, *To 21 ste D. Roumele kai ho Demetres Makres* [The Greek Revolution of 1821 in South-Western Greece and Dimitris Makris], Athens 1971, 34-35, 369-71.

45 D. Karatzenis, *He mache tou Seltso* [The Battle of Seltso], Athens 1970, 55-56.

46 Philimon, *Dokimion*, vol. 1, 217.

47 Prevelakis and Kalliataki Mertikopoulou, *Epirus*, 255. Taxation in the *sancak* of Karheli (south-western mainland Greece) increased by 261.5% from 1820 to 1821 because of the special taxes imposed in support of the war against Ali Paşa. See G. Konstantinidis, 'To Karheli kai he phorologia autou' [Karheli and its Taxation], *Harmonia*, 1 (1900), 473-74.

48 N. Kotaridis, *Paradosiake epanastase kai Eikosiena* [Traditional Revolution and the Greek Revolution of 1821], Athens 1993, 62-63.

Revolution in 1821, the fact that the opportunities for employment offered by the Napoleonic Wars had come to an end, and, finally, the political and financial crisis caused by the conflict between Ali Paşa and the Sultan led klephts and *armatoloi* to participate in the Revolution. The goals of those who decided to join in were not uniform. For the more impoverished ones, the war provided a means of survival with opportunities for social ascent; for others who were more powerful, the aim was to regain their previous positions and prestige. For the incumbent *armatoloi*, the motive was the maintenance and improvement of their social status. For others, those who had close ties to Ali Paşa, it seems that their wish to support him in his conflict with the Sultan played an important role in their decision to take part. What is beyond any doubt is that the overwhelming majority of the klephts and *armatoloi* did not seek changes in the social structure through their participation in the Revolution. Quite the contrary, they sought to maintain the existing social structure, only that, with the eventual withdrawal of the Muslims and within the new Christian political entity to be formed, they envisaged taking the place previously held by the Ottoman elite. In other words, they wanted to become pashas and *beys* in the place of the original Muslim pashas and *beys*.

BREAKING THE *TETRARCHIA* AND SAVING THE *KAYMAKAM*: TO BE AN AMBITIOUS OTTOMAN CHRISTIAN IN 1821

*Christine Philliou**

We are very used to a particular narrative of Greek nationalism. It begins with Greek Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, continues with Greek proto-nationalism, the establishment of the Friendly Society, and culminates with the Greek Revolution in 1821 and the establishment of the Greek Kingdom in the early 1830s. In making the Greek nation the protagonist of the story, however, we miss out on many dimensions of society and politics in the early to mid-nineteenth century. Greek nationalists and revolutionaries enjoy the spotlight of the story and are defined against the void of the Ottoman Empire. In short, Ottoman politics and society has been obscured from view because of a retrospective (at times anachronistic) focus on Greek nationalism and revolution. I propose we take a different approach which would allow us to step back from the national story and think about the culture and dynamics of Ottoman politics, and the ways Ottoman Christians and Greeks fit into this politics on the eve of, during, and just after the Greek Revolution in 1821. First it is necessary to display the limits of the term ‘Greek Revolution’ for our understanding of the Ottoman 1820s.

The Limits of the Greek Revolution

The Greek national story connects the many strands that inexplicably merged to form the Greek Revolution.¹ Three Greek merchants in Odessa formed the Friendly Society in 1814 and recruited

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1 The Greek Revolution has dominated our understanding of the 1820s in part because of the silence in Ottoman/Turkish historiography regarding this crucial decade. The modernization/decline paradigm in Ottoman/Turkish historiography fixes a narrative around top-down reforms, beginning with the Nizam-ı Cedid of Se-

hundreds more from within and outside the Ottoman Empire in five years toward the goal of Greek national liberation from Ottoman rule and with the false promise of Russian backing. After an aborted insurrection in Moldavia, where they had hoped the Romanian peasants would fight in solidarity with Greeks, the Greek Revolution moved to the Peloponnese. There, an alliance between the Greek cleric- and merchant-run Friendly Society, enlightened Phanariot Greeks, the Greek merchant marine, Greek peasants, priests, and local notables of the Peloponnese and Epirus, fought with moral and financial support from Greeks living in Europe and from European Philhellenes, and ultimately with the help and ‘tutelage’ of states like Britain, France, and Russia. The Ottoman Empire is usually presented as a faceless void – ‘the Turks’ – fought against for several years after the declaration of independence in 1821, until the establishment of a Greek Kingdom under Great Power guarantee in 1832.² A collection of heroes, martyrs, and villains serve as decontextualized reference points in the national struggle: Ali Paşa, the Albanian tyrant in Epirus and unlikely ally of the Greeks; the martyred Patriarch Grigorios V, hung from the door of the Patriarchate on Easter Sunday 1821; warriors like Kolokotronis and Mavrogiannis on land and Kanaris by sea; Bouboulina, the island widow who launched her own fleet against the Turks from Spetses; Alexander and Dimitrios Hypsilantis, who kicked off the struggle in Moldavia and then the Peloponnese, respectively; and, Father Germanos, the priest who raised the standard of insurrection at Patras on March 25th, 1821 (also the Orthodox Christian holiday commemorating Christ’s Annunciation).³

While the above summary is of course a simplification of the classical story of the Greek Revolution, it does express the two main features of national historiography regarding the 1820s.

lim III from the 1790s, disappearing from his execution in 1808 and stopping briefly at the Serbian rebellion of 1804, Greek Revolution of 1821, and destruction of the janissaries in 1826. The narrative culminates in the 1839 and 1856 rounds of the more comprehensive Tanzimat reforms. The thread tying all of these moments together is not the dynamics within Ottoman society or between Ottoman state and society, but the entrance of Western ideas and technology into the Empire, which precipitated these top-down changes. Because Greek national historiography has given more attention to the 1820s Greek Revolution than Ottoman/Turkish historiography has, we focus here on the limits of the phrase ‘Greek Revolution’ for understanding the Ottoman 1820s.

- 2 See R. Clogg, *A Concise History of Modern Greece*, Cambridge 1992; C. M. Woodhouse, *The Greek War of Independence*, London 1952; P. H. Paroulakis, *The Greek War of Independence*, Darwin, NT 2000.
- 3 C. and B. Jelavich, in *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, Seattle 1993, offer a more dispassionate alternative to the national narrative of the Greek Revolution. They point out that civil war between ‘Greek’ factions was going on in parallel with the ‘Revolution’ against Ottoman rule, and differentiate between the “outer world of the merchant, the Phanariote [sic] and the diaspora, and the inner world of mainland Greece with its military elements and its peasant people” (39). Because the Revolution was a coincidence of several kinds of conflict (many highly localized), they argue, no strong military or political leader emerged (in contrast with the peasant rebellion of Serbians which produced Karageorge) and the ‘united national government’ headed by Capodistria in 1827 floundered, only to be replaced by European ‘tutelage’. Still, their concern is with the formation of new Balkan states, not with the Ottoman imperial context.

First, the category ‘Greek’ is taken as discreet, transparent, and unchanging. There was never a question of who belonged on which side, according to the historiography; ‘Greeks’ fought against ‘Turks’ and eventually won a state of their own. Second, there is an assumed plan and intentionality underlying the telling of events in the Revolution. Despite, as we will see below, the makeshift alliances that were struck and the many contingencies involved, the Revolution, according to national historiography, had a planning stage, an execution stage, and a predestined victory that led to an independent state. Even with the hint of the complexity of Ottoman politics and society that follow in this paper, there are several reasons to re-examine the term ‘Greek Revolution’ and the concepts that underlie it.⁴

‘Greek’

The very term ‘Greek’ for the Revolution in 1821 is problematic for several reasons. Although there were people who used the term ‘Graikos’ or ‘Hellene’ in the early nineteenth century, most of them lived outside the Ottoman Empire (in France, Italian states, and Russia) and had begun using the term self-consciously in the hopes of appealing to European neo-classicists and reviving an ancient Greek past. Within the Ottoman Empire, the term ‘Rum’ (in Turkish) or ‘Romios’ (in Greek) was used to mean Orthodox Christian subject of the Ottoman Empire – a term which recalled their descent from the Byzantine, or Eastern *Roman* Empire. Once independence was established, the term ‘Greek’ became useful to differentiate between subjects of the new Greek/Bavarian king and Orthodox Christian subjects of the Ottoman Sultan. Before that time, however, the category ‘Greek’ was more an imagined concept and less a social or political reality.⁵ For this reason, when we hold the category ‘Greek’ to the social realities of the time, several questions arise.

If we assume that the term ‘Greek’ was meant to encompass only those Orthodox Christians who took part in the rebellion against the Ottoman State, and equate the term with a nation, as is done in the national narrative, then this implies that there was a ready-made Greek nation with discreet geographic, religious-ethnic, and linguistic boundaries. One problem with this was the geographic dispersal of Orthodox Christians – from Transylvania to Crete, from today’s Albania to eastern Asia Minor – throughout the Ottoman Empire. They lived in local communities, under a

4 The Ottoman/Turkish national narrative also works to obscure our understanding of the 1820s, albeit for different reasons. In this narrative, the significance of the Revolution and of Phanariots is underestimated to give priority to Muslim state and society. The Greek Revolution is seen either as a symptom of decline and of the intrusion of western ideas into the Ottoman Empire, or as a betrayal by inherently untrustworthy Greeks.

5 This is not to say that the term ‘Greek’ was insignificant or to dismiss it as a category for those who were using it at the time. To take the term as unproblematic, however, is to ignore the social and imperial context out of which insurgents were operating. It is that context which concerns us here.

wide range of circumstances, and even those who spoke forms of Greek spoke highly variant (and not always mutually intelligible) dialects. Many Orthodox Christian communities, such as those in Cappadocia (who did not speak Greek but only Turkish), the (Greek-speaking) islands of Chios and Mytilene, and Izmir, did not rise up to support Greek insurgents.

Another related problem with the equation of ‘Greek’ with a nation was the variable of social groups. As we shall see, elite Phanariots were bringing increasing numbers of men and their families into the Phanariot complex and employing them in Phanariot retinues.⁶ They administered a Romanian-speaking population of peasants in the Principalities. Their retinues, furthermore, were socially differentiated, organized into an intricate social and political hierarchy that grew out of the realities of Ottoman government and the culture of the Orthodox Church. They were not a horizontal, national group and those at the acme of power did not share common interests with those of middling ranks. Furthermore, families – not individuals – at all levels of the complex were the socio-political units in competition for power and influence. All of these features of the Phanariot complex would prevent a common sense of belonging and the development of a common revolutionary project. Many members of the Phanariot complex did not take part in the Greek Revolution.

Thirdly, even among those who fought on the side of the Greeks there was considerable ethnic and linguistic diversity. Phanariots were drawing in Balkan Christians of many ethnic backgrounds – Albanian, Vlach, Bulgarian – educating them in Greek, and training them to enter the Phanariot-run bureaucracy. Just as many Greek Christians did not necessarily consider themselves to be of one ‘nation’ with all other Greeks, so many ‘hellenized’ Albanians, Vlachs, and Bulgarians could become the most dedicated of *Greek* patriots in 1821. Athanasios Vogoridis was one such example; a Hellenized Bulgarian who finished secondary school in Wallachia and moved on to medical school in Austria, only to become a figure in the movement for Greek language reform and political liberation run out of Paris by Adamantios Korais.

Aside from the ‘ideological’ dimension of Hellenism that drew in members of other ethnicities, the decision to fight on the side of the Greeks did not have to involve reconstituting one’s identity. The make-up of Alexander Hyspilotis’ partisans in Moldavia was a reminder both of the society where the Phanariot hospodars had ruled and of the flagging capacity of the Ottoman state. ‘Greek’ forces fighting with Hyspilotis included Cossacks, Albanians,⁷ pandours

6 See C. Philliou, ‘Worlds, Old and New: Phanariot Networks and the Remaking of Ottoman Governance in the First Half of the 19th Century’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2004.

7 Hyspilotis’ chief lieutenant, for instance, was Iordaki, “a man of Albanian origin who had belonged to the princely bodyguard” (R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians; From Roman Times to the Completion of Unity*, Cambridge 1963, 196).

(Romanian-speaking peasants), and Slavs (such as commanders Sava, Makedonski, and Petko). There were also many names familiar to the Istanbul circles of Phanariots: Kantakouzinis, Ghikas, and Doukas. Some of the titles that had been proliferating in the years leading up to 1821 also appeared in the ranks of Hetairist fighters: Komisos (Count), and Polkovnic, for instance. Many soldiers, furthermore, were not old enough to have decided on their first, let alone second identity. At the battle for Jassy in June of 1821, for instance, the 300 Greek ‘patriots’ were boys between the ages of 15 and 18.⁸ Some even switched sides in the middle of the conflict; such was the case with Sava Binbaşı, military commander in Moldavia who, disgusted with the behavior of Hypsilantis and others, switched back to the side of the Ottoman state and fought the Greek-aligned insurgents.⁹

Hellenization, then, was not a prerequisite for the many Albanians fighting on the side of the Greeks. The term ‘Albanian’ had been used synonymously with ‘bodyguard’ or local militia for Phanariots in the Principalities. Many ‘Albanians’ (and other groups) were also professional brigands throughout the Balkans, who would fight on the side of the highest bidder. Albanians, in fact, could be found on both sides of the Greek Revolution – they were members of many Greek guerrilla bands, as well as the rank and file in Mehmed Ali and his son İbrahim Paşa’s (themselves Albanians) Egyptian-trained army who entered battle against ‘Greek’ insurgents in 1825. Like the paid extras in the Phanariot hospodar parades before 1821 in Istanbul, soldiers could be hired out for guerrilla bands on either side of the conflict.¹⁰

The question of Albanian involvement on both sides of the Greek Revolution begs the question of who belonged to the opposing category of ‘Turk’ as well. Was it synonymous with the Ottoman state? If so, then Phanariots had been ‘Turks’ when they put down Christian rebellions and until the moment they fled or joined the side of the Greeks. Was it all Muslims? If so, then Ali Paşa’s support of Greek rebels appears problematic. Was it Turkish-speaking people? If so, then the many Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians would have to be excluded from the Greek nation (and were until the twentieth century).

On the side of the Ottoman forces in the Moldavian field of battle could be (and were) Serbian priests, Albanian irregulars/mercenaries, Anatolian peasants raised by their chieftain or governor, and of course janissaries, many of whom had hailed from the Balkans even if several generations back. The composition of the Ottoman forces, too, reflected a kind of patchwork – in

8 T. Gordon, ‘The Campaign of Ypsilantis in the Danubian Principalities in the Year 1821’ from an unpublished contemporary manuscript, London 1922.

9 “An hour before he set out from Pilesci [Moldavia], the commander [Doukas] was informed that Sava had joined the Turks, having received 40 of them as a pledge, and that the Turks were coming in pursuit of his army” (ibid.).

10 See Philliou, ‘Worlds, Old and New’, Chapter I.

this case it was a patchwork put together in the grey areas between Ottoman state and society.

From this short discussion of the term ‘Greek,’ we can see that the category was not discreet, transparent, or unchanging. Those who fought with the insurgents included people from various ethnicities, and not all those who could be termed ‘Greek’ by modern definitions of nation fought in the Greek Revolution. The term ‘Greek’, then, was and is a category used to veil the many types of allegiances and dilemmas – family, local, religious, civic – that came into play for Ottoman subjects in the early nineteenth century.¹¹ The term ‘Greek’ is limited in its usefulness for us because it does not help us explain the decisions of some individuals to take part on the ‘Greek’ side, of others to fight against the insurgents, and still others not to take part at all. Likewise, the term ‘Revolution’ is used to fit a chaotic series of events into a simple template and a predestined outcome.

‘Revolution’

The term ‘Revolution’ limits our understanding of the Ottoman 1820s in a number of ways as well.¹² Such a term implies 1) that the uprisings were premeditated and coordinated, that there was a planning, execution, and victory phase built into them, and 2) that there was either an overturning of the central power or the achievement of independence from that power. In actuality, many kinds of uprisings broke out, without coordination, in several locations of the Empire, and it was unclear to the participants whether the Greek Revolution (or Albanian, or Romanian Revolution) would be taking place in Moldavia, Epirus, or the Peloponnese until well into the conflict.

The conventional story begins, as mentioned above, with the establishment of the Friendly Society by three impoverished merchants in Odessa in 1814. They are portrayed as the vanguard of the Revolution, for they were living outside the Empire, were merchants with ‘western’ education and ideas, and were attempting to gain support from the Russian government and military as well

11 Even if we accept the use of the term ‘Greek Revolution’, this conflict had important differences from the American, French, and Latin American Revolutions just before and contemporaneous with it. Compared to the North and Latin American cases, the Greek groups in rebellion were not geographically separated from their metropole, and they had not been sent as colonists by the co-religionist metropole as had been the case in the Americas. The Greek Revolution was also different from the French Revolution in many ways, one of which being that the goal of the insurgents was not to completely overthrow the old regime, but only, ultimately, to carve an independent state out of an Ottoman province.

12 The conflict is known as both the Greek War of Independence and the Greek Revolution. One difference is that the term ‘War of Independence’ recalls the American and South American Wars of Independence, whereas Revolution recalls the French Revolution.

as from Phanariot elites, clerics, and Peloponnesian notables for their project. But they were not the first or only group with a revolutionary vision. Rhigas Velestinlis had, two decades earlier, composed an anthem and launched the idea of a revolution of Balkan peoples against Ottoman rule before being apprehended by Austrian authorities and turned over to the Ottomans. A generation later, in May of 1816, as the Friendly Society was recruiting new members, Wallachia was “pre-occupied with an insurrectional movement” led by a German from the Austrian border town of Hermannstadt, who planned to assassinate the Prince and the principal boyars of Bucharest, take over the treasury, and declare an independent Wallachia. His plan was to arm the gypsies and ally with Serbia for greater strength. He was arrested with seventeen of his followers, many of whom had been French soldiers who remained in the area after the retreat of the Napoleonic armies, and one of whom was found to be writing letters to his mother and to Bonaparte, dated two years ahead, 1818, from “Grèce Sauvée”.¹³ Finally, Tudor Vladimirescu, Wallachian peasant who had served in the Russian army, too, had tried to launch a rebellion, this one against Phanariot rule, in 1820-21. He had allied with members of the Friendly Society and planned a rebellion with them against the Ottoman state, and then tried to start his own rebellion of Wallachians against the Greek hospodars, but not against Ottoman rule. He was put to death by Alexander Hypsilantis of the Friendly Society.

All of these ‘alternative’ visions of revolution seem far-fetched to us in retrospect, but they should teach us 1) how far-fetched the Friendly Society’s project must have seemed at the time, and 2) the contingencies involved in the story of how the Friendly Society and the ‘Greek Revolution’ ultimately achieved statehood in the form of a Greek Kingdom. It was not at all clear to the members of the Friendly Society where their support would come from; they had attempted alliances with Romanian peasants (and Vladimirescu), with the Russian Tsar (who, along with his Minister Capodistria, repeatedly rejected their overtures), and with clerics and local notables in the Peloponnese, who were highly reluctant to risk their lives for an undefined struggle for independence. They had recruited new members by promising Russian support they knew that they did not have, and so built their movement with an indeterminate goal on false hopes of aid from a superpower.

There were numerous problems with the ‘planning stage’ of the Revolution; planners did not know where, when, or with whose help they would realize an armed uprising against the Ottoman state. There were also numerous problems with the ‘execution stage’ of the Revolution. There was no unified strategy to the conflict; first in Moldavia, then in the Peloponnese, small guerrilla bands turned against Ottoman troops and each other, and leaders such as Hypsilantis in Moldavia, and Kolokotronis and Mavromichalis in the Peloponnese were dependent on the support of local clans for their success or failure. The decentralized fighting force did prove formidable against Ottoman

13 AMAE, Nantes; Constantinople E (Bucharest; 1815/21).

forces that had themselves been reduced to guerrilla bands, and thus the conflict reached a deadlock until 1825 when 'outside' forces became involved.

Once Mehmed Ali and İbrahim Paşa's forces entered the battle against Greek insurgents in 1825, it was not at all clear that European forces would enter in unison on the side of the Greeks two years later, in 1827.¹⁴ Although there were Philhellene movements of varying size in several European countries, their influence was never enough to reverse their governments' commitment to Restoration and protection of old regimes like the Ottoman Empire. Instead, Britain, France, and Russia became involved suddenly and out of mutual suspicion that the other powers would gain a foothold on one side or the other and alter the 'balance of power'.

Finally, the 'victory' stage of the independent Greek republic was very short-lived and fraught with conflict. John Capodistria, former Russian Foreign Minister, was elected President of the Republic in 1827, and assassinated by a local warlord clan in 1831. Rather than the Revolution spiralling into a dictatorship (since there was no one strong figure to replace Capodistria), the issue was tabled to the Great Powers to resolve. They hesitantly took over decision-making about the new Greek state and the negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and its first, tiny successor state, finally establishing a Greek Kingdom under their own guarantee and appointing a non-Greek, non-Orthodox sovereign from the neutral power of Bavaria. The 'Revolution' had removed a section of Orthodox Christian subjects and a small piece of land from Ottoman rule, but had hardly effected a change in Ottoman power relations for the mutually hostile local and family factions that inhabited the Greek Kingdom. Furthermore, although the Greek Kingdom was independent from the Ottoman Empire, the extent to which it was 'independent' from the will of European states was arguable.

The term 'Greek Revolution' thus has numerous limitations for our understanding of the Ottoman 1820s. It does not help us understand why the conflict broke out when and where it did, why it unfolded the way it did, or how people decided whether or not to take part in it. More importantly, it ignores the Ottoman social realities out of which the conflicts emerged and the fact that these realities continued to exist for a century after the outbreak of the Greek Revolution in 1821. Turning to the Ottoman Empire will allow a new perspective on these conflicts and a better understanding of the changes which were taking place beyond the Greek Revolution.

Ottoman Statecraft and Phanariot Ambitions

In describing Ottoman statecraft in his book of the same title, historian W. L. Wright wrote the following of early-nineteenth-century politics:

14 See H. W. Temperley, *The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-1827*, London 1925; W. McGrew, *Land and Revolution in Modern Greece, 1800-1881: The Transition in the Tenure and Exploitation of Land from Ottoman Rule to Independence*, Kent 1985.

Many of those who exercised the greatest power held no official position beyond such a minor and honorary one as master of ceremonies [Halet Efendi]... yet it was such men as these who bought the right to collect the taxes of vast regions, who made and unmade Grand Viziers. The person who was openly engaged in the work of administration occupied too dangerous a position, one not attractive to these subtle schemes... Often the Sultan and Divan members were puppets controlled by a hand within, whose aims were wealth and power – without risks ...¹⁵

Ottoman Christians were involved in this political culture in a number of ways, in areas of the Empire from Moldavia and Wallachia to the Peloponnese, islands, and back to Istanbul. I am speaking here of a loosely defined group known as Phanariots – not just the few prominent families who held and fought for official positions as hospodars of the Danubian Principalities and dragomans of the Porte and the Imperial Fleet, but the hundreds and perhaps thousands of subjects who had become part of their retinues and patronage system by the early nineteenth century. These Phanariots and their associates were created by, and sustained a whole gamut of connections to Ottoman politics – from Ottoman Court figures to the military to humble functionaries and subjects. They did this through their activities in state and private commerce, through their appointment to formal offices in the centre and the Danubian provinces, through the affairs of the Patriarchate, and through the friendships between Christian and Muslim officials of middling ranks, not to mention through their participation in political ceremonies at and around the Court.

In the early nineteenth century, there were several interrelated and conflicting processes underway regarding participation in Ottoman politics. While this was true not just for Christians but for Muslim subjects as well, we will focus here on how Christians fit into the picture. On the one hand, power in the Imperial Court was wielded by those with unofficial power, exemplified most clearly by Halet Efendi, who had the title of Master of Ceremonies (*teşrifatçı*) after his return from the Ottoman Embassy in Paris in 1806 and until his execution in 1822. Halet exercised *unofficial*, yet notorious influence over the Sultan and *Divan*, promoting the interests and names of key Phanariot families *and* of the deteriorating Janissary Corps in the years leading up to 1821. In his case, formal power was not necessary, and was indeed something to be avoided. Halet Efendi was only one of the ways the Phanariots were linked to Ottoman imperial politics, but he was a crucial link.

