

YURTLUK-OCAKLIKS: LAND, POLITICS OF NOTABLES AND SOCIETY
IN OTTOMAN KURDISTAN, 1820-1890

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the dissertation of Uğur Bayraktar, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History to be taken in November 2015

Title: “Yurtluk-Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society in Ottoman Kurdistan, 1820-1890”

This dissertation examines the transformation of family estates (yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet) in Ottoman Kurdistan during the nineteenth century. Since these lands provided their possessors with political and economic privileges, this study also sheds light on the transformation of Kurdish emirs as yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders in their provincial setting. The Tanzimat period (1839-1876), in which the centralisation reforms accelerated, contravened the political and economic concessions associated with yurtluk-ocaklık lands.

Following the case of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands possessed by the Zirki emirs in northeastern Diyarbekir, this dissertation offers the contested concept(s) of property related with these lands and their fates in the aftermath of the Land Code of 1858. As the latter is usually associated with the genesis of modern private property in the Ottoman context, this dissertation contemplates contrasting perceptions with regards to private property beyond the definitions dictated by the Ottoman government. By doing so, this study scrutinizes the making of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands as private property at the interstices of Zirki emirs and the Ottoman government.

Demonstrating the complication nature underlying the making process, it also shows the process was not a straightforward one but rather included many participants with their own agendas. Accordingly, this study scrutinizes the changing notions of politics provincial notables conducted to which Zirki emirs belonged. With a focus on the commercialisation of agriculture in the Ottoman realm from the middle of the century onwards, this dissertation attempts to show how land possession was related with economic-cum-political power throughout the nineteenth century in Ottoman Kurdistan.

ÖZET

Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü'nde Doktora derecesi için Uğur Bayraktar tarafından Kasım 2015'te teslim edilen tezin özeti

Başlık: “Yurtluk-Ocaklıklar: Osmanlı Kürdistanı'nda Toprak, Eşraf Siyaseti ve Toplum, 1820-1890”

Bu tez, on dokuzuncu yüzyıl boyunca Osmanlı Kürdistanındaki yurtluk-ocaklık ve hükûmet topraklarının dönüşümünü incelemektedir. Bu topraklar sahiplerine siyasî ve iktisadî ayrıcalıklar da sağladığından, bu çalışma ayrıca yurtluk-ocaklık ve hükûmet sahibi olarak Kürt emirlerinin taşra düzeni dâhilindeki dönüşümüne de ışık tutmaktadır. Merkezîleşme reformlarının hız kazandığı Tanzimat dönemi ise yurtluk-ocaklık topraklara ilişkin siyasî ve iktisadî imtiyazlarla uyuşmamaktaydı.

Zirki emirlerinin Diyarbekir'in kuzeydoğusunda tasarrufunda bulunan yurtluk-ocaklık ve hükûmet toprakları örneğini takip ederek bu tez bu topraklara ilişkin ihtilafî mülkiyet kavram(lar)ını ve 1858 Arazi Kanunnamesi sonrasında bu toprakların akıbetini göstermektedir. Bu kanunname sıklıkla Osmanlı bağlamında modern özel mülkiyetin doğuşuyla ilişkilendirildiğinden, bu tez Osmanlı hükûmetinin tahakkümündeki tanımların ötesinde özel mülkiyete ilişkin çatışmalı bakışaçılarını irdelemektedir. Böyle yaparak da yurtluk-ocaklık ve hükûmet topraklarından özel mülkiyet oluşumunu Zirki emirleri ve Osmanlı hükûmetinin iddiaları arasındaki boşluklarda incelemektedir.

Bu oluşum sürecinin altında yatan karmaşayı göstererek aynı zamanda bu sürecin yekpâre bir süreç olmadığını aksine kendi gündemleriyle birlikte birçok faili barındırdığını da ortaya koymaktadır. Bunun yanında, bu çalışma Zirki mîrlerinin de dâhil olduğu âyânın siyaset yapma yollarındaki değişen mefhumları incelemektedir. Osmanlı topraklarında yüzyılın ortasından itibaren ortaya çıkan tarımın ticarîleşmesiyle birlikte, bu tez Osmanlı Kürdistanında toprak tasarrufunun on dokuzuncu yüzyıl boyunca iktisadî bir güçten siyasî bir güce nasıl evrildiğini göstermeye çalışmaktadır.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
Historiography on Provincial Notables	8
Towards a Broader Context of Provincial Notables	19
Chapter Outlines	30
Sources and Methodology	35
CHAPTER II: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE YURLUK-OCAKLIK AND HÜKÛMET SYSTEM	39
Historicising Yurtluk-Ocaklık and Hükûmet System in the Early Modern Era.....	43
Yurtluk-Ocaklıks as a Peripheral Strategy	59
The Gradual Liquidation of the Yurtluk-Ocaklık System	75
CHAPTER III: DEPOSING THE ZIRKIS: THE REFORM, THE FALL OF THE KURDISH EMIRATES AND YURLUK-OCAKLIK LANDS IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY	93
The Historical Geography of Diyarbekir	96
The Historical Background of Zirki Beys	107
CHAPTER IV: ADMINISTERING THE LAND: STATE LAND, LOCAL NOTABLES, AND REFORM	148
Confiscation and the Politics of Administering the Lands	150
<i>Madrabs</i> as State Property, Administration, and Appropriation by Local Notables	163
The Tanzimat in Hazro and Mihrani	178
CHAPTER V: CLAIMING THE PROPERTY: THE POLITICS OF PETITIONING FOR YURLUK-OCAKLIK LANDS	202
The Politics of Petitioning and the Challenge in Exile.....	204
Petitions for Pardon and the Restoration of Property	215
Imperial Pardon	230
CHAPTER VI: RESTORING THE PROPERTY: THE LAND CODE OF 1858 AND THE SALE OF YURLUK-OCAKLIK LANDS.....	239
The Land Code of 1858 and Change in Property Relations	242
The Land Code in Practice: A Different Form of ‘Sale’ of Yurtluk-Ocaklık Lands in Hazro and Mihrani	259
CHAPTER VII: EXPANDING THE PROPERTY: THE COMMERCIALISATION OF AGRICULTURE AND THE RISING TENSION.....	280
The Zirki Beys as Local Notables in Hazro and Mihrani	283
The Purchase of the <i>Madrabs</i> in Hazro and Mihrani.....	286
CHAPTER VIII: RE-EMIRISATION IN HAZRO AND MİHRANİ AND THE RISING TENSION	316
The Armenian Reform Movement.....	318
The Armenian Opposition in Hazro	329
The Reform of 1879 and Exile	334
Ethnic Tensions in Hazro.....	346

CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSION	357
APPENDICES	364
Appendix A. Selected Documents Concerning the Fall of the Zirki Emirs ...	364
Appendix B. Selected Petitions of the Zirki Family	371
Appendix C. Selected Documents on the Yurtluk-Ocaklık Lands and Madrabs	379
Appendix D. Selected Documents on the the Armenians of Hazro	387
BIBLIOGRAPHY	398

TABLES

1. Tax Revenue Distribution in Tercil District in the Sixteenth Century.....	113
2. Yurtluk-Ocaklık and Hükûmet Districts in the Province of Diyarbekir.	119
3. The Amount the Zirki Beys Paid for the Date Teşrinisani 1252 (13 November-12 December 1836).....	143
4. Property Claimed to Have Been Granted to the Hükûmet of Tercil by the Glorious Deed.....	144
5. Revenues Granted to the Troops of the Diyarbekir Citadel.	153
6. Property Accrued as Revenue of the Imperial Treasury Including the Possessions of the Zirki Beys.	155
7. Revenues of Zirki Beys Withheld for 1835/36.	159
8. Costs and Expenses of Rice Cultivation Incurred by the State in Diyarbekir Madrabs	170
9. Costs of Cultivating Cotton and Rice on One-Dönüm-Land.	170
10. Number of Tribal Households Settled and Taxes Imposed in Hazro and Mihrani in 1858.	197
11. Annual Stipends and Property of the Zirki Family in Edirne, circa 1860.....	212
12. Non-Registered Villages Zirki Beys Claimed to Have Possessed by Means of Glorious Deed.....	221
13. Non-Registered Rice Lands and Mills Claimed to be Possessed by the Zirki Beys.	221
14. Difference between the Revenues of Escheated Property and the Stipends Granted.	224
15. Rice and Cotton Lands under the Possession of Receb, Bedirhan, and Behram Beys according to the Claim of Mir Behram and Mir Bedirhan....	270
16. Capacity and Names of Lands Irrigated by the Four Madrabs.	294
17. Annual Auction Amounts of the Madrabs in Hazro and Mihrani.....	303

FIGURES

1. A map of Diyarbakir and its northeastern districts.	101
2. A map of the major Kurdish emirates.	124

NOTES ON TRANSLATIONS, DATES, AND REFERENCES

Unless stated otherwise, all translations in the dissertation are mine. In the transliteration from Ottoman Turkish, only the diacritical marks of *‘ayn* and *hamza* are retained throughout the text with the addition of circumflexes to indicate lengthened vowels.

The Hijri dates (the lunar calendar) cited in the footnotes are always presented with their Gregorian equivalents. Dates are mostly referred to the ones provided in the catalogues of the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministry in Istanbul. However, in archival materials with several documents and thus dates, the specific dates of those documents were used instead of the date presented in the catalogue. All archival documents in the dissertation were used in abbreviations the extended versions of which are provided in the bibliography.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation reinserts nineteenth century Ottoman Kurdistan into the Ottoman Empire proper. Largely peripheral, the provincial rule of Ottoman Kurdistan was decentralised prior to the nineteenth century – made up of autonomous or semiautonomous regions such as *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* districts. With respect to decentralisation, however, Ottoman historiography focuses mostly on the Balkans and sometimes Western and Northern Anatolia. Asking why the Kurdish emirs are not present in the literature on the provincial notables (*a'yân*) of the empire, this dissertation argues that Kurdish rulers should be among those notables. Emphasising commensurability between *a'yâns* of the Balkans and Anatolia and emirs of Ottoman Kurdistan, this dissertation explains how Kurdish notables and the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands they possessed experienced the *Tanzimat* reforms – the political and fiscal centralisation of the Ottoman government.

This study demonstrates the political and fiscal centralisation of the government by analysing the transformation of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in the Ottoman East from de facto possession into formal private property. Since the lands were a means of provincial administration employed by the Ottoman government, the study also concerns the mostly Kurdish notables to whom the imperial government delegated some power by means of the administrative features of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* districts. To this end, the dissertation investigates the formation of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands as an early modern imperial practice, as well as the political and economic transformation of this practice in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, by following these political, social, and legal trajectories, the study

demonstrates the emergence of vast estates stemming from the transformation of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands in the Middle East context.

The *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* system, in essence, was autonomous family estates and domains held by hereditary title in return for certain services to the government.¹ Granted to the Kurdish rulers in the region prior to the Ottoman-Safavid War of 1514, the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in a short period became prevalent in the eastern borderlands. This dissertation, accordingly, stresses the establishment of this privileged practice of provincial administration by means of a constant negotiation of the imperial government and the holders.² As this dissertation is interested particularly in the transformation of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands into private property throughout the nineteenth century, historical discussion of changes with regards to the practice in the seventeenth and most importantly eighteenth centuries is absent. Constructing therefore upon the secondary literature dealing with the practice during the two centuries, this study attempts to bring about a coherent representation of the practice in the Ottoman realm.³

Viewing the developments on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* practice in the eastern borderlands, however, is a difficult task. The near disappearance of the

¹ Halil İnalçık, "Autonomous Enclaves in Islamic States: *Temliks*, *Soyurghals*, *Yurdluk-Ocaklıks*, *Malikâne-Mukâta'a* and *Awqaf*," in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 126-8; Nejat Göyünç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık Deyimleri Hakkında," in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan* (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1991), 269-71.

² Most studies dealing with the matter are laden with today's ideological considerations underlining the centralist character of the practice in order to downplay the regional autonomy of Kurds. Put in this way, the analysis is doomed to a textual – and largely static – analysis of Ottoman codes on these lands. See, for instance, Orhan Kılıç, *18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Osmanlı Devleti'nin İdari Taksimatı: Eyalet ve Sancak Tevcihatı* (Elazığ: Şark Pazarlama, 1997); "Yurtluk-Ocaklık ve Hükümet Sancaklar Üzerine Bazı Tespitler," *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, no. 10 (1999).

³ Evolution does not indicate a linear progress contrary to the some studies on the matter which either entertains the notion of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet*s as anomaly to be incorporated into the classical Ottoman administration. For the classical age, see Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600* (London: Phoenix, 1994). For *yurtluk-ocaklıks* as anomaly, see Tom Sinclair, "The Ottoman Arrangements for the Tribal Principalities of the Lake Van Region of the Sixteenth Century," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003).

Ottoman central records with regards to the lands in question in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries poses a setback for a more coherent narrative of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts in the Ottoman realm. Bridging the gap between the sixteenth century and the early nineteenth century by means of the secondary literature enables a more coherent narrative of the practice. By highlighting the expansion of the yurtluk-ocaklık system into the eastern borderlands in the later centuries, this study aims to conceptualise the practice not as merely a Kurdish peculiarity, but rather as part of a more inclusive imperial strategy employed also in Georgian and Armenian lands. Such a conceptualisation neither lessens the fact that Ottoman Kurdistan was mostly administered by the practice from its incorporation into the Ottoman polity until the early nineteenth century nor reinforces the view that the practice distorted the “classical” means of provincial administration. Rather, the practice was a result of pragmatism peculiar to the nature of early modern empires. In this context, this dissertation aims to situate the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet practices in the hub-and-spoke network structure, as defined by Barkey, where political and economic relations take place between a central power and various diverse and differentiated entities.⁴

It was not an exclusive Ottoman invention, but rather an imperial tradition that had been predominant particularly in the Timurid and Safavid empires.⁵ The yurtluk-ocaklık system in this context was an Islamic tradition the Ottoman government started employing during the imperial rivalry with the Safavids in the sixteenth

⁴ Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9 ff.

⁵ Under the name *soyurghals*, the practice was common also in the Qara-Qoyunlu and Aq-Qoyunlu Empires. İnalçık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 119-24. Ann K. S. Lambton, "Two Şafavid Soyūrghāls," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 14, no. 1 (1952); Jean Aubin, "Un *soyurghal* Qara-Qoyunlu concernant le ulūk de Bawānāt-HarātMarwast (Archives persanes commentées 3)," in *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, ed. S. M. Stern (Cambridge, NY: Harvard University Press, 1965); V. Minorsky, "A Soyūrghāl of Qāsim b. Jahāngir Aq-qoyunlu (903/1498)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 9, no. 4 (1939); Ann K. S. Lambton, "Two Şafavid Soyūrghāls," *ibid.* 14, no. 1 (1952).

century.⁶ Departing from these premises, the dissertation situates the practice in a broader context of imperial politics. While doing that, it strives to evade over-emphasis on the central government since it was demonstrated as the ultimate authority to grant and negotiate the terms of the deeds of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands. On the contrary, this study demonstrates the flexible polity of early modern empires, for which the Ottomans was not an exception, and therefore the terms entailed with the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands which were open to negotiation between the imperial government and the actual holders of the lands.

Much of the evolution with regards to *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands and their holders took place in the background of the Tanzimat reforms, in stark contrast to the flexibility of the early modern Ottoman state. In order to establish a more centralised rule, the reforms encompassed changes in administrative, financial, military, and judicial terms throughout the nineteenth century. Even though the reforms and the subsequent centralisation attempt might connote a predominant role of the central state, the dissertation does not view the imperial reforms and the consequent changes as self-sustaining polity with a predestined outcome.

Toksöz, in her discussion of the role attributed to the central government in the history writing of the nineteenth century, offers a re-introduction of the state which, however, maintains the centrality of the Ottoman state. Turning the problems she states into a revisionist historiography of the Tanzimat state, this dissertation argues that most of the reform program was not an unchanging, coherent entity, and the change was not entirely attributed to the monolithic state. Most importantly, the

⁶ The decisive victory of the Ottoman forces in 1514 accelerated the alliance between the Ottoman forces and the Kurdish rulers. Idris Bitlisi, who was a great Kurdish statesman and scholar, rallied the rulers for the Ottoman cause. Adel Allouche, *The Origins and Development of the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict (906-962/1500-1555)* (Berlin: K. Schwarz Verlag, 1983), 115-6. Martin van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbekir and the Administrative Organisation of the Province in the 16th and 17th Centuries," in *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbekir: The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname*, ed. Martin van Bruinessen and Hendrik Boeschoten (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1988), 14-22.

actual outcome of the reforms did not hint at the unfolding of the prerequisites of the nation-state.⁷

In the “age of reforms” where borderlands became boundaries, yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts, initially established as buffer zones, came to contravene the projects of the centralist Ottoman statesmen.⁸ However, the present study argues that the dissolution of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet practices in the mid-nineteenth century was undertaken by means of diverse policies. As a centralisation measure of the Ottoman government, the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts of Tercil, Hani, and Atak, in the northeast of present day Diyarbekir, the subject matter of this dissertation, were confiscated by the Ottoman government. This took place in the aftermath of the elimination of the Zirki beys, who had administered the districts for almost three centuries. Compared to confiscation, the rest of options followed more peaceful means including discontinuation of the deeds upon the death of holders and/or distribution of lands among the beys and peasants cultivating the lands.⁹

The subsequent establishment of local councils, however late in Ottoman Kurdistan, was a novelty, not always in the interests of the Ottoman government. As this dissertation demonstrates, the appointment of local administrators was at times renounced and at times encouraged by the Ottoman government. In this sense, the change was not unilaterally dictated by the government, but also the actors who were involved in local politics. The very act of fiscal centralisation which meant the confiscation of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands of the Zirki beys did not translate into an outright central rule. Despite this change, the other local notables of

⁷ Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region 1850-1908* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 5-6.

⁸ Sabri Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary, 1843-1914* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁹ Ömer Toraman, "Trabzon Eyaletinde Yurtluk-Ocaklık Suretiyle Arazi Tasarrufuna Son Verilmesi (1847-1864)," *Uluslararası Karadeniz İncelemeleri*, no. 8 (2010); Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery, Governing the Land: The Making of the Modern Ottoman State in Kurdistan, 1840-70," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 1 (2014).

the society sought to reap the benefits of this fiscal centralisation, much to the dismay of the initial reform planners.

As local councils were established in the province of Ottoman Kurdistan, the fiscal centralisation of the empire necessitated a more direct method of tax collection. As this method known as *muhassıllık* proved to be very short-lived, the detachment of the Zirki beys from the lands they possessed did undergo what the post-*muhassıllık* experiment failed: tax-farm contracts.¹⁰ Apart from the tax-collection methods, this dissertation purports the enigmatic notion of private property in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire by demonstrating legal status the Ottoman government declared and counter-claims with which the Zirki beys contravened on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in Tercil, Hani, and Atak.

The Land Code of 1858, one of the most essential pillars of the Tanzimat state, is noted with the change it brought about with its modern legal terminology of private property. The impact of the Code not being discarded, the change was far from being the unilateral dictate of the Ottoman government. In their petitions, a political means by which the Zirki dynasty acknowledged the reforms and started speaking Tanzimat, the Zirki beys assumed an active role with regards to the prospective changes on lands they claimed to be theirs.¹¹ The proprietary status of the lands in question set aside, this dissertation therefore particularly deals with the tension between the state-owned, i.e. *mîrî*, status of the lands as claimed by different departments of the Ottoman government and the property-like status claimed due to the hereditary possession rights the Zirki beys had enjoyed since the mid-sixteenth

¹⁰ Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, "Maliyenin Maliyeti: Tırhala'da Muhassıllık Düzeni, 1840-1842," *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 15 (Fall 2012).

¹¹ The term "speaking Tanzimat" is borrowed from Petrov and refers to Ottoman subjects who gradually modified their behaviour in accordance with the expectations of the political power, especially in cases where they came into direct contact with the agents of the government. Milen V. Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance: Subaltern Commentaries on Ottoman Reform, 1864-1868," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46, no. 4 (2004), p. 733.

century. Against what one could call legalist tradition of the history writing of private property in the Ottoman Empire, this study offers a perspective of the Zirki beys, the possessors of the lands, contrasting with the state-oriented explanations.¹²

While this study is the history of yurtluk-ocaklık lands possessed by Zirki beys, it is by no means a family history per se.¹³ For the dissertation, the hereditary beys of Tercil, Hani, and Atak constitute only a rhetorical device to facilitate the understanding of not only the transformation between the yurtluk-ocaklık and private property, but also of political, economic, and social structures and dynamics in an Ottoman periphery region, Tercil. While not interested in family history, this dissertation is about the “politics of notables.” Neither the tradition paved by the term coined by Albert Hourani nor the provincial notables (*âyân*) in the Ottoman historiography, however, suffices to understand the holders/rulers of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands/districts.¹⁴ In other words, one of the aims of this dissertation is to

¹² Huri İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858," in *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). For recent studies criticising the legalist tradition and elaborating the flexibility of legal aspects regarding modern private property in the interstices of local political relations, respectively, see Martha Mundy and Richard Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007); E. Attila Aytekin, "Agrarian Relations, Property and Law: An Analysis of the Land Code of 1858 in the Ottoman Empire," *Middle Eastern Studies* 45, no. 6 (2009).

¹³ For family histories in a Middle-Eastern context, see Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family and Fertility 1880-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Kenneth M. Cuno, "Joint Family Households and Rural Notables in 19th-Century Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27, no. 4 (1995); Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Margaret L. Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count: Family and Society in Ottoman Aleppo, 1770-1840* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999); Beshara Doumani, ed. *Family History in the Middle East: Household, Property, and Gender* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003); Yusri Hazran, "How Elites Can Maintain their Power in the Middle East: The Junblat Family as a Case Study," *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 3 (2014); Kenneth M. Cuno, *Modernizing Marriage: Family, Ideology, and Law in Nineteenth - and Early Twentieth-Century Egypt* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2015).

¹⁴ For two seminal studies dealing with provincial notables of the Ottoman Empire in Arab lands, Anatolia and the Balkans, respectively, see Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *The Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The 19th Century*, ed. W. R. Polk and R. L. Chambers (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968); Halil İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration," in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History, Papers on Islamic History*, Vol. 4, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977).

contribute to the vast literature on provincial notables which predominantly deals with the Arab provinces, the Balkans, and Anatolia.

Historiography on Provincial Notables

Despite the rich literature on provincial notables, why the Kurdish yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders have no place in this vast corpus is a question begging an answer.¹⁵ While a definition of one-size-fits-all is very unlikely for provincial notables of the Ottoman Empire, the existing ones do not make the incorporations of holders of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet into the corpus of provincial notables an easy task. That is because most studies first of all tend to consider the provincial notables who emerged as an exclusive group ruling in the empire in a certain period. Noted as the, “age of the *âyâns*”, the period between 1699 and 1812 is considered to have been the heyday of the provincial notables.¹⁶ In addition to the question of when, the question how provincial notables emerged as a distinct entity in the countryside is a corollary question with regards to the provincial notables of the empire.

Treating provincial notables as a strata rising immediately to power in the eighteenth century negates the very existence of the former in the earlier centuries.

Referring to the Middle Ages, Hodgson, warning in advance of the oversimplified

¹⁵ Exceptionally Sakaoğlu establishes a connection between provincial notables of the eighteenth century and yurtluk-ocaklık holders in Kurdistan. He concedes the earlier predominance of the latter which he regards, however, not equals of the *nouveau riche* notables of the eighteenth century. By the same token, Faroqhi notes the survival of local dynasties from even pre-Ottoman days. Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Anadolu Derebeyi Ocaklarından Köse Paşa Hanedanı* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1984), 12; Suraiya Faroqhi, "Coping with the Central State, Coping with Local Power: Ottoman Regions and Notables from the Sixteenth to Early Nineteenth-Century," in *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography* ed. Fikret Adanır and Suraiya Faroqhi (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 368.

¹⁶ Bruce McGowan, "The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. II, ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

aspect of the sketch, underlines the *a‘yân-amîr* system, “where power was normally divided between the *a‘yân*, “notables” of various sorts in the towns and villages, and the *amîrs*, commanders of relatively local garrisons, with minimal interference from large-scale political organizations.”¹⁷ The omnipresence of notables in Islamic history, however, should be taken with caution. Understanding the decentralisation and the notables from the Haldunian view of pendulum, which swings between states formed by tribal solidarities and the disintegration of these states, not only relegates the notables to a place of minor importance, but also brings about an ahistorical history of Islamic World.¹⁸ Conceding the role *voyvodas* or *mütesellims* (both meaning deputy-governors) had played a significant role in Ottoman provincial administration prior to the eighteenth century; İnalcık notes the particular conditions of the century leading the *a‘yân* to unprecedented significance.¹⁹

The significance, however, owes much to the decline paradigm.²⁰ Though revisionist studies criticise the paradigm by regarding the seventeenth century as a

¹⁷ As early as the ninth century, notables existed in Islamic societies at the top stratum of local society acting as mediators between the population and the government. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols., vol. 2: The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 64. Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 31.

¹⁸ Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7.

¹⁹ İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization," 36-7. By the same token, Adanır notes that the predominantly Muslim towns of Anatolia such as Bursa, Ankara and Konya, from the fifteenth century onwards, had urban groups designated as *eşraf* and *a‘yân*. Fikret Adanır, "Semi-Autonomous Forces in the Balkans and Anatolia," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3 The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839, ed. Suraiya N. Faroqi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 161-2. Before it turned into a title claimed by notables, the term *eşraf* referred to a variety of social groups and individuals claiming descent from the Prophet's family. See Hülya Canbakal, "On the 'Nobility' of Provincial Notables," in *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire: Halcyon Days in Crete V: A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 10-12 January 2003*, ed. Antonis Anastasopoulos (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2005).

²⁰ İnalcık lists the social origins of the provincial notables, in descending hierarchical order, as the military-administrative class, the religious authorities, the merchants, and the guildsmen. As a result of several political and economic developments consequently leading to the decline of the empire, in this setting, the four strata came to occupy a more prominent role in the provinces. İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization," 36-7. On the facets of the decline, see "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700," *Archivum Ottomanicum* VI(1980). The decline paradigm" was challenged by Abou-el-Haj, who focuses on the transformation of the central state, intra-elite struggles and the emergence of rival elite groups vying for power within the structure of central state. Recently, it was further radically challenged by Tezcan, who replaces the so-called

century of adoption, the eighteenth century is regarded as the era when decline finally caught up with the empire decentralisation winning over the sporadic attempts of recentralisation.²¹ According to the paradigm, the changing conditions of warfare, particularly the increasing demand for infantry with firearms, in the early seventeenth century led the Ottoman administration to increase the number of janissaries and recruit mercenary soldiers among peasants. As the increasing use of firearms deemed the provincial cavalry (i.e. *tımarlı sipahi*) obsolete, the increasing financial burden struck a fatal blow to the fiefs as the latter gradually were organised under tax-farming contracts (*iltizam*). While non-deployed mercenary militias found shelter in the retinues of provincial governors, the fact that the tax-collectors (*muhassıls*), who had been appointed as a result of the sporadic centralisation of the imperial government throughout the seventeenth century, began to delegate their authority to representatives or tax-farmers. This brought about a drastic change in politics at the provincial level. Especially after the extension of the terms of tax-farm contracts to life-long tenures (*malikânes*), did the representatives or tax-farmers rose to prominence in the countryside with the cash they were able to purchase the contracts and employ peasant militias. It is in this context that the provincial notables, who are portrayed to be notoriously defying the central authorities, are studied.

Still, why were Kurdish holders of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet not included among the provincial notables of the empire? The answer lies within the implicit

decline period with a second empire, the dynasty being transformed into a limited monarchy. Rifa'at Ali Abou-el-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991); Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²¹ Jane Hathaway, "Rewriting Eighteenth-Century Ottoman History," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 19, no. 1 (2004): 45-6; Suraiya Faruqi, "Crisis and Change, 1590-1699," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. 2, ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

stipulations of the decline paradigm. With regards to decentralisation, the paradigm implicitly takes for granted the central rule in the core provinces of the empire, i.e. the Anatolia and the Balkans. Provinces which were already decentralised in administrative terms were not included in the infamous decentralisation. Such a formulation, at the expense of a mystified “central” administration, naturally excludes the provinces without the timar holdings, i.e., the common denomination of the “classical” administration.²² In addition to these privileged provinces, one can add the province of Kurdistan, which apart from the province of Diyarbekir comprised of seventeen *eyâlets* (provinces) as opposed to *livâ‘* or *sancak*, the usual denominations for districts.²³

With these points set aside, this section is a rather limited account of the historiography on provincial notables with particular discussion of their official recognition, landholdings, and their allegiances and/or networks. In the context of decline-cum-decentralisation, official recognition was an essential marker of provincial notables. On one hand, as a result of the centralist concerns infiltrating the historiography, provincial notables are portrayed as outright rebels defying the state yet capturing the governorships by means of tyranny and the consequent wealth they acquired.²⁴ On the other hand lay the (quasi-)official status of provincial notables the ascendance of whose was acknowledged officially with the Deed of Agreement in

²² In provinces called *salyaneli*, including Egypt, Yemen, Abyssinia, southern and northern Iraq (Basra and Baghdad, respectively), al-Hasa in the Levant as well as Tripolitania, Tunis, the coastal Algeria as well as the distant process of the Balkans such as Moldavia, Wallachia, Transylvania, and Dubrovnik, revenues were not distributed as fiefs, contrary to timars, but collected with the help of tax-farmers (*mültezim*). With concerns of self-sufficiency, the remaining revenues, if any remained after the deduction of diverse expenditures of the province, would be submitted to the treasury in Istanbul. Gábor Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire: Authority and its Limits on the Ottoman Frontiers," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (Summer 2003): 16-7; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 87.

²³ Baki Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description and the Incorporation of this Region into the Ottoman Empire in the 16th Century," in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation*, Vol. 3, ed. Kemal Çiçek (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2000), 546.

²⁴ Mustafa Akdağ, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Âyanlık Düzeni Devri," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8-10, no. 14-23 (1970).

1808.²⁵ Depending on the concept of official recognition, the provincial notables of the eighteenth century are presented with a rupture from the provincial notables under different names.²⁶ For instance, the term *derebeyi*, i.e., lord of the valley, has been differentiated from a‘yân with the definition of the latter as an individual who exercised almost virtual autonomy within Anatolia regardless of the central government.²⁷ In a similar vein, differentiation is furthered to greater or grand a‘yân vis-à-vis lesser a‘yân.²⁸

Notwithstanding the titular differentiation of provincial notables, the conjuncture in which provincial notables de facto reigned is rather regarded as an established institution the election, regulation, and running to which were duly

²⁵ For the seminal study on the Deed, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli Âyanlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılık Oğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa* (İstanbul: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1942). Between the process incorporation and rebellion of provincial notables, Yaycıoğlu notes that incorporation, negotiation, and rebellion does not suggest an anarchic condition but a polyarchic one, “where authority was divided among different actors and the central authority simply recognized these authority formations.” Ali Yaycıoğlu, “The Provincial Challenge: Regionalism, Crisis and Integration in the Late Ottoman Empire (1792-1812)” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2008), 293, see also Chapter 6 on the Deed of Agreement.

²⁶ For instance, Özkaya and Nagata draw a line between the *a‘yân-ı vilâyet*, who were prominent in local society from the early stages of the Ottoman Empire, and the a‘yân of the eighteenth century. See Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Âyanlar: Karaosmanoğulları Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), ix; “Ayan in Anatolia and the Balkans during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Case Study of the Karaosmanoğlu Family,” in *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire: Halcyon Days in Crete V: A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 10-12 January 2003*, ed. Antonis Anastasopoulos (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2005), 269; Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Âyanlık* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994), 7.

²⁷ This point is also noted by Robert W. Zens, “The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa of Vidin in the Age of Ottoman Social Change, 1791-1815” (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004), 46. Underlining the closeness of the infunctional terms but conceding the distinction, Sadat notes that those who held power legally were a‘yân while those who gained it through rebellion were *derebey*. Deena R. Sadat, “Rumeli Ayanlari: The Eighteenth Century,” *The Journal of Modern History* 44, no. 3 (1972): 350, n. 20. For an example of this distinction, see Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Âyanlık*, 5. For studies using the term *derebey*, see Andrew G. Gould, “Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7, no. 4 (1976); Sakaoğlu, *Köse Paşa Hanedanı*; Bernard Lory, “Ahmed Aga Tămraşlijata: The Last Derebey of The Rhodopes,” in *The Turks of Bulgaria: The History, Culture and Political Fate of a Minority*, ed. Kemal H. Karpat (İstanbul: Isis Press, 1990).

²⁸ In İnalcık’s formulation, the greater a‘yân who dominated a district or a province “constituted the last stage of development in *ayan*ship and presented the central government with a new set of problems.” İnalcık, “Centralization and Decentralization,” 48. For lesser notables, see Canay Şahin, “The Economic Power of Anatolian Ayans of the Late Eighteenth Century: The Case of the Caniklizâdes,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 11, no. 1 (2005).

structured.²⁹ While the structured setting might demonstrate that the Ottoman government, in the darkest moment of its authority, was able to negotiate with and impose sanctions several provincial notables in the periphery, the elaboration of the period as a straightforward institution obscures the dynamics of provincial politics.³⁰ As Esmer warns that although the Ottomans themselves tended to imagine their society in corporate entities, this should not lead historians to conceptualise these entities as the entire key to Ottoman realities. Referring to the actors of mass violence in Serbia and Bulgaria in the late eighteenth century, Esmer adds that “‘the *a’yân*’ were one of those corporate entities whose structural similarities are largely assumed rather than demonstrated.”³¹

The eighteenth-century decentralisation of the Ottoman Empire was also discussed with regards to the incorporation of the empire to the world economy. In this sense, *çiftliks*, i.e., large-estates, offered an answer to how provincial notables established their power base.³² Once established, provincial notables purchased the

²⁹ Despite his criticism that most works on Ottoman provincial notables (i.e., *a’yân*) are very general studies examining the institution itself and basic characteristics of the notables and are elaboration of notables or dynasties without the context of *a’yânlık*, Zens’ study, however, takes readily granted for the terms of provincial notables as an ‘institution.’ Accordingly Yaycıoğlu’s dissertation expands the origin of provincial notables by means of three developments, localisation, privatisation, and communalisation of authority, but does reify the provincial administration at the hands of notables as an institution. The pro-institutional perspective is clear where he argues that “the central authority initiated a number of reforms to regularize this community leadership and instituted a formal office, known as *ayan-ship*, to oversee the fiscal, administrative and security matters of the district (*kaza*) community and the state. Zens, “The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa,” 3; Yaycıoğlu, “The Provincial Challenge,” 5-9. Emphasis added.

³⁰ As a result of entertaining the notion of *a’yân* as an official institution, the need to differentiate the provincial notable who was, legally or illegally, charged by the Ottoman government. That is, a notable who were representatives of a certain district came to be called as *baş-ayan*, *re’is-i ayan*, and *ayne’l-ayan* (all meaning head or chief *a’yân*) to differentiate from others, no matter how vague the differentiation. By the same token, Yaycıoğlu, in order to enforce this demarcation, suggests the term “*ayanship*” for the natural leadership and “*ayanhood*” for the office of overseers, underlining the transformation from collective community leadership to public office-holding. İnalçık, “Centralization and Decentralization,” 44; Yaycıoğlu, “The Provincial Challenge,” 124.

³¹ Tolga Uğur Esmer, “A Culture of Rebellion: Networks of Violence and Competing Discourses of Justice in the Ottoman Empire, 1790-1808” (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Chicago, 2009), 260.

³² In this sense, Stoianovich’s seminal study deals with the transformation of landholders with a military orientation receiving rent in kind to an economic orientation with quasi-private property holdings. Provincial notables constituted, in his account, the wealthier urban element of this transformation. Traian Stoianovich, “Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy, 1600-

tax-farming leases, eventually turning the lands in question into an extra-legal form of private property.³³ Since the search for second serfdom was also the ultimate question underlying the studies on these estates, changes in the relations of production was another motive predominant.³⁴ Interest in the wealth of provincial notables, however, has not always followed the discussion of incorporation of the empire.³⁵ Nevertheless, lands the Anatolian and Balkan a'yân have held in possession have been studied extensively.³⁶

As a response to the question of how provincial notables acquired wealth in the eighteenth century, the networks the provincial notables established also have been a significant point with regards to their operation.³⁷ Referring to the privatisation of tax-collection methods under malikâne contracts, Salzmann brings forth new terms of accommodation and the form of negotiation the provincial notables played

1800," *The Journal of Economic History* 13, no. 4 (1953). See also Immanuel Wallerstein, Hale Decdeli, and Reşat Kasaba, "The Incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World-Economy," in *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-Inan (Cambridge, NY and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1987).

³³ Sadat, "Rumeli Ayanlari," 348.

³⁴ See, for instance, Yuzo Nagata, *Materials on the Bosnian notables* (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1979); *Some Documents on the Big Farms (Çiftlik) of the Notables in Western Anatolia* (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1976); "The Decline of the Ottoman Empire's Doctrine of State Landownership: The Development of the Çiftlik Type of Landownership," in *Studies on the Social and Economic History of the Ottoman Empire* (Izmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1995); *Tarihte Âyânlar*; "Ayan in Anatolia and the Balkans During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Case Study of the Karaosmanoğlu Family." For an elaboration of different views with regards to formation of çiftlik, Gilles Veinstein, "On the Çiftlik Debate," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991).

³⁵ For a view that trade with the European demand on Ottoman products was not significant and therefore change in relations of production did not take place, see Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

³⁶ Zens, "The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa."; Canay Şahin, "The Rise and Fall of an Ayan Family in Eighteenth-Century Anatolia: The Caniklizades (1737-1808)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Bilkent University, 2003); "The Economic Power of Anatolian Ayans." For the aftermath of the lands possessed by Ali Pasha of Tepelen, see Hamiyet Sezer, "Tepedelenli Ali Paşa'nın Çiftlikleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma," *Belleten* 62, no. 233 (April 1998); "Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Oğullarının Çiftlik ve Gelirlerine İlişkin Yeni Bilgi – Bulgular," *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, no. 18 (2005).

³⁷ Barkey, rightly, criticises the consideration of centralisation-decentralisation as a zero-sum game, the latter implying devolution for the state in the conventional historiography, which leads at best to disinterest in the intermediary processes of negotiation and distribution of rights and privileges. Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 227.

between the former and rural lords and tribesmen.³⁸ Adding the interest of the Ottoman state to this extended fiscal network, the provincial notables have come to be not only possessors of large tracts of land, but also the intermediaries between these lands and the state with their networks reaching down to the village level.³⁹ Looking at the turmoil in the Balkans in the late eighteenth century, provincial notables seem to blur in terms of their official “duties” and their personal interests. In this network of violence, we come to see provincial notables extending from governors to rather minor leaders with their crews with the delicate relations established between the very different parts of the society and the state.⁴⁰

In these networks, either tribal or ethnic allegiances played a part in explaining how provincial notables with their retinues struggled with each other. In the Balkans, the most notable component of the networks which provincial notables employed in their retinues was Albanians. Like the *Celâlis* (the bandits who emerged throughout in Anatolia) of the previous century, the Albanians were regarded as the main cause of the violence during the eighteenth century when they started joining bands of brigands led by the greater provincial notables who dominated the Balkans in the aftermath of Habsburg-Russian-Ottoman War of 1787-1792.⁴¹ As spread of the Albanians out of their original base to the frontier zones was partly due to the settlement policy of the Ottoman government and partly due to armed strife among

³⁸ Ariel C. Salzmänn, "Measures of Empire: Tax Farmers and the Ottoman Ancien Régime, 1695-1807" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1995), 213-4.

³⁹ Ariel Salzmänn, "An Ancien Régime Revisited: Privatization and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *Politics & Society* 21, no. 4 (1993). See also Karen Barkey and Ronan Van Rossem, "Networks of Contention: Villages and Regional Structure in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *American Journal of Sociology* 102, no. 5 (1997).

⁴⁰ Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 49.

the Albanian notables, the result was the emergence of a new elite in the Balkans, sealing the fate of the infamous Albanians pashas in the later decades.⁴²

The pejorative epithet attached to Albanians left aside, it was evident that Christian groups shared a similar type of the Albanian pastoral life.⁴³ Therefore, while it was beyond the Muslim/Albanian armed groups ravaging the Balkan countryside, the pool these groups constituted the backbone of the rising provincial notables. Apart from the ethnic epithet, northern Albanians, i.e., Gegë in their tribal nature, which centred on *bajraks* (roughly equivalent to clans) several of which constituted the *fis*, the largest kinship group, supplemented the networks the provincial notables needed to erect their strongholds.⁴⁴ Likewise, the tribal allegiances in the eastern provinces of the Empire followed a similar trajectory. For instance, in Mosul, tribal populations were enlisted in a camp of a household to fight others.⁴⁵

As much as the provincial notables of Anatolia and the Balkans have suffered from the ill-fated projections of the decline paradigm, the notables of the Arab provinces have yet another nuisance with which to reckon. It was the legacy of the Hourani's "Politics of Notables" with the path paving the perennial adversity between the political notables coming from the Ottoman centres vis-à-vis the non-political local notables of Arab households.⁴⁶ The political elite, in this sense, constituted the imperial agents such as janissary aghas or chief guild leaders

⁴² Antonis Anastasopoulos, "Albanians in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans," in *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History*, ed. Elias Kolovos, et al. (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2007), 39, 46.

⁴³ Tolga U. Esmer, "Economies of Violence, Banditry and Governance in the Ottoman Empire Around 1800," *Past & Present* 224, no. 1 (2014): 179.

⁴⁴ Accordingly the *vllazni* as the smallest unit was roughly equivalent to brotherhood. James N. Tallon, "The Failure of Ottomanism: The Albanian Rebellions of 1909-1912" (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Chicago, 2012), 46.

⁴⁵ Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, 209.

⁴⁶ Meriwether determines notables not only in terms of provincial role but their high social status and wealth. Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 34.

exercising considerable political power whereas the social elite would include local families who had the social power to exercise political influence but chose not to do so.⁴⁷

As an attempt to expand the scope of notables beyond the realm of politics, it might have been useful; however, at the expense of a much grave formulation. In order to offer an alternative to the dichotomies of imperial versus local, Ottoman vs. Arab, and state vs. civil society implicit in Hourani's model, these studies, however, evoke another dichotomy. The political/social elite divide turns into binarism "that differentiates between elite formation and elite incorporation."⁴⁸ While this dichotomy distances itself from the centralist perspective, it nevertheless paves the way for the "implicit" nationalism of the social elite, demonstrating the very elite roots of nationalism.⁴⁹

With all their emphasis on official recognition, landholding, and networks and allegiances, the historiography on notables mostly focused on Arab provinces, the Balkans, and western and central Anatolia.⁵⁰ However, the eastern provinces of the

⁴⁷ As a historiographic tradition, the structure "meshed particularly well with the nationalist assumption of a native Arab élite in at least implicit confrontation with an imposed Turkish élite." Hathaway, "Rewriting Eighteenth-Century Ottoman History," 35. For studies reiterating provincial notables in this duality, see Bruce Masters, "Power and Society in Aleppo in the 18th and 19th Centuries," *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 62, no. 4 (1991); Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 48; Ehud Toledano, "The Emergence of Ottoman-Local Elites (1700-1900): A Framework for Research," in *Middle Eastern Politics and Ideas: A History from Within*, ed. Moshe Ma'oz and Ilan Pappé (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1997), 150. Not necessarily with nationalist motives, Meeker's formulation of "the Ottomanization of Trabzonlus, Trabzonization of the Ottomans" is a recent employment of the imperial-local divide in a core province of the empire. Micheal E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 103-7.

⁴⁸ James L. Gelvin, "The "Politics of Notables" Forty Years After," *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 40, no. 1 (2006): 26.

⁴⁹ Most studies dealing with Kurdish nationalism take this notion granted. See, for instance, Hakan Özoğlu, "'Nationalism' and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33, no. 3 (2001); *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004).

⁵⁰ As a plausible explanation, Faroqhi notes the serious problems of documentations due to the autonomous rule enjoyed by Kurdish beys (princes acknowledging the overlordship of the Ottoman Sultans in Faroqhi's words). Faroqhi, "Coping with the Central State," 378.

empire inhabited mostly by Kurds and Armenians did not attract as much attention.⁵¹

In this context, this dissertation aims to expand the provincial notables upon a region not satisfactorily studied by conceptualising yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders within the context of provincial notables. Such a conceptualisation enhances not only commensurability of provincial notables of the empire vis-à-vis early notables of early modern Europe, but also the commensurability of provincial notables in the core regions, i.e. the Balkans and Anatolia, with other peripheral regions of the empire.⁵² While doing that, it aims to bridge provincial political culture and provincial political economy, two realms of inquiry that remained almost separate until the twentieth century.⁵³ As yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands with their political and economic significance constitute the main stream of this study, it also attempts to shed light on the social life of particularly Tercil the transformation of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands brought about.⁵⁴

⁵¹ This point is also noted by Özok-Gündoğan, whose studies in addition those of Salzmänn's constitute an exception on the matter Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State in the Kurdish Periphery: The Politics of Land and Taxation, 1840-1870" (Ph.D. Dissertation, State University of New York, 2011); "Ruling the Periphery." Salzmänn, "An Ancien Régime Revisited."; *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004). For a criticism of Arab distortion of Ottoman history, see Rifa'at Ali Abou-el-Haj, "The Social Uses of the past: Recent Arab Historiography of Ottoman Rule," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 14, no. 2 (1982).

⁵² By comparability in addition to commensurability Abou-el-Haj criticises the evaluation of the Ottoman state in the seventeenth century as an unchanging institution with the standards of modern-nation state leading to the treatment of the empire as a more subjective standard than its early modern counterparts in Europe. *Formation of the Modern State*, 6-11.

⁵³ Hathaway, "Rewriting Eighteenth-Century Ottoman History," 33.

⁵⁴ With "social life," this study follows Doumani's definition of "the linkages among, economic, political, and cultural factors that determined both the meaning(s) of a particular commodity to the different social groups and its trajectory through space and time." Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 12.

Towards a Broader Context of Provincial Notables

Associating the political power the provincial notables came to enjoy with the decline of the empire and explaining their rise with the consequent decentralisation of the empire does not leave any room for contemplating yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders with the rest of the provincial notables throughout the empire. As a result of this state-centred perspective, it becomes too easy to substitute decentralisation for decline, demonstrating decentralisation as a bad road for the state.⁵⁵ As the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet practices in addition to other means of flexible administration in the other parts of the empire was outright decentralisation in the heyday of the “classical” age, this dissertation seeks to employ a broader definition of provincial notables.⁵⁶ For that matter, reframing the Ottoman Empire like most empires and most modern polities as a polity undergoing alternating cycles of centralisation and decentralisation could be less restrictive in terms of provincial notables.⁵⁷

In parallel with the criticism on the decline paradigm, this perspective also calls for questioning how “classical age” was indeed classical.⁵⁸ That is simply because the centralist tendency in Ottoman historiography accounts for the silencing of the notables of relatively peripheral provinces. Notwithstanding the limits of the Ottoman authority in the frontier areas, how omnipotent was the Ottoman power in

⁵⁵ Hathaway, "Rewriting Eighteenth-Century Ottoman History," 46.

⁵⁶ The presence of border territories “where the sultan’s writ was only fitfully obeyed” despite the height of central power is also noted by Faroqhi. Faroqhi, "Coping with the Central State," 352-3. On provincial administration with a high level of centralisation, see İ. Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

⁵⁷ Jane Hathaway, "Introduction," in *Mutiny and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Jane Hathaway (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 7.

⁵⁸ Conceding the benefits of the abstraction, Piterberg notes that the abstraction of “the classical age” becomes a fetish resulting with the fact that it is rarely asked whether it was classical at all and if so in what ways. Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2003), 147.

the more central provinces of the empire in the early modern era?⁵⁹ Taking this power for granted, the Ottomanist historiography does deal with regions constituting a part of the supposed central state. This is mostly due to the attachment to the thought of the state; a rupture from the latter according to Bourdieu is difficult yet necessary.⁶⁰ Casting a dark shadow with the notion of a modern state, the Ottoman government is considered retrospectively as a central entity. What Bourdieu calls “a radical doubt” in this sense is illustrative:

To have a chance to really think a state which still thinks itself through those who attempt to think it, then, it is imperative to submit to radical questioning all the presuppositions inscribed in the reality to be thought and in the very thought of the analyst.”⁶¹

With the provincial notables of the empire, this dissertation therefore attempts to question whether the Ottoman state in both classical and early modern eras was a state in this sense.

By doing so, this study aims to incorporate the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts in the bundle of provinces with decentralised rule into the allegedly central provinces of the empire. The early modern Ottoman polity that happened to have constituted the Ottoman state ruling the either central or peripheral provinces was an agglomeration of relations maintained with diverse populations led by diverse provincial notables. As long as the imperial order was maintained by the components of legitimacy, control over elites and resources, and maintenance of diversity, the state entity as the agglomeration of relations negotiated and bargained with social

⁵⁹ By the same token, Brummett asks with regards to traditional narrative of Ottoman command economy to what extent the Ottoman state actually controlled trade within its borders. Palmira Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 19.

⁶⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, Loic J. D. Wacquant, and Samar Farage, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," *Sociological Theory* 12, no. 1 (1994): 1.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

groups. As provincial notables constituted one of these groups, state interests were shaped by the different compacts of rule by the realities on the ground.⁶²

In this context, this dissertation argues that the Kurdish *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* holders were commensurable to, if not identical with, the provincial notables of the relatively “core” provinces of the empire between the sixteenth and late eighteenth century. Since the early modern Ottoman polity was in nature an entity with a pool of diverse accommodations for diverse geographies, the terms of commensurability among provincial notables was possible only to a certain extent. That is, the very terms of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* practice were from the very beginning a negotiation, however loose, between the local rulers and the imperial government vis-à-vis the provincial notables of core provinces, who came to dictate their terms of negotiation only after they rose to power in the eighteenth century. The terms of commensurability between core and peripheral provinces might be limited, but is is essential otherwise Ottoman Kurdistan bears the risk of being denoted as a distinctive region. Such an approach would do nothing but reversely reproduce the ‘particular’ characteristics of Ottoman Kurdistan which most studies dealing with the core provinces of the empire underline.⁶³

Detaching the “centralist” baggage attributed to the core provinces and curbing the exemptions which the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* districts were granted, this dissertation argues that there are repeating features common in the provincial notables throughout the empire prior to the late eighteenth century. Despite the outright recognition of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* holders by the Ottoman government in the mid-sixteenth century, the rest of the provincial notables came to

⁶² Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 67-8.

⁶³ Albeit with the difference of the scope, Piterberg’s attempt to bridge Ottoman Egypt with the wider Ottoman context is very illustrative. Gabriel Piterberg, “The Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian Elite in the 18th Century,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 3 (1990).

be recognised as the office of overseers, i.e., a'yânship only in the mid-eighteenth century. Asking whether the term a'yân stood for an official power or a sort of prestige, Tamdoğan argues that there is a difference between the rise of a new elite and their official recognition.⁶⁴ The rise of the a'yân as new elite is beyond the scope of this study and is entertained here in terms of its relation with the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders. The latter and a'yân were entitled with official power by imperial deeds (*berât* and *buyruldu*, respectively). Accordingly, their rise to power had different temporalities and contingencies. However, if one entertains the rise of the new elite beyond the restriction of office-holding, which was quite decisive in terms of notables' securing their power over their rivals, striking similarities between the two cannot be denied.⁶⁵

With the centralisation in the late eighteenth century, however, the Ottoman government gradually began to merge these "provincial" components. And the terms of commensurability increased on the eve of the nineteenth century, at least in the offices of the Sublime Porte. Would an Ottoman statesman's first impression have differed if he had paid visits to Ioannina, Vidin, Manisa, Amasya or Ottoman Kurdistan at the turn of the nineteenth century? Probably not. Albeit with this state-

⁶⁴ Işık Tamdoğan, "'Büyükleri Saymak, Küçükleri Sevmek" 18. Yüzyıl Adana'sında Ayanların İlişki Ağları ve İki Farklı İlişki Yürütme Üslubu," *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no. 1 (2005): 81-2.

⁶⁵ The search for a more inclusive definition for provincial notables is nevertheless a difficult task since a 'one size fits all' definition bears the risk of an ahistorical elaboration of the notables. Even though provincial notables with the definition of a social stratum distinct with their status, power, and wealth become more inclusive, it does not meet possible socio-historical developments and shifts in the three distinctions over time, let alone the nature of relations established with governments. The definition follows the one made by Peter Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Elites* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 1994), 2. and expanded by Antonis Anastasopoulos, "Introduction," in *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire: Halcyon Days in Crete V: A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 10-12 January 2003*, ed. Antonis Anastasopoulos (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2005), xiv, xxi. By the same token, Zens, while noting the difficulty of suggesting a definition to incorporate all provincial notables (a'yâns), suggests wealth, power, and communal pre-eminence as features found in all notables. Zens, "The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa," 44. Due to the term's connotations, this study employs 'notables' instead of 'elites' on the grounds that the latter, despite developments, implicitly accept the premises of 'classical elitist thesis' implying that every society, regardless of its regime, is inevitably ruled by an elite. Anastasopoulos, "The Mixed Elite of a Balkan Town: Karaferiye in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century," 260, n. 6. For the thesis, see Piterberg, "The Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian," 276.

oriented rhetorical question, the changing vision of the Ottoman statesmen would be countervailed by the increasing resemblances of provincial notables. As the following chapters demonstrates, the rule of the Zirki beys in eastern Diyarbekir in the early nineteenth century did not differ much from the violence, banditry and state-sanctioned plunder of Kara Feyzi, a bandit in late eighteenth century Bulgaria and Serbia.⁶⁶ As the diversity of the side-activities of provincial notables was similar on both ends of the empire, so was the dependence of the Ottoman government on them, especially in the warfare against the Russians.⁶⁷

In addition to power as a concept delegated by the imperial authorities, power stemming from networking and patronage skills brings the provincial notables of the empire closer. "No dynasty of whatever origin could hope to establish itself locally," states Faroqhi "without gaining adherents among provincials possessing a degree of power, as well as financial resources and social capital."⁶⁸ By the same token, patronage comprised a family's horizontal relations with other, not necessarily notable, families as well as vertical relations with other households.⁶⁹ Either to establish local consensus in concert or to protect their power base against the intra-elite rivalry, patron-client networks were essential for the rooting of a provincial

⁶⁶ His latter reinvention "as an officially sanctioned borderland skirmisher, slave merchant and even arms manufacturer, operating against one ethnic group in particular, hardly fits the role of an *a'yân* as outlined in secondary literature." Esmer, "Economies of Violence," 196.

⁶⁷ As it was an obligation, realisation of which was quite dubious, for the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* holders to recruit and provide troops for the imperial campaigns from the beginning, the *a'yân* who was entitled with the right to recruit and possibly lead troops into battle gave them greater legitimacy, close to *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* holders. Robert Zens, "Provincial Powers: The Rise of Ottoman Local Notables (*Ayan*)," *History Studies* 3, no. 3 (2011): 443.

⁶⁸ Faroqhi, "Coping with the Central State," 373.

⁶⁹ Vertical and horizontal relations were not free of brokerage relations. According to Köksal, vertical brokerage refers to local intermediaries connecting the state and local groups crossing the boundary in-between as horizontal one denotes local intermediaries mediating within the local level. Needless to say, vertical brokerage does not have to exclusively involve the state on the other hand. Yonca Köksal, "Local Intermediaries and Ottoman State Centralization: A Comparison of the Tanzimat Reforms in the Provinces of Ankara and Edirne (1839-1878)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2002), 30.

dynasty's power in a locality.⁷⁰ In this case, the rivalry the Zirki beys experiences with the neighbouring tribal aghas had something in common with the struggle between the Çapanoğlus and the Caniklizâdes, the major a'yân dynasties of northern Anatolia.⁷¹ Even though it is beyond the scope of the dissertation, it is very telling that the dynasties of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire maintained their political and economic presences, albeit with differing guises and configurations.⁷²

The dynasticisation of provincial notables by means of employment of family names (-zâdes, literally sons) was a further acknowledgment by the Ottoman government with regards to addressing the provincial notables throughout the empire.⁷³ Becoming dynastic notables, to borrow from Bragg, was thus a sine qua non for any notable not only to be recognised by the locals, but also to be addressed by the imperial government.⁷⁴ Even notables of humble origins who succeeded at becoming respectable notables intended to maintain their leadership by establishing family control.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ By patron-client networks, this study does not maintain the structuralist-funcionalist argument – implicit in Hourani's "Politics of Notables" – that certain pre- or non-bureaucratically-ordered societies operate as "patronage systems." Accordingly patronage is distinct from the system per se. Gelvin, "The "Politics of Notables"," 24.

⁷¹ By the same token, the Caniklizâdes provided the dynasty of Köse Paşa of Divriği with patronage and protection. Şahin, "The Rise and Fall of an Ayan," 33-4.

⁷² Meeker's seminal study sheds light on the continuity of the political spheres of provincial notables in the Republican period. Despite the limitation to bureaucratic elites in Istanbul, Bouquet accordingly notes that the Kemalists, without official acknowledgement, established a bureaucratic system based on the co-optation of existing elites who maintained their social privileges. In this case, the descendants of Receb Bey or the Budak family in the Republican period maintained their presence in administrative and political areas despite the forced settlement in the late 1920s. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*; Olivier Bouquet, "Old Elites in a New Republic: The Reconversion of Ottoman Bureaucratic Families in Turkey (1909–1939)," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 31, no. 3 (2011); Rıfki Arslan, *Diyarbakır'da Toprakta Mülkiyet Rejimleri ve Toplumsal Değişme* (Ankara: Diyarbakır Tanıtma, Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Vakfı, 1992), 65.

⁷³ Evidently such uses were not restricted to the official language but also served to identify themselves as members of the notability as well as insinuating the claim among the society. Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 35.

⁷⁴ John K. Bragg, *Ottoman Notables and Participatory Politics: Tanzimat Reform in Tokat, 1839-1876* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).

⁷⁵ Another aspect of dynasticisation, according to Yaycıoğlu, was the transmission of power, status and property to the next generations. Yaycıoğlu, "The Provincial Challenge," 220-3.

As this dissertation demonstrates, the imperial address of the Zirki beys, in the form of Telli Beyzâde, relegates the differences between the provincial notables of the central provinces and those in Ottoman Kurdistan, at least in the bureaucratic jargon. Yet the acquisition of titles, as it consolidates the prestige of dynastic notables, was not a state-owned monopoly.⁷⁶ In addition to politically-laden titles, provincial notables reinforced their prestige by titles such as *ağa*, *seyyid*, and *hacı*.⁷⁷ In this context, non-Muslim provincial notables had their own respective titles. While wealthy Armenians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were known as *hocas* or *çelebis*, Christians in the Balkans were renowned as *çorbacıs* and *kocabaşıs*.⁷⁸

Without doubt, what would amaze the fictive Ottoman statesman most would be the large amounts of land the provincial notables came to possess under different terms. Considering the largely agrarian economy of the Ottoman realm, the control of land and revenue it generated as a basic source of income and power was important for the provincial notables. Accordingly most local and regional notables tended to ensure their presence by acquiring control of small and land agricultural

⁷⁶ Another symbolic title, head of imperial gatekeepers (*serbevâban-ı 'âli* or *dergâh-ı 'âli kapucubaşı*) gradually was granted to notables of such origin. Operating within the age-old military-subject (*askerî-re'aya*) stratification of Ottoman society, İnalcık argues that such grants to aghas of re'aya origin was a direct delegation of the sultan's authority, needless to say a fatal blow to the dissolution of the Ottoman society in İnalcık's point of view. İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization," 40.

⁷⁷ Anastasopoulos, "Introduction," xxii. While the title agha denotes elder brother and elder male relatives, it was also used for the highest offices of the standing army and non-secretarial positions of the imperial household in Ottoman times becoming a title for illiterate lower-ranking officers only in the early nineteenth century. As the title *seyyid* denoted the descent from the prophet, *seyyidization*, i.e., to resort to false claims of descent from the prophet, was not uncommon for many families in the Empire. Micheal E. Meeker, "The Great Family Aghas of Turkey," in *Social Practice and Political Culture in the Turkish Republic*, ed. Micheal E. Meeker (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2004), 131-2; Hülya Canbakal, *Society and Politics in an Ottoman Town: 'Ayntab in the 17th Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 77-83.

⁷⁸ Vartan Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1863* (Istanbul: n. p., 1988), 20. Noting the absence of Christian notables in widespread discussions of provincial notables, Esmer rightfully notes that *çorbacı* and *kocabaşı* were important not only in terms of Ottoman provincial life but also of their interaction with Muslim notables. However, the Christians in the Asian provinces of the Empire yet beg an elaborate discussion. On *çorbacıs*, see Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 8; Milen V. Petrov, "Tanzimat for the Countryside: Midhat Pasa and the Vilayet of Danube, 1864-1868" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 2006), 217-28. For a discussion of non-Muslim leaders in Tokat in the Tanzimat period, see Bragg, *Ottoman Notables*, 178-90.

units both by means of legal and extra-legal measures.⁷⁹ Regardless of the question of “çiftlikisation,” the transformation from subsistence agriculture to crop production instigated by the demand of European markets, there were similar large tracts of land possessed by provincial notables at the turn of the century.⁸⁰ For provincial notables in Ottoman Maghreb, the Balkan borderlands along the Adriatic and Danube, Egypt, the provinces of Baghdad and Ottoman Kurdistan, the acquisition and possession of çiftliks was the first step in becoming a powerful notable.⁸¹

What is meant by “çiftlikisation,” however, is not confined to çiftliks in the narrow sense. While it was in a sense a continuation of *malikânization*, a term coined by Salzmänn meaning the transformation of fiefs to tax-farm units for the life-long possession of its owners, it was beyond çiftliks but rather included revenue-generating lands of various kinds. While *vakıfs* (public or pious endowments) were an item in this process by means of which provincial notables partly promoted their popularity among the populace and partly evaded the hazard of confiscation, more significant item was the lands acquired thanks to life-long tax farm contracts (*malikâne-mukatâ‘a*), born as a result of the change in tax collection practices of the empire in the early eighteenth century.⁸² The vested interests provincial notables came to enjoy thanks to these tax-farm contracts had by the turn of the century taken the shape of an enterprise. As lands constituted the backbone, the enterprise was,

⁷⁹ Yaycıoğlu, "The Provincial Challenge," 247; Anastasopoulos, "Introduction," xxi.

⁸⁰ For a brief discussion on the emergence of *çiftliks* in the incorporation paradigm, see Wallerstein, Decdeli, and Kasaba, "The Incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World-Economy."

⁸¹ For the significance of çiftliks in the context of the rise of the notables, see Zens, "Provincial Powers:," 438-42.

⁸² Salzmänn, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*, 96. On malikânes or *malikânization*, see Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikane Sistemi," in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Ekonomi* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2000); Salzmänn, "An Ancien Régime Revisited."; Erol Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikâne Uygulaması* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2003). On waqfs, see Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Türkiye’de Vakıf Müessesesi: Bir Sosyal Tarih İncelemesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2003); Tevfik Güran, *Ekonomik ve Malî Yönleriyle Vakıflar: Süleymaniye ve Şehzade Süleyman Paşa Vakıfları* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2006).

however, torn between private business and public administration.⁸³ With regards to the ends they intermediated, provincial notables as entrepreneurs had to give in occasionally being administrators involved with overseeing the public good, prosperity, and security of the community.⁸⁴

Despite the differences kept in the registry, if any, the proprietary rights associated with all these lands provided the notables with another opportunity for their enterprises. By entertaining the notion of çiftlikisation, therefore, this dissertation argues that most of the lands possessed by the notables of the empire were identical in terms of landholding and production patterns. Furthermore, proprietary rights can be said to have converged towards private property rights with discretions of sale and inheritance rights. Such land revenues enabled provincial notables to develop their tax farm units in the way they best saw fit and to invest surplus funds into other ventures.⁸⁵ That is, as much as the lands were inheritable from father to son with the discretion of retaining the revenues for the dynasty, there was little difference between the çiftliks of the Balkans and Anatolia and the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands of Kurdistan.⁸⁶

On the eve of the nineteenth century, the political and economic power the notables in the periphery wielded made them untrustworthy allies the Ottoman government gradually sought to replace. Once the Ottoman government attempted to change the rules of the game with increasing intervention in the provinces, the

⁸³ Yaycıoğlu, "The Provincial Challenge," 250.

⁸⁴ The 'public' character of provincial notables, however, should be taken with a grain of salt. Because of the dark shadow cast by the past historiography, studies such as Yaycıoğlu's tend to attribute normative values to notables. Evidently, such activities of notables were means of maintaining and enhancing their status among their respective locality. Ibid., 133. Cf. the 'formal' duties – administration, tax-collection, and warfare – in Akdağ, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Âyanlık," 58-61.

⁸⁵ Whether this process is proto-capitalism as stated by Zens however is debatable. Zens, "The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa," 35.

⁸⁶ Land-based wealth, as it could shift between direct ownership or by contractual ownership, was not the only financial resource upon which provincial notables erected their power base upon. Establishing credit networks to peasants, involvement in commercial activities are therefore complementary economic activities of provincial notables.

question of how to eliminate these notables represents a further bridge for understanding the differences between notables of different provinces. In other words, how the provincial notables came to end in the early nineteenth century throughout the empire calls for a broader perspective in which the Kurdish emirs might have something more in common with the Albanian pashas or Turkish notables. By emphasising the realm of negotiation in which the Ottoman polity dealt with several provincial entities in the early modern period and thus demonstrating that the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts in the Ottoman East were no less central in the supposedly core provinces, this dissertation argues that the commensurability between the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders and a'yân became almost identical due to both the economic-cum-political power they acquired and the increasing suspicion of the Ottoman government.

Notwithstanding the identical markers, there were minor differences between the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders and the a'yân. First was the locality: As the former were autochthonous in their regions, it is evident that most provincial notables established their power bases in specific geographies, not necessarily in their hometowns. In other words, the mobility of the former was severely restricted to the environs of their hometown. The second difference was the size and network extent of dynastic notables. This dissertation treats yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders as local notables since the former were mostly rooted in towns or districts compared to regional notables, who were among the limited number of local notables holding higher state appointments and imperial ranks.”⁸⁷ In this context, this

⁸⁷ The present formulation, albeit in concert with that of Meeker, follows a more geographical trajectory, rather than dictation by imperial posts or ranks. Holders of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands, similar to local notables as defined by Meeker, “had the ability to tax commerce, raise armies, requisition supplies, impose labor, apprehend fugitives, and exact punishment.” While notables of this kind could encounter the imperial attempt to prevent them from carrying out these activities, yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet holders, with their extended autonomy, were at a relative ease to deploy the

dissertation employs the Zirki beys as local notables with their yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands in addition to other lands possessed by legal or extra-legal means in the hinterland of Diyarbekir.⁸⁸

By the same token, the leading families of the Şeyhzâde, Müftizâde, Kadızâde, Çınarzâde, and Gevranlı-zâde, had two-story mansions in the citadel of Diyarbekir in the eighteenth century forming a pool of candidates for government offices, are treated as regional notables.⁸⁹ This dissertation is therefore an attempt to follow the course of the struggle waged by the Ottoman government with its different departments and its imperial elites, regional notables, and local notables for yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands, which underwent several claims, competitions, and changes due to that struggle.⁹⁰

sovereign power of a family. Regional notables, on the other hand, were incorporated to the imperial establishment from higher echelons by formal or informal means and however retained their provincial identities while controlling a considerable number of provincial networks and revenue-generating units. Provincial notables such as Cabbaroğlu, Ali Pasha of Tepelen, Karaosmanoğlu, and Mehmed Ali Pasha falls in this category. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, xx, 215; Yayınoğlu, "The Provincial Challenge," 195-6.

⁸⁸ Otherwise, it is evident that Zirki beys conformed to regional elites as defined by Meeker with their rootedness and immobility due to their leadership in district networks. Furthermore regional elites "had built a large mansion, founded a family line, assembled an armed following, and was able to mobilize" a coalition. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, 220.

⁸⁹ Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*, 152-3. While the Gevranlı-zâdes and Şeyhzâdes maintained their power as regional notables or a'yân in the conventional sense in the nineteenth century, the rest of the families seem to have lost their status. In addition to the two families, the Hacı Seyfizâdes were among the regional notables in the city. Mustafa Korkmaz, "Şer'iye Sicillerine Göre 1824-1834 Yıllarında Diyarbakır'da Sosyal İktisatı ve Kültürel Hayat" (M. A. Thesis, Hacettepe University, 1988), 64.

⁹⁰ Despite the employment of the term "imperial elites," this dissertation entertains the notion with hesitation for two reasons. Due to its (mis)use in the studies of Arab notables of the empire, it connotes an exclusive sphere where politics is confined to these imperial notables as mentioned above. In the case of Ottoman Kurdistan, it is evident that this particularity leads to hazardous nationalist narrative whereby Turkish governors rule Kurdish (and Armenian) subjects. As Turkish and Kurdish nationalisms started emerging in the Hamidian era, the very prospects of understanding the nationalist tension in this bifurcated and clear-cut way is ambiguous, if not in vain. Secondly and in relation to the first, the term connotes a clear distinction between state and society whereby imperial elites are normatively agents of a clear-functioning, well-defined, rational state. True, governors were appointed by the Ottoman government with particularly defined jobs, but they were not completely servants of the sultan, as claimed by Bouquet. In the particular case of Of, a district in modern Trabzon, Meeker defines imperial elites who had various households with numerous dependants raised and trained in official conventions and procedures; the agents of formal state system, i.e. officials and officers that were not from the province they would administer, associations with higher state officials by kinship, friendship, and alliance and a certain number of paid regular or irregular soldiers in his capital in addition to the discretion to recruit larger number of regular or irregular soldiers in the province. As both imperial and regional elites were rooted and immobile,

Chapter Outlines

Constructed upon provincial notables in this context, the following chapters are organised to demonstrate the changes the nineteenth century Ottoman policies brought to the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in the districts of Tercil, Atak, and Hani and on the fate of the Zirki beys as local notables of the said districts. Chapter 1 examines the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* districts in a historical trajectory from its emergence in the mid-sixteenth century to its abolition in the early nineteenth century. As the chapter elaborates upon the administrative and economic privileges of the practice, it follows the cycles of centralisation and decentralisation rather than a more static narrative, a major setback in the historiography. The chapter, accordingly, focuses on whether *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands were exclusive to Kurdistan or were a part of the Ottoman imperial polity employed in the borderlands. Demonstrating the expansion of the practice into the greater part of eastern provinces, it argues that the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands were not a Kurdish peculiarity, but rather a part of the arrangements for flexible administration devised by the early modern Ottoman state.

Familiarising reader with the geographic, social and economic features of the province of Diyarbekir, Chapter 2 introduces the Zirki dynasty as the provincial notables of Tercil, Hani, and Atak following their incorporation to the Ottoman administration. In this context, the chapter elucidates the power balance between the dynasty and the imperial government from a broader historical perspective. The

Meeker's statement that the latter would have been reduced to inconsequence once removed from the context of the social networks and commercial interests of their 'provinces' seems to attribute a normative value to state system. As this normative system in Bouquet's account is entirely exclusive to elites to whom he attributes the *esprit ottoman des institutions*. It is that very spirit, this dissertation attempts to blur with prospects of presenting a more fluid identities between state and societal actors. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, 216-20; Olivier Bouquet, "All the Sultan's Pashas: Ottoman Civil Officials and the Imperial State," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 14, no. 1-2 (Fall 2008).

second half of the chapter, accordingly, deals with the disruption in the balance in the early nineteenth century. Concurrently with the rise of provincial notables in other parts of the empire, the increasing measures the Ottoman government took with regards to the centralisation of administration meant a bitter hostility among the Zirki beys. The chapter deals with the culture of rebellion with networks of violence among the Kurdish beys in the region not necessarily from the prism of resistance against the centralising state, which was, however, decisive in sealing the fate of the Zirki beys.

In this setting, Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, which constitute the core argument of this dissertation, elaborate the transformation of rice lands (*madrabs*) in quasi-feudal *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands into the vast commercial estates with full-fledged private property rights in different and complicated phases. As the first phase of this transformation, Chapter 3 follows Chapter 2, however with a focus shift. This chapter concentrates on fiscal centralisation with its implementation on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in the district of Hazro. Cut in two by the reform period of Tanzimat, the chapter in the first part attempts to demonstrate the fiscal move of the Ottoman government on the particular case of rice lands in Hazro and Mihrani. As the abolition of fiscal privileges associated with the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands was decisive, the repertoire the finance departments of the government devised was not able to establish direct control over the revenues of the land, an overarching aim of the reformers. Albeit with the brief period of direct administration of rice lands, in the absence of the Zirki beys, the rice lands in question came to be possessed by the regional notables of Diyarbekir under tax-farm contracts. By analysing the interwoven administrations of politics and finance, the chapter argues that the elimination of the Zirki beys and abolition of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands

brought about in Hazro an introduction of the central administration no matter how positions of politics and finance continued to be filled by regional notables in Diyarbekir or local notables in Hazro.

While the focus is still on the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands, Chapter 4 elucidates the other end trying to conceptualise the counter-claims made by the Zirki beys on the lands in question. This chapter, with the alternative perceptions the dynasty developed of possession rights on the lands, demonstrates a non-state oriented approach in the context of the convergence of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet possession and private property. For that matter, the chapter argues that the Zirki dynasty, despite their exile, maintained their politics by means of the Sublime Porte. The first part of the chapter details the politics of petitioning with which the Zirki beys were involved in the exile. Focusing on the politicisation of petitions penned by men and often women from the dynasty with requests regarding their pardon and restoration of their property, it demonstrates the contrasting views of property rights on the long-abolished yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands. As the Sublime Porte restored the lands to state-owned status (i.e. *mîrî*), it was increasingly challenged by the Zirki dynasty in favour of private property. The imperial pardon some members of the dynasty succeeded in receiving not only consolidated their alternating and contrasting perceptions of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands, but provided them with a stronger hand to rally for the restoration of the property.

The rally would come into realization with the enforcement of the Land Code of 1858, the subject matter of Chapter 5. Taking the consequences of the Land Code into consideration within the context of rupture and continuity, the chapter first of all summarizes the literature on the Code, aiming to highlight the private property as a contested domain between the Ottoman government and the landholders in an

imperial context. Accordingly, it evaluates the consequences of the Code in terms of Ottoman Kurdistan and contextualises the latter developments with those taking place in the greater Middle East, however, without reifying the ideological baggage of the Eurocentric view of oriental despotism.

In the second half of the chapter, the state's attempt to sell the lands in its possession (i.e. *mîrî*) is elaborated by adding claimant members of the broader Ottoman society to the contested domain. With the auction of the state property in Hazro and Mihrani, the chapter discusses the auction process as a procedure with complication and controversy in the Ottoman bureaucracy and participation of not only the Zirki beys, but also imperial notables in the capital and local notables in the district. Even though the fate of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in Hazro and Mihrani was sealed with their official acknowledgment as full-fledged private property, the associated rights were constantly changed with contrasting claims of collective property. No matter how restricted in scope, this chapter supports the argument, but not its ideological biases, that the Code led to formation of vast estates in the Middle East of which Ottoman Kurdistan was a part.

As the final phase of the transformation, Chapter 6 dwells on the establishment of control over the large estates in Hazro. Demonstrating the local opposition due to the appropriation of vast lands by the Zirki dynasty, the chapter argues that the post-Land Code period with its commodification of land increased the competition over land. Backed by the economic power the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands yielded, the Zirki beys, this chapter explains, related this power to the political one. As they gradually became influential in the local politics of Hazro, their incentives to commercialisation of agriculture increased. The chapter follows the commercialisation by the increasing interest in water sources, i.e., the rice lands in

Hazro and Mihrani. In the post-Land Code period, this chapter argues that not only the lands but also the water resources were treated in a similar way albeit with fluctuations and pervasive struggles. As the Zirki beys' purchase attempt of the rice lands was ruled out in the 1860s, the chapter concludes the changing notions of water possession in the Ottoman bureaucracy with a case concluded in the late 1900s.

Chapter 7 to a certain extent deals with the consequences of the developments in the previous chapters. Constructing upon the transformation of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands into vast amounts of private property and the political power therein, this chapter concentrates on the rising tension between Kurds and Armenians in the aftermath of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War and the deployment of the tribal Light Cavalry Regiments. Correspondingly, this chapter argues that what came to be termed as "the Armenian Question" was an agrarian tension between the emergence of large tracts of land and its impact on the landless peasants. Saving the question from its "diplomatic" nature, the chapter first of all underlines the basic tenets of the Armenian reforms movement in the imperial capital. Following the trajectory of struggle between the Zirki dynasty and the local Armenian notables in the greater Hazro area, the chapter attempts to highlight the increasing hostility between the Kurds and the Armenians at the interstices of political intrigues between the Kurdish aghas and the Armenian notables and peasants. By utilising sporadic cases in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, this chapter finally underlines the nationalization and ethnicisation of the question as a result of the political vacuum and the ideological shift in the Ottoman state mechanism after 1878.

Sources and Methodology

This dissertation relies largely on material collected from the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministry in Istanbul. Considering the scope of the dissertation, most of the materials come from several collections gathered under the common name of *Sadaret* (Grand Vizierate in the Sublime Porte). As a particular institution of the Tanzimat period, the collection of *Meclis-i Vâlâ* (the Supreme Council) provides further insightful details with regards to social, political and economic changes taking place in Hazro, Diyarbekir. Additionally, *Hatt-ı Hümayûn* (Sultan's handwritten decrees) covers the pre-Tanzimat period and the Council of State supplements the narrative in the aftermath of the abolition of the Supreme Council. Among these collections, petitions penned mostly but not entirely by members of the Zirki dynasty were especially valuable for understanding the perspective of the different strata of the society in Hazro and its environs. The rest of the archival material produced mainly in the expanding bureaucracy of the Ottoman government presents a different perspective. Rather than a normative tradition, thanks to several correspondences between the departments of the State, the materials enable us to observe a fragmented state with considerations and hesitations in the decision-making process, disputes and controversies among the departments, and the gap between the central verdict and the local enforcement.

In addition to the archival material, this dissertation also employs accounts of contemporary travellers who included mostly British/American missionaries and a few French travellers. Supplementing the dissertation with these narrative accounts without their orientalist biases, these narratives offer details beyond the scope of the archival material. Other supplementary materials this dissertation employs are two

interviews the author conducted in early June 2014. One interview was conducted with Şakir Budak, a descendant of the Zirki beys in Hazro and the other was made with Kadri Yaka, a descendant of the Zirki beys in Hani. These interviews were unstructured in nature resulting mostly in a blurring of facts with mythical, often unsounded, discourses. However, the open-ended questions presented valuable insight with regards to the family.

Nevertheless, there are a few points this dissertation was not able to explain. First and foremost, even though the dissertation revolves around the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands in Hazro and Mihrani, information with regards to their size, production, and location are at best partial. While this partiality at part is due to the scarce knowledge produced by the Ottoman government on the region in the first half of the nineteenth century, it might be at part due to the author's inability to locate further quantitative data on the lands in question. Interested in revenue sources in their bundles (i.e., several different revenue units consolidated in larger units such as *voyvodalık*, *malikâne*), the Ottoman bureaucrats relied on local knowledge, which we severely lack, and were therefore content with identifying a property in question with mere numbers (i.e., 29 properties). While this dissertation attempts to circumvent this problem in the particular case of madrabs by giving at least the seed capacity, the rest of details on the bundle of yurtluk-ocaklık property remains a further research to be undertaken in the future.

By the same token, the relations of production, a very preliminary motivation of the dissertation, in the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands remain beyond the scope of the study. Though it is hinted by the recent literature that the common relations of production in such lands was sharecropping, historical evidence in the environs of Hazro still begs a satisfactory answer. The dissertation hints at the

employment of wage-labour in the particular case of rice cultivation; however, its generalisation to the rest of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands is impossible. Accordingly, the commercialisation of agriculture in the environs of Hazro after the Land Code of 1858 is only hinted at, thanks to the entrepreneurial attempts of the Zirki family. As the commercialisation of agriculture was out of the question, understanding of its extent as well as its impact on the relations of production and on the production for markets need to be furthered.

Except for scant information regarding the involvement of Armenians in irrigation works on behalf of rice cultivators, details of the relations of production between Armenian peasants and Kurdish landlords remains unknown. As the town of Hazro and its attendant villages were the homeland of many Armenians, their relative silence for the first half of the nineteenth century is perplexing. After the Reform Edict of 1856, it is true that a few Armenian notables from Hazro emerge in Ottoman archival documents, the absence of Armenian peasants notwithstanding. But increasing ethnic tensions between Kurds and Armenians in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was also rather limited in Hazro and Mihrani, a surprising fact considering that the hostility between Kurdish aghas and Armenian peasants in the adjacent district of Silvan were violently evident in the course of Hamidian massacres of 1894-96. As with the silence of Armenians in the first half of the century, the absence of atrocities against Armenians in the last quarter of the century remains a subject for further research; the relative tranquillity of Hazro compared to neighbouring districts, however, will constitute another facet of this research.

A closely related question pertains to the tribal nature (*aşiret*) of the Zirki beys. Contrary to most tribes in the region, the Zirki beys, albeit with their ability to gather armed followers, seem to have lacked a tribal base in the early nineteenth century.

That being said, the Zirki beys in this period resemble a‘yâns rather than Kurdish tribes with their limited tribal base under their command. The scarce discourse in the archival and traveller accounts with regards to the Zirki/Zirkan tribe is equally puzzling with the increasing tribalization in several and seemingly unconnected parts of Ottoman Kurdistan and Ottoman Armenia starting in the late nineteenth century. Whether these members of the tribe constituted the agrarian labour under particular conditions vis-à-vis their beys is a question necessitating a delicate and exhaustive treatment of the Zirki tribe in their transformation from almost non-existence to a widely recognised unit employed in the Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments. Despite these setbacks, this dissertation attempts to delineate the political and economic aspects affiliated with the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts/lands. In this sense, this dissertation aims to bring Ottoman Kurdistan into the discussion of Ottoman studies proper by contributing not only to the literature on the Kurdish notables of the nineteenth century, but also to the discussions of the making of private property in the Ottoman context.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE YURTLUK-OCAKLIK AND HÜKÛMET SYSTEM

In the heyday of the final Ottoman-Safavid conflict in the mid-seventeenth century, an Ottoman statesman drafted an imperial order to be presented to the sultan of the empire concerning the prospective services of the Kurdish beys:

You from grandfather to father for generations have been people of pure character and members of the Sunni sect falling in at the fore of my victorious armies in all the battles against the Iranian “redheads” with many thousand and armed and capable and famous Kurdish soldiers whose business is victory, have fought with body and soul on behalf of the true religion and in order to carry out zealous efforts for the sake of the four favorite Caliphs and have given rise to many admirable victories. However, while you are thereby deserving of favorable treatment and requiring protection, it has become truly impressed on my imperial knowledge that through the neglect and negligence of the advisors of the Sultanate, those ministers assigned to Diyarbekir as well as other provincial governors have, some of them through greed for seizure and procurement and other through [fear of] dismissal and appointment or for other reasons, extended the hand of aggression over you and opened the doors of oppression and tyranny thereby reducing your strength and power and your endurance and capacity to a state of complete feebleness and decline. Now, since concerning myself with and taking care of your affairs and reviving and restoring you is a personal duty incumbent on my imperial self, I have decreed first of all in accordance with the treaty agreements granted to each of you by my great forebears you should inherit the jurisdiction of your governorships (*hükûmet*) generation after generation as is right, and each be confirmed and maintained in your posts, and whenever one of you should, by the decrees of God the exalted, die the provincial governors shall not interfere in dismissal or assignment, rather it is my order that candidates should come in person to the Threshold of Felicity with sworn statements (*temessükât*) establishing their relationships to the deceased, whether son or brother, and prostrate themselves at the foot of the Imperial Stirrup so that the vacant governorship may be assigned at my court, whereupon after being distinguished by my noble favor the chosen successors should proceed to their assigned posts and render service. Also, a strong injunction has been sent to the governor-general of Diyarbekir instructing him that henceforth he shall refrain from interfering your reassignment and replacement and free you from the hand of oppression and transgression of moneylenders. He (the governor-general of Diyarbekir) should exercise constant care and provide protection so that you in turn being henceforth saved from the moneylenders and other oppressors may day by day gain in strength and power and as in the time of my noble forefathers your tribes and your

clans may once again put to use the sharpest swords, the swiftest and most active Arabian horses, and the most valiant and blood-shedding Kurdish warriors accomplishing even greater services than in the past and bringing about many conspicuous victories on behalf of the imperial throne.⁹¹

The system outlined depicted by Aziz Efendi in the mid-seventeenth century was the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet system.⁹² Particularly the system was a provincial administration introduced by the Ottoman system in the eastern parts of the empire. Almost a century after its establishment, the system, however, could no longer be regarded merely as a privileged unit of provincial administration. Rather it was a system espousing a different regime of property relations as well as enabling local rulers a certain extent of autonomy in their affairs as a result of the negotiation between the Ottoman government and the local notables in the frontier zones.

In an attempt to transcend the nationalist fervour associated with the question of autonomy, the emergence and development of the yurtluk-ocaklık system and the political autonomy it entailed will be elucidated in a way to underline the shifting variations of political power at the hands of yurtluk-ocaklık holders vis-à-vis the central government. To do this, the political and social developments which profoundly affected the borderlands and their people will be elaborated while placing the emergence of the yurtluk-ocaklık system in this context of borderland politics.⁹³

That is because the power struggles in the borderland and the relations between the

⁹¹ Aziz Efendi, *Kanûn-nâme-i Sultânî Li 'Aziz Efendi*, ed. Şinasi Tekin and Gönül Alpay Tekin, Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures, vol. 9 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Publisher, 1985), 16-7. The *kanûn-nâme* is dated to have been written in 1632-1633.

⁹² For practical reasons, however, the term yurtluk-ocaklık in this chapter will encompass the hükûmet system unless noted otherwise as the former was more widely employed in the Ottoman bureaucracy in the nineteenth century as a general category of a type of landownership. Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 162; Fatih Gencer, "Merkezileşme Politikaları Sürecinde Yurtluk-Ocaklık Sisteminin Değişmesi," *AÜ DTCF Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 30, no. 49 (2011): 78.

⁹³ Employment of borderlands instead of frontier or boundary is on purpose as the former was a classic frontier zone where the competing imperial powers which failed to extend their authority on a permanent basis engaged in a continuous process of conciliation and coercion with local elites leading therefore to political autonomy. Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 8. On the distinction, see Linda T. Darling, "The Mediterranean as a Borderland," *Review of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (Summer 2012).

two empires, i.e., Ottoman and Safavid, evidently shaped and re-shaped not only the autonomy the system entailed, but also the grant of the units. The economic aspect of the yurtluk-ocaklık system, which is an understudied subject obscured by the shadow of the autonomy discussions, will be brought forward in order to present a better understanding of the connection underlying the relations between the imperial centre and the local rulers in the borderlands. The financial gains offered to the holders of yurtluk-ocaklık property evidently served to consolidate the loyalty of the local rulers on the fringes of the empire.