On the other hand, formal positions had their value as well. There were thousands of Christians (and Muslims) fighting for formal positions and ranks in the same period. While Carter Findley

15 H. Reed, 'The Destruction of the Janissaries by Mahmud II in June 1826', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1951, 54; cf. C. Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, New York 1878, 115-18.

describes a proliferation of bureaucratic personnel at the turn of the nineteenth century for the Empire as a whole, and Howard Reed notes the same trend in the paybooks of the janissaries, I observed a virtually identical trend among Phanariot functionaries and clients.¹⁶ According to contemporary Dionysios Photeinos, himself an associate of Phanariots in the Danubian Principalities, the predicament in Danubian administration in 1818-19 was as follows:

promotions of the archons and the order of offices [in the Principalities] always depends on the will of the hospodar, and whereas in old times sudden promotions and the skipping of ranks were rare, in recent times, the need of the hospodar to please the Ottomans, the Romaioi [Greeks], and the Wallachians, and the selling of offices has caused a proliferation of titles, which are given not only to those who already have functions under the Hospodar, but also to those without such functions. That is, to many people are given *payedes* [*paye*] – only the titles of offices, and these people are satisfied with high appellations, because with those they enjoy the designated number of *sokotel-niks* [cavalrymen] for life, preeminence granted by the rank of their title, and all the other privileges of those offices.¹⁷

Thousands of Ottoman Christians, then, were participating in Ottoman politics through their associations, both informally as part of a patronage network, and formally as functionaries with official titles and ranks. While unofficial power could be most potent in the Imperial Court, official position also carried with it privileges to collect certain taxes, customs, and irregular tributes, not to mention a preferential position in commercial transactions.

The proliferation of Phanariot functionaries, like the proliferation of the larger Ottoman bureaucracy, was viewed as a problem by imperial state authorities (despite the fact that Photeinos claims the hospodars were swelling the ranks to please the Ottomans). Findley and others have long argued that the core problem stemmed from military weakness and that the state identified bureaucratic inefficiency as the problem to be rectified. Whether or not this was the case, in reading Ottoman regulations promulgated to deal with the proliferation of Phanariot families, I found a different vocabulary used to explain the problem and devise a solution. This included the con-

16 C. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922*, Princeton 1980, 121, provides one of many examples of this proliferation at the turn of the nineteenth century: “Signs of mounting pressure for admission into official ranks [of the scribal offices] find confirmation in a variety of prescriptions concerning overcrowding and other related problems. The documents make clear that all three of the offices were over-staffed, and the Regulation on the Office of the Corresponding Secretary indicates clearly that the growth in the number of its clerks over the previous three to four decades had outstripped even the needs implied by the growth in the volume of affairs”.

17 D. Photeinos, *Historia tes Palaias Dakias* [History of Old Dacia], vol. 3, Vienna 1818-19, 447.

cept of ambition (*tahsil-i emel sevda*) as the central ill in the ranks of Phanariot functionaries, and the concepts of loyalty (*sadakat*) and moral rectitude (*istikamet*) as the antithesis of ambition.

I am referring specifically to the *kanunname*, or Regulation, dated from February/March of 1819, known as the Regulation for the *hanedan-ı erbaa* in Turkish, *Tetrarchia* in Greek, and Tetrarchy (Dynasty of Four) in English.¹⁸ The object of the Regulation was to limit the number of Phanariot families eligible for the offices of hospodar and dragoman to four specific families. While we know from Ottoman chronicles that the Regulation was proposed and advanced by Hallet Efendi himself, who was a patron to these families, the formal language of the Regulation of course does not reveal this connection. Instead, the text of the Tetrarchy Regulation articulates a problem and orders the solution of limiting the eligible families for the top four offices. The Tetrarchy Regulation begins by explaining the woeful situation of too many functionaries with too much personal ambition and not enough loyalty and moral rectitude. It states,

For some time now, Phanariots have been preferred for employment in the Sublime State, and those descended from the Phanariot clique have been seen in ever closer proximity to the strong state (Ottoman). The people who have applied for work to those who have just reached the service as interpreters or as voivodas in the twin Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia), are sometimes qualified but without position, sometimes come from the outside and are deserving of office, and still other times come from outside and are not deserving, and those of all three categories have multiplied of late. *Their passion for ambition/advancement has been a breeding ground for intrigue of one against another, and the need has arisen to remove this shroud of intrigue and malice.*¹⁹ [emphasis added]

It continues by stating the solution to the systemic problem of ambition:

From now on, those who have shown themselves to be loyal and faithful and of a high degree of personal honor and moral rectitude will be taken out, and those who are seen to be experts in intrigue will no longer be employed. Wallachian and Moldavian hospodarates and the dragomanates of the Porte and the Imperial Fleet will go to descendants of the famous four houses who have

18 BOA, Name-i Hümayun, #989, 245. V. Sphyroeras published a translation (in Greek, from the French of N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente cu privire la istoria românilor* [Acts and Fragments Concerning the History of the Romanians], vol. 2, Bucharest 1898, 545-49) and commentary of the regulation in *Ho Eranistes*, 11 (1974), 568-79. Sphyroeras summarizes the content of the document but provides no comment or translation of the signatories. This list was a virtual Who's Who of the Phanariot complex, including not only the Patriarch (Grigorios V) and the Holy Synod, but the approximately twenty chief functionaries/associates of each of the four families of the Tetrarchy.

19 BOA, Name-i Hümayun, #989, 245.

been loyal to the concept of moral rectitude; that is, 1. of the current Moldavian Hospodar Kallimaki; 2. of the current Wallachian Hospodar Drakozade Aleko Sucu; 3. of the current Imperial Dragoman Drakozade Mihalaki Sucu who is of the house of Mihal Bey; and 4. of the houses of the three brothers of the deceased Alexander Muruzis.

For the chosen four Phanariot families, the formalization and institutionalization of their power must have seemed advantageous. If nothing else, they were exercising their personal ambition and eliminating the competition (namely the Argyropoulos and Hantzerlis families) for the top four posts. They were also sanctioning the ambition of all those who were part of their patronage system and retinues of functionaries. The assumption, however, was not that they, too, were fulfilling their ambitions by having their power formalized, but that they were the most trustworthy and loyal families of the pool of Phanariots. The complexity of Ottoman political culture at this moment is exemplified by the promulgation of the Tetrarchy Regulation – on the one hand, ambition and intrigue are stated as the problem to be eradicated by this Regulation, and yet on the other hand, the Regulation itself is the product of the ambition of the four families of their intrigues with Halet Efendi in the Imperial Court. It is safe to say, then, that ambition and intrigue were what sustained the political system, as accusations and counter-accusations of ambition could and did effect the removal of Phanariots from their official posts, and yet those doing the accusing/denouncing were seeing to their own advancement and fulfilling their ambitions. Perhaps this is not surprising, but it does demonstrate the extent to which Phanariots were integrated into the larger Ottoman political system.

And this is why the Revolution in 1821 was so profound in its repercussions on the Phanariot-Ottoman system. First, because many Phanariot families (including three of the four families from the 1819 Regulation) were involved in the Friendly Society. Second, because the stymied ambitions of those who were shut out of the Phanariot system with the 1819 Regulation could have lent momentum to the Revolution once it began. And third, because the rebellions and the imperial state's reactions precipitated a power vacuum in the diverse areas of government and commerce that the Phanariots had been involved in. When the Revolution broke out in Moldavia, the members of the Ottoman Court did not perceive it as an uprising with a national 'ideology' *per se*, but instead saw it as an uprising of those with shameless ambition and disloyalty to the Sultan. For lack of time I pass over the sequence of events of the Revolution mentioned above in order to very briefly highlight the way one Christian subject combined ambition and loyalty to survive the upheaval of the 1820s and remain in the service of the Ottoman state.

Stephanos Vogoridis was a Hellenized Bulgarian, born Stoiko Tsonkovich in the early 1770s in Kotel/Kazancik near Turnovo. By 1819 he had already completed a 20-year career as interpreter, married into the Phanariot clique, and served in several positions in the Moldavian Princely regimes of Kallimaki and Karadja. As a member of Kallimaki's retinue, he was a vocal proponent

of the 1819 Regulation and was a signatory of the document (at that time he was a *hatman* in Voivoda İskerletzade Kallimaki's Moldavia regime). He was certainly an example of the many newcomers to the Phanariot network denounced in the Regulation, and yet he made the cut in 1819 and became an official member of an institutionalized, albeit short-lived, Phanariot power structure. When Hyspilotis arrived in 1821 to start the rebellion in Moldavia, Vogoridis (perhaps because of his formal membership to the Phanariot system), like many other Phanariots chose not to join the movement.²⁰

In 1821-22 Vogoridis was appointed *kaymakam*, or provisional governor, of Moldavia at a time of confusion and interruption in the *status quo*. This would be the highest position he would attain in his career, which lasted almost another forty years after 1821. The position of *kaymakam*, just one rank below that of prince/hospodar, turned out to be safer for Vogoridis and is perhaps what allowed him to survive when he was arrested and taken to Istanbul and then into internal exile in Anatolia in 1822 – had he been Prince, he would have had greater official power, and therefore greater responsibility for the rebellions. Instead, he could claim to be a loyal functionary and wait out the conflict. This he succeeded in doing, and emerged as early as 1823 when he was called upon by Hüsrev Paşa, the Ottoman Admiral, to serve as a secret negotiator with the Greek insular Government.

In the end, Vogoridis was one of the first and only members of Phanariot retinues to survive the 1820s and climb back to a position of power and influence in what was in many ways a new political environment. Combining his ambition with his express loyalty to Sultan Mahmud and his patrons in the Ottoman military, he took advantage of the power vacuum left by his Phanariot superiors and established himself, sometimes formally and other times informally, in the same niches of power that he had learned before 1821: in the Ottoman Court, the Patriarchate, the Danubian Principalities, alongside foreign statesmen and diplomats, and in Istanbul society. If there was more space I would discuss the intricacies of his career and relationships – political, familial, personal – but for now what matters is that he, as a creation of the Phanariot-Ottoman political system before 1821, used ambition and loyalty to “swim the dangerous waves”, as he put it, of Revolution, and stay afloat in a post-Greek Revolution Ottoman Empire.

Ambition was a preoccupation of the Ottoman central state, whose leaders expressed it as a cause for their distinct loss of control over administration and the military by the early nineteenth century. Ambition was also a preoccupation of Phanariots themselves, who made accusations and counter-accusations of ambition and intrigue at each other to the Sultan and Ottoman Court. And yet, ambition was what kept a system in place when the tumult of the Greek Revolution set in. In this paper I considered the concept of ambition as an alternative to the concept of nationalism in

20 His brother, incidentally, Athanasios Vogoridis, made a different choice and became a Greek patriot, dying at the side of Adamantios Korais in Paris in the 1820s.

approaching early-nineteenth-century Ottoman politics. I found that ambition is a useful concept in several respects – as a counterpoint to loyalty before 1821; as an engine for revolution in 1821; as an asset for Ottoman Christians struggling to survive in the turmoil of the 1820s. In thinking about the place of ambition in these three contexts, I also move from discussing a document, considering its social/political context, and the processes and people that created it, to discussing some of the people who appeared in the documents and what we can know about them when we use several different kinds of documents.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR A BOLDER INCORPORATION OF STUDIES OF THE GREEK REVOLUTION OF 1821 INTO THEIR OTTOMAN CONTEXT

*Christos Loukos**

In 2002, in an important congress held in Athens by the Institute for Neohellenic Research of the Hellenic National Research Foundation on the Greek historiography of the last 30 years, I gave a paper on the need to study in new terms the Revolution of 1821, an event that marks the beginning of modern Greek history.¹ Among the subjects that I believe need to be reconsidered is what I described as ‘a substantial knowledge of the Ottoman Empire’. More specifically, I argued that Greek historians need to abandon the ‘hellenocentrism’ of our research, so that we can place developments in the regions in revolt in the wider context. This means that we do not adequately know of the changes that took place in the Ottoman Empire at large as a result of the various forms of intrusion of the capitalistic West into the Orient. In other words, we do not know to what degree this intrusion tended to disorganise the Ottoman system of domination, whether that system passively accepted the various forms of dependence that Western intrusion entailed, or – through the reforms that it introduced – it managed to adapt or successfully react, as well as if and how these developments affected the various conquered populations. A better grasp of this wider perspective will allow us to study these populations more effectively, be they Greek or not, and to examine the extent of their relations with one another. In this paper, I will try to analyse further how Greek historians could reach a substantial knowledge of the Ottoman Empire so that we can bet-

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1 C. Loukos, ‘He Epanastase tou 1821: apo kyriarcho antikeimeno ereunas kai didaskalias, sten ypovathmise kai si-ope’ [The Revolution of 1821: From a Dominant Subject of Research and Teaching to Degradation and Silence], in P. M. Kitromilides and T. E. Sklavenitis (eds), *IV International Congress of History. Historiography of Modern and Contemporary Greece 1833-2002, Proceedings*, vol. 1, Athens 2004, 579-93. This volume was published by the Institute for Neohellenic Research of the Hellenic National Research Foundation.

ter understand and place into context the events connected with the Greek Revolution of 1821.

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Apart from an attempt at understanding as well as possible the institutions of the Ottoman Empire and the way it was governed by the leading groups in Istanbul and the provinces, what comes first, in my opinion, is boldly to expand our research towards the Muslim populations living in the regions where the idea of a revolution spread, regardless of whether these regions actually revolted or not and, if they did, of whether the revolution was successful or not, that is, in the wide – and somewhat vague – area known in Greek as *he kath'hemas Anatole* ('our East'). We must try to understand better the demography and make-up of the Muslim populations, their economic activities and relations, their educational status, their way of thinking, their relations with state authority, their everyday life, the possible changes that they underwent through time, etc. In a few words, whatever we deem important knowledge for the understanding of the Christians of the Empire, we should try and understand also in the case of those who, because of their Muslim religion, belonged to the society of the conquerors. To succeed in our venture, we should – far from restricting ourselves to evidence that would simply complement or contextualise the picture that we have of the Greeks, or other Christians, or Jews – seek to explore comprehensively the 'other', the 'opponent'. Thus, we should be able to reach a more substantial understanding of the multifarious relations among the populations who lived in the Ottoman Empire, especially in towns, villages and provinces with mixed populations.

Research that has been conducted on the basis of such a principle has yielded interesting results: for instance, we have come to know how the *ağas* of Gastouni in the Peloponnese reacted to the market challenge posed by Western demand, which meant that they had to increase their agricultural production, and how their cultivating strategies differed from those of the Christian notables of Kalavryta.² As a result, we are now in a better position to pose a question that has not yet been fully answered: what did this increase in wealth from the expansion of economic transactions really mean for the Muslim communities of Helida or other regions in the Peloponnese in financial, social and cultural terms? To give but a few more examples: the reason we now have better knowledge of the political and financial attitudes of the Greek notables on the eve of the Revolution of 1821 is because there have been well-documented studies which place these notables in their real context, that is, Ottoman provincial administration.³ We also have better knowledge of the situation in the region under Tepedelenli Ali Paşa's command, because his extant archive

2 V. Panayotopoulos, 'Gastoune-Vostitsa: dyo antagonistika protypa agrotikes anaptyxes sten proepanastatike periodo' [Gastouni-Vostitsa: Two competitive models of agricultural development in the pre-revolutionary period], in *Ametos ste mneme Photis Apostolopoulou* [Studies in memoriam Photis Apostolopoulos], Athens 1984, 359-75.

3 M. Pylia, 'Leitourgies kai autonomia ton koinoteton tes Peloponnesou kata te Deutere Tourkokratia (1715-1821)' [Functions and Autonomy of Peloponnesian Communities during the Second Turkish Occupation (1715-1821)], *Mnemon*, 23 (2001), 67-98.

has been used as a basis for interpreting the financial, political and military activities of the Souliots, or other Christian populations, armed or not, by placing them within the context of the institutional arrangements and practices of a pasha who sought to exceed his formal authority, but never overstepped the inflexible bounds of Ottoman political principles and way of thinking.⁴

We could cite even more examples of such a novel, 'open' approach in historical research in Greece. Nevertheless, much needs to be accomplished before we could claim that Greek scholarship fully understands who the Ottomans, i.e., the 'other' side, were, which is a vital prerequisite for a better understanding of what constitutes its main subject matter, that is, the conquered populations.

For instance, if we pose the question what the similarities and differences in the life-rhythm of Muslims and Christians were, be they farmers in the district of Corinth or merchants in Chania or artisans in Anabolu (Gk. Nauplio) or notables in Athens or soldiers under the command of a pasha, I think that we are not in a position to reach safe conclusions, with the exception of very few cases. There were many districts, especially urban centres, where the two populations, conquerors and conquered, co-existed. They may not have lived always in the same neighbourhood, yet they lived in the same town or village, their shops were next to one another, they enjoyed themselves in similar ways, often they shared the same music or diet. Of course, the fact that they belonged to different religious groups, and that Muslims were the conquerors, and thus the dominant group, and Christians the conquered, created the potential for differences in their ways, attitudes and mentalities. But maybe we have overstressed the differences and neglected the similarities between the two groups...

Let us take the example of Athens as a case-study at hand. On the eve of the Revolution, its population approximated to 10,000, of which 1/3 were Muslims. In spite of certain scattered references to the town's social life, what do we actually know about the occupations that Muslims and Christians pursued? What was their family structure? What was their educational level? How did they organise their everyday lives? What were relationships between them like? We cannot really detect how the attitude of at least one part of the Christian population of Athens towards the conqueror gradually changed if we do not have the full picture of realities in this town.

A focus on 'micro-analysis', at the town or province level, will allow us (provided of course

4 V. Panayotopoulos is preparing Ali Paşa's archive for publication: V. Panayotopoulos, 'Zetemata epeirotikēs historias sta chronia tou Ale pasa' [Issues in the History of Epirus at the Time of Ali Paşa], in *Epeiros: Koinonia – oikonomia, 15os-20os ai.* [Epirus: Society – Economy, Fifteenth to Twentieth Century (conference proceedings)], Ioannina 1986, 289-96; idem, 'He hellenophone epistolographia sto archeio tou Ale pasa' [Letters in Greek in the Archive of Ali Paşa], in *Mesaionike kai nea hellenike* [Medieval and Modern Greek]. Vol. 8: *Praktika tou epistemikou symposiou 'Neohellenike epistolographia (16os-19os ai.)'* [Proceedings of the Symposium 'Modern Greek Letter Writing (Sixteenth to Nineteenth Century)'], Athens 2006, 269-86. See also E. Prevelakis and K. Kalliataki-Mertikopoulou (eds), *He Epeiros, ho Ale Pasa kai he Hellenike Epanastase: proksenikes ektheseis tou William Meyer apo ten Preveza* [Epirus, Ali Paşa and the Greek Revolution: Consular Reports of William Meyer from Preveza], vol. I: 1819-1821, vol. II: 1822, Athens 1996; this volume is the product of a research project of and published by the Research Centre for the Study of Modern Greek History of the Academy of Athens. For Ali Paşa's relations with the Souliots, see V. Psimouli, *Souli kai Souliotes* [Souli and Souliots], Athens 1998 (2nd ed.: Athens 2005).

that we are willing to attempt a more comprehensive approach) to understand better by which procedures and at what pace sultanic authority lost its legitimacy for some, while others were not thinking of or were reluctant to accept, or even opposed, any change in the *status quo*. There are scholars who have provided us with valuable interpretative suggestions on the impact of the economic crisis that hit several regions on the eve of the Revolution,⁵ and how individuals and social groups became convinced that the Ottoman Empire, the set-up imposed by the conquerors, was unable to undergo substantial improvements, and thus could prove catastrophic for the prospects of progress and development of the conquered populations.⁶ These suggestions can help us – on the micro-scale that I propose – discern what Spyros Asdrachas has aptly called the “enlightenment of the Greek territories” (*helladikos diaphotismos*),⁷ that is, a change in awareness/mentality, and how this came about within the context of the Empire with the various compulsions that this context imposed. And I believe that it is still a major desideratum to get to know how ready to revolt the revolting populations were, and to avoid restricting our research to the attitude of the few and famous.

Let us dedicate some more space to how the Sultan’s authority was de-legitimised among the conquered. That is, when, with what arguments and under what circumstances the providential/messianic perception of the fate of the subjugated, cultivated mainly by the Church, was abandoned, to be replaced by the secular idea that God is not against but on the contrary supports the peoples’ quest for freedom. For some this change of heart was easy, yet others took or had to take this leap in the tumult of the Revolution.⁸ Not everyone had the same cultural alertness, therefore several interpretative models were used with the aim of rejecting the legitimacy of the Ottoman governing context that the conquerors had imposed on the conquered. Likewise, the picture that different individuals and groups came to have of the agents of this context, be it the Sultan and the officials around him or the Muslims on the whole, was not uniform. As the Revolution prevailed, these various ‘pictures’ were coloured by the intense religious character given to the deadly clash of the two opponents. Yet, here too, although the enemy was, as was to be expected, depicted in the darkest colours, many different shades can be observed, which may be attributed both to the variety and complexity of pre-revolutionary relations between the two opponents and to the social level of the person who draws the picture of the ‘enemy’.

5 V. Kremmydas, ‘He oikonomike krise ston helladiko choro stis arches tou 19ou aiona kai hoi epiptoseis tes sten Epanastase tou 1821’ [The Economic Crisis in the Greek Territories at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century and its Consequences on the Revolution of 1821], *Mnemon*, 6 (1976-77), 16-33.

6 G. Hering, ‘Schetika me to provlema ton epanastatikon eksegerseon stis arches tou 19ou aiona’ [About the Problem of the Revolutionary Uprisings of the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century], *Ta Historika*, 24/25 (1966), 105-20.

7 S. Asdrachas, ‘Anamorphoseis e ho Neos Iatros’ [Reformations or the New Doctor], in O.M.E.D.’s (=Society for the Study of Greek Enlightenment) *Neohellenike paidēta kai koinonia* [Neohellenic Culture and Society], Athens 1995, 267-84.

8 N. Theotokas, ‘Paradose kai neoterikoteta: scholia sto Eikosiena’ [Tradition and Modernity: Comments on the Revolution of 1821], *Ta Historika*, 17 (1992), 345-69; N. Kotaridis, *Paradosiake epanastase kai Eikosiena* [Traditional Revolution and the Revolution of 1821], Athens 1994.

In short, it would be quite useful to collect systematically and with all necessary interpretative preparation the scattered testimonies as to how the conquered populations viewed the system through which the conquerors governed them. In fact, some of the conquered population were privileged enough to acquire a better understanding of the pros and cons of the central or provincial Ottoman administration, because they personally served the Ottomans and thus had eyewitness experience of their administrative system. The most prominent among these eyewitnesses was Alexandros Mavrokordatos, who always believed that the world-view and way of thinking of the Empire's governing elite left absolutely no hope for substantial reforms. Thus, he tried to convince the British, with whom he was mostly in contact, that the Greeks were the only ones who could serve as a barrier against Russian expansionism and should therefore be viewed as Great Britain's most valuable allies.

So far I have tried to demonstrate that if we, Greek historians, seek to obtain systematic knowledge of the 'other side', we will reach a better understanding of the preconditions for the Greek Revolution of 1821. Now, I will expand my argument by suggesting that the full picture of the Revolution will elude us as long as we do not know for a fact how Turks, from the Sultan down to the common soldier and imperial subject, perceived it and reacted to it. Our picture will always remain incomplete without the testimony of the Turkish side.

It is common knowledge among Greek historians that what we sorely lack about the Greek Revolution is Ottoman sources. Little do we know about how the Porte reacted to the Revolution, how it tried to suppress it, and how eventually pressure by the three allied powers (Great Britain, France, Russia) forced it to acquiesce originally to an autonomous Greek state and later to full independence. The testimonies at our disposal come mostly from the documents of foreign diplomatic delegations, as well as from the very few Ottoman sources that happened to be translated into Greek. We know nothing, for instance, about what Dramalı Mahmud Paşa reported to his government concerning his defeat at Dervenakia, or how Kütaahî Reşid Mehmed Paşa boasted about his victory outside the Acropolis of Athens, or about the deliberations at the Porte before deciding how to react to the uprising of its Greek subjects. That is why I am particularly happy to know that at least one Turkish colleague is researching the Greek Revolution through its Ottoman sources.⁹ I would be happier, though, if we could set up a working group whose basic aim would

9 See the article of Hakan Erdem in this volume. See also his "Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers': Ottoman Responses to the Greek War of Independence", in F. Birtek and T. Dragonas (eds), *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey*, London 2005, 67-84. For a Greek presentation of this article, see S. Anagnostopoulou, 'Pos eide ten Hellenike Epanastase kai ti katalave apo auten he othomanike eksousia' [How the Ottoman Authorities Saw the Greek Revolution and What they Understood of It], *Ho Politis*, 129 (January 2005), 16-21. Erdem's is far from a nationalistic approach to the Greek Revolution, in contrast to S. R. Sonyel, 'How the Turks of the Peloponnese were Exterminated during the Greek Rebellion', *Bellekten*, 62 (1998), 121-35. Recently some publications which bring to light new aspects of the Greek Revolution in Crete, based on Ottoman documents, have appeared. See V. Dimitriadis and D. Daskalou (eds), *Kodikas ton Thyssion: onomata kai demeumenes*

be to locate and catalogue the scattered (as it seems) sources about the Revolution, as a necessary precondition to studying them systematically. Knowing that a large part of the central Ottoman archives has remained intact and is open for consultation, one hopes that the reports sent by the various high officials to the Porte about the situation in the regions in revolt and the events of the Revolution, are in place. Obviously it would also be desirable to discover memoranda of high officials of the central bureaucracy about the Greek issue, or even minutes of their discussions and deliberations.

To give a small example of how our knowledge of the Greek Revolution could be furthered if the Ottoman view became available, I shall now cite some evidence that I have derived from documents of the British Embassy in Istanbul. To help us with our quest for this type of evidence we possess a valuable guide, *Correspondence between the Foreign Office and the British Embassy and Consuls in the Ottoman Empire, Foreign Office 78/97-221: 1820-1833. A Descriptive List* (2 volumes, Athens 2003-05), published by the Research Centre for the Study of Modern Greek History of the Academy of Athens, under the supervision of the late Eleftherios Prevelakis and Eleni Gardika-Katsiadaki. Before proceeding, I do have to note that the British Embassy in Istanbul was, at least until the beginning of 1823, on very friendly terms with the Porte, opposed the Greek Revolution, and thus was privy to many important deliberations and decisions of the Ottoman government. Some of the topics that I hastily gleaned from this catalogue on the events of the Greek Revolution are cited below:

- Observation of the Reis Efendi on the execution of the Patriarch (F.O. 78/99/4).
- Massacre of the Greek inhabitants of Aivali occasioned according to the Reis Efendi by their own perfidy and cruelty (F.O. 78/99/14).
- The Reis Efendi denied that the massacres at Aivali had been perpetrated in application of orders from the Porte (F.O. 78/99/14/1).
- Council held at which the plan of operations to be pursued in the Morea was fully discussed [among other things, it was decided to send 1,000,000 piastres to Hurşid Paşa] (F.O. 78/100/6).
- Firman ordering the Greek Patriarch to communicate a warning to the Greek insurgents [the actual document by the Patriarch, successor of Grigorios V, follows] (F.O. 78/100/14/2).
- Improper conduct of Vlassopoulos, Russian Consul at Patras (F.O. 78/100/25).
- Atrocities of the Candiot Turks against the Greeks. Capture of Tripolitza by the Greeks (F.O. 78/102/3).

periousies ton christianon agoniston tes Anatolikes Kretes kata ten Epanastase tou 1821 [Register of Sacrifices: Names and Confiscated Properties of Christian Combatants of Eastern Crete during the Revolution of 1821], Herakleio 2003; A. N. Adıyeke and N. Adıyeke, 'Hoi apostasies apo to islam sten Krete ste diarkeia tes Hellenikes Epanastases' [Converting from Islam in Crete during the Greek Revolution], trans. E. Kolovos, *Kretologika Grammata*, 19 (2004), 33-41.

- Cruelties of the Greeks in the Morea, particularly at Navarino and Tripolitsa (F.O. 78/102/11).
- Refusal of the Porte to adopt the proposed address by the Foreign Ministers to the Greeks [so that they should be pardoned and accept the authority of the Sultan again] (F.O. 78/101/23/1).
- Many documents referring to the escalating tension in the relations between the Porte and Russian Ambassador Stroganov. The Ottomans seem fully convinced that the Russians supported the Greek Revolution.
- The Grand Vizir to the Governor General of the Morea and to the Commandant and to the Judge of Athens, demanding the protection of the monuments in Athens, at the request of Strangford, the British Ambassador (F.O. 78/100/22/1).

I left to the last the document that I regard as the most important for our discussion. It is a report, dated 11/23 July 1821, of “Kiose Mehmed Pasha (appointed Vali of the Morea) to the Grand Vizir, on his operations in Eastern Greece and the Negropont” (F.O. 78/100/4/3). On the basis of this short description, I looked for and found the full text of the report, which was translated by the British Embassy into French (all the documents cited in the catalogue have been microfilmed and are kept at the Research Centre for the Study of Modern Greek History of the Academy of Athens).

Köse Mehmed Paşa, in his report, *inter alia*, explains how he defeated the “execrable rayas” of Livadia, and how he forced those besieged in the fortress to surrender; furthermore, he states that he captured all the emblems of the revolt, and that he ceremoniously reinstated the *kadı* in his office (*revêtu d’une robe d’honneur et confirmé dans son poste*). He speaks of 3,000 Christians killed and boasts that he sends to the Porte 450 enemy heads, ears and four flags.

Many similar reports could, it is to be hoped, be found in the Turkish archives, which would allow us to have the testimony of the ‘other side’ for many events connected with the Greek Revolution. For instance, Evangelia Balta has spotted in the Ottoman Archive of the Turkish Premiership in Istanbul (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*) approximately 100 documents that refer to the revolted region of Karystia in Negropont and cover the period 1821-32; these documents show how interested the Porte was in maintaining this region under its control and how it managed to do so.¹⁰ Needless to say, it would be extremely useful to be able to cross-check information derived from both sides.

The usefulness of such an endeavour is not restricted to military developments only; Costas Lappas has drawn evidence from the archive of the British Embassy in Istanbul on the execution

10 E. Balta, ‘He othomanike martyria gia ten epanastatemene Karysto’ [The Ottoman Testimony for Revolutionary Karystos], *Archeion Euvoikon Meleton*, 35 (2003-04), 189-200. See also her ‘Archives ottomanes en Grèce. Perspectives de la recherche’, in her *Problèmes et approches de l’histoire ottoman. Un itinéraire scientifique de Kayseri à Eğriboz*, Istanbul 1997, 259-75, and eadem, *Ottoman Studies in Greece*, Istanbul 2003.

of Constantine Mourouzis, dragoman of the Porte. Lappas has demonstrated that Mourouzis was not executed because of his alleged participation in the Greek Revolution, as claimed by nationalistic Greek historiography, but because of the fact that the Sultan found out that he had inaccurately translated a Greek document from the Danubian Principalities that could incriminate some of his Phanariot relatives.¹¹

As I have already stressed, the quest for such evidence, be it decisions of the Sultan and the government or actions of Ottoman generals or attitudes of common Muslims, should not be aimed simply at supplementing our knowledge of the Greek Revolution, but mainly at an attempt to understand the way of thinking and acting of the representatives of the ‘conquering society’ when part of the conquered population disputed their authority. Such an approach could perhaps allow us to throw light on systems of thinking and mechanisms of the conqueror, which in turn could help us better understand why eventually some subjects of the Sultan decided to revolt, and why their revolution was successful.

This aim could be achieved, at least to a certain extent, through the, mostly Greek, sources that have already been made available to us. By this I mean that, because of the ethnocentric approach of Greek historiography, we have not fully exploited many testimonies from memoirs, documents and various other sources that provide a picture of the opponent – not always in a negative light. Correspondence and conversations between the two opponents, even the curses exchanged between them, could prove enlightening for our purposes.

To give an example, together with my postgraduate students at the University of Crete we attempted to index the *Military Memoirs (Enthymemata Stratiotika)* of Nikolaos Kasomoulis and other sources. What resulted were testimonies that could cover, to some degree, many of the research desiderata that I have cited so far. Some of the testimonies that we indexed are listed below:

- Advice given, in Greek, by the arrested Kâmil Bey to the Greek leaders on concord among them.
- The correspondence, in Greek, between Ottoman military commanders and Greek chieftains. For instance, İşkodra Paşa writes to Georgios Karaiskakis just before the battle at Agrapha: *My name is Mahmud Pasha Scodra. I am faithful and I am sincere. The majority of my army consists of Christians. I was appointed by the Sultan to appease the people; I do not want to see blood shed; may it be avoided; I know nothing of lies. Whoever wants to be with me, should be near me. Whoever does not, should look forward to my war [against him]... I allow you fifteen days to think it over.*

11 K. Lappas, ‘Patriarchike synodos ‘peri kathaireseos ton philosophikon mathematon’ ton Martio tou 1821. Mia martyria tou Kon. Oikonomou’ [Patriarchal Synod ‘for the Suppression of the Philosophical Lessons’ in March 1821. A Testimony by Kon. Oikonomou], *Mnemon*, 11 (1987), 123-53.

- The admiration of Kasomoulis for an *ağa* who, having been held captive by the Greeks, knew of the laws and regulations of the Revolutionary Greek Government. Thus, he orders his trumpeter to sound on the *ağa*'s departure, but is then taken by his fellow Greeks to be a Turcophile.
- The numerous insults, jokes and stories exchanged by the two sides during the sieges of Mesolongi and Athens.
- The admiration of many Greeks for the bravery of their opponents.
- The fear many Ottoman soldiers felt for Karaiskakis.
- General Chadjichristos's intense concern to enter the base of command in great pomp wearing yellow mules, only to be worn by pashas.

*

A whole world emerges before us which invites us, or rather challenges us, to interpret it. The evidential harvest that is to be gathered by studying Greek, Ottoman and other sources, together with our new hypotheses, will allow us to elucidate the events related to the Revolution and the attitudes of the two opposing sides, but also to ponder on the concepts and practices from which they emanate. We could try and better understand above all the changes that took place among the populations in revolt, that is, how the revolutionary dynamic subverted, often not without resistance, established beliefs and attitudes, and gradually led everyone to accept the idea of an ethnic state, in other words, to become citizens of a free and constitutional polity.

I believe that it is widely accepted that the Greek Revolution is an event of the utmost and widest importance. This is proved by the participation in it of representatives of all the other Christian Balkan peoples, by the response it elicited in contemporary Europe, as well as by the new ideas that it initiated. Therefore, the importance of the Revolution as a historical event surpasses the bounds of Greek scholarship. The conference from which the papers in this volume emanate could prove an opportunity to create the prerequisites for scholarly collaboration which could promote a multi-faceted study of all the Balkan populations during the crucial decades around the turn of the nineteenth century. It goes without saying that such a project could succeed only through better knowledge and understanding of the 'Ottoman conquering context' and its agents, i.e., the Balkan Muslims.

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS IN CRETE, BETWEEN LOCAL MUSLIMS AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN ISTANBUL DURING THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, 1821-28

*Vassilis Dimitriadis**

The Greek War of Independence caused great upheaval throughout the domains of the Ottoman Empire. The Balkan ethnic groups, who from the beginning of the nineteenth century had sought their independence from Ottoman rule, began to organise armed struggles, which continued throughout the century. The Greeks were the first to gain their independence from the Ottomans after a revolution, a pattern that was to be followed by many other ethnic groups in the future.

It was not only the national aspirations of the subject peoples, however, which actively opposed the Ottoman authorities. Centrifugal forces also developed during the same period among the Muslim communities of the provinces. The conflict of these groups with the increasing centralisation of the administrative organisation in Istanbul was manifested throughout the Empire in a variety of instances.¹ One such expression of a conflict of interests between the central government in the capital and the local Muslim population in Crete will be examined here, on the basis of the evidence found in contemporary judicial registers, surviving in the Ottoman archive of the Vikelaia Municipal Library in Herakleio.

Crete was the last Ottoman conquest of a territory populated by Greeks. The Ottoman forces conquered first the western parts of the island, in 1645, and subsequently expanded into the rest of the island with relative ease.² The Republic of Venice did not have the necessary forces to con-

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1 Well-known examples of this attitude are the attempt of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa to gain independence, the numerous insurrections which broke out in Anatolia and in the Balkan Peninsula in 1830 and in the years which followed, especially among the Albanian and the Bosnian Muslims, and above all the insubordination of Mehmed Ali in Egypt.

2 For the Ottoman conquest of Crete and its aftermath, see M. Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Princeton, N.J. 2000.

front the numerous Ottoman armies; the population of Crete, after having suffered under the tyrannical rule of the Venetians for centuries, did not resist the Ottomans. On the contrary, almost immediately a large number of the population converted to Islam and fought against their former overlords, supporting the Ottoman forces. Only the city of Candia, today's Herakleio, managed to resist for twenty years because of its strong fortifications. Eventually, she also surrendered to the Grand Vizier Ahmed Köprülü, in 1669.

The circumstances which developed in the aftermath of these events spared the Ottoman administration from resorting to the old and tried method of consolidation of authority by forced migration of large numbers of Turkish populations to the island. The local population of Turkish origin was small, consisting mainly of governors, administrators and military personnel, who resided primarily in the big cities of the island, Kandiye (Gk. Herakleio), Chania and Rethymno.³ In the villages the indigenous people of Crete remained, Muslim converts living alongside Christians. Place-names retained their Greek form; everyone spoke the local idiom, and only a few spoke Turkish.⁴ The gap, however, between the Muslims, who held the power, and the Christian *reaya* subjects was large. The local converts to Islam, many of whom, especially among the city-dwellers, had been enrolled in the janissary corps, treated their Christian neighbours with contempt and cruelty, despite the fact that they sometimes were their relatives, and shared the same Greek family names.

In 1821 the Greek Revolution spread to Crete. The Christian population rebelled in all regions, starting from some isolated mountainous areas, such as Sphakia. Not surprisingly, the hatred between Muslims and Christians proved to be deep, and atrocities were committed by both sides. In June 1821, informed of massacres taking place in other areas of the Empire, local Muslims roamed the streets of Kandiye killing all the Christians they encountered. Many hundreds were executed in just one day. During the days which followed local janissaries raided the surrounding villages, spreading the bloodshed to the countryside. The governor of the *sancak* of Kandiye and *serasker* of Crete, Mehmed Şerif Paşa, made no move to stop them.⁵

However, as the number of the local soldiers was not large enough to suppress the rebellion, the central Ottoman authorities were forced to dispatch reinforcements to the area. As the main part of the Ottoman army was occupied in suppressing the Revolution in mainland Greece, the Sultan was in 1823 forced to ask for assistance from Egypt. Mehmed Ali initially sent 3,000 soldiers under the leadership of his son-in-law, Hasan Paşa, followed by more troops later on. The Egyptian forces, supported by the local janissaries, continued the policy of severe persecution, slaughter, arrests and devastation of the Christian population.

3 Ibid., 5.

4 V. Dimitriadis, 'Hoi onomasies ton chorion tes Kretes kai merika symperasmata' [The Names of the Cretan Villages and Some Conclusions], in *Ta kretika toponymia* [Cretan Place-names], Rethymno 2000, 267-73.

5 For the Revolution of 1821 in Crete, see T. Detorakis, *Historia tes Kretes* [History of Crete], Athens 1986.

In the Ottoman Archive of the Vikelaia Municipal Library in Herakleio a judicial register survives, listing the properties in the cities and villages of all those executed, arrested, or who, in order to avoid a similar fate, had fled to the mountains or abandoned the island altogether for other, safer, regions outside Crete.⁶ The Ottoman authorities confiscated their properties, without informing the capital about the further fate of these. Şerif Paşa died in the spring of 1823⁷ and the central government appointed in his place Osman Paşa, former governor of the *sancak* of Rethymno.⁸ He also died after some months, and was subsequently succeeded by the governor of Chania, Lutfullah Paşa, who was put in charge of Kandiye and the entire island.⁹

Not knowing how the confiscated properties were being handled, the government was alarmed. In the spring of 1826, a senior executive of the Imperial Treasury, Hüseyin Kâmil Efendi, and the chief-secretary of the Accounts Office (*muharrirbaşı muhasebe ketebesinden*) were sent to record the confiscated properties.¹⁰ These experienced clerks first registered the confiscated houses and shops in the city. A preliminary list was sent to the capital with the names of the *reaya* and their properties, including information on the prices at which they had been sold. A separate entry was made for what had been sold under the rule of each of the three pashas mentioned above. Meanwhile, they collected the receipts for all expenses disbursed with the money which accrued from these sales.

Among the buyers' names appeared many local dignitaries, or their relatives. In addition, the government representatives discovered at least another 50 properties which were sold without having been declared. Furthermore, the two pashas had given out even more properties as gifts without the Sultan's permission. Recipients of these gifts were again locals, janissary commanders, or other dignitaries. Many more properties outside the city walls had been sold without having been registered. Several local dignitaries had also proceeded to such acts, even during the periods in between the death of one pasha and the appointment of the next. The *ferman* sent after this inspection requested the return of all these properties and their sale in the name of the government.¹¹

Investigations continued over the properties confiscated in the villages. Naturally, it was impossible for the government representatives to travel personally to a thousand villages through-

6 OAH, vol. 120. For a translation of this register and conclusions, see V. Dimitriadis and D. Daskalou (eds), *Ho Kodikas ton Thysson: onomata kai demeumenes periousies ton Christianon agoniston tes Anatolikes Kretes kata ten Epanastase tou 1821* [The Register of Sacrifices: Names and Confiscated Properties of Christian Fighters in Eastern Crete during the Revolution of 1821], Herakleio 2003.

7 Ibid., 361.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., 362.

10 Ibid., 364.

11 Ibid., 352.

out Crete, especially under the riotous conditions of the time. They were, therefore, compelled to take the word of the local authorities, and the lists of names and properties of the rebels that were submitted to them. It is almost certain that several more properties were concealed. Those confiscated and registered had formed a separate tax unit in every village (*mukataa*), and had been handed over to a *subaşı* and a secretary (*yazıcı*), who received state salaries and were responsible for forwarding the taxes on crops and olive oil production to the state depositories. All the government representatives could do was to check whether the overseers of the confiscated properties paid their due, and whether the revenues were used for state purposes.

In the course of peaceful intervals, the capital ordered that the confiscated properties be returned to those *reaya* who came back to their homes and declared their submission to the Ottoman government, or to their relatives and heirs. Several of the confiscated properties were thus returned to their previous owners. Many inhabitants, however, had been killed, sold as slaves in Egypt, or fled the island, as can be seen from the notes found above the name of each owner of confiscated properties. Dozens of *murtad*, that is, Christians who had previously become Muslims, but during the Revolution returned to their prior religion, can be counted among them. None of them returned to their villages, well aware of their fate had they done so. All the confiscated properties in the cities and two thirds of those in the villages were, thus, never returned to their owners.

A large number of *fermans* shows the efforts of the central government to rectify the discrepancies discovered.¹² Investigations were conducted to determine how the revenues from the sales and management of the properties were spent. The registers of expenditure recorded the most diverse purposes: employees' salaries, purchase and transportation of ammunition, weapon repairs, military victuals, but also rewards, gifts and medals for commanders of local troops and their men, decorations, honorary robes, furs and expensive horses for the pashas, expenses for the maintenance of public buildings, but also for the pashas themselves, or their households (*harem*), payments to the British ships which transported ammunition and soldiers to the island, but also for shawls given to the Pasha's slaves.

Although the expenses were approved by the government, they exceeded the revenues. An order was issued, then, that all money spent without permission by the pashas should be returned. Furthermore, when Şerif Paşa and Osman Paşa died, their estates were confiscated, recorded and sent to the capital. Clothes, weapons, books, household items, even slaves, were all sold and the money given to the Treasury.

In mid-1827 the inspectors returned to the capital. Another *ferman* was issued to the new governor of Crete, Süleyman Paşa, mentioning that up to 45 *konaks*, or mansions, had been discovered in the city of Kandiye which had been sold without previous mention anywhere. The fi-

12 Ibid., 352-55.

elds discovered to have been similarly sold on the outskirts of the city were even more numerous. They all had to be confiscated again, and resold by auction. The same *ferman* also ordered an inquiry into the management of revenues between the years 1824 and mid-1827, “and they should be collected from the locals on the spot”. Furthermore, “if there are properties that have been handed over with receipts of your predecessor [that is, Lutfullah Paşa] and his representatives, and they have been occupied by persons who have not presented receipts stamped by the agent of the government, their revenues should be collected for the state and dispatched to the Palace, along with the registers of the concealed [properties]”.

It is noteworthy that this document was not entered in the register of 1827, but in another three years later, after the Revolution was over and the Sultan had granted an amnesty to those who had participated in it. It is likely that this document was concealed deliberately, so that it would not be enforced, and was revealed only when it was void. After all, in 1831 Crete was handed over to Mehmed Ali, the governor of Egypt, as a reward for his assistance in the suppression of the Revolution in Greece.

The reports to the capital, the registers of the confiscated properties and their expenditure, along with the various orders sent from Istanbul give a clear idea of what happened. According to Ottoman law, the properties of the *reaya* who during the Revolution had been executed, fled to the mountains with their families and perished, been arrested and sold as slaves, or fled the island permanently, should have been confiscated, either as unclaimed lands, or as the property of rebels who had given up their *reaya* status and had, therefore, lost their right to the Sultan’s protection. Indeed, a large portion of these properties had been handed over to the state, and the revenues had been used for war purposes.

A sizeable portion of the income, however, had also been spent for unauthorised purposes. Many properties, both in the city and the villages, had been bestowed as gifts, or even bought for a nominal price. Furthermore, there was a considerable number of properties which were appropriated by local Muslim notables, administrative or military officials, or even villagers. These properties had been concealed and withheld by the local population. Their number is so large that it cannot be considered as an isolated, personal attempt by particular individuals to keep for themselves state property, or a refusal to follow the orders of the central government. It more likely was a deliberate attempt to deceive the Ottoman administration, an action in which many participated, including local officials, army leaders, notables, administrators, as well as common subjects. Even the Pashas were part of this attempt, despite their prominent position as state governors, either by actively appropriating government funds, or by turning a blind eye to the embezzlement by locals of properties of which the state should have taken possession.

Certainly, the unstable conditions produced by the war must have contributed to laxer enforcement of the law. This illegal concealment of the confiscated properties went on for several years, though, and would not have been revealed had the state not sent its own inspectors on the spot. Even they must have been unable to uncover the whole truth, as they could only rely on the testi-

mony of the local population, both in the cities and in the countryside. It is doubtful whether the locals would provide the information necessary to reveal the full extent of the fraud committed, especially as the inspectors were soon to return to the capital, leaving informers at the mercy of the population's revenge. It is also important to keep in mind that all involved were Cretans, with a strong sense of local sentiment.

I would like at this point to focus on this idea. As the island of Crete is quite isolated from mainland Greece, even from the rest of the Aegean islands, local sentiment developed to a high degree. Naturally, this was a widespread phenomenon throughout Greece: the geography of the country, with high and inaccessible mountains in mainland Greece, made communication difficult with even neighbouring villages; in the numerous small islands the population lived in isolation, withdrawn from the coast, because of fear of pirates; decent roads were lacking; the ever-present poverty made even the most meagre possessions extremely valuable and under threat from any stranger; there were frequent and destructive raids and conquests; all this had contributed to a strong protectionism and local sentiment among Greeks in the Ottoman period.

In Crete, this phenomenon was even more pronounced. Non-Cretans who had settled on the island, for longer or shorter periods, were often considered as outsiders, a potential threat to the ancestral heritage. For the locals, every outsider was approached with mistrust. Even in our own times, non-Cretans find it difficult to start a shop or business in certain parts of the island. What purpose did the government inspectors have in their land, then, other than to take away properties that were rightfully theirs? It was believed that the lands, houses, fields or olive trees abandoned by Christian rebels should still belong to the locals, especially those who had embraced the true religion of Islam. The fact that they spoke a different language from the inspectors made the distinction between the two parties even more apparent.