Secondly, the chapter will deal with the yurtluk-ocaklık system as a peripheral strategy in the borderlands of the empire. Considering the fact that the system is regarded in the literature as the key to the Kurdish autonomy and therefore regarded as a Kurdish specificity, the chapter will shed light on similar practices in the northeastern borderlands of the empire, i.e., modern Georgia. Expanding the features of the yurtluk-ocaklık system to flexible and diverse imperial policies par excellence, the chapter will compare the system with other administrative systems and practices in the western borderlands of the empire in an attempt to contextualise the yurtluk-ocaklık system as a part of a more comprehensive peripheral strategy the Ottoman Empire developed. Merging the practices the Ottomans employed in Kurdistan, Georgia, and the Danubian principalities into an imperial policy, the chapter contextualises the function and tenets of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet system in a broader imperial context by which empires, under flexible and diverse forms of political and financial arrangements, negotiated with peripheries to maintain the control over elites and resources. By doing so, it calls for a questioning of the extent of early modern polity vis-à-vis the modern nation-state with “central” attributions

attached and attempting to offer a commensurable Ottoman political realm with early modern Europe.⁹⁴

Having therefore shown the power balance between the two empires and the one between the Ottoman government and the local rulers decorated with yurtluk-ocaklık administrative units from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, the chapter then discusses the centralisation drive of the Sublime Porte in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The drive, which adopted a more centralised approach rather than the imperial diversity, found the yurtluk-ocaklık system simply not maintainable. Along with the period soon to be known as Tanzimat, the system that had served the Ottoman interests in its borderlands for almost three centuries came to be questioned in the Sublime Porte. The question, which ended with the dissolution of the system, however, proved to be difficult for the Ottoman state after the centuries of privileges that had been enjoyed by the local rules in the yurtluk-ocaklık regions. Partly due to the resistance and partly to the pace of the reforms, the full dismantling of the system was therefore gradual, similar to the reforms implemented throughout the nineteenth century. Particularly, the autonomy enjoyed by the yurtluk-ocaklık holders in addition to the economic gains that had accumulated throughout the centuries made the central government careful to carry out the abolition process smoothly. Even though the Sublime Porte confiscated the lands with yurtluk-ocaklık status and reverted to the state treasury, the peripheral servants of the empire were spared in other forms other than property.

⁹⁴ For a recent attempt at an explanation of the incorporation of the empire into early modern Europe, see Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Historicising Yurtluk-Ocaklık and Hükûmet System in the Early Modern Era

Historical knowledge of how the original deal between the Ottoman state and the yurtluk-ocaklık holders in the borderlands developed in reality and how it changed over time remains limited.⁹⁵ Rather, the autonomy espoused by the yurtluk-ocaklık is excessively studied with differing political imaginations.⁹⁶ Most Turkish historical accounts, which accept what is written in the law texts too readily, interpret the developments to serve a political imagination.⁹⁷ Once the study is confined to the political sphere in its entirety, there is therefore no room for the social and economic aspects of the relations developed between the Ottoman government and yurtluk-ocaklık holders in the aftermath of the incorporation. Turning the everlasting tension in the dichotomy of centre-periphery into an academic one, Houston notes two biases; historical and anthropological.⁹⁸ The historical bias, he argues, leads one to reframe the analysis in the prism of a single imperial social system where questions of historical change, regional variation, concentrations of power, and the process of resistance remain unanswered.⁹⁹ The historical bias can be furthered to a more

⁹⁵ Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 162.

⁹⁶ Apart from the question of autonomy, even the subject of the presence of Kurdistan has undergone politically-charged examinations. Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'." Maria Theresa O'Shea, *Trapped Between the Map and Reality: Geography and Perceptions of Kurdistan* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

⁹⁷ Yet, the very same imagination was not confined to the Turkish discourse, but rather served the Kurdish political imagination as well. Fuccaro argues that along with the feudalist tendencies it brought about the employment of the hükûmets as pre-modern national entities by which their ruling dynasties were regarded as the bearers of proto-nationalist consciousness. Nelida Fuccaro, "The Ottoman Frontier in Kurdistan in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *The Ottoman World* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), 246. Izady's almost vulgar equating of hükûmets to Kurdish states is a particular example of this perspective. Mehrdad R. Izady, *The Kurds: A Concise Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: Taylor & Francis, 1992), 52-3.

⁹⁸ Christopher Houston, "'Set aside from the Pen and Cut Off from the Foot': Imagining the Ottoman Empire and Kurdistan," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (2007): 405.

⁹⁹ The bias, which can be bundled under the centralist approach in Turkish nationalist historiography, exalts the central power of the Ottoman state, but also has relegated the yurtluk-ocaklık holders at the borderlands to mere functionaries of the empire. To name an example, in one of the pioneering studies of the yurtluk-ocaklık system, Kılıç argues that the beys possessed the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet provinces only in times of campaigns and were obliged to join their soldiers in

nuanced and implicit account underlining the central hold the Ottoman state had over the yurtluk-ocaklık system, which was viewed as an anomaly to be corrected.¹⁰⁰ In this formalist view, once the yurtluk-ocaklık districts are considered alien units, developments taking place in the Ottoman borderlands would be considered as nothing but deviance from the de facto arrangements.¹⁰¹

the campaigns under the provincial commander (*beylerbeyi*) to which they were subject. Furthermore, he concludes that the provinces in question were not administrative units which had an autonomous structure in today's context. Kılıç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık ve Hükümet," 136. For other studies with the same political imagination, see also "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı Hukukunda ve İdari Tatbikatındaki Yeri," *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 11, no. 1 (2001); "Van Eyaleti'ne Bağlı Sancaklar ve İdarî Statüleri (1558-1740)," *The Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 21 (2001); "Klasik Dönem Osmanlı İdarî Sisteminde Hükümet Sancaklar: Hakkâri Hükümeti Örneği," in *XIV. Türk Tarih Kongresi Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005); Mehmet Öz, "Ottoman Provincial Administration in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia: The Case of Bidlis in the Sixteenth Century," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003); Mehmet Ali Ünal, "XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Diyarbekir Eyaletine Tabi Sancakların İdarî Statüleri," in *X. Türk Tarih Kongresi Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 5 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994). In the face of these acute nationalist accounts, İnalcık, most of whose studies can be said to constitute the base of such accounts, however, does not hesitate to underestimate the autonomy the yurtluk-ocaklık holders enjoyed. His expansion of the autonomy granted to Albanian and Wallachian nomadic groups and similar practices of the Aqquyunlus for the Kurdish beys in particular is very telling compared to the narrow-minded formulations of the nationalist historiography. İnalcık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 126-8.

¹⁰⁰ Sinclair, "The Ottoman Arrangements." As a further extension of the centralist approach, Sinclair's account views the yurtluk-ocaklık system from a central perspective where he does not deem the future of the system any possibility outside the classical administration. Additionally, his elaboration of the hükümet districts as tribal principalities seems problematic. As stated by van Bruinessen and Fuccaro, hükümetler were not merely tribal formations but rather political units based in towns with a majority of non-tribal populations. The Kurdish emirs who asserted their tribal lineage were supported by tribal clients in general, but they had sources of authority independent of the tribes. van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbekir," 27; Fuccaro, "The Ottoman Frontier in Kurdistan," 243; Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 40, n. 31.

¹⁰¹ In a nuanced way, Baki Tezcan's arguments on the development of the autonomy the administrative units the Kurdish beys possessed seem to contribute to the standardisation process. Since he is preoccupied with the use of Kurdistan, he concedes the privileged nature of the Kurdish counties and finds the disappearance of the name sufficient to argue that the yurtluk-ocaklık units formed a part of the Ottoman provinces. By the same token, Özoğlu's account gives a more illuminating facet of the standardisation attempt of the Ottoman state. He argues that the Ottomans, who were aware of the strategic importance of the region, aimed at integrating the Kurdish tribes fully into the Ottoman system. Hakan Özoğlu, "State-Tribe Relations: Kurdish Tribalism in the 16th- and 17th-Century Ottoman Empire," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 23, no. 1 (1996): 17. See also *Kurdish Notables*. Furthermore, Özoğlu argues that the Ottoman policy for the Kurdish tribes was "unite and rule." On this point, Houston remarks that Özoğlu's historiography pays homage to Ottomanisation, a term Özoğlu never employs, by which the Kurdish tribes' elaborated forms of stratification replicated the very structure of the Ottoman state. By the same token, Tezcan's argument can be said to converge with Özoğlu's when he argues that "just as administrative practices and a shift in local power structures had created a region called Kurdistan, similar reasons and not ethnic identity or the demographic makeup, brought about changes in the level of autonomy enjoyed by the emirs of the area." Contrary to the 'unite and rule' policy of the Ottomans, Işıksel, conceding the impact of Ottoman-Safavid rivalry on the formation of local powers, notes that the presence of the Georgian kingdoms and the Kurdish emirates contradicts the argument that these local powers were shaped in the course of the rivalry. Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'," 548-9. Houston, ""Set

Second, the anthropological bias overemphasising the autonomy of the periphery, on the other hand, leads to the minimisation of the imperial constitution of society, transnational institutions, and cultural practices indicating wider networks of social influence and relations.¹⁰² In the same vein, Karpas warns about the bias in a rather different formulation. Rejecting the peripheral status of the Ottoman state which could be regarded as a loose agglomeration of territories with differing administrative status, he underlines that such a peripheral approach is as misleading as the centralist approach ignoring the borderlands.¹⁰³

To tackle the question, which was heavily laden with the question of autonomy per se, it is necessary to approach the status of the yurtluk-ocaklık system from the very tension between the imperial Ottoman policy and the centrifugal tendency of the borderlands. Considering the pace of Ottoman conquest in the sixteenth century, the Ottomans can be said to have had realistic expectations for creating dramatic changes in the ever-changing conquest-cum-frontier areas. As a part of this realism, Imber

aside from the Pen", 409. Güneş Işıksel, "16. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Osmanlı-Safevi Sınırında Eşkıyalar: Bir Çözümleme Denemesi," *Kebikeç*, no. 33 (2012): 38, n. 12.

¹⁰² Contextualising foreign patronage and internal clientelism as the two fundamental elements of the Kurdish autonomist movements, Vali argues that these movements are essentially 'reactive' rather than proactive and located outside their geopolitical boundaries, in the power and capacity of the central governments to establish and exercise territorial centralism in Kurdistan, like all reactive politics. By the same token, the autonomist movements are in accordance with the 'reactive' nature and 'external dynamics' of the 'center-periphery' politics, which, according to Vali, defined the relationship between the Kurdish principalities and their Persian and Ottoman overlords. Abbas Vali, "The Kurds and Their 'Others': Fragmented Identity and Fragmented Politics," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 18, no. 2 (1998): 83. In their study on Diyarbakir, Aydın and Verheij argue that the most inaccessible areas were left to their own devices, not assuming any obligations to the central government. These areas, they argue, "effectively became principalities—know [*sic.*] as 'hükûmets' (governments)—and in fact, only nominally part of the Empire." The nominal connection the region had with the empire is strengthened by van Bruinessen, who argues that "until the nineteenth century, the Ottoman officials stuck largely to this arrangement – which may tell more about the independent-mindedness of the Kurds than about the Ottomans' respecting promises once made." Suavi Aydın and Jelle Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron: Some Notes on Ethno-Religious Groups, Local Powers and the Ottoman State in Diyarbakir Province, 1800-1870," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), 17; Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books Ltd, 1992), 159.

¹⁰³ In addition, he finds the centre-periphery paradigm misleading since it ignores the great variation of centres and borderlands which had their own 'centres.' Kemal H. Karpas, "Comments and Contributions and the Borderlands," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003): 4.

concedes that the most important factor in determining the pattern of districts before the mid-fifteenth century was the existence of former lordships and principalities.¹⁰⁴ The presence of local powers that were powerful enough for the sultan to easily remove following the conquest signifies a part of Ottoman policy.¹⁰⁵ It does not, however, mean that the Ottomans forfeited the idea of integrating both the frontier provinces and semiautonomous borderlands into the system. It does not also mean that the Ottoman rulers, as Karpas argues, had an a priori ideological blueprint or a legal system for the borderlands, but rather followed a realistic path by “demanding only that they recognize the sultan as suzerain, pay tribute and maintain law and order.”¹⁰⁶ The conquest of Kurdistan in the sixteenth century and its distribution among its Kurdish rulers was no different from these minimal demands.

The Origins of the Yurtluk-Ocaklık System

The struggle over the Mesopotamia plain, which had its origins in ancient times, changed in the early sixteenth century. As Iran was consumed by sweeping civil strife following the decline of the Aq-Qoyunlu Empire, the success of Shah İsmail in eliminating the power of the Aq-Qoyunlus and laying the foundation of the Safavid dynasty changed the terms of the struggle. The rise of Shah Ismail was both a political and a religious movement, a victory to renew the prolonged Sunni-Shi'ite

¹⁰⁴ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The Structure of Power* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 184.

¹⁰⁵ Imber notes surviving semi-independent dynasties in some areas of the Anatolian and Arab provinces. Ibid., 188. The Kurdish rulers in Bitlis, for instance, had been vassals of the Qara-Qoyunlu while enjoying autonomy in their internal affairs. Thomas A. Sinclair, "The Armenians and the Kurdish Emirs of Bitlis under the Kara Koyunlu," in *Armenian Baghes/Bitlis and Taron/Mush*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2001).

¹⁰⁶ Karpas, "Comments and Contributions," 4.

schism.¹⁰⁷ In the midst of this schism, Ottoman Kurdistan became a playground for the imperial rivalry between the Ottomans and Safavids, both of which were caught in a crisis of legitimation.¹⁰⁸ In other words, as O'Shea notes Kurdistan became a buffer zone "not only between the Arab\Semitic, and later Ottoman culture, and the Persian culture, but also between the two major branches of Islam," which constituted the main theatre for the Ottoman-Persian rivalry.¹⁰⁹

Despite the fall of the Aq-Qoyunlu influence in eastern borderlands of the Ottoman Empire, Shah Ismail had a strong follower base in Anatolia and did not want to lose this support. To reach Anatolia allowed the shah to have direct control over the Kurdish provinces in the borderlands. The intention of the local Kurdish leaders, including the rulers of Bitlis, Cizre, and Hazzo to pay homage to the shah was of no avail since the shah arrested replacing them with *kızılbaş* (literally redhead indicating the Shiites) emirs to consolidate the direct control of the region.¹¹⁰ With

¹⁰⁷ On the fall of Aq-Qoyunlu Empire and the rise of the Safavid Dynasty in Iran and the latter's rivalry with the Ottomans, see John Woods, *The Aqqayunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1999), 1491-172; Allouche, *The Origins and Development*, 30-64.

¹⁰⁸ For a general account of Ottoman and Iranian relations, see Bekir Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-İran Siyâsî Münâsebetleri: 1578-1590* (Istanbul: İ. Ü. Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1962); M. Münir Aktepe, *Osmanlı-İran Münasebetleri, 1720-1724 ve Silâhşör Kemânî Mustafa Ağâ'nın Revân Fetih-nâmesi* (Istanbul: İ. Ü. Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1970). For a brief account of the sectarian rivalry and Shi'ite influence in the Ottoman past, see respectively, Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, "Qizilbash Heresy and Rebellion in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century," *Anatolia Moderna* 7(Fall 1997); Stefan Winter, *The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 7-30. Despite her emphasis that Kurdish religious groups in the borderlands "could function both as vehicles of imperial integration and as loci of political dissent," which indicates the flexibility between heterodox and orthodox Islam, Fuccaro unconvincingly attributes the role of defending of Sunni orthodoxy to Kurdish orders, especially the Nakşbendi and Kadiri. The rivalry, as often connoting the sectarian struggle, however should be taken with a grain of salt as Dressler argues that the 'religious dichotomy' was a product of the rivalry rather than its cause as the both empires tended to consolidate their political-cum-religious power in orthodox terms. Fuccaro, "The Ottoman Frontier in Kurdistan," 248; Markus Dressler, "Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict," in *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, ed. Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005).

¹⁰⁹ O'Shea, *Trapped Between the Map*, 71-2. The imperial rivalry in the early sixteenth century between the Ottomans and Safavids above all produced in the Kurdish historiography the 'first' division of Kurds followed by the Ottoman occupation in the aftermath of Battle of Çaldıran in 1614. The second division took place in the aftermath of World War I. For brief information on the first division, see Vali, "The Kurds and Their 'Others'," 82. n. 1.

¹¹⁰ Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'," 544; van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbakir."; O'Shea, *Trapped Between the Map*, 70. For a brief discussion on the

this bitter alienation, the remaining Kurdish leaders were more than willing to cooperate with the Ottoman forces.¹¹¹ Following the Ottoman victory of Çaldıran in 1514, the Kurdish leaders lost their trust in Shah Ismail. In addition to the confessional tension, “it was in fact precisely,” states van Bruinessen, “because Shah Ismail attempted to rule directly, while Sultan Selim promised a form of autonomy, that most of the Kurdish rulers, after the battle of Çaldıran, formally submitted to the latter and expelled the former’s troops.”¹¹² Basing his account on *Şerefname*, Tezcan argues that the support of Kurdish rulers preceded the eastern campaign of Selim, when twenty emirs from Kurdistan, including Şeref Khan, wrote a letter of submission to the Ottoman Sultan to be sent by Idris Bitlisi.¹¹³

Following the conquest of Diyarbakir and the Kurdish leader’s active participation, the latter along with Bıyıklı Mehmet Paşa, the beylerbeyi of Diyarbakir shaped the formation of the province.¹¹⁴ It was under these circumstances the *yurtluk*-*ocaklık* and *hükûmet* property was granted to the Kurdish emirs oscillating between Ottoman and Safavid pressure. “Recognizing the limits of its administrative capabilities in the eastern frontiers,” states Agoston, “the Ottoman government accepted the formation of numerous administrative units of special status, the so-called *yurtluk* (family property, family estates) and *ocaklık* (family estate) *sancaks*

Safavid emirs, see Fariba Zarinebaf, “Rebels and Renegades on Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Porous Frontiers and Hybrid Identities,” in *Iran Facing Others: Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective* ed. Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdani (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

¹¹¹ Alienation also bore a confessional one as Sunni Kurds were distant from the Shi’ite policy of the Safavids. Allouche, *The Origins and Development*, 121; Cabir Doğan, “XVI. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İdari Yapısı Altında Kürt Emirlikleri ve Statüleri,” *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, no. 23 (May 2011): 33. For a comprehensive military account of the campaign, see M. C. Şehabeddin Tekdağ, “Yeni Kaynak ve Vesikaların Işığında Yavuz Sultan Selim’in İran Seferi,” *Tarih Dergisi* 17, no. 22 (1967).

¹¹² van Bruinessen, “The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbakir,” 13.

¹¹³ Tezcan, “The Development of the Use of ‘Kurdistan’,” 545. Allouche, *The Origins and Development*, 115-6.

¹¹⁴ It appears that administrative organisation of the region was handled directly by Idris-i Bitlisi and Bıyıklı Mehmed Pasha. Furthermore the former is said to have received empty ‘order papers’ leaving the grant of districts to the discretion of the influential Kurdish leader. Nejat Göyünç, “Diyarbakir Beylerbeyliğinin İlk İdarî Taksimatı,” *Tarih Dergisi*, no. 23 (1969): 26. Ünal, “XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Diyarbakir,” 2211-2.

(district).”¹¹⁵ The outlines of the system with which Kurdish rulers were privileged were the following:

- the provinces and castles held by these emirs previously, together with the additional places granted to them by the Ottomans, were made their “property,”
- these “properties” were to be enjoyed by the emirs and their sons, generation after generation,
- as long as the emirs remained obedient to the Ottoman state, no one among the sons of the sultan, the administrators, and the tax collectors, were to interfere in their “properties,”
- if a certain emir dies, his province were to pass to his son, if there were more than one son, then they would decide among themselves on how to share their legacy,
- if there is no one left from the family of a deceased emir, then his province will not be given to any one from outside, but the emirs of Kurdistan will be consulted and the province will be given to someone from that region,
- the sultan swears on God and the Prophet that this grant will be honoured by him and his offspring as long as the emir in question remains loyal, and be friends with his friends, and enemy with his enemies,
- anyone who acts against these stipulations is cursed,
- at the end, the duties of the emirs are underlined: in case their contributions are needed, they are expected to act together with the governors of Diyarbekir and Baghdad, and other begs of Kurdistan. They are to treat the subject population under their rule justly, they are to remain loyal to the throne. Finally, in case of the death of the sultan, they are to recognize the son of the sultan who succeeds in replacing him on the throne, and they are to see all other sons as his enemies and not help them.¹¹⁶

The yurtluk-ocaklık system, in short, granted a leader autonomy in return for providing the government with certain services, such as bringing auxiliary troops to imperial campaigns.¹¹⁷ The system with the administrative privileges granted to local leaders was beyond the term ocaklık, which were designated as revenue sources

¹¹⁵ Gábor Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire: Authority and its Limits on the Ottoman Frontiers," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003): 18.

¹¹⁶ Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'," 547. See also Kılıç, "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı," 3-4.

¹¹⁷ İnalcık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 126. The autonomy also included the traditional symbols of power, a drum and a flag. Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'," 547.

destined for specific expenses.¹¹⁸ Tax registers were drawn up in yurtluk-ocaklık districts; some of the districts also saw the introduction of timar system. Apart from the obligation to participate in imperial campaigns, the basic difference of the system from hükûmets according to the codes was that the latter were not subject to the classical Ottoman surveys.¹¹⁹

The formulation of the system as a simple acknowledgement of the Ottoman rule in the region where yurtluk-ocaklık districts were kept by their former owners not only helped shape the relation between Kurdish rulers and the Ottoman government in a more egalitarian manner, but also offers a chance for historians to observe continuity in Ottoman-Safavid borderlands.¹²⁰ That is, the yurtluk-ocaklık system was not a unilateral grant of the Ottoman sultans as suggested by the legal texts of the period, but rather a perpetual imperial practice implemented in borderlands. That is, similar landholding patterns augmented with various forms of fiscal immunity go back at least to the fifteenth century.

Soyurghals, which were type of land grants similar to *temlîknâmes* (a sultanic land grant bestowing hereditary and absolute immunities), were prevalent in the

¹¹⁸ This kind of ocaklık usually meant a direct payment from a local source of revenue to a military group, usually in a distant fortress. For the distinction, see Göyünç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık Deyimleri Hakkında." İnalçık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 126; Orhan Kılıç, "Yurtluk," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 43 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2013); "Ocaklık," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 33 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2007).

¹¹⁹ "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı," 11. Departing from this difference, Sinclair argues that *hükûmet* would be the better general term for all principalities in the Van region, noting that none of the principalities except Bitlis saw its land surveyed in the sixteenth century. However, the districts of Hazro and Atak immediately after the Ottoman conquest underwent Ottoman surveys, weakening Sinclair's claim in broader Ottoman Kurdistan. Noting also that the term hükûmet was reserved by custom and practice for the most prestigious principalities, Sinclair also comes to the available conclusion of ocaklık as a general term. Sinclair, "The Ottoman Arrangements," 139. See, for instance, the following studies based on the post-conquest surveys, Alpay Bizbirlik, "16. Yüzyılda Tercil Sancağı Üzerine Notlar," *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. 16 (1999); *ibid.*; "16. Yüzyılın Ortalarında Atak Sancağı ve Sancak Beyleri Üzerine Notlar," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, no. 14 (1999).

¹²⁰ Agoston warns about the euphemistic language of Ottoman legal texts concerning the yurtluk-ocaklık system which suggests that the Ottoman sultans did grant these lands and warns that what happened was an acknowledgement of the former owners of yurtluk-ocaklık lands "as a consequence of a political deal that reflected the balance of power and mutual interdependence in the frontier zones." Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 19.

region prior to the Ottoman conquest.¹²¹ In this context, it would not be wrong to assume that the Ottoman pragmatism once again acknowledged the pre-conquest practices as the *soyurghal* system was also predominant in the Aq-Qoyunlu and Safavid Empires.¹²² Accordingly, most emirates in Kurdistan had enjoyed privileged statuses prior to the Safavid policy of central rule and it was exactly this privileged status the Ottoman states granted to the Kurdish emirs, who in turn shifted their allegiance away from the Iranian borderlands.¹²³

Even though autonomy was not present in the first surveys of the province of Diyarbakir immediately after the conquest, a few years later twenty eight administrative units emerged classified under the title Kurdish communities (*cemâ'at-i Kürdan*) compared to nine regular districts.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, the *yurtluk-ocaklık* system was not a fixed point in time. Depending on the political trajectory of the day, the terms of granting as well as maintaining the status of *yurtluk-ocaklık*

¹²¹ The *soyurghal* basically denoted a land grant that was characterised by full immunity from taxation as well as by complete freedom from judicial and administrative interference on the part of the central government. Despite its presence in pre-Timurid period, the system attained its greatest expansion, becoming the predominant form of landholding in Central Asia and Iran. Similar to the formulaic phrase of 'Set Aside from the Pen and Cut off from the Foot' in the Ottoman context, state agents were explicitly prohibited from even setting foot in the territory of a *soyurghal*. Maria Eva Subtelny, "Socioeconomic Bases of Cultural Patronage under the Later Timurids," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20, no. 4 (1988): 480-1; İnalcık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 119-24.

¹²² Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*, 144. Minorsky, "A Soyūrghāl of Qāsim b. Jahāngir Aq-qoyunlu (903/1498)."; "The Aq-Qoyunlu and Land Reforms (Turkmenica, 11)," *ibid.* 17, no. 3 (1955). In general, the impact of the Aq Qoyunlu rule particularly in Diyarbakir was evident in the immediate aftermath of the conquest. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı Devrinde Akkoyunlu Hükümdarı Uzun Hasan Bey'e Ait Kanunlar," in *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi* (Istanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1980); M. Mehdi İlhan, *Amid (Diyarbakır): 1518 Tarihli Defter-i Mufassal* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 28. Lambton, "Two Şafavid Soyūrghāls."

¹²³ See, for instance, the emirate of Eğil in Nusret Aydın, *Diyarbakır-Eğil Hükümdarları Tarihi* (Istanbul: Avesta, 2003); Yunus Emre Gördük, "Eğil Emirliği'nin Kısa Tarihçesi ve Eğil Emirliğine Ait Şecere Metninin Tercümesi," *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, no. 35 (Spring 2014).

¹²⁴ Ağoston, "A Flexible Empire," 20; Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'." For the eventual shifts in the administrative statuses of regular and autonomous districts, see Ünal, "XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Diyarbakır." For the classical provincial administration of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century, see Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*. For the survey on Diyarbakir completed in 1518, see M. Mehdi İlhan, "Some Notes on the Settlement and Population of the Sancak of Amid according to the 1518 Ottoman Cadastral Survey," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 14 (1981-2).

lands were under constant negotiation.¹²⁵ For instance, Sharaf Khan, the *hâkim* (holders of *hükûmets*, literally ruler) of Bitlis, declared his allegiance to Shah Tahmasp in 1530s after having maintained a neutral balance between the Ottomans and Safavids. The change of heart led the Ottomans to appoint a non-dynastic ruler in Bitlis, Ulama Tekelü Han, prior to the Ottoman-Safavid War of 1532-55.¹²⁶ Şemseddin, Sharaf Khan's son, was able to reclaim his father's position as the Bitlis khan during the Iraq campaign in 1533-35, but however was frustrated when Süleyman I appointed himself as the governor of Malatya and Maraş. It was Sharaf Khan V, the author of *Şerefname*, who changed sides in favour of Ottomans having served the Safavids until 1578.¹²⁷ Prior to the Ottoman-Safavid War of 1578-1590, thanks to his changing sides, Sharaf Khan was able to cash in his local power to extract more concessions from the central government in this way "silently recreating the pre-Ottoman principality in territorial terms."¹²⁸

As the power balance between the *yurtluk-ocaklık* districts and the central authority was therefore constantly negotiated throughout the sixteenth century, new *yurtluk-ocaklık* districts rather than ordinary districts were established throughout the

¹²⁵ So were the Ottoman *kanuns*, as Abou el-Haj argues that the form of the *kanuns* underwent significant changes throughout the seventeenth century as new ideas reflecting the changing class relations came to shape the old forms in accordance with a more modern perspective. Rifa'at Ali Abou-el-Haj, "Power and Social Order," in *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, ed. Irene A. Bierman, Rifa'at A. Abou-el-Haj, and Donald Preziosi (New Rochelle, NY: A. D. Caratzas, 1991).

¹²⁶ Allouche, *The Origins and Development*, 138; Öz, "Ottoman Provincial Administration," 150. For the background of the war, see H. R. Roemer, "The Safavid Period," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 6 The Timurid and Safavid Periods, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockheart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 241ff.

¹²⁷ Öz, "Ottoman Provincial Administration," 150. Accordingly Şemseddin was promised to be granted districts by means of *ocaklık* prior to the Ottoman-Safavid war. Kılıç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık ve Hükümet," 126.

¹²⁸ First of all, Sharaf Khan succeeded at having the district of Mush granted to his son, Ahmad. Other concessions he was able to materialise included: the district of Mush joined to Bitlis, Sharaf's son gained the district of Nakhchevan. Furthermore, the *nâhiyes* (subdistrict) of Ahlat, Karcikan, and Gevar would be annexed to the district of Bitlis. Sinclair, "The Ottoman Arrangements," 130.

eastern borderlands of the empire.¹²⁹ Thus, the yurtluk-ocaklık system was not a fixed point in time, nor in space. The intensification of the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry ended up with more yurtluk-ocaklık districts in the eastern borderlands.¹³⁰ As the mid-sixteenth century rivalry opened up new fronts in Caucasus, the expansion of yurtluk-ocaklık system into the northern parts of Ottoman Kurdistan was inevitable.¹³¹ Even though the two empires, following the Peace of Amasya, had attempted to increase their influence in these relatively independent structures including the Georgian ocaklıks and *meliklik*s (principalities) in the province of Erzurum as well as the Kurdish yurtluks and hükûmets in the provinces of Van and Şehrîzor, the next phase of the conflict to start in the early 1570s changed the tide in favour of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders.¹³² Against the Safavid agitation among the hâkims of the borderlands against the Ottoman rule and promises of districts to obtain their allegiances, the Ottoman countermove resembled that of its foe, as the

¹²⁹ For the change in the districts of Diyarbakir, Van, and Hakkâri, see Ünal, "XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Diyarbakir." van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbakir." Sinclair, "The Ottoman Arrangements."; Kılıç, "Van Eyaleti'ne Bağlı Sancaklar ve İdarî Statüleri (1558-1740)."; James J. Reid, "Hakkârî Clan and Society: Kurdistan, 1502-1656," *The Journal of Kurdish Studies* 2(1996-1997); Kılıç, "Klasik Dönem Osmanlı İdarî." For the classical administration, see İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*.

¹³⁰ Yurtluk-ocaklık districts were established in the provinces of Diyarbakir, Çıldır, Baghdad, and Van and expanded to the provinces of Kars, Damascus, Raqqa, Bosnia, and Anatolia in 1631/2 and to the provinces of Erzurum, Trabzon, Şehrîzor and Tunisia between 1673 and 1740. For the names of districts in addition to the changes between yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet status, see Kılıç, "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı," 6-7.

¹³¹ For the frontier provinces, see Feridun Emecen, "Çıldır Eyaleti," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 8 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1993); Mustafa L. Bilge, "Lahsâ," *ibid.*, Vol. 27 (Ankara: 2003).

¹³² The peace acknowledged the frontier which ran across the mountains dividing eastern and western Georgia, through Armenia, and via the western slopes of the Zagros down to the Persian Gulf. For the military developments before and after the Peace, see Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 2 vols., vol. I: Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 109; Allouche, *The Origins and Development*, 138ff. Işıksele extends the Ottoman central hold also over the Arab dynasties and tribes in the beylerbeylik of Baghdad, Basra, and rarely Lahsa. Işıksele, "16. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında," 39. For the meliklik, see Orhan Kılıç, "Ottoman Provincial Organization in the Classical Period (1362-1799)," in *The Turks*, Vol. 3 Ottomans, ed. Hasan Celâl Güzel (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2002).

licenses of most of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts were renewed in addition to new privileges bestowed upon the local rulers and tribal leaders.¹³³

As the two empires competed for the loyalty of each other's Kurdish subjects by offering them material gains, the allegiance of Kurdish rulers became important not only for the imperial rivalry, but also demonstrated that the Kurds were not passive partners in the developing state-tribe relations.¹³⁴ The tribes, states Murphey, sought and found the means to play both sides off against the middle capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the complex matrix of fluid borders, changing alliances and the heightened strategic importance their own native and patrimonial homelands now possessed.¹³⁵

The incessant wars between the Ottoman and Safavid empires until the peace in 1639 shaped the mutual interdependence between the Ottoman government and yurtluk-ocaklık holders.¹³⁶ As a political and military bulwark against the Shi'ite rule in Iran, the yurtluk-ocaklık system maintained its status despite the occasional centralisation attempts undertaken by the Ottoman government. The centralising policies were often associated with the presence of an Ottoman army, which was not a rare event considering the frequent campaigns against the Safavids, although their

¹³³ Even Mehmet Öz, who downplays the autonomous status of the yurtluk-ocaklık system at every opportunity, concedes that the Ottoman-Safavid War that started in 1578 affected the status of the whole area. Öz, "Ottoman Provincial Administration," 152. Ünal, "XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Diyarbekir," 2217.

¹³⁴ Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 49.

¹³⁵ Rhoads Murphey, "Resumption of Ottoman-Safavid Border Conflict, 1603-1638: Effects of Border Destabilization on the Evolution of State-Tribe Relations," *Orientwissenschaftliche Hefte* 12(2003): 152. For example, conquering the southern territories of Georgia in the middle of the century, the Ottomans established the new province of Çıldır in 1578 and appointed the region's former Georgian prince as its first beylerbeyi. Similar to the post-conquest of Kurdistan, the new province albeit with some exceptions was administered by the Georgian princes of Samtskhe as hereditary *beys* until the mid-eighteenth century. Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 22.

¹³⁶ For the political background, see Christoph K. Neumann, "Political and Diplomatic Developments," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3 The Later Ottoman Empire 1603-1839, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

extent, as Faruqi argues, was limited since local rulers reasserted themselves once the armies withdrew.¹³⁷

The peace concluded in 1639; however, did not seem to change the statuses of the yurtluk-ocaklık systems in the eastern borderlands drastically.¹³⁸ In the first half of the eighteenth century, the system appears to have extended to the north eastern borderlands. As most of the hükûmets in the provinces of Diyarbekir, Erzurum, Van, Baghdad, and Çıldır retained their statuses, a few ocaklık districts emerged in the provinces of Trabzon and Kars in 1730s.¹³⁹ In the “age of the âyâns,” it would not be wrong to assume that most of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders in the Ottoman borderlands maintained their privileged statuses with local variations. In the eighteenth century, for instance, almost all districts in the province of Erzurum, Çıldır, Kars, and Baghdad were denoted ocaklık districts.¹⁴⁰ Despite the occasional centralisation attempts, the system enabling local rulers to maintain their power in the borderlands survived well into the nineteenth century.¹⁴¹ Particularly the Kurdish rulers administering hükûmet districts enjoyed de facto autonomy almost in complete control of their own internal affairs in the late eighteenth century while paying lip

¹³⁷ Suraiya Faruqi, "Politics and Socio-Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire of the Later Sixteenth Century," in *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, ed. İ. Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (New York: Longman, 1995), 95.

¹³⁸ “During the seventeenth century,” Ágoston argues, “the central government lost control of many eastern provinces, which is reflected in the growing number of hereditary *sancaks* in the area.” Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 22. Basing his account on Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme*, Özoğlu, however, argues that the degree of autonomy in the Kurdish emirates greatly diminished in the post-1639 period. It is most probably related to the already decreasing strategic importance of Diyarbekir in the Safavid campaigns as the border expanded eastwards. However, Kılıç's table demonstrating the districts in the province for the period between 1673 and 1702 indicated nine regular districts out of twenty. Furthermore, the loss of control was not entirely confined to the yurtluk-ocaklık system, as decentralisation was keenly felt in a regular district such as Raqqa. Cf. Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 51; Kılıç, *18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında*, 62; S. H. Winter, "The Province of Raqqa under Ottoman Rule, 1535–1800: A Preliminary Study," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 68, no. 4 (2009).

¹³⁹ Kılıç, *18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında*, 67–8. For yurtluk-ocaklık districts in Trabzon, see Toraman, "Trabzon Eyaletinde Yurtluk-Ocaklık."

¹⁴⁰ Kılıç, *18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında*, 62–72.

¹⁴¹ Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 18.

service to Istanbul.¹⁴² Permanent and decisive centralisation did not happen, Faroqhi states, until the 1830s when Sultan Mahmud II had the principal *beyliks* (principality) overthrown by military force.¹⁴³

The Financial and Economic Aspects of the System

The bifurcation of the autonomy of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* system followed suit in terms of the economic privileges associated with the grant. Inalcık contextualises the *yurtluk-ocaklık* system in the *temliknâmes* regime, which bestowed absolute and hereditary immunities vis-à-vis the administration making it a virtually autonomous enclave within the territory of the state.¹⁴⁴ The formulation correspondingly approximated the system to the *mülk* (freehold) property. On the other side, however, did stand Ottoman *mîrî* system (state ownership of lands) in which the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property under the classification of non-free timars was considered as a privileged extension of the timar system.¹⁴⁵ Considering the stipulation that the state possession was confined to grain-producing lands in accordance with the concerns of ensuring revenue and subsistence production, İslamoğlu discusses an exceptional case of free-hold property of grain producing lands. This exceptional case, which could be regarded as constituting the base of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands, not only

¹⁴² Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 59.

¹⁴³ Faroqhi, "Politics and Socio-Economic Change," 95.

¹⁴⁴ Inalcık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 112.

¹⁴⁵ In this context, owners of *ocaklıks* were entitled to collect the tithe in addition to some other taxes including the custom taxes. Halil Cin, in his pioneering work, evidently confused the *ocaklıks* as source of revenues with land grants. Halil Cin, *Mîrî Arazi ve Bu Arazinin Mülk Haline Dönüşümü* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Yayınları, 1969), 77. Nevertheless, *yurtluk-ocaklıks* were considered part of the timar system in order to incorporate the Ottoman land regime into the Asiatic Mode of Production. Owners of *yurtluk-ocaklıks*, as timars granted in order to meet a local military need, were entitled to collect tax revenues in return for the land rent without transferring any to the central state but were obliged to perform military duties. In a further deconstruction, Erdost draws a difference between *yurtluk* timars and *mülk* timars, whereby the former signifies a collective ownership by the tribal members rather than the sole property of a tribal leader. Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumu* (Kırklareli: Sermet Matbaası, 1981), 51. Muzaffer İlhan Erdost, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Mülkiyet İlişkileri* (Ankara: Onur Yayınları, 1984), 87-8.

conceded the free-hold property of lands which were supposed to be owned by the Ottoman state, but also subjected the terms of the property to negotiation between the central state and revenue claimants where land could remain with the latter as their freehold property.¹⁴⁶ The contextualisation of yurtluk-ocaklık lands as a part of the state domain helps consolidate the argument of absence of landed provincial elite.¹⁴⁷

On the other hand, hükûmet or yurtluk-ocaklıks, the owners of which retained inheritance rights over territory with concessions of land and administrative jurisdiction were, “the closest equivalent to European feudal property rights.”¹⁴⁸ While it is obvious that the very possibility of central intervention distanced yurtluk-ocaklık lands from feudal fiefs in the crudest sense, the lands in question were not a regular part of the Ottoman land domain. Whether the lands in the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts constituted full property rights is a debatable question, their freehold property status is beyond question.¹⁴⁹ Towards the end of the eighteenth century, for instance, the yurtluk-ocaklık district of Malazgird was abolished.

¹⁴⁶ Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1994), 59. Her argument elsewhere, where she claims that mülk did not signify private ownership but was a category of entitlement to tax revenues that the grantee held, consolidates the central hold of the Ottoman state. İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain," 18.

¹⁴⁷ The debate on Asiatic Mode of Production was criticised of being carried out within a narrow perspective by İslamoğlu and Keyder who note the absence of recourse to concepts of social formation and dominance. Not entirely detached, they incorporated the debate in their account, in effect, to emphasise intra-class conflict rather than an inter-class one. The presence of intra-class conflict in their social formulation concept was a response to Oriental despotism. Huri İslamoğlu and Çağlar Keyder, "Agenda for Ottoman History," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 1, no. 1 (1977): 37, n. 18. See also Çağlar Keyder, "The Dissolution of the Asiatic Mode of Production," *Economy and Society* 5, no. 2 (1976); Karl August Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1957).

¹⁴⁸ O'Shea accordingly notes the quasi-feudal character of the system Ottomans established in Kurdistan. Salzmänn, "Measures of Empire," 113. O'Shea, *Trapped Between the Map*, 72. Accordingly, terms of malikâne contracts, which originated in the very heart of the timar system, approached those of private property as a result of the changes within Ottoman state-society relationships in the sixteenth century. Salzmänn, "An Ancien Régime Revisited," 402. For malikânes, see Genç, "Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikane Sistemi." Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikâne Uygulaması*.

¹⁴⁹ In an interesting way, Tezcan attempts to intercept the connection between yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands and their possible notation as full property rights by stating that when a Kurdish emir wished to create a foundation out of his estates, “he had to ask for a title deed from the central government in order to prove that the property in question was his.” He therefore concludes that the royal grant associated with *hükûmets* “was not enough to invest an emir with full property rights.” Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'," 547.

However, its transformation into malikâne (*serbestiyet üzere ve malikâne veçhile*) should suffice to bridge the connection.¹⁵⁰

Regardless of the property relations the yurtluk-ocaklık system entailed, the absence of Ottoman surveys as well as hereditary land possession provided the holders with great privileges which enabled them to become a sort of landed provincial notable. The absence of a timar system and Ottoman surveys indicated first of all that the revenue of the territory went to the local power-holders and Istanbul received no income from these areas.¹⁵¹ This was the case for hükûmets, Ágoston writes, as it was likely in the case of yurtluk-ocaklıks “where part of the revenue might have been remitted to the sultan’s treasury.”¹⁵² Even though its predominance is yet to be known, the renewal of the contracts on yurtluk-ocaklık seems to have required a down payment.¹⁵³ However, the conceptualisation of yurtluk-ocaklıks as condominium, defined by Ágoston as “the joint rule of the former power elite and the Ottoman authorities,” changes the perspective associated with the otherwise hierarchical status of the grants.¹⁵⁴

Regardless of the payments made for renewing the licenses, the terms of negotiation between the Ottoman government and yurtluk-ocaklık holders had more depth. That is, Murphey regards the assumption of the financial burden as a period of shared responsibility and burden redistribution during the warfare with the

¹⁵⁰ BOA. C. ML. 8665, 19 Safer 1208 (26 September 1793). The “*malikânization*” process not only allowed for the privatization of land and enterprises and made enterprises alienable, but also initiated a process of appointment relying on market conditions. Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 232.

¹⁵¹ Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 41.

¹⁵² Ágoston, “A Flexible Empire,” 23. Tezcan also claims that some financial obligations followed the fiscal immunity. Tezcan, “The Development of the Use of ‘Kurdistan,’” 548.

¹⁵³ For instance, in 1583 Ahmed Bey, the bey of Palu, renewed his status in the district of Palu by sending the Ottoman treasury 100,000 florins in addition to 6,000 *akçes* in return for the official license (*berat-ı resmî*). Kılıç, “Klasik Dönem Osmanlı İdari,” 718, n. 57. By the same token, Köksal indicates that emirs were obliged to pay a fixed amount of revenue to the Ottoman treasury per annum until the early nineteenth century. Yonca Köksal, “Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization of Tribes in the Ottoman Empire,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2006): 476.

¹⁵⁴ Ágoston, “A Flexible Empire,” 23.

Safavids.¹⁵⁵ The condition of mutual need and dependency during wartime, therefore, undermined neither the powers of tribal forces nor the local rulers, but rather as Murphey notes, “created opportunities for leadership elements within the tribes to reassert and renegotiate their position and status vis-à-vis state administrative hierarchies from a bargaining position based on strength.”¹⁵⁶

Beyond the questions of the absence or presence of timar units, survey registers, and economic and financial capitalisation the yurtluk-ocaklık holders enjoyed, yurtluk-ocaklık districts emerged as a result of Ottoman pragmatism and with time turned into a condominium in which terms of exploitation depended on the constant negotiations between the central state and holders. Either as a continuation of the pre-conquest practices and or as a counter-measure devised against the threat in the borderlands, the yurtluk-ocaklık districts, albeit with their fluctuations in terms of autonomy and financial obligations, evidently brought about the formation of a landed property elite in the borderlands. The political and economic autonomy might have and probably did change during the course of the system over the centuries; however, the lands survived the Ottoman-Safavid conflict and endured into the nineteenth century. The survival, in this sense, maintained the very definition of the system: the yurtluk-ocaklıks as a hereditary family estate or property.

Yurtluk-Ocaklıks as a Peripheral Strategy

The yurtluk-ocaklık system was a result of Ottoman compromise and pragmatism in the eastern borderlands as a result of the conflicts with the Safavid Empire. However, the yurtluk-ocaklık districts were by no means a peculiarity exclusive to the eastern

¹⁵⁵ Murphey, "Resumption of Ottoman-Safavid Border," 166ff.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 166.

borderlands of the empire. Rather, it was a peripheral strategy deployed by an imperial polity. As the Ottoman policies in the contested borderlands in the aftermath of its conquests constituted continuity with regards to the earlier practices of once-ruling-empires, the establishment of yurtluk-ocaklık districts therefore was not an Ottoman novelty, but rather the product of an imperial vision. Imposing less, leaving arrangements supple and variable, adaptation to local conditions lest the imperial rulers be confronted by strong rivalries was an Ottoman means of incorporation in line with imperial traditions.¹⁵⁷ In this sense, yurtluk-ocaklık districts as units of provincial administration shared many characteristics of conquered lands in the other parts of the empire. Similar flexible solutions for the borderlands, as in the case of yurtluk-ocaklık districts, were a sine qua non of the Ottoman Empire longevity which relied on the incorporation of new entities diverse in local peculiarities.¹⁵⁸

Despite the fact that pragmatism especially in the context of the early modern Ottoman Empire has gained currency for the last decade, Dağlı warns that Ottoman pragmatism under different connotations such as responsive plasticity and flexibility blurs more than it clarifies.¹⁵⁹ Particularly the concept, according to him,

adopts a problematic periodization, posits a state-centric approach at the expense of the overall configuration of power relations, and reproduces some of the assumptions of neoliberal discourse that relegate a critical reflection on the political to the background.¹⁶⁰

In his criticism of taking pragmatism as a constant, he challenges the fact that pragmatism or negotiation renders what he defines as the political useless vis-à-vis politics.¹⁶¹ Even though flexibility tends to highlight a certain historical context from

¹⁵⁷ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 84.

¹⁵⁸ Flexible solutions of administrative matters were also applicable for the empire's economic institutions. Şevket Pamuk, "Institutional Change and the Longevity of the Ottoman Empire, 1500-1800," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35, no. 2 (2004).

¹⁵⁹ Murat Dağlı, "The Limits of Ottoman Pragmatism," *History and Theory* 52, no. 2 (2013).

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 195.

¹⁶¹ In his definition, the political is about a specific vision of the organization of society whereas politics are about the means to reach that specific vision. Accordingly, he notes that defining

the prism of the state, the Ottoman in this case, his call for taking pragmatism into a historical context where it becomes a part of the struggle for power relations does not mean that the Ottoman Empire was from the early conquests to the bureaucratisation in the nineteenth century an entirely monolithic institution.¹⁶² Flexibility or compromise under the umbrella of pragmatism, as the following section demonstrates, was not an unchanging entity to which Ottoman politics resorted, but rather was peculiar solutions of the Ottoman polity which stemmed from very distinct historical contexts.

Pragmatism and flexibility were already Ottoman strategies from the inception of the empire in terms of conquests. First of all, the Wittekian ghazi thesis with the geographical advantage of the Ottoman emirate as an *uj begi* has been long the overarching explanation underlying the success of the Ottomans.¹⁶³ While this border emirate was a further flexibility of the Ottoman polity with its roots in the Byzantine practices namely *akritai* (border guards), the Ottoman domination immediately after the conquest was severely limited regardless of the significance of ghazis.¹⁶⁴ Since the newly conquered areas were now part of the borderlands throughout the empire, the Ottoman concession was therefore expanded to reward

the political as pragmatic has serious shortcomings and adds on the other hand that pragmatism can be a useful concept to define actions, strategies, and decisions of actors in the realm of politics provided that the latter are taken into a proper contextualisation with a detailed analysis of a whole range of institutional structures and ideological conventions. Ibid., 207, 11.

¹⁶² Ibid., 211.

¹⁶³ For a comprehensive account and criticism on theses of Wittek, see Colin Heywood, "The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths," in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, ed. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (London: Macmillan Press, 1999); Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003). The religious zeal of the Turkish ghazis constituted one of the incentives of the Ottoman conquest in the early years of the Ottoman state. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Vakıflar ve Temlikler I: İstila Devirlerinin Kolonizatör Türk Dervişleri ve Zaviyeleri," *Vakıflar Dergisi* 2, no. 279-304 (1942); Halil İnalcık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," *Studia Islamica*, no. 2 (1954).

¹⁶⁴ Radushev furthers the similarity between *akritai* and *uc begi* to the Roman times with the expansion of *milites limitanei*, i.e. frontier militia. Eugeni Radushev, "Ottoman Border Periphery (*Serhad*) in the Vilayet of Nikopol, First Half of the 16th Century," *Études Balkaniques*, no. 3-4 (1995): 144-5.

the rulers of the previous states. In these lands yet enigmatic to the Ottoman realm, the dervish orders, as brokers of the state-building enterprise, stood between the local populace and the Ottoman state and grounded the Ottomans in local realities and forced them to capitulate to the existing configurations of religions, ethnic and kin groups, local traditions, and deep-rooted superstitions.¹⁶⁵ The local experience the orders presented was *metis*, a wide array of practical skills and acquired intelligence in responding to a constantly changing natural and human environment.¹⁶⁶

Adopting these *metis*-laden skills, empires with each conquest and integration into themselves had to negotiate multiple systems of rule, multiple negotiated frontiers, laws and courts, and forms of revenue management. Diversity and flexibility were therefore assets for the Ottomans, like the Romans, as Barkey indicates “rather than attempt to impose new or uniform forms of rule, they built on and took advantages of systems already in place.”¹⁶⁷ In the large space where *metis* lies between the realm of genius, to which no formula can apply, and the realm of codified knowledge that can be learned by rote, empires need to maintain legitimacy, diversity, and various resources through a stable relationship with the intermediary elites.¹⁶⁸

For the regions the Ottomans conquered, it was therefore not very surprising that the prior dynasties kept their names in addition to very same fiefs demonstrated by the early cadastral surveys.¹⁶⁹ Where the lands conquered had non-Muslim

¹⁶⁵ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 174.

¹⁶⁶ Scott defines *metis* as a means of comparing the forms of knowledge embedded in local experience with the more general, abstract knowledge deployed by the state and its technical agencies. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 311-3. Apart from the Greek concept, *metis* also connoted the mixed and/or half-breed people in St. Lawrence-Great Lake's region in the American continent. J. E. Foster, "The Métis: the People and the Term," *Prairie Forum* 3, no. 1 (1978).

¹⁶⁷ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 70.

¹⁶⁸ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 316; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 1.

¹⁶⁹ Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650*, 184-5.

populations, such grants attested the Ottoman flexibility at the expense of the timar system.¹⁷⁰ In effect, to establish the Ottoman administration, the co-optation of local elites regardless of their confessions was a part of the Ottoman pluralism in terms of administration. That was why at the edges of the Western borderlands the Ottomans found it necessary to employ natives as auxiliary forces whose faithfulness according to İnalçık “was encouraged by special privileges [*sic.*], such as exemption from certain taxes.”¹⁷¹ It is therefore understandable that almost half of the timar-holders in the Balkans during the fifteenth century were Christians.¹⁷²

Apart from the timars, the Ottoman administration resorted to the deployment of irregular local military contingents who were almost entirely Christians. Similar to the yurtluk-ocaklık districts, frontier districts in the Balkans had also special military functions in return for certain confessions. As *derbendcis* were in charge of guarding passes, *voynuks* and *martoloses* performed other auxiliary military services.¹⁷³ For instance, *voynuks*, “soldier” in most Slavic languages, were irregular corps led by minor nobles of the Serbian kingdom mostly employed in interior Bulgaria in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.¹⁷⁴ Under a specific land and fiscal regime, the *voynuks* in the villages of Nikopolis (Niğbolu) were exempt from extraordinary taxes

¹⁷⁰ The establishment of Ottoman rule was a more complex task in the Balkans as the Ottomans encountered a society without any previous contact with Islam. Géza David, "Administration in Ottoman Europe," in *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, ed. Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (New York: Longman, 1995), 74.

¹⁷¹ İnalçık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," 107.

¹⁷² İnalçık notes 62 timariots out of 125 in the district of Branicheva in 1468, 60 out of 335 in Albania in 1431, and 36 out of 182 in the province of Trikala in 1455. *Ibid.*, 114. For Serbian timariots in the fifteenth century, see also Halil İnalçık, "Stefan Dušan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna: XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri," in *60. Doğum Yılı Münasebetiyle Fuad Köprülü Armağanı: Mélanges Fuad Köprülü* (Istanbul: Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi, 1953).

¹⁷³ David, "Administration in Ottoman Europe," 78. Apart from politically and/or militarily strategic regions, some occupational groups including *derbendcis* as well as miners, tar, extractors, horse breeders, saline workers, and gunpowder producers had been furnished with privileges with exemption from certain taxes. Adanır, "Semi-Autonomous Forces," 161.

¹⁷⁴ İnalçık, "Stefan Dušan'dan Osmanlı," 238. For a more close-to-date study, which however mostly relies on the same material İnalçık uses, on the *voynuks*, see Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986).

in return for the service of the imperial campaigns.¹⁷⁵ Despite the absence of land grants, *martoloses*, which were organized in accordance with the fashion of the Byzantine *akritai*, demonstrates the flexibility of Ottoman border policing. The *martoloses* resembled *akıncıs* (raiders) with the exception that the former were Christians and were charged with learning the location of the enemy and weakening their defence.¹⁷⁶

The Ottoman deployment of Christian peasants-in-arms was a form of pragmatism which maintained the pre-conquest status of lands in socioeconomic terms. *Bashtinas*, which were close to feudal fief prior to the arrival of the Ottomans, were granted to the *voynuks* in return for their services.¹⁷⁷ Despite its controversial nature, the inheritable nature of the *bashtinas* made it closer to *yurtluk-ocaklık* practice in a broader perspective of the Ottomans' maintenance of the conquered territories.¹⁷⁸ Following the conquest of Bosnia in 1463, thanks to the Ottoman concessions the old Bosnian nobility retained their hereditary *bashtina* lands that had previously been acknowledged by Bosnian kings.¹⁷⁹ In accordance with the rulers in Bosnia charged with making annual raids usually into Hungary, the Mihaloghlu family, who retained the hereditary governorship of Vidin and the leadership of the raiders in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, constituted a similar example as the

¹⁷⁵ Radushev, "Ottoman Border Periphery," 154.

¹⁷⁶ Occasional plunders they endeavoured were not discouraged with the obligation of honouring their commanders with one fifth of the booty. Ibid., 151.

¹⁷⁷ *Bashtina*, which means inheritance in Slavic languages, was mostly not different from the *çiftlik*s the Ottoman peasantry cultivated. However, there were other *bashtinas* granted to *doğancı*, *akıncı*, and *voynuk* corps. On *bashtinas* of the latter kind, see Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar*, 84-90.

¹⁷⁸ While peasantry *bashtinas*, in accordance with the *çift*, were inheritable, the *voynuk bashtinas* were in principle alienable and inheritable by the *voynuk*. Ercan, however, rightly notes whether the sale and grant of *voynuk bashtinas* changed according to historical circumstances. Ibid., 88. See also, İnalçık, "Stefan Dušan'dan Osmanlı," 239.

¹⁷⁹ İnalçık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," 116-7.

family enjoyed tax-free lands in Rumelia in return for making annual raids across the Danube or acting as vanguard and shock troops for the Ottoman forces.¹⁸⁰

The Rumanian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia posit a similar example of Ottoman polity in terms of dealing with the borderlands. That the Ottoman government entitled the princes with a certain degree of autonomy at the outset posits the limits, if not absence, of incorporation policies in this part of the western borderlands. The rule of the Ottoman state in the principalities depended on shared responsibilities. Even though the princes were entitled with prerogatives of the maintenance of the old order, protection of subjects, and protection of the country, the Ottoman government, apart from their tribute-payer status, asked the *voivodes* (a term of Slavic origin meaning warlords) to observe sultanic decrees in accordance with the political, military, and financial interests of the Porte.¹⁸¹

Despite its formulaic nature, the phrase “be friend of our friends and enemy of our enemies” illustrates the similarity between Kurdish *hükûmets* and Rumanian principalities. By this phrase, the Rumanian princes similar to the Kurdish emirs were obliged to refrain from the hostile acts against the Sultan, to participate with army in sultanic campaigns, to support the governors of nearby provinces, and to collect information about any hostile intention or action by the neighbouring states.¹⁸² In return, the Rumanian princes’ lands like *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* districts were exempted from cadastral surveys.¹⁸³ The established rule of princes in the Rumanian provinces which led to the perpetuity of the lord-vassal relationships at

¹⁸⁰ Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650*, 190. On this prominent family, see Orlin Sabev, “Osmanlıların Balkanları Fethi ve İdaresinde Mihaloğulları Ailesi (XIV.-XIX. Yüzyıllar): Mülkler, Vakıflar, Hizmetler,” *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, no. 33 (Spring 2013).

¹⁸¹ Viorel Panaite, “The Voivodes of the Danubian Principalities - As *Harâcğûzarlar* of the Ottoman Sultans,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003): 160.

¹⁸² The difference was of course the Habsburg Empire in the western borderland. The neighbouring states, however, were not limited to the Habsburg Empire, but included Hungary, Poland, and later Russia. *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁸³ Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, 103.

the time of the conquest brought about a feudal-like province in the following centuries, not very different from the relations of production observed in the later centuries in Ottoman Kurdistan.¹⁸⁴

Prior to the Ottoman conquest, Vidin was an important administrative centre for the Bulgarians as it had been the capital of one of the three Bulgarian kingdoms in the fourteenth century. The Ottoman conquest did not change the strategic importance of the city as it became a frontier district centre immediately after the conquest and retained its importance after the expansion in Central Europe in the sixteenth century as an immediate hinterland of the borderland with the main Ottoman adversary in the region, the Habsburgs.¹⁸⁵ The hereditary governorship established in Vidin had many characteristics in common with that of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* districts.¹⁸⁶ The specific status emerged with the exclusive predominance of *mîrî* regime at the expense of any *mülk* or *vakıf* lands. What made the administration in Vidin closer to that of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* administration took place in the gradual disappearance of the *timar* system in the subsequent centuries in line with the rest of the provinces. The hereditary governorship when juxtaposed with the replacement of *timars* with *mukata'as* (tax-farmed fiscal units) in the seventeenth century brought about a phenomenon resembling the basic principles of *yurtluk-ocaklık* landholding. The result was the following:

The regime, combined with the displacement of villagers during the wars at the end of the seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth

¹⁸⁴ Stoianovich, "Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy, 1600-1800," 407ff. For the peripheralisation of the Rumanian provinces in the following centuries, see Daniel Chirot, *Social Changes in a Peripheral Society: The Creation of a Balkan Colony* (New York: Academic Press, 1976).

¹⁸⁵ Rossitsa Gradeva, "War and Peace Along the Danube: Vidin at the End of the Seventeenth Century," in *Rumeli Under the Ottomans, 15th-18th Centuries: Institutions and Communities* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2004), 108.

¹⁸⁶ The impending danger of attacks across the borderland by bandits and the incessant battles with the Habsburgs led to the formation of a highly militarised society in which the majority of the Muslims were closely preoccupied with the defence of the town and the region despite their peacetime occupations *ibid.*, 109.

century, led to the formation of a specific system of land ownership in the area. *Tapu* deeds were no longer in the possession of peasants cultivating the land, but in the hands of new agents who intervened between the *nazırs*, acting as representatives of the sultan, and the direct cultivators. The *tapus* were bought usually by citizens of Vidin, mainly Janissaries, depriving villagers of their legal possession rights on the land.¹⁸⁷

In this regime, which came to be known as *gospodarlık*, the aghas who were given the use of mukata'a properties for life and who could pass their rights on to their sons, tried to benefit from the weakening in central control starting to act as if these lands were their private property.¹⁸⁸ The *gospodarlık* regime was essential in terms of the very limits of concessions the Ottoman government granted for the borderland districts.¹⁸⁹ It was not from its inception a privileged district as were those of the *yurtluk-ocaklık*, however the change in social and political developments led to a very similar case in the western borderlands. Even though the town lost its frontier characteristics in the course of the abolition of the *timar* system, the political consideration of the fact of the Muslim population being outnumbered by the non-Muslims led to the continuation of the control over the lands by means of Muslim aghas.¹⁹⁰ Accordingly, similar practices were in effect in the western borderlands as *čitlučene* (a corrupt version of *çiftlik* in Slavic languages) took hold in the adjacent in the pashalic of Belgrade.¹⁹¹ By the eighteenth century, the latter including soldiers mostly of janissary origin had already been involved in a network of agriculture and commerce in the district and as much as Vidin remained a porous borderland the

¹⁸⁷ "Osman Pazvantoğlu of Vidin: Between Old and New," in *The Ottoman Balkans, 1750-1830*, ed. Frederick F. Anscombe (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006), 119.

¹⁸⁸ Halil İnalçık, "Application of the Tanzimat and its Social Effects," *Archivum Ottomanicum*, no. 5 (1973): 125.

¹⁸⁹ For a brief discussion on *gospodarlık* regime, see *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1943), 83-107; Mark Pinson, "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period: The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 11, no. 2 (1975).

¹⁹⁰ "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat," 118.

¹⁹¹ Gradeva, "Osman Pazvantoğlu of Vidin," 119. In addition to the struggle for land, Belgrade was resembled Vidin in terms of disorder, sedition, inter-confessional violence and enmity in the mid-eighteenth century. Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 70. See also Robert W. Zens, "In the Name of the Sultan: Hacı Mustafa Pasha of Belgrade and Ottoman Provincial Rule in the Late 18th Century," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44, no. 1 (2012).

social conditions deteriorated thanks to the already oppressive land regime in the region.¹⁹²

The imperial policy at play did not undergo drastic changes in the sixteenth century as the Ottoman government, conceding its administrative capabilities, accepted the formation of numerous administrative units of special status. Out of this concession, the *yurtluk-ocaklık* districts were only one of the privileged districts. Vassalage, as the more general Ottoman flexibility deployed during the first Balkan conquests, continued with the conquest of Hungary.¹⁹³ As most strategic provinces were incorporated in line with regular provinces, two districts were created in the eastern parts of the country which were given to the pro-Ottoman Hungarian nobles.¹⁹⁴ More interestingly, their appointment by a *berat*, the type of certificate used during appointments of *sancak bey*, rather than *temessüks* or *ahdnames*, granted to the hereditary districts in eastern borderlands, indicated the short-life of the co-optation of the Hungarian nobilities.¹⁹⁵ “Although these provinces were part of the regular Ottoman administrative system with *timars* and regular cadastral surveys,” Ágoston notes, “actual administrative and taxation practices were different from that of the core zones.”¹⁹⁶ As a condominium, the Ottoman administration in Hungary

¹⁹² Virginia H. Aksan, "Whose Territory and Whose Peasants? Ottoman Boundaries on the Danube in the 1760s," in *The Ottoman Balkans, 1750-1830*, ed. Frederick F. Anscombe (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006), 63ff.

¹⁹³ As vassalage allowed local Christian landowners to remain on their lands and to feel privileged, on the side of the Ottomans, it was a policy of accommodation encouraging local populaces and nobles to accept the new rule through incentives and concessions prior to the fully incorporation. Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 87-8.

¹⁹⁴ The partial conquest in this context was a further evidence of Ottoman pragmatism and strategy. Considering the costs associated with the defence of such a distant province might curb the Ottoman strategy of a full conquest which was content with creating “a pro-Ottoman vassal state, a buffer zone” against the Habsburgs. Gábor Ágoston, "The Ottomans: From Frontier Principality to Empire," in *The Practice of Strategy from Alexander the Great to the Present*, ed. John Andreas Olsen and Colin S. Gray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 109.

¹⁹⁵ Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 23.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 24. For a brief account of the post-conquest Ottoman practises in Hungary, see "Defending and Administering the Frontier: The Case of Ottoman Hungary," in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (London; New York: Routledge, 2012).

shared the rights to taxation, jurisdiction, and administration with the previous Hungarian nobility.¹⁹⁷

The Ottoman imperial policy in peripheries was not confined to the Balkans as demonstrated by the origins of *yurtluk-ocaklıks*. As the relations the Ottoman navy established with North African corsairs in the western Mediterranean demonstrate, this policy was not a land-locked one. The imperial rivalry with the Habsburgs on the Hungarian Plains brought about an Ottoman accommodation in the western Mediterranean commensurable to the vassalage of the Hungarian notables. During the sixteenth century, the North African corsairs and the Ottomans developed a reciprocal cooperation where the corsairs, in return for imperial opportunities, backed the Ottoman navy in its struggle to challenge the Habsburg domination in the sea.¹⁹⁸

The accommodation the Ottoman polity devised in the sixteenth century was not limited to the western front. Similar to the Balkan provinces falling under Ottoman control, the hereditary district of Adana was maintained in the hands of the ruling Ramazanoğlu dynasty after they accepted the Ottoman sovereignty in 1516.¹⁹⁹ Apart from the Kurdish emirs, the local elites of Syria, most notably the Sunni Yamanis and the Druze Qaysis, who had been co-opted following the elimination of Mamluk officers.²⁰⁰ Accordingly the tolerance of the Ottoman polity regarding

¹⁹⁷ Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 25.

¹⁹⁸ On the side of the Ottomans, the operations of the imperial navy depended on secure and fortified ports in the western Mediterranean for provisions and intelligence. On the side of the corsairs, the opportunities offered there were greater including the right to recruit young boys from Anatolia, the legitimacy of the Ottoman titles (*beylerbeyi*), and the access to raw materials essential for shipbuilding and ammunition in the Ottoman realm. Needless to say, there were also economic opportunities in consideration. Emrah Safa Gürkan, "The Centre and the Frontier: Ottoman Cooperation with the North African Corsairs in the Sixteenth Century," *Turkish Historical Review* 1, no. 2 (2010).

¹⁹⁹ Only after almost a century did Adana become a regular district. Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 119.

²⁰⁰ Despite the Ágoston's narrative attributing much power to Fakhr al-Din Ma`ni, the Druze leader of the Shuf, Winter warns that the emir's payment of tribute and entitlement with the authority to rule over the Druze and other tribes of the coastland is a myth to endow the Ma`ni emirate with

religion was at play in the eastern borderland. Following the Ottoman occupation of the Georgian principalities of Guria, Imeretia, and Mingrelia, which lay to the northwest of the river Kura, in the heyday of the Ottoman Safavid rivalry, the Ottomans occupied the strategic southern territories of southern Georgia, establishing districts under the jurisdiction of the province of Erzurum; however, in the mountainous and thus difficult-to-conquer areas of Guria, Imeretia, Mingrelia Svanet and Abkhazeti as Ágoston writes “the Ottomans wisely permitted the rule of vassal Georgian princes who recognized the authority of the sultan by paying symbolic (but often irregular) tributes.”²⁰¹

Building upon the very definition of empires, which are legitimacy, control over elites and resources, and the maintenance of diversity, the Ottoman polity deployed in the western and eastern borderlands featured an imperial character.²⁰² In this sense, as much as the Byzantine combination of Roman political concepts and Greek culture demonstrated the flexible and adaptive rule, the same principles became the hallmark of the Ottoman Empire with its Islamic culture.²⁰³ The Ottomans in this sense merged the Roman imperial tradition, which was exclusively Mediterranean, with the tradition of Islamic empires in Eurasia and the Mogul

historical legitimacy. Albeit the administrative prerogatives, however, the local notables of Greater Syria dominated tax farm contracts. Ibid., 121; Stefan Winter, "The Kızılbaş of Syria and Ottoman Shiism," in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), 172.

²⁰¹ Furthermore, in southern Georgia, Minuchir, the region's former Georgian prince who converted to Islam, was appointed as the governor after the establishment of the province of Çıldır in 1578. Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 21-2.

²⁰² Following the definitions of Tilly and Barkey, an empire is a large composite polity linked to a central power by indirect rule realised by the retention of the establishment of particular, distinct compacts for the government of each segment and exercise of power through intermediaries enjoying considerable autonomy in return for some tribute or delivery of services. Charles Tilly, "How Empires End," in *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation Building: the Soviet Union and Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires*, ed. Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 3; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 3-27. For another definition stressing the dominance of core elites over peripheral elites by hierarchical or dictatorial means, see Alexander J. Motyl, *Imperial Ends: The Decay Collapse, and Revival of Empires* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). Salzmann, without reference to imperial terms and emphasis on the state dominance, underlines the highly localised organs of the premodern state followed by a peculiar form of standardization. Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*, 24-30.

²⁰³ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 19.

Empire in South Asia.²⁰⁴ Early modern empires by their very nature were and had to be flexible and diverse and privileged administrations in borderlands was a direct product of this polity.²⁰⁵

As it is very likely that the ‘imperial policy’ along with its sweeping standardisation might call for a myopic view from the centre, it was not the case. The very diverse methods to be devised by empires thwart any attempts at unification of peripheral strategies let alone the centrifugal tendency of the rulers in the borderlands. In addition to diversity, the borderlands look backward over their shoulders to metropolises in plural because they are meeting places where, as Darling notes, “two societies do not simply abut, they overlap.”²⁰⁶ Due to the overlapping, the empires had to deal very delicately with the borderlands in both western and eastern borderlands.²⁰⁷ In addition to hosting the site of intense imperial rivalry and fluid relations between the latter, the borderlands were beyond accepting homogeneous policies where still independent metis peoples negotiated favourable terms of trade with competing imperial regimes.²⁰⁸ In the same vein, empires’ generic formulas in these metis-zones were futile as it was the local knowledge leading to what Scott describes as “a successful translation of the necessarily crude

²⁰⁴ Marshall Hodgson describes the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mogul empires as the ‘gunpowder empires’ with commonalities in their centralised, agrarian, and tributary natures. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, vol. 3 *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974).

²⁰⁵ In this context, Khoury and Kennedy criticises that most comparative inquiries are mostly restricted to the early modern era and to the great land empires of Eurasia. Despite the promising yet inconclusive argument that empires of the west and the east, i.e., the British and the Ottoman, are commensurable in the nineteenth century, see Dina Rizk Khoury and Dane Kennedy, “Comparing Empires: The Ottoman Domains and the British Raj in the Long Nineteenth Century,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (2007).

²⁰⁶ Linda T. Darling, “Mediterranean Borderlands: Early English Merchants in the Levant,” in *The Ottoman Empire: Myths, Realities and 'Black Holes': Contributions in Honour of Colin Imber*, ed. Eugenia Kermeli and Oktay Özel (Istanbul: Isis, 2006), 174.

²⁰⁷ Of course, it was valid for the state in the other part of the borderlands. That is, the double triangle of power relations in a borderland included elites and people of borderlands with relations to be carried out by two, most often competing, states. Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel, “Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands,” *Journal of World History* 8, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 219ff.

²⁰⁸ Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History,” *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 3 (1999): 817.

general understandings to successful, nuanced, local applications.”²⁰⁹ Therefore, the imperial practices were by no means copycats in the two borderlands.²¹⁰

Once the borderland elites were incorporated, such imperial devices could be seen in *zamindars*, who were superior landholders and tax collectors in British India, and *caudillos* of the Latin American borderlands.²¹¹ The Russian incorporation of Cossacks into a frontier people, buffering Muscovy from the Tartars, in this context, had much common with the Ottomans’ establishment, if not maintenance, of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* districts in the Safavid borders.²¹² By the same token, the Habsburg policy in the Croatian borderlands during the seventeenth century, which awarded Serb and Vlach refugees *zadrugas* in return for military service, served to create a militarised society, not different from the Ottoman borderlands.²¹³ In general, the Habsburg expansion based on marriage alliances, the Russian expansion into Ukraine, Poland, Belarus or Central Asia furthers the exemplary case of contingent, parceled, and successive incorporation.²¹⁴ In this sense, it would be short-sighted to confine borderlands to the realm of two competing state powers. While borderlands

²⁰⁹ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 318.

²¹⁰ Arguing for the multiplicity of borderlands, Karpas warns that the Ottoman borderlands cannot be grouped in one single category, but must be regarded separately for each one of them defined its relationship with the Porte according to international and domestic conditions. Karpas, "Comments and Contributions," 1.

²¹¹ Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History," 217.

²¹² In the 1730s, the Russian Empire played the Cossacks card by arming the Cossacks and encouraging raids into the Ottoman realm. The Cossacks, therefore, became an important element in Russian imperial strategy in the southern frontiers where defensive and offensive measures were already blurred. Micheal Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500-1800* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 130-83. Even the expansion into Siberia in the late imperial period had to take regional specifics of the territories into account despite the establishment of monovalent model with centralisation and bureaucratisation of the administration. Anatolyi Remnev, "Siberia and the Russian Far East in the Imperial Geography of Power" in *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700-1930*, ed. Jane Burbank, Mark Von Hagen, and Anatolyi Remnev (Bloomington and Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2007), 431ff. See also, Charles Steinwedel, "How Bashkiria Became Part of European Russia, 1762-1881," *ibid.*, ed. Jane Burbank, Mark von Hagen, and Anatolyi Remnev (Bloomington and Indianapolis).

²¹³ *Zadruga*, or family holding, was very close to *çiftlik* in the classical Ottoman sense. However, a deliberate policy of the Habsburgs to populate the military border made it closer to the exceptional administration patterns observed in borderlands. John R. Lampe and Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 61-9.

²¹⁴ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 11.

could be any kind of region where states and people in the borderlands might have resorted to mutual cooperation with accommodative policies serving the both parties, highlanders and nomads constituted another borderland for imperial powers just because the two eluded the grasp of the state alike in the Mediterranean basin and Southeast Asia.²¹⁵ Even in the nineteenth century, when imperial policies of accommodation were replaced with overarching uniform principles, Kurdistan and also Albania, Transjordan, and Yemen, posed great distress for the Ottoman Empire.²¹⁶ The very geographic and political necessities of each borderland area necessitated a different approach to be devised by the Ottoman Empire among other empires.

In the borderlands, however, the terms of flexibility and co-optation were not everlasting. Depending on the especially political conditions of the day, the terms of negotiation between local rulers and the central government were incessantly contested. Especially local rulers, in the case of warfare, were able to extend their sphere of independent action and influence between the fringes of two states.²¹⁷ That the borderlands are always in motion, concessions and compromises were recalibrated depending on imperial urgencies.²¹⁸ As a result of recalibrations, empires accelerated the incorporation of condominiums into regular provincial

²¹⁵ James C. Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 101.

²¹⁶ Maurus Reinkowski, "Double Struggle, No Income: Ottoman Borderlands in Northern Albania," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003). Frederick F. Anscombe, "Albanians and "Mountain Bandits"," in *The Ottoman Balkans, 1750-1830*, ed. Frederick F. Anscombe (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006); Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Isa Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire: A Comparative Social and Political History of Albania and Yemen, 1878-1918* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2003); Thomas Kuehn, *Empire, Islam, and Politics of Difference: Ottoman Rule in Yemen, 1849-1919* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011).

²¹⁷ In the case of Ottoman-Safavid borderlands, Murphey expands this perspective to tribes who occupied an important role in both peacetime and wartime activities. Murphey, "Resumption of Ottoman-Safavid Border," 51.

²¹⁸ I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Identity, Movement, and Response," in *Understanding Life in the Borderlands: Boundaries in Depth and in Motion*, ed. I. William Zartman (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Darling, "The Mediterranean as a Borderland," 60-1. See also, "Mediterranean Borderlands: Early English Merchants in the Levant."

administration.²¹⁹ Whereas Hungarian notables retained their interests in taxation, justice, and administration, the hereditary rulers in eastern borderlands were not able to maintain most of their privileges because of the fading of the Safavid threat after the conquests in Azerbaijan and Iraq.²²⁰ However, the loss of privileges was not definite. That is, the expansion of the borderlands at the expense of the rival states throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries brought about new conquests and therefore new condominiums in the furthest edges of borderlands. However, this expansion did not always render the old condominiums which were then left behind the furthest edge of the borderlands trivial. Not only because of the benefits that the local rulers reaped in the days of Ottoman pragmatism leading to their consolidation now in the hinterlands but also because of the Ottoman logistics, the old condominiums still were able to exert significant pressure on the Ottoman attempts of incorporation.

The yurtluk-ocaklık regime was thus another condominium in the imperial sense that the Ottoman government delegated some of its authority to the local rulers of the peripheries. The delegation, while retaining the military security of the eastern borderlands, kept the previous political and economic structures almost intact. As a part of the imperial strategy in the peripheries, the yurtluk-ocaklık districts were a means of incorporation empires devised for co-optation and incorporation. As much as such policies seem reductionist in the sense that they treat all borderlands in the same bundle, the very flexibility and diversity of empires, in addition to the borderlands, precluded such uniform strategies. Furthermore, in this evolution, the

²¹⁹ It should be noted that regular provincial administrations were predicated on vertical integration by which agreement on financial and political policies were reached. Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 93.

²²⁰ Ágoston, "A Flexible Empire," 29. By the same token, with the turn of the sixteenth century the Ottoman interest in the western Mediterranean waned and so did the relations with the North African corsairs. Gürkan, "The Centre and the Frontier," 162.

Ottoman government was not the sole actor, but rather the Kurdish – and one can add Georgian and Turkish – yurtluk-ocaklık holders maintained ongoing bargaining with the government in return for the services they offered. As the initial concerns of the Ottoman Empire can be said to have somehow similar strategies in the borderlands, the power structure and terms of negotiation in each borderland shaped the future of the balance of power between the local rulers and the central government. Even though the Kurdish yurtluk-ocaklık holders maintained the essential privileges associated with the grants to a certain extent thanks to their particular political and military power until the early nineteenth century, the yurtluk-ocaklık regime was by no means a Kurdish peculiarity in this context, but rather a result of an imperial tradition.

The Gradual Liquidation of the Yurtluk-Ocaklık System

The hereditary land ownership by yurtluk-ocaklık holders enjoying a significant degree of fiscal autonomy turned into a problem in the eyes of the central and local Ottoman authorities in the early nineteenth century.²²¹ The change was evident in an Ottoman memo which stated that “because of the changing times (*inkılâb-ı zaman*) this kind of yurtluk-ocaklıks were abolished by all means.”²²² As the Ottoman government moved away from negotiated, distributive, flexible and accommodationist forms of imperial integration towards rational settlements and uniform rules and regulations, the yurtluk-ocaklık property which had been granted

²²¹ Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 162.

²²² BOA. A. AMD. 89/98, no date. See also, Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 83.

in return for the appreciated services was no longer deemed necessary by the Sublime Porte.²²³

This was of course a result of the administrative and fiscal centralisation of the Ottoman state in the early nineteenth century, to be heralded with the Edict of Gülhane.²²⁴ The increasing political and administrative capacity of the Ottoman state depended largely on its fiscal revenues necessitating a tighter grip on revenue sources outside the scope of the treasury. The attention the central government paid to the yurtluk-ocaklık system was therefore a consequence of this necessity as the yurtluk-ocaklık system contradicted the aims of the landholding and tax systems.²²⁵

However, the attempt at abolishing the privileged landholding pattern was not an easy task. As the governors in the eastern borderlands started voicing their discontent with regards to the status of the yurtluk-ocaklık property in the mid-1830s, the criticism of the statesmen was very careful not to disrupt the status quo in the region.²²⁶ The discontent was a consequence of the first phase of the centralisation in Ottoman Kurdistan during which the Ottoman governors acquired a more on-the-spot

²²³ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 286. For the subsequent collapse of the empire, see Çağlar Keyder, "The Ottoman Empire," in *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires*, ed. Karen Barkey and Mark Von Hagen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

²²⁴ For a classical account of the reforms in the early nineteenth century, see Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 1-54. For the political and financial aspects of the reforms particularly, see Musa Çadırcı, "Tanzimat'ın İlanı Sırasında Türkiye'de Yönetim, 1826-1839," *Belleten* 51, no. 201 (1988); Şevket Pamuk, "From Debasement to External Borrowing: Changing Forms of Deficit Finance in the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1914," in *Monetary and Fiscal Policies in South-East Europe, Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Şevket Pamuk and Roumen Avramov (Sofia: Bulgarian National Bank, 2006).

²²⁵ Shaw notes the main financial goals of the later Tanzimat reformers as "shifting the tax burden from the land to urban wealth, supplanting indirect with direct tax collection by salaried agents of the state, replacing the excise taxes, which were levied mainly on households and land plots regardless of ability to pay, and abolishing many of the historic exemptions which had been granted over the centuries." Most notably, the case of yurtluk-ocaklık system was related to the last goal as it constituted one of the biggest challenges in Ottoman state's efforts to establish a standardised landholding system and a rationalised tax system. Stanford J. Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6, no. 4 (1975): 421; Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 163.

²²⁶ The abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık property possessed by the Zirki emirs, which took place in the same years, constitutes an exception as most of the abolition process was realised following the introduction of Tanzimat reforms in the eastern provinces. See the next chapter.

information on the region.²²⁷ Presenting his discontent with the privileges of the Kurdish emirs, Reşid Mehmed Pasha, who was the governor-general of Sivas, suggested in 1835 the replacement of emirs with centrally-appointed officials. This would facilitate, he believed, the direct transfer of the revenues to the Treasury.²²⁸ In the meantime, Ahmed Pasha, the beylerbeyi of Çıldır, recommended the confiscation of yurtluk-ocaklık property in the provinces of Kars and Çıldır by the *Mansûre* Treasury, a treasury established in 1826 to finance the expenses of the Trained Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad (*Mu'allem Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye*). When the suggestion was discussed in Istanbul, the recommendation seems to have been rejected on the ground that it would deprive of yurtluk-ocaklık holders of their means of subsistence, which was regarded as a potential threat in the region. The following suggestion, which foresaw an allocation of two-thirds of the revenues that would be delivered to the Mansûre treasury as the other would be kept in possession of holders for life-time, was rejected, too.²²⁹

The initial concerns of the local authorities came onto the agenda of the Ottoman reformers following the introduction of the Tanzimat in the eastern borderlands. The Supreme Council, which was the engine of the reforms, became also the primary office in terms of negotiating the fate of the yurtluk-ocaklık property in the 1840s.²³⁰ In addition to the reforms which were discussed in the council to establish a more direct rule, the Tanzimat also stipulated the abolition of the yurtluk-

²²⁷ The first phase started with the appointment of Reşid Mehmed Pasha as the governor of Diyarbekir vested with extraordinary powers in 1834 and continued until 1839 with the next governor Hafız Mehmed Pasha. Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 30-7. For a detailed account, see the next chapter.

²²⁸ Furthermore he deemed the yurtluk-ocaklık property at the hands of Kurdish rulers in Mush useless as it was only possible to collect 150,000 kuruşes for the Reserve Army where the revenues of Mush province stood at 2,000 keses, i.e., 800,000 guruşes. Fatih Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler Bağlamında Bedirhan Bey Olayı" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ankara University, 2010), 11-2.

²²⁹ Gencer, "Merkezileşme Politikaları Sürecinde," 82.

²³⁰ On the scope and authority of the Council, see Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu, *Tanzimat Devrinde Meclis-i Vâlâ* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999).

ocaklık property. Reaction from different segments of society living in the borderlands was inevitable.²³¹ It was therefore after 1845 that the abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık system began in earnest in the aftermath of the introduction of reforms in the eastern borderlands. However, Özak-Gündoğan rightly warns that the military suppression of the Kurdish emirs was not the only option at their disposal, adding that “rather than having a grand plan toward all the emirates in the region, the Ottoman state developed its strategies on a case-by-case basis, taking multiple criteria into consideration.”²³²

Following the smooth restoration of the yurtluk-ocaklık property to the state treasury in Diyarbekir, the Supreme Council sought the possibility of expanding the procedures into the Erzurum region.²³³ The success in Diyarbekir, however, did not mean much as the governor and treasurer of Diyarbekir were not very enthusiastic due to the possible hazardous consequences of such an attempt in financial and security terms. Though it was possible to abolish some yurtluk-ocaklık property in the province of Erzurum, some of them was reserved due to the local conditions (*icâbat-ı mevki ‘ye*) and to problems with Iran.²³⁴

The abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık system was a gradual process. The considerate attitude of the Ottoman government was evident in a six-article-draft on regulating the abolition and its aftermath.²³⁵ The first article acknowledged the

²³¹ Çadırcı, however, attributes the primary role to the yurtluk-ocaklık holders. Needless to say, all segments of the society hitherto enjoying a less direct rule brining elites and commoners together resisted the reforms in the borderlands. Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2007), 192; Özak-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 160.

²³² "Ruling the Periphery," 162.

²³³ Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Türkiye*, 192. The smooth restoration took place in the districts of Palu and Eğil. However, not all the abolition processes was peaceful in Diyarbekir. For instance, the Zirki emirs, who will be the subject of the next chapter, did not relinquish their property without an open rebellion.

²³⁴ Ibid., 193. BOA. MVL. 2/24, 11 Cemaziyelahir 1261 (17 June 1845).

²³⁵ BOA. A. DVN. 12/45, 9 Cemaziyelahir 1261 (15 June 1845). The document has missing part(s) giving no information whereabouts, but the content gives the impression that the lands in question could be in Van, as the unknown emir's relations with Bedir Khan is dealt with a precise delicacy by the Ottoman government.

abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklıks; however, the draft did not find appropriate the appointment of a *müdür* (administrator of a district) for each district. Merging a few districts and appointing a *müdür* likewise constituted a problem as it was suspected that the holders of yurtluk-ocaklıks would not have refrained from wrongdoings and rebellions following the confiscation of the property and their exclusion from the administration of districts (*zâbit olamamalarından*). The second article had taken allocation of salary into consideration for the pasha who was eager to waive his yurtluk-ocaklık property in return for payment, the third article underlined the delicate situation in eastern borderlands. Despite the increase in revenues in the case of the introduction of reforms in the province, the authorities were concerned that the administrative reorganisation could lead the said pasha to cooperate with Bedir Khan. A possible rebellion set aside, the Ottoman government was very vigilant since the province was in a delicate location (*mevâki ‘-yi nâzike*), as the question of Iran had not yet been settled for good.²³⁶ Even though a military campaign was possible, the draft noted, it had not been taken into consideration, but rather the introduction of reforms in the province and the abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık system were postponed.