The entire attitude of the locals, be they officials, notables, low-ranking janissaries or peasants, is a testimony to this mentality. The interests of the central government came into conflict with the local sentiment and isolationism of the Muslim population of Crete. The magnitude of the fraud committed precludes the possibility that it was the work of only a few individuals. Refusal to cooperate with the government inspectors came not only from a few persons, but from the entire population. A report of one of the inspectors reveals that the *defterdar* of Crete had refused to surrender the financial registers for the years 1822-24, had withheld part of the region's wheat, and had shared the interest on its revenues with the officers of the depository. His intention was to secure the post of *defterdar* for himself and his descendants. Lastly, he disregarded the government representative, and sent the financial registers directly to the capital, thus evading any inspection.¹³

This last example is a clear indication, in my opinion, of the conditions prevalent in Crete dur-

13 Ibid., 353-54.

ing and after the Revolution. The local Christians desired their full independence, but even the local Muslims wished to be free from the direct control of the central government. How could this attitude be interpreted? Was it merely an effort to take advantage of the unstable circumstances and benefit at a personal level from the unclaimed properties of their Christian compatriots, or did they aspire to something else? Perhaps they also wanted their independence, at least some independence.

On the other hand, defiance of the Sultan's authority was widespread at that time. Let us remember, for instance, the case of the Bosnian Muslims, who refused to participate in the Russo-Ottoman war in 1828, only a few years after the beginning of the Greek Revolution, or the numerous insurrections which broke out in 1830 and the years which followed in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Among them, none was more violent than those of the Bosnian and the Albanian Muslims. A similar picture emerges from the study of the contemporary archival material of Crete. The appropriation of properties was, I consider, a manifestation of the local population's resistance to the control of the central government, and an attempt to establish the independent management of not only the local revenues, but of local administration as well. After the death of Osman Paşa, the commander of the Egyptian army, Hasan Paşa, who was of Albanian origin, appointed as temporary governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Candia the local *kethüda* of Şerif Paşa, Mehmed Necib Efendi, and not another pasha from Chania or Rethymno, as would be the norm, without Istanbul's acknowledgement.¹⁴ Other local officials operated along the same lines, managing the local finances accordingly.

The struggle of the Muslims of Crete for independence was mild, premature, and in the end failed. Christian Cretans, on the other hand, fought for independence repeatedly throughout the nineteenth century. They only achieved their goal gradually, first through the Act of 1868, which accorded significant privileges to the Christian population; then, through the Constitutional Charter of Chalepa of 1878, which secured certain basic freedoms, including freedom of religion and language, and the right to be governed by Christian governors; and, finally, through the proclamation of an autonomous Crete in 1898. The next step was to seek unification with Greece, which was only achieved after the Balkan War of 1912, and the inevitable removal of the Muslims of Crete, which was completed through the population exchange agreed on between Greece and Turkey in 1923.

14 Ibid., 351.

**“PERFIDIOUS ALBANIANS”
AND “ZEALOUS GOVERNORS”:
OTTOMANS, ALBANIANS, AND TURKS
IN THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

*Hakan Erdem**

On the eve of the Greek Revolt, Ottoman rule in Albania was tenuous. In a decade that roughly corresponded to the Greek War of Independence, but actually preceding and succeeding it, the Ottoman government moved with great energy to bring Albania into the centre’s orbit. It might be that the ‘rebellion’ of Ali Paşa preceded and precipitated the Greek Revolt, but it is even truer that the Greek Revolt enabled the Ottomans to control Albania more tightly than ever. There was conflict of opinions, interests and sometimes arms between the Ottomans and Albanians. In fact, Albania’s reconquest by the Ottomans emerges as a parallel history to that of the Greek Revolt. My aim here is not to reconstruct this history in full, nor to assess the Albanian role or military performance in the Greek War of Independence but to explore into the tripartite relationship among the Ottomans, Albanians, and Turks.

Perhaps a few words of explanation are not out of place as to my usage here of the terms Ottoman, Albanian, and Turk for the sake of clarity. The term Ottoman is used to denote either the central government or the founding dynasty of the Ottoman Empire, or somebody, whether of free or slave origins, in the service of the Ottoman government and, in a wider sense, a person culturally participating in the ethos and pathos of being an Ottoman. I use Albanian much as the Ottomans did, to denote a conglomeration of tribes and communities regardless of religious affiliation. I consciously avoid using the word Turk interchangeably with the term Ottoman. Whenever the word Turk makes an appearance, it is either a direct quotation from Ottoman documentation or in a discussion built on such documentation.

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Mercenaries, Pashas and the Everlasting Pay Dispute

A modern student of Albanian nationalism observes that “The *ağas* and *beys* of southern Albania, who sided with the Ottomans in the Greek Revolution of 1821, abandoned the battlefield when the Sultan’s High Command was not in a position to give them the contracted payment”.¹ The theme is certainly worth following as the discussion on the topic of salaries produced many different voices, representing different interests which had to be balanced with each other and taken into account by the Ottoman centre. How, in fact, did the Ottoman government react to the abandonment of the battlefield, or for that matter, to the reports from the field commanders that some Albanian leaders were in secret correspondence or collaboration with the leaders of the Greek Revolution?

Contemporary Ottoman documentation is full of invective against the “Albanians”. Numerous Ottomans from mere scribes to the Sultan himself heaped abuse on Albanians in an unrestrained way. Criticism against an individual Albanian, say a chief, easily deteriorates into abusive stereotypes against the whole group without even paying attention to the various Albanian sub-groups. The Albanians are strongly criticised for their attitude vis-à-vis the Greek Rebellion or for that matter for their responses to the policies of Istanbul. They are invariably depicted as an undisciplined, ill-mannered tribe (*kabile*), group (*taife*), ethnic group (*cins*) or people (*millet*) whose pecuniary concerns were above all values.

One of the stock accusations was that the Albanians would not fight any of the Sultan’s campaigns even in a declared holy war (*cihad*) unless they were paid in cash and that in advance. The complaints of the Ottoman commanders and of the centre were clearly that of any government against a mercenary system. There is no reason to suppose that the Albanian military contractors should be of a different nature from their counterparts anywhere else. The system was actually beset with a number of ‘abuses’, most of them perfectly well known to and sometimes connived at or agreed upon by the employer.²

Here are the salient features of the system in a nutshell: the Albanian military contractor, a hereditary chief or a self-made leader of men, commissioned to procure a certain number of soldiers, negotiated the price, duration and often the precise place of the service with the employer, the Ottoman government at large. The stock abuse levelled against the Albanian chiefs was that they never produced the agreed number of soldiers. If they did, they allowed them to disappear at various stages of the campaign but continued to claim the salaries and rations all the same. They demanded at least two months’ cash in advance, loaned the cash whether it belonged to them or to the privates at interest and kept the ‘profit’ for themselves. If salaries were in arrears, they would

1 S. Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening, 1878-1912*, Princeton 1967, 23.

2 See C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*, Cambridge, Mass. 1992, 82-84.

not disperse but remain in employment even after their period of service ended and demand the payment of their ‘past salaries’, living in the meantime off the land. One reason for the endless disagreement between Albanian contractors and the Ottoman functionaries on the exact amount of salaries was the charging of interest by the contractors on the amount due to them.

There were also obvious benefits of the mercenary system. An employer could save money or time or both by employing mercenaries rather than a standing army or, as was the case with the Ottomans, could use them to compensate for the inefficiency of the standing army. So long as mercenaries were efficient, such abuses could be overlooked or simply added to the cost. Moreover, to explain away all the Ottoman-Albanian disputes as ramifications of a pay dispute would be a reductionism.

In a more ideological and perhaps more substantial vein, the Albanians’ military dependability and political loyalty came to be fused in the eyes of the Ottoman government. As the Greek War of Independence wore on, the Ottoman government came to see the Albanians in a different light from ordinary mercenaries and there is some evidence that towards the end of the Greek War some Ottomans including none other than the Grand Vizier, Reşid Mehmed Paşa, and most probably Sultan Mahmud as well, actually believed that some Albanian leaders were on the verge of a large conspiracy of a ‘nationalist’ character not unlike that of the Greeks.

Seyyid Ali Paşa, commander of the Ottoman forces in the Morea, was one of the first to clash with the Albanian troops because of the payment question. In March 1822 he wrote to Hurşid Paşa, the commander-in-chief of Ottoman forces in Rumelia, and asked for a substantial sum to pay the mercenary troops. Hurşid had already sent him 1,000 *keses* (500,000 *guruş*); he had paid a month’s full salary, but the Albanian troops were up against him again, they formed a “mob” (*cumhur*) and were demanding the rest of the payment. When they staged a demonstration, he implored them and used dissimulation lest a scandal should arise before the enemy. When this did not work, he told them that he had sent his steward to Hurşid Paşa to fetch money. This worked. Seyyid Ali managed to buy some time. He asked Hurşid to lend him 1,500-2,000 *keses* (750,000-1,000,000 *guruş*) to “protect the honour of one’s own kind” (*namus-ı hemcinsini vikayeten*). The amount was to be reimbursed when the centre sent money to the army, and in the event of its not doing so, from his own properties. Seyyid Ali Paşa called the Albanians a “repugnant people” (*millet-i mekruhe*) who “were in habitual treason”. The Albanian chiefs sent away some of their soldiers by paying only a month’s salary against their three-month service, using the money they had received from him. Seyyid Ali claimed that those chiefs who initially brought 100 men had only 10 men under their command. They, however, stuck to their original claims.³

Perhaps one blunder of Seyyid Ali was his hasty offer to pay the soldiers out of his own pocket if no money came from the centre. In July 1822, Hurşid Paşa wrote two letters, as Ottoman

3 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 38557-B, Seyyid Ali Paşa to Hurşid Paşa, 15 Cemaziyülahir 1237 (10 March 1822).

governors usually did, a short one to the Grand Vizier and a much more detailed and informal one to his representative (*kapu kethüdası*) in Istanbul. Both were meant to be seen by the Sultan and they were. In the formal letter he remarked that the reason for the “treason” of the “Albanian tribe” was their ignorance of Ottoman methods and their poverty. That is why they were dragging their feet to join the army. In the letter to his agent, he complained of the mismanagement of Seyyid Ali. Moreover, the protests of Ali’s soldiers began to infect his own soldiers.

The Grand Vizier, Salih Paşa, presented the ‘case’ to the Sultan. He wrote that in the previous orders to the so-called *Kega* (Gheg) pashas he promised “imperial gifts” to them. He suggested that, in order to quicken their joining the army, 15,000 *guruş* for each should be sent to them *before* they left for the army. As to Seyyid Ali Paşa, he suggested his removal from the area and warned that there was a distinct danger so long he hung around there: he would cause turmoil among the soldiers. He should be relieved of his duties as the governor of Ankara and Kangırı (Çankırı) provinces (*sancak*), he should be stripped of his rank of a vizier and his property should be confiscated. Mahmud II approved the immediate sending of a total of 105,000 *guruş* to the Gheg pashas and remarked in a rare moment of pity: “The behaviour of the former commander of the Morea, Ali Paşa, necessitates his execution, but I have taken pity on him on the grounds of his youth. Let all his properties and things be confiscated and sold off. Give the money to the soldiers and if there remains a surplus, write to us”. He also ordered Ali Paşa’s exile to Bolu.⁴

Hurşid Paşa, who died soon after, towards the end of 1822, was in many ways typical of the Ottoman elite of the time. He was of Georgian slave origins and rose in the Ottoman hierarchy to become the Grand Vizier in 1812. He called both the Tosk and Gheg tribesmen Albanians and was prejudiced against both groups. The Tosks were at the time politically unreliable. The Ghegs were also in “treason” in not obeying the Ottoman centre. However, he was pragmatic enough to suggest that the centre should pay them in cash in advance in line with their demands. The Ottoman government, too, was flexible enough so long as there was cash to send.

Hurşid’s pragmatic approach was shared by many other imperial administrators. In January 1823, the new governor general of Rumelia, Mehmed Emin Paşa, observed that if the Albanians put their hearts into it, the war with the Greeks could be won in a short time, as the Albanians knew all the tricks of the Greeks and the Greeks dreaded them. They did not put their hearts into it. The Tosks, as the “zealous partisans” of the executed Ali Paşa of Tepedelen, felt disconcerted. They were dragging their feet with a lot of excuses or simply deserting. Their hearts had to be won over. He suggested that İsmail, one of the grandsons of Ali Paşa who survived the putsch and was in exile in Istanbul, should be sent back to the region as a commander. In this way, he hoped, “full trust” would be restored to the region and the “gossip circulating among some people ever since

4 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 45873-A, Hurşid Paşa to his representative (*kapu kethüdası*) in Istanbul, 17 Şevval 1237 (8 July 1822), and 45873, Hurşid Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 17 Şevval 1237 (8 July 1822), *telhis* and *hat*.

the incident of the executed Ali Paşa that the Albanians were traitors... would be got rid of...”. Only then could the Ghegs and the Tosks be set against one another and they could be employed in an efficient way, when they were suspicious and fearful of each other. As if this crash course in *divide et impera* tactics did not suffice, he gratuitously added that this was “regarded as part and parcel of politics (literally, affairs of the realm) and military craft (*umur-ı mülkiye ve sanayi-i harbiyeden*)”. The Grand Vizier in Istanbul did not even comment on the letter and simply presented it to the Sultan.⁵

Of Slaves, Albanians, and Turks

Not everybody could be as devious as Mehmed Emin Paşa, in carefully dissociating himself from charges that the Albanians were treacherous and yet maintaining his own condescending attitude. For one, Yusuf Paşa of Siroz (Gk. Serres) was not. He was blunt to the point of being potentially offensive to quite a section of the Ottoman elite. He was at the time of writing, the commander of the Balya Badra (Patras) and İnebahtı (Lepanto, Gk. Naupaktos) castles, strategically important places, controlling the mouth of the Gulf of Corinth. In January 1823, immediately after the death of Hurşid Paşa, he wrote an extremely detailed dispatch to Istanbul and gave vent to some of his inner thoughts. According to Yusuf Paşa, the military situation was pretty bad. The Greek ships were blockading the Gulf of Corinth, not allowing Ottoman vessels to relieve the besieged castles in the northern Morea. The castle of Anabolu (Gk. Nauplio) fell. The news that the imperial navy was still near the Dardanelles did not help the situation. His criticism of the captains of the imperial navy was harsh. They were addicted to cowardice and lethargy, and wary in the extreme of the Greek fire-ships. Accepting that there was no point in sending the whole navy without it being properly manned and provisioned, he boldly asked for the transfer of about 15 vessels to his own command, in order to protect the approaches to the Morea. All the community of Muhammad was imploring this and their sole consolation was the hope that the army was to enter the “island of the Morea”. They were wondering “when revenge will be taken of these Moreot infidels”.

His censure of Ottoman commanders, great and small, dead or alive, was equally scathing. The late generalissimo, Hurşid Paşa, appointed one of his slaves, his treasurer, as a military commander, “without ever thinking whether all these great commanders, receivers of the Sultan’s great titles, would accept the command of this page of a man (*bu oğlan makulesi herif*)”. This was more than a passing criticism or one pertaining only to a particular person, the treasurer-commander. Yusuf Paşa, no doubt counting himself among the “great commanders” he referred to, was dead-

5 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 40232-A, Mehmed Emin Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 27 Rebiyülahir 1238 (1 January 1823).

set against the slaves and slave culture, still dominating the Ottoman establishment. He returned to the subject once more and accused Hurşid Paşa of “employing and consulting nobody but a few frivolous slaves (*birkaç sebükmağz köle*) and pages who were members of his own household”. The late Pasha refused his counsel when Yusuf said: “Let us attack these infidels” to save the besieged “brothers in religion” in Tripoliçe (Gk. Tripoli), thus displaying criminal neglect. Conscious that his words would not go down well in Istanbul as they were “against the etiquette”, he excused himself saying that only those who were eyewitnesses knew how all the besieged Muslims talked of the Pasha and in what sort of a deeply insulting language!

Yusuf Paşa’s long dispatch is crisscrossed with stories of military inefficiency, ineptitude, cowardice, and lethargy on the part of the Ottoman military during the first two years of the campaign. To say that his criticism was levelled only against the safely deceased Hurşid Paşa would be doing him injustice. The governor of the Yanya (Gk. Ioannina) *sancak*, Ömer Paşa Vryoni, one of the Albanian commanders, emerges as his chief living villain. It is Ömer Paşa who misleads Reşid Mehmed Paşa, governor of Karaman in Anatolia but on campaign in Rumelia, in besieging Mesolongi. He prevented Reşid from attacking the town on the grounds that he was negotiating the terms of a pardon with the besieged Greeks. Then, the Greek vessels appeared, the infidels gave their answer by indicating with their guns that there was nobody among them asking for a pardon. Let alone entering the Morea, the Ottoman army could not conquer Mesolongi and retreated in disgrace.

As was the case with the slaves, Yusuf Paşa’s censure of Ömer Paşa Vryoni was beyond personal criticism. He remarked in a casual way that “everybody” knew well that since the Yanya incident the Tosk Albanian *millet* were a conspiratorial lot. Money was their religion and faith. They were a “black-faced people” as they instantly turned to opposition when they faced a little difficulty. His suggestion was therefore not to employ them on their own, but to mix them with other soldiers. Yusuf Paşa did not object to the recruitment of the Gheg Albanians. However, his full sympathies were with the Turks, and of the Turks, the Rumelians. He wrote:

The Anatolian soldiers are not familiar with the kind of warfare in this region nor have they a suitable physique. Recruiting and sending them here would be a needless destruction of lives, waste of provisions and of cash as well. But the Turks of Rumelia and the *evlad-ı fatihan* group (descendants of the conquerors) are familiar as of old with techniques of warfare here (*Rumeli’nin Türk uş-ağı ve evlad-ı fatihan taifesi öteden berü fenaşına-ı muharebe olup*). They live in the Çirmen and Salonica *sancaks* of the province of Rumelia. If it pleases the Sultan, 15,000 of them can be easily recruited from among them only for this matter.

Yusuf Paşa, aware of his own boldness, asserted that he had entered the Morea to sacrifice his life. He wrote to explain his breach of the protocol in a quaintly antiquated language, worthy of the early Ottoman chronicles: “As I am determined to be a man of death (*ölüm eri*), I am

also determined to convey my knowledge and observations in a correct and honest way”. Here, in his own words, we have a warrior of the faith (*gazi*) who spent his wealth (he borrowed 150,000 *guruş* from the European merchants and sent it to Reşid Paşa) and was ready to die for the faith.⁶

Determined to die or not, Yusuf Paşa’s was one voice among many in the much divided house that was the Ottoman Empire at the time of the Greek Revolution. As to his own identity, sticking to my self-imposed guidelines, I will not identify him as ‘Turkish’ as he did not call himself that and nobody else did either. A member of the provincial elite, he was a local pasha from the town of Siroz in the *sancak* of Salonica, where the *Türk uşağı* and *evlad-ı fatihan* lived. How his discourse against the slaves would sink in in Istanbul, where the Sultan, who was often in consultation with his military-governmental slaves, appointing his own slaves to important places, and himself being the son of a female slave is only to be guessed at, as Yusuf Paşa’s dispatch is among those that were only “seen by the imperial eyes”. No commentary on it exists in the archives.

One could mildly speculate that despite his holding a “great rank” from Istanbul, he could not be seen there as fully Ottoman, somebody able to appreciate the Ottoman way. That this Ottoman way was about to undergo profound changes, mostly brought about by the Ottomans themselves in a paradoxical way in response to a changing world, is a question which needs to be tackled elsewhere. However, his evaluation of the Albanians would be very familiar to the centre as it had received a deluge of similarly worded reports from its own trusted slaves, full Ottomans. As to Yusuf’s specific charges against Ömer Paşa Vryoni, the centre adopted a cautious way, as can be seen from the following exchanges between Yusuf Paşa and the central government.

In August 1823, Yusuf Paşa wrote another of his acrimonious letters to Istanbul. The opening shot was that the Tosk Albanians kept behaving in accordance with their “inborn traits” and they deserved not be employed at all. However, the Albanian chiefs kept coming, offering their services. Despite his awareness of their dubious loyalty, as he put it, he decided to hire them as it would take a long time to bring soldiers from somewhere else. Thus, he crossed the gulf to Preveze and informed Reşid Mehmed Paşa and Ömer Paşa that he went to Preveze “only to take revenge on the infidels lest they should take offence thinking that Yusuf Paşa, who had been besieged in the Morea for two years, came now to recruit soldiers to achieve something before they themselves did”. When he received their blessing and endorsement, he wrote to the Albanian chiefs. Then he learnt that Ömer Paşa was threatening the Albanians to prevent them from entering his service. He sent news to Ömer via Reşid and told him that it was improper of him to impede their coming. Ömer took vehement oaths and denied all involvement. Yusuf, however, had reason to believe that Ömer’s nephew Arslan, the governor of Berat, had threatened the chiefs back at home and burnt

6 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 39983, Yusuf Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 3 Cemaziyülevvel 1238 (16 January 1823).

down the houses of some. After further exchanges of accusations and denials, he nevertheless decided to go ahead with his plan, paid handsome salaries and formed an army of 12,000 Albanians. He, with his brand-new mercenary army and his own household, proceeded to Voynice and then to Lutraki. There, he summoned the chiefs to discuss such military matters as which way to take, where to strike camp, how to distribute provisions, etc. Those chiefs, “corrupted” by Ömer Paşa, did not want to cross into the Morea. They influenced the soldiers, and demanded to be discharged. It was apparent that “a great scandal and much evil” would take place. So, Yusuf ordered the examination of the salary accounts. Many of the chiefs were found to be in debt to him; they paid back the money and left for Narda (Gk. Arta) with a “heavy heart”. Only 1,500 troops chose to remain with him. Ömer reputedly sent just 80 *keses* (40,000 *guruş*) to a few chiefs, and this was enough to disperse the army!⁷

Not content with only Yusuf Paşa’s report, Mahmud II ordered Silihdar Ali Paşa, the Grand Vizier, to ask the first lord of the imperial stable, Elhac Ali, who happened to be in the region, confidentially to investigate the case and report on it independently. Elhac Ali was able to confirm that the Albanian soldiers objected to the Morea as their destination. However, he was not in a position to confirm Ömer Paşa’s role in the dispersal of soldiers. He only knew about Yusuf Paşa’s claim from his letter to Reşid Mehmed Paşa, the governor of Tırhala (Gk. Trikala). Mahmud cautiously scribbled in his minute that whether Ömer Paşa had a hand in this or not, things had to be left as they were for the time being.⁸

It seems that one of the most salient aspects of the bickering among the leaders of the Ottoman forces in Rumelia at the time pertained to the re-allocation of cash resources mobilised for the war effort. This was not necessarily due to a desire to embezzle state funds, although the system encouraged such transactions, but mainly to emphasise who was in charge of the cash resources as well as soldiers. In other words, the various leaders of the Ottoman forces wanted to form or maintain mercenary units under their own command by using the state funds on the grounds of being able to control their own soldiery in a more efficient way. This doubtless was a reason. However, controlling a mercenary army also defined one’s own position in the pursuit of power. The Albanian chiefs jealously guarded their position as intermediaries between the individual mercenaries and the Ottoman representatives. Thanks to their local means of control back in Albania they were infinitely better placed against would-be competitors like Yusuf Paşa.

7 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 37784-B, Yusuf Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 7 Zilhicce 1238 (15 August 1823).

8 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 37770, Elhac Ali to the Grand Vizier, 11 Muharrem 1239 (17 September 1823).