As in the case of establishment, the abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık system largely depended on the fate of the borderlands with Iran.²³⁷ In this sense, disturbing the prevailing power configuration in this delicate frontier zone was not a wise policy for the Ottoman authorities.²³⁸ By the same token, the opposition of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders to revenue and property surveys was tolerated by the Ottoman

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ For the developments in Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, see Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 52-85.

²³⁸ Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 163.

authorities.²³⁹ Once the status quo was altered by the rebellions of Kurdish emirs in Cizre, Van, and Hakkâri, the Ottoman state initiated military operations as a last resort, which paved the way for the second centralisation phase in Ottoman Kurdistan.²⁴⁰ Following the suppression of rebellion of the Bedir Khan in 1847, the provinces of Kurdistan and Van were established as an extension of the Tanzimat into the region.²⁴¹ The rebellion was a reaction to what Özoğlu describes as “a new administrative system enforced by the Ottoman central government that aimed at dividing Bedirhan’s land and weakening his authority.”²⁴² What followed in the aftermath was a new administrative system which left no room for the yurtluk-ocaklık property system in Ottoman Kurdistan.

In the meantime, the northern provinces that comprised of yurtluk-ocaklık provinces underwent a similar reorganisation. In 1847, the yurtluk-ocaklıks were partially abolished in the district of Çıldır.²⁴³ Complaining about the harassment of the holders in the region, the governor and treasurer of Erzurum were not content with the unfinished business of the yurtluk-ocaklık property as its abolition had been abandoned due to the delicate situation in the borderlands. Even though some of the

²³⁹ Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Anadolu Kentleri'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), 228.

²⁴⁰ Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 37-8.

²⁴¹ The rebellion led by the Buhtan Emirate under the leadership of Bedir Khan was also supported by other Kurdish emirs in the eastern borderlands. Studies on the rebellion and its consequences offer are rich, for a selection, see van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 177-80. Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 59-63, 70-2; Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 69-210. Particularly Nurullah Bey, the hâkim of Hakkâri, revolted following the suppression of Bedir Khan. The district of Hakkâri was expanded into a province in 1848. Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Vak'anüvîs Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi*, vol. VI-VII-VIII (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı-Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 1269.

²⁴² Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 71. There is however a significant amount of nationalist studies attributing proto-nationalist sentiments to the rebellion. See, for instance, Ahmet Kardam, *Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan: Direniş ve İsyan Yılları* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2011); Sinan Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde Kürtler ve Kürt Direnişleri (1817-1867)* (İstanbul: Doz Yayıncılık, 2007).

²⁴³ However, the abolition was not an overall peaceful process. The beys of Tavusker, Ardahan, Posof, Göle, Mirho, and Livane seemed to have agreed on a collective action to attack Erzurum in the summer of 1845 against the Ottoman government. The primary objection of the beys of Çıldır was the abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklıks. Considering the disorder in the Van region, the Ottoman government by means of Bekir Sami Pasha soothed the beys with the guarantee not to touch the yurtluk-ocaklık districts. Kızılkaya gives the date as 1851 noting however that the confiscation procedures took a long time due to the absence of the yurtluk-ocaklık registers. Oktay Kızılkaya, "XIX. Yüzyılın Ortalarında Çıldır Sancağı'nın Sosyo-Ekonomik Durumu," *Turkish Studies* 8, no. 5 (Spring 2013): 411-2.

revenues accrued by the property in question were confiscated by the Ottoman government, the ultimate abolition was extended in time.²⁴⁴

The Georgian districts seem to have undergone a similar transformation. In 1841, officials were charged with conducting surveys in the province of Trabzon, which included yurtluk-ocaklık districts Batum, Çürüksu, Acara-ı Ulyâ, Acara-ı Suflâ and Mahcil, but the strong opposition of the local notables made the Supreme Council take a step back, leaving the reforms to a later date.²⁴⁵ After the second attempt, the Tanzimat reforms were initiated in Trabzon in 1847. As the opposition seems to have persisted, the settlement of the yurtluk-ocaklık property was not at the top of the agenda. Despite the stipulation that yurtluk-ocaklık revenues belonged to the Treasury by the very nature of the Tanzimat, the local authorities were advised to follow “gradual means.”²⁴⁶ That is, it was planned that the yurtluk-ocaklık property would be eliminated not by means of confiscation, but rather by the avoidance of new grants and subsequent restoration to the Treasury. In the district of Çürüksu, in the province of Gönnye, two yurtluk-ocaklık villages were confiscated peacefully. With the death of Süleyman Bey, the former possessor of the villages, the property was inherited by his four sons who appeared to have died.²⁴⁷ When Süleyman Bey’s grandsons found out that the 13,000 guruşes were necessary to inherit the property in question, they petitioned the government claiming that their application had preceded the new order. It appears that the inheritance of the sons of the four beys was not continued, but rather each was granted a monthly stipend of 500 guruşes.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ BOA. A. MKT. 113/69, 29 Rebiülevvel 1264 (5 March 1848).

²⁴⁵ Çadircı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Türkiye*, 198.

²⁴⁶ Toraman, "Trabzon Eyaletinde Yurtluk-Ocaklık," 63ff.

²⁴⁷ The four beys were Mehmed, Arslan, Said, and İsmail. As İsmail was not found, Mehmed had six sons, Arslan and İsmail Beys had two and Said one. BOA. A. MKT. 28/2, 20 Rebiülahir 1267 (22 February 1851).

²⁴⁸ Toraman, "Trabzon Eyaletinde Yurtluk-Ocaklık," 64. BOA. A. MKT. 28/2, 20 Rebiülahir 1267 (22 February 1851).

The confiscation of yurtluk-ocaklık property in Palu and Eğil followed a similar, but more complicated pattern. The property was confiscated in 1852; however, the subsequent claims of both emirs, aghas, and cultivators of the lands led to a series of dispute among the claimants. Referring to the benevolent services they had provided the Ottoman state, it was decided that the emirs would be granted one-third of the yurtluk-ocaklık property as their own possession, with title-deeds. As the aghas were to be rewarded one-fifth of property, the remaining lands were to be auctioned.²⁴⁹ The yurtluk-ocaklık property in Eğil, was accordingly abolished in 1850. In accordance with the practices carried out in Palu, the one-third of the property was retained by the emirs of Eğil.²⁵⁰ The settlement in Palu followed a course similar to the beys of Çıldır. Having refrained from making an outright move, the Ottoman government did wait for the natural death of Abdullah Bey, the hâkim of Palu, until 1859. The death of the hâkim was a facilitation of the Ottoman ends in the district as yurtluk-ocaklık property would revert to the central treasury in the absence of a primary heir.²⁵¹

The liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık regime which started in earnest in the mid-1830s accelerated in the mid-1840s. However, to conclude that the system was entirely eliminated in 1840s would be a mistake. The process, which was followed by the central and local authorities of the Ottoman government, was, if anything, gradual. Merged with the potential discontent of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders in the case of cessation of their privileges, the proximity to the borderlands was one of the

²⁴⁹ "Tanzimat'ın Yurtluk-Ocaklık ve Hükümet Sancaklarda Uygulanması (1839-1864)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Fırat University, 2010), 97-8; Özok-Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State," 194-5.

²⁵⁰ BOA. ŞD. 1453/21, 14 Zilkade 1287 (5 February 1871). As late as 1871, Ragıp and Tayfur Beys still seem not to have possessed their property due to the absence of the distribution of the share of lands. The petitioning emirs asked for a redistribution of land similar to the one conducted in Palu. Following the petition, land officers were assigned to the province of Diyarbekir. BOA. ŞD. 1453/22, 12 Safer 1288 (3 May 1871).

²⁵¹ Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 172.

factors which led the Ottoman authorities to pay the utmost attention to smooth transition in the abolition process. In the meantime, the central government maintained the liquidation process as a process of negotiation.

As the next section discusses, the terms of compensation included not only the political co-optation of the once privileged servants of the empire, but also financial gains the loss of the means of subsistence incurred. The terms of compensation accordingly made the liquidation process a question beyond the political considerations. Economic calculations were also given a thought in terms of the cost of appointing governors in regions once ruled by the local emirs and providing the holders with enough stipends for their subsistence. In this sense, the liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık property and its aftermath paved the way for contested negotiations to be concluded between the holders and the Ottoman government.

Practices after the Liquidation: Restoration, Co-optation, and Stipends in Return

The liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık property abolished the political and financial benefits associated with the lands in question, but the Ottoman government took particular measures not to alienate the yurtluk-ocaklık holders. The liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık property was absolute, but the following period offered the servants of the empire a great deal of opportunities in proportion to their political and economic statuses. These opportunities included the co-optation of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders into the Ottoman administrative domain as well as stipends in return for confiscated property.

The gradual fall of the yurtluk-ocaklık regime, along with other reform packages, set the scene for a facilitated acceleration of Ottoman penetration into the

borderlands. Regardless of its partiality, property falling under the category of yurtluk-ocaklıks had been reverted to the Treasury by the 1850s. The co-optation in this sense expanded to include the possibilities of appointed as local administrators (müdür) of districts.²⁵² Behlül Bey, who possessed large yurtluk-ocaklık property in the district of Bayezid, actively negotiated to minimise his loss after the liquidation. He only agreed to the government's plan provided that he would be compensated with a reasonable salary as an appointed administrator in his district.²⁵³

Even the exile of the rebellious emirs did not preclude negotiation and co-optation by the Ottoman state. For instance, Bedir Khan was sent with his extended family to Candia and was given a salary in return for the yurtluk-ocaklık property.²⁵⁴ Şeref Bey of Mush, who had rebelled against the Ottoman forces, was exiled to Damascus. In the same vein, the Sublime Porte took all measures for the bey and his extended family during their travel from Kurdistan to Damascus.²⁵⁵ Nurullah Bey of Hakkari, who had rebelled after the suppression of the rebellion of Bedir Khan, was exiled to Crete. Immediately after the exile, however, he was given the rank of "head of the palace doorkeepers," and pardoned with a salary increase provided that he would not communicate with his homeland.²⁵⁶

Apart from the measures to co-opt the major emirs of Kurdistan, the confiscation and the subsequent restoration of yurtluk-ocaklık property followed a more or less standard pattern. The Ottoman government, as further acknowledgement

²⁵² Even though Çadırcı claims that it strengthened the futility of reforms in Ottoman Kurdistan, it was a result of the absence of the means to fully consolidate and expand jurisdictional, administrative and military authority in the borderlands. Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Türkiye*, 92-6; Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 82.

²⁵³ Özok-Gündoğan, "Ruling the Periphery," 164.

²⁵⁴ Furthermore, he was allowed to collect revenue from his private lands. Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 83.

²⁵⁵ His yurtluk-ocaklık property was confiscated and was administered by the state (*emâneten*). As a further instance of co-optation, the revenues of the property in question were assessed by an official appointed by the governor of Kurdistan and an appointee by Şeref Bey. BOA. A. MKT. 225/82, 3 Zilkade 1265 (20 September 1849).

²⁵⁶ Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 83.

of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders, granted stipends in return for the escheated property. Even though the discourse of the central government would at times oscillate between the grant of stipends as a compensation for the escheated property and a mere charity grant in the following decades, the liquidation of yurtluk-ocaklık property provided all holders with stipends in proportion to the revenues of the property.²⁵⁷ Generally, stipends came to be granted by a *berat*, a Sultanlic diploma, in proportion with the annual revenue of the property confiscated. They were inheritable to sons and would only revert to the Treasury in case of the death of the heirs (*nesilleri münkarız oldukda*).²⁵⁸ The stipends of the deceased could be claimed by other members of the extended family.²⁵⁹ Considering the size of the families of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders, the possibility of an end to the payments did not seem likely.

The clarity about the inheritance rules, however, was not observable in the further allocation among family members. That is, the allocation of stipends among brothers who had collectively possessed the yurtluk-ocaklık property seems to have followed an arbitrary pattern. However, the determination of the base amount constituting stipends was quite definite. As a precaution to prevent excess payments, the Ottoman financial officials took the average of the two years revenues of the yurtluk-ocaklık property into account while calculating the base level of stipends.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ The question of stipends whether they were granted as a benevolent grant (*`atiye-yi seniyye*) of the sultan or compensation in return for their confiscated property (*emlâk-ı mazbûta mukâbilinde*) constituted a debate throughout the century. See, Yener Koç, "Bedirxan Pashazades: Power Relations and Nationalism (1876-1914)" (M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2012), 50-1.

²⁵⁸ BOA. A. AMD. 85/63, no date. However, the stipends in question to be granted to the holders of yurtluk-ocaklıks in Hakkârî would start from 1848 [A.H. 1265] onwards. The inheritance of stipends included girls, Gencer argues, following the enforcement of the Land Code in 1858. Gencer, "Merkezleşme Politikaları Sürecinde," 92.

²⁵⁹ For instance, Osman Bey, who had possessed yurtluk-ocaklık property in Acara-ı Suflâ, asked for the addition of the stipend granted to his brother Yusuf Bey after his death without children. BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 196/71, 6 Safer 1273 (6 October 1856).

²⁶⁰ Taking a two-year average was a common practice in the course of liquidation of yurtluk-ocaklıks in the empire. Toraman, "Tanzimat'ın Yurtluk-Ocaklık," 164.

Following the confiscation of yurtluk-ocaklık villages in the district of Hizan, the subject of stipends to be granted was discussed in the central government. On the amount of the stipends due to the confiscated villages, Şeref Bey and his brothers also asked for the consideration of a two year average as “such an amount of tithe would change from year to year.”²⁶¹ As the first option of compensation included one-third of the revenues accrued by the villages and the second one offered a monthly sum of three thousand guruşes.²⁶² Considering the auction amount of the villages, which was 121,000 guruşes, the second option was favoured by the central treasury a little bit more as the residual amount deduced from the one-third would probably be reverted to the treasury. However, the determination of amounts was not closed to negotiation.²⁶³

As the assessment of revenues generated by the yurtluk-ocaklık property took some time, the Sublime Porte ensured the subsistence of those whose property was confiscated. Particularly, in the district of Çıldır, until the stipends were determined by means of the surveys, the government deemed a lump-sum payment appropriate. What the government paid attention to was not merely financial ease, but also political concerns. As Çıldır was regarded as a delicate region, the authorities found the appraisal and favour (*taltîf ve tatyîb*) of the holders as a local necessity.²⁶⁴ By the same token, back payments and arrears were handled duly by the Ottoman government. In a petition of Süleyman, Ahmed and İbrahim Beys, who were the owners of the yurtluk-ocaklık villages in Pertekrek, Lazistan, complained that they

²⁶¹ BOA. A. AMD. 29/16, 23 Rebiülevvel 1267 (25 January 1851).

²⁶² BOA. A. DVN. 58/89, 27 Cemaziyelevvel 1266 (10 April 1850). The difference in allocation of stipends among brothers is however ambiguous. Şeref Bey would receive 2,000 guruşes while his two brothers received too five hundred guruşes.

²⁶³ As a result of correspondence between Muş and Istanbul, the ultimate amount was set at 3,500 guruşes. BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 7/39, 3 Receb 1266 (15 May 1850). Gencer wrongly notes the ultimate amount as three thousand guruşes. Gencer, "Merkezîleşme Politikaları Sürecinde," 89. In the end Şeref Bey was to receive 2,000 guruşes and his brothers Derviş and Nurullah Beys 750 guruşes. BOA. A. MKT. UM. 20/27, 15 Şevval 1266 (24 August 1850).

²⁶⁴ BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 82/81, 8 Şevval 1269 (15 July 1853).

had not received the three-year payment before 1852 despite the confiscation of their property in 1849. As the revenue of the three-year period remained with the cultivators, the *kâ'immakam* (governor of a province) of Lazistan was ordered to settle the problem.²⁶⁵ The options at the disposal of Ottoman authorities between security and reform depending on the region, the Ottoman eastern borderlands were the region in which security concerns overwhelmed the reform initiatives.²⁶⁶

The liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık system ensured the restoration of the property to the State treasure to a great extent; however, the subsequent practices became the source of long-contested issues. That is, petitions associated with either the inheritance of a deceased individual's stipends or augmentation in amounts continued throughout the nineteenth century.²⁶⁷ The gradual yet perpetual dissolution of yurtluk-ocaklık property while bringing property back to the treasury imposed additional fiscal and political burdens on the Ottoman state. By "perpetual" what is meant is not the dissolution extended over a long time span, but also its aftermath. The stipends granted in return for yurtluk-ocaklık property made the regime a perpetual one albeit with a different guise. Since the payments acknowledged the very fact that the yurtluk-ocaklık property did not fall under the state-owned lands but rather converged freehold property, the following compensation period perpetuated privileges associated with ownership of the property in question for centuries. A draft in 1894, to this effect, asked for the restoration of the stipends

²⁶⁵ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 405/71, 25 Şevval 1276 (16 May 1860).

²⁶⁶ Frederick Anscombe, "Continuities in Ottoman Centre-Periphery Relations, 1787-1915," in *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, ed. A. C. S. Peacock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

²⁶⁷ Problems related to land redistribution persisted as well. Especially in the districts of Palu and Eğil, the settlement, if any was reached, continued until the last quarter of the century. Peasants in Eğil, for instance, petitioned on their inability to pay the down payment for the two-thirds of the once confiscated yurtluk-ocaklık property and asked for an exemption of the payment. BOA. ŞD. 2586/11, 18 Cemaziyelahir 1309 (19 January 1892). On Palu, see Özok-Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State."

those who died without children to the treasury.²⁶⁸ As it was once again concluded that stipends in return for yurtluk-ocaklık should be inherited by all members of the family, the payments were continued until the fall of the Empire.

Conclusion

In accordance with pragmatism in terms of the newly conquered regions, the yurtluk-ocaklık system was a continuation of the imperial policy the Ottomans devised for the rivalry with the Safavids in the sixteenth century. However, the pragmatism was not confined to the Ottoman state, but rather included the local leaders in the borderlands who opted to collaborate with the government for their own interests. In particular, the Kurdish rulers who sided with the Ottoman government obtained political and economic privileges depending on the day-to-day developments in the borderlands. Beyond the nationalist-narratives which have attempted to downplay the autonomous features of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet districts to emphasise the central authority of the Ottoman state, there was a condominium in the eastern borderlands. As a result of the shared responsibilities in administration of the borderlands, the Ottoman Empire demanded fewer duties, such as acknowledgement of suzerainty, payment of tribute or maintenance of law and order. For the realisation of these duties, the yurtluk-ocaklık holders were provided with relative political and economic autonomy to administer their districts.

The collective administration envisaged by the Ottoman state, while it did not radically alter the political establishments in the borderlands, was not eternal. First, the political conditions of the day determined the power of balance in the

²⁶⁸ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 245.

condominium. That is, in periods of relative tranquillity vis-à-vis the enemy at the gate, the Ottoman government took measures to change the tide in favour of a more central administration whereas in times of warfare, the logistic considerations to which the Ottoman forces paid the utmost attention gave the yurtluk-ocaklık holders the upper hand for the negotiation of further privileges. Second, as the borders expanded eastwards in the sixteenth century, the new borderlands gained more importance compared to the ones left in the hinterland. Particularly, the yurtluk-ocaklık districts in the province of Kurdistan were crucial for the Ottoman forces up to the peace in 1555. The resumption of the mutual hostility between the two empires in the second half of the century shifted towards the northern parts of the borderland. As new yurtluk-ocaklık districts were established in the region, the ones that had been established earlier, however, did not lose their significance. In addition to their still crucial functioning as a hinterland on the side of the Ottoman government, the yurtluk-ocaklık holders in the southern parts augmented their power bases thanks to the advantages the initial Ottoman pragmatism had offered. Despite the decrease in importance, the Kurdish yurtluk-ocaklık holders were generally able to establish and maintain their political authority in the region in the course of the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry.

Regarded as frontier districts of the Ottoman Empire, the yurtluk-ocaklık lands from the perspective of Ottoman practices can be elaborated in this broader conceptualisation rather than as having been a peculiarity in Ottoman Kurdistan. Despite the scarcity, the Kurdish nationalist-narrative tends to regard the yurtluk-ocaklık districts as a Kurdish peculiarity. As it was out of question that the Kurdish yurtluk-ocaklık holders with the relations they established with the Ottoman government for almost three centuries were noteworthy in terms of autonomy they

came to enjoy, the yurtluk-ocaklık was not a Kurdish phenomenon per se. Apart from the districts established in parts of Georgia and provinces of Erzurum and Trabzon, the yurtluk-ocaklık districts were beyond the eastern borderlands and resembled an imperial policy based on institutional flexibility and diversity. In this context, the regime with prerogatives in administration, finance, and jurisdiction called for a more general motive of Ottoman co-optation, resembling not only those in the other borderlands of the empire, but also imperial policies both on historical and geographical levels.

The policy devised for such borderlands was imperial in the sense that the Ottomans, like the Romans, the Romanovs, and the Habsburgs, had conceded at the very first place the limits of their rule by acknowledging the geographic reach of their control and the scarce manpower.²⁶⁹ The yurtluk-ocaklık regime in this sense was a product of imperial continuity featuring only one kind among multiple systems of rule and forms of revenue management. Geographically, it is evident that the yurtluk-ocaklık system was nothing but a continuation of an Islamic imperial tradition, including soyurghals employed by the Timurids, Qara-Qoyunlu and Aq-Qoyunlu, and Safavid dynasties in Iran and Central Asia. Despite the different course of each special administration in imperial borderlands, the gospodarklık regime in Vidin as well as the voivodes of the Danubian principalities posits a parallel course of developments in the sense that the political autonomy gave rise to an economic autonomy ending up with a landed notable class. The fact that aghas and boyars in the western borderlands were granted title deeds in the following centuries to the detriment of peasants, which led to a feudal-like regime, makes yurtluk-ocaklık property commensurable to the former. Furthermore, the oft-cited quasi-feudal

²⁶⁹ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 70. Needless to say, the borderlands in this context were beyond the metis zone between two empires, but included peripheral areas with a limited and/or challenged imperial rule.

structures had been present in the eastern borderlands from the very beginning since the lands were bestowed to yurtluk-ocaklık holders by temliknâmes bestowing absolute and hereditary immunities from the central authorities.

In conclusion, the yurtluk-ocaklık regime, not discarding the historical changes throughout the centuries, brought about a feudal-like land-holding regime, rather than a revenue-holding one, in the eastern borderlands.²⁷⁰ It was very this privileged land-holding regime the Ottoman government in the early nineteenth century objected. With the centralisation drive that translated into some reforms, the Sublime Porte was no more content with the diverse structures in the borderlands because of the changing of times. Despite the discontent, the very fact leading to the emergence and perpetuation of the yurtluk-ocaklık system, the imperial rivalry in the eastern borderlands, still influenced the fate of the regime. The abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands was therefore gradual yet perpetual. The Ottoman government, partly due to the imperial services the yurtluk-ocaklık holders had provided for centuries, and partly due to the political considerations in the borderlands, paid the utmost attention to a smooth abolition of the privileged land system.

Not very differently from the imperial practices carried out in the establishment of yurtluk-ocaklık districts centuries ago, the terms of the abolition and its aftermath followed a diverse model. Depending on the power balance, the Ottoman government accomplished a rather peaceful elimination of the system in some regions whereas the military option as a last resort was not refrained in others. What they had all in common was, however, the practices after the liquidation of the

²⁷⁰ On the fate of vakıf holdings in the age of Mehmed II, there is a debate between İnalçık and Özel. Özel claims that the freehold owner did not own the land itself, but was “simply a revenue-holder with no immunities, and the duration of his holding depended on his loyalty to the state.” İnalçık, on the contrary, cites examples of temliknâmes and soyurghals as an indication of change from the state-controlled lands to private properties. What is meant by land-holding rather than revenue-holding here therefore indicates a change in property rights. Oktay Özel, "Limits of the Almighty: Mehmed II's 'Land Reform' Revisited," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42, no. 2 (1999): 230ff; İnalçık, "Autonomous Enclaves," 117-8.

yurtluk-ocaklık regime. As a measure to ensure the co-optation of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders, the Sublime Porte bestowed the now-abrogated yurtluk-ocaklık holders with stipends in proportion to their revenues. While co-optation was another approach of Ottoman pragmatism in the lands in which its administrative means, if not its suzerainty, was barely acknowledged, one thing was certain; the liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık property.

CHAPTER III

DEPOSING THE ZIRKIS: THE REFORM, THE FALL OF THE KURDISH EMIRATES AND YURTLUK-OCAKLIK LANDS IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

With the centralisation drive of the Ottoman Empire, the flexible administrations of the earlier centuries were reassessed on the agenda of the Sublime Porte in the early nineteenth century. Caught in the midst of internal rebellion, the Ottoman government was reckless against threats throughout the empire. Following the recognition of the landed class in 1808 thanks to the Deed of Agreement, the Sublime Porte with the decisive leadership of Mahmud II, endeavoured to eliminate first the Anatolian notables, including Çapanoğlu and Karaosmanoğlu in the early 1810s, and second the Balkan notables extending from Albania, Macedonia, and Thessaly plains to the Danubian shores and much of Wallachia between 1814 and 1820. The suppression of Arab notables, despite its long course throughout the nineteenth century, began in the same decade following the suppression of the Wahhabi revolt in 1818.²⁷¹ In addition to the Serbian revolt in 1815, the Greek Revolution in 1821 distressed the Ottoman presence in the Balkans once Ali Pasha of Tepelenë made an ultimate overture to the Greek rebels prior to his fall.²⁷²

While in the Balkans the rise of the Albanian pashas constituted a close threat to the Sublime Porte, Ottoman Kurdistan was not different. In an era in which the Ottoman administration experienced serious threats from the Russian empire and the

²⁷¹ For a political background of the first two decades of the century, see Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire* vol II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, 8-19.

²⁷² For Albanian pashas, and particularly Ali Pasha of Tepelenë, see Dennis N. Skiotis, "From Bandit to Pasha: First Steps in the Rise to Power of Ali of Tepelen, 1750-1784," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2, no. 3 (1971); Katherine Elizabeth Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Hamiyet Sezer, "Tepedelenli Ali Paşa'nın Oğulları," *AÜ DTCF Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 17, no. 28 (1995); "Tepedelenli Ali Paşa'nın Çiftlikleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma."; "Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Oğullarının Çiftlik ve Gelirlerine İlişkin Yeni Bilgi – Bulgular."

Qajar dynasty, the influence of the great powers was far away from absent in the eastern parts of the empire.²⁷³ Following the Russo-Turkish War of 1829-29, in which the northern Kurdish tribes assisted the Russian troops, the southern Kurdish emirates strove to reap the benefits in southern Kurdistan. Kör Muhammed of Rawanduz, or Mîrê Kor in Kurdish, whom the Ottoman administrators called Mehmed Pasha, accelerated his expansionist policies during that period.²⁷⁴ The possibility of the emir's cooperation with Ibrahim Pasha, Mehmed Ali's Son, similarly accelerated the Ottoman campaign.²⁷⁵

The current literature, more often than not, deals with the greater emirates, respectively their rapid rise and falls. In this context, one can see various studies elucidating Kurdish emirates such as the Baban, Soran, Buhtan, and Hakkari.²⁷⁶ The search for the early origins of Kurdish nationalism in the nineteenth century underlies the interest in the particular examples of Bedir Khan and Nurullah Bey.²⁷⁷ Setting the historical background of a Kurdish confederacy, the Zirki emirs in Tercil, Atak, and Hani in the immediate northeast of Diyarbakir, this chapter will elucidate an emirate with their relationships with the central government as well as other

²⁷³ For a brief account of Ottoman-Qajar relations in the nineteenth century, see Stanford J. Shaw, "Iranian Relations with the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 7 From Nadir Shah to the Islamic Republic, ed. Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, 31-85.

²⁷⁴ For the rise of the emirate of Soran led by the Mir Kor Muhammed Pasha and the emirate of Baban respectively, see Michael Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates: The Impact of Ottoman Reforms and International Relations on Kurdistan during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no. 2 (2008): 249-54; Metin Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier: The Babans (1500-1851)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg, 2013).

²⁷⁵ For Mehmed Ali, see Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

²⁷⁶ For a brief discussion on these major emirates, see van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 175-82. Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 51-68; David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 38-48.

²⁷⁷ Nationalist studies which replace the Ottoman centralisation with a clear Kurdish 'rebellion' do not leave a contested space in which the centralisation attempt at one hand and the resistance of the Kurdish beys shape and reshape each other. See for instance, Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde Kürtler ve Kürt Direnişleri (1817-1867)*; Kardam, *Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan; Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan: Sürgün Yılları* (Ankara: Dipnot, 2013).

Kurdish emirates in the Diyarbekir proper. By doing so, this chapter attempts to shed light on rather minor emirates in the outskirts of the province of Diyarbekir with the evolution of their political and economic configurations between the sixteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the struggle of the Zirki beys, who administered several semi-independent lands outside the reach of the Ottoman Empire yet very close to the capital of the province of Diyarbekir, had much in common with the major emirates of central and southern Kurdistan in the early nineteenth century, their fall was similar to that of the Kurdish emirs who waged open rebellion against the Ottoman forces and were defeated in the end.

In this context, this chapter will firstly present the setting of the province of Diyarbekir in geographical terms. Delineating the geographical boundaries of the province, the chapter will offer a historical geography of the region as geographical factors in addition to political, social, and economic ones determined the history of Diyarbekir from the beginning of the Ottoman conquest. Having laid the general outlines of the province, the chapter will describe the land and people of Hazro, Lice, and Hani, which hosted the Zirki emirs for almost three centuries. Once the social and economic tenets of three major districts are laid down, the second part of the chapter will deal with the historical background of Zirki emirs. This section deals mostly with the political relations the Zirki emirs had established with the Ottoman authorities as well as other Kurdish rulers in the region. As the Zirki emirs, similar to their fellow rulers in the region, collaborated with the Ottoman forces during the sixteenth century, this part narrates the political developments along the trajectory of collective administration vis-à-vis the Ottoman government. The early attempts of centralisation on the side of the Sublime Porte, while ending the centuries-lasting-flexible arrangements the Kurdish rulers had enjoyed, however

changed the infrastructure of political arrangements devised for Ottoman Kurdistan. The imminent threat of centralisation provoked discontent among the Kurdish rulers, the Zirki emirs not being an exception, which led to the fall of the emirs and their autonomous rule in the eastern periphery.

The Historical Geography of Diyarbekir

“Approaching from the West,” Soane wrote in 1914 “Diarbekr is not beautiful nor [sic.] remarkable. In the middle of a great desert, the river, too, hidden by its cliff banks, Diarbekr appears as a citadel of black stone without any green or vegetation.”²⁷⁸ Allegory set aside, Diyarbekir has hosted many empires throughout history. Founded as Tigranakert after the name of the Armenian King Tigranes in the last century BC, the city constituted the fourth Armenian kingdom of the Roman Empire.²⁷⁹ Following the Muslim conquest of the region in the mid-seventh century the Arabs named Upper Mesopotamia al-Jazirah, i.e. the Island between the Tigris and Euphrates and Amid hosted the province of Diyarbekir after the Arab tribe of Bekir.²⁸⁰ The Ottoman conquest retained the prominence of the city in Kurdistan, geographically defined as a triangular extending from the Lakes Van and Urmia in the east and the source of the Tigris in the west to the sources of the Kerha and

²⁷⁸ Of course, he revises his first impression after seeing the gardens and states apologetically that the cliff upon which the city stands is invisible from the west. Ely Banister Soane, *To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise: with Historical Notices of the Kurdish Tribes and the Chaldeans of Kurdistan* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1914), 57. For a collection of journeys passing through Diyarbekir, see M. Şefik Korkusuz, *Seyahatnamelerde Diyarbekir* (Istanbul: Kent Yayınları, 2003).

²⁷⁹ Richard G. Hovannisian, ed. *Armenian Tigranakert/Diarbekir and Edessa/Urfa* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2006).

²⁸⁰ Accordingly the southern regions were named Diyâr Rabî`ah and Diyâr Mudar after the tribes of Rabî`ah and Mudar. Guy Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate: Mesopotamia, Persia, and Central Asia from the Muslim Conquest to the Time of Timur* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 86. See also Şemseddin Sami, "Diyarbakir," in *Kamusu'l-A`lâm*, Vol. 3 (Istanbul: Mihran Matbaası, 1891).

Diyala in the south.²⁸¹ In administrative terms, the province of Kurdistan in the nineteenth century contained what Taylor describes as “a great portion of the fourth Armenia, the whole of Arzanene, Zabdicene and Gordyena or Cordouene, and Northern Mesopotamia.”²⁸²

In this greater geography, the city and the province of Diyarbakir constituted the northern part of Kurdistan. The province itself is a deep depression surrounded by Anti-Taurus Mountains in the north, which heads the southwest direction in the western part, the Karacadağ in the northwest-southeast direction, and the Mardin Mountains in the southeast.²⁸³ The greater region is the foreland of the Taurus Mountains, a region of extensive limestone plateaus 500 to 600 meters high dissected by a network of valleys.²⁸⁴ In this sense, the plateau in general differs from the Iraq valleys in the south. Due to the insignificant rainfall and slope, the plateau lacks any deep valleys compared to southern Kurdistan.²⁸⁵ Apart from this distinction, the province of Diyarbakir can be further divided to four geographical zones: the centre of the province, infamous with the French proverb “*pierres noires, chiens noirs, coeurs noirs*,” thanks to its basaltic rocks, the northern part extending from west to east as a part of the Anti-Taurus range, the southern part which was largely flat and

²⁸¹ Kurdistan was surrounded by Azerbaijan in the northeast, Iran-Iraq in the east, Lurestan and Arabic Iraq in the south, al-Jazirah in the southwest, and Anatolia in the northwest. Sami likens Kurdistan to a triangle and a pear whose sharp edge heads the northeast direction. "Kürdistan," in *ibid.*, Vol. 5 (1896).

²⁸² Arzanene is the Armenian historical region of modern Garzan, J. G. Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan, with Notices of the Sources of the Eastern and Western Tigris, and Ancient Ruins in Their Neighbourhood," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 35(1865): 22. Ainsworth divides Kurdistan, mostly along political lines, into four districts: Buhtan, Hakkâri, Rawanduz, and Amadiyah. William Ainsworth, "An Account of a Visit to the Chaldeans, Inhabiting Central Kurdistân; And of an Ascent of the Peak of Rowândiz (Tûr Sheikhîwâ) in Summer in 1840," *ibid.* 11(1841): 21-2.

²⁸³ Sami, "Diyarbakir." James Silk Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia Including a Journey from Aleppo to Bagdad by the Route of Beer, Orfah, Diarbekr, Mardin, & Mousul*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (London: 1827, 1827), 373.

²⁸⁴ Sırrı Erinç and Necdet Tunçdilek, "The Agricultural Regions of Turkey," *Geographical Review* 42, no. 2 (1952): 199. For further information on the geological features of the region, see İ. Enver Altınlı, "Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu'nun Jeolojisi," *MTA Dergisi*, no. 66 (1966); Basri Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı* (Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1936), 5-13; Şevket Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakir Coğrafyası* (İstanbul: Şehir Matbaası, 1962), 2-15.

²⁸⁵ Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı*, 10-1.

accessible with the exception of the Karacadağ chain and the Tûr Abdin in eastern Mardin, and the eastern part where the Tigris constitutes a geographical divide between the southern part of Diyarbekir and the western section of central Kurdistan.²⁸⁶

In the way the Tigris divides northern and central Kurdistan, the volcanic mass of Karacadağ divides the plateau into two drainage basins, that of the Tigris on the east and that of the Euphrates on the west.²⁸⁷ The Tigris, the Nile of Diyarbekir, originates from two tributaries.²⁸⁸ First is Lake Hazar in the southwest of Harput, the rivulet that takes on different names as it follows in an easterly direction in a wide arc until it reaches the Eğil region. Flowing in a deep valley in the easterly-south-easterly direction, it merges with the Birklin rivulet, the second tributary originating in a cave in the north of Lice. Coming from the eastern bank, the rivulet Ambar, which surfaces in the spring usually flows through plains of alluvium due to the sluggish tributaries whereas it flows more swiftly in the eastern part of the province.²⁸⁹ The sluggish tributaries constitute a peculiarity between the Tigris and the Euphrates in the sense that the more important affluent sources of the two rivers reach them from their left banks; therefore, the plateau of Diyarbekir contributes

²⁸⁶ The proverb is quoted in Lamec Saad, *Sechzehn Jahre als Quarantänearzt in der Türkei* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1913), 257; Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 19-28.

²⁸⁷ Erinç and Tunçdilek, "The Agricultural Regions of Turkey," 199. Akdağlar, the part of Anti-Taurus Mountains, in the north and the Tûr Abdin Mountain in the south also divides the drainage basins of the Tigris and Euphrates. Sami, "Diyarbekir," 2203-4.

²⁸⁸ Apart from the tributaries of the Tigris, there are a few rivulets not flowing into the Tigris: the Kalhane rivulet in Ergani, the streams Medya, Sinek, Göz and Beylik Madrab in Çermik, and the Çüngüş rivulet in Çüngüş. Most of these rivulets are tributaries of the Euphrates. Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 18.

²⁸⁹ Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan," 50. Apart from the major tributaries, there are thirty four affluents the Tigris receives from its source until leaving the province. Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie, géographie administrative : statistique, descriptive et raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie Mineure*, 4 vols., vol. 2 (Paris: E. Leroux, 1891), 429.

nothing to the Tigris but all to the Euphrates.²⁹⁰ The left bank of the Tigris, also thanks to its soil, is more fertile with larger village populations.²⁹¹

The climate in Diyarbekir proper is largely continental, with high summer temperatures as high as tropical deserts and winter temperatures close to freezing.²⁹² The fact that the province is a depression especially surrounded by mountains in the north impedes the cool weather common in the mountainous region. While the northernmost districts of the province are a slight exception, the area is a transitional zone towards the desertic conditions of southern Kurdistan.²⁹³ The British traveller Brant, while passing through Kulb in the northeast of the province, noted the sudden change in climate, stating that the dwarf oak trees covering the low mountains gave their place to the oriental plane with *agnus castus*, a typical Mediterranean maquis, and the cotton fields.²⁹⁴ Rainfall mostly occurs in winter and spring, and comes to halt in the summer when the heat becomes unbearable.²⁹⁵ Apart from the green views observed in spring, vegetation of any kind in the Diyarbekir proper has adapted to the arid conditions, the plants growing in the valleys and depressions being the exception.²⁹⁶ Forests are, therefore, only significant on the left bank of the Tigris, in

²⁹⁰ Mark Sykes, "Journeys in North Mesopotamia," *The Geographical Journal* 30, no. 3 (1907): 238.

²⁹¹ Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 14. For the water sources serving the city of Diyarbekir, see M. Mehdi İlhan, "Diyarbakır Şehrinin Suları ve Çeşmeleri," in *Diyarbakır: Müze Şehir*, ed. Şevket Beysanoğlu, M. Sabri Koz, and Emin Nedret İşli (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999); Mustafa Öztürk and İbrahim Yılmazçelik, "Arifi Paşa'nın Seyahatnamesi Diyarbekir Seyahati," *Belgeler* 18, no. 22 (1997): 98.

²⁹² Erinç and Tunçdilek, "The Agricultural Regions of Turkey," 200.

²⁹³ Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 19; Erinç and Tunçdilek, "The Agricultural Regions of Turkey," 200.

²⁹⁴ James Brant and A. G. Glascott, "Notes of a Journey through a Part of Kurdistan, in the Summer of 1838," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 10(1840): 358.

²⁹⁵²⁹⁵ In the mid-nineteenth century, the rich inhabitants of Diyarbekir are said to have left the town and retreated to their country residences and paid attention to complete their outdoor business between four and nine in the morning. R. J. Garden, "Description of Diarbekr," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 37(1867): 192. Accordingly, Sykes warns his fellow white men of the climate, which was terribly trying in addition to the autumnal malarial fevers. Mark Sykes, "Journeys in North Mesopotamia (Continued)," *The Geographical Journal* 30, no. 4 (1907): 394.

²⁹⁶ Konyar, *Diyarbekir Yılığ*, 22. For other meteorological details, see Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 19-25.

the mountainous regions of Eğil, Piran, Silvan and Kulb.²⁹⁷ In addition to these regions, Beysanoğlu, with regret, adds Çermik, Çüngüş, Ergani, Eğil, Hani, Lice and Hazro, higher regions of which had been covered with oak trees until one hundred years earlier.²⁹⁸

The arid climate in the Diyarbekir proper along with irrigation determined the conditions of agriculture. As there was an intensive agriculture producing higher yields of crops in the fertile and irrigated valleys and basins, the cultivation in other areas was scattered over the arid, limestone plateaus. Arable lands, however, accordingly increased towards the foothills of the Taurus Mountains thanks to the increased rainfall.²⁹⁹ Accordingly, the regions of Behramki, Bismil, and the flat areas of Silvan and Ergani came first in terms of agricultural productivity, followed by the city of Diyarbekir and the mountainous regions of Kulb, Lice, and Çermik.³⁰⁰ Mulberry and other fruits were cultivated in irrigated valleys and basins. This green area was surrounded by a yellow circle with the cultivation of wheat and barley, which were also extensively cultivated in the non-irrigated lands.³⁰¹ The rich volcanic soil yielded also cereals, cotton, rice, silk, and tobacco.³⁰² Like other provinces, the economy of Diyarbekir was largely agrarian.³⁰³

²⁹⁷ Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı*, 23.

²⁹⁸ Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakir Coğrafyası*, 26. By the same token, Şemseddin Sami argues that the region in the Hellenistic era was rich in forests, but lost its woodlands due to the devastation the warfare brought about in the ensuing centuries. Sami, "Diyarbakir," 2204. Evliya Çelebi, who spent a few weeks in Diyarbekir in 1655, does not make significant remarks concerning the forests. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbakir: The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1988), 112-97.

²⁹⁹ Erinç and Tunçdilek, "The Agricultural Regions of Turkey," 200. The southern foothills of the mountains, differently from the northern ones, descend rather extensively creating wide plateaus irrigated by several streams. Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı*, 11-2.

³⁰⁰ *İzmir Fuarında Diyarbakır*, (Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası, 1938), 13.

³⁰¹ Erinç and Tunçdilek, "The Agricultural Regions of Turkey," 200.

³⁰² Robert H. Hewsen, "Armenia on the Tigris: The Vilayet of Diarbekir and the Sanjak of Urfa," in *Armenian Tigranakert/Diyarbakir and Edessa/Urfa*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian (Costa Meza, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2006), 66. Evliya Çelebi, who visited the city in 1655, notes the major agricultural produce in the greater Diyarbekir region: melons (Diyarbakir), cucumbers (Mifariqin, Nisibin), grapes and wine (Si'ird, Harput, Hisnkeyfa), plums and other tree-borne fruits (Mardin, Cezire, Si'ird), oranges (Sincar), nuts (Mardin), manna (Mardin and Hisnkeyfa), rice (Mihrani), cotton



Figure 1. A map of Diyarbakir and its northeastern districts.

Source: J. G. Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan, with Notices of the Sources of the Eastern and Western Tigris, and Ancient Ruins in Their Neighbourhood." *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 35 (1865).

In terms of mineral resources, however, the province was not rich compared to the mountainous regions of central Kurdistan. Diyarbekir lacked any mines except

(on the irrigated lands of Harput and Çermik), galls (Mardin, Cezire) and honey (Mardin, `Arabkir). Garden, who visited the region in late 1860s, notes the production of the pashalik of Diyarbekir composed of corn, wax, sesame-seed, cotton, silk, wool, mohair, and gum tragacanth. Martin Van Bruinessen, "Economic Life in Diyarbekir in the 17th Century," in *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbekir: The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname*, ed. Martin Van Bruinessen and Hendrik Boeschoten (New York: Brill, 1988), 40. Garden, "Description of Diarbekir," 192.

³⁰³ For a detailed account of agricultural production in the nineteenth century, see Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie, géographie administrative*, 2, 416-20; İbrahim Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır (1790-1840)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995), 281-2. For comparison with the early Republican period, cf. *İzmir Fuarında Diyarbakır*, 15.

for the rich but poorly cultivated copper mine in Ergani.³⁰⁴ As late as 1891 there were only five mines and only three of them, which were copper mines in Palu, were exploited. The other two, which were closed coal mines, were in Hazzo and Cizre.³⁰⁵ Apart from these, Sami notes a sulphur mine in Ergani and two salt mines in the districts of Lice and Si'ird and le Strange notes an iron mine in the vicinity of Hani.³⁰⁶

Even though not directly related to the geographical conditions, trade followed a similar pattern in Diyarbekir proper. As Diyarbekir stood as an important centre in silk trade and was visited by many pilgrims to the holy places in Palestine, the shift in international commerce routes led to the decline of the long-distance trade from the seventeenth century onwards.³⁰⁷ The decline seems to have persisted in the early nineteenth century as the emergence of more practicable conditions regarding the caravan routes over the desert in the south rendered the Diyarbekir stop less attractive between Syria and the cities to the East.³⁰⁸ Tribal depredations, in this sense, contributed to the decrease in trade with the insecurity even on the highways

³⁰⁴ Hewsen, "Armenia on the Tigris," 66. With regards to the workers of the mine, Brant notes 743 families, 270 of them Greek, 173 Armenian, and 300 Turkish, and adds the Greeks and the Turks were engaged in directing the mines, the Armenians being tradesmen and artisans. James Brant, "Journey through a Part of Armenia and Asia Minor, in the Year 1835," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 6(1836): 208-9.

³⁰⁵ Cuinet also notes salt mines in the district of Savur and furthermore remarks that the gold and silver mines about which travellers spoke were not known then. Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie, géographie administrative*, 2, 421-2. On the other hand, even the mines in the Hakkari region cannot be said to be exploited efficiently as Ainsworth notes that the inhabitants of an iron mine in Hakkari wrought the mine for only their wants. Ainsworth, "An Account of a Visit to the Chaldeans," 38. For a under-wrought lead mine in Tiyyari, Hakkâri, see William Francis Ainsworth, *Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, and Armenia.*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: John W. Parker, 1842), 229.

³⁰⁶ Sami, "Diyarbekir," 2205. Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, 110.

³⁰⁷ Following the Ottoman embargo imposed on the silk trade as a result of the rivalry with the Safavids, the contraband trade took the northern route by Erzurum and Erzincan. Van Bruinessen, "Economic Life in Diyarbekir," 37-8.

³⁰⁸ Horatio Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour Through Armenia, Kurdistan, Persia, and Mesopotamia with Observations on the Condition of Mohammedanism and Christianity in Those Countries*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: Tilt and Bogue, 1840), 291-2.

from the imperial capital to Mosul and Baghdad.³⁰⁹ As the city maintained its importance in one geographical aspect, that the Tigris became navigable with *keleks*, primitive rafts, from Diyarbekir down the stream to Mosul, there was no prospect of reviving its ancient importance in the nineteenth century because of the lack of security and the interruption of its communication with Baghdad.³¹⁰ In the absence of long-distance trade, the manufactures of the town including silk, cotton and woolen textile and copper products along with gold and silver filigree work were traded in the immediate towns.³¹¹

The Land and People in Hazro and its Environs

The Anti-Taurus Mountains in the north of Diyarbekir city, with several ranges on the west-east direction, host the towns of Çermik, Eğil, Piran, Palu, Hazro, Silvan, Atak, Ilıcak, Hani, and Kulp.³¹² As mentioned above, these towns differed in geographical and climatic terms from the limestone plateau of Diyarbekir. Hazro is situated on a ravine between two ranges extending in the west-east direction and not exceeding 1,500 meters.³¹³ As the southern range, including the mountains Ayindar;

³⁰⁹ Austen H. Layard, *Discoveries among the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon with Travels in Armenia, Kurdistan, and the Desert: Being the Result of a Second Expedition Undertaken for the Trustees of the British Museum* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1853), 335.

³¹⁰ Brant, "Journey through a Part of Armenia," 210. Hewsen, "Armenia on the Tigris," 73-4. Despite the absence of any activity, Horatio notes in 1840s that frightful stories of Kurdish depredations in the desert were rife between Ergani and Diyarbekir. Horatio Southgate, *Narrative of a Visit to the Syrian [Jacobite] Church of Mesopotamia* (New York: D. Appleton, 1844), 91. For an account of a voyage down the Tigris and a brief description of *keleks*, respectively, see John MacDonald Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan, in the Years 1813 and 1814; with Remarks on the Marches of Alexander and Retreat of the Ten Thousand* (London: John Murray, 1818), 469-76; Soane, *To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise*, 72.

³¹¹ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, 1, 380; Sami, "Diyarbekir," 2205; Hewsen, "Armenia on the Tigris," 66.

³¹² Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 22; Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 10.

³¹³ Konyar names the immediate villages on the foothills as Kekân, Zoğnuç, Kobik, Aynıbrik, Tahtan, and Şeyh Şahap. Konyar, *Diyarbakır Yıllığı*, 330. For a list of villages of Hazro in Kurdish and Turkified versions, see Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 53-4.

Tercil, famous for its castle; Dikan; and Biler is in the immediate environs of Hazro, the northern range extends in two parallels. The first range in the north includes the mountains Nisip, Hazertun, Dertopan, Keel, Gaban, and Mezra Hadiki, which extends towards the Silvan region. The second range and the second northernmost range include the mountains Şahgeldi, which extends towards the Atak Mountain, upon which Atak Castle is located, and Barbeş.³¹⁴ Established at the edge of the mountains, the castles in the region survived for centuries due to their geopolitical importance. Following the abandonment in the early nineteenth century, Tercil Castle, which is dated to the Assyrian era, is in ruins with only its foundations and west towers remaining.³¹⁵ Atak Castle accordingly goes back to the Assyrian period, when it was called Attachä.³¹⁶

Hazro occupied a central role among the immediate towns in the northern ranges of Diyarbekir. As the hometown of the most powerful Zirki bey in the nineteenth century, Hazro had close interactions with the surrounding towns of Mihrani, Lice, and Hani.³¹⁷ While Hazro contained about 60 villages governed by the Zirki beys in the nineteenth century, Lice and Hani contained 70 and 60 villages, respectively.³¹⁸ Aligned with the villages of Hazro, Resülayn, Ayindar, and Hondof

³¹⁴ Apart from the ranges, there is also Gire-Habo Mountain in the northwest of the region. *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 12. For the geological features of the Hazro-Eğil region, see W. Chazan, "Diyarbakır'ın Kuzey ve Kuzeydoğusunda Hazro-Eğil Bölgesinde Jeolojik Müşahedeler," *Türk Jeoloji Kurumu Bülteni*, no. 2 (1948).

³¹⁵ Şevket Budak, a descendant of the Zirki beys in Hazro, notes that the family abandoned the castle and relocated to Hazro in the early nineteenth century. Şakir Budak, interview by Author, 11 June 2014, Tape recording, Diyarbekir. Among the ruins of the castle, the unfinished mosque, the installation delivering water to the castle, and the very small church in the western side remain. Konyar, *Diyarbakır Yıllığı*, 332.

³¹⁶ For Hazro, Taylor notes the Assyrian connections stating that "the name of 'Khuzru,' and that of the neighbouring district of 'Khuzu,' situated as they are, near the sources of one of the affluents of the Tigris, are suggestive of the Khuzirina of the Assyrians." Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan," 39.

³¹⁷ For the sake of simplicity, the town Hazro and Tercil and Lice and Atak (Entax in Kurdish) are used interchangeably here. Tercil and Atak are two small villages today.

³¹⁸ Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey through," 359. The number of villages in the district of Tercil was 48 in 1518 and 86 in 1567. Özlem Başarır, "18. Yüzyılda Malikane Uygulaması ve Diyarbekir Voyvodahğı" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ankara University, 2009), 116.

along an elevated ridge of the northern mountains, Mihrani was to the immediate east of Hazro. Taylor wrote that the town particularly stood on the extreme edge of the ridge, “where it is bounded by a steep rocky mountain, on one of whose peaks the ruins of the old Meherani [*sic.*] Castle frown down upon the smiling plains at its feet.”³¹⁹ Hani and Lice were on the plateaus to the north of Hazro. Hani was situated under lofty limestone cliffs crowning the ruins of an ancient castle. The view of the plain, states Brant, was commanding and the position of the town seemed well chosen.³²⁰ Accordingly, some buildings and ancient square watchtower in the middle of the luxuriant gardens at the foot of the town completed the scenery.³²¹ In the late 1830s, the town had 300 Muslim and 150 Armenian families, and Lice contained 750 Muslim families and 213 Armenian families.³²² Hani also was the source of the Tigris which is said to flow with a rush of green water out of a dark cave in some distance to the west of the town supplying the town gardens and clover fields in the centre of the town before emerging into the plain and forming the river called Ambar Su.³²³

The Ambar Su also played a key role in the rice cultivation in the region.³²⁴ In addition to this, the stream Bayık-Barkuş, which emerges out of a rocky region between Silvan and Hazro, and the Madrab Suyu in Hazro was also important in rice cultivation in the region.³²⁵ In addition to rice in particular, most fruits were

³¹⁹ Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan," 39.

³²⁰ Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey through," 361.

³²¹ Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan," 39.

³²² Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey through," 359-62.

³²³ Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, 110. Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan," 39. For further details of the rivulet, see Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey Through," 362.

³²⁴ The rice cultivated in Diyarbakir is classified into three groups: black-awn, white-awn, and red-awn. As rice with red awn was no longer cultivated in the twentieth century, rice with black-awn is resistant to disease and plentiful. Rice with white-awn is relatively longer and bigger and different in terms of quality and price. *İzmir Fuarında Diyarbakır*, 20-1.

³²⁵ According to Beysanoğlu, the former stream irrigates a 1800-dönüm-land on which 150-200 *kiles* of rice is cultivated depending on the year and the latter stream, also called “Zergüz” is used in rice lands after irrigating gardens in Hazro. Annually 60 to 80 *kiles* of rice is cultivated. 1 *kile* in this account equals to 92 kilograms. Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 95-6.

cultivated in Hazro and its vicinity along with wheat, barley, millet, tobacco, and cotton.³²⁶ Cotton cultivation was an outcome of the climatic features of the region. While the region was relatively mild compared to the southern plains of Ottoman Kurdistan, the heat was still evident as noted by Viscount who, after descending to the plain of the Tigris and arriving at the town of Hazro, wrote that “the heat was great, and the bazars were filled with fruit, chiefly mulberries, both white and black.”³²⁷ Cotton production was also common in Hani and Lice. In the late 1830s, all the Armenians in Hani, excepting for some who had vineyards and gardens and sent their fruit for sale to Diyarbakir, were engaged in spinning and weaving cotton yarn and coarse cotton cloths. The Armenians in Lice, not being cultivators or owners of land like their fellows in Hani, manufactured coarse cotton cloth.³²⁸ Although to what extent is unknown, the Armenians in the mountainous regions in the nineteenth century were said to be poor and oppressed by the Kurdish chiefs.³²⁹ The oppression of Armenians was partly due to the limits of the sphere of the government in the remote parts of the province in which petty chiefs were employed, in case of need, in military services on the condition of certain privileges and exemptions in

³²⁶ Fruits cultivated include plums, apples, apricots, almonds, pears, and grapes. Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı*, 331. According to the registers in the sixteenth century, agricultural production in the region seems to have been the same with the cultivation of wheat, barley, corn, cotton, sesame, and grapes. Bizirlik, "16. Yüzyılda Tercil Sancağı Üzerine Notlar," 93; "16. Yüzyılın Ortalarında Atak Sancağı ve Sancak Beyleri Üzerine Notlar," 125.

³²⁷ Viscount Pollington, "Notes on a Journey from Erz-Rúm, by Músh, Diyár-Bekr, and Bíreh-jik, to Aleppo, in June, 1838," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 10(1840): 449. Conceding the mild weather of Hazro, Konyar notes for the early republican period that the excessive rice cultivation along with the mild climate leads to swamps causing disease. Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı*, 331.

³²⁸ Brant also noted that the cotton used was the domestic product of Adana and exports of Khoi in Iran brought from Harput and Erzurum. Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey through," 359-62.

³²⁹ Armenian and Nestorian Christians in Kurdistan, Taylor states, lived in a state of serfdom and were property of Kurdish chiefs bought and sold like cattle and sheep. The landless Armenians were not a peculiarity confined to Diyarbakir proper; Brant was surprised to find that only 16 families out of 80 in an Armenian village of Harput had lands. The remainder worked as labourers. Taylor, "Travels in Kurdistan," 50; James Brant, "Journey through a Part of Armenia and Asia Minor, in the Year 1835," *ibid.* 6(1836): 207. See also, Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 39.

return.³³⁰ The very origins of these privileges and exemptions had been established in the previous centuries, yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet system being the most notorious.

The Historical Background of Zirki Beys

Zirki Beys in the Early Modern Period

The Ottoman-Safavid conflict in the early sixteenth century was essential for the rise of the Kurdish emirates and subsequently the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet systems.³³¹ Kurdistan in general and the province of Diyarbekir in particular had been a region of contestation throughout the conflict. When Selim I left Edirne on March 20, 1514 on campaign against the Safavids, the course of the conflict changed the fate of the Kurdish rulers living between the two empires.³³² In other words, the equilibrium that was established following the victory of Ottoman forces in the region in 1514 introduced the principal tenets of the political relations between the Ottoman state and the Kurdish periphery for the next three centuries.³³³

In addition to Shah Ismail's conquest of Maraş, Diyarbekir, Mosul, and Baghdad with the exclusive majority of kızılbaş troops, the region had been long under the influence of the Shi'a Islam, thanks to the Turcoman tribes of Aq-Qoyunlu

³³⁰ Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, 1, 381.

³³¹ Özoğlu, "State-Tribe Relations." For the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry, see the previous chapter.

³³² One can add the frontier principality of Dulkadirs, which constituted another arena for the imperial rivalries among the Ottomans, Safavids, and the Mamluks. For the diplomatic developments at the turn of the century and the details on the Battle of Çaldıran and the conquest of Diyarbekir in particular and the Ottoman East, see Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower*, 51-87; İlhan, *Amid (Diyarbakır)*, 5-14; Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, I: Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808, 80-3.

³³³ Evidently these principles were not fixed or stable, but the idea underlying the relation between the periphery and the state would maintain its core essence of autonomy. For the importance of this essence and that of Çaldıran, see McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 25-6.

and Qara-Qoyunlus.³³⁴ Therefore, the threat Shah Ismail posed was not only a military concern, but also a confessional one which was entirely contrary to the fundamentals of Sunni Islam. Despite the recognition of Shah Ismail by the Kurdish rulers, they had little enthusiasm because they were aware that a change in Persian dynasty would have grave consequences in their own realms. That is, as the Aq-Qoyunlu had deliberately exterminated the ruling families of the region supporting the Qara-Qoyunlu, Shah Ismail was no different while taking stringent measures for those who had supported his predecessors. In that sense, the extended Persian influence alienated the Kurdish ruling families, leading most of them to help the Sunni Ottomans achieve their victory.³³⁵

With their discontent with the Safavid conquest, the Kurdish beys, along with the Dulkadir principality, had been realising frontier raids against the Safavid governor since 1504.³³⁶ While the Kurdish beys especially in the environs of Diyarbekir resisted on their own the Safavid rule led by the governor Khan Muhammed Ustajlu, the Ottoman campaign against the Safavids incorporated the Kurdish resistance in favour of the Ottomans.³³⁷ Likewise, the inhabitants of Diyarbekir welcomed the Ottoman forces, declaring their allegiance. The following incorporation of Diyarbekir into the Ottoman Empire owed much to the efforts of Idris Bitlisi, a Kurdish statesman and a scholar. The following victory against the Safavid forces had convinced the Kurdish rulers to change sides.³³⁸

³³⁴ For the period during which Diyarbekir was under the control of Shah Ismail, see Şevket Beysanoğlu, *Anıtları ve Kitabeleri ile Diyarbakır Tarihi*, 3 vols., vol. 2: Akkoyunlular'dan Cumhuriyete Kadar (Ankara: Diyarbakır Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür ve Sanat Yayınları, 1998), 508-13.

³³⁵ McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 26.

³³⁶ Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower*, 62.

³³⁷ Following the appointment of Khan as the governor of Amid by Shah Ismail in 1507, the governor of Amid refused to submit to the former as Kurdish beys attacked Khan's camp, which was forced to winter in the open. Along with the Kurdish beys, Alaüddevle's periodic skirmishes against the Safavid forces continued until 1512. Ibid., 65, 79.

³³⁸ van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbekir," 14.

Accordingly the reward for the Ottoman support ensured the Kurdish hâkims to retain their hereditary districts under the conditions of the previous ruler.³³⁹ The politics of taxation correspondingly did not undergo major changes in late 1510s since most of the *kanunâmes* were “in accordance with the *kanuns* of Hasan Pâdişâh,” meaning the non-amended versions of the Aq-Qoyunlu codes.³⁴⁰ However, the Ottoman administration, a decade later, implemented a sharp distinction between the directly and the indirectly governed parts of the province of Diyarbekir:

[...] the former consisted of 10 sancaqs, the latter (called *vilayet-i Kürdistan*) of 7 major and 10 minor emirates (each of which was called *eyalet*). The degree of autonomy at this time is not clear; succession was theoretically to remain within the ruling families, but there are no indications as to whether or not the emirates paid any taxes to the central or provincial treasury.³⁴¹

The Ottoman government, thus, maintained the autonomous rule of the Kurdish emirates in the region by re-establishing the administration system the emirates had had during the Persian rule.

The Zirki, or Zirkan, beys were entirely part of the conflict and the following incorporation to the Ottoman rule. According to Sharaf Khan Bidlisi, the Zirki beys descended from the Arabs in Damascus. Sheikh Hasan bin Seyyid Abdurrahman, Şeref Han claims, had to come to the province of Mardin due to poverty during the Seljuk period. The sheikh came to be known over time as Sheikh Ezrakî (*ezrak* meaning blue in Arabic) because either he constantly dressed in blue or had blue eyes.³⁴² The prominence of Sheikh Hasan was confirmed by the Zirki beys in the

³³⁹ Despite the Ottoman administration did not drastically alter the status quo, there is a debate concerning the extent of autonomy hükûmets enjoyed. See the previous chapter.

³⁴⁰ İlhan, *Amid (Diyarbakır)*, 28.

³⁴¹ van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbekir," 17. For the emergence of the name of Kurdistan, see Tezcan, "The Development of the Use of 'Kurdistan'."

³⁴² The name *Zirki* is thus derived from the very name of the sheikh himself. According to the mythological narrative of Şeref Han, Sheikh Hasan was a religious devotee who gained enthusiastic followers among the local notables of Mardin. His ascendance was impeded by Emir Artuk bin Ekseb,

nineteenth century when Ali and Hüsnü Beys, Behram Bey's sons, and Mehmed Said, Hamza Bey's son, claimed that their ancestors had returned to Baghdad and Musa el-Kazım, seventh imam of the twelve imams according to the Shi'a belief.³⁴³

Composed of four branches, Derzinî, Girdikan, Atak, and Tercil beys, the Zirki emirates had witnessed not only Safavid rule, but also the previous dynasty, the Aq-Qoyunlus.³⁴⁴ Ömer Bey, Sheikh Hasan's son and the hâkim of Tercil, had been contemporaneous with Uzun Hasan, the Aq-Qoyunlu ruler, the compassion and respect of whom he was believed to have obtained.³⁴⁵ Uzun Hasan's marriage with Ömer Bey's daughter is evident in terms of indicating the extent of the relations between the Zirki beys and the Persian rulers. As the emirs of Tercil cooperated with the Aq-Qoyunlus, the beys of Atak followed suit. The founder of the emirate of Atak, according to Şevket Beysanoğlu, Ahmed Bey, son of Mir Muhammed, was contemporaneous with Shah Ismail. Along with other Kurdish tribes of the region, Ahmed Bey and Şemsi Bey, the emir of Tercil in particular Zirki emirs in general were thus one of the Kurdish emirs who paid their allegiance to the Ottoman cause and fought against the Shah Ismail.³⁴⁶ For instance, Budak Bey, one of the emirs of

the governor who ruled the hükûmet of Amed, Mardin, Harput, Micingerd, and Hasankeyf on behalf of the Seljuk Sultan, who imprisoned him in the Castle of Mardin. Upon the miracles (*kerâmet*) the sheikh revealed, he was pardoned by the governor and married to his daughter. As his fame in the region increased further, the death of the sultan enabled Sheikh Hasan to replace the governor and reign the district of Tercil by appointing his sons as rulers in the districts of the province. Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, trans., M. Emin Bozarslan (Istanbul: Yöntem Yayınları, 1975), 297, 310-1. For the background of *Şerefname* and the intellectual background of Şeref Han Bidlisi, see Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 27-31.

³⁴³ It was common for orders and tribes to trace their existence back to prominent persons such as imams or sheikhs in their *silsilenâmes*, or genealogies. BOA. ŞD. 103/38, 17 Mayıs 1297 (29 May 1881). For a definition of *silsile*, see Necdet Tosun, "Silsile," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 37 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı, 2009); Muhiddin Usta, "Tabibzâde Mehmed Şükrî Efendi ve Silsilenâme-i Süfiyye İsimli Eseri" (M.A. Thesis, Marmara University, 2006), 10-67.

³⁴⁴ For the brief histories of these four emirates, see Han, *Şerefname*, 296-314.

³⁴⁵ Beysanoğlu, *Diyanbakır Tarihi*, 2: Akkoyunlular'dan Cumhuriyete Kadar, 512; Han, *Şerefname*, 311-2.

³⁴⁶ Alliance with the Ottoman forces served also a particular interest for the emirate of Atak. In the course of Shah Ismail's occupation of Diyarbakır, the shah had captured Atak Castle and its environs from Ahmed Bey and granted to the tribe (*oymak*) of Kaçar. Having no option but to abandon the lands, the Kurdish tribes of Atak employed the Battle of Çaldıran as a window of opportunity to recapture the castle. Firstly taking control of a ruined castle called Milh near the Atak

Tercil, had been killed during Shah Ismail's occupation of Diyarbekir in 1508.³⁴⁷

Şemsi Bey, the second ruler following Budak Bey, was frustrated with the oppressive acts of Kızılbaş assault and sought the remedy by paying allegiance to Selim I.

Accordingly, Emir Hamza, a ruler of the Derzinî emirate, ruled the emirate with Shah Ismail's order, but it was his son Muhammed Bey who paid their allegiance to Selim I.³⁴⁸

The changing side of the Zirki emirs had been realised following the Battle of Çaldıran in 1514. In return for the allegiance and alliance of the emirates in Tercil and Atak, the central government had left the provincial administration intact following the decisive victory against the Safavids. The following period had brought about an increasing level of cooperation between the Ottoman state and the Zirki emirates. At times, however, the cooperation was replaced with the co-optation of the central government which had still a say over the provincial administration. After the Battle of Çaldıran, Ahmed Bey, the founder of the Atak emirate, had died leaving three sons behind.

As a significant difference from the other emirates in the region, the Ottoman state had intervened in the process of determining the successor upon the mutual consent of three sons. According to an imperial decree addressing the beylerbeyi of Diyarbekir, the villages of the district had been distributed among the three brothers. In that sense, Mahmud Bey received 60,000 akçes by means of *ze'amet* (larger-sized timars) and Yusuf Bey received one hundred and ten thousand akçes. While Şahım Bey, the third son, had been appointed as the ruler of the district, the *nâhiye* of Rabıt,

castle without engaging in any warfare, the emirate of Atak launched an ultimate attack on the castle during the battle and capturing the castle and exterminating the *Kızılbaş* populace within the city walls. Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Tarihi*, 2: Akkoyunlular'dan Cumhuriyete Kadar, 511-2.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 512-3.

³⁴⁸ Han, *Şerefname*, 298.

Miyafariqin and the village of Cıska in addition to poll-tax received from the non-Muslims were incorporated to the private purse of the Sultan in return.³⁴⁹

Being a yurtluk-ocaklık administration, the Atak emirate did not benefit from the privileges other hükûmet lands had in the first half of the sixteenth century. The Ottoman government had a say over the provincial administration of Atak immediately after the victory against the Safavids. The co-optation of the government was not rare.³⁵⁰ According to the narrative of Sheref Khan, the emirate of Atak had been administered by Ottoman-appointed officials throughout the sixteenth century.³⁵¹ Şahım Bey had been accused of treason and graft by Rüstem Pasha, the beylerbeyi of Diyarbekir between 1540 and 1543. As a result, Şahım Bey had been executed and the Zirkan beys had been expelled from the district of Atak by the decree of Sultan Süleyman.³⁵² For a period of 20 years, the district was administered by the Ottoman officials. At the end of this period, the district was granted to the Zirkan beys on the grounds that the walls of the castle would be destroyed and the ze‘amet lands of Yusuf Bey would be incorporated to the lands of the sancak.³⁵³

Compared to the Atak emirate, the emirs of Tercil maintained a more autonomous administration in accordance with Sharaf Khan’s narrative. In the aftermath of the Battle of Çaldıran, Haydar Bey, the hâkim of Tercil, fought among the Ottoman forces against the Safavids in the environs of Çıldır along with other

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 307; Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Tarihi*, 2: Akkoyunlular'dan Cumhuriyete Kadar, 512.

³⁵⁰ So was the interference of the central government. It is very telling that Şeref Bey, the author of *Şerefname*, served the Safavids until 1578 along with his father Şemseddin, who was said to have been frustrated with Süleyman I appointing him to the governorate of Malatya and Maraş and granting Bitlis as a *sancak* to Ulama Tekelü Han. Öz, "Ottoman Provincial Administration," 150.

³⁵¹ In a puzzling manner, Sharaf Khan notes the period of Ottoman administration as two years on one page and 20 years on another. What is certain here is that the Ottoman government was indeed involved with the administration of the district. Han, *Şerefname*, 307-8.

³⁵² Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Tarihi*, 2: Akkoyunlular'dan Cumhuriyete Kadar, 633.

³⁵³ Ibid.

Kurdish beys and their troops.³⁵⁴ The autonomous administration was evident thanks to the registers carried out in 1540 and 1564 which did not resort to any provincial organisation on a village level and considered the nâhiye as a single unit (*nefs-i Tercil*).³⁵⁵ Reallocation of tax resources, however, indicated the extent of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in the district.

Table 1. Tax Revenue Distribution in Tercil District in the Sixteenth Century

	Amount in the 1540 Register (akçes)	Amount in the 1564 Register (akçes)
Sultan's <i>hass</i> lands	259,049	168,074
Sancak bey's <i>hass</i> lands	132,273	266,291
Mahmudî Hasan Bey's <i>hass</i> lands	-	137,963
Ze'amet lands	-	54,199
Timar lands	18,260	39,053

Source: Alpay Bizbirlik, "16. Yüzyılda Tercil Sancağı Üzerine Notlar."

As Table 1 demonstrates the financial organisation of the district, the extent of allocation of resources between the Ottoman state and the emirate of Tercil is evident. Considering that sancak beys were co-opted among the Zirkan tribe, the extent of the lands and thus tax revenues granted to the local rulers constitute a significant portion of the district. The lands allocated to Zirki beys was 32.65 per cent of the total tax revenues in 1540 and 40 per cent in 1564. According to the register in 1540, the revenues of the sancak beys, thus the hükûmet of Tercil, comprised of the harvest of state-owned lands and lost property (*mâl-ı gâ'ib*), harvest of rice, a certain proportion of taxes such as incidental dues, fines on crime and transgression, and wedding dues (*bâd-ı hevâ, cürm-i cinâyet, and resm-i arus* respectively), and tax revenues of 11 villages and of the *nefs* of Tercil.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁴ Han, *Şerefname*, 313.

³⁵⁵ Bizbirlik, "16. Yüzyılda Tercil Sancağı Üzerine Notlar," 85-6. The district of Atak, however, was split to three subdistricts (*nefs*) including Atak, Bilan, and Serde. For a detailed information on the district of Atak according to the registers of 1540 and 1564, see "16. Yüzyılın Ortalarında Atak Sancağı ve Sancak Beyleri Üzerine Notlar."

³⁵⁶ "16. Yüzyılda Tercil Sancağı Üzerine Notlar," 88.

Even though there is not satisfactory information as to the *hass* lands, i.e., the most valuable timar units reserved for imperial or vizierial posts, of Mahmudî Hasan Bey, who was a pro-Ottoman bey of the Mahmudî tribe, the portion of the total amount allocated to local rulers is very telling. In particular, 17 villages of the district, which had been the Sultan *hass* lands in 1540, were allocated to these *hass* lands in 1564.³⁵⁷ In other words, it would not be wrong to claim that timar, the common Ottoman practice throughout the empire, had been surpassed by the *yurtluk-ocaklık* administration, which was based on providing troops for the Ottoman army, but under more privileged conditions.

The cooperation between the Ottoman state and the emirs of Tercil seemed to have been in line for the sixteenth century as Ömer Bey, Haydar Bey's son, had been granted the emirate by the imperial decree of Murad III (r. 1574-1595). Sharaf Khan's commentary on Ömer Bey, in a sense, summarizes the extent of the relations the emirate of Tercil had vis-à-vis the Ottoman state:

He is a young man qualified with princely benevolence and sound moral values and maintains various relations with the Turks. He has been constantly under the service of the beylerbeyi of Diyarbekir and is consulted by the Council of Âmid on affairs and matters related with the Kurdish beys under the jurisdiction of Diyarbekir.³⁵⁸

While the degree of autonomy was maintained by the emirs of Tercil by means of privileges with regards the right to collect taxes, the seventeenth century turned the tides in favour of the Kurdish emirs, the Zirkan beys not being an exception. Elaborating the amount of taxes '*avarızhâne*, *nüzul*, and *sürsat*' levied on the districts of Diyarbekir during Murad IV's Baghdad campaign of 1637-8, van Bruinessen compares the amount of taxes the *ocaklık* and *hükûmet sancaks* with ordinary Ottoman *sancaks* concluding that "Kurdish (*ocaqlıq*) *sancaqs* were less obedient in

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Han, *Şerefname*, 313-4.

delivering these special taxes than the ordinary Ottoman sancaqs-an indication that complete control over them had not yet been established.”³⁵⁹

The Baghdad campaign however was also important for the Zirkan beys. In the nineteenth-century petitions, they made special reference to the campaign; Behram Bey and Bedirhan Bey argued that İbrahim Bey had participated with a considerable number of troops in the conquest of Baghdad by Murad IV. Furthermore, Ibrahim Bey was said to have fought zealously and devoutly and to have been wounded in his hand as a result. Pleased with the heroic performance of Ibrahim Bey, the sultan called him “Telli İbrahim” and granted the Hasenan tribe to his rule.³⁶⁰ Though the claims of the Zirki beys of the nineteenth century should be taken with a grain of salt, it was evident that the arrangement between the Ottoman state and the Zirkan emirs were maintained. As Evliya Çelebi travelled in the province of Diyarbekir in 1655-6, he also observed then the provincial administration of Diyarbekir. The Ottoman sancaks of Diyarbekir in the middle of the seventeenth century were:

the sancaqs of Harput, Ergani, Siverek, Nisibin, Hisnkeyfa, Çemişkezek, Si‘ird, Mayafariqin, Aqçaqal‘e (near Nisibin), Habur and Sincar, and the sancaq of Diyarbekir, which is the one where the pasha has his seat. All these sancaqs are administered by Ottoman *begs*.

The following sancaqs are hereditary apanages [*yurdluq and ocaqlıq*]:

the sancaqs of Sagman, Qulp, Mihrani, Tercil, Ataq, Pertek, Çapakçur, and Çermik. While these are, according to the stipulations of the law, hereditary apanages, [some of them] have now become ordinary Ottoman sancaqs because their *begs* died childless and their dynasties were thus extinguished.

The autonomous governorates (*hükümet*) in the province of Amid are the following:

the *hükümet*s of Cezire, Egil, Genc, Palu and Hazzo. The rulers of these five emirates have the rank of autonomous *beglerbegis* (*mir-i*

³⁵⁹ The two taxes were extra-ordinary ones levied until the end of the Baghdad campaign. The tax *nüzul* was a fixed amount in kind where each *‘avârız*, i.e., the tax-paying unit, was responsible of bringing it to designated storehouses. The tax *sürsat*, originally consisting of obligatory sale of barley and bread, was demanded as a lump amount from each *sancak*. van Bruinessen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Diyarbekir," 22-7. See also, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 151-61.

³⁶⁰ BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861); BOA. MVL. 357/52, 24 Şaban 1276 (17 March 1860).

miran). They too, however, are obliged to take the field with the vizier [of Diyarbekir] on military campaigns.³⁶¹

There is no further information with respect to the emirates of Tercil and Atak during the eighteenth century except for the maintenance of the hükûmet status of Tercil in the “age of âyâns.”³⁶² As the next section will demonstrate, the status of Tercil evolved from the semi-autonomous yurtluk-ocaklık to the autonomous hükûmet lands in the middle of the eighteenth century. With the decentralisation of the Ottoman Empire, the Zirkan emirs, like most other Kurdish emirs, had benefited from the opportunity and increased their autonomy. The autonomy of the Kurdish beys, however, caused a serious discontent in Istanbul starting from the early nineteenth century and ending up with a centralisation attempt in Ottoman Kurdistan that would take years.

The Zirki Beys and the Alliance between the Kurdish Emirs

Ottoman Kurdistan at the turn of the nineteenth century was like the other provinces of the empire. Similar to the hereditary rule Kurdish emirs enjoyed in the eastern part of the empire, the provincial notables in Anatolia and the Balkans who had controlled not only districts but provinces and established themselves with their landholdings and military retinues became more than the ordinary servants of the imperial government.³⁶³ What made them extraordinary servants was their fluctuating attitude between the will to imperial service and to pursue an autonomous

³⁶¹ Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbekir*, 120-3.

³⁶² Evidently, Atak continued to be a yurtluk-ocaklık district. In the case of Tercil, however, the extent of autonomy seems to have been reduced as Başarır argues that almost half of the villages in the district of Tercil were under the fisc of the *voyvodalık*, i.e., aggregate tax farms in a district or province, of Diyarbekir. Başarır, "18. Yüzyılda Malikâne Uygulaması," 116-7. See also, Özlem Başarır, "Diyarbekir Voyvodası Aklâmı Malikânecileri Örneğinde XVIII. Yüzyılda Yatırımcıların Kimlikleri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 15 (Fall 2011).

³⁶³ Yayıcıoğlu, "The Provincial Challenge," 197.

sphere of operation from the intervention of the Ottoman government. Having built up a regional power base, the provincial notables-cum-governors rebelled against the sultan to ensure that autonomous sphere, not independence, with material gain and personal aggrandizement.³⁶⁴ The rebellion of the Kurdish emirs was not different, with the exception that they rather defended the autonomous sphere with which they had already been bestowed. As rebellions and banditry raged in the Ottoman provinces at the turn of the century, it was by no means a provincial notables-led enterprise. The consequent bandit economy, which supported both plunderers and those who were given resources to destroy the former, indicates the fluidity of relations established between the Ottoman governors and the provincial notables.³⁶⁵

The claims on being a provincial notable (*a 'yânlık iddiâ 'sı*) therefore furthered the violence entailed with the bandit economy.³⁶⁶ The claim already acknowledged by the Ottoman government, the struggle in Ottoman Kurdistan was no less different than in the rest of the empire. The Zirki emirs in particular, Kurdish yurtluk-ocaklık holders in general vied for power in their environs and for that matter struggled with both fellow emirs, established coalitions with provincial notables in the cities, controlled large tracts of lands, and followed an unsteady trajectory with the central government. While provincial notables throughout the empire experienced the “age of âyâns” in a commensurable manner, their commensurability was not confined to the Ottoman realm.

With their more often not violent search for autonomous spheres with personal spoils, Hathaway likens the Ottoman provincial notables to the *caudillos* of

³⁶⁴ Hathaway, "Introduction," 4. Referring to Pasvanoğlu after 1798, when he repelled the Ottoman forces sieging Vidin, Zens notes that once the provincial notables found out that the Ottoman government did not have the ability to force the notables into submission, they started mimicking Pasvanoğlu, leading to the age of the warlords, an individual seizing control of a section of a state or empire and operating freely of the legitimate authority. Zens, "The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa," 195.

³⁶⁵ Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 195-6, 234.

³⁶⁶ For the claim, see Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Âyânlık*, 209-37.

nineteenth century Latin America, and the warlords who dominated China.³⁶⁷ Noting that *qiangshen*, who had originated during the second half of the seventeenth century from minor or retired bureaucrats living in the Chinese provinces, rose to power thanks to production and marketing of tea, rice, and cotton, Nagata correlates Ottoman notables with the Chinese ones in socioeconomic terms. Moreover, he furthers the correlation to the Japanese *gono*, wealthy peasants emerging from mid-eighteenth century onwards thanks to their skills in enlarging the sphere and scale of the commodity production of cotton and rice.³⁶⁸ The fact that *gonos* had been appointed after the Meiji Restoration to replace the feudal lords of the *Tokugawa* period is commensurable to the de facto appointment of a'yâns, albeit the differences in political structures.³⁶⁹

Similar to the other provinces, the Ottoman grip in Ottoman Kurdistan in general and in Diyarbekir periphery in particular was loose. Even though the centralisation attempts on the side of the Sublime Porte had been initiated, it was still the emirs who ruled at the outskirts of the Diyarbekir province. Table 2 indicates the semi-independently administered districts three of which, namely Tercil, Hani, and Atak in the northeast of Diyarbekir, were ruled by what the Ottoman administration called Zirki beys.

³⁶⁷ Hathaway, "Introduction," 4. Derived from the Latin *caput*, i.e. head, *caudillo* means chieftain. The reign of *caudillos* or *caudillaje* is distinct with four characteristics: the repeated emergence of armed patron-client sets, cemented by personal ties of dominance and submission, and by a common desire to obtain wealth by force of arms; the lack of institutionalised means for succession to offices; the use of violence in political competition; and the repeated failures of incumbent leaders to guarantee their tenures as chieftains. For further details on the political system of these chieftains, see Eric R. Wolf and Edward C. Hansen, "Caudillo Politics: A Structural Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9, no. 2 (1967).

³⁶⁸ Nagata, "Ayan in Anatolia and the Balkans," 289.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

Table 2. Yurtluk-Ocaklık and Hükûmet Districts in the Province of Diyarbekir³⁷⁰

Yurtluk-Ocaklık and Hükûmet Districts in 1747	Yurtluk-Ocaklık and Hükûmet Districts in 1821
Hani (Y)	Hani (Y)
Atak (Y)	Atak (Y)
	Palu (H)
	Kih (Genc) (H)
	Cizre (H)
Eğil (H)	Eğil (H)
	Hazzo (H)
Tercil (H)	Tercil (H)
Savur (H)	Savur (H)
Miyafariqin (H)	Miyafariqin (H)*

Source: İbrahim Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır (1790-1840)*.

In the early nineteenth century, Receb Bey, the hâkim of Tercil, was considered, according to Brant's account, the richest and most powerful bey among the Zirki emirs. He was said to have derived his wealth from having plundered three or four pashas of Diyarbekir and various caravans.³⁷¹ In addition to three hundred horsemen in service, regularly paid and well mounted and armed, Receb Bey could collect about 700 horsemen and 3-4,000 men on foot armed with swords and rifles.³⁷² As a regional alliance to be reckoned with, the Zirki beys were in conflict with Mirza Ağa, the chief of the Silvanlı tribe residing close to Hazro. The conflict, however, never translated into warfare in the open field. Rather, the contestation followed a plunder-like pattern in which the confederates gathered at a rendezvous point and attacked a predetermined village, much to the surprise of its inhabitants, carrying off everything they could seize.³⁷³ Apart from these local power struggles, Receb Bey

³⁷⁰ Miyafariqin was regarded as an ordinary district in the source and was thus replaced with the status of hükûmet.

³⁷¹ Many plunders of this kind, warns Brant, were committed by others but nevertheless attributed to Receb Bey. Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey Through," 359.

³⁷² Hüseyin Bey, the hâkim of Atak, commanded 300 horsemen and 4-5,000 men on foot armed with sword and rifle whereas Timur Bey in Hani could bring 200 horsemen and 2-3,000 armed men to the battlefield. Ibid., 360.

³⁷³ Evidently, this act of regression leads to a retaliation on the side of the opposite party. Ibid., 360-1.

had to fulfil some duties as result of the arrangement made with the Ottoman government.³⁷⁴

With regards to the arrangement, the Zirki beys were there to fight along with the Ottoman forces in a rather federalist rebellion of the Diyarbekir local notables which resulted in the Commune of Diyarbekir in 1819. Diyarbekir, the local government of which had laid down the basis of federalism, had been administered by an oligarchic rule led by the prominent families of the city, namely the Şeyhzâdes and the Gevranlızâdes.³⁷⁵ Ibrahim Pasha, a member of the Şeyhzades, had obtained the deputy-governorship (*mütesellimlik*) of Diyarbekir in 1808, a post he would keep until his death 1814. The increasing autonomy of the city at the hands of these notables, however, did not accord with the centralisation. The oligarchic alliance culminated with the governorship of Mehmed Derviş Pasha carried all the requirements to become a target of the Porte. Searching for a pretext for intervention, Istanbul appointed a controversial candidate, Behram Pasha, a member of the Deli branch of the Milan (Milli) tribe in 1819. Because he was an enemy of the Şeyhzades, his appointment was planned to bring about discontent among the urban elite.³⁷⁶ The urban elites whose vested interests lay in the continuation of the deputy-governorship fought against the appointment of Behram Pasha and took refuge in the citadel.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ In various documents, Receb Bey, the hâkim of Tercil, was addressed as “Telli Beyzâde.”

³⁷⁵ Supported by the oligarchy which had their financial interests beyond the city, Ibrahim Pasha would act like a semi-autonomous ruler imposing full custom tax instead of the tax *bac* on the transit trade passing through the city and maintaining security of the city and its environs. Salzmänn, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*, 187-93.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.; Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır*, 251-3; Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 6 vols., vol. 6 (Istanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1994), 2652-5, 66-70. For a compilation of differing historiographical views, see Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Tarihi*, 2: Akkoyunlular'dan Cumhuriyete Kadar, 707-14.