Albanian Worries, Albanian Voices

At this juncture, an attempt to recover some ‘Albanian voices’ may not be out of place. Theirs make quite a different reading from the dispatches by the Ottoman officials. In 1824-25 Ömer Paşa Vryoni made an attempt to expand his own power base or negotiating powers by placing a request with the centre to be allowed to use a larger resource than the one already at his disposal. As governor of Ağrıboz (Negropont, Gk. Chalkida) at the time, he found the Rumelian levies sent to him by the governor general quite useless. His chief reason was the “difficulty of maintaining discipline over and employing in a desired way such soldiers whose pay and ration slips were issued by another party”. He also happened to have a janissary force of 3,000 soldiers, a rare sight in the battles of the Greek War of Independence. He wrote them off in a more casual way, pointing out that as they were scared after some battles near Athens, they were deserting on a number of pretexts. He asked the centre to be allocated 3,500 pay tickets (*harc*) to enable him to hire more and better mercenaries in the way he desired. It should be noted here that the number of pay tickets did not automatically translate into the same number of soldiers. This was subject to negotiations. He also asked the government to send him 2 *yiiks*, 64,000 *guruş* (264,000 *guruş*) to distribute to his existing mercenaries for their services of a period of three months. The Grand Vizier and the “councillors” (*erbab-ı şura*) deliberated on the matter and suggested to the Sultan that the amount he was asking for should be sent to him and his demands to have 3,500 new pay tickets should be granted. Mahmud II accepted the first suggestion, ordering the treasury to send him money for the existing mercenaries, but was rather cool on the issuance of a new quota for him, commenting that the opinions of the admiral of the imperial navy and the governor general of Rumelia should be sought first. In the light of some other documents about Ömer Paşa, it is not likely that he was granted his wish.⁹

In March 1823, the hereditary Pasha of İşkodra (Alb. Shkodër), Mustafa Paşa Buşatlı acknowledged the receipt of the orders of Istanbul bolstered by religious rulings (*fetva-ı şerif*) and instructing him to take as many soldiers as the province was capable of providing to the war zone. Istanbul promised him “imperial gifts”, despite the severe shortage of money thanks to the huge expenses of the war. Mustafa Paşa had the edict read aloud among the populace. They ceremoniously said “we hear and we obey”, but respectfully reminded him of the fact that İşkodra was far from the war zone and they needed the support of the Ottoman state to go there as they were “poorer than others and naked”. Rhetoric aside, Mustafa Paşa for his part equally respectfully reminded the centre that when he sent soldiers to İzdin (Gk. Lamia) the previous year, the cavalry

9 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 51305, Ömer Paşa Vryoni to the Grand Vizier, 1240 (1824-25), *telhis* and *hat*.

signed up for the advance cash payment of 450 *guruş* and the infantry for 350 *guruş* per soldier for a period of six months. Therefore, he warned that even if the locals were compelled to go, they would not wholeheartedly work, or, even worse, they would act improperly as they were a rough people. He begged for the immediate sending of cash to be distributed to the soldiers before they left their province.¹⁰

A dispatch of Reşid Mehmed Paşa, now the governor general of Rumelia, on the salary question closely corroborates Mustafa Paşa's "observations" in the main, but as is to be expected, it is set in an altogether different tone. From this we learn that the centre was averse to put in writing that "salaries" would be paid to those Albanians who were ordered to go to the front, but in recognition of the fact that some of them needed money to reach the front, "help" would be given to them. Ordered to give guarantees to and satisfy one Albanian chief, İsmail Bey of Avlonya (of whom, more later), Reşid Paşa commented that the Albanians could not be employed without salaries, unlike the other Rumelian soldiers. They would not make a move unless they were paid two months' salaries in advance. He, then, somewhat gravely warned that as they were "a money-loving people, they could perpetrate [the offence of] serving another *millet* for money". What Reşid Mehmed Paşa was saying in effect was that the Albanian mercenaries could serve another "nation", not necessarily, but most probably, the Greeks, if they found employment with them or were offered more money.¹¹

No doubt such arguments were not lost on the centre. As long as the opportunity cost of not employing Albanians was greater than employing them, it made sense to employ them. Fully a year later we learn that the centre gave in, in the 1823 campaigning season, and contracted soldiers in İşkodra for 70 *guruş* per soldier per month, a slight increase on the 1822 salaries. In June 1824, Mahmud Nedim Bey, an official sent to İşkodra to see to it that Mustafa Paşa himself left the province for the front, wrote that the Albanian soldiery demanded 200 *guruş* per month and they were still reluctant. He calculated that the salaries alone would cost 5,000 *keses* (2,500,000 *guruş*). Mustafa Paşa did not ask anything for himself but told him that there was no point in his personal departure for the front at the head of a few hundred dependants. The campaign season was already upon them and time was flying. A frustrated Mahmud Nedim Bey commented:

It is impossible to describe the state of this region in writing. They have no debate here save the one on salaries. They are such a people that for five or ten *guruş* they can kill their own mothers and fathers. It is impossible to expect service and loyalty from them. Taking this attitude of theirs

10 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 40511-A, Mustafa Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 9 Receb 1238 (22 March 1823).

11 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 40488, Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 15 Receb 1238 (28 March 1823).

into consideration, I understand that if they are offered the money they are asking for they will sign up, otherwise they will not.¹²

One alternative for the Albanian mercenary forces was to send levies (*nefir-i âm*) to the front. As these ‘soldiers’ were simply civilians with little training, most Ottoman commanders held them in low esteem. In July 1824, the new governor general of Rumelia, Derviş Mehmed Paşa, summarised the situation in a dispatch. According to him, the levies collected from Rumelia were no good. They, too, were accustomed to the salaries as the government gave them monthly salaries of 35 *guruş* each. As they did not like the sum, he was obliged to pay 12 salaries to 10 soldiers. In other words, the governor began to play the time-honoured and favourite game of the mercenaries, only the amount in question was smaller than the kind of money the Albanian mercenaries were demanding. He could only hope that they would show up without desertions. As they were eroded, one way or another, he put an effort into recruiting more *kırcalı*s and Turks of Rumelia (*Türk uş-ağı*) as soldiers, but they were reluctant to go to the front as they had suffered very heavily from disease in previous years. Of the 2,500 soldiers recruited from the Kırçalı region, only 1,000 survived! The *deliyan* soldiers (light cavalry/skirmishers) were better but they could not be employed in full as the war zone was mountainous. The Albanian soldiers, of whom he was recruiting a new batch of 6,000, were like common merchants, doing trade with their salaries! Clearly in stress, it occurred to the governor (*vali*) that the Ottoman government also possessed a janissary army. He asked for janissaries and money to be sent to him. The Grand Vizier observed that as the campaign season was halfway through, there was no point in sending janissaries and that the governor of the Morea, İbrahim Paşa of Egypt, was expected at anytime to be in the region and they had already sent 500 *keses* (250,000 *guruş*) to the governor. He suggested that new orders should be sent to him advising him to employ the Albanians without consuming much time, as his predecessors had done, as they were salaried troops.¹³

Talking to the Enemy, Talking of the Enemy

One specific charge made by the Ottoman commanders against some of the Albanian leaders was that of high treason. Indeed, the relations between some Albanian chiefs and the leaders of the Greek Revolt were a greater concern to the Ottoman government than the eternal but somehow

12 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 40318-A, Mahmud Nedim Bey to the Grand Vizier, 3 Şevval 1239 (1 June 1824).

13 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 39928, Derviş Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 19 Zilkade 1239 (17 July 1824), *telhis* and *hat*.

familiar controversy over salaries. That the Greek revolutionaries made appeals to the Albanians right from Hyspilotis' proclamation of the revolt is doubtless the case. Assessing the validity of the high treason charges is, of course, more difficult. The Albanians were accused of having correspondence with the enemy and of acquiescence in Greek demands. There were also claims that some Albanian leaders were manipulating the Greek Revolt for their own ends. Tepedelenli Ali Paşa's 'support' of the Greek Revolution had already put the Ottomans on the alert. The interception of Greek appeals to the Albanian chiefs could only heighten this feeling of suspicion. When 'proof' came in the shape of correspondence between the Albanian chiefs and the Greeks or among the Albanian chiefs themselves, you still, even if you were Ottoman, had no sure way of knowing that such 'in fact' was the case.

These are not usual methodological words of caution on the nature of historical documents or a sudden outburst of an agnostic attitude towards the discipline of history itself. It is the same Ottoman documents that make us aware that some of the charges were make-believe or that when hard-pressed, the Ottoman commanders could forge imperial documents! However, throughout this research I have been rather interested in how the Ottomans perceived, presented, and constructed their realities.

In 1822, at the beginning of the Greek Revolt, the Ottomans intercepted or acquired a letter by one of the popular Greek leaders, Todori Kolokotroni (Theodoros Kolokotronis), addressed to the Albanian chiefs with the Ottoman army in the Morea. He reminded them that he was still keeping in a loyal and manly manner the *besa* (truce/peace) he had given to "our old grandfather" (Ali Paşa). If the Albanians had been equally manly they would not have come against him. However, it was no surprise to him if the Albanians were deceived this time as they had been tricked on a previous occasion into causing the death of their father and Kolokotronis' friend, the "old Ali". The Albanians would repent of their action after it was too late. Their crime in all this was known to him but he still regarded them as his own and would not deign to kill them even when they came against him under arms. He liked them and saw them as brothers and sons and asked them to send messengers to him, as many as they liked. He was ready to grant them his *besa* on his life, honour and children's lives that he would not harm them. The messengers had to carry their letter attached to a pole as a mark of recognition and tell the Greek soldiers that they were going to Kolokotronis. After a deal was reached and the Albanians gave their *besa*, all of them would be welcome to join him without any fear. God was on his side and he took the trouble of writing to them as he did not want their ruin.¹⁴

Kolokotronis was little contaminated by romantic nationalism. Operating in the same quasi-feudal milieu, he spoke the 'same language' as the Albanian chiefs. He commanded the loyalty of

14 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 39917-R, Turkish translation of letter by Kolokotronis, 1238 (1822). The original Greek is in BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 39917-S. See Appendices I and II.

the klepht bands, which had life styles similar to those of the Albanians and in fact included many ethnic Albanians. Linguistic, ethnic, and religious divisions meant little to him and they could easily be eclipsed by the kind of relations he was referring to in his letter. Whether this would be liked by Istanbul or for that matter by the ‘enlightened’ leaders of the Greek Revolution is another story.

In March 1825, the governor general of Rumelia, Reşid Mehmed Paşa, reported to the centre the circumstances of the public execution of one Albanian chief, Derviş Hasan, in Yanya. According to him, Derviş Hasan had been a known mischief-maker ever since the Yanya incident. His punishment was postponed so as not to cause fear in the “chiefs and commanders of Albania”. The governor was not exactly happy with the situation and was looking for a suitable opportunity to get him executed. This presented itself when Derviş Hasan, in line with his “inherently evil nature”, wrote a letter to the “captains of the brigands” in the Morea and Karlieli (Gk. Akarnania) encouraging them to keep up the good work to “cause some fear in the generalissimo and his soldiers”. Unfortunately for the man, the herald took the letter, written in Greek and sealed by him, directly to Reşid Mehmed Paşa instead of the Greek captains. Reşid invited Derviş Hasan to Yanya. Unsuspecting, he came and was speedily executed. Reşid Paşa had his dead body hung in the marketplace and summoned all the influential chiefs in a show of strength. He displayed the captured letter to them and argued that Derviş Hasan’s daring to commit treason “certainly proved his apostasy and infidelity, necessitating his execution in accordance with the sharia”. All the chiefs “displayed satisfaction and praised” the governor when they became aware of the real situation!

In Istanbul, the Grand Vizier, Mehmed Selim Paşa, praised Reşid Paşa’s execution of Derviş Hasan. There was, however, one problem. The Grand Vizier discovered, as probably Reşid Mehmed intended him to do, that Ömer Paşa Vryoni’s name was mentioned in Derviş Hasan’s letter, implicating him in a conspiracy. He commented that Derviş Hasan’s solo execution would make Ömer Paşa suspicious. Now that the letter was public, Ömer Paşa would be duly warned and could be expected to take precautions fearing that his own conspiracy would be discovered. As if to indicate that he personally believed in Ömer Paşa’s complicity, he reminded the Sultan that Ömer Paşa did not carry out a previous order to execute an “infidel called Kosta Gramatik” (*grammatikos* means scribe in Greek) who had taken refuge in Albania. What was important, however, was that the campaign should go smoothly. He suggested that Reşid Paşa’s views on Ömer Paşa should be sought before Istanbul did anything. Mahmud II approved this course of action but wrote rather understatedly of Ömer’s disobedience and issued a new order to the Grand Vizier that he should secure the execution of Kosta Gramatik.¹⁵

Ömer Paşa himself proved to be a survivor, despite occasional misgivings of the centre about

15 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 40213, Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 11 Şaban 1240 (31 March 1821), *telihs* and *hat*.

him. Coming from an ordinary Albanian family and not from the ‘dynasties’ (*hanedan*) of Albania, he owed and maintained his position solely thanks to the Ottoman government. This relationship with the Ottomans caused him to be more co-operative with the centre, while the Ottoman government chose to overlook the kind of failings in him it would usually amplify in others.

How to Mollify Albania?

Such momentous events in Istanbul as the abolition of the janissary army and the establishment of the “victorious soldiers of Muhammad” (*asakir-i mansure-i muhammediye*) together with the development of a new discourse putting emphasis on the Muslim *millet* running its own affairs by public consensus certainly had their impact on the centre-Albanian relations.

When there was, in 1828, a distinct possibility that the Ottoman Empire would fight a war against the Russians, the centre made determined efforts to mobilise the Islamic *millet*. One of the cornerstones of this discourse was that the whole Islamic *millet* was to be mobilised and fight the enemy without asking for salaries at all. The Albanians were specifically mentioned in this context in a document antedating the declaration of Holy War (*cihad*). According to this, in the event of war with the allies, it was the soldiers of Rumelia and Albania who were to confront the enemy first and foremost. However, there would be no issue of salaries and the whole *millet* should fight the enemy. This was required by the new method of the “public consensus of the Islamic millet” (*ittifak-ı amme-i millet-i islamiye usulu*).¹⁶ The *cihad* declaration itself repeated similar ideas.¹⁷ Such statements can lead one to construe them as a new world order where there was no place for mercenaries and salaries. There is no doubt that this discourse could have been used against the Albanian chiefs with considerable efficiency but this does not mean that there was no suppleness in the system and it was all too rigid, unable to incorporate or co-opt divergent elements.

In 1828, during the war with Russia and probably after 24 October when a new Grand Vizier, İzzet Mehmed Paşa, was appointed, the Ottoman government made a determined effort to order the affairs of Albania and mobilise the Albanians in the service of the Ottoman state. The Grand Vizier let the Sultan first know of a small meeting between himself and some Albanian grandees like Palashzade İsmail Paşa, Süleyman Paşa of Avlonya, and Hüseyin Bey. The meeting took place at the Sublime Porte on the eve of a larger one, a consultative council meeting (*meclis-i şura*) that was meant to convene to discuss the same subject. In the small meeting, the removal of Ömer

16 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 43251, Grand Vizier to the Sultan, n.d., possibly 1243 (1827/28).

17 See Y. H. Erdem, ‘Do not Think of the Greeks as Agricultural Labourers’: Ottoman Responses to the Greek War of Independence’, in F. Birtek and T. Dragonas (eds), *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey*, London 2005, 67-84.

Paşa Vryoni from his post of governor of Yanya to Salonica was agreed by those present. Hüseyin Bey took upon himself the writing of a letter in Greek to give him guarantees and assurances.¹⁸

Fortunately, the minute of the *meclis-i şura* that took place at the offices of the chief juriconsult (*seyhülislam*) exists in the Ottoman archives. This is a 1,500-word document mostly dealing with appointments but also providing an insight into Ottoman-Albanian relations as well as the decision-making process itself. All the participants were in agreement about the appointment of Reşid Mehmed Paşa, who was at the time the commander of the Vidin fortress on the Danube, as governor general of Rumelia. Reşid Paşa was chosen on the grounds of his knowledge of Albania. Ömer Paşa Vryoni was to go to Salonica and it would be explained to him that he was being relieved of his duties in a routine way. If necessary, Reşid Mehmed Paşa could write to him and give guarantees that there was no ill will or conspiracy against him. The governor of Salonica, İbrahim Paşa, would go to the Vidin front. Of the *sancaks* under Ömer Paşa, Avlonya (Alb. Vlorë) would be granted to none other than a member of the local dynasty that had ruled the area, to Süleyman Paşa of Avlonya, who was in Istanbul at the time. In this way, it was hoped that more soldiers could be recruited from the *sancak*. Berat would also be placed under his control, though indirectly, under a sub-governor. Yanya, Delvine, Karlıeli, Tırhala and İnebahtı *sancaks* would also be granted to the “appropriate Albanian pashas as required by policy”. Yanya and Delvine, at the time under Ömer Paşa together with Karlıeli, were to be granted to Palaslızade İsmail Paşa, but this was subject to the approval of Reşid Mehmed Paşa. Another of the Albanian pashas, Salih Paşa, the commander of Yergöğü (Rom. Giurgiu) would be granted Tırhala. If Reşid Paşa approved, İnebahtı, too, could be granted to him. The council accepted that it was more sensible to put the supervision of the mountain passes (*derbendat nezareti*) under the direct control of the governor of Rumelia, but “out of necessity” it had to be given to the Tosk province. They toyed with the idea that it could be given to Silihdar İlyas Bey (Poda) but some members pointed out that he was not from the lineage of the Albanian dynasties, that there were many people of similar status in Albania and that in the event of his being appointed, the likelihood was that they would be jealous of him, as was the case with Ömer Paşa. So they argued that the supervision of the passes should be granted to either the Yanya or Tırhala governors as the “real purpose of all this was to procure the service of Albania”. The last word would belong to the governor of Rumelia. Then the council prepared detailed suggestions as to which Albanian commander should serve as the deputy-governor under which of the governors. Delvine, for example, would be given to Mustafa Paşazade Şahin Bey, who would serve under Palaslızade as deputy lieutenant-governor (*mütesellim*). All of them would receive letters praising their loyalty and honesty and they would be told that their salaries would be paid by the Ottoman government.

18 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 50995, Grand Vizier to the Sultan, n.d, possibly 1244 (1828).

Most fascinatingly, the council deliberated whether to “assure” or “provoke” Ahmed Paşa, nephew of Ömer Paşa. Luckily for the man, they decided to “assure” him and appointed him to Köstendil. Also, in a spirit of good will, they asked the Sultan not to demote the outgoing governor general of Rumelia, Derviş Mustafa Paşa, and confiscate his property. Such things were done in the past to discipline the pashas and make them an example for their successors, but the result was less than satisfactory as it led to the timidity of the incumbents. Derviş Mustafa could render a good service if he examined and reduced the excessive salary demands of the troops before Reşid Paşa reached his post. All the commanders were to be told that “as the shame and damage of years of failure are mounting, God willing, from now on it is obligatory (*farz*) for you to strive to work in public unity (*ittifak-ı umum*)”. The hereditary governor of İşkodra, Mustafa Paşa, too would be required to send 5,000 soldiers under a capable commander to the war zone.

The year before, there were 15,395 soldiers levied from the Rumelia towns in addition to the Albanian troops, *evlad-ı fatihan* soldiers and *timar* holding cavalry. They could avoid going to the front in return for substitution money which was fixed at 35 *guruş* per month for a period of six months. This year the towns were required to furnish the above amount as well as other “reasonable” amounts for the provisioning of the army. This being so, the council observed that the collection of money from the towns would take time and as the Albanians were raising the salary issue in the event of arrears, Reşid Paşa had to be supported by the centre to protect his authority as he was not personally rich. The salaried troops would receive their salaries every two months, that is, *after* they had worked for two months. The council observed that the Albanian soldiers asked for nothing else but money but the Albanian chiefs wanted farms (*çiftlik*) even more than cash. The governor could tell them that they would be rewarded in line with their service and success. The governor needed “full freedom and complete authorisation” more than his predecessors did. His main duty was to mobilise, unite and placate Albania.¹⁹

On the surface, this was a victory for the established local dynasties and the Albanian military contractors. The centre was withdrawing Ömer Paşa, granting posts to Albanian hereditary chiefs or rather confirming them in their ancestral places, assigning the supervision of the passes to the Albanians and perhaps most important of all, revoking the kind of *cihad* it envisaged for the Islamic *millet* for Albanians, confirming the mercenary principle. One small concession the Albanian chiefs in Istanbul must have felt like making was the principle of the payment of salaries after two months in service. However, it is difficult to assess the degree to which this ‘compromise’ was carried into practice. This was largely due to the great powers granted to Reşid Mehmed as governor general. He, for example, kept the *sancaks* of Trnhala and İnebahtı under his own administration and did not assign them to the Albanian pashas, nor did he appoint Şahin Bey as *mütesellim*

19 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 51009, summary of *meclis-i şura* with minutes by the Grand Vizier, n.d., possibly 1244 (1828).

of Delvine. This does not mean that Reşid did not try to implement his mission but the deals in Istanbul did not necessarily fit the needs and ambitions of the locals. Avlonya, for example, was coveted by another member of the same dynasty, İsmail Bey of Avlonya. There is evidence that Reşid paid some of the mercenary leaders in land, granting them imperial farms in Yanya and Narda. He also sold off some land to be able to meet the cash demands of the soldiery.²⁰

Ordeals of a Zealous Governor

Reşid Mehmed Paşa, a Georgian slave trained in the household of Koca Hüsrev Mehmed Paşa, himself a slave of Abkhazian (Abaza) origins, was destined to play the greater part in this ‘mollification’ of Albania.²¹ First as the governor general and later as the Grand Vizier, he brought the whole of Albania within the Ottoman orbit. In November 1828 Reşid Paşa broke the bad news to Istanbul that Greek forces under Dimitrios Hypsilantis had captured Livadye and a French army of 18,000 were approaching against Ottoman-held Athens. The main culprits were two Albanian commanders, Abbas Cam and Kasım Mesguram. They came to an understanding with the ‘infidels’ during a skirmish, left the battlefield and entered the Morea. Later on, they, together with an accomplice called Vasil Baba, who was within Livadye and in the retinue of the seal-bearer of Ömer Paşa, corrupted the other Albanian chiefs to join them. In accordance with a contract (*mukavele*) with the Greeks, they opened the gates of the town at night and delivered it to them. The Greeks were increasing their forces in the Patras and Athens regions. It was clear that the small numbers of *asakir-i mansure-i muhammediye* soldiers defending the area would not suffice for the task.

The fragility of the military situation induced Reşid Paşa to enter into one of his severest denunciations of the Albanians. He wrote that “considering the nature and manners of this Albanian *millet* there is no other way than killing a few of them to get things going or give them all the money they are asking for and wait for a suitable time to punish them”. The Albanian chief who was allocated 500 pay tickets would immediately reduce the number of soldiers in his command to 200 if the salaries were in arrears for a few months. Tempted by the idea of killing a few of these “profiteers”, as he put it, he cautioned himself that doing this would create “coldness and conspiracy” in other soldiers. He could not dismiss the profiteers because he was in considerable debt to each one of them. The situation was truly insoluble. To him, it seemed that it was impossible to

20 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 42734-F, Selim Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 9 Rebiyülevvel 1245 (8 September 1829).

21 İ. H. Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi* [Annotated Chronology of Ottoman History], vol. 4, Istanbul 1955, 121-22.

employ the Albanian *millet* as it was equally impossible to achieve anything anywhere because of lack of funds. He reminded the centre that he had 10,000 pay tickets allocated to him but the magnitude of the task forced him to issue 25,000 pay tickets to the chiefs. Of this number, however, only 10,000-15,000 “muskets” were actually present in the army. The war effort needed at least 20,000-30,000 soldiers and they needed money. Considering that Reşid had already surpassed his quota, it seems that the contractors took upon themselves to finance the war effort with a view of making profits in the future.²²

As he attempted to mobilise and placate the Albanians on the one hand and prevent a total collapse of the Ottoman front against the Greeks on the other, Reşid’s dispatches were increasingly desperate and acrimonious. The fact that İbrahim Paşa of Egypt withdrew from the contest heightened his feeling of isolation among the Albanian troops. In December 1828, he painted a much bleaker picture. He pointed out that for quite a time he had been reporting on the state of affairs in the region, on the “evil behaviour of the Greek infidels and the conspiratorial manners of the Albanian *millet*”. The Ottomans could not quite cope with the Greeks alone in the past, whereas at present the Russians were actively at war with the Empire and the ‘Franks’ were making threatening signs. Even the suppressed subjects (*reaya*) in secure areas were displaying signs of disobedience. His only chance was to employ Albanian soldiers, but not only was there the salaries question but also animosity among the chiefs. He summoned the Albanian chiefs in his army for consultation and told them about the situation. They suggested that he should invite all the chiefs for consultations in Yanya. The Pasha sent respected chiefs and elders like Tahir Abbas, Veli Ağa of Girebene and Süleyman Bey of Konice as envoys to the *beys* and chiefs who kept their distance from the Ottoman army, and asked them to come to Yanya.

The Albanian chiefs, including İsmail Bey of Avlonya and Silihdar Poda, answered that they had to talk among themselves first at Berat. Then they wrote to Reşid Paşa that they should rather meet at the village of Zayce, four or five hours’ distance from Yanya, as they did not want to create difficulties in Yanya with their retinues of 4,000-5,000 men. To build some confidence, Reşid wrote to them that he would go to the village accompanied by only 70-80 horsemen. On arrival in Zayce, he found that the chiefs had disappeared into their strongholds.