³⁷⁷ Behram Pasha addressed the urban leadership stating that “I was sent [by the state] to destroy you, to scatter your belongings [to the wind] and to burn your houses [to the ground]. Following this declaration of war, the pasha hastily retreated to the citadel from which the troops began an artillery fire on the city. As the counter-attack on the citadel started, the merchants and craftsmen withdrew goods from the market and stopped paying taxes. The gentry led by Mehmed, a

In the suppression of the commune, the Ottoman forces also benefited from the surrounding Kurdish tribes among which the Zirki were present. The official account narrated by Cevdet Pasha conceded the official assistance requested by Behram Pasha. Among the tribe leaders the governor asked for military aid was Eyüb Bey, *iskânbaşısı* of the Milli tribe, Telli İbrahim Bey and Hüseyin Bey, the tribes of Diyarbekir.³⁷⁸ Additionally, Timur Bey of Hani showed up in front of the Diyarbekir citadel with 300 troops, but did not remain there for long and walked away.³⁷⁹ Behram and Bedirhan Beys, Receb Bey's sons, proudly described the participation of the house of Telli İbrahim Bey in the suppression of the rebellion:

Though Behram Pasha was ordered to punish and discipline the Diyarbekir populace who rebelled in 1819 in accordance with the imperial decree, the said person called for help from the said person [Telli İbrahim Bey] since the aforementioned marauders besieged him and his retinue within the inner castle. As a necessity of our obligation and requirement of our humble duty, your servants, in order to enforce the influence of his Excellency, went immediately near Urfa and fought along with Eyüb Ağa, who was Milli Timur Paşa's son. During the fight, we besieged the environs of the Castle of Diyarbekir for one hundred and one days with approximately twenty thousand cavalry and infantry troops; furthermore even the allowances of the said troops during the siege were assumed by our side capturing the said castle from the said pests and returning it to the said governor. Once the said governor stated the narrated events here, it caused the satisfaction of the Excellence granting your servants an establishment of a custom and retaining [*ibkâ*] us in the hükûmet of Tercil.³⁸⁰

member of the Şeyhzâdes, blockaded the external gate of the citadel preventing Behram Pasha from obtaining fresh supplies from the Tigris or from summoning help from the district of Ergani. Salzmänn, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*, 193.

³⁷⁸ Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 6. The immediate reward for those who responded to the call of duty did not take long. Behram Pasha was awarded with a sable fur (*samur kürk*) and ten sable clothes were awarded to Eyüb Bey, Telli İbrahim Bey, Hüseyin Bey and those present with them. As a common practice, *hil'at bahası* was an Ottoman practice widely employed by officials of the higher echelons of the bureaucracy that included supplying local functionaries with robes or granting the equivalent value of robes in the context of ceremonial allegiance. The fact that Kurdish emirs or tribal leaders were vested with such gifts denotes the material and symbolic facets of the bandit economy. Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 228.

³⁷⁹ The disaffection of the central government is reflected on Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, who regarded Timur Bey as a marauder (*eşkiya*) and narrated his leave as "he went to the hell" (*cehennem olup gitmiştir*). Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 6.

³⁸⁰ BOA. İ. MV. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861); BOA. MV. 357/52, 24 Şaban 1276 (17 March 1860).

In the struggle waged by the local notables of Diyarbekir, Receb Bey maintained, if not enhanced, his relationships vis-à-vis the Sublime Porte.³⁸¹ However, the relations with the Sublime Porte were volatile and shifting. Despite the backing the Ottoman forces in 1819, Receb Bey, like his several counterparts in the region, augmented his efforts with a view to increasing his power in the late 1820s thanks to the power vacuum the wars with Qajar Iran and Russia created in the region.³⁸² In a decree addressing the Eyüb Bey, *iskânbaşı* of the Milli tribe, Receb Bey was stated to have been refraining from complying with the governors (*vâli*) of Diyarbekir for twenty to thirty years. Apart from his disobedience, he was stated to have gathered (*celb ve cem*) tribesmen (*'aşâyir ve kabâ'il*) in his environs and seized districts and villages lying throughout his hükûmet.³⁸³ The Kurdish cavalry forces he had gathered, the order stated, harassed those who had passed along the Baghdad road. In a recent attack of the cavalry, Receb Bey had been found to possess some property (*emvâl ve eşyâ*) amounting more than 1,000 kese which had been stolen from the Baghdad merchants and messengers (*tatar*). The Porte was fed up with Receb Bey's misdeeds and misdemeanour. His execution and deposition (*i'dâm ve i'zâle*) were not out of the options available; however the government instructed Eyüb Bey to ensure that Receb Bey would have been incorporated to the Ottoman sovereignty.³⁸⁴

Following the deposition of Ebu'l-bûd Mehmed Pasha, the governor of Diyarbekir, in 1826, the new governor to be elected changed the tide in favour of

³⁸¹ Even though, the petition referred to [the offspring of] Telli İbrahim Bey, it was Receb Bey who actively participated in the suppression of the commune.

³⁸² Particularly, the Turco-Persian War of 1821-23 was a further blow to the Ottoman authority in the region. Apart from the Kurdish sympathy for the Persian rule in central Kurdistan, the Iranian advances to Bitlis and Diyarbekir disrupted the power balance in the region. Shaw, "Iranian Relations with the Ottoman"; Graham Williamson, "The Turco-Persian War 1821-1823: Winning the War but Losing the Peace," in *War and Peace in Qajar Persia: Implications Past and Present*, ed. Roxane Farmanfarmaian (London; New York: Routledge, 2008).

³⁸³ BOA. C. DH. 52/2585, 29 Şaban 1242 (28 March 1827).

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

Receb Bey.³⁸⁵ After Ebu'l-bûd Mehmed Pasha was deposed, the governorship of Diyarbekir and Urfa was administratively incorporated into the province of Imperial Mines, thereby Salih Pasha, the agent (*emin*) of the Imperial Mines, assuming the two governorships. However, actual debate took place with respect to the election of new deputy-governor.³⁸⁶ For that matter, Gevranlızâde İsmail Bey, Şeyhzâde Mehmed Bey, and Ali Ağa, the chamberlain (*kethüdâ*) of Receb Bey, were summoned to the Sublime Porte and to some offices including the *mukâta'ât nâzırı* (the Minister of long-term tax-farms) and were asked how many troops they could provide for eastern Diyarbekir.³⁸⁷

In short, Ali Ağa undertook to provide 300 troops that Kurds Receb Bey held under his control.³⁸⁸ However, the road to the office was full of negotiations in which both parties followed up their own interests. The Ottoman government was preoccupied with adding additional troops to its army for the distress on the eastern fronts, whereas the Kurdish beys sought to acquire some higher posts from the Porte.³⁸⁹ Within this context, the officials in Istanbul sounded the said chamberlain out on that matter. The chamberlain, however, replied that the governor in office, Ebu'l-bûd Mehmed Pasha, had frightened (*mütevahhiş*) most of the Kurds. If, Ali Ağa stated, the province of Diyarbekir had been given to Receb Bey and Rakka to

³⁸⁵ For a brief information about the deposed governor, see İbrahim Yılmazçelik, "Osmanlı Hakimiyeti Süresince Diyarbakır Eyaleti Valileri (1516-1838)," *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 10, no. 1 (2000): 264-5.

³⁸⁶ In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, it was a common practice for a governor to administer a province *in absentia* and delegate his position to his mütesellim. XIX. *Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır*, 176-81.

³⁸⁷ BOA. HAT. 476/23343, no date. Yılmazçelik asserts that Ebu'l-bûd Mehmed Pasha was deposed in 1826. Therefore, the document is dated between the aftermath of the pasha's deposition and the Russo-Turkish War of 1827-28.

³⁸⁸ Having admitted first that there were 50-60,000 thousand Kurds and tribes (*ekrâd ve aşâyir*), he added that they were preoccupied with helping each other out in case of any disputes among them and not familiar with service to the Ottoman empire. Ibid.

³⁸⁹ The mütesellims of Diyarbekir were virtual governors of the city. In addition to providing some government services such as maintaining public order and protecting the poor, the office was also in charge of keeping registers on the expenses of the provinces and mediating the transfer of any kind of tax revenues to the central treasury. Korkmaz, "Şer'iye Sicillerine Göre 1824-1834," 65.

Eyüb Bey with the titles of *mîr-i mirân* (beylerbeyi in Persian), each would have been able to provide 2,000 cavalry separately.³⁹⁰

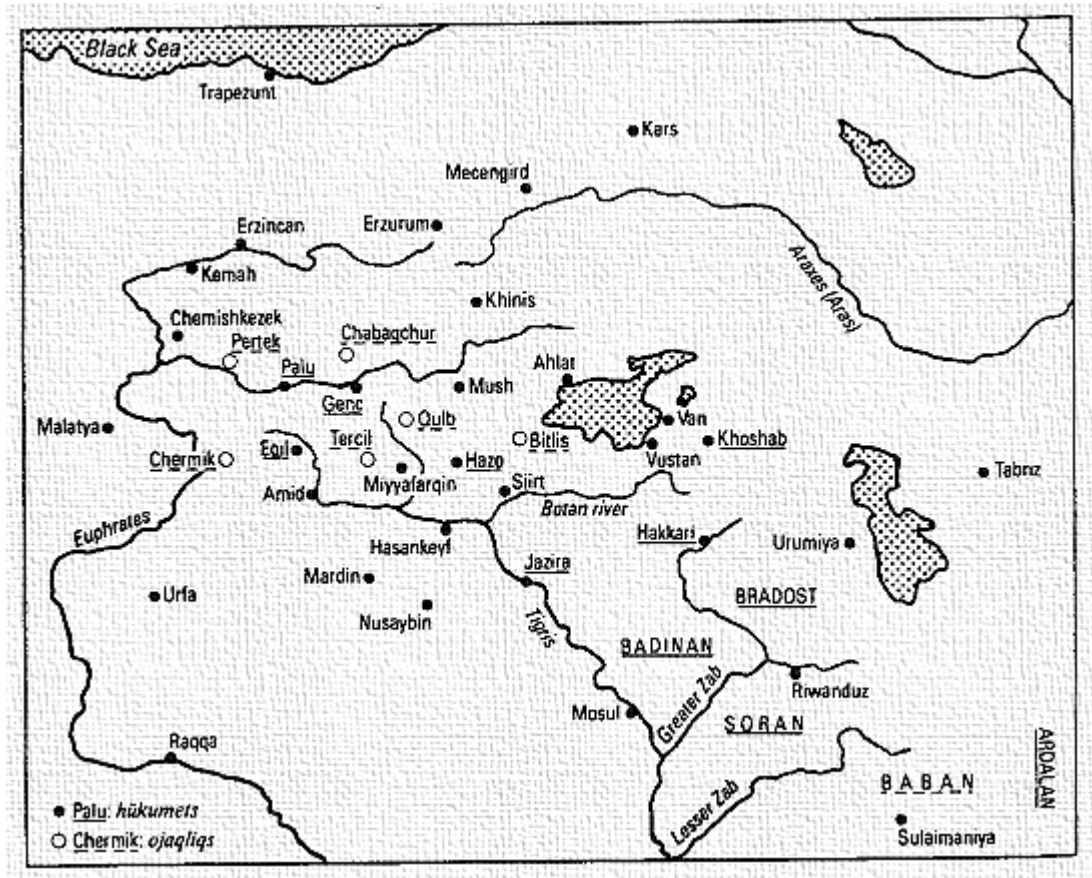


Figure 2. A map of the major Kurdish emirates.
Source: Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*.³⁹¹

Needing to back the Imperial troops against the Russian threat, the officials in Istanbul were well aware that the beys had the upper hand in that matter. Albeit with some hesitation, the Porte granted Receb Bey the title of deputy-governorship on the condition of providing 300 troops to be deployed in Erzurum. The decrease in number compared to what Ali Ağa had offered was due to the doubtful stance the Porte had with respect to the Kurdish troops. In fact, the doubt was two-fold. First, the government was not convinced about what Receb Bey would promise since the

³⁹⁰ BOA. HAT. 476/23343, no date.

³⁹¹ In addition, there should be Hani, a yurtluk-ocaklık district, nearly between Eğil and Tercil shown in the map. Cf. Table 2.

former regarded the bey as a person not familiar with what service to the empire meant (*Devlet-i 'Aliye bendeliğini bilür makûle*). Actual reason for the decrease was the nature of the Kurdish troops since it was not clear whether 1-2,000 Kurdish troops would be of service in their stations or bring about some another trouble (*gâ'ile*) for the Erzurum governor.³⁹² If one counts on the latter narration of the Zirki emirs, they provided and armed 300 cavalry to be deployed against the Russians in 1826/7. At the moment of their deportation, however, they were held back in accordance with the imperial urgency for cash resources. Instead of the troops, Bedirhan and Behram Beys argued, they submitted 100,000 guruşes following the decree of the governor of Diyarbekir.³⁹³

Despite the discontent he brought about, Receb Bey appeared to maintain his position vis-à-vis the Sublime Porte. In no more than a few years, Receb Bey had come to be addressed as a bey who did his best to ensure his obedience to the Ottoman administration during the height of the 1828/29 Russo-Turkish War.³⁹⁴ In the spring of 1828, the Ottoman government asked Receb Bey to provide 200 troops to be deployed in the war waged against the Russians. Though there is no clarification whether it was an ordinary service with which Receb Bey was assigned in return for holding hükûmet lands, Receb Bey was not able to provide the troops demanded in due time. The failure of not being able to provide the troops demanded, he stated in his petition, had been caused by the plague (*ta'un ve vebâ*) raging in the

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ The beys substantiated their claims thanks to a deed (*hüccet*) they had demonstrating their submission of the said amount to the Imperial Treasury. BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861); BOA. MVL. 357/52, 24 Şaban 1276 (17 March 1860).

³⁹⁴ During the war, the northern Kurdish emirs somehow had an affinity with the Russians whereas the southern Kurdish emirs, i.e. the emirate of Hakkari, did not show any sign of participation on the Russian side. For the relations between Russians and Kurds during the 1828-29 War, see Piotr Ivanovich Averyanov, *19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, trans., İbrahim Kale (Istanbul: Avesta, 2010 [1900]), 53-79. For a comprehensive account of the War, see Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lutfî Efendi Tarihi*, trans., Yücel Demirel, 8 vols., vol. 2 (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 366-80. Tuğrul Özcan, *Sosyal ve Ekonomik Etkileri Açısından 1828-1829 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı* (Ankara: Gece Kitaplığı, 2014).

countryside of Diyarbekir, if not his aversion to fulfil the demand.³⁹⁵ The plague, Receb Bey complained, had increased its pace for the last 20 to 30 days and killed approximately 200 men every single day.³⁹⁶ Even though this should be taken with a grain of salt, Receb Bey maintained that half of the conscripted for the campaign had perished the next morning. Finally, he was helpless while noting that the very act of finding 200 men in the city centre had been quite difficult since most of the citizens had been scattered in the mountainous regions and the rest had already perished. As a remedy, Receb Bey asked for a delay up to 50 or 60 days concerning the imperial duty.³⁹⁷ However, in a letter written on June 18, 1828, the deputy-governor of Diyarbekir reported Receb Bey's request on delay concerning the provision of 200 troops and suggested its replacement with their equivalent costs in cash.³⁹⁸

The Kurdish beys were not alone in their ventures with respect to achieving greater stakes in the Ottoman east. The armies of the tsar advanced into the Caucasus and sought new alliances for the wars to be conducted against both the Persians and Ottomans.³⁹⁹ Eppel argues that the Kurdish tribes assisted the Russians in their warfare against the Persians in 1826-28. In the next round, the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29, as Eppel writes "the more southern emirates of Buhtan, Rawanduz (Soran),

³⁹⁵ The plague occasionally visited the city of Diyarbekir throughout the nineteenth century, as in the years 1796, 1827, 1848, and 1864. Receb Bey, therefore, had a point since 400 men among the conscripted soldiers lost their lives because of either diseases or lack of physicians during the Mardin expedition under the command of Mehmed Reshid Pasha. Bülent Çukurova and B. Erantepli, "XIX. Yüzyılda Diyarbakır'ın Sosyal ve İdari Yapısı," in *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Diyarbakır*, Vol. 2 (Ankara: Diyarbakır Valiliği and Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 2008), 360; Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 23.

³⁹⁶ BOA. HAT. 451/22361, no date.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ In financial terms, the replacement amounted to 130 kese akçe in return for the eight month service pay (*ulûfe*) and the deputy-governor stated it was possible to raise the amount to 150 kese akçes following its undertaking by a guarantor. Whether Receb Bey was still the deputy-governor of Diyarbekir at this time is, however, unclear. BOA. HAT. 451/22361-A, 5 Zilhicce 1243 (18 June 1828).

³⁹⁹ It would not take long for the British Empire to take part in the three-party struggle in the region. Describing the formation of the Ottoman-Iranian border in the nineteenth century on the levels of global, regional, and local history, Sabri Ateş brilliantly discusses the developments on the global level. See, Sabri Ateş, "Empires at the Margin: Towards a History of the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland and the Borderland Peoples, 1843-1881" (Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 2006).

Baban and Hakkari took a neutral position and refrained from assisting their sovereign the Ottoman Sultan.”⁴⁰⁰ Presumably in concert with the emirates of the region, it would not be wrong to claim that the hâkim of Tercil complied with their demands. Whether Receb Bey refrained from sending the troops requested on purpose is not known; however, his activities in the province of Diyarbekir make it likely that the scope of the plague had been exaggerated.

In the few years following his rise to the office, Receb Bey rather chose to follow a more autonomous path, much to the discontent of the Porte. The officials in Istanbul were not oblivious to the fact that the authority of the governors of Diyarbekir was not prevalent outside the city walls.⁴⁰¹ In a letter sent to Istanbul by a certain Halil Agha, a local notable of Diyarbekir, the agha was frustrated with the aggressive affairs Receb Bey conducted with his allies in the city. Receb Bey, Halil Agha complained, had taken districts and villages outside Diyarbekir under his command (*dest-i tagallüb*) and refrained from paying the mîrî and other taxes levied for malikânes and timars he possessed. In addition he had come close to Diyarbekir with his 7-8,000 Kurdish marauders (*eşkiyâ*) with the intention of capturing the city centre (*dâhil-i belde-yi dahi zabt dâ‘iyesi*).⁴⁰² His allies in the city, Gevranlızâde İsmail Bey and Hacı Hüseyin Efendi, who were the a‘yân of Diyarbekir, backed the bey and dared to bring about disorder and riot (*ihdâs-ı fitne ve fesâd*) to increase their authority in the city with the intention of ceding the city to the hands of marauders.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ The support for the Russian side came out of the tribes’ beliefs in Russia’s supremacy and strong military force and their hostility against Ottoman reforms. Accordingly, any cooperation with the Russians seemed like a good opportunity for breaking away with the Persians. Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates," 246-7.

⁴⁰¹ BOA. HAT. 476/23343, no date.

⁴⁰² BOA. HAT. 451/22366-B, 28 Rebiülevvel 1246 (16 September 1830)

⁴⁰³ Gevranlızâdes were one of the a‘yân families of Diyarbekir who rose to positions such as mütesellim, voyvoda, nâkibü’l-eşraf or *şehir kethüdâsı* (i.e. city chamberlain). In particular, Gevranlızâde Ömer Bey would be quite influential in the city in the late 1840’s with the missions of reform and tax collection to which he was assigned in the districts of Sason and Garzan. Salzmann,

Despite the frequent warnings İsmail Bey and Hacı Hüseyin Efendi were given, it did not seem like they heeded.⁴⁰⁴ In the end, however, the alliance with Receb Bey cost the two beys dearly. After a consultation with the governor Yahya Pasha, İsmail Bey's execution (*şer' en katli*) was realised. Hacı Hüseyin Efendi was luckier, since he was banished to Sivas. Then, the marauders were soundly defeated by the battle waged by troops commanded by the experts on warfare (*erbâb-ı harb ve darb*) of the Diyarbekir people and the districts of Kiğı and Türkman were recaptured.⁴⁰⁵ İsmail Bey was exiled to a far place on the condition that he would never return to city centre.⁴⁰⁶ Similar to Pasvanoğlu who managed to receive a 'second chance,' Receb Bey was said to beg for the mercy of the Sultan along with his uncles.⁴⁰⁷

Having maintained his fragile balance vis-à-vis the Sublime Porte, Receb Bey seemed to get away with his aggressive expansionist policies in the periphery of Diyarbekir. However, the rise of the Kurdish beys in the 1830's was not confined to the Zirki beys. In 1833, Emin Pasha, who was a bey in the district of Mush at that time, strove for more like Receb Bey did and did not hesitate to resort to open rebellion.⁴⁰⁸ Due to new tensions brought about following the arrival of Hüseyin

"Measures of Empire," 268; Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, "Tanzimat'ta Devlet ve Aşiretin Ötesinde: Diyarbakır'da İktisadi Mücadele ve Aktörlere Bir Bakış," *Toplum ve Kuram*, no. 4 (Fall 2010).

⁴⁰⁴ BOA. HAT. 451/22366, 11 Rebiülahir 1246 (30 August 1830).

⁴⁰⁵ BOA. HAT. 451/22366-B, 28 Rebiülahir 1246 (16 September 1830).

⁴⁰⁶ In case of any violation, he would be obliged to pay 50,000 guruşes within the deed contract (*nezir*) to which he was subject. The practice of *nezir* was an ancient custom by which the responsibility for public order for a certain settlement was subjected to a high amount of compensation as in this case. For brief information on the practice, see Işık Tamdoğan, "Nezir ya da XVIII. Yüzyıl Çukurova'sında Eşkıya, Göçebe ve Devlet Arasındaki İlişkiler," *Kebikeç*, no. 21 (2006). Alp Yücel Kaya, "19. Yüzyıl Ortasında İzmir'de Mülkiyet, Emniyet ve Zaptiyeler," in *Jandarma ve Polis: Fransız ve Osmanlı Tarihçiliğine Çapraz Bakışlar*, ed. Noémi Lévy, Nadir Özbek, and Alexandre Toumarkine (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2009), 203.

⁴⁰⁷ BOA. C. DH. 2/68, 28 Receb 1246 (12 January 1831). Zens notes that the sultan's pardon or 'second chance' can be seen as a sign that both Pasvanoğlu and Receb Bey were more than a mere brigand and had the power to capacity to bring the region under control, if willing to cooperate with the central authorities. Zens, "The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa," 113.

⁴⁰⁸ The reason for the rebellion led by Emin Pasha was related to him becoming the mütesellim of Mush. The next governor of Mush, however, did not get along well with the pasha.

Pasha, the new governor of Mush, Emin Pasha took refuge in Atak.⁴⁰⁹ The governor writing the letter noted that Emin Pasha and his three brothers, Şerif, Murad and Hurşid Beys, were no one but traitors (*hâ'in*) and did everything they could to subdue the emirs of Atak with several plans.⁴¹⁰ Unfortunately, the deviation in the eyes of the Ottoman government was a widespread phenomenon among the other Kurdish beys in the region. The plan of capturing Mush, which was drawn up by Emin Pasha, found itself an immediate audience in the surrounding provinces. The author of the letter was worried that the fact that an Ottoman governor would become refuge in the Kurdish beys would further undermine the Ottoman authority in the region since the emirs of tribes in the province of Diyarbekir had gradually become marauders and distant from submission to the state (*semt-i itâ'atden min-küllü olub da revgerdân*).⁴¹¹

The support came from his brothers in addition to the hâkims of the region including Hüseyin Bey, the hâkim of Atak; and Timur Bey, the hâkim of Hani. In a mediation meeting held by Emin Pasha and Hüseyin Pasha, it was one of these beys who acted as the intermediary. Timur Bey and Hüseyin Bey escorted Emin Pasha in the course of their visit to Mush with the intention of taking the house of the pasha out of the district. However, the intermediation not only brought about instantaneous changes in alliances, but also shed light on the nature of the local politics in Ottoman Kurdistan. While the two beys met Faris Agha of Hasenanlu tribe in Bükilan, a village in the district of Genç, Hüseyin Pasha, according to the two beys, provoked

⁴⁰⁹ BOA. HAT. 450/22351-A, 25 Rebiülahir 1249 (11 September 1833).

⁴¹⁰ As the first practical solution, the Ottoman government stated three cities to which Emin Pasha would be exiled, however the pasha insisted on staying in the district of Atak. Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

the agha, resulting in the treason of the troops of Hasenanlu and Haydaranlu tribes.⁴¹²

While Timur Bey and Hüseyin Bey regarded the meeting in Bükilan as a means of reconciliation, it was nothing but a political manoeuvre. On the side of the government, however, the beys were said to have arrived in Bükilan with 8-10,000 thousand cavalry and troops with the idea of capturing the district of Mush. What the two beys did not mention in their letter was that a battle of about one and half hour had taken place.⁴¹³

The alliance among Kurdish the beys, however, grew stronger following the failed attempt at reconciliation. The network Şerif Bey and Murad Bey, who were Emin Pasha's brothers, tried to establish by means of sending letters stirred up the region.⁴¹⁴ In particular, Mirza Agha, the agha of Silvan tribe, penned a letter himself as well to a certain Rıdvan Agha indicating the arrival of Şerif Bey in Silvan and asking other tribes to join in their struggle.⁴¹⁵ As the former governor of Mush resided in Atak and his brother resided in Silvan, a statesman called for help against the Kurdish emirates of the region. In return, the Kurdish beys such as Hüseyin Bey, Timur Bey, Receb Bey, and Mirza Agha were held responsible by the Ottoman government for agitating Emin Pasha with respect to the distribution of these letters.⁴¹⁶ Additional support backed by the bey of Eğil, a district of the Imperial Mines in the north of Diyarbekir, evidently had turned this discontent into a rebellion in the entire province of Diyarbekir, if not in Ottoman Kurdistan. Particularly Tayfur

⁴¹² Timur Bey and Hüseyin Bey somehow agitated that they were on their way with peaceful intentions meaning that they were unarmed. In addition, the tribes, they claimed, stole their property amounting 1,500 *kise akçes*. BOA. HAT. 450/22351-G, 1 Cemaziyelevvel 1249 (16 September 1833).

⁴¹³ BOA. HAT. 450/22351, 25 Cemaziyelevvel 1249 (10 October 1833).

⁴¹⁴ There are at least sixteen letters written. See for instance, BOA. HAT. 450/22351-P, 11 Rebiülevvel 1249 (29 July 1833); BOA. HAT. 450-22351-N, 13 Rebiülevvel 1249 (31 July 1833); BOA. HAT. 450/22351-Y, 13 Rebiülahir 1249 (30 August 1833).

⁴¹⁵ BOA. HAT. 450-22351-Ü, 11 Rebiülevvel 1249 (29 July 1833).

⁴¹⁶ "...Adak ümerâsı namân olan Hüseyin Bey ve Timur ve Receb Bey ve Mirza Ağa nâmân-ı şekâvetkârların tahrik-i 'arûz gayret-i câhiliyetlerine yol bularak Adak havâlisinden Muş tarafına dürlü havâdisât neşriyle havâli-yi mezkûreyi ihlâl ve ifsâddan hâlli olmadığından..." BOA. HAT. 450-22351, 25 Cemaziyelevvel 1249 (10 October 1833).

Bey, the hâkim of Eğil, was deposed in the spring of 1833 due to his insubordinate acts and replaced by Numan Bey.⁴¹⁷

Following the fall from his post, Tayfur Bey took refuge in Timur Bey, who was regarded by the Porte as the companion (*hempâ*) of Atak's hâkim. In that context, Tayfur Bey did not see any risks in attacking the Diyarbekir road (*cadde*) with a force of 300 cavalymen.⁴¹⁸ The disorder the beys had created was also backed in the centre. The deputy-governor of Diyarbekir, presumably Receb Bey, was said to have detained the messenger of the governor who had written the letter for three days in addition to the appropriation of letters he was carrying.⁴¹⁹ Bitterly annoyed, the governor admitted that even Emin Pasha was tribal in his origin (*aslı dahi 'aşâyir*) and all of these traitors had gone astray to follow their ignorant endeavour (*gayret-i câhilâneye düşmüş*).⁴²⁰ Evidently, the Kurdish emirs of Diyarbekir were not uncomfortable with their current states as their rise, or their "ignorance" in the eyes of the Porte, accelerated in the years that followed. Vigilant against the Russian threat, the Sublime Porte maintained a moderate path for the troublesome Kurdish emirs. That path included rewards, or hil'at bahâsı, which was supposed to ensure the submission of the emirs in return.⁴²¹

Timur Bey was one of the Zirki beys who set a higher standard for the rebellion-like discontent Kurdish emirs led in Diyarbekir when he challenged the

⁴¹⁷ BOA. HAT. 450-22351-A, 25 Rebiülahir 1249 (11 September 1833)..

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ The reference to the nomadic origins of the pashas and the other culprits under question recalls Deringil's elaboration of nomadic populations who were "never actually bad, they were always 'simple folk who cannot tell good from evil.'" Accordingly the nomadic leaders, according to Deringil, had to be treated carefully and all care was to be taken to avoid provoking their wild nature and hatred." Selim Deringil, "'They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery': The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 2 (2003): 317. Though the early nineteenth century seems quite early to be seen by colonial views, Ottoman governors' continuous references to nomadism and ignorance seem to puzzle this case. For further discussions, see the next chapters.

⁴²¹ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 24. Even though Receb Bey, Timur Bey, and Hüseyin Bey was rewarded with hil'at bahâsı in 1834, their compliance with the imperial rule would not be taken for granted.

centralisation attempts of the Porte. Albeit with the duly paid taxes such as imperial taxes (*tekâlif*) and *hazâriye*, Timur Bey complained to the governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Eğil that there had been continuous interventions in his district.⁴²² In a period in which the primary concern for the semi-autonomous lands held under the local notables in the countryside, the persistent interventions presumably reflected the increasing level of the state affairs in the domain of Timur Bey.⁴²³ His arguments showed another aspect of alliance among the Kurdish emirs. That is, Timur Bey asserted that the Tirikanlı tribe (*kâbile*) refused to accept the principles which would not be successfully imposed on the Zirki tribe.⁴²⁴ On behalf of the tribe for which he advocated, he challenged the conscription of children on the grounds that the Zirki tribe had not given their children away.⁴²⁵ It is clear that the grounds underlying the discontent were nothing but building pillars of the centralising state: taxation and conscription. For that matter, Timur Bey benefited from tribes under the control of his fellow emirs thereby maintaining a somewhat different alliance.⁴²⁶

The policy Timur Bey led, however, was not readily acknowledged by some other emirs. As he encroached upon the lands under the control of another emir, the alliance began to shatter as part of the regional conflicts. In his challenge to the

⁴²² *Hazâriye* was the lump-sum payment to be submitted to governors in the realm where government offices were granted to the highest bidders. Within this context, *imdâd-ı hazâriye* was the reward for one who had succeeded in becoming a governor. In Diyarbekir, the amount of *hazâriye* was 20,000 guruşes in the early nineteenth century. The tax, which would be abolished after the establishment of *müşirlik*s (the post of governor-generals) in 1845, was collected in two instalments and levied on the entire populace of the province. Yılmazçelik, "Osmanlı Hakimiyeti Süresince Diyarbakır Eyaleti Valileri (1516-1838)," 281-2.

⁴²³ Conscription in the province of Diyarbekir, Southgate states, increased the already present discontent and danger of the Kurds. Noting the enlistment by force, he notes "two hundreds of young men driven in like cattle, their aged parents following, weeping and wringing their hands." Southgate, *Narrative of a Visit*, 99.

⁴²⁴ BOA. HAT. 449/22346-D, 24 Şevval 1250 (23 February 1835).

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ Leaving his essentialist views aside, Sykes gives information on the Tirikanlı as "a sedentary tribe between the Euphrates and Haini [*sic.*]; fond of bright coloured clothes; wealthy and intelligent; kindly disposed to the few Armenians who live among them" and the tribe had 650 families. Unfortunately, there is no clear indication as to Zirki tribe. Mark Sykes, "The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 38(Jul. - Dec. 1908): 464.

reforms imposed by the centralising Porte, the tribes and villages he had under his control happened to be under the jurisdiction of another emir, Tayfur Bey. On February 26, 1835, a certain Mehmed Emin wrote a letter to the Porte:

Since your highness is informed by the correspondence presented to my humble side by beys of Eğıl in addition to interpretation of my humble petition that Tirikan tribe along with Kurds of Zoğorlar villages do not accept the auspicious matter of population register and *Mansûre* troops demanded and show the signs of maraud and rebellion (*şekâvet ve bâgi*) there is no further need for repetition. Your servant Mehmed Tayfur Bey, the *hâkim* of Eğıl, noticed to my humble post and wrote that recently Timur Bey, the *emin* of Hani, came to the village of Çumapak, which are between (*hudud bâşı*) Hani and Eğıl, and summoned the elders of the said Tirikan tribe along with some others to his presence returning them after some conversation. Speaking about that he is the *emin* of Eğıl and how inappropriate (*mugâyir-i emr ü rızâ*) it is for him to patronise (*açıkdan götürmesi*), negotiate and consult with those who are from the district of Eğıl and inclined (*meyl ve sülûk*) to maraud, Tayfur Bey was instructed to write something in accordance. Even though he was given this enquiry depending on the response to arrive to be sent back to my side, he wrote himself before the arrival of the said enquiry. As his correspondence copy and the sheet he received from Timur Bey was sent as an attachment, the interpretation of documents indicates that the traitor Timur Bey now come out into the open sticking his nose into everything and increasing his malice day by day. However, Receb Bey has not yet exposed himself. Since he has promised to our sultan [...] his chamberlain was summoned a couple of days ago with the intention of ensuring that and was sent back to his side after some statement and advice. It is evident that whatever happens from now on will be presented. By means of inference, your servant Mirza Ağa is regarded as an appropriate servant of yours for the current period and will be sounded (*yoklanacağı*) and since the handling of the said agha will be realised by perfect ease, ways of his summoning will be investigated.⁴²⁷

Cooperation and the subsequent discontent went hand in hand as Tayfur Bey was frustrated with the intervention of another bey within his lands. Timur Bey's uneasiness with conscription eventually led him to provoke the surrounding tribes from Hani to Yezidhan.⁴²⁸ On the side of the Porte, however, there was concern about a possible spread of the rebellion among the Kurds and tribes in the district of

⁴²⁷ BOA. HAT. 449/22346-E, 27 Şevval 1250 (26 February 1835).

⁴²⁸ Timur Bey, according to Mehmed Emin, who wrote the letter to the Porte, provoked the local people by saying that the conscription for the *Mansûre* army would take away every single boy they had (*kimsenin evladı bırakılmayub alınacağını*). BOA. HAT. 449/22346-F, 27 Şevval 1250 (26 February 1835).

Mush. As Timur Bey openly agitated against the conscription, Behram Bey, another Zirki bey, was said not to have exposed himself.⁴²⁹ Even though the rest of Zirki beys opted to align with the Ottoman government, Timur Bey pushed for a general mobilisation of the Kurdish in his environs, making Emin Pasha, the deputy-governor of Mush, vigilant at all costs. Presumably with the motive of opposition against him, Tayfur Bey warned Timur Bey that any kind of rebellion against the Ottoman state would cost dear. Discouraging him further from such attempts, Tayfur Bey asked him to stay away from his district in case of such a rebellion.⁴³⁰ Timur Bey made it publicly known that he was against the new organisation that was supposed to be established.⁴³¹

In the spring of 1835, the dye was already cast. The discontent Timur Bey had spread among the Kurdish tribesmen had reached its peak and turned into a rebellion. The change of events owed also much to the aggressive expansion of the emir of Rawanduz. Taking over most of southern Kurdistan within the confines of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1830s, Kör Muhammed (*Mîrê Kor* in Kurdish), the emir of Rawanduz, succeeded in temporarily taking over Cizre, the residence of the emirs of Buhtan.⁴³² The expansion of the emir subdued other emirates, such as Buhtan and Bahdinan, following the occupation of the region. Despite the imperial order dispatched asking them to pay allegiance to the government in Diyarbekir, said a certain Mehmed Tahir, it was not possible for them to get out of the village, let alone going to Diyarbekir.⁴³³ The increasing influence of the emir in the southern parts of

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Tayfur Bey seemed to have persuaded Timur Bey from giving up on rebelling against the Ottoman forces. He not only gave the example of a recent reform operation carried out in Harput, but also prescribed submission to the state (*bu hengâmlarda it`âden güzel bir şey' yokdur*). BOA. HAT. 449/22346-H, no date.

⁴³¹ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 23.

⁴³² Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates," 250.

⁴³³ Mehmed Tahir added also nearly 50,000 men (*çakmakdâr*) were seen only in the district of Behdinan. BOA. HAT. 449/22346-İ, no date.

Diyarbakir not only consolidated the power of Muhammed K r, but also opened a room for ever-changing alliances among other petty Kurdish emirs. It was a very thin line considering the final decision to be taken by the surrounding Kurdish emirs would seal their fate.⁴³⁴

The Fall of the Zirki Beys, the Exile, and the Property Confiscated

On April 3, 1835, Re id Mehmed Pasha, the governor of Sivas and the former reformer in Albania, wrote to the Ottoman Palace

[...] it is evident thanks to the interpretation of the paper sent by the villain (*cin yetk r*) called Timur Bey to the *h kim* of E il that even though the *kaz * of E il is within the Imperial Mines because of the district's adjacency to their basins, the chiefs of Diyarbakir Kurds (*r  es -y  ekr d*) called Zirki beys provoked the Tirkanlu Kurds. Furthermore the malefactor (*mel' anetk r*) whom they call Rawanduz Bey Mehmed Pasha was present heretofore in the province of Diyarbakir and came to the town they called Es'ard [Siird], 30-hour-distant to the centre of Diyarbakir, and dared and still dare to commit several oppression and cruelty (*zulm ve i'tis f*); as you could sense thanks to the attached papers written in Arabic the people of the said region stated the said person's aggression. Since we do not have much information concerning this matter, the enquiry about the state was requested from the provinces of  ehrizor. [...] As mentioned earlier in this way, it is clear as day that the traitors (*h 'in*) they call Zirki beys would immediately get their hands in any kind of misdeed and malice (*f s d ve mel' anet*) they could once they find a tiny chance of liberty (*pek c  z' i bir serbestiyet*) and that they would abuse the matter of Rawanduz Bey for their misdeed and malice.⁴³⁵

The early nineteenth century brought about such windows of opportunity for the notables in the Ottoman Kurdistan periphery vis- -vis the centralising state's ambition to suppress these notables. The limits for the toleration of the Kurdish emirs,

⁴³⁴ As mentioned above, Mehmed Tahir, from a village in Siird, paid his allegiance to the Sublime Porte at least on paper. Noting that the emir of Rawanduz arrived in Cizre, the *h kim* of  irvan indicated that he did not lend credence to the emir. In a way to persuade his allegiance, the *h kim* demonstrated that he and his retinues stayed in their houses and did not visit the emir while the entire populace (*ah li*) of Buhtan paid a visit to him. BOA. HAT. 449/22346-J, no date.

⁴³⁵ BOA. HAT. 449/22346-C, 4 Zilhicce 1250 (3 April 1835).

however, had long been exceeded on the side of the government in Istanbul. While the Russian threat had somehow been lessened thanks to the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi in 1833, the conquest of Syria by Mehmed Ali in 1831-32 was a threat to be reckoned with. That is, Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Mehmed Ali, already sought ways of cooperation with the Kurdish tribes. Following the takeover of the districts of Aleppo, Damascus, and Adana to Ibrahim Pasha, the Sublime Porte was therefore quite concerned with the possibility of further cooperation between Egyptian forces and the Kurdish emirs.⁴³⁶ Thus was initiated the reform operation of Mehmed Reshid Pasha in the spring of 1835 after the rumours that Muhammed Kor was in contact with Ibrahim Pasha.⁴³⁷ The primary target of the operation was therefore the emir of Rawanduz, the pasha considered a threat to his eastern flank.⁴³⁸ As mentioned above, the thin line between acting as allies or enemies of the state, however, would shape the fates of other less powerful emirates of Ottoman Kurdistan.

In the meantime, the increasing disobedience the Zirki beys showed under the leadership of Timur Bey was a harbinger of their imminent fall. Mehmed Reshid Pasha, the governor of Sivas and commander of the reform in the region, indicated the actual reason underlying their rebellion was the fear of losing several privileges they had enjoyed hitherto.⁴³⁹ In a sense, the emirs of Diyarbekir had too much at stake. As the emir of Rawanduz encroached upon the district of Siird, the convenient

⁴³⁶ Apart from the actual meetings Muhammed Kor had with Ibrahim Pasha, the extent of the Egyptian influence on Kurdish emirs is a question begging yet an answer. Even though Ibrahim Pasha had relations with Kurdish tribes in the district of Adana, the impact on Ottoman Kurdistan is an enigma except for the Tiyari tribe, a Chaldean community in the district of Hakkâri, the leader of which was well affected towards Ibrahim Pasha. Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates," 252-4; Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, 42-6; Ainsworth, "An Account of a Visit to the Chaldeans," 46.

⁴³⁷ Ebubekir Ceylan, *Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq: Political Reform, Modernization and Development in the Nineteenth Century Middle East* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 49.

⁴³⁸ Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates," 252. As the major target of the campaign was the Soran emirate, the operation in question expanded to the elimination of Zirki beys further to the eastern districts of Diyarbekir such as Garzan. For a detailed account of the pasha's campaign, see Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 19-47; Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates," 252. For the fall of Soran emirate, see also McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 42-4.

⁴³⁹ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 24.

conditions for a prospective rebellion began to emerge, as they did for a prospective reform operation.

As a part of a greater reform operation in Ottoman Kurdistan, Mehmed Reshid Pasha crushingly defeated (*bir yürüyüşde kaldırılmış*) the forces of Receb Bey, who had retreated to the village of Seyid Hasan, eight hours distant from Diyarbekir. The forces of Timur Bey and Behram Bey succoured the emir in trouble but shared the same fate of defeat at the hands of the Ottoman forces.⁴⁴⁰ As the Zirki beys fought the Ottoman forces, Mirza Agha, who was this time ally of the beys, provoked the tribes in the Silvan region. The tribes Sinanî and Berazî joined Hacı Telli and Fersooğulları and attacked Hazro administered by the deputy-governor.⁴⁴¹ Following the battle, the defeat of the Kurdish alliance was decisive with 1,000 men killed and another 600 taken prisoner following the defeat. The leading cadre's doom was no different. Mehmed Reshid Pasha wrote proudly that Receb Bey, the traitor, and his brother Bedirhan Bey had been captured alive with, each one's sons with slight wounds, and exiled to Diyarbekir. Despite the fleeing Timur Bey and Behram Bey, the pasha was quite confident that their capture was just a matter of time.⁴⁴²

After the decisive defeat of the Kurdish alliance, the victory was decided to be published in the official gazette of the empire, *Takvim-i Vekâyi* (official newspaper of the empire).⁴⁴³ The fall of the Zirkis soon became a subject of discussion in the gazette concluding:

[...] Telli Beyzâde Receb Bey and others whose names are known, who are called Zirki beys in the province of Diyarbekir, and Mirza Bey, the *zâbit* of Silvan, and other tribes and Kurds such as Ömerganlû from Mardin dared to retaliate and surround [the Ottoman forces] with a large party in cooperation, but the majority of their party (*sevâd-ı cem'iyetleri*)

⁴⁴⁰ BOA. HAT. 453/22435-A, 5 Zilkade 1250 (5 March 1835).

⁴⁴¹ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler," 25.

⁴⁴² He suggested the continuation of the current operation since they were once involved with these emirs and demonstrated the next target as the Yezidis. Ibid.

⁴⁴³ BOA. HAT. 448/22326, no date.

was scattered and devastated (*perakânde ve perişân*). The said Zirki beys was sent to Istanbul to be resided in a convenient location in Roumelia along with their families and children (‘*ıyâl ve evlâdları*) and Kurds captured (*ahz ve girift*) were delivered to the Imperial Arsenal. Currently the said community were settled for agriculture (*zirâ‘at ve harâset*) in a large number of villages which are far away from prosperity (*şenlikden hâlli olan*) in the region from Diyarbekir to the mine of Ergani and from there to Mardin and the auspicious affair of improving the prosperity of the country was to be completed. [...] ⁴⁴⁴

By doing so, the Sublime Porte not only completed the re-conquest of Ottoman Kurdistan, sweeping away the emirs of Diyarbekir, the mountainous people around the districts of Sason and Garzan, and the emirate of Soran but also paved the path for prospective reforms to be practices in the region. Apparently, the reforms in question firstly dealt with the sedentarisation of the nomadic tribes of Ottoman Kurdistan to be followed by improvement in the agricultural infrastructure. ⁴⁴⁵ The fall of the Zirki beys, however, led to the realisation of some other practices of the centralising Ottoman state, just prior to the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict. As the article above indicates, the conscription of Kurdish boys into the Imperial Arsenal sheds light on the labour recruitment practices in the Ottoman capital. As a request of Mehmed Reshid Pasha, Kurdish children were summoned to be employed in the arsenal awaiting shipment in the next spring. ⁴⁴⁶ Conscribed children were not confined to Kurds. Even though there is no information associated with their terms of

⁴⁴⁴ *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, Defa 123, Sene 1251 (1835/36). Section on Internal Affairs. The publication of the success in Ottoman Kurdistan in particular and *Takvim-i Vekâyi* in general also served another purpose. That was the change in state practices with respect to politics in the Ottoman capital. In this context, such a victory away from the Ottoman centre was delicately employed as a new element in politics and as an implicit source of legitimacy for the Ottoman government in the early 1830s. Cengiz Kırılı, "Surveillance and Constituting the Public in the Ottoman Empire," in *Public, Politics and Participation: Locating the Public Sphere in the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. Seteney Shami (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2009).

⁴⁴⁵ As another grand project of the Tanzimat era, the sedentarisation of nomadic populations was carried out on a thin line between coercion and mediation throughout the empire, including Bosnia, Kurdistan, Syria and Transjordan, according to Köksal. In the case of Zirki beys, who were regarded as the grave impediments against sedentarisation initially, their exile was supposed to facilitate sedentarisation process but could not. In fact, the process in the Ottoman Kurdistan would take years, the consequences leading to serious ethnic hostilities in the last quarter of the century. For relatively a more successful process in Ankara, see Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation."

⁴⁴⁶ BOA. HAT. 447/22314, no date.

employment, 500 Armenian children around Sivas were summoned and sent to work in a spinning mill and an iron foundry. Accordingly, 148 Kurdish children, probably children the pasha had requested, were collected in and around Diyarbekir.⁴⁴⁷

Apart from the prospective reforms the Sublime Porte envisioned in the region, the threat the Zirki beys posed was still present. On September 10, 1835, Mehmed Reshid Pasha wrote to the Sublime Porte that the Zirki affair had been completed following the arrest of Receb Bey, Timur Bey, Behram Bey and their relatives in addition to Silvan bey Mirza Agha in Diyarbekir. Their presence in Diyarbekir let alone Anatolia, noted the pasha, would not be deemed acceptable in any way.⁴⁴⁸ After being held in Diyarbekir, the emirs were then sent to the province of Sivas. However, their stay in Sivas was not safe because of the proximity to their homelands, Diyarbekir.⁴⁴⁹ In line with the newspaper article above, only then were the options of exile subject to negotiation as their final destination was certainly the Balkans. Those options included districts such as Varna or Rusçuk.⁴⁵⁰ After negotiations, the final destination of the fallen emirs was Edirne, with the exception of Mirza Agha, who was exiled to Rusçuk.⁴⁵¹

The exile of beys, however, brought about new problems for the Ottoman state. The problems, economic in origin, demonstrated in a sense the transformation the Ottoman polity underwent during the early nineteenth century. That is, the emirs of Diyarbekir demonstrated that their wealth was almost non-existent in the aftermath of their defeat. Hence, the government saw it necessary to provide a certain amount

⁴⁴⁷ BOA. HAT. 447/22314-B, 17 Cemaziyelevvel 1235 (10 September 1835). The door was left open for additional Kurdish children in case of further demands that would come from Istanbul. However, their transfer was postponed to the forthcoming spring as children would not survive the long journey while winter approached.

⁴⁴⁸ BOA. HAT. 447/22314-E, 17 Cemaziyelevvel 1251 (10 September 1835)

⁴⁴⁹ BOA. HAT. 447/22314, no date.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Vak'anivîs Ahmed Lutfî Efendi Tarihi*, trans., Yücel Demirel, 8 vols., vol. 5 (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 867.

for their sustenance, to be allocated out of the property they had.⁴⁵² That decision was also the beginning of a new era for the Zirki house since the salaries to be paid to members of the house would continue throughout the nineteenth century.

The claim that the emirs did not have any property whatsoever entailed some problems for the pasha in charge of the campaign. As the prospects of material gains to be recouped on the other side of the bandit economy was still vivid, Mehmed Reshid Pasha was alerted to rumours including the pasha's extraction of money from the fallen beys. The pasha, the rumours contended, would be expected to get some monies (*akçe ve boğça*) because of the known wealth and prosperity (*servet ve samân*) of the beys. In order to thwart the rumours, the pasha informed the Porte that he had incurred expenses amounting more than 100,000 guruşes.⁴⁵³ In the web of relations where loyalty to the Porte meant more than expenses incurred, the pasha proudly legitimised his act by saying "Look, Reshid Pasha, thanks to the sultan, not only keeps his hands off single penny and share of those who captured (*harben ahz ve girift*) in war but also grant them their allowances (*ta'vinât*) obtaining their compliance (*ri'âyet*) in return."⁴⁵⁴ The alleged poor state of the beys, therefore was turned into a means of furthering the favour governors had in the eye of the Ottoman government.

Uprooted from their homelands, the Zirki beys arrived in Istanbul in December 1835 on their way to Edirne. Settled in several residences in Üsküdar, where they would spend the winter, 105 persons were granted aid by the Ottoman state in kind

⁴⁵² BOA. HAT. 447/22314, no date. It was deemed appropriate to allocate a certain amount of the property to the state expenses. See below for details.

⁴⁵³ BOA. HAT, 447/22314-C, 17 Cemaziyevvel 1251 (10 September 1835). The expenses incurred included the daily allowances of the Zirki house and clothes he ordered for the children of the house.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

and in cash.⁴⁵⁵ As they departed for Edirne, the finance departments of the Ottoman state were to face a serious challenge with regards to the confiscation, allocation, and reallocation of the revenues the Zirki beys had enjoyed hitherto. The preliminary investigation revealed that the beys owned vast lands with or without deeds (*berât*) classified in various mukâta‘ât (fiscal units usually tax-farmed to bidders), voyvodalıks, ocaklık villages, and some other villages and mukâta‘ât allocated to troops of the Diyarbekir castle.⁴⁵⁶ The entire property, according to the calculations, yielded an amounting to 1,733 keses, i.e., 866,500 guruşes for the year 1834/35.⁴⁵⁷ The lands, in fact their revenues, were confiscated by the Mansûre Treasury. Since the lands in question were confiscated, means of how they would be run profitably raised another question for the Ministry of Finance. The Ottoman finance officials had two distinct questions waiting to be resolved. The first question was how the recently confiscated revenues would be allocated among two treasuries for various state expenditures, and the second one was concerned with means of administering the lands in the near future.

The exile of the Zirkis gave the Ottoman government an opportunity to re-seize the lands, and subsequently the revenues that had been out of its reach. Once confiscated, the lands the Zirki beys held under their possession by different means were reallocated according to the needs of the Ottoman treasuries. Since timar, yurtluk, and ocaklık lands that had been appropriated (*tagallüben zabt*) by the emirs were reserved for the troops in cavalry, artillery (*humbaracı*) and castle (*kal‘a-yı hâkâniye*) and their return to the Mansûre Treasury was necessary by law in case of

⁴⁵⁵ The population of the house, due to its already large number, would change all the time. See below for further details. On the other hand, the aid included bread, meat, oil, rice, candles, wood and coal in kind and the expenses they incurred on their journey from Uskudar to Çekmece-i Kebir in cash. BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date; BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836).

⁴⁵⁶ BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836).

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

escheat (*mahlûlât*), the legitimisation of confiscation was ensured.⁴⁵⁸ Having thus confiscated revenues for the year 1250 A.H. (i.e. 1834/35), the Mansûre Treasury reallocated one third of the revenues to the Imperial Treasury because of the latter's deficits due to salary payments.⁴⁵⁹ The remaining two thirds, or 688,021.5 guruşes, were to be held by the Mansûre Treasury.⁴⁶⁰

The second question was the future possession of the lands. Negotiations with regards to who would tax-farm the lands brought about two persons. The first option was auctioning the lands to the governor of Diyarbekir by means of direct control (*emânet*).⁴⁶¹ Considering the high prices of grain in the region and unlikeliness of such high revenue for the forthcoming years, the second option was tax-farming the lands to governors with a slight reduction in the contract value.⁴⁶² Evidently the first option was favoured as the lands were tax-farmed to the current governor of Diyarbekir, Mehmed Reshid Pasha.⁴⁶³ As compensation, the emirs settled in Edirne were rewarded with monthly allowances out of the revenues of the lands they once

⁴⁵⁸ It should be noted that confiscation was prohibited following the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict.

⁴⁵⁹ Prior to the Tanzimat, there were various treasuries in the Ottoman Finance. The Mansûre Treasury, originally established by Mahmud II in order to cover the expenses of the newly recruited Mansûre Army, rose as a distinct but not an independent, treasury within the Imperial Treasury. See Arzu Terzi, *Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti* (Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 2000), 9-10.

⁴⁶⁰ BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date; BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836). As 30,000 guruşes out of this amount were allocated to the troops deployed in Diyarbekir citadel, the remainder would be registered as revenue for the Mansûre Treasury. Evidently the men paid received pension payments as they were labelled abolished old servants (*mülga hademe-yi `atike*). Furthermore the number of servants in the citadel for the year 1252 A.H. was 412 even though 214 persons were absent and six dead. For details such as payrolls and names of servants, see BOA. C. ML. 274/11260, 28 Rebiülahir 1254 (21 July 1838).

⁴⁶¹ *Emanet*, or public administration, refers to the direct administration of lands by the fisc through its salary/fee earning agents (*emin*) appointed by the central government. As the central authority held full jurisdiction over publicly administered lands, the agent was public officer who either received a salary or a share of the revenue collected. Yayıoğlu, "The Provincial Challenge," 78.

⁴⁶² BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date; BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836).

⁴⁶³ "6 yük 88.021,5 guruş 51 senesi Martından i'tibâren şimdilik bedel takdîriyle müşârinileyh hazretleri el-hâlet-i hazihi Diyarbekir vâlisi dahi bulunduklarıçün sene-yi merkûmeye mahsûben kendülere itizâmen ihâlesi icrâ olunmak..." BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date.

possessed. Starting from July 26, 1836, the Zirki beys would receive the following monthly payments:⁴⁶⁴

Table 3. The Amount the Zirki Beys Paid for the Date Teşrinisani 1252 (13 November-12 December 1836)

Name of the Bey	Amount (guruşes.paras)
Telli Beyzâde Receb Bey	3,500
Hüseyin Beyzâde Behram Bey	3,000
Timur Bey, Receb Bey's father in law	3,000
Mirza Agha, Agha of Silvan	2,500
Behram Bey, Receb Bey's brother	1,500
Bedirhan Bey, Receb Bey's brother	1,500
Şerif Bey, Receb Bey's brother's son	687.20
Faris Bey, Receb Bey's brother's son	687.20
Esad Bey, Receb Bey's son (<i>mahdûm</i>)	687.20
Selim Bey, Receb Bey's son (<i>mahdûm</i>)	687.20
Total	17,750

Source: BOA. C. DH. 47/2335, 7 Şevval 1252 (15 January 1837)

The matter of subsidising the fallen emirs served similarly the legitimisation of the Ottoman polity against the rebels. Even though source of payments realised was covered by the very revenues of the lands the emirs of Diyarbekir possessed, the Sublime Porte described the case as an auspicious grant demonstrating that even the most villainous rebels were not denied the benevolence of the sultan. As the emirs regularly received their stipends and were kept away from politics and away from their networks, they were expected to lead tranquil lives in an environment with which they were barely familiar.⁴⁶⁵

On the side of the Ottoman state, however, the intervention was inevitable as there was too much at stake. One of the founding pillars of the Ottoman

⁴⁶⁴ For the first half-month payment, see BOA. C. DH. 77/3814, 17 Cemaziyelevvel 1252 (30 August 1836).

⁴⁶⁵ There are various documents in the archives showing the receipts of payments for the period between January 1837 and March 1840. See for instance, BOA. C. ML. 312/12782, 27 Muharrem 1253 (3 May 1837); BOA. C. ML. 273/11232, 18 Şevval 1252 (26 January 1837); BOA. C. ML. 163/6854, 25 Cemaziyelahir 1253 (26 September 1837); BOA. C. ML. 224/9305, 16 Muharrem 1256 (20 March 1840). Considering the size of the family, it is not surprising that payment of these stipends and their transfer to the next of kin continued throughout the nineteenth century. The question of stipends, however, was on the agenda because of occasional requests of the family members with respect to increase in amounts.

modernisation, at least in financial terms, stipulated the elimination of intermediation between the sources of revenue and the central treasury. In this context, the significance of the Zirki beys was far away from insignificant. As the discussion above demonstrates, the value and thus the financial importance of the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands they possessed were important items not to be easily discarded. In addition to the registered lands they possessed, the hükûmet villages which was not whatsoever present in the state registers perhaps might explain the state officials' determination of confiscating them at the very first place.

Table 4. Property Claimed to Have Been Granted to the Hükûmet of Tercil by the Glorious Deed

Property with Deed	Number of Villages and/or Fields
Ocaklık villages	42
Malikâne villages	95
Timâr villages	33
Mill (<i>asyâb</i>) farm	16
Rice lands (<i>madrab</i>)	11
Garden	19
Vineyard	36
Residential garden	3
Watered Farm	500

Source: BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 1, 2.

What the Zirki beys possessed was not confined to the lands classified in Table 4.⁴⁶⁶ Despite the lack of any information with regards to size and crops produced, the emirs of Tercil, Atak, and Hani also possessed some non-registered lands that had been granted by the Ottoman state. As their absence in the registers yet the presence of imperial deeds (*berât-ı 'alişân*) point to the possibility of hükûmet lands, the villages the Zirki beys held in their possession indicates the extent of influence they hitherto enjoyed in the province of Diyarbekir. More important than the lands they controlled, which extended from the southern tip of the province of Harput to the

⁴⁶⁶ For the same table attached to the petition of Bedirhan Bey and Behram Bey, who were Receb Bey's brothers, see BOA. MVL. 357/52, 21 Şaban 1276 (14 March 1860).

northern region of Diyarbekir, the emirs also possessed a significant number of mills and rice farms, revealing their interest in agricultural production.

Conclusion

All the property the Zirki emirs enjoyed was confiscated end a few years prior to the promulgation of the Gulhane Edict. As reforms facilitating the Ottoman centralisation in Kurdistan gained new momentum in the first decade of the Tanzimat era, the fall of Zirki emirs, along with other southern Kurdish emirates, was duly completed as early as 1835. Not different from the provincial notables of Anatolia and the Balkans, the time span between the rise and fall of Receb Bey, or the hükûmet of Tercil, however was quite short. Despite the possession of vast lands under the yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet practice, Receb Bey pursued the trajectory of powerful notables in Anatolia and the Balkans, such as acquiring the post of the deputy-governorship of Diyarbekir and expanding the size of his landholdings thanks to the networks he established either by legal or extra-legal means. The fate of the Zirki dynasty accordingly followed the same doom of the provincial notables of the empire. In a few decades, conscription and taxation, which were practices the surrounding Kurdish tribes had never heard of, became the priority of the Ottoman government, much to the dismay of the Kurdish emirs.⁴⁶⁷ Receb Bey, who hitherto had enjoyed ruling vast lands he had inherited from his grandfathers, became somehow an enemy of the state. While the government negotiated and at times

⁴⁶⁷ Even the German field marshal Helmuth von Molke, who was summoned by Mahmud II in order to modernise the Ottoman army, conceded that all of the Kurds he encountered in the region complained about taxation and conscription. The field marshal accompanied the Ottoman troops which continued their campaign after the fall of the Zirki emirs expanding the Ottoman incursion to the emirate of Buhtan and nomadic inhabitants around the Garzan Mountains. Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke'nin Türkiye Mektupları* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1969 [Original publication in German 1839]), 180-214.

accommodated the illicit acts of Receb Bey, his mere presence was considered as a potential threat to the new order to be established. Receb Bey, however, was probably discontent with respect to the increasing state practices in his own realm. As demonstrated, the Zirki emirs did not like the idea of conscription at all. Turning the inter-tribal rivalry into a political instrument against the Sublime Porte, the Zirki beys sought to challenge and thwart, if possible, the practices of the centralising Ottoman state. As Timur Bey actively provoked the villages under his control in order to resist conscription, Receb Bey, on the other hand, sought to evade his responsibilities associated with the hûkûmet lands he possessed.

However, the rising concerns in Ottoman government would no longer tolerate the semi-independent acts of such emirs. The reform in Ottoman Kurdistan, however partial, attempted to intervene in the centuries-old practices of semi-independent rule of the Kurdish emirs. Despite the elimination of the Zirki beys, the Ottoman statesmen were worried that security and order were still on a razor's edge.⁴⁶⁸

It was not just the political elimination of semi-independent Kurdish emirates. The question was also the re-appropriation of lands that once had been granted to emirs in the frontier zones. Relatively a smaller emirate when compared to other emirates such as Buhtan, Rawanduz, and Baban, the Zirki emirs still possessed a significant amount of lands. The confiscation of these lands was the ultimate end of the forthcoming Tanzimat reforms. The presence of immune and hereditary wealth that was confiscated, in a sense, became the main culprit in the eyes of the Ottoman government. In other words, the *ancien regime*, by which Salzmann underlines the inevitable relation between the socio-political organization of the ruling elite and the

⁴⁶⁸ For the second phase of the campaign in Ottoman Kurdistan, see BOA. HAT. 451/22359, 1 Cemaziyelahir 1251 (24 September 1835). On the other hand, the second stage of reform in Ottoman Kurdistan, to be realised in 1848, would completely eliminate the remaining Kurdish emirs. In this context, the exile of some other Kurdish emirs such, as Nurullah Bey, and Bedir Khan in the first decade of the Tanzimat era would perpetuate the challenge of the Ottoman polity.

fiscal structure of the empire itself, was about to fall as the Tanzimat, the harbinger of reforms, targeted the lands and the subsequent provincial power the Kurdish emirs had, and drastically intervened in the socio-political organisation in a way that would never let it to last.⁴⁶⁹

The new regime in the capital did not leave any room whatsoever for the Kurdish emirs as intermediaries of the state. Neither the office of deputy-governorship nor the privileges granted to the emirs by means of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands was to last. Even though Salzmann refers to *mukata'a* holders who were quite influential on the fiscal structure of the empire, it was also the Kurdish emirs who, in a sense, had constituted for centuries the backbone of the fiscal structure in the Ottoman border areas. Receb Bey's discontent, which soon turned into an open rebellion, however, was not in accordance with the new language in which the Ottoman statesmen would speak. The most important expressions in this language were the elimination of intermediation on tax sources and assertion of state's control on land and property. The next chapter will elaborate the administration of these recently confiscated lands. The politics of land and property the Zirki emirs once possessed would bring about actual Tanzimat-state practices in the districts of Diyarbekir province.

⁴⁶⁹ Salzmann, "Measures of Empire," 145-6.

CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTERING THE LAND: STATE LAND, LOCAL NOTABLES, AND REFORM

The centralising Ottoman government in the early nineteenth century no longer needed the Kurdish warriors, annulling unilaterally the political arrangements with the Kurdish *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* holders. Albeit with their provision of a significant number of troops, especially useful in the war against the Russians, in the 1820s, the mentality change in the Ottoman fisc necessitated the elimination of these privileges.⁴⁷⁰ In fact, it was a continuation of the changing political attitude towards the autonomous *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* administrations. As there was increasing dissent among the Kurdish emirs with regards to the accelerating political intervention by the Ottoman government, the Sublime Porte was increasingly irritated by the acts of the Kurdish emirs who did not refrain from defying the sovereignty of the empire. Political considerations set aside, the lands the Kurdish emirs enjoyed beyond the grasp of the Ottoman fisc did not go unnoticed in the Porte.

The political elimination of the Zirki beys followed the restoration of state possession of all lands once possessed by the same beys. The first centralisation-cum-confiscation phase of reforms in Ottoman Kurdistan had attempted at establishing an administration closer to the Sublime Porte.⁴⁷¹ While it was the first comprehensive reform operation in Ottoman Kurdistan, the economic trajectory of the reform in this sense followed the practices observed in the Ottoman Balkans. In

⁴⁷⁰ For the attempts at financial centralisation, see Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi* (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1986). For the multi-treasury phase of the Ottoman finance and its aftermath, see Terzi, *Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti*.

⁴⁷¹ The second phase for the elimination of remaining *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands would be initiated in the late 1840s, following the rebellion of the Buhtan emirate. For the second phase, see Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 39-43.

particular, the elimination of the pashalic of the Balkans, particularly that of Ali Pasha of Tep len, led the Sublime Porte to revert the pashas' lands back to the state possession.⁴⁷² While the destruction of the Kurdish emirates was a political part of the Ottoman move, the confiscation of the yurtluk-ocaklık and h k met property was the financial counterpart. Even though the Ottoman treasury restored these privileged property to the imperial treasury, the fact that the lands in question had been long beyond the grasp of the Ottoman registers brought about immediate problems with regards to their direct administration. The absence of registers upon which the Ottoman finances would rely combined with the inability to acquire direct administration of property would be a problem to be reckoned with.

The chapter firstly will discuss the confiscation process and its aftermath. Despite the very decisive intrusion of the Ottoman state into the unknown for the previous two centuries, the administration of the lands in question would not be that straightforward. In the particular example of the rice lands once possessed by the Zirki beys, this chapter will demonstrate the shifts in the pace of the Tanzimat reforms. Direct administration of the rice lands following the fall of the Zirki beys on the one hand, and the subsequent tax-farm relations associated with the very same lands on the other illustrates the gradual reforms in Ottoman Kurdistan. That is, it did not take long for the Ottoman government to lose control of the lands in question once the complicated web of tax-farm relations impeded the government from being informed about the actual possessors of the land. Not confined to the rice lands, the tax-farm contracts for the revenues of districts of Hazro and Mihrani, in this sense,

⁴⁷² Sezer, "Tepedelenli Ali Pa a'nın  iftlikleri  zerine Bir Ara tırma."; "Tepedelenli Ali Pa a ve O ullarının  iftlik ve Gelirlerine İli kin Yeni Bilgi – Bulgular." The  iftliks of the Ali Pasha following his demise however would succumb to desolation and became idle and devastated. In the early years of the Tanzimat period, these  iftliks would be tax farmed to its highest-bidding claimants. For brief information on the fate of these  iftliks, see U ur Bayraktar, "The Political Economy of  iftliks: The Redistribution of Land and Land Tenure Relations in the Nineteenth Century Provinces of Ioannina and Trikala" (M. A. Thesis, Bo azi i University, 2009).

demonstrates the struggle for land by the urban provincial notables in the absence of the local rulers.

Having explained the course of the rice lands in terms of possession, the second part of the chapter will deal with the implementation of the Tanzimat reforms in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. Delving into the practices of local administration, the chapter elucidates the Ottoman flexibility as the government oscillated between the centrally appointed officials and members of the local dynasts. As this was a generic Ottoman practice throughout the empire, the elimination of the Kurdish beys and the consequent power vacuum with the acute absence of manpower in Ottoman Kurdistan therefore led to a sort of compromised local administration shared between the Ottoman authorities and the local dynasts. Having presented the tension between the two ends on a descendant of the Zirki house, the rest of the chapter entertains the notion of fiscal centralisation in this arduous administrative setting. Emphases on fiscal centralisation and the settlement of tribes, however, do not seem to have eradicated the opposition the Ottoman government faced in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani.

Confiscation and the Politics of Administering the Lands

The elimination of the emirates had also financial motives in addition to the political ones. While the autonomous powers of the emirs of Ottoman Kurdistan were curbed thanks to the operations of the Ottoman regular forces, the prospective revenues to be registered in the treasuries of the empire was no less important than the political agenda. As a part of the common fiscal policy of the empire in the 1830s, the confiscation of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands in addition to several

mukâta‘as, possessed either legally or illegally, served first of all to meet the accelerating financial bill of the empire.⁴⁷³ The confiscated revenues of the lands and mukâta‘as possessed by the Zirki beys in that context were reallocated the different two treasuries of the time.

Following the exile of the Zirkis, the central government investigated the property owned by Receb Bey, Hüseyin Bey, and Timur Bey. Allocation of the revenues for the year was carried out by taking into consideration the urgent needs of the two treasuries. Once the discussions with regards to allocate the revenues were negotiated in the summer of 1836, it appeared that the emirs possessed a combined annual income amounting to 1,733 keses, i.e. 897,103 guruşes for the year 1835-36.⁴⁷⁴ Out of this revenue, the Mansûre Treasury reallocated one third of the revenues, which amounted to 209.082 guruşes, to the Imperial Treasury because of the latter's deficits due to salary payments.⁴⁷⁵ The remaining two thirds, or 688,021.5 guruşes, were to be registered as revenue by the Mansûre Treasury.⁴⁷⁶ As thirty thousand guruşes out of this amount were allocated to the troops deployed in Diyarbekir citadel, the remainder would be registered as revenue for the Mansûre Treasury.⁴⁷⁷ In short, two thirds of the revenues confiscated were reserved for the

⁴⁷³ In financial terms, the age of reforms also necessitated an inevitable demand in increasing revenues associated with the central treasury. Financial activities in this sense, Genç argues, were composed of the mukâta‘aization of timars and ze‘amets, suspension of malikânes, and more importantly the transfer of revenues controlled by the provincial notables to the centre. Accordingly, Cezar discusses the necessary changes carried out in the treasury to meet the expenses of the *Asâkir-i Mansûre*. Thanks to these changes, revenues of Imperial Properties (*Emlâk-ı Hümâyûn*) were transferred from the Imperial Purse to the Imperial Treasury. Mehmet Genç, "19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadî Dünya Görüşünün Klâsik Prensiplerindeki Değişme," *Divan İlmi Araştırmalar*, no. 6 (1999); Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım*, 248-50.

⁴⁷⁴ The beys' revenues included not only landed property but also revenues extracted from the sources such as mukatâ‘ât, voyvodalık and ocaklık. BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836); BOA. C. DH. 304/15182, 17 Cemaziyelevvel 1252 (30 August 1836).

⁴⁷⁵ For a brief information on the distinctions between the Mansure and Imperial Treasury, see Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım*, 259-62; Terzi, *Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti*, 9-10.

⁴⁷⁶ BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date; BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836).

⁴⁷⁷ BOA. C. ML. 274/11260, 28 Rebiülahir 1254 (21 July 1838).

recently established Ottoman army, whereas the other third would be regarded as state possession to be auctioned off.⁴⁷⁸

In accordance with the allocation of revenues between the treasuries, the allocation of lands followed a similar path. That is, as an imperial decree states,

since the villages, timârs and others appropriated and possessed by these beys without deeds are by means of timârs and yurtluk and ocaklık assigned to the Cavalry of the Victorious Soldiers and troops of the Mortar Corp, and the Imperial Castle, the escheated hass villages by means of the imperial order belonged to the Mansûre Treasury.⁴⁷⁹

Correspondingly, the escheated mukâta‘as and *maktû*‘s (large collective tax-farm units) would be restored to the Imperial Treasury.⁴⁸⁰ As a further evidence of the financial motivation behind the operation against the Kurdish emirs, some of the revenues restored were assigned to the salaries of the troops of the Diyarbekir citadel, which included mostly young troops (*gılman*) and a few officers. In the immediate aftermath of the elimination of the Zirki emirs, the original amount assigned was 22,000 guruşes, later to be increased to 30,000 due to the poor state of the young troops.⁴⁸¹ The amount to be granted to these men was obtained by the revenues of timârs, and yurtluks the Zirki emirs had appropriated (*tagallüben zabı*). In addition to the young men, others received pension payments as they were labelled the abolished old servants (*mülga hademe-yi ‘atike*). The original number of those entitled to receive this annual lump-sum payment starting from March 1837 was 412.⁴⁸² As demonstrated in Table 5, the excess amount would be returned to the

⁴⁷⁸ The bifurcation in the treasury system would be eliminated in favour of a unified treasury. For the unification of the treasuries, see Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım*, 252-92; Abdüllatif Şener, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Vergi Sistemi* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 1990), 61-8.

⁴⁷⁹ Falling in this category, the villages, timârs, and others are by order (*zâten ve nizâmen*) restorable to the said treasury. BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date; BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836).

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ BOA. C. AS. 611/25784, 4 Safer 1253 (10 May 1837).

⁴⁸² Having completed a roll call, the number decreased to 192 persons the remainder being absent. For details such as payrolls and names of servants, BOA. C. ML. 274/11260, 28 Rebiülahir 1254 (21 July 1838)

treasury of the Diyarbekir voyvodalık, showing the various alternatives of reallocating revenues in different state offices. While the central state divided the lands to allocate the revenues for its urgent needs it had another question to be settled down.

Table 5. Revenues Granted to the Troops of the Diyarbekir Citadel

	Amount (guruşes)
Amount originally assigned to the troops	30,000.00
Shares of 254 troops who deceased or are absent	-13,174.18
Salaries of the officers and troops who are alive	16,825.12
Amount of some services already realised by the voyvodalık	910.00
Total amount to be restored to the voyvodalık	17,735.12

Source: BOA. C. ML. 274/11260, 28 Rebiülahir 1254 (21 July 1838).

The essential question was how the confiscated property would be administered by the central government. In a geography and era in which ‘seeing like a state’ was difficult, the central government hesitated to introduce more direct means of administering the lands which now belonged to state property.⁴⁸³ Still, there were two options at hand, the first was the direct administration of revenues (*emânet*), hence lands, by the governor-general (*müşir*) of Diyarbekir and the second was tax-farming the lands to claimant governors (*vali*).⁴⁸⁴ Therefore, the hesitation of the government should not be exaggerated since the possibility of direct administration was not entirely disregarded. The politics of administering property, in this vein, was rather a social reality in which “administrative practices or rules and regulations represented settlements between the ruler and different groups regarding claims over access to resources, to their revenues or to their use.”⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸³ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*.

⁴⁸⁴ The second option necessitated a significant discount on the amount to be tax-farmed since the current grain price was relatively high in 1836 and it was unlikely to reach such a high level in the near future. BOA. C. DH. 85/4225, 29 Rebiülevvel 1252 (14 July 1836).

⁴⁸⁵ Huri İslamoğlu, "Politics of Administering Property: Law and Statistics in the Nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire," in *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and the West*, ed.

As options regarding the allocation of the revenues among two treasuries were negotiated, the fate of the lands was concluded at the same time. Presumably due to his decisive success in subduing the Zirki emirs and the relations he had maintained in the region, Mehmed Reshid Pasha was awarded with to the tax-farm contracts of the lands reserved for the Imperial Treasury with the condition of making the return payment for the year on the first day of 1252 (March 13, 1837).⁴⁸⁶ While one third of the revenues confiscated was allocated to the Imperial Treasury and then tax-farmed to Mehmed Reshid Pasha, the governor-general of Sivas, it appears that the remaining two thirds, which amounted to 688,021.5 guruşes, were later tax-farmed to the same pasha. Since the governor was also currently the governor of Diyarbekir, the document stated, it was deemed appropriate to auction the lands in question to him from the *Rumi* date of March 1, 1251 (March 13, 1836).⁴⁸⁷ In short, the entire lands once possessed by the emirs of Diyarbekir were firstly confiscated by the state and then auctioned out to one of the state functionaries, the governor (*vâli*) of Sivas which comprised provinces of Diyarbekir, and Ma'âdin-i Hümâyûn. In a period governor-generals were not entitled to receive monthly salaries, it was apparently, on the side of the Porte, a convenient way of rewarding a statesman who accomplished successful campaigns.⁴⁸⁸

Huri İslamoğlu (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 279. Such an understanding, in contrast to that of Scott's, helps blurring the contrasts between both the pre-modern and modern statecraft, and state and society. For another study subscribing to this understanding, see Salzmann, "An Ancien Régime Revisited."; *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*.

⁴⁸⁶ BOA. C. DH. 201/10033, 29 Rebiülevvel 1226 (23 April 1811). Evidently, the document is misdated as it is a *kâime* indicating the transfer of the lands confiscated by the Imperial Treasury in Diyarbekir, under a tax-farm contract, for the year 1836/37.

⁴⁸⁷ BOA. HAT. 1597/65, no date; BOA. C. ML. 364/14929, 11 Rebiülevvel 1253 (15 June 1837).

⁴⁸⁸ On the eve of the eighteenth century, the only revenue source for a Diyarbekir governor-general was the tax called *imdâd-ı hâzâriye*. Considering that once vâlis were turned into müşirs and that the latter started receiving monthly salaries from 1840 onwards, it was not merely an appraisal for the lands in question were perpetually tax-farmed to the Sivas governors. For the vâlis of Diyarbekir in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır*, 185-92.

Table 6. Property Accrued as Revenue of the Imperial Treasury Including the Possessions of the Zirki Beys

Revenue Appropriated and Property Possessed by Zirki Beys		Amount (guruşes.paras)
Possessions of Hüseyin Bey and his brothers		
1835/36 Revenues of 'ât		
Possession with deed		4,305.30
Appropriated without deed		3,857.30
One-Year-Tenure of Property		
Farmland	20 pieces	800.00
(?)	2 pieces	800.00
Mills	9 1/1, 2 1/4, 1 3/4, 2 1/2 shares	4,285.00
Possessions of Receb Bey, his brothers, and sons of his brothers		
1835/36 Revenues of the maktû'ât		
Possession with deed		85,431.20
Appropriated without deed		19,109.20
One-Year-Tenure of Property		
Vineyards	32 pieces	400.00
Fruit Garden	21 pieces	500.00
Rice Mortar	1/1 share	400.00
Bulgur Mortar	1/2 share	200.00
Mills	4 1/1, 4 1/2 shares	4,800.00
Possession of Timur Bey and his son Eyüb Bey		
1835/36 Revenues of the maktû'ât		
Possession with deed		25,057.20
Appropriated without deed		14,077.20
One-Year-Tenure of Property		
Mills	1 1/2, 1 1/3 shares	800.00
Farmland	3	250.00
Garden	3	600.00
Vineyard	3	500.00
Revenues of the mukâta'ât granted to retired to the troops of the Diyarbekir Castle		42,807.00
Total		209,082.00

Source: BOA. C. DH. 304/15182, 17 Cemaziyelevvel 1252 (30 August 1836).

As demonstrated in Table 6, the revenue items under tax-farm contracts were diverse in kind. Accordingly the revenues and property the emirs of Atak, Tercil, and Hani controlled enjoyed a similar diversity. Particularly, Receb Bey's both legal and extra-legal mukâta'a possessions, which were approximately half of the revenues accrued for the Imperial Treasury, demonstrates his hâkim status in the region vis-à-vis his allies and possibly rivals. On the other hand the documentation of the table shows that the actual possession of lands by the emirs was quite limited.⁴⁸⁹ Keeping

⁴⁸⁹ Of course, it should be noted that the kind and revenue of the property included in the other two third that was allocated to the Mansûre Treasury is unknown. Most of the hükûmet and yurtluk-ocaklık villages might be in the part assumed by the latter treasury. As the sons of Behram and

in mind that the portion in question was only a third of the total property and revenue rights confiscated, it still does not weaken the prominence of Zirki emirs in the agricultural relations of production. That is, Hüseyin Bey, the emir of Atak, possessed nine mills in addition to variable shares in other five mills, and Receb Bey possessed four mills and half shares in other four mills. In addition, mortars (*dibek*) possessed by the hâkim of Tercil, albeit a small portion of the entire property, strengthened the role of the emirs in the production of grain and its latter stages.⁴⁹⁰

Having completed the division of the lands and restoration of them to the status of state property, the Ottoman government accomplished the financial targets associated with Ottoman Kurdistan. The campaign waged was not confined to the Zirki emirs but included the districts in the environs of Diyarbekir. That is, the districts of Cizre, Siird, Zaho, and Genç were confiscated (*zabt ve teshîr*) before the harvest of the *Rumi* year 1251 and the district of Garzan after the harvest.⁴⁹¹ Despite the challenge, the Porte, in the aftermath of the campaign, did not uproot the prevailing land tenure arrangements. Rather, the thrust of the suppression of the Kurdish emirs of Diyarbekir was interested in reclaiming the possible revenue sources that had been long away from the grasp of the Ottoman registers. That being a considerable success in itself, the Ottoman state resorted to the traditional practices of administering the land, tax-farming.

Bedirhan Beys, Receb Bey's brothers, claimed for restoration in the early 1860s, their claim was much larger than the property discussed here. See the next chapter.

⁴⁹⁰ The definition of *dibek* in *Redhouse Turkish and English Lexicon* is: "A very large mortar of stone or wood in which grain is pounded."

⁴⁹¹ The lands in the four districts were to be administered directly with the intention of specifying the amount of revenue the lands can bring about by Hafız Pasha who became the governor of Sivas following the death of Mehmed Reshid Pasha for the year 1837/38 (*Rumi* 1252). The following year, the lands were ordered to be tax-farmed with the amount specified during the previous year. C. ML. 364/14929, 11 Rebiülevvel 1253 (15 June 1837).

Following the death of Mehmed Reshid Pasha, the potential revenues of the Ottoman treasury was still not assessed.⁴⁹² Reshid Pasha, according to a financial report, had undertook the tax-farm of the confiscated lands of the Zirki emirs for the years 1835/36 (i.e., the *Rumi* year 1250) to be followed by Hafiz Pasha, the governor-general of Sivas, at the fixed amount of 688,021.5 guruşes. However, as the preliminary reallocation procedures were carried out, the Ottoman armies expanded southwards reclaiming more lands into the state possession. In addition to some lands and revenue sources in the districts of Midyat and Mahalmi⁴⁹³ that was already included in the gross amount above, Reshid Pasha had promised to send the entire revenue sources of two districts once the conquest of the region was completed.⁴⁹⁴ Despite the prospective conquest of the region, the pasha was not content since he complained that the accounting of the regions that brought about the said revenues were not processed one by one but rather in summaries (*icmâlen*).⁴⁹⁵

It seems that following the “conquest” of most parts of Ottoman Kurdistan, the revenue sources, which was mainly the tithe and poll tax, were assigned en masse to Mehmed Reshid Pasha under tax-farm contracts for the years 1835/36 and 1836/37.⁴⁹⁶ The two consecutive year contracts the pasha assumed in the eye of the Ottoman capital might be regarded as a consideration for the pasha, especially with respect to the complaint he made above. The high amount circulated in the tax-farms

⁴⁹² Mehmed Reshid Pasha, according to Abdüsselam Efendi, sickened and died in November 1836 after he set out a campaign against the Soran emir, Mehmed Bey (Muhammed Kor) arrested the emir. Abdüsselam Efendi, *Abdüsselam Efendi'nin Mardin Tarihi* (Istanbul: Mardin Tarihi İhtisas Kütüphanesi, 2007), 123.

⁴⁹³ Mahalmi is both a tribe including a mixture of Arabs and Kurds in Midyat and Dargeçit and possibly a settlement. In 1869, Mahalmi was one of the *nâhiyes* of the Mardin district. Suavi Aydın et al., *Mardin: Aşiret-Cemaat-Devlet* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2000), 12, 219-21.

⁴⁹⁴ The revenue already included in the gross amount was approximately 83,000 guruşes. BOA. C. ML. 364/14929, 11 Rebiülevvel 1253 (15 June 1837).

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ Since poll-taxes were collected as a lump-sum payment at the beginning of the financial year, the tithe payments preceded the poll-tax in terms of financial year. That is, as the tithe for the year 1835/36 was collected, the poll-tax for the year 1836/37 would be collected in lump-sum payments.

of the region thus it was not very unlikely for the pasha to end up in loss rather than profits. Accordingly, İsmail Efendi, the poll-tax collector (*cizyedâr*) of the pasha, stated after his investigation in Istanbul that the districts of Midyat, Mahalmi Hasanke (Hasankeyf?), and Aznavur in addition to some yurtluk-ocaklık villages which were appropriated from the Zirki emirs and Seyfeddin Bey, the bey of Cizre, were granted to Paşabeğendi Mehmet Ağa as the deputy-governor.⁴⁹⁷ Accordingly, Mehmed Reshid Pasha had tax-farmed the revenues of the lands and the poll-tax revenues of four districts to Mehmed Ağa.⁴⁹⁸ Even though the gross revenue to be collected for the year 1836/37 concerning the tithe revenues and for the year 1837/38 concerning the poll tax was set at 2,000 keses, i.e., one million guruşes, the actual amount collected by Mehmed Ağa was only 83,900 guruşes.⁴⁹⁹ That low-level-collection did not evidently put the agha at risk, for it was first of all the pasha who was responsible for returning the fixed amount to the Mansûre treasury. The remaining uncollected total amounting to approximately 1,832 keses would be in the end deduced from the pasha's account held in the Ottoman financial registers.⁵⁰⁰

Dursun Efendi, the scribe of the deputy-governor of Diyarbekir, indicated, however, the low-level of the collected amount was not the only problem. Apart from the question of revenues in the four districts, the scribe stated during his meeting with İsmail Efendi, there was also a significant amount withheld from the treasury.

⁴⁹⁷ Hafız Pasha, Abdüsselam Efendi stated, was appointed to the post of the deceased Mehmed Reshid Pasha and was dismissed to be replaced by Paşa Beğendi Mehmed Ağa who, according to the author, kept his post for four months. Yet it seems more plausible that Paşa Beğendi Mehmed Ağa was rather appointed as a deputy-governor. Efendi, *Abdüsselam Efendi'nin Mardin Tarihi*, 123. Cf. the table of governors of Diyarbekir in Yılmazçelik, "Osmanlı Hakimiyeti Süresince Diyarbakır Eyaleti Valileri (1516-1838)."

⁴⁹⁸ BOA. C. ML. 364/14929, 11 Rebiülevvel 1253 (15 June 1837).

⁴⁹⁹ The combined amount assigned to the district of Aznavur, Mardin equalled to five hundred kises as the rest of the amount was assigned to the three districts. 1 kese equalled to 500 guruşes at this period.

⁵⁰⁰ Even though it is not easy to have an idea about the wealth of the pasha and thus the relative burden of the said amount to be deduced, it might be a good excuse to downplay the pasha. Similar acts would take place in the forthcoming years between the periphery and the central government, see Cengiz Kırılı, "Yolsuzluğun İcadı: 1840 Ceza Kanunu, İktidar ve Bürokrasi," *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no. 4 (2006).

Table 7. Revenues of Zirki Beys Withheld for 1835/36

Item of Zirki Beys' Revenues Withheld for the year 1835/36	Amount (guruşes)
Other revenues apart from the four districts	370,800
Revenues of çiftliks transferred from Zirki beys to the Mansûre Treasury	138,246
Villages classified as malikâne	32,282
Revenue of the tax called <i>bedel-i şenlik</i>	71,376
Revenue of the taxes called <i>şahnelik</i> and <i>subaşılik</i>	535,968
Revenue of the fifth (<i>humus-ı şer'î</i>) from the sipahi lands whose possessors and terms of tenure are unknown	45,420
Total Revenues Withheld	1,194,092

Source: BOA. C. ML. 364/14929, 11 Rebiülevvel 1253 (15 June 1837).

Table 7 indicates, in a sense, the limits of the grasp of the Ottoman finance in Ottoman Kurdistan while demonstrating the kind of revenue sources withheld. The total amount for the year 1835/36 and for the year 1836/37 would be deduced from the account of Mehmed Reshid Pasha kept in the central treasury.⁵⁰¹ When he died in November 1836, the same amount was expectedly tax-farmed for the year 1837/38 to the müşir of Sivas, Hafız Pasha.⁵⁰²

More importantly, Table 7 offers a glimpse of how the surplus was extracted and an overview of the landed property. Possession of malikânes, and çiftliks that were products of the eighteenth centuries while the former were the immediate remedy for the increased cash need of the central government and the latter were accordingly associated with the commercialisation of agriculture and the subsequent cash-crop production.⁵⁰³ The following studies, however, cast a doubt on the distinct

⁵⁰¹ The amount of gross tax revenues were expected to be higher than the previous year, still Mehmed Reshid Pasha was assigned the same amount for the year 1836/37. BOA. C. ML. 364/14929, 11 Rebiülevvel 1253 (15 June 1837).

⁵⁰² Ibid.

⁵⁰³ For a brief discussion on the malikâne, see Genç, "Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikane Sistemi." Çiftliks were in a sense rose from the ashes of malikâne-mukâta'a system. For the classical work on çiftliks which sought the existence of plantation-like farms, see Halil İnalcık, "The Emergence of Big Farms, Çiftliks: State, Landlords, and Tenants," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991); Khristo Gandev, "L'apparition des rapports capitalistes dans l'économie rurale de la Bulgarie du Nord-Ouest au cours du XVIIIe siècle," in *Etudes historiques* (Sofia: Académie des Sciences de Bulgarie, 1960). For a revised view on çiftliks criticising the large-scale production and commercialisation of agriculture, see McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*; Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak, *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991).

production patterns attributed to çiftlik and offered a different order of changes including changes in modes of surplus extraction, cycles of production, and regulation of work according to Tabak.⁵⁰⁴ The taxes listed as withheld revenues in the table above, therefore, justified the change in the mode of surplus extraction.

Most of the taxes in the list were a continuation of the practices of previous centuries, going back as far as to the conquest of Diyarbakir in the sixteenth century from the rule of Aq-Qoyunlus. Out of the taxes, *şahnelik* and *subaşılık* were generally payments made in return for security measures such as protection of roads and suppression of marauders. The term *şahne* in the eighteenth century was employed for those who collected tax revenues of a village on behalf of someone else, presumably a tax-farmer (*mültezim*).⁵⁰⁵ *Şahnelik*, accordingly, was a tax in kind assigned to the şahnes.⁵⁰⁶ The origins of the tax in question was similar with that of *subaşılık* in institutional terms. In a similar vein, the fifth tax (*humus-ı şer'i*) was an established practice as early as the sixteenth century. The tax simply meant one fifth of the cereal including wheat, barley, and millet to be collected.⁵⁰⁷

The taxes in question were significant in terms of continuities. Firstly, the taxes such as *şahnelik* and *humus-ı şer'i* were collected in the way the Aq-Qoyunlus had collected them. According to the kanûnnâmes of 1518 and 1540, the tax on grains was set to one fifth of the harvest. In the then nâhiyes of Amid, Hani and Tercil were in perfect accordance with the *kanuns* of Hasan Padişah, the Aq-Qoyunlu ruler.⁵⁰⁸

The case of *şahnelik* was no different. Going back to the Seljuk period, the tax was

⁵⁰⁴ Faruk Tabak, "Agrarian Fluctuations and Modes of Labour Control in the Western Arc of the Fertile Crescent, c. 1700-1850," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991).

⁵⁰⁵ In the fifteenth century, for instance, the tax, albeit with its prohibition, stipulated payment of a man and submission of some feed for his horse. Ahmet Özcan, "Uzun Hasan Kanunları ve Osmanlı Dönemine Yansımaları," *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, no. 29 (Spring 2011): 187.

⁵⁰⁶ Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır*, 221-23.

⁵⁰⁷ İlhan, *Amid (Diyarbakır)*, 27-30.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

common in Anatolia in the fifteenth century.⁵⁰⁹ Second continuity, which is more relevant to the discussion here, is the existence of these taxes in the nineteenth century on the eve of Tanzimat reforms. The taxes of humus and şahnelik persisted in the nineteenth century.⁵¹⁰

Even though there is not any information with regards to the evolution of the taxes or the land tenure categories in which they had been practiced, they evidently demonstrated the change in the mode of surplus extraction, the change meaning the changing actors of those who appropriated the tax revenues of lands. Considering that most of the lands under question were possessed by means of malikânes and yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet systems, such systems paved the way for treatment of such lands by landlord/officials as a “special kind of private property whose agricultural products accrued to them by right of their being its ‘owners.’”⁵¹¹ Since the prevalence of centuries-old practices would not fade away in a few years, the continuity was evident.

In this setting, the tax-farming of the confiscated property to the governor-generals of the region continued until the introduction of Tanzimat reforms in the province of Diyarbekir. However, the extending relations in a periphery of the

⁵⁰⁹ Özcan, in his work, brings about a nationalist endeavour to underline the uninterrupted continuity of both the institution and tax of *şahnelik* by attempting to trace the origins of the institution back to the tenth century in which first Turkic-Islamic states emerged. However, as a tax, he states that first records in Anatolia are dated to fifteenth century. Despite the overarching attempt, the continuity between the Aq Qoyunlu and Ottoman practices in Anatolia is evident free of the nationalist arguments. Göyünç, in his classical work, simply noted the continuity and expanded the practical use of Uzun Hasan’s kanûnnâmes to kanûnnâmes of Diyarbekir, Ergani, Urfa, Harput, Çermik, Arapkir, Mardin, Beriyecek [Birecik], and even Erzincan in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. Özcan, "Uzun Hasan Kanunları," 185-6. Nejat Göyünç, *XVI. Yüzyılda Mardin Sancağı* (İstanbul: İÜ Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1969), 134.

⁵¹⁰ Yılmazçelik, thanks to an imperial decree, underlines that “collection of grains under the name of şahnelik” was prohibited in October 1839 but hints at the possible continuity of the tax in the nineteenth century. Accordingly, Özcan gives an incidence of complaint with regards to continuity of the tax in Harput in the second half of the nineteenth century. Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarisında Diyarbakır*, 223; Özcan, "Uzun Hasan Kanunları," 187.

⁵¹¹ Khoury here only refers to malikâne lands. Since proprietary rights associated with *hükûmet* lands grant its possessors relatively a broader autonomy, it would not be wrong to classify the latter in that manner. Dina Rizk Khoury, "The Political Economy of the Province of Mosul, 1700-1850" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Georgetown University, 1987), 96.

empire soon made it almost impossible to effectively control the lands confiscated by the state. In line with the previous centuries, land had been a field of contestation especially in the peripheries of the empire. Considering that most of the lands controlled by the Zirki beys were under life-long tax-farm contracts, it would not be wrong to claim that *ancien regime*, by means of malikâne contracts, brought about “a practice which created diffused but interrelated loci of state power.”⁵¹² As much as these loci of state power, in a sense, shared the privileges of tax collection and possession with regards to land with the urban notables, which included pasha-viziers, high-ranking religious scholars (*ulema*), rural gentry, urban notables, and provincial janissaries, the nineteenth century brought about a gradual extent to the loci.⁵¹³

The confiscation of various kinds of property possessed by the state, not necessarily yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands, was in this sense as a continuation of these locus despite the state’s increasing interest in eliminating these privileges. With the Ottoman government asserting its authority on state lands that were leased out in this manner, the bitter struggles to be waged against those groups with claims over tax revenues from land were inevitable. The long-time-possession of these lands, i.e., mukâta‘as, and yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands, had taken away these lands from traditional usufruct rights associated with state lands. That practice did not seem like to fade away immediately. That is, even though the lands were captured from the Kurdish emirs and restored as state property (*mîrî*), its interpretation by the remaining groups did not translate into the same meaning. Given the meagre authority of the Ottoman government in Ottoman Kurdistan in the late 1830s and

⁵¹² Salzmann, "An Ancien Régime Revisited," 395.

⁵¹³ Stressing in especially the eighteenth century terms that was close to private property, malikâne, the semi-privatized and interdependent institution, “conceded the demands of both political and military cadres in Istanbul and provincial elites vis-à-vis the dynasty and even the civil bureaucracy for greater personal control over state resources.” Ibid., 402.

1840s, the administration of the lands by governor-generals, while maintaining the practices Salzmänn attributes to the period between 1695 and 1793, brings about another locus between these state officials and the local notables of Diyarbekir.

Madrabs as State Property, Administration, and Appropriation by Local Notables

The Tanzimat in the province of Diyarbekir were promulgated in 1845 following the elimination of the last emirates of Buhtan and Hakkari and the emirs Bedir Khan and Nurullah Bey respectively.⁵¹⁴ Eliminating the resistance of the emirs in Ottoman Kurdistan, the process ended up with the formation of the province of Kurdistan.⁵¹⁵ As the fall of the Zirki emirs indicate, the reforms of the central government however preceded the establishment of the province. Despite its partiality, there was an attempt at a rather standardised tax on a household basis in 1845.⁵¹⁶ The administrative reorganisation was hence simultaneous with an increased interest in fiscal centralisation. Conceding its limited authority in advance, the ends of the Sublime Porte would be backed and at times thwarted by the local notables who not

⁵¹⁴ The rebellion and the subsequent fall of the Buhtan emirate was a reaction to the centralisation reforms. Mehmet Alagöz, "Old Habits Die Hard, A Reaction to the Application of Tanzimat: Bedirhan Bey's Revolt" (M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2003); Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler." Still, there are nationalist studies which seek to attribute a proto-nationalism to the rebellion of Bedir Khan. Kardam, *Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan*; Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde Kürtler ve Kürt Direnişleri (1817-1867)*. The origins of Kurdish nationalism, however, started in the late nineteenth century as demonstrated in Hamit Bozarslan, "Kürt Milliyetçiliği ve Kürd Hareketi (1898-2000)," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*, vol. 4: Milliyetçilik, ed. Tanıl Bora (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002).

⁵¹⁵ For the formation of Kurdistan and its political repercussions, see Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 59-63.

⁵¹⁶ In the provinces of Diyarbekir and Ma'den-i Hümayûn, the governor-general of the Anatolian Army suggested that agricultural producers should pay their tithes as usual whereas the rest in the towns and cities pay 50 guruşes per household. BOA. A. MKT. 23/59, 9 Rebiülahir 1261 (17 April 1845). On the other hand, one of the most problematic practices with regards to agricultural production, the *corvée* labour had been abolished in Mardin in 1844 as a result of the petitions of Assyrians who complained about the misbehaviours of voyvodas and mütesellims. BOA. A. DVN. 5/74, 14 Cemaziyelahir 1260 (1 July 1844). Abolition of *corvée* labour, according to İnalçık, was essential in terms of the expectations the peasant in Balkans had from the promulgation of the Gülhane Edict. For the classical work on the Tanzimat, see Halil İnalçık, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri," *Belleten* 27 (1964). Similarly for a brief information on the financial reforms of the nineteenth century, see Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman."

only constituted the provincial council in Diyarbekir like the rest of provinces but also were co-opted to realise the reforms on behalf of the central state. In other words, the role of intermediaries during the implementation of reforms especially in Ottoman Kurdistan was essential. Either enemies or friends of the state, facilitators or saboteurs of good governance, entertaining the notion of Tanzimat reforms in the context of these 'fixers' facilitates a more detailed relation between the state and society.⁵¹⁷

A question raised during the implementation of reforms in the province of Kurdistan was a brilliant example of this intermediation. The council of public works (*meclis-i 'imâriye*) of Diyarbekir, a novelty of the introduction of Tanzimat reforms in Diyarbekir, had prepared a detailed report of the region in accordance with the reform needs. The council, which was constituted in order to settle the questions property and peasant improvement, delegated Gevranlızâde Ömer Efendi and Derviş Efendi, the mufti.⁵¹⁸ The Gevranlızâde family had been one of the provincial notables in the previous century who were already in service of state intermediation.⁵¹⁹ Ömer Efendi, in a few years, would be appraised by the Sublime Porte because of his success in tax collection in the district of Sason while Hafız

⁵¹⁷ For the term fixer, see Craig Jeffrey et al., "Fixers in Motion. A Conversation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53, no. 3 (July 2011). Accordingly, Barkey highlights the importance of chains of brokerage unfortunately as an increased burden on peasants in the earlier centuries. Köksal's study, however, is the most relevant to the discussion here. As she deals with the reforms of the Tanzimat period, she underlines the importance of local notables, not as a temporary stage prior to the direct rule. Rather, by means of brokerages, she indicates a rather shared control of the central government and the local notables. Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 99-102; Köksal, "Local Intermediaries " 155-216.

⁵¹⁸ BOA. A. MKT. 25/40, 29 Cemaziyelahir 1261 (5 July 1845). Later Hafız Mustafa Efendi would replace Ömer Efendi thanks to his closer affiliation with agricultural affairs. BOA. A. MKT. 32/41, 29 Cemaziyelahir 1261 (5 July 1845).

⁵¹⁹ Apart from the Gevranlızâde, the Diyarbekir a'yân, great gentry-families such as the Şeyhzade, the Müftizade, the Kadızade and the Çınarzade formed a pool of candidates for a variety of offices including the deputy-governor and others. Salzmänn, "Measures of Empire," 268. For Hafız Mustafa Efendi, see Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, "Periphery's Centre: Reform, Taxation, and Local Notables in Diyarbakir, 1845-1855," in *New Perspectives on the Ottoman East: Studies on Local Politics, Violence and Identity in the late 19th Century*, ed. Tolga Yaşar Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi (forthcoming in 2015).

Mustafa Efendi would be one of the targets of the very council of which he became a member.⁵²⁰ Drawing a general financial outline of the province, that council on public works brought about an important fact about the lands which was possessed by the Zirki beys and had been confiscated by the Ottoman government. The centralised administration of the lands had been relinquished in favour of the state functionaries by means of tax-farm contracts in the short run following the elimination of the emirs. As a result of some extended practice of “privatization” of revenues and thus land, in accordance with the Salzmann’s argumentation, the madrabs or the rice lands located in the districts of Hazro, Mihranî, and Silvan had been left out of the financial registers (*dâhil-i defter olmamış*) for almost a decade.⁵²¹

The council members asked if most of the watered lands in the three districts had not been included in the registers because they had been assigned to *mirlivas*, i.e., major generals, in the past or they had been escheated lands, or had been under the possession of Receb Bey and others who had occupied (*istilâ edüb*) the region for a long time.⁵²² Evidently, the lands once confiscated and restored by the Ottoman state had not undergone a process of survey. More importantly, the report filled in the blanks in terms of the administration of the Zirki beys’ lands in the aftermath of

⁵²⁰ Gevranlızâde Ömer Efendi, thanks to his client Hacı Keleş Ağa, who was the *başbuğ* (leader of the irregular forces) of the retinue of the former, carried out a harsh tax collection in eighteen villages of Sason, leaving twelve dead behind. For details on the incident, see Bayraktar, “Tanzimat’ta Devlet ve Aşiretin Ötesinde.” In that context, the role of intermediation is similar to Barkey’s account. Underlining the increasing burden of contracting revenues for peasantry, she notes that “as chains extended, many deputies of various arrangements (*mütesellim, mübaşirr, emin, amil*) hired intermediaries whom peasants dealt with or encountered at court. Interestingly enough, despite the fact that such high-ranking officials as governors and governor-generals hired out others to collect the petty dues, they easily invaded villages with their retinues and demanded more levies and imposed more burdens.” Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 100-1.

⁵²¹ Instead of rice lands, the term madrab will be employed throughout the text for rice lands, in addition to being rice lands, were part of the irrigation network. In a report on madrabs in Diyarbakir, it appears that the term, beyond the definition of irrigated lands devoted to the rice cultivation, has acquired the meaning of water resources and canals made on water springs irrigating not only rice lands but also lands in the immediate vicinity. BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 18 Şevval 1333 (29 August 1915).

⁵²² BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845). The report also deals with diverse economic matters extending from the administration of boats on the Euphrates, taxation, the lands in the province of Harput, and the attitudes of the state officials in the region.

their falls. It appeared that there was a custom to provide the rice seeds without charges (*mîrî vermek*) due to their status as state lands (*arâzi-yi mîrîye*).⁵²³ Furthermore, it seems that peasants cultivated the land without any additional charges (*meccânen*) and distributed and sold the rice in the districts as it was their own customs.⁵²⁴ Even though there is not any information with respect to their status of hass lands prior to the possession of Zirki beys, the state possession in the aftermath of the elimination of the emirs seemed to bring about relatively a less-exploited state for cultivators.

While the status of the peasantry was far away from being complete, the land tenure relations in the rice lands were definite. The introduction of Tanzimat in the province of Kurdistan, in this sense, facilitates to observe the changing hands of the lands in question after the immediate confiscation and assignment to the pashas in charge of the region. As mentioned earlier, Reshid Pasha assumed the cultivation of the lands (*ekib biçdirmiş*) for the first year. In the following year, the report indicated, Hafız Pasha, the next governor in charge of the lands, assigned the lands first to Şeyhoğlu Mehmed Bey and Gevranlızâde Ömer Bey for the second year, on the condition of returning a certain amount of rice in return.⁵²⁵ The next year, İsmail Pasha, who was the commander in chief (*re'is-i erkân*) of the Anatolian Imperial Army, had assumed the administration of the lands because he was then the governor (*kâ'immakam*) of Diyarbekir, appointing a certain Hüseyin Ağa as the deputy

⁵²³ Regardless of the status of rice lands, i.e. state-owned land or waqf land, seeds were supplied by those who possessed the land. Halil İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the Çeltukci-Re`aya System in the Ottoman Empire," *Turcica, Revue d'études turques* XIV(1982): 107; Margaret L. Venzke, "Rice Cultivation in the Plain of Antioch in the 16th Century: The Ottoman Fiscal Practice," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 12(1987-1992).

⁵²⁴ "...dâhil-i defter olmamış arâzi-yi mîrîye olduğundan tohumu mîrî virmek ve ahâli meccânen eküb husûlünde pirinci kazâlara tevzi` ederek satmak `âdetleri idüğünden..." BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845).

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

accountant (*vekil-i harc*).⁵²⁶ In the midst of the fiscal centralisation on the part of the Porte, the 'privatised' administration of lands seemed to persist.

Upon the arrival of Faik Efendi, the provincial treasurer (*defterdâr*), in the province, he asked first of all Ismail Pasha whether seeds for the rice lands were granted by the state.⁵²⁷ Having received an affirmative response the treasurer assumed the administration of the rice lands (*ekdirüb*) and tax-farmed the revenues to Sami Bekir Pasha, the *kâ'immakam* of Diyarbekir, and Hüseyin Ağa, the private secretary (*mühürdâr*) of Zekeriya Pasha by means of partnership (*bi'l-iştirâk*).⁵²⁸ The tax-farming of the lands to governors, which was an established custom then, maintained also the extended chain of tax farms to the local notables. The nexus of the tax farms was extended to the local notables of Diyarbekir in 1842. Vecihi Pasha became the governor of Diyarbekir in 1842, tax farming the lands to Yusuf Efendi, an influential local notable and tax-farmer of the city.⁵²⁹ The pasha transferred the administration of the lands to Yusuf Efendi, saying "You cultivate the land and I will

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Rice cultivation in the early modern period was an entire state-enterprise. The question of the treasurer therefore seemed to have ensured the state undertakings in the enterprise. In financial terms, treasurers were the most authoritative state official next to the governor on the provincial level in the post-muhasıllık period. Şener, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı*, 45.

⁵²⁸ Faik Efendi had the lands cultivated and then participated as a partner in the tax farm with the pashas. The original reads "... ve ertesi sene Faik Efendi defterdâr olmağla yine ol vechile ekdirüb Diyarbekir ka'immakamı bulunan Sami Bekir Paşa ile Zekeriya Paşa mühürdârı Hüseyin Ağa'ya bi'l-iştirâk iltizâm eylemiş..." BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845).

⁵²⁹ Thanks to a letter he sent to Bedir Khan, it appears that Vecihi Pasha was the governor of Diyarbekir in December 1842. Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 71. Yusuf Efendi would, in a couple of years, become infamous in the eyes of the central government due to his support for Bedir Khan. Being a tax-farmer of the district of Rızvan, Diyarbekir for the year 1842/43, Yusuf Efendi had assigned Mele Hüseyin to tax collection. He, in turn, had not hesitated to resort to violence in the course of tax collection. Mele Hüseyin abdicated twenty four children, who were Yezidi in entirety, and dispatched sixteen of them to Bedir Khan. In the meantime the khan had plunged in a Yezidi Massacre in the region. The similarity of the web of brokerage in which Yusuf Efendi occupied a middle position with Barkey's arguments demonstrates somehow the continuity of intermediation in the nineteenth century. For a detailed discussion on the acts and fate of Yusuf Efendi, see Bayraktar, "Tanzimat'ta Devlet ve Aşiretin Ötesinde."; "İnsaniyete Alışmak: Tanzimat Döneminde Babîâlî'den Diyarbakır'a bir Bakış," in *Diyarbakır Tebliğleri: Diyarbakır ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi Konferansı* (İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı, 2013). For the Yezidi massacre by Bedir Khan, see Kardam, *Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan*.

cover its expenses.”⁵³⁰ The pasha’s dismissal from the office prior to the harvest led the next governor, Ismail Pasha, to appropriate (*zabtla*) the harvest that amounted to one thousand *kiles* in 1843.⁵³¹ In accordance with the custom, Ismail Pasha distributed (*tarh ve tevzî’ edüb*) and sold the rice at a price of sixty guruşes per kile in the surrounding districts.⁵³²

The “privatized” administration of the lands continued when İsmail Pasha did not cultivate the lands (*kendüsü ekdirmeyüb*), but granted them for the year 1844 to Yusuf Efendi in a tax-farm contract amounting to 60,000 guruşes. Saying “[the expenses of] the rice to Timur Pasha,” the pasha apparently did not assume the expenses for the seeds that was supposed to be borne by the state, therefore to be covered by the valis, and recouped 13,300 guruşes in return. For the following year, İsmail Pasha accordingly tax-farmed the lands, but this time to the cultivators (*ahâli*) in return for a fixed-value (*maktû’*) amounting 70,000 guruşes.⁵³³ The three consecutive years of administration by İsmail Pasha came to an end with the incorporation of the province with the Tanzimat reforms. The financial strain imposed by the Sublime Porte stipulated the collection of the said amounts from those who assumed the tax-farm contracts during the period on the grounds that it

⁵³⁰ BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845).

⁵³¹ *Kile* is originally a measurement for volume. Even though Ágoston says 1 kile equals 36 litres, 25.66 kg of wheat, and 22.25 kg of barley, he warns of regional variations. Gábor Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 244. The gross amount of annual rice harvest in the lands is thus equal to approximately 25 metric tons.

⁵³² BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845). Though the peculiarities of the custom of rice cultivation in the districts are not clear, the report of the council sheds light on the commodified nature of rice. The commodification, however, did not necessarily translate into a large-scale commodity production. That is, the custom which included the distribution of rice seeds without any charges and the sale of the harvest in regions nearby might be associated with the privileged status of the lands for centuries. Particularly, since these lands were once hass lands prior to their hükümet status maintained by the Zirki beys, the need for cash to be obtained thanks to the harvest seems a more plausible explanation for the rice cultivation here, otherwise which evidently resembled the tenets of capitalist production. What is meant by capitalist production is the significance of production for market. The relations of production had a similar capitalistic essence since rice cultivation required an additional workforce in some phases of production.

⁵³³ BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845).

was owned by the state. In the same vein, the central government asked for the return of the revenues generated.⁵³⁴ As a harbinger of Tanzimat finance, the Ottoman government once again instigated the centralisation when Faik Efendi appropriated the lands on behalf of the state as requested.

Harbinger of the Tanzimat: Direct Administration of the Madrabs

Once Faik Efendi, the treasurer of the province of Kurdistan, had restored the lands back to state possession, the central government did not tolerate any form of tax-farm contracts. Assigned by the Sublime Porte, kâ'immakam Sıtkı Efendi assumed the state cultivation of the madrabs in 1845. Table 8 demonstrates mainly two items, seed and labour costs for the madrabs in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. Cleaning and improvement of fields (*'arsâ*) and water-canals (*harks*) had been decreed by the Sublime Porte. For that matter the water-canals were cleaned by some of the agricultural workers as demonstrated in Table 4. Having purchased the rice seeds for 60 guruşes per *kıyye*, the state employed 2,404 wage labourers. The total cost of cultivating the lands was covered by the 1845 revenues of the Diyarbekir Customs.⁵³⁵ Compared to the expenses incurred, which had amounted to 13,300 guruşes a few years earlier, with regards to provision of rice seeds when İsmail Pasha had the rice lands cultivated, it is not clear that the rice lands in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani were equal in size vis-à-vis the lands the pasha possessed.

⁵³⁴ Apart from Reshid Pasha, it was decided that revenues of all tax-farmers, i.e. Hafız Pasha, Faik Efendi, and İsmail Pasha would be demanded by the state (*mîrînin matlûbu*). Ibid.

⁵³⁵ BOA. C. İKTS. 25/1224, 21 Zilkade 1261 (21 November 1845).

Table 8. Costs and Expenses of Rice Cultivation Incurred by the State in Diyarbekir Madrabs

Item of Costs and Expenses Incurred	Amount (in guruşes)
Madrab in the district of Hazro	
Seed (25 kiles 11 batmans)*	1,560.00
Workers (448 persons)**	448.00
Madrab in the district of Mihrani	
Seed (71 kiles)*	4,260.00
Workers (1956 persons)**	1,956.00
Batman madrab	
Seed (15 kiles 4 batmans)*	920.00
Total Cost and Expenses	9,144.00

Source: BOA. C. İKTS. 25/1224, 21 Zilkade 1261 (21 November 1845).

*: 1 kile equals to 12 batmans in the account.

**: Daily wage of a worker is 40 para, i.e., 1 guruş.

More importantly, Table 8 brings about another crucial fact about the Ottoman economic structure. Apart from the state's ultimate challenge against de facto possession by state functionaries and local notables, the table also might lead one to think of some sort of a capitalist agricultural enterprise as early as 1840s. While distribution, if not production, for markets and employment of wage labour is tempting at least to claim for a certain type of state-led capitalism, it is not the case in rice cultivation. First, employment of wage-labour other than cultivators was not a novelty, but a necessity.⁵³⁶

Table 9. Costs of Cultivating Cotton and Rice on One-Dönüm-Land

Cost Item	Costs Incurred			
	Cotton		Rice	
	Amount (guruşes)	Percentage	Amount (guruşes)	Percentage
Preparing Soil	50	26.3	33	30.3
Seed	10	5.3	20	18.3
Seeding	25	13.1	2	1.8
Cleaning Crops	45	23.7	25	23.0
Harvesting	60	31.6	29	26.6
Total	190	100.0	109	100.0

Source: Tervik Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı Üzerine Araştırmalar*⁵³⁷

⁵³⁶ Even for the "classical" period of Ottoman Empire, İnalçık distinguishes three labour systems including slave-sharecroppers, free peasants, or paid workers which, he adds, had been in use in pre-Ottoman times. İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re`aya* System," 92-3.

⁵³⁷ The numbers Güran derives pertains to the early 1910s.

Rice cultivation was a labour-extensive activity compared to other crops and costs associated with the cultivation clarify the peculiarity of rice as demonstrated in Table 9. Elucidating the labour employed in rice cultivation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, İnalçık offers a three-staged employment organisation starting from the exploitation of servile labour to what he calls the *çeltükci-re`âyâ* system by which “the state was led to organize groups of free *re`âyâ* peasants into closely controlled rice growing cultivators under a special regulation.”⁵³⁸ In the end, some of the free peasants, in accordance with İnalçık’s arguments, were turned by the state into sharecroppers under the name *çeltükci*s who were also imposed some extra dues. Even though there is not any satisfactory evidence in order to bridge the practices between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, the continuity of such employment patterns could go hand in hand with some additional wage labour. Secondly, the distribution and sale of the harvest was not a new development back then. The sale had been as a result of the increased need for the cash revenues as accelerated by tax-farm contracts in the eighteenth century. In short, the Ottoman state did not alter the existing relations of production at all as rice cultivation had always needed some sort of additional wage-labourers to facilitate the cultivation.⁵³⁹ Furthermore, the centuries-old practices of rice cultivation composed of almost similar technique and employment patterns.

More evident was the change in land tenure arrangements. Defining types of lands on which rice cultivated in the earlier centuries, İnalçık offers three categories: state and free-hold (*mülk*) lands, vakıf lands, and state ownership of land.

⁵³⁸ İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re`aya* System," 94.

⁵³⁹ For instance Güran makes a remark about the particular cultivation of rice by pointing out the increased need for labour during the cleaning out the plants. The cultivation necessitated also required an intensive use of labor in the preparation of water canals and their constant maintenance, readying of the fields for planting, and periodic irrigation and weeding. Tevfik Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı Üzerine Araştırmalar* (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1998), 90; İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re`aya* System," 83.

Furthermore, he warns the limited extent of the first group by saying that “[a]lthough the recognition of free-hold possession of *mîrî* (state-owned) arable lands was possible through issuing of an imperial diploma called *temlîknâme*, it was granted only under exceptional circumstances.”⁵⁴⁰ The lands the Zirki beys possessed, however, had been granted by means of *temlîks*, i.e., assigned as free-hold property, according to the claims of successors of Receb Bey.⁵⁴¹ Even if the lands in question were not *temlîks*, İnalçık’s third classification might serve better to explain the origins of the lands possessed by the Zirki emirs. That is, state ownership of lands, İnalçık argues, were two types in kind. While the first group, lands known as *beylik* or *havâss-ı hümayûn*, was under the direct control of the central treasury, the second group included state-owned lands assigned as *tîmâr*, *ze‘âmet* or *hass* to *sipâhîs*, *subaşıs*, and *za‘îms*. Since the system of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands were in a sense a similar Ottoman practice concerning the military measures of the earlier periods, the resemblance is here helpful when İnalçık states the following for similarly assigned lands mentioned above under the common term *tîmâr*:

The *tîmâr*-holders are referred to in the legal language of the regulations and registers as “*sahib-i arz*”, “landowners” which sometimes give rise to misinterpretations. If the lands assigned to *tîmâr*-holders were used for rice growing by *ortakcıs* (sharecroppers) or by owners or *mulk* or *vakf*, a tithe was to be paid to the *tîmâr*-holders in their capacity as *sahib-i arz*. This was a common practice since the owners of the water canals made use of unused lands which were available to them within *tîmârs*. However, if a water canal (i.e. *nehr-i çeltük* or *hark (ark)-i çeltük*) was specifically assigned as *tîmâr* to a *tîmâr*-holder, a different situation adhered. Then, in most cases the *tîmâr*-holder, supplying seed and meeting all expenses for irrigation, shared the harvest equally after having taken out the originally supplied seed for himself.⁵⁴²

İnalçık’s definition of rice lands that were assigned for military purposes, and also backed by the taxes such as *şahnelik* and *subaşılık* and the custom of supplying seeds

⁵⁴⁰ İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re`aya* System," 71.

⁵⁴¹ BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861).

⁵⁴² İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re`aya* System," 75-6.

without any charges, strengthened the privileged status of the rice lands in Hazro and Mihrani. Regardless of the centuries-old practices, a brand new land tenure arrangement emerged in the mid-1840s.

The direct administration was not confined to the rice lands in Hazro and Mihrani. Rather auctions for the rights to collect tax revenues came under close scrutiny by the Porte. In order to reveal the revenues withheld in the two districts, the Porte decreed the appointment of an administrator (müdür) for the districts in addition to seven gendarmeries (*zabtiye*).⁵⁴³ Starting from March 1846 to be employed for six months, Hacı Hüseyin Ağa, the müdür, and the gendarmeries were charged additionally to ensure that tax-farm auctions would be carried out piece by piece rather than the closure (*kapatma*) practice.⁵⁴⁴ Concerned with the appropriation of lands to be tax-farmed under a few local notables, the Sublime Porte took every possible measure to increase the tax revenues of the two districts. After the inspection of Hacı Hüseyin Ağa and his retinue, the revenues appeared to be much higher than the previous amounts collected.

Since the financial ends of the central government were settled following the duly assignment of the revenue-yielding-property to its claimants, employment of the müdür and the gendarmerie was no longer needed. Echoing the financial concern of the Sublime Porte, basically to minimise the expenditures and maximise the revenues, the appointed müdür was replaced with a locally elected one to administer

⁵⁴³ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 6/18, 4 Şaban 1264 (6 July 1848). The employment of gendarmerie during tax collection was a common Ottoman practice, especially in villages that were infamous with their resistance. For brief information on zabtiye and structural changes that took place in the nineteenth century, see Omri Paz, "Crime, Criminals, and the Ottoman State: Anatolia between the late 1830s and the late 1860s" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Tel Aviv University, 2010), 190-206. For the significance of gendarmerie in terms of tax collection, albeit the hasty generalisations made with regards to its formation, see Nadir Özbek, "Policing the Countryside: Gendarmes of the Late 19th Century Ottoman Empire (1876-1908)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 1 (February 2008).

⁵⁴⁴ For the six-month employment period, Hacı Hüseyin Ağa received a monthly salary of 800 guruşess and each gendarmerie 40 guruşes. BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 6/18, 4 Şaban 1264 (6 July 1848).

without any salary.⁵⁴⁵ Thus Abdülkerim Ağa, a local notable (*yerlûden*), was employed as the administrators of the two districts with instructions of not demanding anything from the people contrary to the imperial consensus (*hilâf-ı rızâyı seniyye*) apart from the dues (*harc-ı senedât*) associated with the office.⁵⁴⁶

Local Notables and the “Struggle for Land”

The intervention of the central government revealed some other lands beyond the grip of the Porte. Following the appointment of a müdir in Hazro and Mihrani in 1846, it did not take long for the investigators to reveal some other lands possessed by the local notables of Diyarbekir. According to a decree dated to July 1849 addressing the governor-general of Kurdistan, some villages under the jurisdiction of the districts of Silvan, Hazro, Mihrani, and Beşiri had been possessed and tithed without deeds (*bilâ-berât fuzûlî zabt ve ta ‘şîr*) by Hafız Mustafa Efendi, a local notable of Diyarbekir, his brother Mehmed Naim Efendi, and Hacı Emin Ağa of Diyarbekir and his brother Ahmed Feyzi Efendi between 1837 and 1846.⁵⁴⁷ The discovery by the Ottoman finance departments would initiate a long process of recouping the revenues associated with the lands illegally possessed. The officials dispatched to those districts investigated the amount of taxes including tithe and subaşılık the possessors received as well as the amount of grains they sold.

A preliminary check of records kept in Istanbul, however, indicated that the villages did not belong to the local notables but rather belonged to the Imperial

⁵⁴⁵ Financial constraints of the Ottoman finances had made it inevitable to dismiss excess state functionaries in line with the principle of increasing revenues and decreasing expenditures. For the principle set in motion, see Bayraktar, "Maliyenin Maliyeti: Tırhala'da Muhassıllık Düzeni, 1840-1842."; Ömer Faruk Bölükbaşı, *Tezyid-i Varidat Tenkih-i Masarifat: II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Mali İdare* (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2005).

⁵⁴⁶ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 6/18, 4 Şaban 1264 (6 July 1848).

⁵⁴⁷ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 15/40, 13 Şaban 1265 (4 July 1849).

Treasury since they were the escheated mukâta‘âs and timârs.⁵⁴⁸ In addition to the fact that the escheated lands might somehow be associated with the villages once possessed by the Zirki emirs, it was also essential in terms of demonstrating the struggle waged for land in the province of Diyarbekir following the restoration of the lands back to the state possession. The result of preliminary investigation also revealed that most of the lands possessed by Hafız Mustafa Efendi was classified as mukata‘as and maktû‘as held without deed (*bilâ-berât*). That is, his lands possessed with deed brought about annual revenue of 31,684 guruşes, the lands of the four notables possessed without deeds generated a two-year-income of 2.4 million guruşes.⁵⁴⁹

The debts Hafız Mustafa Efendi and Hacı Emin Ağa held in the imperial accounts had been pending for nearly two years when Esad Pasha and Raif Efendi, the governor-general and treasurer of Kurdistan respectively, had corrected the debit amount to be approximately 210,000 guruşes.⁵⁵⁰ Even though there is not any satisfactory information concerning the wide gap between the preliminary amount and the latter one, the portions of the notables with regards to their debits had been determined. Nearly 96,000 guruşes of the said amount pertained to Hafız Mustafa Efendi and his brother Naim Efendi whereas the liable notables for the remaining amount had been either deceased or lost (*vefât ve gaybûbet*).⁵⁵¹ As the finance departments deemed the repayment of the amount debited by Hafız Mustafa Efendi, the recollection followed the inheritance practices. That is 85,763.5 guruşes would be collected from his son Ahmed Cemil Efendi in two years starting from March 1851

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ The amount was in detail 4928 keses, 65 guruşes and 11 paras. The finance departments, however, could not determine the portion Hafız Mustafa Efendi had in this gross total. Ibid.

⁵⁵⁰ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 40/24, 29 Muharrem 1268 (24 November 1851).

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

and 10,365.5 guruşes from Naim Efendi in two instalments.⁵⁵² Feyzi Efendi's debit amounted to 46,953.5 guruşes but there was no decree concerning the amount of which Emin Ağa was responsible with respect to mukâta'as since they had been not included in the registers. The finance department of the Porte accordingly decreed the investigation of the status of these revenue sources.

What was more important, rather than revenues reclaimed by the Sublime Porte, was the possession of lands which were kept off the imperial registers. It should be noted that the lands had been already possessed without the imperial decrees. The fact that the lands that had not been included in the imperial registers at all indicates not only the limited extent of the Porte's information on the region but also the struggle for land on behalf of the local notables. As the investigation proceeded, it appeared that Emin Ağa had gone bankrupt and left the city for good (*müflisen terk-i diyar edüb*) and Feyzi Efendi had died.⁵⁵³ Accordingly, Hafız Mustafa Efendi had died in June 1848 making his son assume the successive debit he had accrued.⁵⁵⁴

The settlement of debts between Hafız Mustafa Efendi and the Ottoman state, on the other hand, demonstrates the dynamics of politics in the centre of Kurdistan. Once Ahmed Cemil Efendi assumed his father's debt, the first thing he did was to object to the amount of the debt. Referring to the expenses his father had incurred in 1845-46, Ahmed Cemil Efendi requested a reduction in the total amount of the debt. He further argued that his father had an amount of 45,400 guruşes receivable from the Diyarbekir treasury (*mal sandığı*) due to the expenses Hafız Mustafa Efendi incurred because of the imperial troops stationed in Diyarbekir and deployed to the

⁵⁵² The first installation Naim Efendi was supposed to pay would be realised in the first half of the *Rumi* year 1267 and the second one in the other half of the year. BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 61/36, 21 Cemaziyelevvel 1269 (2 March 1853).

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 15/40, 13 Şaban 1265 (4 July 1849).

district of Eğil.⁵⁵⁵ Furthermore, a few shares of mukata‘as Hafız Mustafa Efendi had possessed were restored to the state treasury (*cânib-i mîrîden zabt*) following his death but his receivables (*bedelât*) concerning the years 1847/48 and 1848/49 had not been paid.

Following further investigation carried out in the local administration, it appeared that the lands he controlled was under his possession by means of malikâne but were not recorded in the tax-farm registers (*defter-i iltizâmât*). The revenues the lands generated for the year 1847/48 and the first instalment for the year 1848/49 would be deduced vis-à-vis the debts he had in the imperial accounts.⁵⁵⁶ The malikânes, accordingly, would be restored as state property following the second period of the year 1848/49. The debt pertaining to Hafız Mustafa Efendi, however, was not still settled in 1856. According to a decree addressing the governor-general of Kurdistan, approximately 1,000 guruşes had been determined as the amount Ahmed Cemil Efendi owed to the Diyarbekir treasury. Emin Ağa, who evidently had returned to his homeland, complained that Ahmed Cemil Efendi’s, his brother Feyzi Efendi’s and his property and houses had been auctioned due to the debt they owed despite his claim that he and his brother had nothing to do with the debt amount.⁵⁵⁷ Discontent with the fact that the settlement had been dragged for such a long time, the Accounting Council of the Finance Department reiterated the urgent need of dispatching the inquiry to Istanbul for the settlement depended very much on that inquiry.⁵⁵⁸ As there is no further information with regards to the settlement of debts the local notables of Diyarbekir owed due to the lands they possessed or

⁵⁵⁵ BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 61/36, 21 Cemaziyelevvel 1269 (2 March 1853).

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 96/15, 7 Muharrem 1273 (7 September 1856).

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

appropriated, increasing financial intervention of the Sublime Port in the region was evident.

The Tanzimat in Hazro and Mihrani

By the time of Reşid Mehmed Pasha's death in 1836, he had succeeded at liberating Mardin from Milli rule in 1835 and ousting the important emir of Soran in 1836 after his extensive campaign against the Milli, the Yezidis of Sincar and Rıdvan, the tribes of Garzan, and Bedir Khan of Buhtan.⁵⁵⁹ Following this first phase of the centralisation in Ottoman Kurdistan, the second one followed the defeat in Nizip, which targeted the triple alliance of Bedir Khan of Buhtan, Han Mahmud and Nurullah Bey of Hakkâri.⁵⁶⁰ Following the fall of the last emirs of Ottoman Kurdistan, the stage was set for the establishment of Tanzimat in Ottoman Kurdistan. Apart from the establishment of Kurdistan as a province, the local administration started flourishing in the region especially after 1845.⁵⁶¹ A population survey was executed, which was a must for the subsequent taxation and conscription practices; a gendarmerie were founded; and administrative councils were established.⁵⁶²

As a bundle of several reforms extending from taxation, conscription and administrative reformation to legal codification, education and public health, the Tanzimat was ultimately an Ottoman policy targeting the reorganisation of the

⁵⁵⁹ Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 31-2.

⁵⁶⁰ The defeat in Nizip, according to Ainsworth, caused also a temporary depression in pashalics of Kurdistan except for Mosul which became more populous and more orderly following the first phase of centralisation. For the Battle of Nizip and its impact in the region, see respectively W. Ainsworth, "Notes on a Journey from Kaîşariyah, by Malâtîyah, to Bir or Bîrehjik, in May and June, 1839," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 10 (1840): 335-7; William Ainsworth, "Notes Taken on a Journey from Constantinople to Môşul, in 1839-40," *ibid.*: 524-9.

⁵⁶¹ Not long after, the province of Kurdistan was established in 1846. Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 60. For a general background of Ottoman Kurdistan in the Tanzimat era, see McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 49-65.

⁵⁶² Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 37.

provincial administration and the rebalance of the power equilibrium in the peripheries.⁵⁶³ At the heart of the reorganisation lay local councils entitled to settle tax assessment, the supervision of taxation, the maintenance of public order, conscription, land survey, and dispute resolution.⁵⁶⁴ The destruction of the Kurdish emirs, however, proved a pyrrhic victory for the Ottoman government as the latter failed to provide enough manpower and resources to replace the remaining Kurdish leaders.⁵⁶⁵ The elimination of Kurdish emirs in this context also eliminated the prospects of the very significant member of “social reactions,” the over-studied field of the reforms.⁵⁶⁶

As this attempt was in and of itself a gradual process in the 1850s, the following decade facilitated the power of the Sublime Porte with regards to the reorganisation of the provincial administration and power equilibrium in the provinces. It was the Reform Edict after which the implementation of reforms began in earnest. The edict, which improved the promised but not practiced equality of non-Muslims of the empire, ensured the participation of non-Muslims in administrative structures.⁵⁶⁷ It was in the 1860s in which the Tanzimat state became visible in the province of Kurdistan following the establishment of a court of appeal, a department and commission for education, a department for public works, a telegraph

⁵⁶³ Despite the title confined to Penal Code of 1840, Kırılı's following article sheds lights on many novelties introduced by the Tanzimat era. Kırılı, "Yolsuzluğun İcadı: 1840 Ceza Kanunu, İktidar ve Bürokrasi."

⁵⁶⁴ Local councils in themselves were not a novelty; but went back to the earlier centuries. However, the ones during the Tanzimat era differed in terms of its continuity as an official institution and participation of non-Muslims. Jun Akiba, "The Local Councils as the Origin of the Parliamentary System in the Ottoman Empire," in *Development of Parliamentarism in the Modern Islamic World*, ed. Tsugitaka Sato (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 2009), 179. On the local council of Diyarbekir, see Bayraktar, "Periphery's Centre."

⁵⁶⁵ Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 40.

⁵⁶⁶ For the classical work, see İnalcık, "Application of the Tanzimat and its Social Effects." See also, Ahmet Uzun, *Tanzimat ve Sosyal Direnişler* (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2002).

⁵⁶⁷ For the international context and the effect of the Edict on the non-Muslims, see Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 75-83.

department, a regiment of gendarmerie, and the municipality of Diyarbekir.⁵⁶⁸ The acceleration of reforms, however, should not translate into a fact that the Ottoman government obtained the full control of the region. In the absence of emirs, the remainder petty Kurdish beys continued to play a crucial role despite their frequent stigmatisation in the eyes of the central government.⁵⁶⁹

Consequently, complaints about labour practices, which were strictly prohibited by the Tanzimat principles, inconformity with regards to assumption of tax-farm contracts, and misadministration of local governors prevailed in the 1860s. Usually regarded as the “social reaction” to the reforms, the opposition in this context should not however be portrayed as a clear-cut distinction between the reforming state and the reactionary society. Since the central government, in addition to the local administration, hosted functionaries with different political and economic agendas, the society composed of different strata. Such a perspective in which reform and opposition shaped and reshaped the state and societal actors especially in the province of Kurdistan enables observations about the realisation of reforms under which laid and the idea of progress improvement of financial resources.

Local Administration

In accordance with the preliminary fiscal rearrangements, which were a logical extension of the level of the provincial administration the Tanzimat state attained, the

⁵⁶⁸ Evidently local versions of these institutions were established in the province in late 1860s. Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 44.

⁵⁶⁹ On the face of the cliché that the provincial administrations had entirely “appointed” officials, Köksal warns that local notables albeit with a certain degree of autonomy had long been incorporated to local administration prior to the Tanzimat era. Accordingly the “impact” of the notables albeit with the disappearance of the title *âyân* persisted throughout the nineteenth century. Yonca Köksal, "Tanzimat ve Tarih Yazımı," *Doğu Batı Osmanlılar I*, no. 51 (2010): 200; Ercüment Kuran, "Âyanlığın Kaldırılmasından Sonra Anadolu'da Sosyal ve Ekonomik Durum (1840-1871)," in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarihi Kongresi, Tebliğler* (Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1990); Köksal, "Tanzimat ve Tarih Yazımı."

administrative reorganisation started in the district of Hazro and Mihrani in the 1850s. While the Ottoman government was interested in establishing direct administration in the districts, this interest soon faded as the central government resorted to the co-optation of the local notables in the absence of salaried administrators. That is, after the appointment of presumably first müdir and his replacement with a local müdir without any salaries in 1846, the shift between appointed and local administrators started in earnest in 1850s.

As a result of what can be considered as the implementation of Tanzimat in the province of Kurdistan, an imperial decree in 1851 declared the blueprint for the Tanzimat practices: distribution and collection of tax revenues by the new order (*usûl-i cedide*), employment of administrators (müdir) instead of tax farmers, who had not been compensated with any salary, and entitlement of the former with policing and administration of districts and reorganisation of districts with regards to the relations with neighbouring districts.⁵⁷⁰ With the standardised measures of the Tanzimat, several reorganisations in the province were started.⁵⁷¹

As required by the decree, administrations of districts in Kurdistan started to be taken away from the tax farmers in the previous year. The new order accordingly deemed centrally appointed governors necessary for those districts the salaries of which exceed five hundred guruşes.⁵⁷² While the districts salaries of that were lower than 500 guruşes were still granted to the local dynasts (*mahallî hanedân*), the districts with appointed officials was not an unequivocal process. Even though the employment of officials in districts was apparently regarded by the Sublime Porte as

⁵⁷⁰ BOA. İ. MVL. 218/7293, 27 Receb 1267 (28 May 1851), the minute of the council of Kurdistan.

⁵⁷¹ The measures were preceded by one of the first reforms of the Tanzimat era, muhassıllık. For the reforms in the context of Tanzimat in the province of Trikala, cf Bayraktar, "Maliyenin Maliyeti: Tırhala'da Muhassıllık Düzeni, 1840-1842."

⁵⁷² For the list including districts, governors, and salaries, see BOA. İ. MVL. 218/7293, 25 Şevval 1267 (23 August 1851).

a means of facilitating its infiltration into local politics, it was disliked by peasantry, who were against the muhassıls in the early years of the Tanzimat and grounded their discontent on the increased financial burden associated with employment of the former officials.⁵⁷³ The discontent eventually forced the Supreme Council to replace the appointment practices in favour of the peasants with the election of administrators among the locals in the 1840s. While the payment of salaries to governors was initially considered in the early 1840s, the practices somehow were changed later into a system in which the salaries of governors were imposed on the tax burden of the people.⁵⁷⁴

Nonetheless, there is no information on the salaries of the offices of the districts of Kurdistan below the limit set. In this framework, the administrators of the districts of Silvan and Hani would be locally elected (*mahallinde intihâb*) whereas centrally appointed officials would be in charge of Hazro and Mihrani, which were merged into one district in accordance with the same decree. Despite the ambiguity, the appointed administrators for Hazro and Mihrani in an undated table for the districts of Kurdistan were Said Ağa, the former quarantine officer of Mosul, and Ahmed Ağa, member of the council of Kara Hisar-ı Şarkî.⁵⁷⁵ With the appointments, however, the local administration in Diyarbakir obtained a new vocabulary in local politics. That is, preceding complaints were utilised by the local habitants as a conventional policy of replacing the administrators in the countryside. Often the complaints were penned by peasants, other times they were the result of inter-class competition.

⁵⁷³ For developments taking place in district (*kaza*) administration throughout the Tanzimat period, see Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Türkiye*, 231-58.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 233.

⁵⁷⁵ The ambiguity stems from the specific dates of appointment of the two administrators. Salaries of the governors were 1,000 and 1,300 guruşes respectively. BOA. İ. MVL. 218/7293, 25 Şevval 1267 (23 August 1851).

For instance, in 1852 a certain Ahmed Ağa, who was the müdir of Hazro and Mıhrani, had been deposed from his office due to his abuse (*sû-ı hareketine mebnî*) and replaced with Hacı Mehmed Ağa, a local notable of Diyarbekir, in 1852.⁵⁷⁶ Though details concerning the abuse is lacking, an investigation carried out by Hasan Ağa, the gendarmerie captain of Diyarbekir, demonstrated that Ahmed Ağa had been targeted for his laxity and lethargy (*tekâsül ve rehâvet*) on taxation matters.⁵⁷⁷ The accusation was not only voiced by the council of Kurdistan that carried out the investigation but also repeated by Abdülkerim Pasha, the governor-general of the Anatolian Corps.⁵⁷⁸ The fact that the pasha highlighted Hacı Mehmed Ağa, who had been previously the müdir of Rızvan, with regards to his successive employment in such posts in addition to his decent service and endeavour might suggest the extent of the local politics by which the local notables had maintained their own business in alliances established with the appointed officials. While such replacements in offices might be also regarded as common, the particular case of Ahmed Ağa is an example in which the profound interest the Sublime Porte developed in taxation can be seen. In another case, a certain Rüstem Ağa, who had been the müdir of the two districts for a few years, complained in 1854 that he had been dismissed without any charges (*bilâ-cünha*).⁵⁷⁹ That the petition providing the innocence of Rüstem Ağa had been penned by personal servant (*kapuçukadârı*) Kamil Efendi reveals the extent of the relations of inter- and intra-class relations to which local politics owed much as much as the Sublime Porte did.

The increasing pace of the Tanzimat reforms in Ottoman Kurdistan, however, was not free of troubles. Despite the imperial decree in 1851 stipulating the

⁵⁷⁶ BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 68/14, 24 Safer 1269 (7 December 1852).

⁵⁷⁷ BOA. İ. MVL. 253/9363, 27 Zilhicce 1268 (12 October 1852).

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 175/79, 6 Rebiülahi 1271 (27 December 1854).

appointment of governors in the province, centrally appointed governors became not that appointed from 1857 onwards. According to the conclusion drawn in the Supreme Council, a certain Said Bey, who had been appointed to the district of Hani, was a member of the local dynast (*mahallî hanedânından*). Furthermore Rüstem Ağa, who had claimed to be innocent following the charges against his office, had been found to be a relative of treasurer of Kurdistan.⁵⁸⁰ The case is important in terms of demonstrating the flexibility of the Ottoman polity in the region in addition to its manipulation by the local networks.⁵⁸¹ Seeing that the appointed officials were not appointed but favoured, the Sublime Porte took one step back and decreed the appointment of appropriate candidates from among the local notables and dynasts of Diyarbekir for the districts of Hani and Hazro.⁵⁸²

As the chain of local administration was strongly shaped by patronage and nepotism, the local Kurdish beys, who were by no means outside this chain, were still strong depending on the extent of their political networks. In this sense Ottoman Kurdistan was not different from the rest of the provinces as the dynastic notables of the empire were already active in the local councils thanks to their political influence and stepping forward to establish wider and more numerous external ties to other notables and local institutions.⁵⁸³ In other words, the informal relations and connections helped local governors to pursue their own interests, at times contrary to the Tanzimat principles.

⁵⁸⁰ BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 84/50, 14 Cemaziyelahir 1273 (9 February 1857).

⁵⁸¹ Çadircı states that “even though it is agreed as a general principle that district governors would be elected among the local notables of the region, *kaymakams* of the *sancaks* appointed their relatives to these posts in practices.” Çadircı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Türkiye*, 234.

⁵⁸² “... işbu iki kazâya kürsi-yi eyâlet-i livâ vücûh ve hânedânından münâsiblerinin bi’l-intihâb bu taraftan istizân olunması...” BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 84/50, 14 Cemaziyelahir 1273 (9 February 1857).

⁵⁸³ Bragg, *Ottoman Notables*, 14.

Sadullah Bey, the müdir of Lice was one of the local intermediaries contradicting the administrative principles of the Tanzimat.⁵⁸⁴ Sadullah Bey, one of Hüseyin Bey's sons, along with his younger brothers, had gone into hiding while his older brothers following their uprising were exiled some 20 years earlier.⁵⁸⁵ According to a petition, the misdeeds the bey had committed included over-taxation of the peasantry, the appropriation of goods on a regular basis, and corvée labour. However, the misdeeds were not the ordinary misdeeds usually narrated in the form of immediate reactions to the Tanzimat. Rather, Sadullah Bey seemed to have administered the district in a manner reminiscent of the days of the emirates. In the provincial administration, according to the petition, Sadullah Bey and his brothers had become müdirs, to each of whom one batman of oil and one sheep was supposed to be delivered by the peasantry twice a year though the custom was annual. The appropriation was not confined to the delivery of goods. When a servant in the houses of the müdirs died, a replacement was supposed to be provided by the peasants. Sadullah Bey, the petitioners claimed, threatened peasants who had an ox, but refused to give it claiming that, "your son is a deserter."⁵⁸⁶ His methods of tax collection were troublesome as he levied 500 batmans of oil annually. Apart from the excessive amount, the bey was said to have calculated every four batmans as two batmans by his men and to sell the oil he bought for 15 guruşes for 40 and 50 guruşes.

In 1858, Sadullah Bey allegedly did not pay the peasants of Lice for the provisions he had appropriated for the Imperial Army in Erzurum. Even though the

⁵⁸⁴ Sadullah Bey was one of the four children of Hüseyin Bey, the hâkim of Atak. According to the interview with Nihat Işık, descendants of Hüseyin Bey, Hüseyin Bey's sons and wife escaped to a region called 'Tafsallayı Riz' during the exile of Zirki emirs. According to Işık, local Armenians of the village Riz, in the middle of the triangular region Lice, Kulb, and Genç, became protectorates of the family thus avoiding exile. Şeyhmus Diken, *İsyan Sürgünleri* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 263.

⁵⁸⁵ BOA. MVL. 586/105, 25 Zilkade 1275 (26 June 1859).

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

debt he owed was 500 keses, the settlement amount had been decreased to 250 keses thanks to the intermediation of Gevranlızâde Ömer Pasha.⁵⁸⁷ The incident crystallised the ends of the local administration in the environs of Diyarbekir. Sadullah Bey was Ömer Pasha's son-in-law and the relations he had with the pasha allowed him to get away with the fraud despite the loss of his rule in Lice.⁵⁸⁸ It seems that following the settlement he attempted to become the müdir of Lice once again but failed. Instead he was elected as the müdir of Hazro.⁵⁸⁹ His violent reign seemed to have continued in Hazro as he did not recognize the local magistrates (*nâ'ibs*) of the district.⁵⁹⁰ The fact that Sadullah Bey made a certain Hasan Efendi shoot at Musa Efendi, imam and member of the Hazro council, attracted the attention of the Supreme Council.⁵⁹¹ Evidently, the bey did not hesitate to run the district of Hazro as he had Lice with his retinue amounting to 150 men. His order to the local magistrates was basically to replace them with his own magistrates as the petitioners claimed that Sadullah Bey, thanks to his retinue and control over the magistrates, eliminated anyone who was not on his side by simply making some persons out of his retinue a claimant against the former.⁵⁹² The administration of the protégé was so violent that it led the Porte to question his isolation (*kesb-i teferrüd*) of the patron, Ömer Pasha, and in the conflicting claims.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁸ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 359/93, 14 Muharrem 1276 (13 August 1859). Ömer Pasha, Nihat Işık indicates, was married to İnci Hanım, Hüseyin Bey's daughter. Diken, *İsyân Sürgünleri*, 263.

⁵⁸⁹ For his petition to the Sublime Porte asking for to be appointed as the müdir of Lice, see BOA. MVL. 589/75, 7 Safer 1276 (5 September 1859).

⁵⁹⁰ For his violent acts and goods appropriated, see the petition in BOA. MVL. 586/105, 25 Zilkade 1275 (26 June 1859).

⁵⁹¹ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 359/93, 14 Muharrem 1276 (13 August 1859).

⁵⁹² BOA. MVL. 586/105, 25 Zilkade 1275 (26 June 1859). Needless to say, dynastic notables of the eighteenth century accordingly deemed a smooth relation with local magistrates to facilitate their wealth and power. Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Âyânlık*, 36.

⁵⁹³ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 359/93, 14 Muharrem 1276 (13 August 1859).

In June 1859, Sadullah Bey was dismissed from his post in Hazro and replaced by Mustafa Efendi, the former müdir of Beşiri.⁵⁹⁴ The administration of Sadullah Bey in both Lice and Hazro was, however, not a unique circumstance. Rather, the appointment and dismissal of local administrators in the districts of Kurdistan indicated the changing policies of the Sublime Porte. The appointment of local notables for districts despite the controversy it constituted for the Tanzimat practices was still an option employed at times. In a correspondence addressing the governor of Kurdistan in 1857, nepotism of the kind from which Sadullah Bey benefited was explicitly discouraged. Following the resignation of müdirs in Hazro and Hani, it appears that once again Rüstem Ağa and Said Bey were appointed, respectively. The problem arose when it was found out in the Supreme Council that the agha was indeed a relative of the treasurer of Kurdistan and the bey was a member of the local dynast (*mahallî hânedânından*).⁵⁹⁵ On these grounds, the ratifications of their posts were denied. Choice for the local-origin administrators, however, was not stationary but rather was reformulated and violated when deemed necessary by the Sublime Porte.

The reformulation was reversed in 1862 when Hacı Ragıp Efendi, the müdir of Lice, resigned from his post. Considering the delicate nature of the province, the governor of Kurdistan conceded that the nature of the location gave him the expression that the maintenance of policing of the province would be realised by appointing müdirs among the local powers (*yerlûden muktedirlerinin*).⁵⁹⁶ For that matter, Sadullah Bey was nominated as a prospective administrator since “he was powerful enough to be immediately present at the location ordered with the provision

⁵⁹⁴ BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 113/37, 20 Cemaziyelevvel 1276 (15 December 1859).

⁵⁹⁵ BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 84/50, 14 Cemaziyelahir 1273 (9 February 1857).

⁵⁹⁶ BOA. MVL. 630/38, 11 Zilkade 1278 (10 May 1862).

of a few hundred people (*nefer-i 'am*).”⁵⁹⁷ The return of Sadullah Bey to his original post in and for itself says about the Tanzimat practices implemented in general the province and in particular the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. It was evident that the local notables, if not beys in the traditional sense, strove for new channels in the centralising Ottoman administration in their own interests. On the face of that, the Sublime Porte was to channel this endeavour into a sound establishment of its reign in the region. However, the process was a negotiated process in which both parties pursued their interests to the extent that the opposing party would tolerate.

Financial Administration

Reform in tax collection methods was as important as the reorganisation in local administration. Immediately after the fall of the Zirki beys, the peasants, who had never paid taxes other than traditional tithes to their beys, awkwardly experienced the taxes imposed by the Ottoman government.⁵⁹⁸ According to Brant, Isa Bey, who was the brother of the deputy-governor in Lice, stated that the inhabitants in the region enjoyed tranquillity now, compared to the rule of the beys, noting that the non-Muslims were heavily taxed at the present, multiplied six-fold after the fall of the beys.⁵⁹⁹ While the destitution of the non-Muslims was conceded, Şerif Bey, the deputy-governor, was hopeful that under the control of legally-appointed authorities, the country would enjoy tranquillity and, consequently, prosperity. For the rule of the beys, he said that they were apt to grow proud and forget their duty when they

⁵⁹⁷ The same concern was evident at the appointment of Reşid Ağa for the district of Silvan since he was powerful enough to be present at the predetermined location with a few hundred armed men. *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁸ Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 39.

⁵⁹⁹ Christians in Silvan accordingly paid before seven pence to the bey with no other tax impositions and then paid six schilling and three pences apart from their share of the annual tax. Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey Through," 359-60. Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 39.

became rich.⁶⁰⁰ While security prevailed in the immediate fall of the emirates in Hazro and its environs, it came with a heavy fiscal bill, much of it to be borne by the Christians in the region.

Immediately after the fiscal practices following the fall of the emirs, the taxation practices used hitherto were abolished by the same imperial decree, in 1851, in accordance with the planned reforms in local administrations.⁶⁰¹ From March 1851 onwards, the central Ottoman government stipulated the abolition of tax farming on tithes and promoted the auctions to be assumed by people familiar with agriculture.⁶⁰² The Council of Diyarbekir discussed the matter, as requested by the Porte. Renouncing tax farming (*sûret-i ilzâm*), the Sublime Porte came up with the annual actions (*müzâyede*) of several tax resources. In addition to the central policy which attempted to curb the power of taxfarmer-cum-governors, annual auctions would at the very least pave the way for a more competitive environment concerning the entitlement to collection of tax revenues.

The madrabs in the district of Mihrani, namely Babak and Barkuş, were a part of the fiscal centralisation of the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁰³ As mentioned above, the rice lands in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani had been confiscated by the Ottoman state and subsequently auctioned to the officials and the local notables of Diyarbekir. The auction case of the madrabs in Mihrani presents a brilliant example of the changing tax collection methods in Ottoman Kurdistan. Following the auctions of villages which had been carried out in the district, there were no other claimants (*tâlib*) in the auction carried out by the Imperial Treasury. While the villages in question were

⁶⁰⁰ Brant and Glascott, "Notes of a Journey Through," 363.

⁶⁰¹ Abolition of tax farming was a repeated measure employed by the Sublime Porte albeit with failures. The abolition along with new practices of tax collection was often discussed in the finance departments of the empire throughout the late nineteenth century. Bölükbaşı, *Tezyid-i Varidat*, 38-42.

⁶⁰² BOA. İ. MVL. 218/7293, 25 Şevval 1267 (23 August 1851).

⁶⁰³ According to information Beysanoğlu gives for the 1960s, the stream (*madrab suyu*) Bayık-Barkuş irrigates an 1800-decare-area and 150 to 200 kile of seeds are cultivated depending on the year. Beysanoğlu, *Diyarbakır Coğrafyası*, 95.

granted to its claimants, the rice lands of Babak and Barkuř were accordingly auctioned locally for the year 1855.⁶⁰⁴

According to the document of the Supreme Council dispatched to the Ministry of Finance, a certain Magsi Kazaz succeeded at obtaining the right to collect the revenues of the rice lands.⁶⁰⁵ The statement in the document, however, sheds more light on the relations of tax-farming on the rice lands: “Once the tithe of the rice lands called Babak and Barkuř in the district of Mihrani were auctioned, its cultivators by raising the previous determined value by 450 guruřes [have been established to assume the land.]”⁶⁰⁶ Despite the name Magsi Kazaz, as the person entitled to collect the tithe revenues, it appears that the rice lands in question were cultivated by peasants who represented him. While this question begs a definite answer, it is not likely to have one. Magsi Kazaz was presumably a local Armenian notable who had achieved the right to collect the tax revenues of the rice lands in return for 4,300 guruřes.

Despite the introduction of the centralised practices of taxation, the local notables and functionaries maintained negotiations with the Ottoman government. In these negotiations, the local functionaries of the central state at times did not hesitate to relish the benefits to be reaped in Ottoman Kurdistan. In 1863, Ahmed Naci Efendi, the chamberlain of the late governor Besim Pasha, presented a plea to the

⁶⁰⁴ BOA. MVL. 347/135, 25 Rebiülevvel 1272 (5 December 1855).

⁶⁰⁵ Magsi, with the variations magdesi, makdesi or makhdesi, is a corrupted version of the Arabic word *mukaddes*, meaning the pilgrimages to Jerusalem. As a title especially common for the Armenians in Ottoman Kurdistan, the Ottoman administration at times employ the term with the Turkish equivalent *hacı*. Hagop L. Barsoumian, *The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul* (Yerevan: American University of Armenia, 2007), 29. I am also thankful for the additional information Yařar Tolga Cora provided on the term.

⁶⁰⁶ The original reads: “*Mihrani kazâsında kâ’in Babaki ve Barkuř madrabları a`řârı müzâyede olundukda kazâ-yı mezkûr a`řârının mukaddemki bedel-i mukarrerine 450 guruř zam ile ahâlisi ve Beřiri kazâsına tâbi` Kefer Zor ve Bazbut karyeleri a`řârına bin guruř zam ile Ohan (?) ve Babaki ve Barkuř madrabları a`řârı dahi bedel-i sâbıkı bulunan dört bin üç yüz guruř ile Magsi Kazaz nam kimesneler`uhdelerinde takarrur edib...*” BOA. MVL. 347/135, 25 Rebiülevvel 1272 (5 December 1855).

presence of the Supreme Council. The plea with five articles was especially important for its last article. Having noted the Council on the presence of hidden state and waqf lands in the districts of Diyarbekir, Midyat, and Siird, Ahmed Naci Efendi offered to be employed as the official to be charged with uncovering these lands. His prospective employment was not out of gratuity but rather the chamberlain asked one fifth of the revenues to be accrued from the escheated lands.⁶⁰⁷ The response of the Ottoman government, however, elaborated the delicate balance between the state and the local administrators. Rejecting his offer forthright, the Council stipulated that the land officials who would carry out necessary procedures of the Land Code in the countryside had been appointed from among the cadres of the Imperial Registry, and added that Ali Rıza Bey occupied that position in Ottoman Kurdistan.⁶⁰⁸ The option of appointing local notables of different sorts therefore gradually started to demonstrate the reinforcement of the Tanzimat-led policies of the central state in Ottoman Kurdistan.

However, several circumstances that contradicted the principles of the Tanzimat prevailed in the 1860s. In order to maintain the escalation of the principles of Tanzimat administration, a province-wide imperial note was sent in 1864 to be published in every village of Ottoman Kurdistan. The note started with the reassertion of the equality of each class, community and people and warned the *muhtars* and *kocabaşıs*, i.e., Muslim and non-Muslim chiefs of villages, respectively, who apparently acted against the equality by levying some sorts of taxes to be collected from the people. The ordinary suspects also included officials and officials' servants.⁶⁰⁹ First of all, the irregularities with regards to tax collection procedures would be supervised closely ensuring that nothing more than what was written on the

⁶⁰⁷ BOA. MVL. 585/34, 11 Şevval 1275 (4 May 1859).

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ BOA. MVL. 669/48, 16 Ramazan 1280 (24 February 1864).

record was given to anyone. Muhtars and kocabaşıs who allocate their tax amounts on people would be dismissed from their offices and subject to the punishment decreed by the Criminal Code.⁶¹⁰ Accordingly, tax farmers who appoint şihnes, who stayed in the village for two or three months and obtained the foodstuff from people with no charge, would be subject to punishment along with şihnes.

As can be seen already, the Ottoman government attempted to destroy the relations of local actors who interacted with each other on different levels. Due to the rumours heard that the tax farmers assigned the tax-bundle to the muhtar of that village in dividends and that the latter added as much as they wished on the amount, the central government stipulated the payment of what was written in the records. In addition to the misdeeds of tax-farmers, muhtars etc., the gendarmeries were also warned by the government for their appropriation of foodstuff without any charges.⁶¹¹ The Ottoman government was no more content with the general warnings. As the bureaucratic structure of the state succeeded in gathering more information on a micro-level, i.e., villages, the warnings followed suit. According to rumours muhtars of most villages appropriated some good and fertile lands without legal grounds and named such lands as lands belonging to muhtârlık. The Supreme Council, however, challenged such usage and concluded that the possession of such lands remained with people who cultivated (*hakk-ı karar*) and bore the legal possession.⁶¹²

⁶¹⁰ The imperial note was a reinforcement of the Criminal Code of 1858. With the earlier versions in 1840 and 1851, the Code was the first systematic treatment of official transgression. In an attempt to discipline officials, the Code addresses bribery in the third chapter, embezzlement of state funds and similar cases of fraud in the fourth chapter as well as abuse of office and fulfilling official duties in the fifth chapter. Avi Rubin, *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 114-5.

⁶¹¹ In another petition in the document, people of Lice complained that gendarmerie and other officials of the state stayed in peasants' houses without any charge in addition to appropriation of foodstuff. BOA. MVL. 669/48, 25 Receb 1280 (5 January 1864).

⁶¹² BOA. MVL. 669/48, 16 Ramazan 1280 (24 February 1864).

In accordance with the central measures taken, the local administrators also portrayed a hands-on approach on the administration of the province of Kurdistan. In an 1864 report on the reform of the province of Kurdistan, the governor classified the Kurds in the region as settled and non-settled, where the former were further divided into those who accepted without question any statement of local notables and muhtars, and those not showing any prospect of obedience to the government unless intimidated by military measures.⁶¹³ No matter how generic the classification is, it is important to observe the three strata of the society depicting the diversity of the society in Ottoman Kurdistan.

In order to appease the turmoil the peasants suffered, the governor targeted three classes: the Kurdish tribal leaders, the members of local councils, and the tax-farmers of tithe and other taxes. His elaborate discussion of the three distinct classes demonstrates the extent to which the Tanzimat accomplished in Kurdistan. Starting with the Kurdish tribal leaders (*rü'esâ-yı ekrad*), the governor stated that the peasants were almost slaves in the hands of these leaders.⁶¹⁴ The competition among the Kurdish families with the ambition of obtaining autonomy (*istiklâl*) at the expense of the other families, controlling the administration, and devastating the opposing party, the governor complained, resulted with the further deterioration of the status of peasantry.⁶¹⁵

The second group was no different. According to the report, the factions in the local councils resembled the competition between the Kurdish families. Since factions vying for power considered the interests of its own party, the governor

⁶¹³ Interestingly, for the first category the governor gave the examples of districts of Behramki, Silvan, and Hazro. BOA. MVL. 669/79, 21 Şaban 1280 (31 January 1864).

⁶¹⁴ Ibid. Consideration of tribe members as slave-like subjects was a conventional view during the Tanzimat era. For such views, see Abdullah Saydam, "Tanzimatçıların Ağalık ve Beylik Kurumunu Kaldırmaya Yönelik Çabaları," *Toplumsal Tarih* 2, no. 7 (July 1994).

⁶¹⁵ The governor gives examples of the districts of Garzan, Şirvan, Çapakçur, and Becar. BOA. MVL. 669/79, 21 Şaban 1280 (31 January 1864).

stated, an arriving müdir had to choose a faction over the rest simply becoming a further part of the factionalisation in a district. In these struggles in the districts, the governor was disappointed to conclude that “some of the said settled people are devastated and exhausted at the hands of members of local councils who had turned their offices into a means of oppression and fear.”⁶¹⁶

Finally, the governor addressed tax farmers with their current relations associated with tax-farm contracts. The revenue auctioned at the centre of the province, the governor noted, was directed to a person by the encouragements of some members of councils. It did not take long for encouragements to become secret partnerships (*şirket-i hafiye*) between those members and others who had obtained tax-farm contracts.⁶¹⁷ The governor sadly noted that the factionalisation was not confined to the micro-level, but rather exceeded the provincial level as members of councils did not hesitate to employ Kurdish tribal leaders and other members of local councils for their interests.

The governor was convinced that the müdirs played a crucial role in this corrupted administrative system. Despite the pessimistic tone, his discourse on the actual state of districts in Ottoman Kurdistan set the limits for the Sublime Porte to increase its authority. The constant treatments of violence by the local müdirs had brought them the privilege of autonomy (*istiklâl*), making peasants believe that the deposition of that administrator would be to no avail since it had become a common belief that he would assume the office once again. In the case of depositions of the local müdirs, the governor stated, they did not let the new-coming administrators run the district properly. The degree of pessimism reached climax when the governor concluded that even if non-local müdirs had been appointed, the intimidated

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

peasantry would not have been able to overcome their fear, leading the new-coming administrators to perpetuate the terrorised administration.⁶¹⁸

The Settlement of the Tribes

As a consequence of the reforms in the administrative and fiscal arrangements, the Ottoman government in the 1860s endeavoured to settle the tribes in Hazro and Mihrani. The efforts to settle the tribes had started in the late seventeenth and eighteenth century. Therefore the settlement of tribes in the period under discussion was a continuation of earlier practices. The Tanzimat government thus developed a rather profound interest.⁶¹⁹ The tendency, of course, did not immediately translate into sedentarisation. Entertaining the notion of semi-sedentarisation, Toksöz writes that the continuous spatial and temporal fixation of habitation did not automatically culminate in sedentarisation.⁶²⁰ While the bifurcation between nomadic and sedentary life had a mid-point of semi-sedentarisation, the shifts eventually shaped the policy tools the Ottoman government developed.

As the process of reform implementation was negotiated between the local groups and the state, the sedentarisation process was no different. Depending on the reaction of tribal groups, the Ottoman state operated within a dual model of coercion

⁶¹⁸ In fact, the governor classified müdîrs into two groups as well. While the first group mentioned above would do anything possible to interrupt the administration of the district in the case of appointment of a non-local administrator, the second group, according to his account, would be content with only deposing the appointed administrator, such as the ones in Lice and Hani. Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 54ff. Though it is possible to go further back in time, the tribe Ömerganlû for instance was settled in 1847. Yılmazçelik, *XXIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır*, 171. For a brief account on the settlement of tribes during the Tanzimat period, see Fatih Sansar, "Tanzimat Döneminde Aşiretlerin İskanı," in *Türkler*, Vol. 13 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002).

⁶²⁰ Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, 30.

and mediation.⁶²¹ By the same token, it would be overwhelming to state that the Ottoman statesmen wanted to eradicate the sedentary life once and for all. What lied under settlement of tribes was the attempt to increase the potential with regards to recruitment and taxation.⁶²²

A report compiled by the governor of Kurdistan in 1864 demonstrates the basic characteristics of the people inhabiting the province. Underlining the perpetual nature of misdeeds that inhibited the progress of prosperity and improvement of revenue resources, Mustafa Pasha depicted the province as “a great province consisting Kurdish and Arabic fellows which consisted of several clans and tribes.”⁶²³ The non-settled Kurdish, with which the pasha was preoccupied, were nomadic and their policing would necessitate separate measures.⁶²⁴ Even though there is no information on the separate measures, more conventional practices facilitated the settlement of tribes in 1858.⁶²⁵

In accordance with fiscal and administrative concerns of the Sublime Porte, one hundred and forty eight households that were nomadic in the environs of Hazro and Mihrani were settled in appropriate locations. Names of the tribes settled were

⁶²¹ Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation." In accordance with this duality, the vocabulary in the mid-1860s demonstrated the change in Ottoman policies. That is, the term addressing unruly tribes such as Bedouins was *te'dib*, which means bringing the insubordinate under the firm control of the government, until the middle of the century was replaced with *istimâlet*, which expresses a policy of currying favour or gaining the good will of the protected. Yasemin Avcı, "The Application of Tanzimat in the Desert: The Bedouins and the Creation of a New Town in Southern Palestine (1860–1914)," *ibid.* 45, no. 6 (2009): 972.

⁶²² Despite the uncritical elaboration of tribal structures such as *ağalık* and *beylik* and relegation of settlement of tribes to the eradication of these structures, Saydam rightly notes the immediate ends of the Ottoman statesmen. Saydam, "Tanzimatçıların Ağalık ve Beylik," 11.

⁶²³ BOA. MVL. 669/79, 21 Şaban 1280 (31 January 1864). For the major tribes in the province of Diyarbakir, see Yılmazçelik, *XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Diyarbakır*, 170-3.

⁶²⁴ BOA. MVL. 669/79, 21 Şaban 1280 (31 January 1864).

⁶²⁵ Not all the settlement practices, however, followed conventional practices. In addition to the settlement of tribes, the Reform Division (*Fırka-ı Islâhiye*) was established in 1865 to capture all the local notables and establish a central administration in Cilicia. Gould, "Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia," 490ff; Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, 65-82. For an official account, see Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, ed. Cavid Baysun, vol. III (Ankara: Türk Tarih Konumu, 1991), 136-90.

Badinan, Kolan, Zıkti, Kesan, Hevidan, Bedoyan (?), Şıhbızınlı, and Cozuran.⁶²⁶

Even though regarded as nomadic (*haymenişin*) by the Ottoman state, most of the tribes settled had lived in the proximity of the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. Despite the lack of evidence, the settlement of the tribes seemed to be a result of mediation on the side of the central state.⁶²⁷ As the tribes in question were nomadic in the neighbouring regions of Hazro and Mihrani, the Ottoman state seemed to end their semi-sedantised status facilitating their sedantisation.⁶²⁸

Table 10. Number of Tribal Households Settled and Taxes Imposed in Hazro and Mihrani in 1858

Villages	Households Settled	Initial Tax	Addition	Total (guruşes)
Hazro	100	1,615	1,945	3,560
Tercil	6	90	115	205
Kazır (?)	5	120	105	225
Haydargan (?)	5	100	145	245
Şıhdıran (?)	8	120	120	240
Melekan	2	30	60	90
Hatçegân (?)	5	90	65	155
Veziyan	6	75	85	160
Pahşam (?) mezra'-yî Melkan	3	40	45	85
Bimeman (?)	6	130	65	195
Mirahoran	3	50	50	100
Göredere mezra'-yî karye-yî Çelikan	13	180	240	420
Kasımî	4	50	75	125
Kula Miran	2	40	35	75
Zoğur	6	120	130	250
Dagelan	1	10	40	50
Karahan	7	100	210	310
Çeşlikan (?)	4	100	75	175
Huşoli-i Kebir (?)	5	60	120	180
Benilan	2	30	50	80
Baroğlu	3	30	50	80
Sahran	4	50	65	115

⁶²⁶ Most of the tribes mentioned were subject to the Zıkti tribe. Even though it is not clear that the subjection was on a household or a tribal level, it is likely that other tribes were the sub-tribes of the Zıkti. That is, most members of the tribes of Bedoyan, Kesan, and Badinan in Hazro and Kalan and Cezuran in Hani were subject to the Zıkti tribe in addition to members of the individual tribes. For the tax imposition on household-level, see BOA. ML. VRD.d. 3073, 30 Rebiülevvel 1275 (7 November 1858).

⁶²⁷ As it evidently remained a dead-letter, Cevdet Pasha, in charge of the Reform Division, stated that once the reform of Cilicia was accomplished the division would walk over the Dersim and Akçadağ Mountains up to the Iranian borderlands with the intention of reforming Kurdish tribes. Paşa, *Tezâkir*, III, 108.

⁶²⁸ Discussing four tribes in Central Anatolia, Köksal argues that the Ottoman state adopted a new strategy of controlling tribes following the failure to settle them by sedantising them in their pastures rather than the old practices of expel. Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation," 476-7.

Mihrani	48	700	1,045	1,645
Bi'naz (?)	7	130	185	215
Kir	5	60	95	155
Hacı Reş (?)	7	90	150	240
Bazmar	11	180	205	385
Mezra-yı Dercil tabi'-yi karye-yi Bazmar	3	40	80	120
Bazmar	8	120	170	290
Hezis	3	40	60	100
Dozr (?)	2	20	40	60
Barkuş	1	10	20	30
Hazuf (?)	1	10	40	50
Total	148	2,315	2,990	5,205

Source: BOA. ML. VRD.d. 3073, 30 Rebiülevvel 1275 (7 November 1858).

Presumably more important than the question of settlement, the increase in the tax amounts imposed on the once-nomadic people hinted at the financial concern of the central government in addition to the power it established. As the müdir of Hazro and Mihrani was already discontent with the ordinary troubles the tribes caused, he noted further that they could afford the additional tax amounts depending on the opinion of local authorities (*erbâb-ı vukûf*).⁶²⁹ As demonstrated in Table 10, the newly levied tax amount surpassed the previous amount of annual amount in gross terms. Most households were levied a half more on their original tax amount. The settlement procedures in addition to its financial ends also demonstrated the increasing capacity of the Ottoman bureaucratic system. The müdir of the two districts carried out the new tax allocation with the supervision of a certain Hacı Mustafa Ağa, a member of the Diyarbekir council, and to complete the administrative hierarchy both were responsible to Gevranlızâde Ömer Pasha who had been appointed as a special official for the task of settlement.

⁶²⁹ BOA. ML. VRD.d. 3073, 30 Rebiülevvel 1275 (7 November 1858).

Conclusion

The challenge the Ottoman government faced in the province of Kurdistan was not entirely different from those experienced in other provinces in the peripheries of the empire. While in most of such provinces the primary target of the Ottoman finance was malikâne lands, yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands were in addition to the former in the province of Kurdistan. The elimination of firstly the Zirki beys in the province of Diyarbekir to be followed by the Buhtan Emirate in the district of Cizre had swept away the centuries-old practices of yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands. Because hükûmet lands did not necessitate keeping a register for the lands in the region concerned, the first years of Ottoman centralisation in the province was prudent in earnest.

Referring to the urban landowners in Mosul and the changes they brought about, Khoury notes two effects of the change on the rural structure:

The first was the gradual and often violent subjugation of hitherto independent semi-sedentary areas to city rule. Second was the gradual transformation of a sector of the peasantry where commercial agriculture was practiced into sharecroppers in a situation where relations of production can be described as semi feudal; and last was a noticeable social differentiation among the peasantry both in terms of their access to land and in terms of a limited division of labour within the village community.⁶³⁰

In the case of Diyarbekir, however, the formulation Khoury suggests needs some revision. Since she entertains the notion of land tenure rights associated with malikânes for the last decades of the eighteenth century, the dependence of semi-sedentary areas had been already acknowledged with the incursion of the central

⁶³⁰ The term "semi-feudal" is used with great reservation here as is done by Khoury who defines it as "disenfranchisement of the peasantry from their traditional right to land, where they became at best *renters* from urban landlords instead from the Ottoman State, accompanied by increase in their dependence on city notables both in terms of their subsistence needs, as well as their economic and social needs." Khoury, "The Political Economy of the Province of Mosul," 82.

government albeit its co-optation of state functionaries in the region in the early 1830s. The city rule extended following the introduction of the Tanzimat reforms in Ottoman Kurdistan with the nexus of tax-farm contracts. Even though the extent of sharecropping and commercial agriculture in the region is yet to be known, the existence of landless, especially Armenian, peasantry subject to a heavier toll of taxation might hint at sharecropping.

The fate of the *madrabs* in Hazro and Mihrani in the particular context constitutes an exemplary course of the Tanzimat practices in Ottoman Kurdistan. The immediate fall of the *beys* brought the rice lands to the State treasury. Awarded to the governors of the province, the *madrabs* demonstrated not only the Ottoman flexibility, but also the financial relations between Ottoman officials and urban notables. Though the state assigned its functionaries to assume the administration of the *madrabs*, the prevalent practice led the latter to conclude sub-contracts with the urban notables of the region. Despite the brief period of direct administration, the uprooting of the *Zirki beys* did not translate into a direct control on the rice lands. Not long after the *madrabs* passed to the possession of the urban landlords as a consequence of the very nature of tax-farming.

In the meantime, the local notables as fiscal entrepreneurs, to borrow from McGowan, who “took on responsibilities as primary contractors, then subcontracted the real risks and the real work to others,” followed their own trajectories as they had been since the previous century.⁶³¹ The local notables were not alone in their ventures to obtain some rewards to meet their ends. Partly due to the destruction of the emirates and partly due to the Ottoman moderation between appointed officialdom and local dynasts, the emergent power vacuum was a void with several

⁶³¹ McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 58.

actors.⁶³² As van Bruinessen states, the governors appointed from Istanbul, lacking the traditional legitimacy, had to leave the local dynasts a large degree of autonomy.⁶³³ As an example of the local dynasts, Sadullah Bey, with his emirate-like administration in both Lice and Hazro, envied the autonomy of the beys of the pre-Tanzimat era, but was able to maintain a transitional administration only in limited terms with the support of powerful patrons.⁶³⁴ Still he was not alone in his ventures. Either in the form of possession some lands not included in the registers or in the form of appropriation of malikâne lands, the local notables were there to reap the benefits of the vacuum created by the state intervention. In this chain of political and financial relations, the Ottoman government strove to establish a more centralised bureaucracy only from 1860s onwards. No matter how moderate or reflexive the administration, it was challenged by many different actors vying for power. The return of Zirki beys, with their claims on the confiscated property still after a twenty-year exile, would nothing but complicate the power balance in Hazro and Mihrani.

⁶³² Being coercive but successful at the allocation of resources, the autonomous Kurdish entities constituted a local balance torn apart by the central administration which exacerbated rather than combated problems linked to insecurity. Hamit Bozarslan, "Tribal *Asabiyya* and Kurdish Politics: A Socio-Historical Perspective," in *The Kurds Nationalism and Politics*, ed. Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (Beirut: Saqi, 2006), 134-5.

⁶³³ Martin Van Bruinessen, "Kurds, States and Tribes," in *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East*, ed. Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (London: Saqi, 2002).

⁶³⁴ Needless to say, the transitional period was not entirely confined to Ottoman Kurdistan. As Kuran demonstrates, the âyâns of Anatolia during the Tanzimat period benefitted from kinship relations to improve their influences. Some notable families' sphere of influence, however, extended well beyond the nineteenth century. Kuran, "Âyanlığın Kaldırılmasından Sonra." Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, 3-39; Hazran, "How Elites Can Maintain."