So far, there is nothing new in the dispatch. The governor general was reporting the usual exasperations of an Ottoman field commander in the face of a highly volatile atmosphere. Suddenly, he enters into a new type of denunciation of the Albanians which opens up new vistas for the historian, as it certainly did for the Ottoman centre as well:

These people fool themselves that if this region, as well as other places, comes under the rule of the

22 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 39491-A, Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 19 Cemaziyülevvel 1244 (27 November 1828).

infidels they will be given liberty (*serbesti*) by them and will be allowed to possess their property and live in peace at their homes together with their families. They openly accept and express this foolish dream. The said İsmail and İlyas Beys provoke and deceive these people in their conspiracy and obstinacy. As I mentioned, the Albanian chiefs in my retinue profess that they have accepted the idea of alliance and union (*ittifak ve ittihad*) among themselves. I do not have much trust even in them. They all have the same character traits. They have to profess such ideas as they happen to be in my retinue... It is clear that they are going to continue to ask for excessive salaries and employ deficient [numbers of] soldiers. Therefore, the affairs of this region can only be ordered thanks to the help of the Exalted State. In reality, this region needs the said *millet* but Turkish soldiers from another region or orderly soldiers from another ethnic group have to be sent here out of necessity. Large quantities of provisions and of money should also be sent. We have either to dismiss and expel the said *millet* in a blanket manner or we have to give what they want in terms of money and bide our time to find a solution in the future.²³

Reşid Mehmed Paşa's statement that the Albanians at the time were after some kind of self-rule or even independence is truly new. How much truth there was in this statement, even in the light of other documentation surrounding the issue, is very difficult to evaluate. But again, I am interested in how the Ottomans saw and presented the issues. Moreover, there were other Ottomans who made similar assessments, though not quite in the kind of language Reşid Mehmed used. The deputy-governor of Berat, where the Albanian chiefs convened to have talks on Reşid's invitation, sounds even more vituperative:

Sir, the people who convened here for consultations never talked about the danger to the Islamic people. Their conversation revolved around such subjects as earning money, making profit or getting appointments. They complained that others were making good money and they remained unemployed. I never heard of them talking about the imminent attack on the families or about the confiscation of their property by the infidels. I have observed no sign of sorrow in these people. God grant us his help, amen! If this people had existed during the glorious time of the pride of the universe [a reference to the prophet Muhammad], God would have definitely sent a revelation to condemn them (*bu millet mutlaka fahr-ı kâinatın zaman-ı saadetinde bulunsaydı haklarında ayet-i lanet nazil olurdu*)!²⁴

23 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513, Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 11 Cemaziyülahir 1244 (19 December 1828).

24 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513-D, The *mütesellim* of Berat to the steward of Reşid Mehmed, 3 Cemaziyülahir 1244 (11 December 1828).

Reşid Mehmed's position was a very difficult one. Whole towns were changing allegiance between him and Albanian chiefs depending who was nearer and in what strength. Yanya itself supported him as he was quartering there, but neighbouring Delvine first supported and then declined to support him.²⁵ His troubles with Albanian chiefs who were asking to be paid seemed to be insurmountable. For example, one such chief, the former deputy-governor of Tırhala, Arslan Bey, told the people of Tırhala flatly that unless he was paid the money due to him he would pillage the town itself. He had 3,000 mercenaries in his retinue. He demanded a sum of 6 *yüks*, 16,180 *guruş* (616,180 *guruş*), whereas, according to the treasurer of Yenişehir (Gk. Larissa), the commander-in-chief's (*serasker*) own records showed a debt of only 2 *yüks*, 80,000 *guruş* (280,000 *guruş*). The difference was due to the fact that Arslan Bey charged an interest rate on the debt to reach almost triple the principal.²⁶

The governor still had the support of some Albanian chiefs and received information from them as well as his own spies and lost no time in transmitting it to Istanbul to bolster his case there. Süleyman Bey, one of the Albanian notables, wrote to him a report of the Berat meeting. According to him, İsmail Bey and Silihdar İlyas won over the other chiefs by saying that the *serasker*'s real intention was not to fight the enemies but to control them. They told the chiefs "whoever wants to repel the infidel let him go to the vizier". However, they were not influential in the whole of Albania as there were many other leaders who were in the pay of the governor.²⁷

A spy report let Reşid Paşa know of the counter-offers of İsmail Bey, Şahin Bey and İlyas Bey. İsmail Bey wanted Avlonya, Şahin Bey Delvine, and İlyas Tırhala *sancak*. In a more important vein, the report talked of a secret deal between the trio and the leaders of the Greek Revolt. According to this, Şahin Bey of Delvine and Count Capodistria were good friends of old, as Delvine and Corfu were neighbours. They made a deal to the effect that neither the "French infidels" nor the "rebellious bands of Capodistria" should attack Avlonya and Delvine in return for the commitment on the part of the Albanian chiefs not to send soldiers to such places as Mesolongi, Ağrıboz, Yenişehir and Tırhala. Also, the three chiefs were putting out propaganda that when peace came, Reşid Mehmed Paşa "will uproot our very roots thanks to our own *millet*. He will destroy us and he will put us into order [or, alternatively, he will conscript us]; the best thing to do is to banish him from here".²⁸

25 See BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513-B, *ilâm* of the *kadı* of Yanya supporting Reşid, 7 Cemaziyülahir 1244 (15 December 1828) and 21513-F, petition from Delvine, n.d. [1828].

26 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513-H, the *kadı* of Tırhala to Reşid Mehmed Paşa, n.d. [1828] and 21513-E, Tahir Efendi, the treasurer of Yenişehir to Reşid Mehmed Paşa, 22 Cemaziyülahir 1244 (30 November 1828).

27 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513-J, Süleyman Bey to Reşid Mehmed Paşa, 5 Cemaziyülahir 1244 (13 December 1828).

28 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513-I, spy report to Reşid Mehmed Paşa, n.d. [1828]

Shortly after, on 28 December 1828, Reşid Paşa sent another dispatch and bitterly complained that the people of Delvine had gone back on their promises to ally and unite themselves in the service of the faith and the state. He warned that it was impossible to employ the Albanians first and pay them later. There was a distinct possibility that they would attack him or banish him from the province. There were imperial orders ordering İsmail and İlyas Beys to go to Yanya and join the governor general. (This, together with the reports as to their intentions must have heightened his sense of fear.) He wrote that although he had had *Türk uşağı* soldiers with him, he had sent them down to Livadye to fight the Greeks. He had no soldiers but Albanians in his retinue now. He was concerned that his life was in danger. Putting on a brave show in the best traditions of the Ottoman way as befitted a slave of the Sultan, he wrote:

Yet, God forbid, if they attempt such a thing against my person, I will not leave my position or stay quiet. My religion, loyalty and slavery would not permit this. Therefore, a very terrible thing will take place. For God’s sake I never think of my person. To sacrifice my head for religion and the state is the very reason for which I live, but it is obvious that the religious affairs of this region will be shattered.²⁹

Reşid Mehmed, clearly at the end of his endurance, asked that either the centre should send him money or remove him from the post. Istanbul, by not doing either, determined his course of action in the weeks to come.

A Spectre of Albanian Secessionism?

Reşid’s next dispatch reported the circumstances of the execution of İsmail Bey of Avlonya. Istanbul was no stranger to the name of İsmail Bey. In 1822 he deserted the Ottoman army besieging Souli and went back to his native Avlonya. There he and his brother Bekir Bey opposed by force the *mütesellim* appointed by the then governor of Avlonya, Ömer Paşa Vryoni. Hurşid Paşa wrote about the matter to Istanbul and asked to be furnished with two orders of the Sultan (*ferman*), one ordering them into exile if they gave in and another ordering their execution if they continued to fight Ömer Paşa’s nephew Hasan Bey. At the time Mahmud wrote: “It is these evil Albanians who usually obstruct affairs. God willing, they will not go unpunished”.³⁰ In true

29 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21513-G, Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 19 Cemaziyülahir 1244 (27 December 1828).

30 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 38782, Hursid Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 23 Safer 1238 (10 November 1822).

Mahmudic style, fully six years had to elapse before İsmail Bey met his end in the way the Sultan desired. Wait certainly Mahmud II could, as he did for almost 20 years in the case of the janissaries.

The episode that ended with the execution of İsmail Bey is worth scrutinising as it gives, through captured documentation, some substance to the earlier claims of Reşid Mehmed that the Albanians were after self-rule. Thus, it offers precious little insight into the way the Albanian leaders thought. Reşid Paşa enclosed a letter by İsmail Bey addressed to the Albanians of the *Lap millet* (central Albania) in his retinue as a further token of his conspiracy. Despite this, he corresponded once more with İsmail Bey in accordance with the Sultan's orders. İsmail Bey asked to be appointed to the governorship of his native Avlonya as a precondition for his taking up service with the governor general. Reşid sent news to him that he accepted İsmail's offer. According to Reşid, İsmail's plan was to bolster his position in Yanya by daily bringing his 2,000 soldiers in batches of a couple of hundred over the next few days. Himself in Yanya and fearing that he would be overpowered by İsmail, the *serasker* pointed out "the Turkish lads in my retinue consist virtually of only my own household". Then, İsmail would one day come to the citadel and evict Reşid! The proof of his conspiracy was that he somehow provoked the 400-500 soldiers of the vanguard in Reşid's service to demonstrate for the payment of their salaries. İsmail showed up on the day after this incident with 500 horsemen. Put on the alert by the information he had obtained not so long ago, the *serasker* was positive that İsmail and his friend Poda's real aim was to control the whole of Albania after they had got rid of him. Fearing that İsmail would carry out his plans concerning him and cause a major conspiracy in Albania, the *serasker* decided to move against İsmail Bey. He had İsmail Bey executed. In jubilant and self-congratulatory tones he wrote to Istanbul that if God granted his wish to remove a few of his like, Albanian affairs could be expected to improve.³¹

We learn from the written deposition of the herald who took the news to Istanbul that İsmail Bey's execution was very unusual, to say the least. The same document reveals that Reşid's position was more precarious than he himself divulged. For example, he could stop the rioting Albanians only with a drawn sword and promises that their salaries were on the way. Reşid Paşa received news that İsmail's plan was to infiltrate Yanya, seize the gates and take him to the island in the lake. When İsmail entered Yanya, the *serasker* sent men to receive him and asked him to rest for a few hours in the residence (*konak*) put at his disposal. Then a group of 300-500 Albanians began to enter the town. The *serasker* invited İsmail Bey to his own *konak* for talks and ordered at the same time that an ambush be laid by a few hundred men. İsmail turned up with a few hundred "scoundrels". Unsuspecting, he dismounted his horse and began to climb the stairs and at that moment received a hail of bullets from the ambushade. He was instantly killed. Reşid Paşa

31 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21436, Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 5 Receb 1244 (11 January 1829).

discharged his soldiers and sent them back to their province. He also sent an order to Bekir Bey, brother to the deceased, appointing him *mütesellim* of Avlonya to secure his asking for a pardon.³²

In other words, there was no arrest or indictment let alone trial nor any attempt to legitimise the affair by the sharia. Reşid Paşa simply had him assassinated. The evidence to indict İsmail was procured by Reşid afterwards! This was a copy of a contract found on the body of İsmail Bey, given to him by his ally İlyas Bey, made in Greek on 20 July 1828 (OS). There is nothing in this contract to suggest that the two were about to engage in some sort of subversive act. It was a quasi-feudal contract “allying these two households for the duration of our lives as brothers” and providing for future marriages between their children.³³ On its own, this could hardly be used as evidence. Of a more substantial nature, Reşid also found a letter by İsmail Bey addressed to some Albanian chiefs who were at the front near İzdin and Mesolongi. Written originally in Greek, this is a rare document providing us with some insights into the self-image of the Albanian notables and their relationship with their country. The letter, if the deposition of the herald is taken into account, was one of the many written by İsmail Bey and his allies to the “Albanian pashas” at the front asking them to cause trouble on the pretext of salaries, therefore disclosing their own intentions.

According to this document, because of the intensive attacks of the “Greek bandits”, the Albanians from every quarter were asked to convene in Yanya and such chiefs as Süleyman Bey of Konice, Tahir Ağa Abbas and Veli Ağa of Girebene were ordered to go to the front. The governor general’s intentions and deeds were bad as far as Albania was concerned (*Arnavudluk hakkındaki niyat ve harekatı fena*), but in order not to cause him to be suspicious and also to attend to the “Albanian affairs” (*Arnavudluk maslahatı*), İsmail and his allies agreed to go to Yanya. They approved the meeting for the “good of Albania” (*Arnavudluğun selameti için*). The governor general’s intention was to use them as the Rumelian levies and make them regular soldiers! In some danger of jumping to conclusions, one has a nagging feeling of familiarity when reading what İsmail Bey wrote to the Albanian chiefs:

You, too, are among the notables and spokesmen of Albania. Do not hurry in the destruction and removal of the bandits. As you are perfectly well aware, when this Greek question (*Rum maslahatı*) is over, it will be our turn to have troubles. I have made an alliance with Silihdar Poda through a woman relative of mine in order to introduce order and security to Albania. As you are among the notables of Albania, be very watchful to protect our country/homeland (*vatanımızı hıfz için gözle-*

32 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21436-C, written deposition of the herald, Tatar Mehmed, 18 Receb 1244 (24 January 1829).

33 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21436-A, İsmail’s copy of contract (Ottoman translation), 20 July 1828 (OS).

rinizi iyice açasız). When things improve in Albania, when we do not have anything to fear, we shall, by God Almighty's power, solve the Greek question ourselves. I look forward to hearing from you on this matter.³⁴

Brief as it is, the letter tells us quite a few things. That the Ottoman distrust of the Albanians was liberally reciprocated, that the Ottoman army was perceived as little better than an army of occupation, that its evacuation of the province was impending, that the Albanian chiefs were not in collaboration with the Greeks but wanted to use the Greek Revolt for their own political ends, that Albania needed peace and security, that the Albanian chiefs or military contractors were extremely averse to the idea of seeing their military following as conscripted levies and 'trained'/regular soldiers and that, above all, there was a country called Albania which was homeland to a people called Albanians. It is interesting to see that an Albanian leader could perceive not only a single Albanian homeland (*vatan*) but speak about its "good", despite the innumerable religious, tribal and feudal or quasi-feudal divisions existing in the province. I am inclined to think that here İsmail Bey was not employing the word *vatan* in its lesser connotations as one's place of birth or hometown but in its greater meanings as fatherland for a people or as the central point of political loyalty. By not fighting the Greeks, the Albanian commanders at the front were asked to deliver a service to their "*vatan*", not to İsmail Bey or his allies! This was their duty as notables of Albania who were thought to have a common concern for their "*vatan*". If the *serasker's* aim was to unite Albania in the Ottoman service, this was a clear answer that a segment of Albanian political leadership voted with their feet but were willing to organise such a union for their, or as they put it, Albania's, own ends. In this modern context, this usage of *vatan* must be one of the earliest employed by a Muslim.

This is where, in fact, the familiarity comes in together with a caveat. Contemporary letters or declarations written or issued by the leaders of the Greek Revolution reverberate with similar concepts and more, and speak of another fatherland, again *vatan* in the Ottoman translation: Greece. The caveat is that İsmail's letter, written in Greek and possibly by an ethnic Greek *grammatikos* (scribe) or an ethnic Albanian, who could, of course, follow the contemporary nationalist 'literature' in Greek, might not reflect the precise ideas of İsmail Bey but only those of the scribe as far as the term "our fatherland" was considered. The fact that the Ottomans kept talking of the Albanian leadership as "bandits" or "conspirators" and did not identify them as "nationalists" or "revolutionaries" provides us very little clue as to the nature of the Albanian 'movement', as the Ottomans used precisely the same language consistently for the Greek and, later, for all the other nationalist, revolutionary, irredentist or secessionist movements! My task, however, is not to assess the genesis of Albanian nationalism but to assess the impact of the Greek Revolution on the

34 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21436-B, letter of İsmail Bey, 29 November 1828 (OS). See Appendix III.

Ottoman centre and its policies. Here, I feel more confident with the knowledge that it was this document or its like that helped shape Ottoman policies. Reading the above document and another written by a Greek in a Turkish translation, similarities would hardly escape the Ottoman officials or the Sultan, who would see them in a similar light. Without bothering to see the obvious differences between the Greek and Albanian moves and motivations, the Ottomans could, as some of them certainly did, regard both as threats to their own legitimacy and territorial integrity. Reşid Paşa, for one, went so far as to claim that the Albanians were after self-rule or even independence. With Greece successfully renouncing Ottoman rule before their very eyes, any such argument was likely to gain acceptance even in the most level-headed circles let alone the immediate entourage of Mahmud, which was dominated by some radical people.

Regardless of the methods used, Mahmud approvingly penned a minute on Reşid Paşa's dispatch reporting İsmail Bey's death:

From their attitude and manners the hidden conspiratorial intentions of these Albanian chiefs had become known and obvious for a long time, not now. It is to be expected from God's divine benevolence that the others will meet their punishment like the executed wretch. Let a letter be written in reply to praise the governor as you [the Grand Vizier] indicate in your report.³⁵

The Sultan's appreciation of Reşid Mehmed was not confined to the sending of a mere letter of praise. Reşid was, in fact, appointed Grand Vizier on 28 January 1829, only three or four days after the above dispatch became known to the Sultan. He became one of the longest serving grand viziers under Mahmud II, remaining in office through difficult times until February 1833. It was largely during his term of office that the centre moved with decisive force to deal with the 'Albanian question'. It is important to note here that the two sides, Ottoman and Albanian, saw eye to eye at least in one respect. While the Albanian chiefs were suspicious of the centre's moves and concerned for their future, Mahmud II and his men had been waiting for a suitable opportunity. As correctly surmised by İsmail Bey and his allies, they had to wait until the military campaigns of the Greek Revolution era came to an end.

35 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 21436, Sultan Mahmud's *hat* on Reşid Mehmed Paşa to the Grand Vizier, 5 Receb 1244 (11 January 1829).

APPENDIX II

٥ (١٢٧٧)

طودوری قولو قوطرونک مورد اردو سنده اوژد ارنود بیکباشینارینه و بایکباشینارینه
کوزردکی روی العبارة کا عدک ترجمه سینه

- 1 بنم غیزدوستلم بعد السلام انہا اولنوردک بکہ طودوری قولو قوطرون غیزدوستلک نام طرفکہ
- 2 یا نازدم وضا طریکی صودام سز لکه ارنود طائفه سی سز اوژدمه کلکزه و هجیم انیکزه نجی انیم
- 3 او بردوم دوملا بکلکزه استغراب انیم اول و صکره ارنود لره و بردیکم بسای صادفان و کجیم
- 4 طونام هج برطف کند و بسای بوزغه ارتکاب انیم اختیار بولک بابا بزلا و دونه و شرط ابرن
- 5 ابتدا او در بنم دوستلم الماس بک و و طابک و طره بویچده اولد سار ارنود روی بنم
- 6 بستی اکلومشردر سز روی بکت اولش اولد بریکز بودابه کلما ابریکز ارنود دفعه دخی سز تغلیط
- 7 اختیار بسه نجی اولد بقی ماده و کلرد زیر اسزی مقدم تغلیط ابروب بابا زنی و بنم دکتم اوژد
- 8 اختیار بقی ضایع انیز بدیل باشکی او ره دق فائره سز زنه نمانت کله جکدر اجنی سز لک
- 9 بو خصوصه اولد قباحتکی بن بلورم بولایک بن سزله بنم سز کی بقدم او و زیم دخی کلکی
- 10 اولسک سزی اورغه ارتکاب انیم حتی در و زاکرن سزی اورم دق چود بکن اکلوشیلور
- 11 بنم سزی سورم قریزاق او وود نظیر بقادم و اگر سز سز طرف کزدن برایکی ودخی زیاده
- 12 هر نه قراستر سز طرفه ادم کوزردیکه ناکره ابره بعم واستدیکلر دق بسای سز ویرمک
- 13 حاطرم طرفه کلکله خوف انیمیک و هج و سوسه انیم سز عود کز اکلوم دخی امن و سمانا
- 14 باشم و رشیم و جانم او ادرم باشیم کوزردوم و کوزرده جلکرا دملر بر زده اولد کاهنی
- 15 براغاجک اوجنه قوسونلر و اطراف سوسونلکی قولو قوطرونکی کیده بودر و هر طرف
- 16 کلور اوجنه آنه حاضر و بعضی و قادر لب عودف ابردر از جید کز کلکی استرک
- 17 بسا کزی و برد کزنسکره توشکل کزکی او موز کزن او ره دق قوسوز کلک ای قریز اشلم
- 18 بن سز کله کوزردکی استم زیر بن سزله بسای رشیم حق زده اسمعده اولد بقی سزده
- 19 کوزردک سزله دخی قضا اولکری استعا استمدکی بنم ابرن سز رشیم کوه اولکزه قوسوز کلک

سینه سز اعلم سز

Letter of Theodoros Kolokotronis to the Albanian chiefs with the Ottoman army in the Morea, Ottoman translation dated 1238 (1822) (BOA, Hatt-i Hümayun, 39917-R).

PART IV

EPILOGUE

THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF SERBIA (1804-56): OTTOMAN INFLUENCES

Čedomir Antić*

Serbia was constituted as a modern state after a long and hard struggle known as the Serbian Revolution (1804-35). Even though the Serbian Revolution had meant final separation from the Ottoman Empire, after which nothing was to be the same in the relations between the Serbs from the Belgrade *pašalık* and the central Ottoman authorities, the state ideology, the state apparatus and the perception of the Serbian future were not promptly completely Westernised. Ottoman influence can be recognised in many features of Serbian proto-nationality and numerous characteristics of early state organisation of Serbia.¹

The early organisation of Serbian autonomy, as it was established during the 1790s, as well as during the period of independence which lasted from 1807 to 1813, was mainly elementary and imbued with Ottoman influences.² That was the main difference between Serbia and autonomous and independent states and entities established later in the Balkan Peninsula. While Wallachia and Moldavia preserved their native semi-feudal structure of tributary principalities with rulers elected from the ranks of the native or the Phanariot aristocracy, who were later on, after unification, replaced with a foreign dynasty, and while Greece acquired a foreign dynasty as the first recognised independent state in the Balkans, the case of Serbia was quite different. We should make a distinction between the chronology of the national ideology and the development of state organisation before and after 1829. It was then that the Concert of Great Powers accepted independent Belgium as a new state in Europe. As the Greek War of Independence had reached its climax by then, the

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1 General literature: S. K. Pawlovitch, *A History of the Balkans from 1804 to 1813*, London 1999; R. Ljušić, *Vo d Karadjordje* [Karageorge, the Leader], Belgrade 2000; J. McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks: An Introductory History to 1923*, London and New York 1997; K. H. Karpat, *An Inquiry into the Social Foundations of Nationalism in the Ottoman State: From Social Estates to Classes, from Milletts to Nations*, Princeton 1973.

2 *Ibid.*, 70.

mediation and intervention of European states and their influence on the nation and state-building processes, was not only possible but unavoidable.

In the case of Serbia it was not so. The only two patterns that the founders of a revived Serbia knew were related to their perception of the Serbian medieval past, on the one hand, and already existing practices of regional or minority autonomies in the Ottoman Empire, on the other.³ As the population of the Belgrade *pašalık*, the centre of the First Serbian Uprising, was mainly new, composed of new settlers who had recently immigrated, and almost completely rural, it is obvious why even the relatively recent institutions of the so-called Kingdom of Serbia, which was established, governed, and sponsored by Austria from 1718 to 1739, had not survived until the end of the eighteenth century. However, the local autonomy (*knežinska samouprava* in Serbian), mainly fiscal, judicial and military, established after the Austro-Ottoman War of 1787-91 and developed and enlarged during the war between local Ottoman authorities and rebels from Vidin, was perceived as an ideal of lawful and just government of the Sultan. *Knežinska samouprava* was the main goal of the uprising from its early beginnings to 1807. However, there were several patterns of local autonomy in the Ottoman Empire that were the model desired for the final status by the leaders of the Serbian uprising. The two most desirable and well-known autonomous states were Wallachia and the Ionian Islands. During the negotiations, especially those conducted by Petar Ichko in 1806, the Serbian side tried to find an autonomous system already known to the Ottoman authorities that would be fully reconcilable with the Ottoman notion of imperial sovereignty.⁴ Nevertheless, under the pressure of an impending war with Russia, the Ottoman Empire accepted the compromise draft of autonomous rights, also known as Ichko's Peace. Serbian leaders encouraged by Russia rejected it, thus commencing the struggle for national and state emancipation.