CHAPTER V

CLAIMING THE PROPERTY: THE POLITICS OF PETITIONING FOR YURTLUK-OCAKLIK LANDS

Despite the loss of the traditional status and political and economic power, the Zirki beys in exile did not step back from their oppositional politics vis-à-vis the Ottoman government. By means of petitions penned by the Zirki family, this chapter attempts to delineate a new sort of politics of notables in the mid-nineteenth century. Most of the provincial notables of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century had been eradicated or relegated to a minor status by the Ottoman government, but it was unlikely that the power the provincial notables of the empire held was to fade out. Now there is almost a consensus that most provincial notables filled the echelons of provincial administration devised by the Sublime Porte, the participation in politics was not confined to the state offices. The politics of petitioning, despite the deferential overtures of the discourse vis-à-vis the sultan or the Sublime Porte, therefore became a weapon in the hands of the provincial notables with regards to their political or economic ends.

Although petitions are more often than not depicted as the voices of the lower classes, this chapter rather expands to include the voice of the notables. Compared to petitions penned by “ordinary men and women,” fallen or faded provincial notables were able to assert a stronger pressure by the politics of petitioning with which they not only contested and altered the prospective policies of the Sublime Porte, but also brought forward their claims. In this setting, this chapter demonstrate the politics of notables the Zirki family developed by means of petitions in their exile in Edirne. Not differently from urban notables of the empire, the Zirki men and women sought

to defend and improve, if conditions favoured, their rights and interests by revoking the imperial legitimacy and revoking the mercy of the sultan.

In this brief context, this chapter will firstly characterise the nature of the petitions penned by the Zirki family. By resorting to the legitimation sources of the sultanate, the emirs developed a defensive approach in their first petitions with regards to the Ottoman policies. The Ottoman plan of settling the Zirki family in Silistra brought about a reaction among the family members. They resisted the imperial decree of further exile and forced settlement with collective petitions. The collective reaction they developed in their petitions reached a new phase following a significant cut in the stipends they had been receiving in return for their confiscated *yurtluk-ocaklık* property. By employing the deferential discourse of petitions and invoking the legitimising principles of Ottoman sultanate, they were able to contest the imperial decrees and at times manipulate the latter in their favour. Having underlined the collective petitions' significance in terms of success, the section dwells into the distinction between the collective and individual petitions, the latter mostly denied by the Sublime Porte. Particularly the section sheds light on the financial power the Zirki family developed in Edirne, which they manipulatively understated in their petitions vis-à-vis the Ottoman government.

Secondly the chapter examines the change in the discourse of Zirki beys. That is, while the initial petitions were defensive against the Ottoman projects, the family beys moved from the defensive to making outright claims in the early 1850s. While most petitions, explicitly or implicitly, asked for pardons, the petitions also started presenting claims with regard to the confiscated *yurtluk-ocaklık* properties. In these petitions, in which they claimed exclusive rights with regards to the property, the discourse of the emirs is very important in terms of expanding the definition of the

very concept of private property beyond the definitions of centralising states. Thanks to an almost three-century possession of vast lands, the Zirki beys in Edirne came up with a concept of property preceding the stipulations of the Land Code. Stressing their privileges on the exclusive possession rights of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands, the Zirki beys challenged the Ottoman stance. The perpetual petitions of the emirs, which mostly addressed the enforcement of their exclusive possession rights on the lands, overwhelmed the Ottoman statesmen with ever-changing stances with regards to the statuses of the lands in question. The chapter lastly deals with the imperial pardon of the Zirki emirs, which strengthened their hand with regards to the further claims on their property. Becoming further politicised in this sense, the petitions the Zirki family submitted to the Ottoman government connoted different views with regards to state owned property.

The Politics of Petitioning and the Challenge in Exile

Despite the exile, the Zirki beys, now in Edirne still preoccupied the Sublime Porte with their petitions. The politics of petitioning the Zirki beys initiated was a process by which the members of the family somehow agitated their state of being with the hope of attracting the mercy of the sultan.⁶³⁵ The petitions of the emirs, however, differed from the complaints of the previous centuries. Even though the idiom “state of being” was employed in most petitions, the change in the Ottoman statecraft was out of question.⁶³⁶ While the Tanzimat period attempted to reorganise the provincial

⁶³⁵ On a broader level, petitioning was only a part of the politics of the notables. No matter how multifaceted, complicated and negotiated the politics of notables in the Ottoman realm was, Hourani's account is still the classical study. Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables."

⁶³⁶ For the classical work on petitions, see Halil İnalcık, "Şikayet Hakkı: 'Arz-ı Hâl ve 'Arz-ı Mahzar'lar," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. 7-8 (1988). Since the literature is quite rich, see for instance, Michael Ursinus, *Grievance Administration (Şikayet) in an Ottoman Province: The*

administration and reshuffle the power balance in the provinces, the discourse of the petitions expectedly accorded the change in the Ottoman polity. In other words, the Tanzimat state benefited from a new legal discourse to shape local resistances; however, it simultaneously invoked different strategies in the power structure of the periphery.⁶³⁷

While the literature on petitions and popular protest, in an understandable manner, focuses on the voices of the underclasses, the case of the Zirki emirs, however, did not resemble those classes.⁶³⁸ Despite addressing the mid-sixteenth century perceptions, the distinction made between the elite and the common seems to shed light on the nineteenth-century practices. That is, according to Peirce, the distinction stemmed from a conception of society in which the classes were distinguished from one another in accordance with their moral learning and moral excellence which were easier for those who derived status from notable lineage, religious authority, wealth, and political power.⁶³⁹ By the same token, Gara et al., by underlining the impact the introduction of malikânes had upon the provincial elites, consider these elites involved in the management of local affairs extending from becoming part of the provincial administration to challenging the prerogative of the

Kaymakam of Rumelia's 'Record Book of Complaints' of 1781-1783 (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); John Chalcraft, "Engaging the State: Peasants and Petitions in Egypt on the Eve of Colonial Rule," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 3 (2005); Boğaç A. Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Eyal Ginio, "Coping with the State's Agents 'From Below': Petitions, Legal Appeal, and the Sultan's Justice in Ottoman Legal Practice," in *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi*, ed. Eleni Gara, Erdem Kabadayı, and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2011).

⁶³⁷ The case of Vranje discussed by Kırılı is a recent and brilliant example of the dynamics between the state and the petitioners albeit with the little success of the latter. Cengiz Kırılı, "İvranyalılar, Hüseyin Paşa ve Tasvir-i Zulüm," *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 195 (March 2010).

⁶³⁸ For a recent work on popular petitions and their strength in political participation, see Eleni Gara, Erdem Kabadayı, and Christoph K. Neumann, eds., *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2011).

⁶³⁹ Leslie Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2003), 157.

centre to control the appointment of officials as never before.⁶⁴⁰ After having enjoyed a semi-independent rule for centuries, it would be therefore naïve to expect the yurtluk-ocaklık holders to reduce their prestige in the eye of the Sublime Porte. As petitions in their own nature were penned in a deferential way, the elite language was another feature.⁶⁴¹ The case of the emirs was not different. Even though the deferential and self-agitating language the Zirki beys employed was somehow generic, it was not the mere language itself, but rather frequency that made their petitions more politicised.

From a different perspective, the address of the petitions also distinguished the Zirki emirs' pleas. The question of why the Zirki emirs directly petitioned the imperial centre rather than the local courts, which were in a sense the office of first instance in the early modern period, is related to their punishment.⁶⁴² The offense of the emirs was not directly in accordance with the sharia, but for administrative reasons. The capital punishment *siyaseten* could be imposed either for administrative and political reasons, whereby Heyd writes "the ruler has the right, if the public interest or *raison d'état* require it, to inflict severe punishment on criminals, who are, according to Islamic law, liable to only to a lighter penalty."⁶⁴³ Since both the authority to inflict and invoke this capital punishment was retained by the sultan, the official addressee of the petitions penned by the Zirki beys was not the local or

⁶⁴⁰ Eleni Gara, Christoph K. Neumann, and Erdem Kabadayı, "Ottoman Subjects as Political Actors: Historiographical Representations," in *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi*, ed. Eleni Gara, Christoph K. Neumann, and Erdem Kabadayı (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2011), 31-2.

⁶⁴¹ However, the elite language was entirely for tactical reasons, where a minor mistake in an officially authorised language of complaint cost petitioners their case. Despite the language of the ruling classes, petitions still could defend the interests of the underclasses by the concrete projects of petitioners. Lex Heerma van Voss, "Introduction," in *Petitions in Social History*, ed. Lex Heerma van Voss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 7; Chalcraft, "Engaging the State," 308.

⁶⁴² The recent interest in petitions is mostly confined those addressing local courts. However, it should be noted that local courts were not the only place to where plaintiffs could have applied. In this sense, imperial councils were always open to general and private grievances in the early modern period. For the criticism and importance of provincial and imperial councils, see Ursinus, *Grievance Administration (Şikayet)*, 4ff.

⁶⁴³ Uriel Heyd, *Studies in Old Ottoman Criminal Law* (London: Clarendon Press, 1973), 192.

provincial centres, but the Gate of Felicity. Those convicted of a capital punishment, i.e., exile, due to their rebellion in the past, the emirs would not be welcomed however in imperial offices to which they resorted for dispute resolution.⁶⁴⁴

Conceding in advance that the power of the petition was scarce due to the very fact their fall had been heralded in the official newspaper of the state, the Zirki emirs developed in their own rights different ways of coping with the decrees of the imperial centre. Needless to say, as inhabitants of a city to which they had been exiled, the emirs were aware that the encounter between a petitioner and ruler was heavily asymmetrical and also dialogic, as Chalcraft attributes to Egyptian peasants, in terms of manipulating, contesting and partially redefining official terms.⁶⁴⁵

Starting from the mid-1840s, the Zirki faction started petitioning the Sublime Porte with the overtures on their pardon.⁶⁴⁶ With the claim that their exile had exceeded seven years, which was the standard duration of exile, the Zirki beys asked for their relocation to Diyarbekir agitating their destitution. Though rejected outright by the Ottoman government, once their petitions were backed by the notables of Diyarbekir, the government sought the case with the governor-general of Diyarbekir.⁶⁴⁷ Even though there was no problem with their relocation to Diyarbekir, the governor-general stated, their actual motive was to return to their homelands.⁶⁴⁸ Contrary to the optimistic view of the governor-general, another Ottoman statesman,

⁶⁴⁴ One should be aware that provincial and imperial centres as alternative sites for dispute resolution had existed prior to the nineteenth century on matters not necessarily related with punishment *siyaseten*. For a discussion on these alternative sites in the eighteenth century, see Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society*, 170-88.

⁶⁴⁵ Chalcraft, "Engaging the State," 308.

⁶⁴⁶ What is meant by faction is close to the joint household system. Cuno discusses a tendency on the part of the nineteenth century rural notables to form joint households. Particularly, these families were distinguished from other village families by their possession of wealth together with power. Kenneth M. Cuno, "Joint Family Households and Rural Notables in 19th-Century Egypt," *ibid.* 27, no. 4 (1995): 485-7. See also, Doumani, *Family History in the Middle East: Household, Property, and Gender*.

⁶⁴⁷ BOA. C. DH. 249/12449, 29 Cemaziyelahir 1260 (16 July 1844).

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

referring to the current turmoil Bedir Khan had brought about, made the return of the emirs conditional on the full organisation of the Anatolian Imperial Army and the provision of significant armed forces in the region.⁶⁴⁹

No matter how asymmetrical the encounter between the Porte and the Zirki family in Edirne was, the actual opposition on behalf of the family came following the imperial order decreeing their further exile to Silistra, a town in northern Bulgaria, for settlement. In this plan of forced settlement, the Sublime Porte also planned to cut the stipends the Zirki family had been granted for good.⁶⁵⁰ Against this challenge, in a petition signed by all of the adult males of the family, the Zirki beys opposed the decree by justifying their habitation in Edirne for the previous ten years and their landed property and business affairs and adding also that they had become regular inhabitants (*yerli hükmüne girilmiş*) of the city by marriages. In addition to protection of their wealth, their struggle was one given for the status. By explicitly stating any kind of agricultural practice, the Zirki beys were by no means interested in learning techniques of agriculture.⁶⁵¹ The discourse the emirs developed on their habitation in Edirne, however, was only a political move for it would be reversed not long after. Following the opposition, only Mirza Ağa, who was not a member of the family but the chief of the Silvanlı tribe, was exiled to and settled in Silistra.

The decisive politics the Zirki emirs developed in the 1840s by means of petitions also continued in the aftermath of a cut in their annual stipends. Following the decrease in revenues of the escheated yurtluk-ocaklık lands in 1846, the Sublime

⁶⁴⁹ BOA. A. MKT. 19/27, 27 Zilhicce 1260 (7 January 1845).

⁶⁵⁰ The reward of the forced settlement was a lump-sum payment of three-month stipend for the one last time. BOA. İ. DH. 103/5217, 27 Cemaziyelevvel 1261 (3 June 1845).

⁶⁵¹ Of course, this fact was stated in a deferential way where the beys kindly indicated that they were not capable of learning agricultural practices (*zirâ`at usulünü bilmediğimize ve öğrenmeğe kabiliyetimiz olmadığına*). The petition was signed by Receb Bey, Said Bey, Eyüb Bey, Şerif Bey, Esad Bey, Mîr Bedirhan, Mîr Behram, Mîr Şerif, Mîr Selim, and Mîr Faris. Ibid.

Porte resorted to a consequent decrease in amounts of the stipends of the emirs.⁶⁵²

The decrease, similar to the policy of forced settlement, was met by strong opposition from the Zirki beys in Edirne. In distress, they claimed that they were 124 people as a family and asked how they were supposed to manage on 4,000 guruşes even when it had already been difficult with the original stipend exceeding 15,000 guruşes.⁶⁵³ The emirs were also frustrated that this decrease had followed their request for an increase in their annual stipends which they submitted as a petition to the Sultan during his visit in Edirne in 1846.⁶⁵⁴ In order to refute the decrease in revenues, the beys also indicated that only seven malikâne and maktû'âts possessed by three brothers annually exceeded 50,000 guruşes, the amount the Porte had set as the revenue accrued for the entire confiscated property.⁶⁵⁵

Regardless of the truth, this petition was just one of the example among others which could have comprised of rumour, intrigues, fictional accounts, and veiled personal agendas. Rather than their face-values, the question of how local administrators, governors, or the imperial government reacted to these petitions and sought to tell truth from fiction can demonstrate the extent of the Ottoman government for ascertaining the truth however imperfect it was.⁶⁵⁶ As the Sublime Porte discussed the request of the emirs, which was the restoration of the stipends to its original value of 15,000 guruşes, it was not denied outright to ascertain the

⁶⁵² BOA. A. MKT. 41/33, 26 Rebiülevvel 1262 (24 March 1846).

⁶⁵³ The petitioners included, all their titles as *mîrs* (emir in Persian and Kurdish) Receb, Said, Bedirhan, Behram, Eyüb, Şerif, Selim, Faris, Şerif, Haydar. The file included also two other petitions of the emirs. BOA. İ. DH. 99/2124, 10 Receb 1263 (24 June 1847).

⁶⁵⁴ For the Rumelian Journey of Abdülmecid, see Efendi, *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lûtfi Efendi Tarihi*, VI-VII-VIII, 1218-22.

⁶⁵⁵ According to the Registry, the exact amount the property generated was 54,134 guruşes. The emirs, however, argued that their property in Diyarbekir would annually bring approximately three or hundred *keses*, i.e., 150,000 or 200,000 guruşes. BOA. İ. DH. 99/2124, 10 Receb 1263 (24 June 1847).

⁶⁵⁶ Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 193-4.

possibility of truth.⁶⁵⁷ Considering the destitution of the exiled family, the Supreme Council provided the family with a two-month payment of 500 guruşes in addition to their current stipend as the members of the council was aware that the said increase would not affect the Treasury since the payment was relocated from the revenues generated by the yurtluk-ocaklık property.⁶⁵⁸

Partly due to their previous prestige in the eye of the Ottoman government and partly due to the success of the politics of petitioning, the Zirki beys in Edirne had successfully challenged the Ottoman moves. The success, while it was evident for a matter affecting the entire family, was not decisive in terms of individual petitions. Under the pretext of settling some debts, Bedirhan Bey did petition the government for a conditional return to his homeland for three months. Following the statement of being not able to settle a debt he had credited to a non-Muslim in Diyarbekir, Bedirhan Bey requested a 91-day permit to Diyarbekir.⁶⁵⁹ Rejected, the bey was advised either to settle the debt by correspondence or delegate a proxy in Diyarbekir.⁶⁶⁰ His brother with similar requests two years later received the same response.⁶⁶¹

Presenting the unsettled debts he had in Diyarbekir, Bedirhan Bey petitioned the government with the same motive one year later.⁶⁶² In his petition, Bedirhan Bey paid the utmost attention to the delicate discourse of petitioning when he made references to the earlier practices other members of the family had enjoyed. Remarking his brother Behram Bey's and Mirza Agha's temporary licenses to visit

⁶⁵⁷ BOA. A. MKT. 89/60, 29 Receb 1263 (13 July 1847).

⁶⁵⁸ The ultimate amount of stipends was tied to the financial investigation to be carried out in Diyarbekir, with which the members believed that the revenues would be far higher than the current one. BOA. İ. DH. 99/2124, 10 Receb 1263 (24 June 1847)

⁶⁵⁹ BOA. MVL. 77/5, 20 Şaban 1265 (11 July 1849).

⁶⁶⁰ BOA. MVL. 80/17, 1 Zilhicce 1265 (18 October 1849).

⁶⁶¹ For the petitions of Behram Bey, see BOA. MVL. 242/19, 16 Zilhicce 1267 (12 October 1851); BOA. MVL. 245/11, 11 Safer 1268 (6 December 1851).

⁶⁶² Procedurally, Bedirhan Bey's request would be investigated in the relevant local council, Diyarbekir. BOA. A. MKT. UM. 120/41, 25 Rebiülevvel 1269 (6 January 1853).

Diyarbakir as a precedent, Bedirhan Bey probably wanted to ease off the imperial order prohibiting the family members leave Edirne under any conditions whatsoever. In this politics of petition, the emirs in order to reach their ends employed whatever useful in the negotiation with the state. Despite the denial of their requests, the emirs did not give up petitioning the government.⁶⁶³ Though the ulterior motive of the entire petitions the Zirki beys sent to the Porte is not clear, most of them can be said to be aimed at improving their hand with respect to their negotiation with the state.

Despite the generic discourse referring to their distress and destitution, most members of the Zirki family succeeded at establishing a sound economic base in Edirne. As they, contrary to the very discourse of their most petitions, had demonstrated the extent of their financial wealth in Edirne while opposing the forced settlement plan of the Ottoman government, the wealth enjoyed by the Zirki faction could be a reinforcing argument supporting their claim vis-à-vis the Sublime Porte. As a result of the on-going petitions of the emirs with regards to improvement in their stipends, the investigation carried out by the Porte revealed the fact of the habitation of the Zirki family in Edirne.

Receb Bey's family, with those of his brothers Behram and Bedirhan Bey, seemed to have maintained their wellbeing, yet not comparably to their wealth in their homelands. The latter family, the investigations revealed, maintained their living by tax-farming (*iltizâmcılık*la geçinip). As a further extension of their network in Edirne Bedirhan Bey's family in addition to Timur Bey's family and his son Halef Bey's family occasionally entered tax-farm partnerships with Cezzar Mustafa Bey, a prominent tax farmer in Edirne region.⁶⁶⁴

⁶⁶³ Bedirhan Bey's request was directed to the governor of Kurdistan, who found some reservations on the matter. BOA. MVL. 254/106, 17 Rebiülahir 1269 (28 January 1853).

⁶⁶⁴ Mustafa Cezzar's business partnerships were not confined to Edirne. In 1863-4, he farmed the tithe in Lom, Oriakhovo, Berkovitsa, and Vratsa, which are in the fertile area between the Danube

Table 11. Annual Stipends and Property of the Zirki Family in Edirne, circa 1860

Family	Monthly Stipend	Property and Revenues (guruşes)
<i>Receb Bey Family</i>		
Zeynep Hanım, wife	300	A residence close to the Government Office (40~50,000) A çiftlik in the village of İsmailce-i Kebir One-acre vineyard (800~900) Land in the village of Koca Yakublu (4,000)
Yusuf Bey, son	550	
Nuri Bey, son	550	
Seyfeddin Bey	550	
Mecid Bey, son deceased	550	
<i>Receb Beyzâde Selim Bey's Family</i>		
Delir Hanım, wife	203,10	A residence in Edirne (30~40,000)
Ahmed Bey, son	300	Paid for his service for Receb Bey's sons' tax farms
Murad Bey, son	200	
Adile Hanım, daughter	203,10	
Kudret Hanım, daughter	0	
<i>Behram Bey Family</i>		
Behram Bey	400	A residence with a garden in Edirne (60,000)
Esbiye Hanım, wife	200	
Haydar Bey, son	400	Annually undertakes 60~100,000-guruş tax farm contracts
Hüsnü Bey, son	350	
İbrahim Bey, grandson	225	
Nikab Hanım, daughter	150	
Zeyneb Hanım	150	
Hadiye Hanım	150	
<i>Bedirhan Bey Family</i>		
Bedirhan Bey	300	A residence in Edirne (50~60,000) Three-acre vineyard in Kurunlar (?) Ridge (3,000)
Ayşe Hanım, wife	200	
Faris Bey, son	400	Used to possess 300~500 guruş in cash, now lost
Tayfur Bey, son	300	Three-acre vineyard (4~5,000) Annually undertakes 300~500-guruş-tax farm contracts
Hamid Bey, Tahir Bey's son	100	
Tahir Bey, son	300	A saddlery shop (50~60,000) A stone residence (50~60,000) Three-acre-vineyard in Çifteçeşme (2,000) Annually undertakes 500~600,000-guruş tax farm contracts
Mustafa Bey	250	Undertakes tax farm contracts
<i>Bedirhan Beyzâde Şerif Bey Family</i>		
Fatma Hanım, wife	150	A residence (15,000)
Mehmed Bey, younger son	125	
Mehmed Bey, elder son	50	In service of Tayfur Bey
Salim Bey, son	0	
<i>Timur Bey Family</i>		

River and the Balkan Mountain, with Nikola Tsvetkoğlu of Svishtov, another active tax farmer. Evgenia Davidova, *Balkan Transitions to Modernity and Nation-States: Through the Eyes of Three Generations of Merchants (1780s-1890s)* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 59.

Ali Şerif Bey, son	500	A çiftlik in the village of Bağçeli (100,000) A residence in Edirne (100,000)
Fatımatu'z-Zehra Hanım, daughter	160	
Azmiye Hanım, daughter	150	
Lut (Lobud) Bey, son	460	A residence in Edirne (10,000) A çiftlik in Bağçeli (40,000) Annually undertakes 1,000,000-guruş tax farm contracts
<i>Timur Beyzâde Halef Bey Family</i>		
Halef Bey	500	A residence in Edirne (30~40,000) A vineyard (2~3,000) Annually undertakes 150~200,000-guruş tax farm contracts
Vesile Hanım, mother	100	
Zeliha Hanım, sister	180	
<i>Timur Beyzâde Eyüb Bey Family</i>		
Sayfiye Hanım, wife	100	A residence in Edirne (15,000) A vineyard (2,000)
Abdi Bey, son	200	Serves in the Reserve Army
...Reşid Bey, son	120	
Hüsnü Bey, son	120	
Reşid Bey, son	120	
Timur Bey, son	125	
<i>Ahmed Beyzâde Melik Bey Family</i>		
Melik Bey	150	A residence in Edirne (30~40,000)
Hafize Hanım, daughter	250	Two-acre vineyard (2,000)
<i>Ahmed Beyzâde Selim Bey Family</i>		
Zeyba (?) Hanım, wife	40	A residence in Edirne (3~5,000)
Behiye Hanım, daughter	80	(Married to Hüsnü Bey)
<i>Halil Beyzade Halil Bey Family</i>		
Kafiye Hanım, daughter	40	A residence in Edirne (3~4,000)
Zehra Hanım, mother	0	
Hamza Beyzâde Mehmed Said Bey	300	Annually undertakes 30~40,000-guruş tax farm contracts
Şöhret Hanım, wife of the late Receb Beyzâde Esad Bey	100	A residence in Edirne (30~40,000)

Source: BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 3.

Individual petitions also addressed the financial distress of the petitioners apart from the general wellbeing of the Zirki family. For instance, Lobud Bey, who had fallen into the red after the tax-farm for the silk tithe, asked for the annulment of his contract, but to no avail.⁶⁶⁵ His debt amounting to 707,000 guruşes; however, would soon lead him and his family to destitution. With the imminent threat of confiscation

⁶⁶⁵ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 527/81, 23 Cemaziyelahir 1278 (26 December 1861).

in return for the debt, Lobud Bey and his partner and brother Şerif Bey petitioned the government.

According to the claims of the brothers, they had been advised by Tahir Efendi, the accountant of Edirne, sons of Süleyman Pasha, the governor, and a few notables during a meeting in their residences to undertake the said tithe farm of silk. The meeting ended with Lobud Bey undertaking the tax-farm contract and his brother becoming his guarantor.⁶⁶⁶ The next day it appeared that the revenues associated with the tax-farm contract would not yield even the half of the amount the brothers undertook, nearly 1,600,000 guruşes. In their petition, the brothers complained that they had not been spared whereas the debt of Mustafa Cezzar Bey, who had accrued a similar loss for the same contract for the next year, had been turned into the treasury bills (*kâ'imeye tahvili*).⁶⁶⁷ Even though the brothers accused some local notables of malice (*garez ve nefsanîyet*), the debt remained the same.⁶⁶⁸ Notwithstanding the petitions asking for the return of Şerif Bey's residence and çiftlik, the property in question was sold.⁶⁶⁹

By politics of petitioning, the Zirki family in Edirne succeeded at contesting and redefining the official terms dictated by the Ottoman government. Despite the occasional denials, the success underlying the politics of petitioning was the determination the Zirki family demonstrated which led an Ottoman bureaucrat to state their "constant complaint of these men on the excess of the revenues of their

⁶⁶⁶ BOA. MVL. 441/135, 29 Şevval 1280 (7 April 1864).

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁸ Brothers paid particular attention to keep the accountant and the governor away from malice. It appears that it was the latter's departure which complicated the affair. Ibid.

⁶⁶⁹ BOA. MVL. 443/108, 4 Muharrem 1281 (9 June 1864); BOA. MVL. 447/81, 15 Rebiülevvel 1281 (18 August 1864). Even though the family of Timur Bey followed the matter and went to Istanbul, the verdict did not change. Furthermore, their request of compensation for the expenses they incurred for the travel from Edirne to Istanbul was denied. BOA. MVL. 453/63, 19 Rebiülahir 1281 (21 September 1864); BOA. MVL. 1009/24, 28 Cemaziyelevvel 1281 (29 October 1864).

property confiscated and the insufficiency of their stipends.”⁶⁷⁰ While the individual petitions despite their number did not succeed in receiving in their contents, the Zirki beys in Edirne maintained the politics they had vis-à-vis the Ottoman government by means of petitions. Particularly, Bedirhan and Behram Beys, to lead the Zirki family in Edirne, did not hesitate to manipulate and contest the official stance by their frequently repeated petitions with regards to their motivations. While the political tone of petitions in the 1840s was defensive in nature, the contestation gradually turned into partial definition of their own claims awkwardly contrasting with that of the State. With abrupt changes in their discourses, most important of which was their becoming habitants of Edirne, the political struggle of the emirs would assert their own demands.

Petitions for Pardon and the Restoration of Property

Started as a defensive reaction against the decrees of the Ottoman government, the petitions the Zirki family penned in 1850s gradually voiced the further their demands in negotiations vis-à-vis the Sublime Porte. The continuous petitions sent by the Zirki emirs in the 1850's can be said mostly to have been preoccupied with their pardons of their acts per se. Particularly, the emirs asked for three things in their petitions; their pardon, a review of their stipends, and a claim on the lands they had once possessed. Penning the petitions, the Zirki beys usually complained of the distress to which they were subjected far from their home. In the late 1840s, the individuals of the family in various ways sought to be pardoned and to be relocated in the empire in

⁶⁷⁰ BOA. MVL. 990/28, 30 Muharrem 1281 (5 July 1864).

different ways apart from the petitions asking for increases in their stipends in the early 1850s.

The terms of negotiations with the Ottoman state had continued with the individual complaints and favours. For instance, Faris Bey, Bedirhan Bey's son, who had succeeded at materialising such an individual pardon had penned down a few petitions associated with his employment. In a petition he wrote in 1850, he investigated the request he had made in 1845 for a travel visa (*mürûr tezkiresi*) for his employment under the service of Kamil Pash.⁶⁷¹ His claim that there had been an imperial order (*emirname-yi sâmî*) on the matter going back five years hints at the possibility of his rejection for the position. However, that was not the case. Through the petitions he wrote, he succeeded in being pardoned to a certain extent by being incorporated to the Ottoman bureaucracy. After his service for Kâmil Pasha in Bosnia, this time he did complain about being unemployed.⁶⁷²

Presumably as a means of thwarting their exile decree, these kinds of petitions did not end as the Zirki beys expected, contrary to the success of Faris Bey. Incorporation to the Ottoman bureaucracy as an official, however, did not seem to be the ultimate end of Faris Bey. Starting from the 1850s, the Zirki emirs' struggle for the property they claimed turned into another field of politics of petitioning. Following the first rejection by the Ottoman government on that matter, Faris Bey complained about the debts and expenses he had incurred, finally asking for the office (*müdirlik*) of Dimetoka in Edirne province.⁶⁷³ Having presented another petition asking for an office, Faris Bey seemed however to have turned down the grant after he had been heard.

⁶⁷¹ BOA. MVL. 95/89, 25 Zilhicce 1266 (1 November 1850).

⁶⁷² BOA. MVL. 109/8, 10 Safer 1268 (5 December 1851).

⁶⁷³ According to his claims, Faris Bey, probably with his father and uncle, had incurred expenses around thirty to forty thousand gurus and debts around five to ten thousand. BOA. MVL. 122/8, 7 Zilhicce 1268 (22 September 1852).

It is stated to the author of the petition but he did not want grant (*teveccüh*) this year but rather asked for a countenance letter (*teveccühnâme*) that would address his highness, the governor of Diyarbekir, in order to be favoured with the office of district of Hazro, in the province of Diyarbekir.⁶⁷⁴

Even though there is no information with regards to his request, it seems like his petition did go unheeded because not later than a couple of months, Faris Bey asked to be employed under the service of a certain Abbas Pasha deployed in Cairo.⁶⁷⁵

While Faris Bey was considered for an office in Rumelia, their politics of petitioning the government continued.⁶⁷⁶ The politics they carried out by petitions gradually went beyond the requests necessarily related to their pardons. As the case of Faris Bey's demonstrates, the Zirki beys manipulated their states of being in order to negotiate their exile and the restoration of the property. While their state of being was brought forward in order to justify their requests, their petitions had the ultimate end of accomplishing their pardons and consequently the restoration of wealth to which they had been entitled before the exile.

Since the petitions implicitly bore the underlying faith invested in the legitimacy of Ottoman rule, in return "(t)he entwined concepts of justice and protection, celebrated in the well-known 'circle of justice,' were the most important legitimizing principles of Ottoman rule."⁶⁷⁷ In this context, the petitionary struggle of the Zirki emirs was not doomed to failure at all times. For instance, Mirza Agha's

⁶⁷⁴ The original reads "*sâhib-i istidâ'ya ifâde olundukda bu sene tarafına teveccüh istemeyüb Diyarbekir eyâleti dâhilinde Hazro'dan kazâsı müdirliğiyle kayırılmasına dâ'ir Diyarbekir vâlisi paşa hazretlerine bir küt'a teveccühnâme istemekde bulunduğ.*" BOA. MVL. 122/50, 23 Zilhicce 1268 (8 October 1852).

⁶⁷⁵ BOA. MVL. 125/48, 24 Muharrem 1269 (7 November 1852).

⁶⁷⁶ It was not only Faris Bey who succeeded at becoming a functionary of the empire. Considering the benefits he could offer for the army in Baghdad, the governor-general of Imperial Corps of Hejaz and Iraq helped Şerif Bey to be employed under the governor-general. BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 120/50, 3 Rebiülahir 1274 (21 November 1857).

⁶⁷⁷ Eleni Gara, "Popular Protest and the Limitations of Sultanate Justice," in *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi*, ed. Eleni Gara, Erdem Kabadayı, and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2011), 93. For the origin of the "circle of justice" as self-legitimizing principle in the Ottoman thought, see Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden and New York: E.J. Brill, 1996), 281-99.

request to be permitted to return his homelands, which was employed as an exemplary case by Bedirhan Bey, was granted conditionally for three months, mostly because the tribe leader's request did not have any ulterior motives.⁶⁷⁸ The detoured petitions of the Zirki beys however persisted, especially those of Bedirhan Bey. This time resorting to the legal practices of the Ottoman government, Behram Bey, Bedirhan Bey's brother, argued that he had served the duration of his sentence, stating that he had lived in Edirne for 20 years and asked to be relocated to Damascus. The petition addressed the Supreme Council which directed in turn the case to the governor of Kurdistan for the investigation of the consequences of the possible relocation of the emir and his family in Damascus.⁶⁷⁹ This request was accordingly rejected by the Ottoman state.

The petitions submitted by the Zirki emirs became more politicised in the late 1850s. Even though there is not any information concerning the shift in the language of the petitions, the 20-year sentence might be regarded having been possible grounds. Evidently the term they served in Edirne contributed to the politicised nature of their petitions compared to the earlier decades. That is, the emirs from the late 1850s onwards asked not merely for a review of their stipends, but for their pardon, and subsequently the restoration of the property their ancestors had possessed in Diyarbekir. Of course, the request for the restoration of the property was not straightforward, but rather an addition to the common requests on the revision on the stipends they had been receiving. The requests addressing the Porte and the Sultan were juxtaposed in a sense that the insufficiency of the stipends they had been

⁶⁷⁸ Being in Istanbul, Mirza Agha firstly asked for permission to go to Ruse to see his wife and daughters from whom he would get some money, and then asked for permission to go to Diyarbekir for three months. Accordingly the governor of Kurdistan did not see any harm with his temporary presence in the province. BOA. MVL. 124/89, 2 Safer 1269 (15 November 1852); BOA. A. MKT. UM. 113/48, 2 Safer 1269 (15 November 1852); BOA. MVL. 262/16, 18 Zilhicce 1269 (22 September 1853).

⁶⁷⁹ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 233/96, 16 Şaban 1272 (22 April 1856). For Behram Bey's petition, see BOA. MVL. 172/97, 16 Şaban 1272 (22 April 1856).

receiving were presented as grounds for the restoration of the property to them. As the juxtaposed nature of the petitions grew in both number and frequency in 1850, the petitioners also travelled to the imperial capital for the settlement of the matter.

The problem stemmed from the stipends the Zirki emirs received in proportion to the property the State had appropriated. Having obtained permission, Bedirhan Bey arrived in the imperial capital and asked that he be granted a pardon. In a petition he submitted, he complained about the bureaucratic procedures between several state departments. Initially the petition asking for pardon was directed to the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances, but since the pardon was related to the lands under their possessions, the case was supposed to be investigated by the Council of Finance.

As the following section elaborates, the investigation, which included repeated correspondence among several state departments and the petitions of Bedirhan and Behram Beys, lasted almost three years. In the initial response Bedirhan Bey received, he was told that the matter would be investigated in Diyarbekir. Biding time in Istanbul for six months, Bedirhan Bey finally petitioned the government with regards to the settlement of the matter. The settlement, in his terms, included his pardon and assignment of the revenues their *malikânes*, *yurtluk-ocaklık*, and other property generated to their party.⁶⁸⁰ While the petition was considered null, the emir petitioned the government with the same motives three months later, asking for additional allowance due to his impoverished state. “Considering the distress and hardship in inn rooms, the debts I have incurred, and the approach of the holy Ramadan,” complained Bedirhan Bey, “since me incurring such poverty and misery

⁶⁸⁰ BOA. MVL. 191/92, 18 Zilhicce 1274 (30 July 1858).

in inn rooms is under no circumstances in accordance with his supreme consent.”⁶⁸¹

As the investigation took time much more than expected, the petitions of the two beys were heard in the Ottoman bureaucracy to facilitate the process.⁶⁸²

In various petitions penned during the legal battle, the discourse the emirs, mostly Bedirhan and Behram Beys, constructed oscillated between requests for the restoration of their property and a raise in their stipends otherwise. That was why the two beys introduced various lists of property they claimed to have possessed in Diyarbekir. Also Bedirhan Bey complained that the value of the property out of which they received stipends proportionally had been undervalued with annual revenue of 100,000 guruşes.⁶⁸³ Indicating the survey which had been carried out in Diyarbekir, “some of my property was not mentioned in the aforementioned registry,” grumbled Bedirhan Bey “and some of them had been state property since time immemorial, it is evident that by doing so [they will be after] the idea of cancelling my rights out.”⁶⁸⁴ Provided that he would be able to prove his claim, the bey kindly requested either the restoration of the property or grant of a sufficient amount of stipend for his sustenance.⁶⁸⁵

Bedirhan Bey and Behram Bey, Hüseyin Bey’s sons, thereby took the petition process one step further by turning it into a full-fledged legal case. Even though there is not any information with respect to the investigation carried out in Diyarbekir, the result sent from the province evidently did not please Bedirhan and Behram Beys in Istanbul. There was a discrepancy between the official register and the Zirki emirs’

⁶⁸¹ BOA. MVL. 807/31, 3 Ramazan 1274 (17 April 1858). The dating of the documents is in accordance with the official treatment of the petitions. The controversy between the documents is not misleading for Bedirhan Bey’s references to his stay in Istanbul.

⁶⁸² Upon the beys’ petitions, a correspondence was dispatched to the Ministry of Finance stating settlement of the Zirki family’s case as soon as possible. BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 297/91, 15 Cemaziyelevvel 1276 (10 December 1859).

⁶⁸³ BOA. C. DH. 221/11039, 29 Zilhicce 1255 (4 March 1840). Evidently the document is misdated, since Bedirhan Bey, in the petition itself, makes a past reference to the year 1846.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid.

claims. In order to make their claims on their property, they grounded their legal battle on the insufficiency of the stipends compared to the revenues their confiscated lands might have generated. In order to eliminate any possible wrongdoing that might have happened in Diyarbekir and to be able to receive a raise in their stipends, they submitted an inventory list of the property they claimed to be non-registered.

Table 12. Non-Registered Villages Zirki Beys Claimed to Have Possessed by Means of Glorious Deed

District, Province	Number of Yurtluk-Ocaklık Villages
Tercil, Diyarbekir	17
Hani, Diyarbekir	4
Şark and Garb, ...	6
Behramki, Diyarbekir	5
Silvan, Diyarbekir	2
Savur, Diyarbekir	1
Çermik, Harput	9
Ergani, Harput	15
Total	59

Source: BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 2.

Table 13. Non-Registered Rice Lands and Mills Claimed to be Possessed by the Zirki Beys

Shares of Madrabs possessed by the hükûmet of Tercil	Shares of Mills possessed by the hükûmet of Tercil
Large madrab in Hazro	Half-share of one and two mills in the village Rasû'l-‘ayn
Half-share of a small madrab in Tercil	Two mills in the village Mehmedan, Hani
Half-shares of two madrabs in Mihrani	Half share of a mill in the village Timurhan
One-third share of a madrab in Silvan	One mill in the village Zoğur
Half-shares of two madrabs in Hani	Quarter share of a mill in the village Karakoç
Two-third shares of a madrab in Tercil	
Three-fourth shares of two madrabs in Tercil	
Quarter share of a madrab in Western Diyarbekir	
Total number of madrabs	11
	Total pieces of Mills
	8

Source: BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 2.

As Tables 12 and 13 demonstrate, the discrepancy between the official accounts and the number Bedirhan and Behram Beys claim was evident.⁶⁸⁶ Regardless of that discrepancy, about which the Imperial Registry did not have any

⁶⁸⁶ In addition to the property above, there were additional thirty three timâr villages under their possession. BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 2

kind of record whatsoever, there was another discrepancy between the revenues the confiscated property had generated and the stipends granted to the Zirki faction proportional to the revenues of the property. As this posed a challenging question for the Ottoman finance, it was Bedirhan and Behram Beys who did seize the opportunity to turn the question into their struggle for restoration of their property.

As a culmination of the struggle they had been waging since 1858, Bedirhan Bey petitioned the government on August 9, 1859:

...Twenty four years ago our rebellion occurred as a result of our human nature and by imperial decree we were ordered to reside in Edirne in exile. Regarding the distress we had been suffered up to now as sufficient sentence to our rebellion, imperial grant of the revenues of malikânes, yurtluk-ocaklık villages and our other property we possessed by means of Glorious Deed had been requested two years ago. According to the response the Finance Treasury which investigated and made the records inquired in the countryside (i.e. Diyarbekir), our humble property had not been registered (*dâhil-i defter olmayub*) and [they] had obscured our humble rights; though it was requested that our humble property would be revealed, a correspondence was written from the Council of Accounting to the Supreme Council. However, property of Hüseyin Bey, who had been a fellow of ours in exile, had been imperially granted intact to his sons, and being exiled for twenty four years that we do not see any record whatsoever demonstrating that our humble property were property of the treasury [...] it is humbly requested from his highness that his humble servants be summoned to the Supreme Council [...] be honoured with the sublime pardon of his highness in accordance with the imperial practice similar to precedents, and be allowed to be decreed an imperial grant of our landed property, vineyards, gardens, mills and rice lands and revenues of those are villages as his highness' supreme alms ...⁶⁸⁷

The petitions were no longer guised with ulterior motives, but rather asked for direct restoration of property by appealing to the benevolence and the fairness of the sultan.⁶⁸⁸ From another perspective, the legitimation of the state acts was at a dead end due to the significance difference between the property allegedly possessed once

⁶⁸⁷ BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 13.

⁶⁸⁸ Initially there was also a request for the restoration of the stipends returned to the central treasury following the death of Mecid Bey, a family member. The emirs, however, argued that the stipends of a deceased person should not be returned to the treasury, but rather must be distributed in accordance with the inheritance rules since the revenues were in return for their escheated lands. This practice, which would relegate the case to an ordinary case of inheritance in the late nineteenth century, however, brought about some confusion in the state offices in the 1860s.

by the emirs, who had been functionaries of the imperial state, and the records in the registry. Accordingly, the discrepancy stemming from the surplus revenue associated with the escheated property of Zirki emirs necessitated fine tuning, what Deringil defines as a process “through which the legitimation ideology of the state is promoted and state policy is imposed.”⁶⁸⁹

While the Ottoman Finance departments were preoccupied with the actual states of being of the emirs in Edirne and thus investigated their wealth, the struggle Bedirhan and Behram Beys waged moved beyond prospects of raising their stipends. The most powerful mean for that matter was nothing but petitions. Writing petitions quite frequently, the Zirki emirs participated in the struggle for the restoration of their property.⁶⁹⁰ As Hacı Melik Bey, under false pretences, regarded the claim of Bedirhan Bey which he believed to have been settled in favour of Bedirhan Bey with the restoration of his entire property asked for the same for himself on December 20, 1859.

The petitions were also penned by the wives of the emirs.⁶⁹¹ Albeit with the implicit reference, three women named Hanife, Vesile, and Zeynep, who were members of Eyüb, Timur, and Receb Beys’ families respectively, complained that the yurtluk-ocaklık villages and other property which had been in their possession prior to the order decreeing their residence in Edirne had been left in the province of

⁶⁸⁹ Even though Deringil elaborates these fine tunings including the meticulous inculcation, indoctrination, enticing, frightening, flattering, forbidding, permitting, punishing or rewarding somehow as a defensive measure employed by the Ottoman state in the constant state of crisis especially during the nineteenth century, the term he offers can accommodate the increasing interest the Ottoman polity had in legitimation. Selim Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimization of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1999), 1-15. See also "Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 3 (1991); Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002); "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism, and the Hamidian Regime, 1876-1909," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (2005).

⁶⁹⁰ Eight documents out of 25 were duly-penned and signed petitions which had been combined by the Ottoman bureaucrats for practical reasons in the file BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861).

⁶⁹¹ For a brief information on elite women and law, see Peirce, *Morality Tales*, 161-6.

Diyarbakir and that they could not adapt to the conditions in Edirne (*ab ve havasına imtizac etmeyerek*). Agitating that most of their family had died, the women asked for those who survived to be able to go back to their homelands.⁶⁹² The explanation written on the back of the petition, however, demonstrates the stance of the Ottoman government: “Since replies have been given repeatedly to the owners of the petition, let such response be given again.”⁶⁹³

Table 14. Difference between the Revenues of Escheated Property and the Stipends Granted

Annual Revenues and Stipends	Amount (guruşes.paras)
Gross revenues of registered maktû‘ât, property and etc.	180,071.20
Total of stipends Zirki beys are paid	147,804.20
Difference	32,267.00

Source: BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861), sheet 6.

As the petitions attempting to restore the property in favour of the Zirki emirs continued, so did the investigation of the Ottoman government.⁶⁹⁴ As Table 14 demonstrates, the discrepancy claimed by Bedirhan and Behram Beys was indeed confirmed by the investigation. Several departments involved in the case had successfully managed to stall the emirs. The note at the back of the petition saying “[the matter will become] null after they are replied that a reply will be given after a while,” in which the two beys had referenced to the case of Hüseyin Bey as precedents, was thus a brilliant example.⁶⁹⁵ Against the persistent claims of the emirs, the consensus concluded in the Supreme Council was either their improvement by means of some raise in their stipends granted in return for their confiscated property

⁶⁹² BOA. MVL. 358/2, 19 Ramazan 1276 (10 April 1860).

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁴ Apart from the material in which the claim on property and raise in stipends was discussed in its entirety, there are individual petitions addressing the Ottoman government that range from grants for pardon and otherwise raises in their stipends. For instance, see BOA. MVL. 357/52, 24 Şaban 1276 (17 March 1860); BOA. MVL. 359/106, 26 Zilkade 1276 (15 June 1860); BOA. MVL. 363/82, 29 Safer 1277 (16 September 1860).

⁶⁹⁵ BOA. MVL. 359/106, 26 Zilkade 1276 (15 June 1860).

or the statement that the stipends had not been originally granted in return for the escheated property but as charity (*merhameten*).⁶⁹⁶

Evidently, the Ottoman statesmen employed different solutions with respect to the cases brought before them. Whether the stipends were in return of the escheated property or simply were imperial charity, while the question itself was enigmatic, would start a misunderstanding that would last for the decade. The Ottoman state shifted between the two alternatives depending on the particular circumstances. Apart from the initial response, however, the on-going investigation brought to light some facts contrary to the claims of the Zirki emirs. According to the summary of the Revenue Accountancy, there had been nine extra villages apart from the local registry and there were not any kind of records demonstrating that nearly 40 villages had been under the possession of the said two emirs' family, leaving thus no ground for the initial claims of obscured property and revenue.⁶⁹⁷ Accordingly, the claim that Hüseyin Bey had been restored his property was baseless. Repeating the argument that the stipends were granted as "charity to become means of their sustenance rather than in return for property and mukâta'as escheated," the Treasury stated that it was not entitled to decide on the restoration of property.⁶⁹⁸

However, the significant discrepancy between the revenues associated with the property and the actual stipends granted to the emirs was not disregarded. The Treasury deemed the surplus remaining after deduction of the annual stipends in the accounts inappropriate; the raise in stipends, especially for those without any salaries, was taken into consideration. The officials involved in the case were,

⁶⁹⁶ The original reads: "...zabtolunan emlakına mukâibl ma`âşlarına birer mikdâr şey zammyyla terfiye ve ikdârları ve yâhud ma`âş-ı mezkûr emlak-ı mazbûta mukâbili virilmeyerek merhameten tahsis olunması hasebiyle mumâileyhimâya cevâb i`tâsı..." BOA. İ. MV. 444/19773, 22 Muharrem 1276 (21 August 1859), memorandum from the Supreme Council to the Ministry of Finance.

⁶⁹⁷ BOA. İ. MV. 444/19773, 10 Şevval 1276 (1 May 1860), memorandum from the Ministry of Finance to the Supreme Council.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

however, well aware of the ulterior motives of the emir and did not hesitate to state that “their actual end was the restoration of their escheated property.”⁶⁹⁹ Actually, as this end was found totally unacceptable, the raise in stipends contributed to maintaining the legitimation of the state in addition to eliminating the emirs’ needs and complaints.⁷⁰⁰ The Ottoman state in the meantime developed its own ‘fine tunings’ by granting some of the surplus revenue to the family members in need. While it is repeatedly stated during the investigation that restoration of the property was out of question, an Ottoman statesman made a very definite stance:

...their ulterior motives is nothing but the complete restoration of their escheated property, however restoration and return [of the property] is not appropriate according to the practice and the precedents since the said property had been previously appropriated by the Treasury as a result of their wrongdoing and some amount of stipends had been granted not in return for them but as charity; nevertheless because of their needs and distress, their improvement by means of raising their stipends is in accordance with his Supreme Glory...⁷⁰¹

In the memorandum written to the Ministry of Finance, there was a further financial concern in addition to the political reasons given above. As it was conceded that the property in question had been appropriated as a result of their wrongdoing, the property was stated to have been merged into other revenue sources since a significant amount of time had lapsed following the appropriation.⁷⁰² The correspondence also indicated the glimpse of attention the Ottoman polity paid to its legitimation. As the return of the property was not appropriate and possible by the established order, location, and practice; a raise in their stipend was deemed appropriate as “the surplus of the revenues of the escheated property is obvious.”⁷⁰³

⁶⁹⁹ BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 11 Safer 1277 (29 August 1860), memorandum from the Supreme Council to the Ministry of Finance.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁰¹ BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 7 Şaban 1277 (18 February 1861), the minute of the Supreme Council.

⁷⁰² BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 125/89, 29 Şaban 1277 (12 March 1861).

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

The raise in stipends was considered for the ones who were in need of demonstrating the delicate fine tuning of the Ottoman administration.

Bedirhan Bey's sons and relatives were regarded by the imperial government as quite wealthy, whereas the emir himself was found to be old and in need. As the correspondence continued between the different departments, Bedirhan and Behram Beys' prospects of accomplishing their ends weakened. The entire struggle for the restoration of property, along with raises in the amount of stipends for the ones in need, brought about a 250 gurus increase in Bedirhan Bey's monthly stipend.⁷⁰⁴ As the memorandum was returned to the Ministry of Finance, the Council made a note to ensure that the emirs would be informed that the return of the escheated property would not be possible.⁷⁰⁵

Despite the definite character of the rejection the Ottoman government conveyed to the claimants of the Zirki beys, the petitionary struggle persisted. Having served 20 years in exile, Bedirhan and Behram Beys accelerated their struggle against the Ottoman government. This struggle was not confined to the Zirki emirs. Discussing the case of Bedirhan Pashazades, Yener Koç indicates that other Kurdish, Turkish, and Arab notable families who had had their property confiscated in the early years of the Tanzimat asked to be granted of stipends in return for the escheated lands.⁷⁰⁶ Normally a common struggle for the return of the privileges lost, the case of the Zirki emirs, however, preceded most of their precedents.⁷⁰⁷ Not only

⁷⁰⁴ BOA. MVL. 916/32, 4 Şaban 1277 (15 February 1861); BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 7 Şaban 1277 (18 February 1861), the minute of the Supreme Council.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ In addition to the Bedirhan Pashazades, the Baban dynasty, the beys of Kozan, and the notables of al-Harkoş collectively petitioned the government with regards to the stipends they had been receiving in return for the escheated lands. Koç, "Bedirhan Pashazades," 50. Accordingly, on the matter of taxation, Kurdish notables, i.e. hâkims, employed petitions in order to have a say on the new regulations being established in their locality. On the case of new taxation regime in Palu in the early Tanzimat period, see Özok-Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State," 124 ff.

⁷⁰⁷ The Bedirhan Pashazades started petitioning about the stipends in return for the escheated property in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

due to their early character, but also to their changing discourse, the petitions of the Zirki emirs were distinguished. Contrary to petitions asking for imperial pardon, those of the Zirki beys asked implicitly at first and explicitly later the restoration of their property.

Their claim on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* villages, in this context, benefitted from several tactics deployed against the Ottoman bureaucracy. Firstly, the frequency of petitions was in a sense a weapon to put pressure on the Ottoman government in order to facilitate the process.⁷⁰⁸ It was evident that the emirs knew a great deal about the functioning and the reorganisation of the state mechanism and they attempted to benefit from this ever-expanding bureaucratic state to the utmost extent. Secondly, the emirs' contestation with the Ottoman state went back and forth between two seemingly different ends. On the question of residence in Edirne, the Zirki family heatedly claimed to have been residents of the city against the possibility of forced settlement to another city in 1845. On the other hand, their discourse on residence was turned upside and down with their refusal to adapt to the environment of Edirne once their goals became to return to their homelands. By the same token, presenting auxiliary aims, which was a revision of their stipends according to the current revenues of the lands escheated, was in a sense room for manoeuvring as restoring the property was the primary aim. Such room was necessary since the asymmetry between the parties was unbridgeable. By doing so, the emirs attempted to contest and define their ultimate ends without attracting the wrath of the imperial state.

Lastly, their claims were grounded on the very practice of the state, albeit their abolition. Since the property in question had been granted as *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands to the emirs by imperial decrees in the previous centuries, the petitions asked the

⁷⁰⁸ Bedirhan and Behram Beys submitted three petitions in October 1860, on the first, thirteenth, and eighteenth. BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 20 Şaban 1277 (3 March 1861).

restoration to the original status. Regarding the yurtluk-ocaklık lands as their own property, the two beys reminded the Ottoman state of its own practices since it “had not confiscated [*müsâdere*] any person’s property since 1245 [1829/30].”⁷⁰⁹

In accordance with the past deeds of the empire, submission of previous deeds was a common example. Abdullah Bey, the bey of Palu, had similarly petitioned the government with references to their *mülknâme-yi hümâyûn*, i.e., imperial title, stating that “the Palu villages were under their possession in the form of ownership.”⁷¹⁰ The judgement that the property in question was their own property compared to the claims on revenues associated with the land indicating only possession had offered the Zirki emirs an upper hand in the negotiation they had with the Ottoman state. Notwithstanding the tactics the family deployed, the state officials came up with their own tactics, namely shift between the legal justifications for the stipends granted to the emirs, and maintained to exert control over the petitioners. Albeit with the absence of “popularity” of the protest, the Zirkis’ struggle is brilliantly in accordance with Gara’s formulation:⁷¹¹

...At the same time, the instrumentalization of the concept of sultanic justice by both state and Ottoman subjects created a space for all kinds of popular protest, often against state demands, which were frequently expressed in contentious forms with contested legitimacy. The success or failure of contentious popular protest depended on a structure of power relations that did not remain static but underwent constant negotiation. If protesters did not have enough leverage, their actions might be construed as outright revolt and they would be severely punished.⁷¹²

⁷⁰⁹ BOA. İ. MVL. 444/19773, 27 Rebiülahir 1277 (12 November 1860), petition of Bedirhan and Behram Beys. *Müsâdere*, simply meant the mulcting of an official of his (usually) ill-gotten gains or spoils of office. However, the practice of confiscation had been abolished in 1838. Fatma Müge Göçek, “Muşâdara,” ed. P. Bearman, et al., Second ed., *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Brill Online, 2014), http://www.paulyonline.brill.nl/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/musadara-COM_0804; Tuncay Ögün, “Müsâdere,” in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 32 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2006).

⁷¹⁰ Özok-Gündoğan, “The Making of the Modern Ottoman State,” 172.

⁷¹¹ Despite the recently growing interest in petitions as sources of social history giving voice ‘from below,’ it should be noted that there is very scarce literature on petitions of local notables, who were in the upper echelons compared to peasants, workers, and women, in the Ottoman context.

⁷¹² Gara, “Popular Protest and the Limitations of Sultanic Justice,” 103.

The failure was certain for Bedirhan and Behram Beys at the end of the first round. However, the protest on the side of the Zirki emirs continued depending on the power relations. Away from being static, the change in those relations would open new possibilities for the emirs in exile.

Imperial Pardon

The persistent petitioning Bedirhan and Behram Beys realised and the following defeat did not translate into a failure for the Zirki emirs. Rather, the petitions continued arriving at the Porte with decreasing references to the yurtluk-ocaklık lands. Even though the two beys claimed their requests in the name of the Zirki emirs, there was probably factionalism among the Zirki emirs. Against several petitions penned by Bedirhan and Behram Beys in addition to Melik Bey, who was a relative of the two, the rest of the family, that is descendants of Receb, Timur, and Eyüb Beys, did not seem to have participated in the struggle the former two beys waged.

That did not, however, mean that the other factions were entirely silent. Despite the deaths of Receb, Timur, and Eyüb Beys, their wives somehow started a campaign that differed from that of the two beys. The wives of the deceased emirs complained, in several petitions, that their sons would be conscripted. That their sons would be conscripted, however, meant much more than young men joining the army. The women, therefore, warned the Ottoman government that *kura-yı şer'îye*, i.e., conscription by lot, was not applicable to the exiled. Its application would regard the young men in question, consequently their families, as residents of Edirne (*yerlû*

hükümünde tutarak).⁷¹³ In addition to the imminent threat the conscription matter constituted for the family, the women employed the matter as a pretext for their pardon. Not receiving any reply from the state, Zeyneb, Vesile, and Hanife petitioned the government again three months later, asking for the exception from conscription for their sons.⁷¹⁴ In another individual petition by Hanife Hanım, the wife of the late Eyüb Bey, she once again repeated the possibility of exception for her son, Abdi Bey.⁷¹⁵ As the imperial pardon was voiced at the beginning of the petitionary struggle, the conscription issue overwhelmed the process.⁷¹⁶ Still, the request at attaining imperial pardon started to be voiced among the exiled family in Edirne.

Nearly six months later, the other faction actually intensified the struggle given for the grant of imperial pardon. Having agitated that he had no one living in Edirne, but one daughter residing in Diyarbakir, Melik Bey, Hüseyin Bey's brother, asked to be pardoned by the sultan and promised to spend his remaining years in the service of his highness.⁷¹⁷ The request was also backed by the administration in Lice when the council of Lice, the müdir of which was İsmail Hakkı Efendi, testified to the good nature of the bey and stated that he had been accidentally subject to the

⁷¹³ BOA. MVL. 814/141, 7 Safer 1275 (16 September 1858), petition of Zeyneb, Vesile, and Hanife.

⁷¹⁴ BOA. MVL. 819/53, 15 Cemaziyelahir 1275 (20 January 1859), petition of Zeyneb, Vesile, and Hanife.

⁷¹⁵ BOA. MVL. 898/4, 8 Şaban 1275 (13 March 1859), petition of Hanife Hanım. As the petitions of women, like other examples, were worded in order to raise empathy, humble phrases were expectedly humbler than males in the given paternalistic structure of society. Phrasing petitions with references to their husbands and to potential losses of their sons is in this sense was beyond the Ottoman realm. Cf. Marcia Schmidt Blaine, "The Power of Petitions: Women and the New Hampshire Provincial Government, 1695-1770," in *Petitions in Social History*, ed. Lex Heerma van Voss (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁷¹⁶ The fate of the men to be conscripted, however, remains unknown. Despite the order from the Headquarters of the Commander in Chief stating that the said young men cannot be excepted from conscription due to their residence in Edirne more than 20 years, the governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Edirne requests asked to be informed what to do upon the repeated petitions of the three women. BOA. MVL. 912/19, 27 Şaban 1276 (20 March 1860).

⁷¹⁷ BOA. MVL. 363/82, 29 Safer 1277 (16 September 1860).

wrath of Reshid Pasha.⁷¹⁸ The process took much longer than expected due to the failure to identify Hacı Melik Bey in the original imperial decree enforcing the exile of the Zirki emirs in 1833.⁷¹⁹ As there were discussions with regards to the pardon of the bey, the enthronement of Abdülaziz changed the tides in favour of the bey.⁷²⁰ The pardon, due to its very own nature, had been a prerogative of the sultan since the capital punishment was accordingly not based on sharia, but on the sultan's will.⁷²¹ Accordingly, the Supreme Council took the bey's case into account and granted an imperial pardon to return his homelands.⁷²²

Melik Bey's case was important because of an exemplary precedent which constituted for the remaining emirs in exile. The Zirki emirs followed suit and this time appealed to the governor of Edirne who wrote:

Since most of the beys deceased leaving only a few of them behind who are on the verge of death while the remaining ones are mostly children and women and they give the strong impression that they will follow good-mannered acts considering that they already suffer currently from hardship and distress, they are found worthy of the highest mercy of his highness' sultanate.⁷²³

The discussion in the Sublime Porte was likewise:

...because of the current distress of those demonstrated to be alive apart from the deceased and since the administrative reasons which

⁷¹⁸ BOA. İ. MVL. 458/20595, 27 Cemaziyelevvel 1277 (11 December 1860), memorandum of the council of Lice.

⁷¹⁹ At the beginning of the investigation upon Melik Bey's petition, the order decreeing his exile to Edirne was not found in the Sublime Porte. The investigation was continued in order to find out whether he was a relative of the eight Zirki emirs. As it was found out that the absence of Melik Bey in the order was due to the collective writing of the names, it was therefore understood that he was a relative of Behram Bey and that his actual name was Yusuf. Once the confusion regarding the name was resolved, a local investigation was carried out to see whether there would be any adversary state in his locality. As mentioned above, the affirmative statement coming from the council of his homeland facilitated the bey's pardon. Once the pardon was realised, as a procedure, the origin of his stipends were changed from the revenues of Edirne to that of the province of Kurdistan. BOA. A. MKT. UM. 462/45, 8 Ramazan 1277 (20 March 1861); BOA. MVL. 369/31, 16 Zilkade 1277 (26 May 1861); BOA. A. MKT. UM. 499/32, 10 Rebiülevvel 1278 (15 September 1861); BOA. A. MKT. MVL. 139/63, 13 Receb 1278 (14 January 1862).

⁷²⁰ The enthronement of Abdülaziz took place on June 26, 1861. Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi* vol. 10 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1988).

⁷²¹ Heyd, *Studies in Old Ottoman*, 192.

⁷²² BOA. İ. MVL. 458/20595, 8 Cemaziyelahir 1278 (11 December 1861).

⁷²³ BOA. İ. MVL. 475/21520, 21 Muharrem 1279 (19 July 1862), from the governor of Edirne to the Sublime Porte.

necessitated their exile had been null and void as time passed by and accordingly pardons of some men who had been exiled at that date was realised, there is no inconvenience in terms of administration and affairs [*mülken ve maslahaten*] for them to be worthy of the sublime pardon...⁷²⁴

Provided that they would be preoccupied with their own business, meaning that they would be away from involvement with political acts like before, the Zirki emirs were pardoned by the Ottoman state. While the classical term in the Ottoman legal practice concerning the criminal acts with which the Zirki emirs charged was noted as *siyaseten*, the basic functions of punishment had been relatively the same with the change in discourses meaning capital punishment *siyaseten* had been replaced with *mülken and maslahaten* in the nineteenth century. In other words, the principle underlying the penalty *siyaseten* had also been employed “as an administrative (and not a judicial) measure”⁷²⁵ The reasoning which underlined the change in the administrative grounds leading to the exile indicates such an employment of the capital punishment and consequently the pardon procedure. The petitions of the Zirki emirs continued when, not necessarily a Zirki bey but rather an aide of the faction, Mirza Agha of the Silvan tribe and his cousin Selim Bey, who had been ordered to reside in Ruse, asked for their inclusion in the imperial pardon granted to the Zirki emirs.⁷²⁶

As a result of the imperial pardon, the equilibrium between the state and the petitioners changed drastically. In the politics of petitioning, by which the opposing parties defined, manipulated, and redefined their interests vis-à-vis those of the other party, the actual ends of the parties had been constantly negotiated on almost a daily basis. As the practice of negotiation had been in place in the previous centuries, the

⁷²⁴ BOA. İ. MVL. 475/21520, 17 Rebiülahir 1279 (12 October 1862).

⁷²⁵ Referring to the arbitrary and unrestrained character of the punishment, Heyd entertains the notion of capital punishment *siyaseten* as a part of the Ottoman decline. If one disregards the discourse associated with the decline paradigm, however, it is evident that the capital punishment for the Zirki emirs, at the very least, was unrestrained. Heyd, *Studies in Old Ottoman*, 194-5.

⁷²⁶ BOA. İ. MVL. 482/21877, 17 Ramazan 1279 (8 March 1863).

politics of petitioning can be said to have occupied a role in the construction of the bureaucratic apparatus itself.⁷²⁷ On the one hand, the Ottoman state offices regarded the emirs' banishment as no longer useful due to having consolidated the administrative order in the homelands from which the beys had been expelled and the Zirki emirs had eliminated one of the grave obstacles with their political struggle with a view to restoring their property on the other hand.

Despite the solid stance of the Ottoman offices, it should be noted that the significance discrepancy between the stipends granted to the beys and actual revenues the lands in question generated had posed a serious matter in terms of Ottoman legislation. Having given some concessions to the petitioners, the Ottoman government, however, maintained its own stance by shifting between two different discourses in order to cope with the claims of the Zirki emirs. In order to resolve the dispute accordingly, the emirs interchangeably brought forward claims not necessarily related to the restoration of property at first sight.

The imperial pardon, therefore, must be regarded in this context whereby the petitionary struggle of the beys with their explicit and ulterior motives was received, altered, and at times faltered in several Ottoman offices. As a struggle in which many actors participated on behalf of the two opposing parties, the resulting pardon was therefore nothing but a product of the contested negotiation albeit with the apparent contribution of the enthronement of the new sultan. The pardon, however, did not necessarily translate into a conclusion for the opposing parties. Rather, improving the hands of the exiled emirs with respect to their claims on the property in question, the

⁷²⁷ As Lafi rightly argues that these negotiations constituted the imperial power of the Ottoman state by stating that the latter was "the fruit of progressive sedimentation resulting from thousands of micro-mediations," however, her following statement that "[t]he result was and old regime, with a particular nature," is quite misleading due to the overemphasis she puts on the difference between the old regime and the consequent new regime. Nora Lafi, "Petitions and Accomodating Urban Change in the Ottoman Empire," in *Istanbul as Seen from a Distance*, ed. Elisabeth Özdalga, Sait Özervarlı, and Feryal Tansuğ (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 2011), 75-6.

Zirki beys had carried their struggle to a new level where their claims on the property once under their possession would be regarded as more legitimate than they had prior to their pardon. In other words, thanks to the the pardon granted by the sultan, the Zirki beys maintained their politics of petitioning in order to materialise their previous ulterior motives, restoration of the property.

With setbacks in their struggle, in a petition penned by Bedirhan Bey and his sons Tayfur and Mustafa Beys on July 10, 1264, the beys bitterly complained about the failure to recieve their property despite the imperial pardon. Having comprehended that the restoration (*bahş ve ihsan*) of their property would not take place despite their pardon (*ıtlâk*), they reverted to a previous level of asking for a raise in their stipends, complaining that on the current amount they could not meet the expenses of three households.⁷²⁸ While the struggle for the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in addition to other property was to continue without undergoing a significant interruption, the Ottoman statecraft was about to bring about a highly contested legal reform in the homelands of the exiled emirs. The legal reform in question was the Land Code of 1858, which introduced drastic changes in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, the lands once ruled by the Zirki emirs. They would be the contested this time by the dynasty on the basis of the concept of modern private property.

Conclusion

Following the exile to Edirne, the Zirki emirs despite the loss of political and economic power maintained their politics vis-à-vis the central state. As a part of the politics of the notables, the emirs in Edirne mostly employed petitions to protect their

⁷²⁸ BOA. MVL. 447/56, 5 Safer 1281 (10 July 1864).

interests against the encroachments of the Sublime Porte. By revoking the mercy of the Sultan, a key notion maintaining the legitimacy of the empire, the Zirki beys continued to carry out their politics in a rather unconventional manner. While these petitions addressed the justice of the sultan, which was in theory accessible to all like the ones penned by the lower strata of the Ottoman society, the petitions of the Zirki emirs did not only deploy the two arguments which are mostly associated with those of the lower classes: illegal procedure and corrupt or weak judges.⁷²⁹ As illegal procedures were implied, the Zirki emirs by their petitions pushed forward a politics in which they were able to cope with the state's demands and further their claims with regards to their future at the same time.

While pushing for their claims, the Zirki dynasty fabricated fictions of several kinds which however were not entirely groundless.⁷³⁰ In order to ensure their well reception and possibly remission, the Zirki men and women had to be creative in their petitions to attain their personal agendas. While doing that, it was therefore important to maintain a discourse that would agitate the sultanic mercy to a reasonable extent and that discourse was not supposed to be coherent. Though theirs was not a moral case but a political one, a much graver situation, what Peirce attributes to the morally-convicted petitioners holds for the Zirki family: "Even when individuals were clearly guilty, they sometimes tried to give moral justification for their acts or at least to plead extenuating circumstances."⁷³¹ The extenuation was for the emirs' case was their centuries-lasting imperial service at times and the discursive regret due to their imperfect nature of humanity (*hasbe'l-beşer*).

⁷²⁹ Ginio, "Coping with the State's Agents," 55.

⁷³⁰ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

⁷³¹ Peirce, *Morality Tales*, 5.

In this context, the petitions of the Zirki beys can be said to have followed an evolutionary phase in accordance with their extending credit and political networks in Edirne. Mostly silent in the immediate years following the exile, the Sublime Porte started becoming attentive to the voice of the Zirki family seven years later. At infancy, the power the Zirki beys had with the deployment of petitions that mostly attempted to cope with the state's demands. That is, the further exile to Silistra and the drastic cut in their stipends brought about a strong reaction on behalf of the family to which the Sublime Porte could not have turned a blind eye. While the collective petitionary success of the Zirki emirs was decisive in the 1850s, the individual petitions did not lead to any sort of success.

Yielding significant political and economic power in Edirne and excelling at their politics of petitioning, the Zirki beys, however, stepped away from coping with the state's encroachments to asserting their own demands albeit with the most deferential discourse. First of all, as the politics of petitioning revealed, the fall and the following exile of the emirs did not wear out the claims laid on the *yurtluk-ocaklık*. Grounding their claims on the imperial decrees and grants that had been the tradition for centuries, the Zirki emirs evidently regarded the property in question as legally belonging to their family beyond the classification mentality in the Ottoman registries. The requests made regarding the restoration of the property without any payments mentioned correspondingly strengthen the argument that the Zirki beys had already considered the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property to closer to freehold property rather than property confiscated by the imperial government. In this sense, the politics of petition insistently employed by the Zirki emirs was a significant factor with a view to the changing perceptions of private property in the mid-century Ottoman Empire. As the petitions demonstrate, the lands in question had been regarded as private

property by the very possessors prior to their loss in the 1830s, and the constant petitioning and references to the previously granted rights in this sense corroborated in a full-fledge sense of private property in Hazro and Mihrani. In partial result of both their politics of petitioning and the enthronement of Abdülaziz in 1861, some families of the Zirki house in Edirne obtained an imperial pardon by frome the new sultan. Once their pardon was ratified, their politics of petitioning, however, did not come to an end. Rather, accelerating the levels of their demands Zirki beys started to make explicit claims with regards to their yurtluk-ocaklık property.

CHAPTER VI

RESTORING THE PROPERTY: THE LAND CODE OF 1858 AND THE SALE OF YURTLUK-OCAKLIK LANDS

After the modest introduction, the initial phase of the reforms in Ottoman Kurdistan matured from the mid-1860s. The Land Code of 1858, as a milestone of the maturation, took hold in Ottoman Kurdistan in the following decade. Despite the oft-cited consequence of creating large tracts of land and paving the way for the capitalist relations in the region, the Code also offered the Zirki beys a new vocabulary with which to express their demands. That is, the exile years in Edirne were by no means peaceful for the Zirki beys who continued to petition the Sublime Porte frequently for either an increase in their stipends or the restoration of their property. The petitions that were dispatched continually to Istanbul during the 1850s underwent a significant change in the 1860s with the promulgation of the Code. Following their imperial pardon by the new Sultan Abdulaziz in 1860, the emirs began to voice their claims on the property their ancestors once had possessed. As the struggle of the emirs for the restoration of the property was thus initiated, the imperial pardon provided the exiled emirs with an opportunity to bring forward a more justified claim on their property with the Land Code of 1858, facilitating the sale of state lands in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani.

In this context, this chapter demonstrates the transformation of the yurtluk-ocaklık property into full-fledged private property in the post-1858 period. While doing that however, it reifies neither the modern state as the harbinger of private property nor the legal terminology associated with the Land Code. Without entertaining the notion of modern state as a unified coherent structure as the ultimate authority shaping the formation of modern private property, this chapter challenges

the state-dictated terms of private property and adds the perception of *yurtluk-ocaklık* holders stemming from the hereditary possession of the lands. By doing so, this chapter attempts not only to mitigate the omnipotent agency to the Ottoman state, but also to contemplate a concept of private property as advocated by the hereditary rulers of lands, not necessarily *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands. In other words, while the lands in question were already regarded by the Zirki beys as their freehold property, the appropriation of the lands once escheated in a sense restored their claims with full-fledged property rights.

As the making of private property in the Ottoman realm was therefore a contested domain between the Ottoman government and the non-state claimants, it was also a domain among the non-state legal personae. In the particular case of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands in Hazro and Mihrani, in addition to other provincial notables of the region, this domain accordingly might be expanded to include the different factions in the particular case of the Zirki beys. The struggle waged over the escheated property set aside, the inter-family rivalry began to emerge during the 1860s with the heavy traffic of petitions sent by the emirs to Istanbul. As the most brilliant example to which the Land Code applied perfectly, the state-owned lands in two districts attracted interest from the different factions of the family in addition to the local notables of Diyarbekir. Lasting almost for a decade, the struggle to restore the property ended in 1869 for the good of a single family, much to the detriment of the others.

In this context, the chapter firstly deals with the Land Code and its implementation in Ottoman Kurdistan. As the Code brought about a ‘contested domain’ not only for property per se, but for the Ottoman historiography, the chapter will offer a brief overview of the Code in terms of its consequences. Regarded as an

exceptional region with respect to the incorporation of the empire into the capitalist world economy, Ottoman Kurdistan is said to have been transformed into a region of large scale agriculture.⁷³²

In this sense, the Code is usually regarded as a means of translating possession rights to full-fledged property rights, on the one hand, and as a culmination of large-scale ownership in Ottoman Kurdistan, on the other. Regardless of these preconceived opinions, this chapter asks how the legal and socioeconomic change in the post-1858 period should be conceptualised beyond the generic attributions to Ottoman Kurdistan. Departing from the argument that there was already a thin line between the state-controlled lands, i.e., *mîrî*, and freehold lands, i.e., *mülk*, this chapter argues that the Code did not reify the property, but rather restored the de facto property in accordance with the socio-economic needs of the time. In the case of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property, which was much closer to the *mülk* category prior to the nineteenth century, this chapter claims that the perception of the Zirki beys in exile demonstrates the fact that the former had taken the form of private-like property, rendering the most state-defined categories almost useless. Such an approach does not downplay the legal terminology or the changes the Code brought about, but rather decreases the emphasis attributed to the legal reform, and therefore consequently the agency of the Ottoman government.

Having underpinned the background of the Land Code of 1858 in this manner, the rest of the chapter attempts to substantiate the Code and the following regulations, which foresaw basically the sale of state-owned lands to private owners.

⁷³² For those studies in which Kurdistan is regarded as an exception, see Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820-1913: Trade, Investment, and Production* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987); İslamoğlu and Keyder, "Agenda for Ottoman History."; Çağlar Keyder, "Introduction: Large-Scale Commercial Agriculture in the Ottoman Empire?," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991). Despite a poor historical elaboration, for the effect the Code brought about in Kurdistan, see van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 182-5.

Ottoman Kurdistan was not an exception for the latter stipulation with the delineation of lands under the state control in the province. Thus, in the particular example of state-owned lands in Hazro and Mihrani, this chapter scrutinises the making of private property out of the confiscated yurtluk-ocaklık lands both at the imperial and the local levels. While the decision to sell state-owned property was a matter of imperial discretion agreed upon in the Sublime Porte, its impact on the local administrations were important in terms of observing the contested making of private property in Ottoman Diyarbekir. As this contest had taken the form of an outright competition thanks to the central and local auctions in which different strata of the Ottoman society participated, it by no means confirmed the definition of private property. Notwithstanding the restoration of yurtluk-ocaklık lands as private property in a legitimate and modern sense at the end of the 1860s, it was challenged by certain Zirki beys in a way defying the stipulations of private property.

The Land Code of 1858 and Change in Property Relations

During the course of the struggle the Zirki beys waged, there was another matter being discussed in the Ottoman capital. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the very lands for which the emirs struggled had been classified and administered as state lands. The late 1850s, however, brought about an effort on the part of the Sublime Porte to define the rights of possession and usufruct associated with these lands. Known as the Land Code, the legal reform, however contested and disputed views with regards to its aims and consequences, was discussed in the early 1860s with respect to the lands in the district of Hazro and Mihrani.⁷³³ In this context, it is

⁷³³ For the English text of the Code, with later amendments, see *The Ottoman Land Code*, trans., F. Ongley (London: William Cloves and Sons 1892).

therefore essential to entertain the notion of private property which the Land Code of 1858 attempted to construct in the Ottoman context. The Code with the rupture it accelerated in the transformation of state lands to private property is important in order to comprehend the transformation of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands.

Accordingly, this section will firstly elaborate the Land Code in a critical sense to bridge the gap between the changing statuses in terms of the consequences in the Ottoman practices. Having discussed the impact of the Code had on state lands apart from several land tenure arrangements on land, the section will question the extent to which the Code in terms of the facilitation of the transformation of state owned lands to duly defined private property. Secondly, the section will discuss the Code with respect to the changes it created in Ottoman Kurdistan. Usually regarded as the path leading the way to large-scale agriculture, the Code has been argued to be different in the region in terms of its consequences. The Land Code was essential in the sense that the following developments stemming from the stipulations of the Code had restored the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in question as private property to the very descendants of the emirs. The story of these lands, therefore, needs a detailed elaboration of the Land Code of 1858, especially with regards to its consequences.

The Land Code of 1858: A Brief Overview

The Land Code of 1858 in itself has been a ‘contested domain’ for many reasons, from its aims to its consequences. Apart from differing ideologies constructed on the basis of the Code, the elaboration of the Code had been conducted in different fields.⁷³⁴ This section will present a brief overview of the Code within the dichotomy

⁷³⁴ For a brilliant analysis of the Code in historiography, see E. Attila Aytekin, "Hukuk, Tarih ve Tarihyazımı: 1858 Osmanlı Arazi Kanunnamesi'ne Yönelik Yaklaşımlar," *Türkiye Araştırmaları*

of continuity and rupture. As the proponents of the continuity argument have rather defended conservative political views in their own agenda, most of the recent studies concede the discontinuity the Code created. Questioning the details of the rupture argument, this section also will reconsider the literature arguing in favour of a rupture in a critical manner especially with regards to the agency.

To speak historically, the Code has been elaborated in the Turkish historiography as a belated measure to protect the already dissolving land tenure arrangements of the Ottoman Empire. For that matter, the Code was far away from materialising new forms of land tenure and property relations, but confined to acknowledge and codify the de facto practices in the Ottoman realm. Despite the ends regarding the employment of the continuity argument, the Code has been considered in the context of modernisation. The continuity, in this context, contributes to the orientalist view that the East, the Ottoman Empire and the successor states in the twentieth century, was devoid of change and thus doomed to stagnation.⁷³⁵

When the Code has been taken into account within the context of the Tanzimat reforms, there have been two opposing views concerning the reasons underlying the promulgation of the code. That is, some scholars underline the continuity the Code brought about whereas others maintain that the Code brought about a rupture from the earlier practices. The Code has been regarded as a continuation of the existing legal practices on different land tenure arrangements and therefore a simple transformation of what had been de facto into de jure. In the Ottomanist view, this view has been forwarded by Ömer Lütfi Barkan, who carried out the pioneering

Literatür Dergisi 3, no. 5 (2005). For its English version with slight differences, see "Land, Rural Classes, and Law: Agrarian Conflict and State Regulation in the Ottoman Empire, 1830s-1860s" (Ph.D. Dissertation State University of New York, 2006), 164-213.

⁷³⁵ Haim Gerber, *The Social Origins of the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994).

studies on the code.⁷³⁶ Not hiding possible doubts of his admire for the classical Ottoman order which can be attributed to the narrative, Barkan claims that the Land Code of 1858 emerged as a codification movement strictly tied to the traditions of land law, reasonable and conservative.⁷³⁷

Even though there was no association with regards to the Ottomanist view on the “continuity” the Code created, Haim Gerber’s views drew him closer to the “continuity” camp in which he relegates both the aims and consequences of the Code to insignificance. Arguing that the Code was conservative in nature, Gerber maintains that “[i]t was intended neither to reduce nor to augment anyone’s right to the land.”⁷³⁸ The attempt to contextualise the Code as a continuity of the earlier practices, in this context, helps Gerber to classify Middle Eastern countries as stagnant societies vis-à-vis those in the West.⁷³⁹

While the question of why the Ottoman statesmen promulgated the Code at the first place was explained within the confines of continuity and rupture, consequences of the Code can be said to have founded a greater interest in Ottoman scholars. With the increasing interest in elaborating the Ottoman Empire within the world-systems theory, the Ottoman code has been reconsidered in this direction.⁷⁴⁰ Contrary to the

⁷³⁶ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Türk Toprak Hukuku Tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274 (1858) Tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi," in *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi* (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınevi, 1980). For a similar context, see also Halil İnalcık, "Land Problems in Turkish History," *The Muslim World* 45, no. 3 (1955).

⁷³⁷ Barkan, "Türk Toprak Hukuku," 372.

⁷³⁸ Gerber, *The Social Origins*, 71. His acknowledgement of Barrington Moore’s theses in his introduction, which distinguishes between democracy and dictatorship according to the dissolution of agriculture, puts him close to the modernisation school where the Ottoman state and the Middle East were parts of the “Orient” and thus doomed to stagnation.

⁷³⁹ This criticism was pointed out also by Mundy, who states that Gerber finds it sufficient to point to very general parallels between the thrust of the Law and earlier kanunnames in support of his argument for continuity in Ottoman legislative intent. Martha Mundy, "Village Land and Individual Title: *Musha’* and Ottoman Land Registration in the ‘Ajlun District," in *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, ed. Eugene Rogan and Tariq Tell (London: British Academic Press, 1994), 60.

⁷⁴⁰ For a manifesto-like elaboration of the Ottoman Empire and replacement of the decline paradigm with the incorporation to the world economy, see İslamoğlu and Keyder, "Agenda for Ottoman History"; Huri İnan-İslamoğlu, ed. *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*

conservative views of previous decades, the Code was, without a doubt, a novelty of the centralising Ottoman state in the nineteenth century. Challenging in a sense the decline paradigm and therefore the continuity argument, İslamoğlu maintains that the very term property, and subsequently the Code, can be associated with a certain type of state that emerged in the nineteenth century.⁷⁴¹ In this school, the Code was not only elaborated with regards to property relations. Keyder asks one of the most essential questions of Ottoman history: was there large-scale commercial agriculture in the Ottoman Empire?⁷⁴² Elucidating landholding relations in the Ottoman realm in terms of its commensurability to those in Western Europe, Keyder does not put much emphasis on the Code, arguing that the “social recognition” of private property or its subjective acceptance by the peasantry would have been much later in arriving.⁷⁴³

The school, especially led by Huricihan İslamoğlu, challenged the reified concepts of private property and rather argued that the sphere of property was a contested domain. Despite the attempt at contextualising property as domains of contestation and negotiation in which social actors challenged each other, her analysis, however, is confined to the very statist explanation she seeks to avoid.⁷⁴⁴ As Aytekin’s criticism on İslamoğlu’s argument where he argues that İslamoğlu takes the state as given is elucidating in this sense, the agency she attributes to the state eventually casts deep shadows on her claim of contested domains. What is also

(Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820-1913: Trade, Investment, and Production*; Keyder and Tabak, *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*; Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800-1914*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2002 [first published in 1981]).

⁷⁴¹ İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain."; İslamoğlu, "Politics of Administering Property."

⁷⁴² Keyder, "Introduction."

⁷⁴³ Ibid., 11.

⁷⁴⁴ Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, however, focuses much more on the contested domain of property. See, for instance, Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Eleni Hatun'un Zeytin Bahçeleri: 19. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da Mülkiyet Hakları Nasıl İnşa Edildi?" *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 4 (Fall 2006). "Landlords, Refugees, and Nomads: Struggles for Land around Late-Nineteenth-Century Ayvalık," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 24 (Spring 2001).

problematic about the analysis of the Code in İslamoğlu's argumentation is the overemphasis on the legal framework. In accordance with the argument of the newly emerging state in the nineteenth century, such a legalistic and formalist approach does not leave any room for the contestations she had initially proposed to involve different social actors apart from the state.⁷⁴⁵ Therefore, the Land Code albeit its presentation as a contested domain falls back to the argument where the omnipotent state was the principal actor leading to the genesis of private property, and therefore shifting the argument towards the legal and/or formal readings of the state policies.

The analysis of the Code with the increasing studies in archival material has also offered new perspectives. Rather than the sweeping generalisations confined to the dichotomy of continuity and rupture, these studies, which mostly study the Code in a Middle Eastern context, have called for new perspectives. Among these studies Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett's work come to the fore in the sense that they regard the Code not necessarily loaded with political motivations. They reiterate the argument of the nineteenth-century state's interest in its ultimate ownership of the land claiming that the Code "as a piece of legislation was a logical extension of the *Tanzimat* to the broad area of land tenure and land taxation."⁷⁴⁶ More importantly they argue the different conditions the Code constituted. Arguing that the Code was almost certainly designed to fit conditions in Anatolia and the Balkans, which can be read as the predominance of small-scale landholding by peasant proprietors,

⁷⁴⁵ As an example of the school emphasising on the legal developments, see Alp Yücel Kaya, "Politique de l'enregistrement de la richesse économique : les enquêtes fiscales et agricoles de l'empire ottoman et de la France au milieu du XIXe siècle" (Ph.D. Dissertation, EHESS, 2005); "Politics of Property Registration: Cadastre of İzmir in the mid-Nineteenth Century," in *New European College Regional Program Yearbook 2005-2006*, ed. Irina Vainovski-Mihai (Bucharest: New Europe College, 2006); Alp Yücel Kaya and Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Tahrir'den Kadastro'ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi: 'Kadastro Tabir Olunur Tahrir-i Emlak'," *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 9 (Fall 2009).