On the other hand, the first independent Serbian state was built as a counterpart to the Ottoman Empire. Feudalism was abolished, while the state apparatus was established on the basis of the earlier military autonomy. When, in 1804, the first Serbian delegation was received at the Imperial Court of St Petersburg, its members were strongly advised to establish an official representative body in Serbia, something like a State Council.⁵ That was the reason why the first elective institution in Serbia was established already in 1805, under the name of the Governing Council (*Praviteljstvujusci Sovjet Serbski*). The Governing Council had administrative, legislative and deliberative functions, and was mainly oligarchic. Its electoral body was not strictly determi-

3 T. Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds: The First and Last Europe*, Armonk, N.Y. 1994, Serbian edition published in 1997, 210-11; S. Novaković, *Osmansko carstvo (1780-1804)* [The Ottoman Empire (1780-1804)], Belgrade 1906, 57-77, lists a dozen such models which were used by Serbian representatives during the negotiations.

4 M. Gavrilović, *Istorijske studije: Ičkov mir* [Historical Studies: The Ichko's Peace Treaty], Belgrade 1932, 78-97.

5 R. Ljušić, *Istorija srpske državnosti: Srbija i Crna Gora* [History of Serbian Statehood: Serbia and Montenegro], Belgrade 2002, 69-70.

ned – even the number of its members was not determined at first. As the functions of the Serbian state before 1813 were mainly based on its war and defence duties, the function of the rebel army commander became the main and most important institution of the state from an early stage. It has recently been proved that the supreme state institution, the *Vozhd* (the leader or the commander), originated from Serbian medieval traditions. During the constitution-building process from 1808 to 1811 the competition between *Vozhd* Karageorge as a monarch and the oligarchy of military commanders and local authorities (*knezevi*) ended in triumph for the former. In that period Serbia acquired its first constitution. *Srbska Sloboda* (the Serbian Liberty) was drafted by a Serb from Russia, imbued with contemporary ideals of constitutionalism. Nevertheless, as the population of Serbia was mainly illiterate, the Constitutional Act did not have much influence on the main course of events. The Cabinet established and led by the *Vozhd* was finally the only institution that remained in Serbia. The *Vozhd's* triumph was short-lived, for already in 1812 the Bucharest Peace Treaty sealed the destiny of Serbia, which had been abandoned by Russia. In 1813, a strong Ottoman army invaded Serbia. At first even the old and traditional autonomous rights were abolished. However, in order to keep the population in the country, the Ottoman authorities soon adopted some kind of limited *knezińska samouprava*. In those early days, Prince Miloš Obrenovich emerged as the most influential potentate of the Belgrade *pašalık*. Miloš's authority rested on his informal agreement with the Ottoman authorities in Belgrade. But, when in 1815 the Second Serbian Revolution broke out, Miloš used several relative successes in war and the support of Russian negotiators at the Vienna Peace Congress in order to win a more independent status for the Belgrade *pašalık*. As a result, from 1815 to 1830 the Belgrade *pašalık* obtained a semi-autonomous status. This, however, did not win any international recognition before 1830 and the Edirne Peace Treaty. However, it established a pattern which made Serbia distinctive among other Balkan states. As autonomy was established on the basis of some traditional patterns set up by peaceful evolution rather than by a revolution, the society that was produced was strictly divided, both ethnically and regionally. Differences between Serbs and the Turkish minority were reinforced after the Ottoman military presence in the seven biggest Serbian cities had been sanctioned as permanent. Differences between a rather small town population and people from Serbian villages were also very great and were suppressed only because of the Ottoman threat. After the assassination of Karageorge in 1817, a dynastic contest started in Serbia; it was to last almost a hundred years.

After 1830, Serbia came under the protection of Russia, though still recognising the supreme rights of the Porte. This was an important period for the Serbian state institution-building process. Four successive *hatt-ı şerif*s defined Serbia as an autonomous state which owed tribute to the Porte, under a Prince with recognised dynastic rights. This state had its own internal organisation. However, Prince Miloš's methods of rule soon attracted significant opposition among Serbian notables. The Porte used this opportunity and confirmed the so-called Turkish Constitution (1838-69) which corroborated the division of power between the Prince and the State Council composed

of notables and high state officials responsible only to the Porte.⁶ The Constitution of 1838 opened up a period of internal instability in Serbia, caused a change of the ruling dynasty and introduced a wave of major internal reforms. The new Prince, Alexander Karageorgevich, Karageorge's son, was the first Serbian monarch to whom the inheritance of the throne in the family was not recognised by the Porte, and who thus had to rest his authority on an unreliable compromise with the ruling Constitutionalists' oligarchy.⁷ The Period of Constitutionalists in Serbia was thus one huge step forward in the development of internal administration of the country, but one step back as regards its international position. While in Greece, Wallachia and Moldavia this period was very important for the formulation of projects of national unification, such as the Greek Great Idea and the concept of Romanian unity, in Serbia, during this period a specific route to national liberation was premeditated. Garashanin's *Natchertanie* (the Draft) introduced the idea of unification of the Ottoman Slavs in an enlarged Serbian state; however, the main pattern for unification was not an independent and parliamentary state, but a Viceroyalty, shaped after the pattern of Mehmed Ali's Egypt. Garashanin's concept remained obscure until the 1880s; however, it influenced some other Serbian foreign policy makers, namely Konstantin Nikolayevich and Yovan Marinovich. It has been recently discovered that during the Crimean War, the British Consul General in Belgrade, Thomas Grenier de Fonblanque, and Garashanin drafted a concept of federalisation of European Turkey with the Viceroyalty of Serbia, an enlarged form of the Principality of Serbia, as the first Christian entity in the north-western provinces of the Ottoman Empire.⁸

The Fonblanque-Garashanin project was not sanctioned by the British Foreign Office, but it vividly depicts the real aims of the Serbian political elite of the 1840s and 1850s. Even though Serbian state institutions were developed under the influence of Western states, especially France, the state organisation and the nature of high offices were still shaped according to the Ottoman state's practice. Prince Alexander, just like his predecessors, was perceived by the Ottoman administration as a *bey*, who was named and invested by his Ottoman suzerain. In his case, however, this was not very far from the truth, as he had seized supreme power in Serbia as an Ottoman protégé and was never granted the right of succession in his family. On the other hand, the State Council, which had been originally instituted by the Russian Court and shaped after several Western European patterns, became after 1838 responsible to the Porte, thus gradually losing its representative character (its members originally represented 17 Serbian *nahiyes*, Serb. *okrug*).

With the Prince as an Ottoman *bey*, the State Council as a *meclis* and with its own Great Idea,

6 S. Jovanović, *Vlada ustavobranitelja* [The Constitutionalists and their Government], Belgrade 1933, 191; Ljušić, *Istorija srpske državnosti*, 110.

7 *Ibid.*, 112-13.

8 Č. Antić, *Velika Britanija, Srbija i Krimski rat – Neutralnost kao nezavisnost* [Great Britain, Serbia and the Crimean War: Neutrality as Independence], Belgrade 2004, 66-74 and 149-51.

which did not exclude the Ottoman suzerainty, Serbia lost part of its international capacity; internal reforms of justice, as well as the improvement of state administration and public education soon proved insufficient. Within a short time, dynastic opposition was strengthened with the opposition of young officials educated abroad. One unnoticed influence of the Ottoman state administration on the Principality of Serbia under the Constitutionalist was the office of Grand Duke (the Commander of the Army), which was introduced in 1844 after the suppression of the Katanaska mutiny.⁹ The title of Grand Duke was granted to one of the most powerful potentates of the Constitutionalist regime, Toma Vuchich-Perishich, a man once notorious for his pro-Ottoman affiliations.¹⁰ The post of the Grand Duke was usually interpreted by Serbian historians and jurists

9 The Katanska mutiny outburst in the North-western strip of Serbia in 1844. Adherents of the exiled Obrenovich dynasty tried to overthrow the Constitutionalist regime. The mutiny was brutally suppressed and severe prosecutions of its supporters and local population followed.

10 PRO, Fonblanque to Canning, Belgrade, 12 January 1852, F.O. 78/896, copy no. 1. Toma Vuchich-Perishich was promoted to the rank of Voivoda (Duke) on 6 October 1844. He was the first and only official with this title, promoted just in order to suppress the Katanaska mutiny. Later on, his title was confirmed and united with the duty of the Cabinet Councillor. R. J. Popović, *Toma Vučić Perišić*, Belgrade 2003, 170-73. The full text of Fonblanque's letter follows:

Sir,

Your Excellency will remember that when the Porte constituted Voutchich Voivode (Commander in Chief) the Vezirial-letter explained, that the new dignity should be the only Person intermediate between the Prince and the Prince's highest officers and Senate. Without actually superseding Voutchich, Prince Alexander has created Knitchanin a Voivode. The justification is that several Voivodi may coexist in Servia, in the same way that the number of generals is indeterminate in other Christian countries. They seem to have confused the traditions of the Servian-Empire with the restrictive revival conceded by the Ottoman suzerain. Without pausing to compute the other analogies implied, I beg only to interpose the remark that, – as the dignity of Voivode supposes a rank beyond that of Colonel, it is not competent for any Prince of Servia to confer it – in his character of ruling – vassal more than it would be for the Vice-roy of Egypt, or any other Feudatory of the Sultan, to appoint a “general”. Possibly the consent of the Porte may have been obtained for this promotion, though nothing of the kind has appeared in a published form, as in the previous case of Voutchich.

Vienna newspapers announce that the contract for supplying Servia with Austrian salt, had been renewed on the same terms as last year. Such prolongation is quite apposed to the assurances severally made to Nazif Pasha and to me by the Servian Government in 1850.

The Servian Govt.- continues to insist that “whatever Treaties and Berats may declare to the contrary the foreign consuls at Belgrade have neither right of Importation or other immunity, unless conferred upon them by the Prince of Servia.” It was recently suggested that Butter, Veal, [...] might be admitted, for general consumption, as there was disease among the cattle in lower-Austria, while it was undeniable that the cows and oxen in Belgrade suffered from an epizootic malady of a serious kind. The senator usually called “Bata-laka” urged, that “such a relaxation would look like a concession to the English”, – and the motion was lost. All this resistance, to vested-rights derived from the Sultan, weakens the already declining-authority of the Porte in Servia. It is, at the same time, difficult to induce the Turks to be true to themselves when the process of encroachment is going on; corruption has so sure a grasp that the hold of delegation-authority nearly always relaxes under it. The Russians well

as some kind of honorary office, designed without any consequence for the constitutional capacity of the other high offices of the state. However, the diplomatic correspondence of the British Consul General in Belgrade provides some new information about its real significance.¹¹ Fonblanque argued that even though the office of Grand Duke was not mentioned in the Constitution of 1838, it was a Serbian version of the highest Egyptian post. As the capacity of a semi-independent state's posts was to a certain degree formed by international recognition, the attitude of the British diplomatic representative could not be put aside unconditionally.

This re-Ottomanisation of the Principality of Serbia, which started in 1838, reached its climax in 1844 and in 1858. It was terminated after the protectorate of five Great Powers and the Ottoman Empire was imposed upon Serbia in 1856. Edhem Paša's mission of 1858 was the last Ottoman interference in internal Serbian affairs. It could be stated that a twenty-year process of re-Ottomanisation of Serbia was not complete because it had affected only its highest offices and changed its international position. As, on the other hand, the internal reforms brought Serbia closer to Western European models, its re-Ottomanisation caused permanent political instability and dissatisfaction among the entire younger generation of Serbian officials and intellectuals. This was the main reason for prompt reforms in the period from 1858 to 1869 and a distinctive additional formative factor in the development of an anti-Ottoman stand of several Serbian political generations from 1858 to 1913.

know this failing, and profit by it continually – while they never accept Bribes themselves unless for services which promote their master's Policy in Foreign countries – some proceedings of Mr: Petronievits, at this time, would fairly illustrate the foregoing propositions, though I cannot safely explain the particulars when writing by the common post. (...)

11 Such an interpretation has not been adopted or opposed by the historians of the Constitutionalist Period. Even the most recent monograph on Toma Vuchich-Perishich did not attach much importance to the title of Grand Duke; see Popović, *Toma Vučić Perišić*, 151.

BALKAN NATIONALISMS AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: VIEWS FROM ISTANBUL STREETS

*Cengiz Kırılı**

Three decades ago Marc Bloch said: “A good historian resembles the ogre of the legend. Wherever he smells human flesh, he knows that there he will find his prey”.¹ Bloch’s foresight has only been fulfilled recently, when historians have turned increasingly to new history, now variously called ethnographic history, new intellectual history, or cultural history. Equipped with new methods borrowed from anthropologists, sociologists, linguists, and literary critics, and guided by the smells of everyday life, historians have been looking for new evidence in the archives to recover the voices of ordinary people. There is a long list of new types of documents that historians have uncovered in this process, such as court records, letters, and diaries. For early modern and modern history, another set of such documents are the surveillance materials that had been generated by different regimes to find out about popular opinions through various means such as spying on people’s conversations, intercepting letters, and sifting through clandestine literature.

These surveillance materials are important for historians in two respects. On the one hand, in congruity with the sensibilities of the new history, they provide an opportunity to capture popular opinions, moods and sensibilities. On the other hand, they provide a means to reconceptualise the nature of the early modern and modern regimes that generated them. Even a cursory examination of the increasing number of scholarly studies that have examined surveillance materials in various contexts shows how integral surveillance was to the emergence of the modern state, and indeed, constitutive of the modern form of governance.² Broadly defined here, surveillance is “the colla-

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1 Quoted in J. Fernandez, ‘Historians Tell Tales: Of Cartesian Cats and Gallic Cockfights’, *Journal of Modern History*, 60 (1988), 116.

2 For a study treating surveillance as a constitutive practice of the modern state, see P. Holquist, ‘Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work’: Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context’, *Journal of Modern History*, 69 (1997), 415-50.

tion and integration of information put to administrative purposes”.³ It refers to administrative practices to make society ‘legible’, such as vigilant observation of popular opinions, surveys, registrations, and maps of persons and things for fiscal and political purposes.⁴ Surveillance was a common governmental practice whose implementation was neither limited to a specific geographical region nor to early-modern absolutist and modern authoritarian regimes. Thus it could be regarded as one of the shared features of modernity and an integral element of the emergence of the governmental state.⁵

The Ottoman state was no exception to the historical process of the emergence of governmental states in the nineteenth century. Three sets of surveillance materials as evidence of newly introduced administrative practices stand out among the documents in the 1840s in the Ottoman archives. One is the so-called income (*temettüat*) registers, the registers of land and income survey of the population in the provinces to form the basis of a new tax system. They were recently made available to researchers and have yet to be explored.⁶ The other set of registers is the quarantine reports registering the health of the populace.⁷ Prepared monthly by the centrally appointed officials, these reports were sent to Istanbul from four corners of the Empire as an inventory of the epidemics and major diseases and show the state’s burgeoning concern for public health in the 1840s.⁸ And yet another set of surveillance materials is the spy reports registering the opinions,

3 A. Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence: Volume Two of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Berkeley 1987, 46.

4 I have borrowed the term ‘legible’ from J. C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven 1998.

5 The term ‘governmental state’ is derived from Foucault’s ‘governmentality’; see G. Burchell *et al.* (eds), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, London 1991. Governmentality refers to the shift in the state’s concern from ruling its territories to managing its population through new technologies, and has broader implications than the term ‘social control and policing’ implies.

6 These income registers amount to several thousand volumes. Our information about these registers is very limited. For a brief introduction to the income registers, see M. Küttükoğlu, ‘Osmanlı’nın sosyal ve iktisadi kaynaklarından temettü defterleri’ [*Temettü Registers as a Social and Economic Source on the Ottomans*], *Belleten*, 59/225 (1995), 395-418; T. Güran, *19. yüzyıl Osmanlı tarımı* [Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Agriculture], Istanbul 1998.

7 These health reports (*tahaffuz jurnalleri*) are located in the Ottoman Archive of the Turkish Premiership, Istanbul, Turkey (BOA), in the series entitled İradeler-Dahiliye.

8 One can also add to these surveys, the first serious, albeit only partly successful, Ottoman census attempt. Up until the 1830s, the Ottoman censuses were narrowly-based. Only males of a certain age and household heads were counted. The main purpose for these censuses was to determine conscription and the tax base. Two census attempts, however, the first one in 1831 and the second one in 1844, differed markedly from the previous ones. While both conscription and the tax base were still the primary concerns of these censuses, they at the same time sought to count the whole male population in a detailed and comprehensive fashion. See M. Aydın, ‘Sultan II. Mahmud döneminde yapılan nüfus tahrirleri’ [The Census during the Reign of Sultan Mahmud II], in *Sultan II. Mahmud ve reformları semineri: 28-30 Haziran 1989: Bildiriler* [Seminar on Sultan Mahmud II and his Reforms: June 28-30, 1989: Proceedings], Istanbul 1990, 81-106.

moods, and sensibilities of the population.⁹ Dating from the period between 1840 and 1845, these reports contain opinions circulating among the public about current events and social and political issues.

The spy reports consist of paragraphs, each of which contains the verbatim transcription by the informer of a conversation or an individual opinion uttered in Istanbul. The topics of conversations and opinions were wide-ranging. They include excerpts of conversations about economic hardship, domestic and international conflicts to state officials and tax collectors. The corresponding moods and sensibilities also varied: hope, expectation, anxiety, restlessness, distrust. It is not surprising to see that a substantial portion of the reports contains popular opinions on uprisings in the Balkans and the anxiety, restlessness, and hope they created among the Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants of Istanbul. This essay is not concerned with an overall examination of these reports. Nor does it attempt to offer an analysis of the Ottoman regime that generated these reports. Rather, it seeks to present how contemporaries, Muslim, non-Muslim, Ottoman, non-Ottoman, felt towards each other and talked about the problems and uprisings in the Balkans in a crucial period immediately following the declaration of the Tanzimat reforms and at a time when separatism, dissent and resistance were particularly widespread throughout the Ottoman Empire.

In addition to presenting everyday conversations recorded by informers, there is another concern that underlies this essay. Admittedly, these everyday conversations are fascinating as such, because they provide a rare opportunity to ‘recover’ the voices of ordinary people. Yet, the historian’s fascination with everyday banalities in exceptional historical records poses a contradiction with the outstanding aim of the academic discipline of history, which has been understood as not only finding out what happened in the past but also giving order and meaning to past occurrences. As Harry Harootunian puts it, “history’s primary vocation has been to displace the constant danger posed by the surplus of everyday life, to overcome its apparent ‘trivia’, ‘banalities’ and untidiness in order to find an encompassing register that will fix meaning”.¹⁰ Since these conversations are about nationalist uprisings, what better readily available “encompassing register” than nationalism to fix the meaning, to reduce the “staggering complexities”, “endless incompletions and repetitions” of everyday conversations? As I hope will be clear shortly, the everyday conversations captured by the informers that will be presented below are incoherent and multi-layered and thus they categorically subvert attempts towards narrative. Any attempt to subsume these pub-

9 These reports are also located in the Ottoman Archive of the Turkish Premiership (BOA), in the İradeler-Dahiliye series, under the keyword *havadis jurnalleri* (news reports) in the catalogue. There are also some scattered documents in the series Cevdet Zaptiye (Police) and Cevdet Dahiliye (Interior), but they are undated. For a general introduction to these reports, see C. Kırılı, ‘Coffeehouses: Public Opinion in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire’, in A. Salvatore and D. F. Eickelman (eds), *Public Islam and the Common Good*, Leiden 2004, 75-97.

10 H. Harootunian, ‘Shadowing History: National Narratives and the Persistence of the Everyday’, *Cultural Studies*, 18 (2004), 181.

lic utterances under a coherent and linear narrative for the purpose of giving order and meaning to them runs the risk of reinforcing the nation-state discourse. It is both futile and counter-productive to try to arrive at exhaustive generalisations in connection with what each community thought and felt. More importantly, this exercise amounts to fixing the meaning of the complexities and nuances of the everyday and thus runs the risk of falling back into nationalist historiographies that “unify diverse populations... through the often fictive agency of common identity”.¹¹ This was not the language of the reports. Ascribing a common voice to a particular confessional, ethnic or linguistic group was not the method of recording popular sentiments by informers. Individuals are removed from the crowd without any intention of restoring them back to a whole. It is impossible to find such generalisations as Greeks think this, or Muslims feel that, or Armenians say that. The reports recorded individual opinions one by one along with their names – from which we can figure out most, if not all, of the time the individual’s confessional community – their profession, and which passports they carried.

Having said that, I am aware that my occasional remarks in the essay that tend to generalise the individualised voices under a particular confessional or ethnic group may not do justice to the style of the reports. But these remarks should be taken as a rhetorical device to deliver to the reader my own impressions, gathered from reading the entire set of reports, out of which I am able to convey only a fraction. Moreover, the authorities in Istanbul in charge of reviewing these reports must have read these reports in a similar fashion; that is, not allowing the informer to infer his own generalisations, but to compile a general impression about ever-shifting popular opinions and moods through individual utterances.

In the following analysis of the reports, I will highlight three important moments between 1840 and 1845: the effects of the Tanzimat reforms; the rebellion in Crete in 1841; and the bloodless coup of 1843 in Greece that culminated in the promulgation of the constitution the following year. Given the density of popular opinions in this particularly chaotic period, I have left aside many other issues that attracted popular attention concerning the uprisings in the Balkans such as those in Ottoman Bulgaria, Serbia, and Albania. On the one hand, the period immediately following the inauguration of the Tanzimat reforms is important in sensing the atmosphere of intercommunal co-existence in Istanbul. On the other hand, the Crete rebellion of 1841 and the coup of 1843 in Greece were two important moments of an intertwined process that echoed strongly in Istanbul streets.

This analysis is, however, uneven, because of the nature of the reports. It would be an exaggeration to see these reports as a mirror image of Istanbul streets, although they are as close a reflection as one can get. In addition to the persistent problem of if and how far informers accurately recorded everyday conversations,¹² the selection of the subjects of conversations and particular

11 Ibid., 182.

12 Even if we assume that informers represented these conversations accurately, the problem still remains, because the words they recorded are removed from the context in which they are uttered and from the bodily gestures that accom-

opinions was no doubt influenced more by the concerns of the regime which collected them than those of the people who uttered them.¹³ Also, the selection of individuals whose opinions are recorded must have been disproportionate with respect to their confessional communities. As will be clear shortly, for example, the fact that the reports contain mostly opinions of non-Muslims, and in particular those of Greeks, in connection with the Crete rebellion and the coup of 1843 may not necessarily mean that Muslims did not talk about these events. This was probably owing to the fact that the views of Muslims were seen as of less consequence for the priorities of a regime beleaguered by ethnic separatisms in the Balkans.

The Tanzimat Reforms

Nineteenth-century Ottoman history has been dominated by nationalist historiographies. The basic contours of these historiographies that have been produced in the successor nation-states of the Ottoman Empire are well known. One of the most important characteristics of these historiographies which needs to be underlined is that they espouse “an historical consciousness rooted in evolutionary and progressive plot lines”.¹⁴ If the most powerful and enduring ‘plot line’ in identifying the nineteenth century for Balkan historiographies is ‘national awakening’, for Turkish historiography it is the Tanzimat reforms. These comprehensive reforms in institutional, administrative and legal-political spheres have been viewed by many Ottoman historians as a milestone in the Westernisation and the modernisation of the Ottoman Empire – and even of the Turkish Republic in an unbroken chain of ‘reformism’ connecting the Tanzimat to the reforms of Atatürk.

The Tanzimat basically was an attempt to provide substantial adjustments on three matters: the changes in the tax regime, the emphasis on the formal equality of Muslims and non-Muslims, and re-organisations in the bureaucratic-legal sphere. But how did contemporaries perceive these reforms? While it is impossible to address here how people perceived and responded to all three issues, what follows is an assemblage of popular moods and sentiments among Istanbul’s Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants about intercommunal co-existence immediately after the introduction of the Tanzimat reforms.