⁷⁴⁶ Peter Sluglett and Farouk-Sluglett Marion, "The Application of the 1858 Land Code in Greater Syria: Some Preliminary Observations," in *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East*, ed. Tarif Khalidi (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1984), 413.

consequences were different where tribal customs, i.e., Iraq, conflicted with the Code.⁷⁴⁷ The compartmentalisation of the Code in this context, therefore, started to bring some other perspectives to light which was essential for the elaboration of the Code in the context of the Middle East.⁷⁴⁸ In this perspective, Samira Haj's work on the making of Iraq deals with the Code.⁷⁴⁹ Despite the rational/modernist approach she attributes to the Ottoman state in terms of maintaining an effective system of surplus extraction and taxation, her elaboration of the Code in practice does not follow the same path. She indicates the extent of the state's presence in the lower Iraq region in which one of the consequences of the Code, *iqta* has been a domain of struggle between tribal groups. The consequence of the Code, Haj argues, in this sense was uneven where transition to *iqta* generated different forms of class conflict.⁷⁵⁰

In that tradition, Eugene Rogan's study on Transjordan enhances the argument of differentiation of the Code. Arguing that the government did not have any ideological motives in the assignation of the title, Rogan underlines the flexibility of the Code in practice whereby government officials seem to have adapted the

⁷⁴⁷ Iraq and similarly Syria, in their opinion, had socioeconomic and political factors which combined to inhibit the development of individual landholding. They were one of the forerunners claiming the argument that collective possession of lands in the Middle East would therefore be contrasted with and altered by the stipulations of the Code. Farouk-Sluglett Marion and Peter Sluglett, "The Transformation of Land Tenure and Rural Social Structure in Central and Southern Iraq, c. 1870-1958," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 15, no. 4 (1983): 494.

⁷⁴⁸ Similar to shared lands in Syria, Cuno discusses the fate of shared lands in Egypt with regards to the establishment of private ownership of land. Beyond the distinction between continuity and rupture, Cuno argues that the private ownership of land "was not creation of 'rights' where none existed before, nor simply a matter of their transfer from the state to individuals. Rather it involved the consolidation of these shared claims into one sphere and their appropriation by individuals. It represents the establishment of exclusive control of the land by individuals as the prevailing system of property relations in place of shared control." Kenneth M. Cuno, "The Origins of Private Ownership of Land in Egypt: A Reappraisal," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12, no. 3 (November 1980): 246.

⁷⁴⁹ Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

application of the Law to the prevailing land order in any part of the empire.⁷⁵¹

Obviously, flexibility of the practice would take away the agency from the State par excellence and contribute to the evaluation and re-evaluation of the legal text on local levels. Notwithstanding the increased emphasis attributed to local actors, such elaborations of the Code leads to a compartmentalisation of the empire, which at most times involves retrospective projections of the modern nation states of the Middle East.⁷⁵²

Following the evaluation of the Code with these nuances, one of the studies has further strengthened the flexibility of the Code with an anthropological perspective. Departing from the very question of attributing a single and unified meaning to the legal text of the Code, Mundy and Smith have warned against interpreting the Code as forming a seamless whole.⁷⁵³ Their rather recent study on the making of property and the modern state in Syria has accordingly worked both the legal expressions of and actual developments with regards to property in an integrative manner.⁷⁵⁴ Considering the legal developments resulting in the promulgation of the Code, the explanation they offer gets beyond the dichotomy of continuity and rupture as they state:

Ottoman reform was not guided by and ideology of private property such as marked France or Britain of the nineteenth century. Nor was Ottoman law-making a mechanical importation of European law. Rather, the changes reflect a gradual reworking of legal vocabularies;

⁷⁵¹ Rogan, *Frontiers of State*, 83ff. See also Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell, *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan* (London: British Academic Press, 1994).

⁷⁵² It should be noted, however, that Aytekin remarks that the compartmentalisation of the Code as a problem in the literature. He bases his argument on the anachronic readings of the Code. He criticises those who seem to forget the area they study was a part of the Empire and thus evaluate the Code in a retrospective manner of the would-be nation states of the Middle East. Though he could be seen right with respect to the projection of the nation-state concept back to the past and the consequent political conclusions, such an explanation does not leave any room for flexibility of the Code in practice and rather calls for a standardised evaluations of the Code, which is highly state-oriented in that respect. Aytekin, "Hukuk, Tarih ve Tarihyazımı," 737.

⁷⁵³ Mundy, "Village Land and Individual Title," 60ff.

⁷⁵⁴ Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*.

only at the very end of the century could Ottoman law be said to have kneeled down before the shrine of modern private property⁷⁵⁵

In addition to the gradual change in the Ottoman legal vocabulary, they reiterate the role of local administration as a significant mediation in the course of the making of private property therefore releasing the genesis of private property as a domain from the overwhelming state. The perspective they offer helps contribute to the understanding of the rise of private property not as a product of the hierarchical state but rather as different levels, the local administration in the middle, between the state and society:

The present analysis, concerned with the construction of property that forms the condition for civil society, has retained the notion of the state – not as a unity, but as formal rules and techniques of knowledge in hierarchically ordered institutions of legal *personae*. Whereas institutions of the central Ottoman state – the central bureaucracy and the rules of *Tanzimat* legislation – appear as if from on high, transcendent or superstructural in the language of Hegel or Marx, the local administration can be seen to mediate between the regulations sent down and the social norms and idioms generated upwards from the relations of production in the district.⁷⁵⁶

The mediation in this context serves a better understanding of the Code since it enables domains to be contested by different segments of society. While such an explanation is apparently in accordance with Islamoğlu's work, her approach does not leave any room for manipulation since her elaboration of the modern state is overwhelming and omnipotent to the utmost extent. As the recent literature, especially on the Middle East demonstrates, however, the consequences of the Code, which was the constitution of private property, was neither a process simply dominated by the legal and administrative power of the nineteenth century state nor a realisation of the legal text throughout the empire. It cannot be questioned that the Code brought about a new concept of private property, but what it accomplished in

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid., 40.

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid., 102.

locales was mostly a reproduction of what had been happened since the early nineteenth century. In other words, as different connotations with respect to possession, i.e., *mîrî* and *mülk*, were on the verge of merging during the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottoman state reconfigured the terms of the ongoing change regarding these connotations.⁷⁵⁷ Such an explanation does not necessitate the evaluation of the Code within a dichotomy confined to continuity and rupture. Rather, the Code, at least with its original intent, was designed to align the formal and legal Ottoman practices in line with developments *de facto* thereby maintaining continuity with a revised legal framework. Nonetheless, the Code had also brought about a rupture since the discourse, terms, and eventually relations concerning private property had been affected duly by the stipulations of the Code. The important point in this rupture was that what happened following the application of the Code created new domains of struggles where claims of differing social classes clashed with each other. In order to bring light on the possible consequences of these domains of struggles, it is necessary to evaluate the Land Code of 1858 in the particularity of Ottoman Kurdistan.

The Land Code of 1858 in Ottoman Kurdistan

Despite the rich literature on the Ottoman Land Code of 1858, its elaboration in the Ottoman Kurdistan context is rare. The effects of the Code, usually narrated thanks to the reports of the foreign consular or statesmen, are analysed by van Bruinessen.⁷⁵⁸ Different from other Ottoman provinces, the Land Code, van Bruinessen argues, was

⁷⁵⁷ For Syria, Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett warns that the distinction between the two had become considerably blurred in practice if not in law. Sluglett and Marion, "The Application of the 1858 Land Code," 413.

⁷⁵⁸ van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*.

intended to offer nomadic tribes a bait to settle on easily acquirable lands in addition to the other reforms of the Tanzimat era.⁷⁵⁹ Furthermore he offered two tendencies in Kurdistan following the application of the Code. The first tendency was the common trend taking place in other provinces as well by which possession soon developed into full ownership. The difference of Ottoman Kurdistan was remarked by the second tendency, which according to van Bruinessen was the result that actual implementation of the Code benefited only a small elite while it apparently intended the actual tillers of the soil to become its legal possessors, and contained clauses preventing corrupt practices.⁷⁶⁰

Since van Bruinessen bases his account on those of British statesmen, it is understandable that his account of the Code with regards to its consequences is a re-evaluation of the Code in the literature. That is, one can see the similarity Gerber's statement in which he laid the focal point of the Code in its creation of truly vast estates in the Middle East.⁷⁶¹ To that end, van Bruinessen attributes agency to people who knew how to deal with government officials in terms of registering large tracts of land in their names.⁷⁶² Albeit with an outright statement of the path leading to large-scale landholding patterns, van Bruinessen is careful enough not to apply these arguments in its entirety to Kurdistan.⁷⁶³ Having thus left room for wide divergences in Kurdistan, he does not however get beyond conventional wisdom with respect to the effects of the Code which he stated:

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid., 182.

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid., 183.

⁷⁶¹ Gerber, *The Social Origins*, 72.

⁷⁶² van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 183.

⁷⁶³ Thanks to the reforms of Midhad Pasha, most of the state lands in the province of Baghdad were distributed to cultivator though most appropriation was carried out by significant tribal sheikhs, city merchants, and notables in return for an appropriate fee. By the same token, the consequences were not the same. That is, in places like Diyala and Karbala, and the environs of Baghdad, the tribal system came to a rapid erosion whereas the it survived in the mid-Euphrates region in which authority of major *beys* declined *vis-à-vis* the rise of lesser sheiks of individual tribes. Gökhan Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908*, SOAS/Routledge Studies on the Middle East (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), 86.

1. Reduction of the communal features of the tribal economy; individualization.
2. Increased economic stratification within the tribe. Many aghas became landlords, their followers becoming their share-croppers. In the course of time, this was to give some aghas inordinate power over the commoners.
3. A new class, with a new life-style, emerged; the urban-based landlords.
4. New forms of cooperation and patronage developed between the urban-based landlords and tribal aghas who remained in the villages. [...]
5. In many cases the actual cultivators lost some of their traditional right and became share-croppers or even hired labourers. The landlords could evict them if they wished [...]⁷⁶⁴

While some of the consequences of the Code cannot be questioned, their historical relation with the Code can be thwarted. That is, increased economic stratification within the tribe was not new, but rather a tradition of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* practice in Ottoman Kurdistan. It was not the Code itself that made many aghas landlords, but rather it restored their status duly by the book. As previous chapters have shown, most lands were possessed and furthermore *de facto* owned by tribal aghas, to which the Zirki emirs can be added. In a similar vein, forms of cooperation and patronage were already existent between the urban-based landlords and tribal aghas, albeit under different circumstances. Following the fall of the Zirki emirs, the struggle given by the urban notables of Diyarbekir for the possession of the escheated lands took place along an extended brokerage network.

Apart from the particular case of the Zirki emirs, which conflicts with his generalisations of the Code, van Bruinessen's account remains part of the conventional literature on the transformation of land tenure in the Middle East. To follow Gerber's conclusion concerning the result of the Code, which he says was largely a transfer of the lion's share of arable lands to a few landed magnates, van Bruinessen's sweeping generalisations do not diverge from those intended for the

⁷⁶⁴ van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 184.

Middle East more broadly.⁷⁶⁵ As the next section will demonstrate, the Zirki emirs actually succeeded at registering large tracts of land in their names by knowing how to deal with government officials, but whether the case of the Zirki emirs may be generalised to Ottoman Kurdistan as a whole is a difficult question. Accordingly the claims of the Zirki emirs on state-lands was a claim on the prior status of these lands, *yurtluk-ocaklık*. While the Code constituted one of the clear examples of registration of state lands by local magnates, it was the Zirki emirs who waged their struggle for the restoration of property away from their homelands.

Van Bruinessen's study is prominent in terms of explaining the practice of the Code in Ottoman Kurdistan, despite the limited extent of the Code. There is a recent flourishing interest in economic readings of Ottoman Kurdistan. Janet Klein's study on the Hamidiye Light Cavalry, for instance, touches upon the agrarian question of the late nineteenth century. Focusing on land-grabbing practices associated with the violent Hamidiye organisation, Klein indicates that confiscation of large tracts of land by Kurdish chiefs represented a significant chapter in the history of modern property relations in the region.⁷⁶⁶ Discussing the impact of the transformation—spurred by the centralising policies of the Ottoman states and the emergence of a world capitalist market—upon the social organisation of tribes and settled communities, she argues that the very transformation brought about a long term shift

⁷⁶⁵ Warning about the urgency for checking empirical evidence, Gerber states the most common reasons advances associated with the feature of the Code resulted in large-scale landholding patterns: 1. The villagers needed city notables to protect them from the Bedouin menace and to represent them in their dealings with the government. In lieu of these services they were willing to register their lands in the names of these powerful urbanites. 2. Peasants were chronically in debt to city moneylenders and often could redeem their debts only with their lands. Such peasants would then remain on the land as serfs of the urban landlord. 3. The peasants were afraid to register the lands in their own names, lest this bring down on them heavier burdens of conscription, taxes, and exactions. They preferred to have the land registered in the name of a city notable. 4. Sometimes they acted out of ignorance because the whole business of registration was beyond their understanding. 5. Bedouin shaykhs played a major role by registering tribal lands in their own names rather than in the names of individual tribesmen; their actions proceeded from the shaykhs' total political superiority over the tribe. Gerber, *The Social Origins*, 72-3.

⁷⁶⁶ Janet Klein, *The Margins of the Empire: Kurdish Militias on the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 128-69.

from largely autonomous household or clan units to the cultivation of dependent individuals and families who worked as tenants and sharecroppers.⁷⁶⁷ While Klein reiterates the arguments of van Bruinessen, her account is confined to the lower regions of Kurdistan where capitalist incorporation into the world-market was emergent and evident.⁷⁶⁸ With regard to the Land Code, she concedes the introduction of a new form of tenure on an empire-wide scale, but warns that it was not fully promoted in Kurdistan until around 1870. Underscoring the role that Midhat Pasha played in the promotion of the Code in Kurdistan, which was actually confined to the province of Baghdad, Klein maintains that the intent of the Code—in addition to provincial reforms, most notably the Vilayet Law of 1864—was to give the state the control it sought over land and the fruits of the land.⁷⁶⁹

Apart from these, there are few studies discussing the Land Code and its impact on Ottoman Kurdistan.⁷⁷⁰ Özok-Gündoğan, in her dissertation, elaborates on the distribution of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in the district of Palu. In a period when

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid., 133.

⁷⁶⁸ Klein bases her discussion on Haj's account on lower Iraq which highlighted the period between 1860 and 1914 as a time of commercialisation and Ottoman centralisation policies. Accordingly, Jwaideh's work is confined to lower Iraq. With some other references, Klein benefits from these studies on lower Iraq, in general, and Mosul, in particular, in terms of the transformation. While conceding that there are few comparable studies for regions further north, she states that "there were at least some general similarities." Ibid. See also Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 22-7; Albertine Jwaideh, "Midhat Pasha and the Land System of Lower Iraq," in *St Anthony's Papers Number 16: Middle Eastern Affairs*, ed. Albert Hourani (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963). With regard to the transformation, however, Shields warns about the extent of the increasing commercial interaction between Europe and the Middle East, and Mosul in particular. Arguing that basic production patterns did not undergo a significant change throughout the century, Shields's discussion of the Code follows a similar path when she argues that "[a]lthough the legal status of the land might theoretically have changed with the Ottoman land reform, Mosul's agrarian relations remained quite similar to the period before reform, with those who had previously acquired the surplus as tax farmers and money lenders now acquiring it as landowners." Sarah D. Shields, "Regional Trade and 19th-Century Mosul: Revising the Role of Europe in the Middle East Economy," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 1 (1991): 23.

⁷⁶⁹ Klein quotes the British consul at Diyarbekir who wrote that his province did not see the Land Code made official until 1872 and applied in reality 1878. The consul further added that at the time of writing (1910), it had still not been applied in some parts of the province. However, the Land Code was in fact in practice in terms of the auction of state lands in the province of Diyarbekir in the 1860s, as the next section will demonstrate. Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 235, n. 9.

⁷⁷⁰ Needless to say, land grabbing associated with the violence of the Hamidiye regime and the subsequent Unionist power has recently attracted scholarly interest. For instance, see Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London: Continuum 2011).

the Land Code was not yet in practice, she asks, “did the central state lease these lands out, granting the usufruct right to the purchasers while maintaining the ownership, or was it indeed the land itself that was sold by the state to individuals as private property?”⁷⁷¹ Elaborating on the question with reference to the distinction between *mîrî* and *mülk* statuses in the particular case of Palu, she does not confine her discussion to the terms employed by the state and argues that by the nineteenth century, Palu beys had control over the land and evidently considered and used it as their private property.⁷⁷² In addition to several examples that demonstrate the status of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands as freehold property prior to their confiscation, Özok-Gündoğan states that the confiscation of the lands by the Ottoman state was the ultimate episode that indicated the property status of these lands. Despite the absence of any discussion related to landholding patterns, Toraman’s recent study demonstrates that while such confiscations of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands were not confined to Ottoman Kurdistan, the confiscation by the Ottoman state can be read in the abstract as a reclaiming of the ownership of the lands. Whether his discussion is constructed upon the tenets of the classical Ottoman land regime—*rakabe* status by which the Ottoman state maintained the ownership of all land—is unclear.⁷⁷³

This section, in contrast with the previous one, has demonstrated the scarce interest in the Land Code with regard to its consequences for Ottoman Kurdistan. Given that the literature upholds views associated with the Middle East, in general, and Syria and Iraq, in particular, it would be correct to claim that most studies in this context reiterate conventional wisdom from a geographically broader perspective. Some questions still beg answers: What happened in Ottoman Kurdistan in the

⁷⁷¹ Özok-Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State," 235. See also, "Ruling the Periphery."

⁷⁷² "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State," 159ff.

⁷⁷³ Toraman, "Trabzon Eyaletinde Yurtluk-Ocaklık." See also, "Tanzimat'ın Yurtluk-Ocaklık."

middle of the nineteenth century in terms of property relations? To what extent was Land Code of 1858 influential in creating large tracts of lands registered by a few local notables? And how were existing relations of production transformed? As the only exception, Özok-Gündoğan's study delves into the complex nature of the Ottoman relations of production and property in the middle of the nineteenth century and determines that *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands had been regarded as private property. Building on Farouk-Sluglett and Sluglett's work which underscored the blurred distinction between *mîrî* and *mülk* lands, Özok-Gündoğan notes the property-like status of auctioned lands.⁷⁷⁴ In the struggle waged by both the fallen beys of Palu and peasants cultivated the lands, the auction of lands, in Özok-Gündoğan's view, strengthened said distinction.

In the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, on the other hand, the distinction culminated in the victory of private property. The next section concerns the making of private property in these districts, where a prior transformation of the contested status of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands from freehold to state property ultimately allowed a transformation from state to freehold property in the full-fledged vocabulary of modern private property. Regardless of the prior *yurtluk-ocaklık* status of land the Ottoman State possessed, the genesis of private property would undergo three processes of transformation, as argued by Mundy and Smith:

Property in land is constructed at the articulation of three moments: the law as text and interpretive tradition; the administration of law by government institutions wherein a regional elite comes together with government employees appointed from above; and lastly, the translation and negotiation of legal categories by actors in productive systems where

⁷⁷⁴ Özok-Gündoğan is careful to note that terms such as *fîruht*, *satmak* (sale, to sell respectively) albeit employed in the case of lands sold in the district of Palu, do not imply a straightforward concept of property. Rather, such terms were used interchangeably by the Ottoman bureaucracy. For a case of such sale-like auctions in the early years of the Tanzimat, see Bayraktar, "The Political Economy of *Çiftlik*s."

right is generated, in part, by forces independent of the first two moments.⁷⁷⁵

In a sense, the Land Code of 1858 culminated in the standardisation of the law as a text of earlier Ottoman practices. Regardless of actual consequences, the Code above all attempted to define property on land. As the next section will demonstrate, the culmination of the Code was not free from interpretations, if not outright mistaken understandings, at the local level. Accordingly, the second stage of the construction of private property would involve government institutions to maintain the administration of the law. When the Land Code is extracted from being just a legal text and put into actual practice, the local government in Ottoman Kurdistan initiates the procedures mentioned by Mundy and Smith. The third stage, however, brings about the aforementioned struggle of the Zirki emirs in the absence of local producers' participation in the creation of private property in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. In addition to the structure outlined by Smith and Mundy, one can add the status of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands where the claim on private property like rights did not stem from legal practice, but from the very administration reign of the Ottoman sultans. By the same token, it can be said that there is a slight difference between the construction and the restoration of private property in terms of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands. While such lands had been possessed for centuries in hereditary form with minimal administrative intrusion, the concept of "restoration"—with regard to a discussion of private property in the case of the Zirki faction—seems to describe the situation better than "construction." The claims of fallen emirs might suffice to strengthen this idea, if not their politics of petitioning.

⁷⁷⁵ Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*, 7.

The Land Code in Practice: A Different Form of ‘Sale’ of Yurtluk-Ocaklık Lands in
Hazro and Mihrani

Sale of State Property in the Province of Kurdistan

As the local administration was a field of constant flux contested by the central government and actors at the local level—particularly in Hazro but also in Ottoman Kurdistan, in general,—the culmination of the Tanzimat took yet another turn following the enforcement of the Land Code of 1858. Two years later, an imperial decree furthered the sale of state-owned property in accordance with the stipulations of the Code. The decree dated, February 19, 1860, called attention to state property in the introduction:

Some state property in the countryside, such as çiftliks, shops, inns, and baths, and etc., have been auctioned to tax farmers in the course of revenue periods, since they only look after their own benefit, not taking care to improve said property, thus leading such property to ruin. To avoid this [result], on one hand, and in order both to ensure the principle of improvement and the means of sustenance for the subjects of the Supreme Sultanate, on the other, the supreme decree of his Majesty has been granted upon the decision of the Council of Minister’s decision regarding the sale of said property to claimant parties who are Muslim and Christian subjects of the Ottoman State...⁷⁷⁶

Grounding the necessity of sales of state-owned property in this manner, the decree, which was circulated throughout the empire, stated the requirements and procedures of the sales process. The auction of property took place in a two-tiered manner: The property in question would first be auctioned locally, the verdict of which would be dispatched to the Imperial Treasury. If the bids at a Treasury auction did not

⁷⁷⁶ The original is read: “*Taşralarda bulunan çiftlik ve dükkân ve han ve hamâm ve sâ’ire gibi ba’zı emlâk-ı mirîye rûsûmât sırasında mütezimlere ihâl olunmakda ise de çünkü anlar yalnız menâfi’-yi zâtiyelerini gözederek emlâk-ı mezkûrenin emr-i i`mârına bakmamalarıyla o misillü emlâk bir taraftan harâb olmakda olmasına mebnî böyle olmakdan ise hem kazîye-yi ma`mûriyet ve hem de teba`a-yı Saltanat-ı Seniyye bu yüzden dahi esbâb-ı ma`îşet hâsıl olmak üzere emlâk-ı merkûmenin İslam ve Hristiyan teba`a-yı Devlet-i `Aliye’den tâlib olanlara fîrûhtu husûsuna meclis-i vükelâ kararı üzerine bi’l-istizân irâde-yi seniyye-yi cenâb-ı şehinşâhi müte`allik ve şeref-i sudur buyrulmuş...*” BOA. A. MKT. UM. 397/17, 27 Receb 1276 (19 February 1860), copy of the Imperial Decree dated 27 Receb 1276.

exceed the local bid, the property would be given to the local claimants. Since state-owned property attracted a wider audience in the Ottoman capital, the decree made sure that the results of auctions were dispatched in the countryside. Once the procedure was set forth in this manner, claimants either in the capital or the countryside were obliged to make a down payment.⁷⁷⁷

The central government was also keen on gathering data with regard to property to be sold. In the decree, which foresaw the direct sale of property, it was stipulated that the size and boundaries (of land) would be demonstrated and that the dimensions and neighbouring lands and buildings (of inns and shops) would be explained, in addition to confirming the vakıf status of the property, if any. More interesting were the conditions of sales procedures. In line with the discussion in previous sections, the blurred distinction between mîrî and mülk was abolished to the extent that the procedure for the transfer of property was termed “selling” (*satmak*). While it was a common practice that the terms of transfer were vague in the Ottoman bureaucracy prior to the middle of the nineteenth century, and therefore terms such as a “sale” were not new, the use of the term “sale” in the decree departed from previous interpretations. Use of terms such as “*satmak*,” “*almak*,” “*iştira*,” “*bey*,” “*füruht*” (to sell, to buy, to purchase, to sell, and sale respectively) was common even with regard to mîrî lands. While in the 1840s these terms connoted a change of hands in terms of possession, the terms of possession were increasingly vague. In the early 1840s, the property of Ali Pasha of Tepelen (*Tepedelenli emlâkı*) had been sold accordingly, and the terms of the sale were confined to nine or ten years.⁷⁷⁸ What happened at the end of the lease period remained unspecified; possession of property

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁸ For discussion of the period following the fall of Ali Pasha and the property he appropriated, see Sezer, “Tepedelenli Ali Paşa’nın Oğulları.”; “Tepedelenli Ali Paşa’nın Çiftlikleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma.”; “Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Oğullarının Çiftlik ve Gelirlerine İlişkin Yeni Bilgi – Bulgular.”

might be said to be maintained by those who acquired it at auction. Deriving from Articles 48 and 49 of the Code, Aytekin states that “[t]hey make clear that the Code gave primacy to the *sale* of things built or planted on land over the *transfer* of land, and to things over land itself. There was no legal priority attributed to the ‘possession’ of arable land as opposed to the ‘ownership’ of other immovable property.”⁷⁷⁹

After an act of sale, local councils were ordered to issue signed documents as “temporary deeds” (*sened-i muvakkat*) until “official deeds” (*sened-i resmî*) were sent by the central government.⁷⁸⁰ Just as the decree regulated what to do in the course of a sale procedure, there were also warnings about what not to do. Anyone involved with an undervalued sale as a result of closure (*kapatma suretî*) or any other forms of impropriety would be subject to legal sanctions. Punishment was decisive, which can be seen from the statement: “Not a single moment will be wasted for the execution of punishment by law for those who dare to commit that sort of deception and corruption.”⁷⁸¹ Last but not least, a warning was addressed regarding foreigners, who were forbidden to purchase state-owned lands.⁷⁸² While the decree ordered provincial administrations to send registry documents concerning acts of sale that had been finalised at the local level (in the absence of other claimants at the Treasury), the very same administrations were also asked to further investigate and find similar state-owned properties or lands in their borders. By doing so, the Porte not only initiated the transfer of its property, but demonstrated a profound interest in revealing lost properties believed to belong to the Ottoman state.

⁷⁷⁹ Aytekin, "Agrarian Relations, Property and Law: An Analysis of the Land Code of 1858 in the Ottoman Empire." Emphasis in original. Bayraktar, "The Political Economy of *Çiftlik*," 62-72.

⁷⁸⁰ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 397/17, 27 Receb 1276 (19 February 1860), copy of the Imperial Decree dated 27 Receb 1276

⁷⁸¹ The Turkish is read as: “...o makule hile ve irtikâba cür’et edenlerin kanunen müstahak olacakları mücâzâtın icrâsında dakika fevt olunmayacağından ...” Ibid.

⁷⁸² Ibid.

A few months following imperial decree, the governor of Kurdistan sent a registry document (*bâlâsı defterlu mazbata*) to the Sublime Porte.⁷⁸³ For investigation purposes, the council of Kurdistan concurrently employed field officers (*'arâzi me'mûru*) upon a request of the Ministry of Finance advanced to the Supreme Council on January 1, 1861. In accordance with the requirements of the Land Code and the imperial decree, Süleyman, Zülfikar, and Osman Zeki Beys were employed to accompany field officers starting from mid-August 1860.⁷⁸⁴ Even though there is no information concerning their activities, the fact that three beys were entitled to employ up to three deed scribes (*tapu kâtibi*) from among the locals indicates their duty to prepare the necessities of the Code and the decree upon the sale of state property.⁷⁸⁵

On May 29, 1861, the council members of Kurdistan reported on the status of state lands in the districts of Kurdistan as required by the imperial decree. In their initial statement, the members of the council actually demonstrated their indifference in practice between *mîrî* and *mülk* lands, stating that “most of [the lands] in this location are entirely freehold while some of them are included in vakıfs.”⁷⁸⁶ In line with the mandate of an imperial decree which arrived in the presence of the council in April 1861, the types of property sought by the Sublime Porte were found in the districts of Hazro, Hani, and Beşiri, which included a *çiftlik*, a garden, and a mill. The council members, however, were confused about the procedures, as they had already sent documents concerning auctions held in the district. The council complained about the gap in the procedure: The memorandum stated that a total of

⁷⁸³ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 206/31, 5 Receb 1277 (17 January 1861).

⁷⁸⁴ BOA. İ. MVL. 442/19633, 11 Receb 1277 (23 January 1861).

⁷⁸⁵ As Süleyman Bey received two hundred and fifty and Zülfikar and Osman Zeki Beys two hundred *guruş* apiece, the limit set for the scribes they were entitled to employ was three hundred *guruş* a month. Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 474/89, 19 Zilkade 1277 (29 May 1861), the memorandum of the council of Kurdistan.

three registry documents had been sent following auctions for the districts of Hazro and Hani on September 8 and for the mill and land in Beşiri on December 28, 1860, and yet the council members failed to receive *mülknâmes* (deeds) despite strictly following the stipulations of the decree.⁷⁸⁷ At a loss for what could have gone wrong in the auction procedures, council members had no choice but to ask whether another auction would be needed.

The confusion had neither to do with the laxity of the council members nor the neglect of the departments at the Sublime Porte. The problem stemmed from the new era that the Land Code had opened. In a short note addressing Ali Rıza Efendi, the chamberlain of the governor Besim Pasha, the Sublime Porte underscored the difference between the two auctions with overt contempt. The note approached the matter from the beginning:

...Even though the auction of the property to be sold has been carried out beforehand with the condition that the escheat—in the absence of inheritors—would remain with the Imperial Treasury, this practice has been abandoned and all related procedures have been reformed. In line with this, there exist many differences between the previous conditions of sale and the current conditions of sale; however, that such a question gets asked without paying attention to the warnings is frankly astonishing. A new auction will be necessary, and from now on, further zeal will be necessary to completely execute of the clauses of such essential affairs by paying careful attention to the warning.⁷⁸⁸

Despite differences in the sale (*bey`*), complementary documents regarding the end results of both auctions seem to be the same, *mülknâmes*. While this could be a mistake on the part of the council members of the province, it may by the same token

⁷⁸⁷ The members did not fail to note that the auctions were duly carried out, and that the auctioned vineyard, gardens, etc. were not a part of any vakıfs, but state-owned lands. Ibid.

⁷⁸⁸ The original note is read as: “*İşbu satılacak emlâkin bilâ-veled olan mahlûlâtı Hazine-yi Celile’ye `â’id olacağı şartıyla mukaddema müzâyesesi icrâ olunmuş ve şimdi ise bu şartın terkiyle her dürlü mu`âmelâtı ıslâh olunarak bu cihetle mukaddemki şart-ı bey` ile şimdiki şart-ı bey`in arasında pek çok fark bulunmuş olduğu hâlde sûret-i iş`âra dikkat olunmayarak bu vechile su`âl vukû`u doğrusu cây-ı ta`accüb olarak her ne ise bunların dahi tekrar müzâyesesi lâzım geleceği ve ba`dema bu makûle medâr-ı mühime hakkında vukû` bulan iş`âra nazar-ı dikkatle bakılarak ahkâmının tamam-ı icrâsı husûsuna himmet buyrulması iktizâ edeceği beyânıyla şukka.*” BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 224/68, 25 Zilhicce 1277 (4 July 1861).

be attributed to the laxity of statesmen in the Sublime Porte. Put differently, it can be safely argued that as a result of auction procedures for state-owned property, there were interchangeable applications of the documents that signified ownership. The original imperial decree highlighted the term “official deed” (*sened-i resmî*) in contrast with the Council of Kurdistan, which called the documents *mülknâmes*. Regardless of the semantics of the name of the document, the note from the Porte leaves no doubt about the change from possession rights to full-fledged private property rights.

Even though it is unclear what happened in the meantime, it appears that the auction procedures ordered to be repeated by the Porte took place in 1863. “The lands and vineyards, and shop lands in the district of Hazro abandoned by the deceased Receb Bey and other emirs from Zirki beys, sale of which was required by the imperial decree,” stated the Ministry of Finance, “have been auctioned locally to be appropriated and possessed (*zabt ve idâre*) in accordance with the clauses of the Land Code and the Cadastral Regulation (*Tapu Nizamnâmesi*).”⁷⁸⁹ Having strictly followed the regulations, the local auction concluded the transfer of the property with a down payment (*mu‘accele*) of 70,500 guruşes and dispatched the conclusion of the affair to the Sublime Porte in line with the procedure.⁷⁹⁰ The property in question was auctioned once again at the Treasury, and Yusuf Bey, one of Receb Bey’s sons, participated. In the auction held in Istanbul he increased the down payment to 71,000 guruşes and apparently let officials in the Treasury know that the property in question had been confiscated while under the possession of his father (*pederi*

⁷⁸⁹ BOA. İ. MVL. 497/22480, 23 Cemaziyelevvel 1280 (5 November 1863), memorandum of the Ministry of Finance. Shaw and Shaw state that the new Cadastral Regulation was prepared to enforce the Land Code, “requiring all the land and property of each province to be surveyed as it was transformed according to the Tanzimat, with each person or institution claiming ownership being required to prove it with legal documents before it could be given a new ownership deed (*tapu senedi*) and the fact entered into the new cadastral registers.” Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire vol. II*, II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, 114.

⁷⁹⁰ The name of the person who bid the said amount is not mentioned in the document.

mumâileyh 'uhdesinden mahlûl). Yusuf Bey added that the imperial decree granted him the right to return to his homelands.⁷⁹¹ Though the clauses regulating the terms of the down payment were clear, Yusuf Bey apparently succeeded at negotiating them to his benefit. Having stated in advance that he was unable to make a lump-sum payment, he persuaded Treasury officials to allow him to make the payment in two instalments. Yusuf Bey agreed to pay 36,000 guruşes in cash in advance, and promised to pay the remainder in mid-December 1864. Once the case was heard before the Supreme Council, they acknowledged the transfer (*tefvîz*) of the property taking into consideration circumstances such as the fact that the property had been his father's, his license to return to his homeland, and his bid in the final auction.⁷⁹²

In the end, the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands which had been close, if not identical, to free-hold property (*mülk*) in the early 1830s, were in a sense restored to their original status as property by the Land Code, using a modern language of private property. Seen from this perspective, the Land Code, with its impact on Ottoman land tenure, did indeed end up creating large tracts of land in the province of Kurdistan. Since most of the scholarly discussion entertains the notion of private property within a distinction between state property and freehold property, such discussions do not reveal much about the actual status of lands classified as *mîrî*, even as they shed light on the overall transformation of the Ottoman land tenure system. Of course, that is because state lands have been thought to be possessed mostly by small-scale peasants who, following the practices of the Code, acquired ownership rights in addition to possession rights. *Yurtluk-ocaklık* lands, however, were far from small tracts of land, but rather were maintained, administered, and eventually sold to private parties in

⁷⁹¹ BOA. İ. MVL. 497/22480, 23 Cemazıyelevvel 1280 (5 November 1863), memorandum of the Ministry of Finance

⁷⁹² BOA. İ. MVL. 497/22480, 11 Cemaziyelahir 1280 (23 November 1863), memorandum of the Supreme Council. See also the memorandum of the Supreme Council ordering the ministry of Finance to meet the case, BOA. MVL. 660/19, 4 Cemaziyelahir 1280 (16 November 1863).

their original status. In this vein, the Land Code can be said to have facilitated the emergence of large-scale landholding patterns starting from the early 1860s.

Yet such a conclusion should not be taken to be comparable to the tradition represented by Gerber. In accord with the conventional wisdom of his time, he concedes that the lion's share of arable lands was transferred to a few landed magnates. The restoration of private property in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, in this sense, can strengthen the conventional arguments Gerber represents, in addition to the conclusions drawn by van Bruinessen.⁷⁹³ Gerber was quite aware of references to the studies concerning the Code, however. While not dismissing supposed "causes" of such land amassment, he posits several questions: What actually happened to lands in the Middle East? How much passed into the hands of large landlords exactly? And was this phenomenon universal or was it circumscribed by other circumstances? As a modest response to his questions, the question of what happened to the land in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani is the subject matter of the next chapter, even though the extent of these lands may be regarded as insignificant in the context of the whole of the Ottoman Empire. The amassment of land achieved by Yusuf Bey's ventures did not cease, but accelerated through the 1870s. Nonetheless, this acceleration was not straightforward but rather a contested process.

While Gerber's arguments concerning the consequences of the Land Code are validated by the example of the province of Kurdistan, his generalisation that covers the broader Middle East should be taken with a grain of salt. With respect to the Ottoman Empire, in particular, and the Middle East, in general, the failure to create large estates—which was the route to agricultural modernisation-cum-democratisation in the West—should be questioned. The question should be directed

⁷⁹³ Gerber, *The Social Origins*, 73.

at the both the general formulation and the subsequent explanation part. The absence of classes, concerning which Gerber maintains “Ottoman society had few potentially explosive tensions inherent in its class structure,” has long been the subject of scholarly debate and is beyond the scope of this analysis. Rather, this study deals with the explanation, in which Gerber (with references to the Land Code) maintains that “the failure of a large-estates regime to appear before 1858 was mainly the outcome of a class struggle in which primary contenders were the central government.”⁷⁹⁴ The case of yurtluk-ocaklık lands, considering both the wide employment of the practice in the Ottoman East and the particular application to the lands in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, poses a counterexample with respect to the presence of large estates throughout the empire.⁷⁹⁵

Furthermore the actual matter in Gerber’s account was the overemphasis on the omnipotent Ottoman state, a must for the despotic regimes in the Orient. While we do not know how actual cultivators of the lands in the two districts responded to the sale of fields that they had been cultivating, this does not suggest a peasant-less society, as Gerber concludes. While the Zirki emirs, who were the landlords of not-so-distant past, constituted a certain class, the sale of the property brought about a class struggle, albeit with an intra-class character. If one recalls the struggle waged by the peasants of Palu, who openly resisted the distribution of the lands of Abdullah Bey (in favour of the bey), the hasty conclusions drawn by Gerber may be further questioned.⁷⁹⁶ As the next chapter will also demonstrate, the appropriation of large

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid., 119.

⁷⁹⁵ One can also note the presence of çiftliks in the Ottoman Balkans. While the commercialisation of these lands is questionable, their size and frequency should not be underestimated in the context Gerber maintains. For the case of çiftliks, see McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*.

⁷⁹⁶ Özkok-Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State," 180ff. There are abundant documents in the Ottoman archives concerning the sale of lands which had been confiscated from the possession of Kurdish beys in the districts of Palu and Eğil. Not only a antagonism with regards to the relations of production, the class struggle was also an ethnic one in which Kurdish beys were

lands did not end the struggle per se. That is, the emergence of large landholding in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani brought about a discontent in the population of those districts, which was mostly Armenian, not to mention the early challenge posed by the other faction of Zirki emirs, namely Bedirhan and Behram Beys. Instead of a classless and somehow stagnant society, the entire sale process—which ended with the Yusuf Bey’s victory—was contested at all stages. Avoiding the pitfall of regarding the state as an omnipotent entity, İslamoğlu conceptualises property relations as follows “[i]t is possible to speak of contestation as being part of the fabric of the very rulings that defined these relations: the struggles of different groups left their imprint on law and administrative practices.”⁷⁹⁷ By doing so, İslamoğlu opens the gates for a more nuanced account, where class struggle is replaced with power relations and several actors struggle with one another to meet their ends.

While power relations, in accordance with İslamoğlu’s understanding of the term, further explain the politics of property in Hazro and Mihrani, her narrow understanding of these power fields allows little room for contesting parties outside the sphere of the nineteenth-century state, which seems not to be instructive in the case of Yusuf Bey’s success and the subsequent struggles.⁷⁹⁸ The sale of the property in the two districts to Receb Bey’s son, from the beginning, constitutes a “contested domain (to borrow from İslamoğlu) in several aspects: First of all, the article of the Code prohibiting the appropriation of vast lands under a single person’s ownership

landholders *vis-à-vis* Armenian peasants/cultivators. For just a small example of reaction of peasants in the two districts, see BOA. MVL. 479/14, 25 Cemaziyelevvel 1282 (16 October 1865); BOA. MVL. 484/56, 7 Cemaziyelahir 1282 (28 October 1865); BOA. MVL 565/13, 6 Zilhicce 1284 (30 March 1868).

⁷⁹⁷ İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain," 11.

⁷⁹⁸ To criticise Orientalist discussions of the Ottoman state, but falling back on the state-oriented approach in defensive Ottomanist literature, İslamoğlu argues that “centralised leviathans,” which had originated in the context of interstate competition in Western Eurasia, “remain the single most important agency in the constitution of the ‘order of the market,’” and therefore of the order of property. *Ibid.*, 14.

was initially challenged by the developments taking place in Hazro and Mihrani in the 1860s.⁷⁹⁹ Secondly, the procedures which represented the actual emergence of private property rights in the districts were contested by several parties. The local auction aside, the other faction of Zirki emirs challenged the process from the beginning in the aftermath of the handover of the property. The challenge continued following the arrival of Receb Bey's sons in the district, this time by local notables of the district. The next section will deal with the immediate challenge of the Zirki emirs, led by Bedirhan and Behram Beys.

Challenge to the Code: Claims on Collective Rights on the Property

In the course of the auction procedures, Bedirhan and Behram Beys had already started to make claims on the lands the state was offering to its claimants. Continuing their struggle in terms of a politics of petitioning, Bedirhan and Behram Bey laid claim to the property that was auctioned and transferred to Receb Bey. The two beys claimed that the property in question had been under the collective possession of the entirety of the Zirki emirs; moreover, their claim was not confined to the bundle of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands. In a note attached to their petition, the beys claimed their traditional rights on the *madrabs* in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani:

⁷⁹⁹ "The whole of the lands of a town or village" Article 8 of the Code stipulates, "cannot be granted *en bloc* to the whole of the inhabitants nor by choice to one, two, or three of them. Different pieces of land are given to each inhabitant, and title deeds (*Tapu senedi*) showing their possession are delivered to them." *The Ottoman Land Code*, 8. It is not clear whether there has been a divergence between this article and the subsequent imperial decree ordering the sale of state-owned properties.

Table 15. Rice and Cotton Lands under the Possession of Receb, Bedirhan, and Behram Beys, according to the Claim of Mir Behram and Mir Bedirhan

Name of the Rice and Cotton Lands	Possession by Shares	Other Explanation
Rice land in Hazro	24/40	Rest belongs to others
Küçük rice and cotton land in Hazro	1/2	Rest belongs to others
Barkuş madrab	1/2	Rest belongs to others
Akrak madrab	1/3	Rest belongs to others
Babak (?) madrab	1/2	Rest belongs to others
Bağırkan (?) madrab	1/1	
‘Ahra (?) rice and cotton land	1/3	Rest belongs to others
Koçik (?) madrab and cotton land	1/2	Other half belongs to İmam Ağa
Çayırçılar madrab and cotton land	1/2	Rest belongs to others
Barkuş madrab and cotton land	1/3	Rest belongs to others
... rice land and cotton land	1/2	Rest belongs to others

Source: BOA. MVL. 978/27, 10 Şevval 1280 (19 March 1864).

The rice and cotton lands, Behram and Bedirhan Beys claimed, were not included in the bundle of property finally sold to Yusuf Bey.⁸⁰⁰ In their petition addressing the Sublime Porte, the beys had two ends: first, the expansion of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands to be restored in line with the property description above, and second, acknowledgement of their rights to the lands following from their claim of collective possession. The petitions the two beys initiated shed further light on the distinction between traditional rights to possession and the rupture of that concept that the Land Code brought about.

While appealing to the Gate of Felicity, the beys acquired further support. To that end, they first contacted the governor of Edirne. A note the governor sent to the Sublime Porte notes that Bedirhan and Behram Beys made their claims in the presence of the governor, who in turn directed their grievances to the central government with reference to their request for the restoration (*terk ve ihsân*) of the property and madrabs in accordance with precedents whereby the property of exiled

⁸⁰⁰ Following the imperial pardon, the change in the signatures of Zirki emirs is telling. The employment of bey at the end of petitions was replaced with mîr (emir). The change in titles due to the imperial pardon was not confined to the two beys; Yusuf Bey did not hesitate to represent his title as emir.

persons had been restored following their pardon (*'afv ve itlâk*).⁸⁰¹ A few weeks later, in another petition addressing the Sublime Porte, they laid claim to ninety-three villages due to their *yurtluk-ocaklık* status. The basis for laying these claims suggested that their possession of the lands was far different from the conceptualisation represented by *mîrî* status. That is, Bedirhan and Behram Beys argued that the villages were by imperial decree (*ba-fermân-ı alîşân*) under their possession (*taht-ı tasarrufunda*) in hereditary form.⁸⁰² Their claim, while resembling the inheritance of *mîrî* lands, has more in common with the language of *mülk* with respect to possession rights, if not property rights. Revising the story of their exile as “the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” (*hasbe 'l-kader*), they complained that the ninety-three other villages under their possession, which were apart from the *yurtluk-ocaklık* villages, had been confiscated by the Ottoman government. Though there is no clarity as to whether the ninety-three villages were among the bundle comprising of one hundred and six items of property, Bedirhan and Behram Beys attempted to expand the content of their bundle by adding rice and cotton fields, as demonstrated in Table 15.

However, the actual matter of their petition was the auction procedures in which they had not been able to participate.⁸⁰³ According to their statement, they heard about the state of the property in question only after the arrival of the correspondence to Edirne which concluded the auction procedures through the official sale of the property to Yusuf Bey. Their frustration was clear when they complained that “our known property with collective [possession] with the deceased

⁸⁰¹ BOA. MVL. 978/27, 19 Cemaziyevvel 1280 (1 November 1863), note of the governor of Edirne.

⁸⁰² BOA. MVL. 978/27, 27 Cemaziyelahir 1280 (9 December 1863), petition of emirs Behram and Bedirhan.

⁸⁰³ Ibid.

emir's son Yusuf Bey was auctioned locally without our information (...)”⁸⁰⁴ In compensation both for being left in the dark and for the misery they had suffered for over twenty years, they asked that their collective property (*müşterek emlâkımızın istihsâline*), consisting of one hundred and six items, be restored. In other words, they asked to be entitled to the property rights of the items auctioned to Yusuf Bey on the ground of collective possession. Accordingly, they asked for a settlement further extending their rights to the madrabs, which had been excluded from the previous auction:

[...] accordingly eleven madrabs in total had been under our possession by half shares and some of the other halves, being excluded from the said auction, had been confiscated by the state and some others had been left [in the hands of] some people and tax farmers. We, servants of his Majesty, kindly ask our rights accrued as a result of our share in the aforementioned one hundred and six items of property that had been auctioned and furthermore we supplicate the execution of [the restoration of] the said rice lands, apart from these *collective property*, to our party in accordance with precedents [...]”⁸⁰⁵

What is more interesting than these repeated petitions asking for the restoration of property may be the notion of the the collective possession of land and water.

Collective possession on behalf of peasants and/or cultivators was not unheard, given the *musha'* system, which was mostly observed in Syria and Egypt.⁸⁰⁶ By the same token, tax farms had welcomed joint ventures in theory and in practice. The extended tax farm system, i.e., *malikâne-mukâta'a*, made multi-party participation in the

⁸⁰⁴ In the original: “*müteveffâ-yı mîr-i mumâileyhin oğlu Yusuf Bey ile bi'l-iştirâk emlâk-ı ma'lûmemiz kullarından bilâ-haber mukaddemce mahallinde mu'ahharen vürûd eden mahallî mazbatası üzerine bi'l-müzâyede mumâileyh Yusuf Bey 'uhde ma'lûmü'l-mikdâr karârgîr olduğu istimâ'-yı 'âcizânemiz vukû'una...*” Ibid.

⁸⁰⁵ In the original: “...on bir madrablar kezalik taht-ı tasarruf-ı nısfîyeleri 'uhde-yi çâkerânemizde ve nısfî diğerinin dahi zikrolunan müzâyede-yi merkûmeden hâric olarak ba'zıları zabt-ı mîrî ve ba'zıları dahi mahallinde ba'zı kesân ve mültezimlerde kalmış bu kulları müzâyede olunan mare'z-zikr yüz altı pare metruk emlâkin içinden hissemize isâbet eden hakkımızı istîrham etmekde bulunmuş isek de bundan başka ve bu müşterek emlâkden ma'âda bulunan ... üzere madrab-ı mezkûrelerin dahi emsâli misillû tarafımıza icrâsı niyâzında bulunduğumuzdan...” Emphasis added. Ibid.

⁸⁰⁶ *Musha'* “was a system in which a common plot of agricultural land was divided into sections that were redistributed annually among shareholders, individual title was defined as a fraction of the common plot.” Rogan, *Frontiers of State*, 84; Mundy, “Village Land and Individual Title.”; Cuno, “The Origins of Private Ownership.”

collection of tax revenues familiar.⁸⁰⁷ However, possession rights seem to follow rather different customs. The difference is essential when it comes to the partitioning of the *madrabs*, intra-family partitioning notwithstanding. While collective possession might be regarded as a problem when the integrity of a faction is threatened, the other partition in which actors apart from that faction participate might demonstrate further nuances with regards to the possession rights in practice. In a setting where property-like rights were restrained due to the collective nature of the property, the partition indicates the extent of the possession rights; in fact, it explains why these rights diverged from property rights. In this sense, *rakabe*, the ultimate ownership of the state, might entertain a notion of complex rights with regard to possession and taxation practices in the Ottoman Empire. The shared structure of the rice lands strengthens the idea that the Ottoman state retained the ultimate rights of ownership of the land, while the possessors benefited from the rights to collect revenues produced by those same lands.

One should be careful at this point, however, because the *madrabs* in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani were missing from the registers of the Imperial Registry. The conceptualisation of ultimate ownership thus remains quite limited: When *rakaba* is taken into account following the implementation of the Land Code, its impact on the rice lands must be taken with a grain of salt. Conventional wisdom suggests that the Code first of all attempted to establish and strengthen the state's ultimate ownership on state lands.⁸⁰⁸ While debate continues concerning whether the Code was designed to maintain the ultimate ownership of the state, what is relevant

⁸⁰⁷ Salzmann notes that such *malikâne* contracts were divided into shares to be held by more than one person, whereas Genç states that the maximum number of persons to hold shares was limited to two according to an imperial decree issued in 1714. Salzmann, "An Ancien Régime Revisited," 401. Genç, "Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikane Sistemi," 107, n. 16. Sales of *çiftliks* in the early Tanzimat era had accordingly been subject to joint ventures in the districts of Trikala and Ioannina. Bayraktar, "The Political Economy of *Çiftliks*," 90-1.

⁸⁰⁸ For instance, see Marion and Sluglett, "The Transformation of Land Tenure," 493-4.

in the current discussion is the rupture the Code brought about on the possession patterns of the rice lands.⁸⁰⁹ An apparent absence of information on the current status of the rice lands in question in Ottoman registers did not matter when it came to the moment of sale.

Contrary to the claims of the faction left in the dark, there was some ambiguity from the perspective of the Ottoman government concerning the content of the one hundred and six items of property. The case was forwarded to the Imperial Registry (*Defter-i Hâkânî*), but the records of the Registry far from settled the issue, much less suggested response to the specific justifications of Behram and Bedirhan Beys. In the report of the Registry, the entire story of the Zirki emirs was summarised, which was most unusual as the case referred to the earliest available records. The matter of the discontent of the two beys ended up as another matter altogether when it came to the registration of the property in Hazro and Mihrani. The report conceded the issue of title deeds (*tapu senedâtı*) on December 23, 1863, but the Registry was at a loss concerning the rice lands on which the beys laid claim. “There was no lucidity,” the note of the Registry indicated, “on the said rice and cotton lands, restoration of which was petitioned by Bedirhan and Mehmed [Behram] Beys with respect to their inclusion in the one hundred and eight items of vineyards, fields, and etc. which had been sold to the aforesaid Yusuf Bey.”⁸¹⁰ The ambiguity was furthered when the report concluded that no records had been found demonstrating the confiscation of the rice and cotton lands by the state.⁸¹¹ Noting the absence of

⁸⁰⁹ Contrary to the argument that the Code’s purposeful design was to protect the ultimate ownership of the Ottoman state, Aytekin offers two counter-arguments, albeit with limited persuasiveness. First, he argues that the restrictions the Code introduced were designed to protect agriculture in a predominantly agrarian society and therefore not relevant to the matter of ultimate ownership. Second, he reiterates that the restriction that required the “possessor” to obtain official leave for a range of practices on the land was nothing but a formality, in his opinion. Aytekin, “Land, Rural Classes, and Law,” 190-1.

⁸¹⁰ BOA. MVL. 978/27, Şaban 1280 (January 1864), report of the Imperial Registry

⁸¹¹ Ibid.

records, the Registry immediately decided to investigate the size and previous administration of the property in question, and whether they were separate from the lands sold to Yusuf Bey.⁸¹² The investigation would also determine whether or not the two beys had any escheated property. The decree of the Registry sealed their fate: the restoration of their property was rejected in accordance with previous imperial decrees; nonetheless, a raise in their stipends was agreed upon.⁸¹³

With this verdict of the Imperial Registry, the long and contested struggle for the restoration of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands was finalised for a time. While one faction of the fallen Zirki emirs accomplished their ends, Bedirhan and Behram Beys failed, despite their petitions, carefully-couched in the very vocabulary of the central state. As there is no further information with regard to the negative response the beys received from the Ottoman government; their politics of petition—and the fact that their financial status was not as promising in comparison to that of the descendants of Receb Bey—illustrate the stance of the central government. The sale of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands in a bundle, however, exemplified the Land Code of 1858 in practice. This demonstration, which revealed claims on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands that had been conceptualised as freehold property by previous possessors even prior to the Land Code, helps to clarify the contested domains that emerged following the implementation of the Code in the province of Kurdistan. These contested domains did not entirely consist of antagonism between a “centralised Leviathan” Ottoman state and cultivators-cum-possessors. Throughout the centuries-long history of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands, albeit with the caveat that they were state state-owned, property had exclusive hereditary rights, similar to ownership rights. The subjection to the stipulations of the Code was not confined to this dual but asymmetric relation.

⁸¹² Ibid.

⁸¹³ Ibid.

Rather, claimants emerged first as a result of the local auction, and then as factions among Zirki emirs. When one adds to this mix the the aforementioned petitions on behalf of the emirs, the claims on the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in Hazro and Mihrani are evidence of another challenge against the central state.

The contest was to continue following the arrival of the descendants of Receb Bey in Hazro and Mihrani, as another matter would be brought to the Sublime Porte. The unclear status of the madrabs in the two districts constituted a setback for the policy of auctioning and selling property owned by the state itself. Rather than regarding the absence of records concerning the madrabs as an uncharted enigma, the Ottoman state was vigilant and eager to apply Tanzimat principles in Ottoman Kurdistan. But the imminent investigation of the status of the rice lands would soon bring about other another clash, this time between local notables (joined by the now exiled Zirki emirs) and the Ottoman government.

Conclusion

The terms and history of mîrî lands differ due to their previous statuses, including the yurtluk-ocaklık status. That is why one finds differences between state lands that had been possessed by their cultivators and the lands auctioned off in the district of Hazro and Mihrani. Nonetheless, they were classified with the same status when it came to the auction and sale of the lands in the two districts. On the other hand, there is consensus on the blurring of the distinction between freehold (*mülk*) and state (*mîrî*) property.⁸¹⁴ Departing from these precepts, this chapter has revealed that

⁸¹⁴ From a legal-historical perspective, the tension and interaction between the two classifications was subject to political circumstances of the day. Particularly among the jurists of Ottoman Egypt and Syria the treatment of the classification in the sixteenth century reflected to some extent the interests of the social classes to which the jurists belonged and/or with whom they were

yurtluk-ocaklık lands, despite their conversion to state property, are a category in between these two concepts, even perhaps leaning closer to freehold property. The conceptualisation has been based on a two-fold scheme: First, as the politics of petitioning and the exile of the emirs constituted a failure, it did not wear out the claims laid on the yurtluk-ocaklık. Grounding their claims on imperial decrees and grants that had been the tradition for centuries, the Zirki emirs evidently regarded the property in question as legally belonging to their family. The requests made for the restoration of the property without mentioning any payment strengthens the argument that yurtluk-ocaklık property was deemed similar to a freehold property in practice. Second, this chapter has discussed the transformation the Land Code of 1858 brought about in Diyarbekir. Following the clauses of the Code, the mîrî lands were legally recognised to allow their conversion into private property. Rather than following a legal reading of the Code, with regard to which Mundy warns not to “impute a single, unified ‘meaning’ to the legal text,” this chapter has delved into actual developments concerning the escheated lands’ possession, which had been retained by the Ottoman state.⁸¹⁵

The Land Code was influential for the escheated lands in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. In addition to the acceleration of Tanzimat-led policies in the environs of Diyarbekir following the enforcement of the Land Code, the Code itself brought about a new era in the two districts. The coming era, however, was not as simple as conclusions commonly drawn with respect to the Middle East, in general, and Ottoman Kurdistan, in particular. In this context, this chapter has demonstrated that such generalisations for Ottoman Kurdistan were not empirically sound. That is, the creation of large tracts of land following from Code practices refutes the argument

allied. Kenneth M. Cuno, "Was the Land of Ottoman Syria Miri or Milk? An Examination of Juridical Differences within the Hanafi School," *Studia Islamica*, no. 81 (1995): 151.

⁸¹⁵ Mundy, "Village Land and Individual Title," 60.

that the aim of the Code was to maintain continuity argument. On the other hand, another generalisation—that of the creation of large tracts of lands—is in accordance with conventional wisdom. But, this chapter has offered yet further insight into the creation of large tracts of land, revealing that it was not a smooth transformation in which tribal aghas or emirs immediately appropriated immediately lands once possessed by peasant cultivators, due either to the later's ignorance or fear of the Ottoman state. Albeit with the noted absence of cultivators as actors, the transformation of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands into private property was a contested process in which many actors participated and looked after their own interests.

The very case of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands constituted a contested domain prior to the enforcement of the Code. Building upon the politics of petitioning employed by the Zirki emirs, this chapter has demonstrated a significant factor in the changing perceptions of private property in the mid-century Ottoman Empire. While the Code contributed to the emergence of private property rights on *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands, it was not the only determinant shaping the fate of the property in question. The discourse in the various petitions of the Zirki beys suggests exclusionary rights, if not full property rights, on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands. The juxtaposition of the petitions with the Land Code in this context brought about a full-fledged notion of private property in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. Apart from the overall impact and coverage of the Land Code, the most basic information regarding the lands—upon which the state's ultimate ownership was supposed—was missing. As the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property had been confiscated just before the Tanzimat, it had apparently not undergone the inventory procedures for describing the actual content of the escheated lands. The restoration of the property took place to the benefit of a faction of Zirki emirs, but the question of what exactly had been restored was another question yet to

be begged of the centralising Ottoman government in its venture in Ottoman Kurdistan.

The inventory studies of the Ottoman state in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani would be initiated in the late 1860s. The reasons that necessitated a modern cadastral survey and Yusuf Bey's entrepreneurship in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani were additional domains of contestation, to be dealt with in the next chapter. Not content with the appropriation of his bundle of *yurtluk-ocaklık* property, Yusuf Bey sought to improve the production of his lands by purchasing the very rice lands, the status of which had been ambiguous in the immediate aftermath of his purchase of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property. The rice lands were essential for agriculture due to the water resources they provided, and the ventures of Yusuf Bey bring the commercialisation of agriculture to mind. A process which started with the modest steps of appropriating the lands in question would therefore turn into an expansion of agricultural commercialisation, especially considering the fact that the rice lands were also the seedbeds for cotton production. Even as this move to acquire the ownership rights of the aforementioned rice lands would entail another confrontation with the Ottoman state, the very arrival of the once-exiled-emirs in their homelands brought about discontent among the local population. Local notables of the two districts were to engage in the competition, and since many of those were Armenians, the contested domain would evolve into a confrontation between ethnicities, namely Kurds and Armenians.

CHAPTER VII

EXPANDING THE PROPERTY: THE COMMERCIALISATION OF AGRICULTURE AND THE RISING TENSION

Tanzimat reforms accelerated in the province of Kurdistan in the 1860s. That is, the the Land Code did not spell the ultimate end of the story in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. In addition to the transformation of yurtluk-ocaklık lands into modern private property, various facets of Ottoman state power were increasingly being exercised in the province. As the accelerated reforms—or perhaps the effort given to accelerate the reforms—demonstrated a more visible state and brought about a new discontent in the environs of Diyarbekir, it also offered an opportunity for members of different segments of society to participate in local politics either taking a stand against the policies of the Ottoman government or by following a moderate approach in line with the interests of the government. The Ottoman administration began to take hold in the provincial administration, but at the cost of unsettling local administrators. That is, even though most reforms became familiar in Ottoman Kurdistan, the assertion of reforms was not a straightforward dictation, but rather a process of negotiation that required local support. In addition to the increasing role the Sublime Porte was playing in local politics, it was proliferating a diversity of classes that did not hesitate to show up in the local arena.

The penetration of the Ottoman state, albeit with its centralisation maxim, was therefore partial; it is difficult to state that Kurdistan was entirely under Ottoman control. The power of the emirates had not been filled by the central authority, and thus a void remained: “Tribal power emerged triumphant in most of the rural parts of

the region.”⁸¹⁶ The 1860s, therefore, could be deemed the beginning of “tribal re-emirisation” despite the centralisation efforts of the Ottoman state. The centralisation, to follow van Bruinessen’s arguments, relied on indirect rule, but at lower levels. What van Bruinessen calls the “atomisation of Kurdish society” took place as the allocation of power was delegated by the governors to tribal aghas or local chieftains, in contrast with the pre-Tanzimat order of delegation of power by governors to only the emirs of the region.⁸¹⁷ The regions extending from Hazro to Hani and Lice were no longer ruled by local emirates, yet Ottoman rule over the districts was in a constant state of negotiation among the remnants of local dynasts and newly rising notables. The arrival of the Zirki beys, thus, would add to the debate, changing the political configurations of the districts of Hazro and Mihrani.

This chapter deals first with the arrival of the Zirki beys, which necessitated a change in the power configurations of the districts. The arrival of these emirs, who had succeeded at being acquitted by the Ottoman government, would not please local notables who had been running the districts’ economic affairs in their absence. Apart from local beys, the faction of the Zirki beys that had failed to receive a share in what they thought to be their possession would continue to pose a threat despite their distance.

Secondly, the chapter expands on the emergence of private property in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, which soon set the stage for commercialisation of agriculture. As much as land became indispensable in the process of commodification that followed the enforcement of the Land Code, water occupied an even more important role with regard to usage rights. In other words, given the vitality of water for a successful agricultural enterprise in a relatively arid region

⁸¹⁶ Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 61.

⁸¹⁷ See the figure on the growth of the administrative network and its destruction of large structures, such as the emirates. van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 194-5.

such as Diyarbekir, water resources became more significant in economic relations. As water is a prerequisite of commercial agriculture, this chapter deals with the struggles over water in the two districts. While the struggle was in part a family matter among the Zirki beys with regard to their collective property, the urban notables of Diyarbekir, who were well aware of the prospects the madrabs could offer, also posed challenges. At the heart of increasing demand for privileged access to water resources was the Ottoman government's inability to provide a historical registry of said resources. In the situation where the Ottoman government was unable to play a mediatory role in the conflicts over the lands in question, the Sublime Porte initiated a cadastral survey of the lands to put an end to the conflicting claims.

While expounding on the practices of cadastral survey in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, this chapter investigates the political aspects of the process. As the survey procedure was not unilateral, the ensuing developments point to the complications and contestations among different offices of the Ottoman administration. Demonstrating the interaction among various state departments, the second part of the chapter deals with the reflexive nature of the Ottoman government. That is, as the struggle for water resources intensified following the arrival of the Zirki beys, Yusuf Bey asked for the sale of water resources to his faction, a request to which the Ottoman government did not turn a blind eye. But after hearing several voices on the fate of the madrabs, the Ottoman government was unable to assert its authority to maintain the madrabs' relations of possession; that is, five-year-tenures to be sold at regular auctions. Even though practices with regard to the possession of the madrabs did not undergo a dramatic change, the struggle for water resources indicated the late-nineteenth-century commercialisation of agriculture in Ottoman Kurdistan, in general, and in Hazro and Mihrani, in particular.

The Zirki Beys as Local Notables in Hazro and Mihrani

The restoration of yurtluk-ocaklık lands as private property gave the descendants of Receb Bey the opportunity to come back to his lands in 1864. Even though there is little detail about the arrival of Yusuf Bey, a statement of the governor of Kurdistan indicates that the arrival was no ordinary event.⁸¹⁸ According to Şevket Budak, a descendant of Sevdin Bey, one of Receb Bey's sons, local Armenians welcomed the arrival of the emirs, including Yusuf Bey and Sevdin Bey, as well as Bedri, Mustafa and Avni Beys, sons of the deceased Nuri Bey.⁸¹⁹ Furthermore, he claims that the Zirki beys arrived in wintertime, and the locals of Hazro laid down felts (*keçe*) along the path from Hazro to Boğaz, a distance of nearly a kilometre.⁸²⁰

Despite Budak's narrative of a warm welcome, Yusuf Bey returned to Hazro to face problems from various adversaries. The fact that he had assumed the tithe-tax farm contract of Hazro for 1864 disrupted the already fluctuating local power configurations from the moment he arrived in Diyarbekir. Thanks to the encouragement of the Kurdistan governor, Mustafa Pasha, Yusuf Bey assumed the tithe contract of Hazro and assigned it to his servant Mehmed Agha.⁸²¹ As Yusuf Bey returned with considerable financial power and therefore assumed the prestige his father once enjoyed, rivals emerged, displeased at the increasing political and financial power of the Zirki beys. According to a petition by Yusuf Bey, the chamberlain of the governor, Emin Efendi, attempted to impede the revenues Yusuf

⁸¹⁸ BOA. MVL. 669/79, 21 Şaban 1280 (31 January 1864).

⁸¹⁹ Nuri Bey was shot and killed by Romanian and Bulgarian brigands during his visit to the çiftlik in Edirne in 1863. For the details of the assault and interrogations of the culprits, see respectively BOA. MVL. 959/91, 3 Ramazan 1279 (22 February 1863); BOA. İ. MVL. 483/21906, 10 Şevval 1279 (31 March 1863).

⁸²⁰ Budak.

⁸²¹ Having made an increase of sixty thousand guruşes, Yusuf Bey assumed the contract for the amount of four hundred and ten thousand guruşes. BOA. MVL. 480/16, 11 Rebiülevvel 1282 (4 August 1865).

Bey was to collect. Out of personal interest, Yusuf Bey grumbled, the chamberlain did not collect the revenues due from tax farmers under the contract to which Mehmed Agha had been assigned. Having said “I do not accept any excuses, I want money,” the chamberlain was said to harass Yusuf Bey despite having received his payment of two hundred gurus according to the contract.⁸²² The harassment became physical when the chamberlain attacked Yusuf Bey’s house while the latter was in Diyarbekir. Yusuf Bey’s mother, Zeyneb Hanım, had a stroke and died as a result.

The harassment continued, according to Yusuf Bey’s account, once the chamberlain reached Diyarbekir. Imprisoned by the chamberlain and familiar with the politics of petitioning, Yusuf Bey attempted to send a telegram to Istanbul itemizing the wrongdoings of Emin Efendi. The müdir of the Telegram Office in Diyarbekir was in the chamberlain’s pocket, Yusuf Efendi noted, so he arranged to have the telegram sent from the Harput Telegram Office.⁸²³ In the meantime, the governor heard about the tensions between the chamberlain and Yusuf Bey and released the bey from prison, asking, “Does anyone complain about his master (*efendisini*)?”⁸²⁴ “I heard that you would send telegram by dispatching your men,” the governor continued, “now find a horseman and recall your telegram immediately.”⁸²⁵ Relieved by the governor’s action, Yusuf Bey retracted the first telegram but complained in a second that he had not yet assumed possession of the lands he had purchased in Istanbul.

⁸²² BOA. MVL. 480/16, Temmuz 1281 (August 1865).

⁸²³ Ibid. There are two petitions written by Yusuf Bey: the first addressed the Sublime Porte, Supreme Council, a certain Sami Pasha and his son Hilmi Bey. Second one, at the prompting of the governor of Kurdistan, addressed only Sami Pasha.

⁸²⁴ BOA. MVL. 480/16, Temmuz 1281 (August 1865).

⁸²⁵ The governor ensured Yusuf Bey by saying that from then on, he would be his servant and son. Ibid.

The post-yurtluk-ocaklık period in Diyarbekir, characterised by a multiplicity of actors in search of power, did not seem to welcome the return of the Zirki beys. The extent of regional competition was similar to the early nineteenth century, with the distinction that Ottoman authority in the province had become more visible. As Meeker notes, there was a strong competition among governors and their retinues—the imperial elites—and the Zirki beys—the local elites.⁸²⁶ The arrival of the Zirki emirs, despite the insignificance of their remaining power in the region, invoked discontent among dependents on the imperial elites in Diyarbekir who had offered their services to the governors in return for the freedom to pursue political and financial interests.⁸²⁷

In this complicated network of social oligarchy, the Zirki beys' return to power went hand-in-hand with the enforcement of Tanzimat policies. That is, the Sublime Porte paved the way for a centrally-appointed administration in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, while at the same time restoring the local dynast. The allocation of power negotiated between the Ottoman government and Yusuf Bey brought about an Ottoman-led administration in return for an economic influence in the region to be enjoyed by the Zirki emirs. The local administration of the district was handed over to the Ottoman government in the 1860s.⁸²⁸ Yet the fact that the yurtluk-ocaklık property in Hazro and the surrounding districts was restored to the emirs ironically

⁸²⁶ In Meeker's formulation, the imperial elites draw on the manpower and resources generated by the state system without being dependent on a local following, while the regional elites, who are the principals among many lesser local elites of varying importance, maintain the same ability, but with a more direct dependence on the regional social oligarchy. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, 218-26.

⁸²⁷ There was also competition with Armenian notables who constituted the other end of the spectrum of local elites in Hazro. See the next chapter for a discussion of intra-notable rivalry.

⁸²⁸ A certain Mustafa Efendi, for instance, petitioned the government to be awarded a müdirlik after serving nearly eight years in the offices of Hazro and Silvan. Millizâde Ali Bey accordingly served in Hazro, later to be appointed to the district of Cizre. In 1867, Neşet Bey, following his resignation from the müdirlik of Hazro was replaced with Mehmed Arif Efendi in accordance with the decision of the Commission of Election. BOA. MVL. 424/64, 17 Şevval 1279 (7 April 1863); BOA. MVL. 499/134, 10 Safer 1283 (24 June 1866); BOA. MVL. 724/79, 5 Cemaziyelahir 1283 (15 October 1866).

created competition with Ottoman authority in the region, as the economic status of the emirs uprooted and would continue to uproot local configurations in the district. Even owning a vast amount of landed property, Yusuf Bey was not content and sought to expand his property in the years to come.

The restoration of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property had paved the way for the emirs in the course of their return from exile to their homelands. Despite initial concerns, this restoration in itself did not result in a return to an emirate-like administration of the district. In order to improve his political power in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, Yusuf Bey opted for—or was compelled to adopt—a more moderate approach vis-à-vis the Ottoman government, unlike the administration of Sadullah Bey. On August 4, 1865, Yusuf Bey complained about his failure to assume ownership of the property he had purchased in Istanbul.⁸²⁹ Having obtained control of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands purchased from the Imperial Treasury in the late 1860s, Yusuf Bey would soon pursue other commercial interests in order to strengthen the local power of the Zirki family. On February 23, 1869, Yusuf Bey petitioned the Ottoman government once again. His demands would facilitate the reemergence of the Zirki beys in Hazro in tandem with the commercialisation of the district's agriculture.

The Purchase of the Madrabs in Hazro and Mihrani

In line with commercial enterprise, it was not much later that Yusuf Bey started claiming rights to the madrabs, which were the main irrigation sources in the environs of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property. In accordance with the post-1858 period,

⁸²⁹ BOA. MVL. 480/16, 11 Rebiülevvel 1282 (4 August 1865).

the same *madrabs* demonstrate the scope of sphere of private property delineated by the Ottoman government. Although water resources were conventionally retained in the public interest as state-owned property, the discussion among departments within the Ottoman government about turning lands with water resources into private property demonstrates the extent of the commercialisation of land in the empire. Regardless of the prospective status of the *madrabs*, the struggle for water resources in Hazro and Mihrani was beyond the projections of the Ottoman government.

Yusuf Bey's attempt to purchase the *madrabs* seemed like a long shot. His aim to expand his lands to include the *madrabs* had started two years earlier in Istanbul in the course of his trial with Magsi Kazaz. Frustrated to have no resolution, Yusuf Bey claimed that an imperial decree was issued two years earlier entitling him to possession (*'uhde-yi kemterâne*), and the matter was directed to the Council of Accountancy (*Divân-ı Muhâsebât*).⁸³⁰ Following the investigation of the Council, it was agreed that the *madrabs* would be auctioned for five-year tenures. Even though there was no local claimant in the region, the case was suspended and came to a deadlock as documents circulated continuously among offices of the Sublime Porte. Yusuf Bey moved from pillar to post in despair. Telegrams to the governorate of Diyarbekir stated that the case was directed to the Ministry of Finance, yet when he inquired about the case at the Ministry, he was supplied with the response that he had to apply to the Council of State.⁸³¹ The Kafkaesque adventure of Yusuf Bey in his attempt at privileged possession of the *madrabs* showed the crucial importance of water for agriculture in Hazro and Mihrani.

⁸³⁰ BOA. ŞD. 2854/69, 11 Zilkade 1285 (23 February 1869).

⁸³¹ Lost in the state departments, Yusuf Bey grumbled, he was redirected to the Ministry when he applied to the Council of State. Ibid.

The Vitality of Water for Rice Cultivation

Apart from agriculture, madrabs and access to water shaped the fate of the two districts in the late 1860s. In a region where the prospects for irrigation sealed the fate of agricultural lands, water—as one agent in a broader broader environmental context—widens the perspective of socioeconomic development. Furthermore, as the following sections elaborate, irrigation, as Mikhail notes, “is a particularly good lens through which to view relations between the peasants of the empire’s provinces and the Ottoman imperial bureaucracy.”⁸³² The vast yurtluk-ocaklık property in Hazro and Mihrani would not yield more revenue so long as its hydrologic connectivity within the Tigris ecosystem remained cut.⁸³³ In addition to ecological disputes between cultivators—who had the most intimate experience on the madrabs—and the Ottoman state—which had to administer and distribute the finite madrabs—water was a commodity. But it was not a commodity that would be subject to the market, since it was “a raw material subject to the pressures and demands of a state with diverse and enormous responsibilities, interests, and changes.”⁸³⁴ Given one of the Ottoman economic principles of provisionism, the Ottoman state had to oversee a fragile balance: this water was essential to a system of food production that sustained individuals all over the empire.⁸³⁵ In fact, the provisionist concern of the Ottoman Empire found its way into the heart of its law on irrigation:

The connection between *shari‘a* as a generic term for Islamic law, and *shari‘a* as the path as well as the law of water, is not a coincidence,

⁸³² Alan Mikhail, *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 23.

⁸³³ “The water-mediated transfer of sediment,” states Husain “energy, and organic matter, referred to as *hydrologic connectivity* in ecological jargon was crucial for the ecological integrity and very survival of the entire river ecosystem.” Faisal Husain, “In the Bellies of the Marshes: Water and Power in the Countryside of Ottoman Baghdad,” *Environmental History* 19, no. 4 (2014): 640.

⁸³⁴ Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 48.

⁸³⁵ For provisionism and its changing nature in the nineteenth century, see Genç, “Osmanlı İktisâdî Dünya,”; Genç, “19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadi.”

and the centrality of water in Islam is obvious in the economic as well as the exponents and expounders of the *shari'a* – did not fail to develop, in answer to this centrality, a highly sophisticated system of rules.⁸³⁶

The highly sophisticated system of rules was essential for rice cultivation in the empire. As production of rice—an aristocratic grain—was largely a state-enterprise in the early-modern period of the empire, use of water was under strict state control.⁸³⁷ Mikhail argues, however, that state control was not direct, but rather a delegation of authority to “communities of water,” “whose understandings of precedent and experience and knowledge in individual rural ecosystems influenced and often even controlled the Ottoman management of water resources.”⁸³⁸ Since irrigation was of basic importance to ensure rice cultivation, early-modern Ottoman polity stipulated the construction and maintenance of water works even when it reclaimed and established ownership rights over rice lands.⁸³⁹ On state-owned lands, however, distribution and sustenance of water flow was carried out by *kürekçis*—supervised by *reis*—charged with the maintenance of water canals.⁸⁴⁰ The close supervision realised by state officials in the early-modern period seemed to function with the cooperation of local rice cultivators. Accordingly, the presence of state officials served to maintain a vital balance among the fields to be irrigated, as “the actions of a few directly affected the welfare of the whole community.”⁸⁴¹

⁸³⁶ Chibli Mallat, "The Quest for Water Use Principles: Reflections on *Shari'a* and Custom in the Middle East," in *Water in the Middle East: Legal, Political and Commercial Implications*, ed. J. A. Allan, et al. (London: I.B. Tauris 1995), 128.

⁸³⁷ The rice aristocracy comes from the relatively limited number of areas in which it was grown. Rice producing areas in Anatolia during the sixteenth century included, Boyabad and Tosya (province of Kastamonu), Beypazarı and Kızılcahamam (Ankara), Bigfadiç, the town of Malatya, Sonusa and Niksar in the vicinity of Tokat, Cilicia and Bergama and Aydın in western Anatolia. Venzke, "Rice Cultivation," 187, n. 51.

⁸³⁸ By “communities of water,” Mikhail is referring to a community “with specific social and ecological ethics including the sharing of natural resources and the collective maintenance of irrigation works.” Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 39.

⁸³⁹ İnalçık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re'aya* System," 80.

⁸⁴⁰ Zeki Arıkan, "XV-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Anadolu'da Çeltik Üretimi," in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarihi Kongresi Tebliğler* (Ankara: Marmara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi, 1989), 478.

⁸⁴¹ Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 47.

The urgent need for a stable, continual water flow was evident in Yusuf Bey's petitions, as he complained that the flow of the four *madrabs*, he had asked to purchase had ebbed, and state possession was impeding the cultivation of his lands.⁸⁴² Yusuf Bey's endeavour was not entirely personal. The Foreign Office of the British Empire, which was interested in land tenure practices in Kurdistan, had asked in a questionnaire about large- versus small-scale agriculture. The response revealed the revealed the most important determinant between the two:

Small holdings predominate. *The cause chiefly affecting the distribution of land is the presence of water.* The only property in this pashalic [*sic.*] for which a purchaser can be found is that which contains a stream of water, or the right to a certain portion of one, available for irrigation. The country at present out of reach of irrigation may be cultivated by anyone who will take the trouble, the government only claiming ten per cent on rent or purchase, it being out of reach of irrigation. All this land could be made most valuable property by the cutting of canals for irrigation from the various rivers which intersect the Pashalic, by making cart roads and introducing carts, and by the introduction of a more just and efficient government capable and willing to afford security and protection to its subjects.⁸⁴³

In line with British concerns for the possibility of commercial agriculture, Yusuf Bey's legal struggle to transform his *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands into large-scale agriculture farms depended on the acquisition of stable *madrabs*.

Despite the vitality of water and the analogy to the *shari'a*, laws regulating the use and possession of water remained enigmatic. Remarking that the legal status of water was far more nebulous than that of land, Mikhail underscores that "although water was owned by no one, it was in many ways owned by all the users of a particular water source or conduit."⁸⁴⁴ Notwithstanding the fact that Islamic law

⁸⁴² BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 9 Receb 1284 (6 November 1867), Yusuf Bey's petition. Due to the number and range of dates of the documents in the file, dates of individual documents will be used for practical reasons.

⁸⁴³ Public Records Office, Foreign Office 78/1419, Reply by Holmes to Questionnaire, quoted in Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 221. Emphasis added.

⁸⁴⁴ Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 10-1.

entitled the state to ultimate property rights, it was not uncommon to simply apply the core principles of the Islamic law on water:

- (a) Water is a gift of God, and belongs in principle to the community. This creates a primary right of *shafa* (drink) for an individual and for cattle and household animals.
- (b) Value added to water by labour in the form of retaining it in a recipient and/or through distribution or conservation works may create a qualified right to ownership. This is particularly true for irrigation (right of *shirb*), and will also permit the appropriation of water which is carried by “recipients”. The trade of water by *saqqa'in* (street traders of water) is still known in some Arab countries, like Egypt.
- (c) Water sharing principles vary according to local uses, but the general trend is the acknowledgement of a right of prior appropriation combined with the required distribution of surplus.
- (d) Liability attaches to withholding or misuse of water, including for polluting or degrading clean water.⁸⁴⁵

The complexity of water rights was reiterated in the Ottoman Civil Code, or *Mecelle*, the draft of which was started in 1867, to be enforced in 1876.⁸⁴⁶ Despite the definition of water as jointly-owned free property (*mübâh*), the Code was puzzling with regard to rivers and adjoining waterways. It declared that all persons are entitled to water from the public domain, yet acknowledged the existence of privately-owned waterways, consequentially restricting use of their water by riparian landowners.⁸⁴⁷ By the same token, Article 1239 differentiated between two types of rivers on private property. The first category was public rivers, the water of which was divided among the owners of the lands through which they flow, and not being exhausted, continues its course through unclaimed lands, free to public. The second category consists of

⁸⁴⁵ Mallat, "The Quest for Water Use," 129-30.

⁸⁴⁶ For the Code and its origins, see respectively Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-ı Adliyye*, Third ed. (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1312 [1895]); Şerif Arif Mardin, "Some Explanatory Notes on the Origins of the "Mecelle" (Medjelle)," *The Muslim World* 51, no. 3 (1961); "Some Explanatory Notes on the Origins of the "Mecelle"," *ibid.*, no. 4.

⁸⁴⁷ Abraham M. Hirsch, "Water Legislation in the Middle East," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 8, no. 2 (1959): 175. As seas and large lakes were free, the case of rivers was a puzzle with regard to its free status of water. That is, as Article 143 defined the right to take water (*hakk-ı şirb*) as the right to take a duly defined and ascertained share of water from a river, Article 216 acknowledged the validity of the sale of that right. What confused the issue was the differentiation between personal and public interests. Article 955 indicated the private right to take flowing water as a right to be enjoyed for limited *personae*, noting the exception that the right to take water from rivers used by the public did not fall in this category. For these articles and the section on jointly-owned free property, see Cevdet Paşa, *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-ı Adliyye*, 43, 59, 291 and 381-4 respectively.

private rivers, the water of which are divided among lands belonging to a limited number of persons and completely consumed within the limits of such lands.⁸⁴⁸

The fact that *madrabs* were water streams as well as rice lands, the puzzling legal terminology led to the struggle for the *madrabs* in Hazro and Mihrani. The Civil Code came to offer solutions for the disputes, confusing as they were, by defining public versus private rights to take water from rivers, as well as public and private rights to possess, if not own, the very same rivers. As a precursor to the legal developments brought about by the Civil Code, the Ottoman government further complicated the issue by considering the outright sale of water resources in the two districts. As the line between the spheres of public and private property was thin, and the added value that water represented represented encouraged the bending of concepts one way or the other, the processes became quite complicated. Complications also arose from the lack of information with regard to the *madrabs* in Hazro and Mihrani. As the possessors of *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands from time immemorial had often been investigated in the registries, yielding no satisfactory results; the *madrabs* would pose a quandary for the Ottoman administration with regard to local disputes that accelerated in the aftermath of the Land Code and the Civil Code.

The Cadastral Survey of the *Madrabs*

The Zirki emirs' attempts to bend definitions in their favour went back even further. In 1864, the year Yusuf Bey obtained the property rights of the once-*yurtluk-ocaklık* lands of his father, the young bey also made his first move to obtain possession of

⁸⁴⁸ *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-ı Adliyye*, 382.

four madrabs. The problems associated with the madrabs had started with the earlier petitions of Behram and Bedirhan Beys in 1864.⁸⁴⁹ Since the madrabs constituted the backbone of any prospective agriculture in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, their fate was equally important to both the Sublime Porte and the Zirki emirs.⁸⁵⁰ Upon receiving the petitions of the two beys claiming possession rights to eleven madrabs, the Ottoman government interrogated the governor of Kurdistan in order to resolve the complicated situation.

The questions asked by the Ottoman government were a step toward strengthening the Tanzimat in the two districts. On the issue of the madrabs, which had been tax farmed but not yet recorded in the imperial registries, the Ministry of Finance was eager to discover the answers to several outstanding matters. Already familiar with the fact that rice and cotton cultivation were being carried out in the years of water flows, the Ministry asked whether tenure payments were being charged by the Ottoman state for non-irrigated lands upon which grain was being cultivated. This was in addition to questions of the location, capacity, irrigation, and title status of the madrabs.⁸⁵¹ What the Sublime Porte wanted to know precisely, however, was whether the yurtluk-ocaklık property sold to Yusuf Bey included property in these lands. As a result of the efforts of the Ottoman administration and religious judges, a cadastral survey was carried out with particular attention to these questions of the Sublime Porte.

⁸⁴⁹ See Table 15 in the previous chapter.

⁸⁵⁰ The rivulets Ambar and Pamuk, the supplies of which were high, were narrowed between the source and their junctions with ten to twelve kilometre long piles of stones. Canals were opened along the elevated water stream, which irrigated the rice lands. Konyar, *Diyarbakir Yıllığı*, 21.

⁸⁵¹ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Gurra Zilhicce (9 May 1864), the record of the council of Hazro on the cadastral survey of the villages which water was supplied by the four water resources.

Table 16. Capacity and Names of Lands Irrigated by the Four Madrabs

Name of the Madrab	Villages Irrigated	Rice-Seed Capacity (in kiles ⁸⁵²)
Küçük	Dersil	30
	Hincikân	26
	Küfercin	51
Büyük	Başnik	60
	Dersil	45
	Celile	50
	Küfercin	95
	Kekân	40
	Zoğbirin	80
	Tercil	70
Barbuş	Dercan (?)	10
	Karye-i Kebir (?)	50
	Panaz	110
Babaki	Bazmar	5
	Geyr (?)	136
	Hacı Umran (?)	200
	Bölük	60
	Cırnoki	100

Source: BOA. ŞD. 1452/21 Gurra Zilhicce (9 May 1864).

The survey was not a cadastre in any typical sense of the word. The locations of the fields irrigated by the four madrabs were presented in descriptive manner, while actual cadastral mapping was out of the question. Furthermore, the survey was borne out of the urgent necessity to determine the possessors and regions irrigated by the madrabs. As it was by no means a revenue survey, surveyors did not even try to establish the connections between allotments and taxation.⁸⁵³ Since the imperial order was predominantly concerned with revealing the possessors and beneficiaries of the madrabs in question, the scope of the cadastral survey remained limited.⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵² For rice cultivation, kile was also employed to determine the sizes of rice lands. Arıkan, "XV-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Anadolu'da Çeltik Üretimi," 478.