As the reports make clear, not only did people constantly change their attitudes and opinions, but they also changed their passports easily. In particular, some Christian subjects of the Empire did so to take advantage of the economic benefits granted to several European states. In the Austri-

mpany them. Therefore, the reports are not a compilation of reported speeches but ‘constructed dialogues’. See D. Tannen, *Talking Voices: Repetition, Dialogue, and Imagery in Conversational Discourse*, New York 1989, 98-110.

13 Obviously, this is a general problem for historians working on similar surveillance materials; see S. Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin’s Russia: Terror, Propaganda and Dissent, 1934-1941*, New York 1997, esp. 12-13.

14 Harootunian, ‘Shadowing History’, 184.

an İspiro's words: "If a non-Muslim approaches me to ask for citizenship, I can get the passport of the state he chooses, whatever that may be... Lately an Armenian came and asked for a Wallachian passport... He gave me three hundred *guruş* in return. I can do the same for anybody".¹⁵

But, for some others the Ottoman imperial identity was still strong. Dimitri, an Ottoman Greek¹⁶ from Kayseri, said: "As *reaya*¹⁷ of the Ottoman Empire, our property and honour have been protected for so long. We even have freedom (*serbestiyet*). I went to Büyükdere the other day. The English fell upon me and told me, 'Come let's make you a British citizen'. And I replied to them, 'My lineage is Ottoman. I can't do it'. These people are offering this to anybody they see".¹⁸

The reports do not reveal much about responses of non-Muslim communities of the Empire to the Tanzimat reforms. There are some remarks that might suggest that the reforms might have reinforced imperial allegiance among the non-Muslims. Yanko, an Ottoman Greek, for example, said: "Nowadays the Greek *millet* has so much freedom... Everybody supports the Sultan. If this had been the case before, the people of the Morea wouldn't have fought the war and perished like that. They would continue to be the subjects of the Ottoman state".¹⁹ Regardless of their confessional identities, however, some wealthier segments whose fortunes depended on the former tax-farming system, such as bankers or money-changers, reacted strongly to the new tax system (*muhassıllık*), which was an integral part of the Tanzimat reforms. İstefan, a money-changer, said in a coffeehouse: "I don't know how long this new order of Muslims will last. They have ruined us, destroyed our profession. Let God put kindness into their hearts and bring back their former compassion. Or, this place should find a new owner so that we can carry on with our families. Otherwise, it is better to leave".²⁰

The reaction of Muslims is more noticeable, however. For many Muslims, the Tanzimat reforms provided the non-Muslims with an encouragement to break up the Empire and to abandon it. Anxiety-provoking rumours and stories were circulating all over Istanbul. In Salonica, according to one rumour, for example, Greeks killed two Jews, but the Pasha of Salonica because of lack of proof let the perpetrators go. Realising that one can get away with whatever crime one commits unless it is proved according to the Tanzimat reforms, these Greeks then turned into bandits.²¹ Abdurrahman, similarly, had been heard saying: "These Croats have been plundering our villages, because they have no fear of death [penalty]. Look what I am going to do! I am going to

15 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 1776, 21 Safer 1257 (14 April 1841).

16 Throughout the article, Ottoman Greek refers to Greek-speaking Ottoman subjects, and Greek refers to subjects of Greece.

17 In the nineteenth century, the term *reaya* refers only to Christian subjects of the Empire.

18 BOA, Cevdet Zaptiye, 556 (undated).

19 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3218, 14 Receb 1258 (21 August 1842).

20 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 1802, 29 Safer 1257 (22 April 1841).

21 Ibid.

fight a *reaya*, and I am going to kill him. If anyone asks me why I did it, I will say I did it, because there is not death [penalty] in Tanzimat".²² Similarly, in a coffeehouse, two Muslims were saying: "We hear of *reaya* uprisings all over. Do you think this could have possibly happened previously?... But it is not the *reaya*'s fault. It is our fault. Since they have invented the Tanzimat, even the fear of the police has vanished. This is the result".²³ In another report, upon hearing the bells of a church nearby, some Muslims said: "These infidels are ringing bells and the palace is right here. Oh God! Give us a chance and we are going to make them sorry to have been born. And look, they have their kids wear green headscarves. It seems the rule has passed over to them".²⁴

It should be underlined at the outset that popular sentiments towards other communities were not shaped entirely by the reforms. On the one hand, the uprisings all over the Empire, and the involvement of the Great Powers which provided patronage to Christian subjects meant the loss of a way of life as they knew it. Thus, these rumours were not merely 'anxiety-provoking', but in fact, 'anxiety-justifying', and provided people with information that fitted with the way they already felt.²⁵ In short, if the rebellions in the Balkans provoked anxiety in Istanbul streets, the Tanzimat reforms justified this anxiety.

The Crete Rebellion of 1841

A major uprising on the island of Crete broke out in 1841 following the peace treaty signed by the Porte and Mehmed Ali Paşa, the rebellious governor of Egypt, who returned the control of the island to the Ottomans after he was defeated by the allied forces of the Ottoman and the British. Unlike historians, contemporaries were indifferent to the reasons for the rebellions, partly because uprisings were neither infrequent nor unexpected, which rendered any discussion on reasons inconsequential. Hearing the news of a rebellion that had erupted in a part of the Empire was hardly news anymore. The rebellion of Mehmed Ali Paşa in Egypt, arguably the most alarming of all, had just been concluded, the strife on Mount Lebanon was still going on, the competition among the local forces over the control of Serbia was mounting, and the tax revolts all over Anatolia and in Nish were underway. In the midst of this broad social upheaval, the Crete rebellion broke out, and suddenly became the major conversation topic in Istanbul. Except for the rebellion of Mehmed Ali, the rebellion in Crete attracted people's interest more than any other popular uprising.

22 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2043, 21 Cemaziyülevvel 1257 (11 July 1841).

23 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2221, 6 Şaban 1257 (23 September 1841).

24 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 1802, 29 Safer 1257 (22 April 1841).

25 P. Lienhardt, 'The Interpretation of Rumour', in J. H. M. Beattie and R. G. Lienhardt (eds), *Studies in Social Anthropology: Essays in Memory of E. E. Evans-Pritchard*, Oxford 1975, 115.

If not the motives, people passionately discussed how the rebellion might turn out, because they knew that its success depended on the involvement of the Great Powers. The question of how and in what capacity they would be involved was more important than how the Ottomans would react to suppress the rebellion. Yanko's words are typical of the emotions pervading the Greeks in Istanbul: "When the Porte handed Crete over to Mehmed Ali Paşa, the Cretans asked the Great Powers to be rescued from Muslim oppression. And the Great Powers then said: 'Wait for nine years, then we will work it out'. Now the time has come, that's why Cretans want their rights. Now they have even notified the Great Powers and said: 'We want our country to be independent, let it be in our own possession, we don't want anyone to interfere. Otherwise, we all will perish'. They are still waiting for an answer. Let's see what the Great Powers will do".²⁶

Those supporting the rebellion, anticipated assistance from Greece, but they knew well that it was not enough. Todoraki, a goldsmith in Bebek, said: "Greece is secretly sending troops to Crete to take away the island from the Ottomans. But it will not work, unless the hands of the Great Powers are in it, because Greece has no power. This business depends on the treasury. I think France will send to them troops and money, and then take [the island] into her possession".²⁷

At a time when Russia was busy with Serbia, and Britain showed her loyalty to the Ottoman Empire over the suppression of the Mehmed Ali rebellion, France was seen by many, albeit not without suspicion, as the only viable candidate among the Great Powers to help the rebels in Crete. Every day people were hearing news from merchants trading in the Levant on the number of troops and ships that were sent by Greece, and on the amount of money France contributed to the Cretan rebels to withstand the Ottoman forces who were on their way to suppress the rebellion. These rumours that reverberated through the streets of Istanbul fed the opinion that Crete might succeed, and sharpened the feeling that, in Cretan merchant Yani's words, "We have suffered a lot. We can no longer live with Muslims".²⁸

In the spring of 1841, the Porte dispatched a fleet to Crete under the command of Admiral Tahir Paşa to quell the uprising.²⁹ Tahir Paşa was asked to blockade the island to prevent any help from outside and force the insurgents to surrender. Soon the news started to pour into the streets of Istanbul, feeding anxiety, hope, and uncertainty as to how the situation would progress. Unable to get comprehensive information, people had to cling to fragmentary information that they obtained mostly from the captains and crews of merchant ships. Travelling from port to port, listening

26 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 1802, 29 Safer 1257 (22 April 1841).

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 For imperial edicts concerning this matter, see Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi* [Chronicler Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi's History], transcribed by A. Demirel, vol. 7, Istanbul 1999, 1164, 1166.

intently and gathering information all over the Mediterranean, merchant ships and their crews served as modern newspapers. The information they spread, however, was at best fragmentary, and it was difficult to verify the information with any accuracy. This inevitably led to conflicting, incoherent, and mostly inconsistent pieces of news, which were then used by different people as evidence to prove their own viewpoints. In other words, although people discussed the events in Crete through these fragmentary pieces of news, what they said was not so much an expression of what they knew as how they felt or what they anticipated.

Sometimes, for example, news led some to believe that the uprising would succeed. A Greek physician said in his hotel room: "A letter arrived with the French ship. It says that a fight broke out on the island and 5,000 Muslims were killed. And the Greek fleet will burn the Ottoman fleet in a short while. Once Greece conquers Crete, Muslims will become powerless. Then, we are ready here; we rise up, kill Muslims and acquire lots of places. And even our book says that. The reign of Muslims is over".³⁰ And another item of news on the same matter led to contradictory interpretations. Vasil, a Greek ship captain said that "The situation in Crete is deteriorating. We were told that a fight had broken out, and 4,000 Christians were killed. I felt sad when I heard the news".³¹

People readily accepted the accuracy of any information if it was in conformity with their wishes, and, if not, refuted it vehemently. A Greek said in Galata: "A few of us were planning to go to Crete. But they frightened us by saying Muslims had triumphed in Crete. But this kind of talk is not true. We should go there as soon as possible. We were told that the King of the Morea had sent 12 ships to help".³²

Let alone which side was prevailing, some people were not even sure if there was a fight in Crete. Some said that the Great Powers did not allow the Ottomans to engage in combat in Crete, and permitted only the blockade of the island. But such views were quickly disproved. Haralanboz, a ship captain, said in Beyoğlu: "I have just arrived in Istanbul on a French ship. I have heard many things about Crete, but none of it is true... Tahir Paşa has surrounded the island. And the fight is on-going every day. It is a lie that the Great Powers have forbidden fighting".³³

Every day new actors were added to make matters even more complex. Sometimes the talk was about several thousand Albanians who were sent out to the island to help smash the rebellion, and sometimes it was about Mehmed Ali of Egypt who sent out food and ammunition to help the insurgents. The plausibility of such rumours did not necessarily stem from their accuracy, but rather from the memory of the Greek rebellion two decades earlier when the Ottomans used Al-

30 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2143, 29 Cemaziyülahir 1257 (18 August 1841).

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

banian troops to suppress it, and of the defiant governor Mehmed Ali, whose adventure against the Porte had just been concluded with disillusionment.

The general climate in the autumn of 1841 was slightly different from that of the summer, however. While that summer opinions oscillated between Ottoman triumph and defeat, in autumn people were largely convinced that the Ottoman troops had prevailed. Giovanni, a moneylender, said in a tavern: “Crete was defeated. They submitted a petition to Tahir Paşa and said: ‘Forgive our crime, we are not the party at fault, it was the King of Greece who provoked us to rise up’. And all the foreign troops escaped from the island. If this is true, not a single Ottoman *reaya* can walk around Istanbul, and then Muslims start to look down upon us”.³⁴ And Petraki, a British citizen, said: “So many Christians were killed. The Cretans were hoping to receive help from the Great Powers, now they have to obey the Porte”.³⁵

Rumours about the Ottoman victory notwithstanding, some people were still incredulous about the outcome. Yanko of Greece said: “There has been talk that Crete submitted loyalty. But it doesn’t make sense as the French were extending this much help. If they obey, who is going to repay this money to the French? And also as to the King of the Morea giving assistance, this news can’t be true”.³⁶ But as the events progressed, and the suppression of the rebellion became certain, sceptical views were heard less, and disappointment was felt more in the streets of Istanbul. For many Greeks this had happened because Crete did not receive enough assistance from the Great Powers, and especially from Britain. For another Yanko, a Greek citizen, the reason was different: “We have come to this point for the lack of *Rum* alliance. If we had been in alliance, we would even have conquered Istanbul. Look what Tahir Paşa did! We were disgraced like the Jews. How can we look the Muslims in the face now?”³⁷

The conversation between Kostanti, a grocer and an Ottoman Greek, and his friend who was a subject of Greece is also indicative of the ambivalence that many Greeks felt at the time: “When Kostanti said: ‘You couldn’t do anything in Crete’, the Greek asked: ‘Why didn’t you go to help?’. Then the above-mentioned grocer said: ‘God willing, I will go later. You have got rid of the Ottomans, we still couldn’t set ourselves free’”.³⁸ Some Greeks, on the other hand, were bold enough to express defiance to Muslims. Nikolaki of Greece, for example, said to his Muslim friend in a Galata coffeehouse: “Do not think that we are scared of the Crete incident. We are not the Bulgarians of Rumelia.³⁹ We will eventually take our vengeance”.⁴⁰

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2221, 6 Şaban 1257 (23 September 1841).

37 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2307, 12 Ramazan 1257 (28 October 1841).

38 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2221, 6 Şaban 1257 (23 September 1841).

39 A reference to the Nish rebellion.

40 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2307, 12 Ramazan 1257 (28 October 1841).

The suppression of the rebellion in Crete in 1841 was a real shock to many Greeks in Istanbul. More important, what was at stake was not Crete only but the existence of Greece as an independent country. Even before the rebellion in Crete broke out, in early 1841, these rumours were prevalent. Especially the high taxes which the Porte imposed on Greek merchants were seen by many as a provocation for Greece to declare war against the Ottoman Empire. Palaki, a Greek, said in his house in Beşiktaş: "We cannot be at ease, unless we fight the Ottomans. Such high taxes are unheard of... Our King is getting prepared. We are weak now... but the Great Powers will surely help us. Even the King of Bavaria, our King's father, will help us".⁴¹ And Dimitri, a Greek ship captain, complained that "We cannot pay 20 per cent customs tax, and it is unheard of. Even if we don't have the power to declare war now, God is great. Blessings on France and Bavaria".⁴²

If a possible war between the Ottoman Empire and Greece did not seem imminent in the 1830s, now that the war against Mehmed Ali Paşa of Egypt was over and the rebellion in Crete was suppressed, for many in 1841, a war with Greece seemed inevitable. Widespread rumours began circulating in the Istanbul streets that Tahir Paşa, who was in charge of suppressing the rebellion in Crete, had requested 24 battleships and 100,000 troops to invade Greece, or that the Ottoman chief admiral was already on his way to Greece.⁴³ The atmosphere was so agitated that many Greek residents and merchants of Istanbul seem to have been convinced that their shops would be closed down and they would soon be deported.⁴⁴

The Coup of 1843 in Greece

This tense atmosphere slowly faded away but did not entirely disappear in the following year, 1842. Although we still read in the reports occasional rumours about a possible war between Greece and the Ottoman Empire and its likely consequences, the frequency was nowhere close to that of late 1841. Toward the end of 1842, however, conversations among Greeks focused more on the King of Greece, Otto, and his future in Greece than his endeavours. Enthroned in 1832 by the Protecting Powers, Otto was the son of the Bavarian King Ludwig I. In a period of three years from early 1840, when the spy reports started recording public utterances, to late 1842 and early 1843, the reports did not record any popular resentment against him. But suddenly in late 1842, in Tanaşaki's words, "Moreots hate their King, and they will waste him soon".⁴⁵

41 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 1776, 21 Safer 1257 (14 April 1841).

42 Ibid.

43 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2438, 15 Zilkade 1257 (29 December 1841).

44 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 2221, 6 Şaban 1257 (23 September 1841).

45 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3202, 7 Receb 1258 (14 August 1842).

What Petraki, a Greek subject, said in Emin's coffeehouse in Galata, expresses the general sentiment: "What is going on in the Morea is terrible. They have driven the King away. The Moreots are right, though. If you ask why, because they rebelled against the Ottoman Empire so many people perished for independence (*serbestiyet*). Then they fell into the hands of this Jew and became captive again. He brought his own kind to all sorts of positions and gave them excessive salaries. The whole population remained backward. He ran up a 72 million francs debt, and offended the poor. Now that he has escaped, realising that he is going to be wasted, let's see how things are going to turn out. But I think the Morea will again be subject to the Ottoman Empire. Because they have understood how comfortable Christians are here".⁴⁶

Petraki's utterance is worth noting in that it is not possible to separate facts from fiction, as in any other rumour, and thus shows the ambivalence of popular consciousness. The influence of Bavarians at court, the huge debt of the country to the Protecting Powers, and the poverty of the inhabitants were all perceptive observations and experiences of a contemporary which explain the increasing unpopularity of the King in 1843. As far as we know, he did not leave the country in that year, but such rumours were so widespread, as we read through the reports, that people must have believed that he in fact did, curiously foreshadowing what was to happen two decades later. What about his being a Jew? It is a fact that he was a staunch Catholic and that he did not consider converting to Orthodoxy rendered him a heretic in the eyes of the Greeks. But the profanity that is attributed to him finds its expression in popular consciousness not in a different church of Christianity but in a different religion, thus irreconcilably removing him from the popular touch. It must be added that there are only two references to Otto's religion throughout the reports and both refer to him as a Jew.⁴⁷ Perhaps that he was considered a heretic among the Greeks was less of a factor in making him unpopular than others, and the belief that he was a Jew was more prevalent than we assume.

The question of the fate of the King, however, was less important than the future of the young country. The options and alternatives were passionately discussed, because at stake was not the King himself but the probable chaos that might ensue after his departure. Nonetheless, the populace did not wait too long to invent a new king: this time not a non-Greek and non-Orthodox from Europe, but the embodiment of a prophecy. Filipaki, a pharmacist, said: "We hear that the Moreots found a young King descended from Constantine in Antalya... and that they wrote to the Great Powers to dismiss the King and replace him with this young King from the lineage of Constantine".⁴⁸

46 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3888, 9 Receb 1259 (5 August 1843).

47 The other reference is in BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3590, 4 Zilhicce 1258 (6 January 1843).

48 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3661, 4 Rebiyülevvel 1259 (4 April 1843). For an account of the different versions of myths and legends involving the 'reawakening' of the last Byzantine Emperor Constantine, see D. M. Nicol, *The Immortal Emperor: The Life and Legend of Constantine Palaiologos, Last Emperor of the Romans*, Cambridge 1992, chapter 6.

Such prophetic solutions aside, the prospect seemed increasingly grim. In the summer of 1843, it was clear that the Greeks were determined to get rid of the King. "The people of the Morea said to their King: 'We are all perishing and we don't want you any more'... Now the Morea has finished".⁴⁹ Many believed that Greece could not stand on its feet, and some thought it would be occupied by one of the Protecting Powers. A Greek was heard to say: "As they were looking for a big kingdom, it seems that they are going to lose the small kingdom. Either England or France will end up invading Greece".⁵⁰ Some rumours suggested that some French generals had come to Greece and demanded to enthrone a king from France⁵¹ or that France would hand Greece over to Mehmed Ali Paşa, the governor of Egypt, in return for the repayment of Greece's debts.⁵² When put in the context that France seemed to have been more adamant in people's minds than the other Great Powers in securing the collection of the loans that it had extended to Greece, evidence of its encouragement and help to Greece on the eve of the rebellion in Crete, it makes sense how such rumours were found credible enough to be spread around.

However, neither the rumours about French occupation nor about the new King from the lineage of Constantine came close to the density of rumours about an Ottoman occupation. There was always talk of a possible Ottoman-Greek war, but an Ottoman occupation now looked more imminent and real than ever. A Greek shopkeeper said: "It makes me sad that despite so much blood being spilled for the Morea, the Ottomans will end up occupying it again".⁵³ The rumours were spreading that many in Greece were escaping to the Ottoman side with their families.⁵⁴ Unlike in previous times, however, this time not many people hoped that the Great Powers would extend their usual assistance to the Greeks against an Ottoman endeavour. Someone said: "The Greeks asked of the three Great Powers: 'We have been put to disgrace before all the kings and *padişahs*, please put us in order'. They haven't helped so far".⁵⁵

In 1843 the mood of the Greeks facing the prospect of an Ottoman occupation was noticeably different from what it was two years earlier during the Crete rebellion. The characteristic tone of 1841, marked by audacity and self-confidence that refuted any possibility of co-existence, was now transformed into the acquiescence of desperation. A Greek said in his hotel room: "The people of the Morea don't want their King any more. They want to be subjects of the Ottoman Empire. If the Porte grants autonomy (*serbestiyet*) to the people of the Morea, they all will ac-

49 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3960, 8 Şaban 1259 (3 September 1843).

50 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3661, 4 Rebiyülevvel 1259 (4 April 1843).

51 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3960, 8 Şaban 1259 (3 September 1843).

52 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3888, 9 Receb 1259 (5 August 1843).

53 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3661, 4 Rebiyülevvel 1259 (4 April 1843).

54 Ibid.

55 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 4022, 15 Şevval 1259 (8 November 1843).

cept the poll-tax”.⁵⁶ Dimitraki, another Greek, said: “The Moreots convened a meeting. They said: ‘Let’s do something as soon as possible, because the Ottoman troops are patrolling around the border. If they catch us off guard, they will enslave our families. If they don’t touch our families, then no problem, we would accept being subjects of the Ottomans as we had been before’”.⁵⁷ And İlya, a Greek ship-captain said in a Beşiktaş coffeehouse: “The Rum *millet* used to be the privileged *millet* in the Ottoman state... They were very comfortable. After the Rum incident all this has been lost, we don’t have any peace any more. Now the comfort and power have passed on to the Armenian millet... We acted unwisely and did all this to ourselves”.⁵⁸

The most important characteristic of rumours was that they were ephemeral. After things had calmed down in Greece in September 1843 after a bloodless coup, all the talk about Greece almost completely disappeared from the streets (or from the reports). It was the events and particular situations that gave rise to rumours, and when those particular situations disappeared, the talk about them vanished. After late 1843, the reports did not record any conversation about the new order in Greece, or any anxious speculations about an Ottoman occupation. Only two utterances cast suspicion on Russia, which allegedly had asked for the repayment of its loans from Greece and was not happy with the new constitutional order because of the repercussions it might create in Russia in the future – again quite a plausible argument, given the Russian stance against constitutionalist movements throughout the nineteenth century.⁵⁹

Conclusion

This paper has shown how contemporaries talked about the Tanzimat reforms, the Crete rebellion of 1841, and the coup of 1843 in Greece as reflected in the spy reports. If the narrative of this essay has failed to provide a coherent picture, it is both because of the heterogeneity and incoherence of popular opinions and the discontinuity of popular moods and sentiments, and my intentional avoidance of securing a linear and consistent narrative. This is a chaotic, heterogeneous, fragmentary, and discontinuous narrative that stands in opposition to nationalist narratives which are marked by stability, homogeneity, and linearity. This brings us to Harootunian’s perceptive remark about the alliance of history and the nation-state that “reduces the surplus of everyday life” and

56 Ibid. Around mid-1843, informers were instructed to indicate the day and the time of utterances included in the reports. For example, according to the report, Peretamoz [?] said these words on 19 September 1843, Tuesday, around 11.00 a.m. We do not know if he was aware of the coup that took place on 3 September 1843.

57 Ibid. Dimitraki’s utterance was recorded on 30 August 1843, Wednesday, around 10.00 a.m.

58 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 3662, 5 Rebiyülevvel 1259 (5 April 1843).

59 BOA, İradeler Dahiliye, 4191, 21 Muharrem 1260 (11 February 1844) and 4270, 5 Rebiyülevvel 1260 (25 March 1844).

“exceptionalizes the particular story” to construct a “continuist and totalizing narrative capable of explaining how the folk – in time and space – had managed to create the nation-state and how the history of this achievement revealed a progressive unfolding which materialized or objectified the fusion of idea and reason”.⁶⁰

Everyday conversations cited throughout the essay are appealing not only because they are interesting, but more importantly because they decidedly remind us that the banalities of everyday life have the potential to challenge and transform the “encompassing registers” of nationalist historiographies.

60 Harootunian, ‘Shadowing History’, 191.

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