⁸⁵³ For a brilliant case of the determination of allotments and their use in taxation by the British in India and its comparison with Ottoman Syria, see respectively Richard Saumarez Smith, *Rule by Records: Land Registration and Village Custome in Early British Penjab* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); Richard Saumarez Smith, "Mapping Landed Property: A Necessary Technology of Imperial Rule?," in *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and the West*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu (London and New York: I.B. Tauris 2004).

⁸⁵⁴ In this vein, Kain and Baigent criticise a direct relation with the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Thwarting the importance attributed to cadastral mapping in the age of capitalism, they argue that "changes in the new capitalist society thereafter did not lead to an inexorable and consistent increase in the use of the 'new' medium of communication local cadastral detail." Roger J.P. Kain and

Nevertheless, with their regulations and procedures of compilation, surveys were important: they represented political power fields wherein the negotiations and struggles of various groups left an imprint on the nature of property itself.⁸⁵⁵ By the same token, the limitations of the cadastral survey should not be regarded as a failure in comparison to the cutting-edge technologies being employed in the West in the nineteenth century.⁸⁵⁶ Considering the uses of cadastral maps—which included land reclamation, evaluation and management of state land resources, land redistribution and enclosure, colonial settlement, taxation, symbols of state control over land, and tools of rational government, all of which are summarised by Kain and Baigent—the cadastral survey on the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, albeit of limited scope, served to perform several of the functions mentioned above.⁸⁵⁷ More importantly, the mere possibility of carrying out such a survey was an indication of increasing government intervention in the region.⁸⁵⁸ It was eventually “an instrument of control which both reflects and consolidates the power of those who commission it.”⁸⁵⁹ The fact of

Elizabet Baigent, *The Cadastral Map in the Service of the State: A History of Property Mapping* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 4.

⁸⁵⁵ İslamoğlu, "Politics of Administering Property," 279.

⁸⁵⁶ İnalcık, in his Ottomanist view, concedes that an Ottoman survey of the early modern period is not a cadastre in the modern sense. His concession is defensive in the sense that the classical Ottoman system of registration of land and population in itself was functional, rendering systematic cadastral registration unnecessary. In comparison to British India, Saumarez-Smith, however, notes that the failure of such in Ottoman Lebanon is related to the fact that the existence of a technology does not guarantee its use. “[O]nly with use does technology acquire value or function in a system.” Halil İnalcık, "Land Surveying," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1914*, ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 138; Saumarez Smith, "Mapping Landed Property," 172.

⁸⁵⁷ Kain and Baigent, *The Cadastral Map*, 332-42.

⁸⁵⁸ In the nineteenth century, increasing land disputes in the Ottoman Empire resulted in the production of documents similar to the survey here. Despite early failures, cadastral mapping and the changing legal and fiscal mentality of the central state were important. Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "'A very important requirement of social life': Privatisation of Land, Criminalisation of Custom, and Land Disputes in Nineteenth Century Anatolia," in *Les acteurs des transformations foncières autour de la Méditerranée au XIX^e siècle*, ed. Vanessa Guéno and Didier Guignard (Paris: Karthala, 2013); Kaya and Terzibaşoğlu, "Tahrir'den Kadastro'ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi: 'Kadastro Tabir Olunur Tahrir-i Emlak'."

⁸⁵⁹ Kain and Baigent, *The Cadastral Map*, 344. For a conservative view that cadastral surveys undermine the political power of central authorities, indeed which interprets them as bypassing the latter: a cooperation of “high science” and local institutions that create a system of information and tax gathering, see Catherine Evtuhov, *Portrait of a Russian Province: Economy, Society, and Civilization in Nineteenth-Century Nizhnii Novgorod* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 165-81.

commissioning the survey itself can be said to have contributed to the reinforcement of Tanzimat in the two districts.

Following the imperial decree, the commissioners of the survey along with nearby village elders made an on-site visit in order to understand the land tenure practices on the *madrabs*. It appeared that cultivators from the villages controlled the direction of water flow to allocate it among sixteen villages; tax farmers were involved with taxation affairs.⁸⁶⁰ However, the use of the *madrabs* for cultivating cotton suggested that additional charges needed to be collected by the Ottoman state. That is, in the *Büyük* and *Küçük* *madrabs* in Hazro one-tenth of the cotton harvest was allocated as a tithe an additional one-third was to be collected by the Ottoman treasury for the rights to take the water (*hakk-ı şerb*).⁸⁶¹ The corresponding amount for the Babak and Barkuş *madrabs* was two-ninths after the deduction of the tithe. The remainder was kept by the cultivators, and the additional charge was applicable only in the years that cotton was cultivated. That is, when grain was cultivated in the absence of water flow, the peasants were not charged anything more than the customary tithe.⁸⁶² Rice cultivation on lands irrigated by the *Büyük*, *Küçük*, Babaki, and Barkuş *madrabs*, on the other hand, had entirely different tax-farm terms. Since rice lands, the governor of Diyarbekir noted, were not cultivated by the same means of rotation as other grains in the region, it was natural to wait for at least seven years to cultivate rice again.⁸⁶³ However, the seven-year period was extended to fifteen years due to the vastness of the region.⁸⁶⁴ Apart from the detailed investigation of the

⁸⁶⁰ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Gurra Zilhicce (9 May 1864), the record of the council of Hazro.

⁸⁶¹ The right is evidently a precursor to Article 143 of the Civil Code, cf. Cevdet Paşa, *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-ı Adliyye*, 43.

⁸⁶² BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Gurra Zilhicce (9 May 1864), the record of the council of Hazro.

⁸⁶³ The seven-year rotation was due to the scarcity of water. There were some lands in Western Anatolia on which rice was grown once in ten or fifteen years. Feridun Emecen, "Çeltik," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 8 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı 1993).

⁸⁶⁴ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 15 Cemaziyelevvel 1285 (3 September 1868), report of the Diyarbekir governor.

relations of production and of land tenure, the cadastral survey concluded that no part of these madrabs was among the one hundred eight items of the yurtluk-ocaklık property, adding that all the lands were under the possession of (*ahâlinin taht ve tasarrufunda*) their cultivators.⁸⁶⁵

Küçük madrab, according to the survey, had been in collective possession (*ber-vech-i iştirak mutasarrıf*) of Receb Bey and Şeyhzâde Osman Pasha of Diyarbekir. Following the exile of Receb Bey to Edirne, his share was escheated by the Ottoman state, while the other share continued to be possessed by the descendants of Osman Pasha. Accordingly, half of the Büyük madrab had once been possessed by Receb Bey prior to his exile, while the other half seemed to have often changed hands. One quarter was currently possessed by Nuh and Fettah Beys, who were the beys of Hazro, while the remaining quarter was collectively possessed by Abdullah, İsmail, and Numan Beys.⁸⁶⁶ Before his exile, Receb Bey possessed half of the madrabs in the district of Mihrani (i.e., Babak and Barkuş madrabs); the other half had been property of the state from time immemorial. Despite the commission's conclusion that the yurtluk-ocaklık property sold to Yusuf Bey did not include any share of the four madrabs in question, the Imperial Registry would ignore the cadastral survey four years later and would conclude that "it is not clear by the records that the rice lands, which are four in number with a capacity of forty-one and half kile, are among the escheated villages the Treasury administers apart from those sold and auctioned."⁸⁶⁷ The uncertainty regarding the madrabs was to continue for years, during which piles of documents would circulate among various Ottoman offices.

⁸⁶⁵ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Gurra Zilhicce (9 May 1864), the record of the council of Hazro.

⁸⁶⁶ The survey noted that the share of Abdullah Bey, who had transferred possession to his two sons and three daughters, was questionable since the children of the bey failed to produce the title. BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Gurra Zilhicce (9 May 1864), the record of the council of Hazro.

⁸⁶⁷ The original reads: "dört kıt'a da cem'en kırk bir buçuk kilelik çeltük mahalleri tefvîz ve ihâle olunandan ma'ada Hazine idâresinde kalan kurâ-yı mazbuta meyânında olmadığı kayden

Deadlock in the Ottoman Bureaucracy

Yusuf Bey's attempts to expand his yurtluk-ocaklık property to include the four nearby madrabs by appealing to various offices within the Sublime Porte were initially a *cul de sac*. But the fact that Yusuf Bey's petitions were put off did not discourage him. Rather, it demonstrated the lack of knowledge of the centralising Tanzimat state in the province of Kurdistan as well as the contested nature of the madrabs in terms of possession privileges. The Sublime Porte currently had little knowledge about the madrabs in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani and their relation to the yurtluk-ocaklık property Yusuf Bey had purchased. The fact that they were in the dark owed much to Diyarbekir's local notables, whose interests with regard to water resources further complicated the situation. On November 6, 1867, the bey wrote one series of petitions asking for the restoration of the four madrabs to the bundle of the yurtluk-ocaklık property.

Yusuf Bey informed the Sublime Porte that the Büyük and Küçük madrabs in Hazro, which had capacities of eight and three and a half kile of seeds, respectively, and the Babaki and Barkuş madrabs in the district of Mihrani, which had capacities of sixteen and twelve kiles, had not been included in the bundle of yurtluk-ocaklık property. Having failed to receive the titles to these water resources, Yusuf Bey further complained that the water flowing through these lands was impeding agriculture in his lands.⁸⁶⁸ Even though the four madrabs irrigated a significant number of villages, as shown in Table 16, Yusuf Bey regarded this use of the water as minor in comparison to the potential yield of to his yurtluk-ocaklık property. The capacities of the Büyük, Küçük, Babak, and Barkuş madrabs themselves were

bilinememiştir". BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 25 Şaban 1284 (22 December 1867), annotation of the Imperial Registry upon Yusuf Bey's petition.

⁸⁶⁸ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 9 Receb 1284 (6 November 1867), Yusuf Bey's petition.

insignificant with respect to with Yusuf Bey's interests; their water resources could conceivably irrigate his lands capable of cultivating 1,312 kiles of seeds.⁸⁶⁹ Aware of the importance of irrigation for large-scale agriculture, the bey was keen to facilitate irrigation access at the expense of other lands being irrigated. In the end, the bey asked for the inclusion of the *madrabs* in the registers and that they be granted (*ferâğ*) to his party for a fair-value payment.⁸⁷⁰ His justification for being entitled with the possession of the *madrabs* was their idle status.

The grant, in his next petition, was replaced with an assignment (*tevfiz*) in return for a down payment.⁸⁷¹ However, he was not alone in the pursuit to acquire the possession rights of the *madrabs*. In early 1868, another faction of the Zirki emirs, headed by Bedirhan Bey's son, Mehmed Faris, was taking part in the struggle over the *madrabs*. Mehmed Faris, with the signature major general (*mirliva*), reminded the Ottoman government of the eleven *madrabs* which his family had asked be restored in the form of *malikânes*. As there was no resolution of the investigation, Mehmed Faris warned the Sublime Porte that Yusuf Bey was preoccupied with appropriating the *madrabs* by means of "closure" as he had done with the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property.⁸⁷² Having made his claim based on the "collective" possession of the *madrabs* in which Yusuf Bey was interested, Mehmed Faris made it known that he was another claimant on the purchase of the *madrabs*.

Doubts about the *madrabs* were not confined to the fact of their collective possession. The question of whether the *madrabs* were included in the originally escheated lands could not be answered in the office of the Accountancy of Stocks (*Esham Muhasebesi*) and was directed to the Imperial Registry. Two days later, on

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁷¹ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 27 Şaban 1284 (24 December 1867), Yusuf Bey's petition.

⁸⁷² BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 9 Ramazan 1284 (4 January 1868), Mehmed Faris' petition.

June 24, 1868, the Registry remarked that the *madrabs* had been recorded as a *mirliva hass*, i.e., timar units assigned to major generals, with an annual revenue of forty-two thousand akçes. With regards to the initial question, however, the Registry remained silent.⁸⁷³ One month later, with no response forthcoming, Mehmed Faris filed another petition to be informed about the outcome of his initial request.⁸⁷⁴ An annotation on the petition suggested that the case had been directed to the Council of Accountancy and that the petitions were merged with those of Yusuf Bey. The case proceeded once the response by the local investigation arrived.⁸⁷⁵ On June 29, the Directorate of Auctions (*İhâlât Müdirliği*) noted that two parts of the *madrabs* with a two-year revenue of 23,400 guruşes had been auctioned, and they forwarded the case back to the Council, as the specific subjects of the petitions remained inconclusive.

In the meantime, Yusuf Bey's petitions continued. In his unending adventure, he did not only face the problems associated with Ottoman bureaucracy. Informed that the order for a local investigation had been dispatched from the Ministry of Finance some eight months before to the governorate of Kurdistan, Yusuf Bey worried that notes sent from the imperial centre were deliberately being filed away by the council of Diyarbekir. "Since [the council members] regard such a minor revenue-source as a means for themselves," complained Yusuf Bey, "it is evident that they will not really respond in order not to give themselves away, regardless of countless reiteration notes sent [from the Porte]."⁸⁷⁶ On September 20, 1868, Yusuf Bey petitioned the Ottoman government again to bring the issue to an ultimate end. He made assurances that absence of the necessary documents from Diyarbekir had to do with the mischief of council members. He claimed, "because [the council]

⁸⁷³ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 3 Rebiülevvel 1285 (24 June 1868), Imperial Registry's annotation.

⁸⁷⁴ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 10 Şevval 1284 (4 February 1868), Mehmed Faris' petition.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁶ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Rebiülahir 1285 (July/August 1868), Yusuf Bey's petition.

members of Diyarbekir have been assigning (*mü'ekkil edinmiş*) such imperial property, they refrain from replying even to a sublime decree.”⁸⁷⁷

Whether the council members of Diyarbekir actually did anything to suspend the local inquiry has yet to be discovered, but what happened in the offices of the Ottoman bureaucracy was complex. On October 3, the Council of Accountancy asked whether the lands sold to Yusuf Bey were sold with or without irrigation. The Imperial Registry, fifteen days later, replied that the land for which deeds were granted included eleven with water sources.⁸⁷⁸ Upon further questioning by the Directorate of Auctions—which concerned how much land was granted to Yusuf Bey and what was the price for each decare—the Imperial Registry noted on October 27 that inquiries into the status of the land sold to Yusuf Bey should be directed to the Accountancy of Revenues (*Vâridât Muhâsebesi*).⁸⁷⁹ Apart from reiterating already known facts about the lands, the Accountancy failed to give a reasonable answer the two questions posed.⁸⁸⁰

Auction of the Madrabs

The problem Yusuf Bey faced in the aftermath of taking control of his yurtluk-ocaklık lands was a lack of irrigation. Water, as one of the most significant factors in agriculture, thus appeared as an agent in the changing environment of Hazro. In February 1869, Yusuf Bey became displeased that the lands he had purchased were granted without water canals. “The said lands which had been purchased from the

⁸⁷⁷ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 2 Cemaziyelahir 1285 (20 September 1868), Yusuf Bey’s petition.

⁸⁷⁸ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, Gurra Receb 1285 (18 October 1868), annotation of the Imperial Registry.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁰ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 16 Receb 1285 (2 November 1868), annotation of the Accountancy of Revenues.

Treasury for an amount of seventy-five thousand guruşes,” wrote Yusuf Bey, “with capital accumulated as the fruit of our thirty-year business in Edirne” was nothing but a disappointment when he discovered at the site that the accompanying water canals (*mâ câriyeleri*) had not been included.⁸⁸¹ He reiterated that the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in question had originally been connected to the irrigation network of a madrab, which was located in escheated lands originally possessed by his father, Receb Bey. In an attempt to access the irrigation channels and expand his property, Yusuf Bey wrote that “it is necessary to purchase the madrabs since it is hopeless unless the lands granted to my possession have water canals.”⁸⁸²

Grounding his claim to the madrabs in the records of Imperial Registry that demonstrated that more than half of the lands he had purchased were irrigated, Yusuf Bey had become helpless after his two-year struggle, and then asked either for restoration of the madrabs to his possession or a refund of the amount he had paid for the yurtluk-ocaklık lands, as he would no longer be able to take shelter in Hazro.⁸⁸³ Having found no satisfactory answers with regard to connections between the madrabs and the yurtluk-ocaklık property escheated in the early 1830s, the Ottoman government resorted to finding out who currently leased the water resources. Backed by the cadastral survey compiled by the local council of Hazro, İsmail Hakkı Pasha, the governor of Diyarbekir, indicated that the four madrabs had been auctioned to Hacı Behcet Ağa for the years 1866 and 1867. The madrabs in Hazro were assigned to the agha in return for 11,700 guruşes, the ones in Mihrani for 13,549 guruşes.⁸⁸⁴ In

⁸⁸¹ Expenses almost equal to the fee, Yusuf Bey noted, were spent on the improvement of the lands. BOA. ŞD. 2854/69, 11 Zilkade 1285 (23 February 1869).

⁸⁸² The original reads: “*tasarrufuma ferâğın virilen arâzi mâ-câriyesi olmadıkça altından çıkılamayacağından mezbûr madrabların dahi münâsib bedel ile alınmasına lüzûm görünmüş idüğünden*” BOA. ŞD. 2854/69, 11 Zilkade 1285 (23 February 1869).

⁸⁸³ BOA. ŞD. 2854/69, 11 Zilkade 1285 (23 February 1869).

⁸⁸⁴ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 15 Cemaziyelevvel 1285 (3 September 1868), the report of the governor of Diyarbekir.

deference to the petitions of Yusuf Bey, the governor noted, the four madrabs in question had not yet been auctioned for the year 1868.

Table 17. Annual Auction Amounts of the Madrabs in Hazro and Mihrani.

Madrabs in Hazro and Mihrani	Annual Auction Amounts (in guruşes)					
	1860/1	1861/2	1862/3	1866/7	1867/8	1912/3
Büyük and Küçük	12,385	12,385	12,385	11,700	11,700	20,000
Babak and Barkuş	14,510	14,510	14,510	13,549	13,549	37,000

Source: BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 7 Safer 1286 (19 May 1869);
BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 18 Şevval 1333 (29 August 1915).

Since rice cultivation was completely a state enterprise in the early-modern period and since the Ottoman government maintained ultimate ownership of water, the governor underscored that the conditions of the auction stipulated the delivery of the entire rice harvest to water owners in those years rice was cultivated.⁸⁸⁵ The governor was well aware of the vitality of water in terms of possession when he stated that “the water irrigating this region is of primary importance in terms of a means of cultivation (*kuvve-yi inbâtiyesince*).”⁸⁸⁶ By the same token, İsmail Hakkı Pasha justified the prospective sale of the rice lands by referring to the wealth of cultivators of the region, which suggested a possible increase in auction revenues beyond the numbers projected by the cadastral survey.

One month later, the Sublime Porte sent a telegram to the province of Diyarbekir regarding the sale of the madrabs to Yusuf Bey. The bey, the telegram stated, claimed possession of half each of the Büyük and Küçük madrabs and the

⁸⁸⁵ İnalçık focuses on practices of sharing the rice yield in the classical period. In a period when rice cultivation was strictly administered, the re`âyâ workers in çeltükci system received half of the net production after the removal of the original amount of seed by the owner on the condition that they submitted one-tenth of the harvest to the “owner of the canal,” *timar*-holders, or owners of mülk or vakıf. The Ottoman practice, according to Venzke, was a classical metayage system that entailed the state’s providing half of the seeds required for cultivation, irrigation water, and possibly even land in return for fifty per cent of the rice yield in addition to an unidentified five per-cent termed *sahib-i arz*. Needless to say, all these accounts are based on sixteenth-century codes; we are left in the dark about developments in latter centuries. İnalçık, “Rice Cultivation and the Çeltukci-Re`aya System,” 111; Venzke, “Rice Cultivation,” 267.

⁸⁸⁶ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 15 Cemaziyelevvel 1285 (3 September 1868), the report of the governor of Diyarbekir.

entire Babak and Barkuş madrabs. Exhausted by Yusuf Bey's incessant petitions, the government grounded his claim, stating that eleven parcels among the lands in the bundle sold to the bey had been sold along with water resources (*sulu olarak tevfi̇z*).⁸⁸⁷ Accordingly, the central government was keen to be informed whether there were any dangers associated with the transfer, as well as whether any other claimant would bid an amount higher than Yusuf Bey's bid of twenty-six thousand guruşes. In April 1869, contrary to the previous consensus that the yurtluk-ocaklık property sold to Yusuf Bey included eleven water sources, the local council of Diyarbekir concluded that the four madrabs were not among that bundle of property.

While uncertainty with regard to past possession of the madrabs continued, the Council of State directed the case to the Council of Accountancy in order to review possible setbacks related to the sale. Referencing rice lands in the other parts of the empire, the latter council compared the case with rice cultivation in Filibe (today Plovdiv in Bulgaria). Registered rice lands in Filibe, according to the report of the Council, were granted to the highest bidders by means of life-long malikâne agreements, while non-registered ones were escheated to be auctioned by the Ottoman state following the death of their possessors.⁸⁸⁸ However, the Council found the comparison unserviceable as the lands in Filibe were entirely devoted to rice cultivation, and cultivators of rice benefitted *in gratis* and in rotation from the water canals that the owners of these lands had constructed.⁸⁸⁹ As indicated above, rice was cultivated in Diyarbekir in cycles, and the Ottoman government was concerned that sale of these water resources in accordance with the rotation method would hinder

⁸⁸⁷ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 23 Teşrinievvel 1284 (4 November 1868), copy of the telegram sent to the governorate of Diyarbekir.

⁸⁸⁸ BOA. ŞD. 235/13 12 Rebiulevvel 1286 (22 June 1869). Rice cultivation in Filibe at this time was capitalist in terms of the relations of production. See for instance, the petition of rice cultivators in Filibe and Pazarcık, where they complained about landholders' employment of cheap labour brought from outside. BOA. HR. TO. 408/58, 19 January 1848.

⁸⁸⁹ BOA. ŞD. 235/13 12 Rebiulevvel 1286 (22 June 1869).

the interests of neighbouring cultivators. The Council members were further confused because halves of the Büyük and Küçük madrabs were already possessed by means of malikâne agreements. The confusion was unyielding as the Council was considering implementing the administration practices of these madrabs on the ones Yusuf Bey claimed to have purchased.⁸⁹⁰ Unable to find a solution that would satisfy all interested parties, the members of the Council also took into consideration the option of a sale by auction in accordance with the prevailing terms of other madrabs in the region. That option, however, was challenged by the local council of Diyarbekir.⁸⁹¹ In the face of that challenge, the Council weighed state control over the madrabs and the economic loss it would entail. The loss, in the members' opinion, would be irrelevant when compared with what it would facilitate; state control would result in a great benefit for the people involved with horticulture. In the end, the Council referred their conclusions to the Council of State for the final decision.

The auction of the Büyük, Küçük, Babak, and Barkuş madrabs was not ordinary, like those of tithe-tax farms. In Diyarbekir, where access to water largely determined potential agricultural yields, there was great competition among local notables. Even though there is no information on those making initial bids for the four madrabs, the fact that the opening bid of twenty-six thousand guruşes was increased six-fold within a few months is telling with regard to the means of the other bidders. Despite the loose language concerning auction procedures, getting access to a water resource for a five-year period was as valuable as obtaining the madrabs as private property. By the same token, the attempt to control vital water resources constituted yet another contested domain, albeit temporary, due to the

⁸⁹⁰ BOA. ŞD. 235/13 12 Rebiulevvel 1286 (22 June 1869).

⁸⁹¹ Unfortunately, the report in which the members of the Diyarbekir council presented their opinions with regards to the possible dangers of selling the madrabs is unavailable.

nature of the auction held by the Ottoman government. In addition to the obvious advantage that water owners would receive the entire rice harvest in years when rice was cultivated, access to water resources was also critical for other lands in the vicinity. The domain constituted by the *madrabs*, therefore, was contested in the sense that it led to “a politics of property, of the market, with openings and possibilities for action and initiative on the part of individuals and groups.”⁸⁹² Such a situation created by the centralising Ottoman state was important in a period when the cliché that “all land in the empire belongs to the Sultan” was being challenged, and gradually the rights associated with terms such as *tasarruf*, *tefvîz*, and *ferâğ* started to be treated as individual and exclusive ownership.⁸⁹³

In the meantime, the Ministry of Finance opted for an auction of the four *madrabs* for five-year tenure, in accordance with precedent. Once the members of the local council of Diyarbekir saw that there were no dangers associated with a sale-like auction of the *madrabs*, support for the procedures gained momentum.⁸⁹⁴ Reiterating the view of the council on the *madrabs* in question, the governor informed the Porte on April 21 that there was a local claimant willing to bid 150 thousand *guruşes* if the government saw no downsides (*mahzûrât-ı mezkûreye bakılmayub*). Five days later, the governor added that another claimant was raising the bid by five hundred *guruşes*.⁸⁹⁵ The politics of property on the *madrabs* of Hazro and Mihrani would soon bring about an intense period of bidding. Though it remains unknown if the local notables whom Yusuf Bey complained had suspended the grant procedures for the water resources were among them, multiple parties participated in the auctions. In a

⁸⁹² İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain," 11.

⁸⁹³ Terzibaşoğlu dates the transition to the turn of the twentieth century, but the shifting terms employed for the auction of *madrabs* attests to an earlier beginning of the transition. Terzibaşoğlu, "A very important requirement of social life," 29-30.

⁸⁹⁴ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 9 Muharrem 1286 (21 April 1869), the memorandum of the Diyarbekir council on the four *madrabs*.

⁸⁹⁵ BOA. ŞD. 1452/21, 17 Muharrem 1286 (29 Nisan 1869), the report of the governor of Diyarbekir.

few weeks time, the auction was still in progress and the bid for the madrabs had been raised to 165 thousand guruşes.⁸⁹⁶ Yusuf Bey subsequently increased the bid to 190 thousand guruşes on June 20, 1869.⁸⁹⁷ The communication between the Sublime Porte and the governorate of Diyarbekir continued for a while after that. On August 2, İsmail Hakkı Pasha sent a telegram to the Porte, stating that the Receb Bey's rice lands were still up for auction with the latest bid being 190 thousand guruşes. He noted that he did not receive a response to his last telegram of June 20.⁸⁹⁸ He also added that the claimants, including Yusuf Bey had been kept on hold due to the lack of a response.⁸⁹⁹

The telegram above was the final correspondence between Diyarbekir and the Sublime Porte. Though the madrabs were not sold as a result of the discussions held within the Porte, the auction of the water resources deemed appropriate by the government was not far away in its terms from an outright sale. Thanks to correspondence between the governor of Diyarbekir and the Ministry of the Interior, each madrab in the region of Diyarbekir, including those in Hazro and Silvan, were "sold to tax farmers for three-or four-year terms."⁹⁰⁰ By the same token, there is no clear evidence whether Yusuf Bey succeeded at obtaining the five-year tenure of the madrabs in question. The related correspondence came to a halt in the middle of 1869, and more importantly, Yusuf Bey's petitions ended, so it is probable that he obtained the possession of the water resources at the end of the auction process. Furthermore, Şakir Budak, who experienced the early-Republican period as well as

⁸⁹⁶ BOA. ŞD. 1452/27, 4 Mayıs 1285 (16 May 1869).

⁸⁹⁷ BOA. ŞD. 1452/38, 8 Haziran 1285 (20 June 1869).

⁸⁹⁸ BOA. ŞD. 1452/40, 21 Temmuz 1285 (2 August 1869).

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁰ BOA. DH. UMVM. 105-41, 26 Şaban 1331 (31 July 1913).

the rule of the Democratic Party, attests that the madrabs in Hazro were Receb Bey's and were nationalised under Democratic Party rule.⁹⁰¹

Regardless of the result of the auction, it is evident that the emirs who had come back from exile found a very different environment in their homelands. Hazro and Mihrani, along with the economic resources they entailed, attracted the attention of the centralising Sublime Porte in the 1860s. That is, while some madrabs had been left out of imperial records, the Ottoman government was eager to consolidate its knowledge of the two districts. Starting with a cadastral survey of the lands and water resources the status of which had been enigmatic up to then, the Porte carried out a land survey of the irrigated lands of the districts. Following from the bits of information the Ottoman government obtained, the knowledge on the water resources was employed to bring the management of the region's natural resources in line with Ottoman practices. Privileges with regard to water usage were essential within this management scheme, as the option to sell was rejected in discussions held both at the centre and the periphery. Even though the madrabs were auctioned rather than sold, the very prospect of a sale—heatedly discussed within the offices of the Ottoman government—is significant in terms of natural resources being admitted into the realm of private property; that is to say, of the near future of legal developments attested to in the Civil Code.

As the auction indicates the importance of water for horticulture in Diyarbekir from an environmental perspective, it also serves as a locus from which to observe the controls on water resources from an economic point of view. The fate of the madrabs hung in the balance becoming private property in the modern sense and remaining state property to be periodically auctioned off. That the bifurcation was

⁹⁰¹ Interview with Budak.

constituted and reconstituted by different government offices as well as by various social actors is indicative of a process by which water resources could be regarded as private property, just as land was. In other words, the water of the *madrabs*, which could be easily interpreted as private property according to principles of Islamic law, constituted a contested domain, in accordance with İslamoğlu's argumentation, where several, local power holders sought to ensure associated privileges. That the *madrabs* were not sold, but eventually rented in tenures did not hinder the changing perceptions with regard to the watered lands. The Zirki emirs' struggle to secure the four *madrabs* demonstrates the importance attributed to lands with water sources, and the very same lands constituted an initial step in the course creating of large-scale agriculture on the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands that Yusuf Bey had obtained as full-fledged private property.

Fate of the Madrabs

The indecisive attitude of the Ottoman government with regard to the relations of possession of water resources was reflected in the Ottoman Civil Code in which elaborations of private and public rights to take water from rivers were intertwined. The complex nature of the affair survived into the twentieth century. After the re-establishment of the Chamber of Deputies in 1908, the Ministry of Finance revisited the question of the *madrabs* in the province of Diyarbekir. In accordance with the decree of the Ministry, the arch tax (*resm-i harkıye*) was abolished. The proprietary possession (*tasarruf mülkiyeti*) of the *madrabs*, along with property rights (*hakk-ı*

mülkiyet) and water rights, were transferred to landowners in 1909, the first legislative year of the Deputies.⁹⁰²

In the correspondence of the province and division of Diyarbekir, local authorities were unable to find practices associated with the arch tax, but added that for the last sixty years, taxes such as madrab tax (*madrab resmi*) and/or madrab *icâr resmi*, i.e., rice lands lease tax (for the first three decades), and madrab lease (*madrab icârî*) (for the latter three decades) were practiced in the Diyarbekir region.⁹⁰³

Underscoring the rotational rice cultivation in the region and explaining the fact that rice lands were, for most years, non-irrigated, the report warned that the taxes as the arch tax under consideration, as well as the subsequent grant of the water to those whose lands were along the water canals, would immediately lead to emigration of the cultivators of non-irrigated lands around the madrabs.⁹⁰⁴ Accordingly, the report noted that those to benefit from the legislation were men of influence (*ümerâ ve müteneffizân*) who had purchased vast lands for very modest fees. The consensus in the local administration of Diyarbekir was that the prospective revenues associated with the sale, which were close to six thousand liras annually, would mean little in comparison with to the likely difficulties of the monopolies of said influential figures.⁹⁰⁵

Sound opposition in the province and the concern of the local administration resulted in the abrogation of the decree by the Ministry of Finance on December 18,

⁹⁰² That is, the revenues associated with the water usage for that year were left to the cultivators of the lands. BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 26 Şaban 1331 (31 July 1913), report of the governor of Diyarbekir Hakkı Pasha.

⁹⁰³ The madrabs in question included the ones in the vicinity of the citadel of Diyarbekir, called *madrâba-yı Âmid*, and those in the district of Çermik and Silvan, in addition to the ones in Hazro. For the details see, BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, no date, a table of madrabs with the annual fees of sale.

⁹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the report noted that it was common for cultivators to sell their lands to the owners of madrabs and to immigrate, leading to a substantial decrease in agricultural production. BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 7 Temmuz 1327 (20 July 1911), the report of the Province and the Division of Diyarbekir.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

1911. Even though the madrabs were restored to their original status, namely regular auctions held by the Treasury, the increasing financial difficulties of the Ottoman government resulted in the madrabs once again becoming a target in a few years time. In the summer of 1913, the Ottoman government initiated another investigation into possible consequences of the sale of the madrabs to their possessors. Referring to the past transfer of water rights to cultivators, the governor of Diyarbekir noted that those who benefit from the water remain limited; furthermore, such exclusion brought about rivalry between the owners of lands with water and the owners of non-irrigated lands.⁹⁰⁶ Despite the probable competition and ambition that would develop if the proprietary possession (*mülkiyet-i tasarrufiye*) of water resources was transferred to landowners, the governor nevertheless proffered possible policies with regard to the sale of madrabs.

Considering the role of the government to maintain the wellbeing of all by retaining possession of the rights to water, the governor maintained his earlier view that either sale or transfer (*terk*) of the madrabs to the peasants would cause many difficulties.⁹⁰⁷ With these reservations, the Ministry of the Interior directed the matter to the Ministry of Finance in order to determine the most appropriate manner of exploiting the madrabs.⁹⁰⁸ The Financial Reform Commission maintained the current status of the madrabs, (i.e., auctions to tax farmers for regular periods), reiterating

⁹⁰⁶ The governor added that the landowners close to the water resources extorted interest from other landowners due to their water possession of the water, leading to hostilities among them. BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 26 Şaban 1331 (31 July 1913), the report of the governor of Diyarbekir Hakkı Pasha.

⁹⁰⁷ If the said madrabs were sold to the concerned parties in the region, the governor stated, the Treasury would yield revenue of thirty thousand or more liras. Since the parties were not able to pay the required amount once, resulting in a dispute between them and the party who had purchased the water of the madrabs, the governor offered for a deal to the actual cultivators whereby they would be able to pay their debts in interest-free instalments. On the other hand, with regard to the complicated issues surrounding the madrabs in Diyarbekir, the governor had an ulterior motive for assigning the revenues of the madrabs to the local municipality and private administrations so that they would be spent for sanitary and public works. Ibid.

⁹⁰⁸ Additionally, the latter ministry was asked for the transfer of revenues associated with the madrabs to the local municipality. BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 23 Ramazan 1331 (26 August 1913), note from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Finance.

that there was no more beneficial solution than the current practice considering local opposition to other options.⁹⁰⁹ In August 1915, the final verdict was dispatched to the province of Diyarbekir. According to the resolution of the Commission, the practice of auctioning the madrabs for revenue to be collected by the Treasury would be kept intact, while sanitary and public works expenses of the province of Diyarbekir were mandated to be confined to revenues allocated to the municipality and the province.⁹¹⁰

Conclusion

The 1860s was a decade when the Ottoman penetration into the districts of Hazro and Mihrani gained momentum. However, the penetration was far from being a unilateral rule imposed by the Sublime Porte. As much as the Ottoman government penetrated into Ottoman Kurdistan, in general, and the districts of Hazro and Mihrani, in particular, it faced new social actors in both urban and rural environments. As this chapter has demonstrated, the Zirki beys, following their return, sought to reassert their power and challenge Ottoman authority, albeit with petitions of its limited substance. Yusuf Bey, to whom the Ottoman governor awarded the tax farm contract of the district of Hazro, exemplified such a challenge to power. Yet, his was only the beginning. The ascendance of the Zirki beys, which

⁹⁰⁹ BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 4 Ağustos 1331 (17 August 1915), the resolution of the Financial Reform Commission. The Commission was established in 1879 as a department in the Ministry of Finance to reform the empire's tax and budget systems in general, as well as to coordinate the financial operations and budgetary processes of all the departments of the government to be gathered together in the annual budget before the Council of Ministers. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire vol. II*, II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, 221-4. The Commission was abolished in 1879, only to be re-established in 1881. It was evidently still in place following the Revolution. For a detailed account of the Commission during the Hamidian era, see Bölükbaşı, *Tezyid-i Varidat*, 15-77.

⁹¹⁰ BOA. DH. UMVM. 105/41, 16 August 1331 (29 August 1915), note to the province of Diyarbekir.

already had a political backbone negotiated with the Ottoman state, also needed an economic foundation.

The struggle of the Zirki emirs is especially important as it juxtaposes the changing perception of private property in the middle of the century with the rise of the beys in the heyday of Ottoman centralisation. Having restored the rights associated with the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property that Receb Bey had once possessed, the Zirki beys had taken the first steps toward large-scale commercial agriculture in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani. However, the potential agricultural yields depended on sustainable water resources. To that end, the struggle for land was followed by a struggle for water in the late 1860s. The new ordering of property relations promulgated by the Land Code of 1858, in a sense, was expanded beyond landed property.

Water was what different groups and individuals strove to possess. The sacred place of water in Islamic law—which has, of course, been subject to manipulation throughout history—was challenged by the rising political power of the Zirki emirs. In a decade in which property relations underwent radical changes in Ottoman Kurdistan, privileged access to water was as important as ownership of land. As the struggle for land and water was also a struggle among different groups, the water access became a primary concern of the Ottoman government. Knowing the crucial meaning of water for the lands of Hazro and Mihrani, the government opted not to turn it into a commodity, but rather followed precedent. And even though that “did not necessarily always represent the most efficient means of governing irrigation and water, it proved in many ways the least troublesome and, hence, most effective means of natural resource management for the Empire.”⁹¹¹

⁹¹¹ Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 53.

Considering the Sublime Porte's attempts to privatise the madrabs in late 1860s and early 1910s, the early-modern Ottoman practices and precedents noted by Mikhail prove decisive in terms of their survival into the nineteenth century.⁹¹² However, the increasing importance that land acquired in the decade following the Land Code also reflected on the water resources. That is, sustaining the move toward lucrative, large-scale, commercial agriculture depended on sustainable water resources. The auction of the Büyük, Küçük, Babak, and Barkuş madrabs, in this sense, demonstrates the limits of the transition of water usage. That is, state control of water resources was replaced by tenured control by individual persons in accordance with the rational concerns of commercial agriculture.

The centralisation efforts of the Ottoman government and the struggle to develop commercial enterprisess by local notables and Kurdish emirs can be said to have merged in the 1860s. "Concomitant with the state's attempt to expand its 'administrative power' to better control the territories to which it laid claim," Klein argues, "locals worked to increase their control over resources (mainly land) against the backdrop of the larger global process of the commercialization of land and the attached rise in the value of land."⁹¹³ Considering water among the resources she mentions, the dual enterprise of the Ottoman state and Kurdish notables would soon be challenged by another party, the Armenians.

Local Armenian notables of Hazro, such as Magsi Kazaz, were discontent with rising Kurdish influence in the region. As Şakir Budak remarks, rice cultivation in

⁹¹² Struggles for water resources survived into the twentieth century. Intra- and inter-state conflicts and historical conflicts aside, these village conflicts were related to the access to water ecological resources. Leila M. Harris, "Water and Conflict Geographies of the Southeastern Anatolia Project," *Society & Natural Resources* 15, no. 8 (2002): 744.

⁹¹³ Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 14.

the districts of Hazro and Mihrani was administered by Armenian *cenanbaşı*.⁹¹⁴ If one assumes that Armenian peasants were active in rice cultivation—beyond just these *cenanbaşı*s—the transformation of the *mîrî* lands they had once cultivated into the private property of the Zirki dynasty is telling in terms of the ethnic tensions that landholding problems would nourish. In other words, it was the very root of Kurdish-Armenian tensions. What “began as a local conflict over resources was harnessed by the state to its own ends, and over time the process combined with new nationalist ideologies.”⁹¹⁵ The Zirki emirs, once they established a base of power base in the district of Hazro, would strive to further their political domination of the district in the ensuing decades, which would lead local Armenians to protest their rise to power. The transformation of landholding patterns that ended with Kurdish ownership would embitter local Armenians. As the value of the land and possession by Kurdish nobles both increased, local Armenians of Hazro and Mihrani would gradually realise they were on the losing side of this transformation.

⁹¹⁴ Interview with Budak. He mentions the origins of *cenanbaşı*s while discussing the nationalisation of the *madrabs* in Hazro during the Democratic Period. Obviously, he is referring to pre-Republic practices since most Armenians in the region were massacred during the Genocide. *Cenanbaşı* was a local term for *re'is* in rice cultivation. The latter was the on-site manager of rice production who was supposed to be experienced and in possession of certain financial resources. Like *re'ises*, *cenanbaşı*s were in charge of maintaining the water flow between fields and supervised the distribution of seed to be sown in accordance with the size of lands. They also had assistants who collectively claimed a portion of rice harvest. İnalcık, "Rice Cultivation and the *Çeltukci-Re'aya* System," 108.

⁹¹⁵ Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 14.

CHAPTER VIII

RE-EMIRISATION IN HAZRO AND MİHRANİ AND THE RISING TENSION

The increasing power of the Zirki beys in Hazro and Mihrani following the restoration of yurtluk-ocaklık property gained momentum in the 1880s following a period of reestablishment in the 1870s. The momentum, however, was not confined to the Zirki emirs, but rather should be considered in its domestic and international context. That is, the defeat following the Russo-Ottoman War in 1877-78 furthered European demands with regard to improving the conditions of the empire's non-Muslim subjects. By the same token, as a reaction to European pressure, the change in Ottoman ideology toward a homogenous polity favouring the Muslims of the empire gradually became official policy in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Pan-Islamism, in other words, would be used among the Muslim subjects whose loyalty would be the building pillar of the core of Turkish nationalism.⁹¹⁶

Non-Muslim subjects of the empire were disillusioned by the call for a more homogenous polity under the banner of Islamic unity during the Hamidian era. In a period where loyal subjects could turn to rebellious overnight, the case of Armenians proved delicate. However, what would culminate in the Armenian Question of the 1880s had a prior history distinct from the diplomatic manoeuvres of the involved parties. Socioeconomic demands that came from a community undergoing changing political arrangements from the 1860s onwards make clear that the Armenian Question was not only a diplomatic affair. In other words, before becoming an international diplomatic crisis, it begged other questions such as agrarian and Kurdish issues, the increasing Islamisation of Anatolia throughout the nineteenth

⁹¹⁶ David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism, 1876-1908* (London: Frank Cass, 1977).

century, and the centralisation and modernisation of, separately, the Ottoman government and the Armenian community. Therefore, the question “is as much a Kurdish and Ottoman question as it is an Armenian one.”⁹¹⁷

In this context, this chapter sheds light on Armenian demands, which started to be voiced following the centralisation and democratisation of the Armenian community in the 1860s. In an attempt to save the Armenian reform movement from the predominant, Turkish historiographical tradition, this section delves into competition between the mandates of the Armenian community in Istanbul and the accelerating pace of demands coming from the countryside. In doing so, it is possible to see the Armenian Question not as a culmination of diplomatic dictates by European powers, but rather as a socio-economic process in which several groups within the Armenian community struggled.⁹¹⁸ In this vein, the chapter illustrates different perspectives with regard to appeals for reform that precede disillusionment with the Ottoman government.

After laying down the framework of the Armenian reform movement, the chapter will deal with developments within the Armenian community from the 1860s forward. While the Reform Edict of 1856 was a tool that facilitated the influence of the provinces in both the Sublime Porte and the Armenian Patriarchate, the struggle of the Armenian notables in Hazro was soon challenged by the Zirki beys following their return to the district. In the local power configurations of the district—where various social actors vied for political and economic power—the case of the Zirki

⁹¹⁷ Stephan H. Astourian, "The Silence of the Land: Agrarian Relations, Ethnicity, and Power," in *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Norman M. Naimark (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 56.

⁹¹⁸ The overwhelming theme in this tradition is to consider the issue as a question of national security rather than as a cultural and socioeconomic question. See, for instance, Ali Karaca, *Anadolu Islahâtı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa, 1838-1899* (Istanbul: Eren, 1993); Musa Şaşmaz, *British Policy and the Application of Reforms for the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia, 1877-1897* (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2000); Kâmuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2005).

beys was not unusual as they were already economically powerful thanks to the restoration of the vast *yurtluk-ocaklik* property and their privileged access to water resources. Though far from being like the emirs of the early century, the Zirki beys gradually changed the configuration to their benefit in a process that could be deemed a transition from emirs to beys.

Lastly, the chapter deals with increasing violence in the district of Hazro and its environs. Partly due to a power vacuum created by the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War and partly due to the increasing pro-Muslim polity of the Ottoman government, ethnic tensions between Armenians and Kurds accelerated. As the urban Zirki beys in towns continued to control the urban Armenians, the tribalisation of Kurdish society over the last quarter of the century resulted in both intra-tribal rivalries and atrocities against the Armenians. The Hamidian regime, which militarised the Kurdish tribes and turned a blind eye to Armenian reform, resulted in the manipulation of Kurdish beys and aghas for Ottoman interests, mostly at the expense of local Armenians. This threw the region into turmoil for decades to come.

The Armenian Reform Movement

The Armenians of the empire sought reform within their communities starting from the 1820s. The arrival of Protestant missionaries contributed to the reformation of the Armenian central administration, which came to realise that increased lay participation in community affairs would be necessary to prevent defections to Protestantism. The increased interest that the Young Armenians developed in European affairs was yet another motive.⁹¹⁹ In this context, Armenian magnates who

⁹¹⁹ While Arpee attributes the impact primarily to Protestant missionaries, Artinian attributes it to the Young Armenians. Leon Arpee, *The Armenian Awakening: A History of the Armenian Church*,

helped the Patriarchate with his administration, known as *amiras*, wielded great power and influence in communal affairs thanks to their government connections and the financial support they provided to churches, schools, and charitable institutions.⁹²⁰ Most of the decisions of the *amiras* were ratified by the communal assembly, and they even had a say in the election of patriarchs.⁹²¹ The fact that the Patriarchate had come to be dominated by certain Armenian *amiras* who ensured their vested interests by replacing one patriarch with another constituted the main subject of discontent within the Armenian community in the capital.⁹²²

As the struggle between the *amiras* and the Patriarchate gradually paved the way for a non-ecclesiastical administrative system, the 1839 edict of *Gülhane* introduced several improvements for non-Muslims of the empire, including Armenians. In addition to a discourse (but only a partial practice) of equality, the edict was followed with the declarations of 1844, permitting apostates to return to their original religions without execution.⁹²³ Despite the incomplete practices, Christian testimony against Muslims was admitted in courts, and some Christians

1820-1860 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1909), 93-107; Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 64-74.

⁹²⁰ For the early stages of the Armenian national awakening and the struggle for a more representative system within the Armenian community, see Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1963), 30-66; Arpee, *The Armenian Awakening: A History of the Armenian Church, 1820-1860*, 172-94. On the *amiras* and their dual identity, see Barsoumian, *The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul*; Hagop Barsoumian, "The Dual Role of the Armenian *Amira* Class within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian *Millet* (1750-1850)," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: the Functioning of a Plural Society*, Vol. 1 Central Lands, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York and London: Holmes & Meier, 1982).

⁹²¹ James Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms and Their Effect on the Armenians in Turkey," *The Armenian Review* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1972): 19.

⁹²² Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 20.

⁹²³ Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 13. While the religious sanctioning of execution for apostates from Islam was no longer being enforced in 1840s, it became a matter of official policy to forbid the execution of apostates because of pressure from foreign powers as well as the wish on part of elites to avoid anything likely to heighten tensions in Ottoman society. Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy*, 38.

found their way into Ottoman schools and the Ottoman military.⁹²⁴ The Tanzimat reforms, however, had further impact on the administration of the Armenian patriarchate. With the establishment of mixed tribunals, the first Armenian Judicial Council was established in 1840, following the model of the Ottoman Council of Judicial Ordinances.⁹²⁵ Though the Patriarch still headed the administrative system and retained the right to designate members of the council, the presence of laymen in these councils was a radical departure from Armenian tradition, marking the beginning of involvement by the laity in religious affairs.⁹²⁶

As much as this rupture was a reform to limit ecclesiastic administration by the Patriarchate, it turned into a struggle among lay elements of the community. Against the conventional power retained by the amiras, the *esnafs*, i.e., artisans of the Armenian community, started demanding a greater participation in the *millet*, i.e., separate community based on confession, affairs.⁹²⁷ As a result of intra-community rivalries that shaped the election of the Patriarchate, the Patriarch Matte'os succeeded at bringing together the *esnafs* and the amiras in a Mixed Council in 1844.⁹²⁸ Following the imperial decree of 1847, the laymen's presence was secured with the establishment of the Supreme Civil Council and the Spiritual Council.⁹²⁹

⁹²⁴ Admission to the armed forces was limited; only a few Greeks made their way into the Ottoman navy. Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 13.

⁹²⁵ Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 52.

⁹²⁶ Members of this council comprised four married priests and four amiras. Ibid.; Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 15.

⁹²⁷ For more on limitation of the power of the amiras, see Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 53-8.

⁹²⁸ The Mixed Council, which acted as an advisory board to the Patriarch, included sixteen *amiras* and fourteen *esnaf* members. Ibid., 73.

⁹²⁹ Charged with the administration of the community's secular education, property, and justice, the Supreme Civil Council consisted of twenty members, of whom ten were amiras and ten *esnafs*. The Spiritual Council made up of fourteen clergy members from Istanbul, was charged with the ordination of clergy and religious education. The two councils were presided over by the patriarch. Ibid., 72-3; Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 19.

The reorganisation of the millets of the empire was as much a result of struggles within each millet as a reform of the Ottoman government.⁹³⁰ With the struggle for a more representative system, friction between old and new classes came to a climax following the promulgation of the Reform Edict of 1856. Unlike the Gülhane Edict, the Reform Edict of 1856 was largely a result of foreign pressure, and promised to provide the principal non-Muslim millets of the empire with new constitutions as the first mandate of basic administrative reform.⁹³¹ The Edict confirmed the rights of Christians: It allowed freedom of worship; abrogated discriminatory practices with regard to race, religion, or language; provided for freedom from forced apostasy; allowed admission to government positions, as well as civil and military schools; admitted non-Muslim testimony against Muslims in mixed tribunals; and abrogated impediments to the repair of churches, schools, and cemeteries.⁹³² Apart from reinforcing the promises of the Tanzimat Edict, the Reform Edict was important since it paved the way for new constitutions in non-Muslim millets. In addition to their official recognition, the Greek Orthodox and Armenian Gregorian communities were made subject to secular law in 1862 and 1863, to the detriment of the power of the clergy.⁹³³

Following the official recognition of the Armenian Civil Council; the National Assembly elected a committee to formulate a constitution for the community in 1855.⁹³⁴ Undergoing a revision in 1856, the draft contained twelve articles dealing with the Patriarchate, the schools of the community, and national institutions. It was approved by the National Assembly and sent to the Porte for imperial ratification in

⁹³⁰ Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 52.

⁹³¹ Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy*, 77. For a classical account of the aftermath of the Reform Edict, see Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 52-113.

⁹³² Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 14.

⁹³³ Ottoman Jews received a similar charter in 1865. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 52.

⁹³⁴ Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 78.

1857.⁹³⁵ The constitution struck a heavy blow to the magnates of Istanbul and destroyed clerical control of the millet, which magnates had operated in line with their interests.⁹³⁶ Because it led to strife within the Armenian community between conservatives and constitutionalists, the Porte rejected the constitution stating “*imperia [sic.] in imperio* cannot be allowed.”⁹³⁷

Revising the 1857 draft, the Constitutional Committee presented a new draft in December 1859, which the National Assembly approved on May 24, 1860.⁹³⁸ With enthusiasm from the community, the constitution was put into effect without approval of the Sublime Porte.⁹³⁹ As a culmination of the centralisation of the Patriarch’s administration, it brought parish councils into being, as well as provincial administrations under the jurisdiction of the national administration.⁹⁴⁰ In the midst of discussion within the Armenian community between vested interests and the opposition, the Armenian Constitution was finally ratified by the Porte in 1863.⁹⁴¹ The Constitution called for reform in the communal administrative structure by putting the temporal administration of the community in the hands of an assembly chosen from among both ecclesiastics and laymen.⁹⁴² While Armenians in Istanbul profited from the expansion and improvement of trade connections, the stronger

⁹³⁵ Ibid., 81-2.

⁹³⁶ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 124-5.

⁹³⁷ Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 82.

⁹³⁸ The 1860 version was in essence more liberal; however the government could not overcome the religious fanaticism and conservatism in the Ottoman community. As Artinian states, that was why the preamble in the 1860 version, which included the following six democratic fundamental principles, was omitted in the ratified text. Ibid., 83, 101. For a comparison of the Armenian Constitutions, see Murat Bebiroğlu, *Tanzimat'tan II. Meşrutiyet'e Ermeni Nizamnameleri* (İstanbul: Murat Bebiroğlu, 2003).

⁹³⁹ Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 21.

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid. For the major provisions of the Constitution, see Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 93-106.

⁹⁴¹ Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, 91. Even though the text in question was termed regulation (*nizâmnâme*) in Turkish, the Armenian historiography called it the National Constitution, revealing the different perspectives from the beginning. Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 47, n. 148.

⁹⁴² Etmekjian, "The Tanzimat Reforms," 15. The civil council was composed of one hundred and forty members, only twenty of whom were clerical. The remainder were laymen, and forty of those were elected from outside Istanbul. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 124-5.

orientation to the outside world, improved education, and the new liberal attitude of the Ottoman government (though grounded in self-interest) they soon took measures to improve the lot of Armenians in the countryside.⁹⁴³

With the backing of a few limited provincial members, the Armenian Assembly started to develop an interest in the provinces. Leaving aside the altruist discourse often attributed to the Assembly, interest in the living conditions of Armenians in the countryside remained marginal. The election of Khrimian of Van as the Patriarch of Constantinople was an important factor in shifting attention to the Armenian provinces, but it took the Armenian Assembly almost a decade to conclude proposals for reforms.⁹⁴⁴ The commission established in 1870 received complaints from the provinces resulting in a formal petition to the Ottoman government submitted in 1872.⁹⁴⁵ Undergoing a heated debate in the Assembly, the report was comprised of two parts: various abuses were tabulated in the first part, while specific suggestions were made in the second. Abuses fell into four categories: tax abuse, unfair treatment by government officials, inequities regarding the non-acceptance of non-Muslim testimony in court, and deliberate oppression.⁹⁴⁶ Even though there was consensus in the Council, the suggestions to the Porte were seriously debated. Considering the gains earlier during the reform period, the Istanbul Armenians were reluctant: the report could lead the government to question Armenian loyalty. After

⁹⁴³ Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 46; Lillian K Etmekjian, "The Reform Movement in Turkey: Background," *The Armenian Review* 29, no. 3 (Autumun 1976): 287-8. The prevalence of interest in the countryside should be taken with a grain of salt: it is mostly altruistic. Even though there is an attempt to improve conditions in the provinces in the late 1860s, these administrative changes had more to do with shifting power dynamics than improving the living conditions of Armenians.

⁹⁴⁴ Garabet K. Moumdjian, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California Los Angeles, 2012), 11.

⁹⁴⁵ Lillian K Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly of Turkey and Reform," *The Armenian Review* 29, no. 1 (1976): 39; Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," 47, n. 147.

⁹⁴⁶ Regarding the fourth complaint, it included incidents of pillage, kidnappings, murders, interference with funerals and other religious services, and damage to church buildings. For details with respect to other categories, see Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly," 39-40.

discussions, the Council presented a revised proposal to the Sublime Porte which differed with respect to on the points below:

1. Military service was not mentioned.
2. Inspection of the provinces was eliminated as a proposal because the government had already adopted that procedure.
3. Direct taxation was also eliminated as a proposal because it was beyond the ability of the government to implement it at that time.
4. A new recommendation was added that law enforcement officials be recruited from all groups.
5. Another new recommendation suggested that nomadic tribes be encouraged to settle as farmers to lessen brigandage.⁹⁴⁷

What would constitute the politically-laden Armenian Question in the following decades was thus established. The submission of the proposal to the Porte did not bring about immediate results, however. For three years after 1872, the Council made no mention of reform. By the same token, the Ottoman government did not undertake any. Upon the election of Archbishop Nersess in 1875, the imperial licence (*berat*) reiterated the traditional rights of the Armenian millet to conduct religious observances, maintain churches and monasteries, and conduct internal affairs, but made no reference to the abuses or resolutions the Council had submitted.⁹⁴⁸ In the face of the belated disapproval, the Armenian Civil Council submitted a second report on the oppression of Armenians on September 17, 1876. The report complemented the first appeal and included a detailed listing of oppressive acts that had occurred in about 320 locations from April 12, 1872 through the end of August 1876.⁹⁴⁹ The most common were land seizure, unjust taxation, forced conversion,

⁹⁴⁷ With regard to unfair taxation, the draft proposal included: 1) the provision of men for the army instead of the military exemption tax, 2) the posting of public assessment lists for all property, and 3) the elimination of tax farmers. Regarding abuses by government officials, proposals included 1) the control of provincial officials by regularly sending inspectors, 2) the election of Armenians to local councils with participation of Armenian prelates, 3) the publicisation of Porte directives to provincial officials, 4) a three-day-grace period for converts to Islam, and 5) the deployment of army soldiers instead of the native gendarmerie. *Ibid.*, 40-3.

⁹⁴⁸ The only concession was the Porte's announcement that cases tried in Islamic courts could be sent to the capital for review in the case of disputes. *Ibid.*, 44.

⁹⁴⁹ Astourian, "The Silence of the Land," 59.

illegal labour levies, pillage, and murder.⁹⁵⁰ As the report singled out two groups—Circassian refugees and Kurdish, Avshar, and Turkish *derebeys*, i.e., lord of the valley—it was significant in terms of raising agrarian issues in Armenian-inhabited lands.⁹⁵¹ Of the 320 incidents, the overwhelming majority concerned land usurpation: 272 cases, mostly by Muslim aghas and beys.⁹⁵² The increasing number of Muslim immigrants to the empire who was settled throughout the countryside was decisive in terms of increasing the demand for land.⁹⁵³

However, the hopes of Armenians enthusiastic about the establishment of the constitution were thwarted as the Sublime Porte did not respond to the second appeal of the Armenian Civil Council, either. With Abdülhamid's support for the provincial Kurdish population, Armenians' discontent became severe: the revival of old alliances between the palace and Kurdish leaders was becoming apparent.⁹⁵⁴ As the Ottoman government distanced Armenians from the discourse the reforms, the Ottoman authorities in the provinces were alarmed about the possibility of the Armenians siding with Russian forces. It did not take long during the first years of

⁹⁵⁰ The questions asked by members of the Councils during the debate over the proposal indicate the effect of the Ottoman government's belated response. The questions raised were: Why were Armenians not protected from oppression,? Why were Kurds permitted to circumvent paying taxes while oppressing tax-paying Armenians? And why were provincial officials permitted to defy the Porte? Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly," 45.

⁹⁵¹ Astourian, "The Silence of the Land," 59-60.

⁹⁵² Astourian suggests that another eleven incidents where title deeds were disregarded could also be classified as land usurpation. Ibid., 59.

⁹⁵³ Due to constant warfare with the Russian Empire not only Circassians, but Chechens and Kabardinians were forced to immigrate to Ottoman lands between 1829 and 1914. Including Crimean Tatars, a total of five to seven million Muslims were forced to emigrate and settle in the Ottoman territory between 1829 and 1914. Kemal Karpat, "Muslim Migration," in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 321.

⁹⁵⁴ Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly," 50. Even in the course of warfare, Armenian deputies supported by Greek and Turkish colleagues in the Ottoman Parliament directed attention to the mistreatment of Armenians in the eastern provinces. The issues specifically involved depredations perpetrated against an unarmed Armenian population by armed Kurdish tribes, the impunity attending and following these acts, and the suspected complicity of local as well as central authorities. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997), 45.

the Hamidian regime for loyal nation (*millet-i sadıka*) to suddenly turn into rebel nation (*millet-i asiye*).⁹⁵⁵

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 was in this sense fatal for relations between the Armenian community and the Ottoman government.⁹⁵⁶ After the crushing defeat of the Ottoman forces, resulting in the San Stefano Treaty and the Berlin Conference, Armenians started appealing to foreign powers.⁹⁵⁷ From that moment on, the socioeconomic and interethnic relations that had typified the Armenian Question were replaced with the discourse of European diplomacy.⁹⁵⁸ Despite Russians' own propaganda that they were for the saviour of the Christians, it was the British Empire that became the principal negotiator of non-Muslim rights in Ottoman territories.⁹⁵⁹ In November 1879, Layard submitted an informal reform proposal to the Sublime Porte that included the establishment of a gendarmerie with a European inspector, the appointment of a European financial governor in the provinces, employment of European officials in courts, decentralisation, appointment of non-Muslims where they constitute a majority, improvement of roads and agriculture, actual implementation of regulations concerning the admissibility of

⁹⁵⁵ Garabet K. Mouldjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya: Abdülhamid II and Armenians, 1878–1909," in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011). In October 1876, *Basiret*, a Turkish newspaper, accused Armenians of disloyalty, asserting that they were unfaithful, suspect, and tools of foreign powers. Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly," 46.

⁹⁵⁶ For developments in the Armenian provinces, see Brad Dennis, "Patterns of Conflict and Violence in Eastern Anatolia leading up to the Russo-Turkish War and the Treaty of Berlin," in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011).

⁹⁵⁷ Etmekjian, "The Armenian National Assembly," 50. The Patriarch Nersess urged Layard and Salisbury, British diplomats in Istanbul, to support the Armenian cause; he also sent delegations to the European capitals of St. Petersburg, Rome, Paris, London, and Berlin. Şaşmaz, *British Policy and the Application*, 7.

⁹⁵⁸ Astourian, "The Silence of the Land," 58.

⁹⁵⁹ For the diplomatic relations between the Ottoman and British governments on the Armenian Question, see Şaşmaz, *British Policy and the Application*, 24-81.

non-Muslims testimony in court, and the abolition of tithe practices.⁹⁶⁰ Following several political manoeuvres, the Ottoman government did negotiate and implement a reform in 1879, but deflected efforts to award the eastern provinces with a special status that could facilitate Armenian demands for political autonomy.⁹⁶¹

Despite diplomatic overtures, atrocities by and Circassians in the eastern provinces did not come to an end with the end of the war. Armenians in the provinces frequently suffered land dispossession, economic deprivation, abuses by Kurdish tribes, and official indifference or complicity, leading to large-scale emigrations.⁹⁶² While migration to Istanbul and Russia had been common during the nineteenth century for landless and economically-distressed Armenians of the provinces, migration not only to Istanbul but overseas accelerated in the post-war period.⁹⁶³ Apart from this, the pressure to settle an immense number of Muslim immigrants also led to the appropriation of Armenian lands. As part of the second wave of Muslim migration, tens of thousands of Circassians and Chechens arrived in Ottoman territory waiting to be settled in the aftermath of the defeat. There was resentment among local groups against these immigrants due to support the refugees received from the central government, which translated into the appropriation of Armenian lands.⁹⁶⁴ The appropriation was legalised by the government by two means: first, Ottoman authorities confiscated the lands of Armenian peasants whose

⁹⁶⁰ Karaca, *Anadolu Islahâtı*, 41. See also, Stephen Duguid, "The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia," *Middle Eastern Studies* 9, no. 2 (1973): 141.

⁹⁶¹ Nadir Özbek, "The Politics of Taxation and the "Armenian Question" during the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876-1908," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54, no. 4 (2012): 780.

⁹⁶² Dikran M. Kaligian, "Agrarian Land Reform and the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire," *Armenian Review* 48, no. 3-4 (Fall/Winter 2003): 25.

⁹⁶³ Florian Riedler, "Armenian Labour Migration to Istanbul and the Migration Crisis of the 1890s," in *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity*, ed. Ulrike Freitag, et al. (London and New York: Routledge); David Gutman, "Armenian Migration to North America, State Power, and Local Politics in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 1 (2014). In a more general context, most non-Muslims migrated overseas for missionary activities. Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, "Migration of Middle Eastern Christians to Western Countries and Protestant Missionary Activities in the Middle East," *The Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 54, no. 1/2 (2002).

⁹⁶⁴ Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees*, 117-8.

taxes were overdue, and second, the Agricultural Bank seized the lands of those failing to pay back loans.⁹⁶⁵

Even as Armenian issues turned into an international predicament, the oppression of the Armenians in the provinces persisted. It is no surprise that decades of national discourse in the Armenian literature and press and the increasing disillusionment with the prospects of reform led to the formation of revolutionary Armenian organisations, such as the Armenakan Party established in Van in 1885.⁹⁶⁶ As the newly established Hamidiye Light Cavalry (recruited among the Kurdish aghas) accelerated oppression and land usurpations, violent and retaliatory acts by such revolutionary organisations escalated in the following decades.⁹⁶⁷ The atrocities and violence culminated in the Sasun incident, which led to outright executions of Armenians throughout Anatolia and Kurdistan.⁹⁶⁸

Borne out of demands by the Armenian Assembly with regard to improving the situation of their fellows in the six provinces, the Armenian Question was not merely a political question with characterised by diplomatic exchanges with the European powers and political evolution in the Ottoman Empire. Rather, it begged “the agrarian and Kurdish questions, the demographic Islamization of Anatolia during the period in question, and the attempts of the Ottoman state at modernizing and

⁹⁶⁵ “Land usurpation” states Astourian “also stemmed from the slow process of Kurdish sedentarization, especially after the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-78, which increased demand for land.” Astourian, “The Silence of the Land,” 62, 4.

⁹⁶⁶ Similarly, the Hnchakian Revolutionary Party was established in 1887 in Geneva, and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation of Dashnaksuthiun in 1890 in Tbilisi. For a detailed account of these organisations, see Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, 90-131 and 51-78.

⁹⁶⁷ For more on the Hamidiye Cavalry units, see Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*.

⁹⁶⁸ Robert Melson, “A Theoretical Inquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894-1896,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24, no. 3 (1982); Selim Deringil, ““The Armenian Question Is Finally Closed”: Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895–1897,” *ibid.* 51, no. 2 (2009); Özbek, “The Politics of Taxation and the “Armenian Question” during the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876-1908.”; Jelle Verheij, “Die Armenischen Massaker von 1894-1896,” in *Die Armenische Frage und die Schweiz (1896-1923)*, ed. Hans-Lukas Kieser (Zürich: Chronos, 1999); “Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895,” in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Jelle Verheij and Joost Jongerden (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012).

centralizing the empire."⁹⁶⁹ In this context, this section has demonstrated the socioeconomic origins of the question, which began in earnest in the 1870s. The same origins were present in the district of Hazro in 1860s, if minor in scope. The return of the Zirki beys to the district caused significant changes in local power configurations, and as such was received with caution by Armenian notables in the district, who had been on the rise since the implementation of the Reform Edict of 1856.

The Armenian Opposition in Hazro

The power vacuum in the districts of Hazro and Mihrani—the Ottoman state's interventions notwithstanding—was challenged by another group that started to rise following the Reform Edict of 1856. Notable Armenians not only constituted a coherent and collective class in Hazro, but were joined other social actors, including settled tribes, corrupt council members, and ambitious local notables. In this context, the effects of the Reform Edict of 1856 were consequential in Hazro and Mihrani in the 1860s. The edict, in addition to elaborately discussing religious freedom, "was meant to carry out the promises made in the Tanzimat Edict."⁹⁷⁰ In addition to accelerating provincial reforms, the edict facilitated popular participation in the process of government. Religious equality, which the edict was supposed to champion, necessitated the conscription of non-Muslims along with Muslims.⁹⁷¹ The right of popular participation for ordinary Armenians coincided with the constitutional struggle. Following official approval of the Armenian Constitution by the Sublime Porte in March 1863, popular participation acquired a new meaning as

⁹⁶⁹ Astourian, "The Silence of the Land," 56.

⁹⁷⁰ Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy*, 76.

⁹⁷¹ Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire vol. II*, II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, 87, 100.

all male members of the community now had the right participate in local affairs, at least on paper.⁹⁷² Along with the constitution, it was the Reform Edict that Armenian notables of Hazro started to speak increasingly in Tanzimat terms.⁹⁷³ Now that religious equality was to be enforced, the non-Muslim majority of Hazro began to find its place in local politics.

In August 1862, the Armenian Civil Council in Istanbul praised Magsi Kazaz, a notable of Hazro, for his service to the Armenian community. According to council members, he worked loyally and zealously for the regulation of community affairs, as well as for the protection of poor and weak members of the community.⁹⁷⁴ Having praised Magsi Kazaz's services, the Council asked for his promotion with a *Mecidiye* medal of the fourth rank. Though the council members did not further expand on Magsi Kazaz's accomplishments, he was promoted the next month with a medal of the fifth rank.⁹⁷⁵ A few months later, the Patriarchate notified the Sublime Porte of the absence of a church in the district of Hazro. Accordingly, council members asked for the construction of a church on lands belonging to the Armenian community.⁹⁷⁶ Though there is no direct relationship between the grant of the medal and permission to erect a church, Magsi Kazaz would increasingly preoccupy the Ottoman central bureaucracy in the coming years.

In accordance with the principle of religious equality among Ottoman subjects, the Patriarchate intervened in the impediments to the popular participation of

⁹⁷² Needless to say, provincial governments followed the Assembly in Istanbul. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 120-6; Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, "Introduction," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: the Functioning of a Plural Society*, Vol. 1 The Central Lands, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982), 23.

⁹⁷³ The term "speaking Tanzimat" is borrowed from Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance: Subaltern Commentaries on Ottoman Reform, 1864-1868."

⁹⁷⁴ BOA. İ. HR. 195/11045, 10 Safer 1279 (7 August 1862).

⁹⁷⁵ BOA. İ. HR. 195/11045, 10 Rebiülevvel 1279 (5 September 1862).

⁹⁷⁶ The projected church would be 15.16 m (20 *zirâ*) in width, 22.74 m (30 *zirâ*) in length, and 11.3 m (15 *zirâ*) in height. BOA. İ. HR. 199/11323, 16 Şaban 1279 (6 February 1863). 1 *zirâ* equals to 0.758 metres. Ağoston, *Guns for the Sultan*, 247.

Armenian communities in the districts of Diyarbekir. In September 1862, the council of the Patriarchate petitioned the Sublime Porte about representation problems in the Diyarbekir districts of Hani, Silvan, Kulb, Hiyan, Mihrani, and Lice. Armenian deputies of the local councils in these districts, the council members complained, were not elected but rather appointed by local müdîrs.⁹⁷⁷ With recourse to the recently promulgated edict, the Patriarchate asked to ensure the election of Armenian deputies and to prevent the dismissal and replacement of elected members.⁹⁷⁸ The Kurdish dynasts in the neighbouring districts of Hazro and Mihrani were evidently meddling not only with state-appointed officials, but also with local, non-Muslim subjects of the empire. For instance, the oppression by Mehmet Şeddi Ağa, a local administrator (*yerlûden müdiri*) of Silvan, of local Armenians eventually led Vartan, Bedros, and others to petition the central government.⁹⁷⁹ The Supreme Council warned the governor of Kurdistan to maintain peace and order in the district. Not long after that, a telegram dispatched to the governorate of Kurdistan further attested to the arbitrary practices of local power-holders. At the end of 1866, tithe tax farmers in Silvan were reported to have forced people carry the tithe amount to Diyarbekir in return for payment.⁹⁸⁰ Stating the illegality, the Sublime Porte immediately called for prohibition of such practices.

It did not take long, however, for animosities to arise among the Armenians and the Kurds of Hazro. In 1865, Karabet, who was priest of the Ayn-ı İbrîk Monastery in the countryside of Hazro, complained about Yusuf Bey. Despite an absence of details, the priest was said to have suspended local affairs with a litigation

⁹⁷⁷ BOA. MVL. 640/20, 21 Rebiülevvel 1279 (16 September 1862).

⁹⁷⁸ Evidently the emphasis on election coincided with the pace of the draft of the Armenian Constitution. Election in local councils was important since delegates to the national assembly were chosen by provincial assemblies that were elected thanks to the lists compiled by local councils. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 125.

⁹⁷⁹ Though the content refers to a telegram sent by the said Armenians, the telegram is missing. BOA. MVL. 710/51, 21 Safer 1282 (16 July 1865).

⁹⁸⁰ BOA. MVL. 1046/92, 24 Receb 1283 (2 December 1866).

process, after his complaints about the bey were found groundless.⁹⁸¹ The Supreme Council warned the Patriarchate to prevent such claims, but felt it sufficient to release the priest with a warning instead of the usual punishment. Nevertheless, opposition to the arrival of the Zirki dynast would not cease anytime soon. In the summer of 1867, Magsi Kazaz, who had been promoted due to his service for the Armenian community, had a financial issue with Yusuf Bey. In a note addressing the governor of Kurdistan, Yusuf Bey complained that he stood trial for ten months after a merely two-month residence in his hometown. According to the bey's claim, the underlying reason for the trial was an attempt by Magsi Kazaz and his brother Kigork to negate (*çürüdmek*) the debt they owed to him.⁹⁸² The two Armenian notables simultaneously made their counter-claim against Yusuf Bey, who had justified the thirty-six thousand guruş debt by law (*i 'lâm-ı şer'*). Stuck between the two opposing claims, the Supreme Council summoned both parties for litigation.⁹⁸³

The resulting litigation process gives clues about local affairs in the district of Hazro. In the summer of 1867, a complaint dispatched by telegram to the Sublime Porte evinced the changes in local configurations of power initiated by the litigations of Yusuf Bey and Magsi Kazaz. Upon a complaint that tithe contracts had been auctioned to peasants in Hazro by force, an opinion of the Ministry of Finance was requested.⁹⁸⁴ It was true that the tithe of the district of Hazro was assigned to peasants; what was untrue was that it was voluntary. As the central government investigated the case, Mustafa Pasha, the governor of Kurdistan, shed light on the practice. In correspondence with the Ministry of Finance in 1866, the governor had changed the terms of tax farm contracts. The revised practice—terms of which were

⁹⁸¹ BOA. MVL. 742/42, 2 Cemaziyelahir 1282 (23 October 1865).

⁹⁸² BOA. MVL. 1047/8, 29 Muharrem 1284 (2 June 1867).

⁹⁸³ BOA. MVL. 738/71, 22 Safer 1284 (25 June 1867).

⁹⁸⁴ The original reads: "*Hazro kazâsı a`şârının cebren ahâliye ihâle olunmasından dolayı vukû`bulan iştikâ (...)*" BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 388/59, 12 Rebiülahir 1284 (13 August 1867).

neatly considered by the governor in order not to violate the principles of tax farming—half of the tithe amount was assumed by peasants and the other half by tax farmers.⁹⁸⁵ The reason underlying this practice was the inability (*bî-iktidâr*) of the tax farmers. When in 1866 the practice resulted in no arrears on the part of the peasants, but high arrears on the part of the tax farmers in 1866, the governor resorted to assigning the next year's entire tithe to the peasants with the latter's consent. In other words, due to their arrears, the tax farmers were taken out of the picture.

As implementation of the practice—with which locals were said to be very pleased—continued in 1867, a provocation broke out.⁹⁸⁶ Stripped of their businesses, tax farmers complained about the practice and revolted. What the governor had difficulty understanding was there were non-tax farmers among the petitioners. In order to stop the insurgency, the governor imprisoned forty people, including even tax farmers who had not undertaken large amounts of tax liability. Evidently, Magsi Kazaz belonged to this group; the governor stated that the imprisonment of the tax farmers was not only because of their actions, but also because of others' claims on petitioners' debts.⁹⁸⁷ A few months later, Magsi Kazaz petitioned the government for the amounts of the tithe and other tax bundles that he had not been able to pay for the year 1866 (A.H. 1281). Stating that he incurred a loss of 25,851 guruşes for the year, he sought out ways of paying his debt in instalments.⁹⁸⁸

The clashing interests in this complicated oligarchy constitute a snapshot of the Tanzimat state at the periphery. In accord with reinforcing central state authority in the district of Hazro, the Sublime Porte relished the prospect of imposing its terms of

⁹⁸⁵ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 389/52, 25 Temmuz 1283 (6 August 1867).

⁹⁸⁶ The governor proudly noted that the practice had attracted the attention of peasants from some districts in Mamuretülaziz. Ibid.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁸ BOA. MVL. 552/83, 17 Receb 1284 (14 November 1867).

taxation, to the dismay of district's the tax farmers.⁹⁸⁹ With the language of the Tanzimat, tax farmers who lost their means of living argued to the Sublime Porte that direct taxation practices were at fault. Apart from the abstract nature of the edicts of 1839 and 1856, the reference by the inhabitants of Hazro to the legal discourse of the Tanzimat state contextualises the actual reception of the reforms by its subjects in the 1860s.⁹⁹⁰ The tax farmers also targeted the Zirki beys, presumably out of fear of their rise to power in the local affairs of the district. Yusuf Bey had not only assumed the tithe contracts of Hazro a few years before, but also went after the debts that tax farmers such as Magsi Kazaz and his brother owed to him.

The Reform of 1879 and Exile

Apart from the disaster of the war itself, the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 had two lasting legacies along the eastern borders of the Ottoman Empire: nationalist and sectarian sentiments. In addition to strengthening the Sunni, Shi'i and Christian identities, Ateş states that "it heightened antagonisms between Christians and Muslims, and Shi's and Sunnis."⁹⁹¹ Beyond these legacies, there were more immediate tragedies. The war had stirred an immense wave of displacement and forced migration: mainly of Muslims from the Caucasus and Balkans to Anatolia and of Armenians and Pontic Greeks to Russia.⁹⁹² Even those Zirki beys who had remained in Edirne were forced to leave after the fall of the city, taking shelter in the

⁹⁸⁹ Striking against tax farming was an ongoing effort of the Sublime Porte in the nineteenth century, stressed once again following the Reform Edict of 1856. Bölükbaşı, *Tezyid-i Varidat*, 38-42.

⁹⁹⁰ Underscoring the degree of awareness of concrete and clearly contextualised reform policies by Ottoman subjects, Petrov rightly argues that the language of the reform program had entered public discourse by the mid-1860s. Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance: Subaltern Commentaries on Ottoman Reform, 1864-1868," 733.

⁹⁹¹ Ateş, "Empires at the Margin," 297.

⁹⁹² *Ibid.*, 300.

Ottoman capital.⁹⁹³ Along with the bitter tragedy of whole populations that had lost their homelands, the Treaty that followed the Congress of Berlin would have a disastrous effect on the fate of the Ottoman Empire.⁹⁹⁴ In addition to vast territories lost in the Balkans, Kars, Ardahan, and Batum were left to Russia. The aftermath was dramatic: the empire “was forced to give up two-fifths of its entire territory and one fifth of its population, about 5.5 million people, of whom almost half were Muslims.”⁹⁹⁵

The impact on Ottoman Kurdistan was immense. Considering that the eastern front did not receive as much as attention the western front, developments unfolding in the East remained shrouded in uncertainty.⁹⁹⁶ One of the immediate results of the war was the flood of Muslim refugees into Ottoman Kurdistan. The migration of Muslims from the Balkans and Caucasus, which started in 1862, acquired more importance in the aftermath of the war. Once Muslim refugees started filling central and northern Anatolia, Urfa and Diyarbakir were designated for the settlement of refugees in 1862. For instance, 3,453 Circassians who arrived in Amasya and 2,344 who came to Samsun via Trabzon in order to be settled in Sivas were redirected to Diyarbakir and Urfa, as the region “had abundant lands appropriate for settling the refugees.”⁹⁹⁷ However, the mass migration of over one million people in the post-war period drastically altered the demographics of the empire in ways inconceivable in

⁹⁹³ Hüsnü Bey and Said Bey—sons of Behram Bey and Hamza Bey, respectively—had fled to Istanbul during the Russian occupation of Edirne. Having lost their houses in Edirne, the two beys asked permission to return to Diyarbakir. ŞD. 1456/11, 14 Cemaziyelevvel 1296 (6 May 1879). With the voluntary and involuntary migration from the Balkans after 1878, the population of Istanbul swelled to nine hundred thousand by the 1890s compared with four or five hundred thousand for the first three quarters of the century. Karpas, “The Social and Political Foundations of Nationalism in South East Europe after 1878: A Reinterpretation.”

⁹⁹⁴ For more on the course of the war on the Eastern front, see Ateş, “Empires at the Margin,” 300-5.

⁹⁹⁵ Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire vol. II*, II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, 190-1.

⁹⁹⁶ Ateş, “Empires at the Margin,” 321.

⁹⁹⁷ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 238/41, 2 Şaban 1278 (2 February 1862); BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 238/53, 13 Şaban 1278 (13 February 1862); BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 238/79, 22 Şaban 1278 (22 February 1862)

the past.⁹⁹⁸ Accordingly, the influx of immigrants placed a heavy strain on the amount of available agricultural land, as it did elsewhere in the empire. Constituting an origin of the agrarian question in Ottoman Kurdistan, struggles for and conflicts over land set these events apart from preceding periods.⁹⁹⁹

The most important development to unfold following the Treaty was the implementation of provincial reforms addressing non-Muslim subjects of the empire. The reform program of 1879 exclusively addressed non-Muslims in eastern Anatolia, “where the British government had assumed a direct interest in the welfare of the local Armenian population.”¹⁰⁰⁰ The process, culminating with the implementation of reforms, acknowledged the existence of the Armenian Question.¹⁰⁰¹ The British reform proposals included the creation of a European-organized gendarmerie, European inspectors of judicial tribunals and tax collection, and the decentralisation of power into the hands of governors.¹⁰⁰² Contrary to a view within Ottoman historiography that these reforms were resented by the Sublime Porte due to outside

⁹⁹⁸ Karpas, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908," 63. Following atrocities during and after the war, 87,000 Armenians started leaving the empire for Russia. Despite the disputes, the number of Armenians who emigrated from Eastern Anatolia to Russia, other Ottoman cities, the Middle East and the Americas reached 150,000. Riedler, "Armenian Labour Migration to Istanbul and the Migration Crisis of the 1890s," 166. See also Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Demographic Changes in the Armenian Population of Diyarbakir, 1895-1914," in *Armenian Tigranakert-Diyarbakir and Edessa-Urfa*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2006). For more on the agrarian question in Ottoman Kurdistan, see Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 128-52.

⁹⁹⁹ Terzibaşoğlu, "Landlords, Refugees, and Nomads: Struggles for Land Around Late-Nineteenth-Century Ayvalık." Muslim migration caused unrest among local Muslims and non-Muslims throughout Anatolia. For instance, consider the case in northern Anatolia Oktay Özel, "Muhacirler, Yerliler ve Gayrimüslimler: Osmanlı'nın Son Devrinde Orta Karadeniz'de Toplumsal Uyumun Sınırları Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler," *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 5 (Spring 2007); "Migration and Power Politics: The Settlement of Georgian Immigrants in Turkey (1878–1908)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 4 (2010).

¹⁰⁰⁰ Stephen Duguid, "The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia," *ibid.* 9, no. 2 (1973): 141.

¹⁰⁰¹ For the cliché, conservative narrative that Armenians were the pawns of Russian imperial interests in the eastern part of the Empire, see Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire vol. II*, II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975, 200-5. For an inclusive discussion of Armenians, cf. Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy*, 197-204. Hans-Lukas Kieser, *İskalanmış Barış: Doğu Vilayetleri'nde Misyonerlik, Etnik Kimlik ve Devlet 1839-1938* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), 159-381; Verheij, "Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895," 89-93.

¹⁰⁰² Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 141. In the context of the Armenian Question, Nadir Özbek entertains the notion of reform from a broader social perspective. See Özbek, "Policing the Countryside."; "The Politics of Taxation and the "Armenian Question" during the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876-1908."

supervision of financial and judicial systems, the reforms actually presented the Ottoman government with a genuine opportunity “to introduce, strengthen, and fine-tune modern administrative practices in the provinces.”¹⁰⁰³ In Ottoman Kurdistan, such practices were deemed essential due to fears about secession: it was one of the last regions inhabited by a significant proportion of non-Muslims.¹⁰⁰⁴

Apart from the Russian-prompted fears among Armenians, the fact that Kurdish notables in the cities prevented Ottoman governors from ruling effectively, while Kurdish tribal chiefs acted virtually independently of all authority, further motivated the Sublime Porte to accelerate the pace of reforms.¹⁰⁰⁵ Since the war brought about armed mobilisation of those in both camps along the eastern border, many tribes in Ottoman Kurdistan actively participated in the war. The distribution of namely Martini and Winchester rifles constituted a motive for the Sheykh Ubeidullah Rebellion in a few years later.¹⁰⁰⁶ The more immediate concern, however, was that the post-war Ottoman control over the region was almost non-existent. As Kurdish tribes raided Muslim and Armenian peasants alike, Armenians proved their disloyalty by siding with the Russians during the short occupation.¹⁰⁰⁷

In the absence of Ottoman control, the immediate post-war environment in Ottoman Kurdistan was vulnerable to nationalist and sectarian sentiments. This vulnerability was the result of the destruction of the emirates, which were replaced by domination through violence in communal relations that had hitherto been managed by local mechanisms of subordination. Kurdish mobilisation would not

¹⁰⁰³ Such a view, of course, does not explain the reluctant Ottoman response to the European demands. "Policing the Countryside," 53.

¹⁰⁰⁴ The reform proposal of the British as well as the Armenians who helped the Russians during the Russo-Ottoman War, though limited in number, furthered fears of secession. Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 21.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Klein also points to the economic autonomy enjoyed by these notables and chiefs alike, as long as large parts of these provinces remained out of the grasp of the central authorities. Non-payment of taxes by most pastoral Kurds posed another problem for the Ottoman state. *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ateş, "Empires at the Margin," 300, n. 99.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 142.

soon come to an end, since the privileges granted to Armenians and the prospect of an autonomous, if not independent, Armenia incited Kurdish leaders in the region.¹⁰⁰⁸ Furthermore, Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin stipulated that the Porte would undertake all necessary steps to protect Armenians against the Circassians and Kurds. Evidently the already-mobilised Kurdish groups dissented against the Treaty, which aimed at guaranteeing the security of Armenians to the detriment of Kurds and Circassians.¹⁰⁰⁹

In line with popular discontent among Kurdish tribal aghas in the countryside, notables in the cities also served to perpetuate the administrative chaos in Ottoman Kurdistan. The notables of Diyarbekir were influential with respect to the affairs of the city council, while in lower administrative divisions, Kurdish aghas maintained control.¹⁰¹⁰ As previous chapters demonstrate, it was not uncommon for the notables of cities and the müdirs of districts to enjoy relative autonomy. In other words, the notables and Kurdish aghas had already been powerful in the preceding decades; but the aftermath of the war left no Ottoman forces in place to restrain their power. In 1879, Abidin Bey, who was charged with implementing the reform program, would have to deal with this political environment.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Hamit Bozarslan, *Violence in the Middle East: From Political Struggle to Self-Sacrifice* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2004), 25. The "[r]ise of the Christians," according to Verheij, was viewed by Muslims with apprehension and jealousy throughout the nineteenth century. The reforms on equality among subjects seemed to them to invert the natural order in which Muslims were rulers and non-Muslims were subjects. Verheij, "Diyarbekir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895," 91.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 21; Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables*, 74. Needless to say, this general dissent constituted the motive for the Sheykh Ubeidullah Rebellion.

¹⁰¹⁰ Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 142.

The Exile of the Kurdish Aghas

In 1879, rumours that Shaykh Ubeidullah would soon revolt against the Ottoman government spread in Ottoman Kurdistan.¹⁰¹¹ Turmoil in the region led to Abidin Pasha being sent to Diyarbekir as head of one of four reform commissions to be deployed in the six provinces.¹⁰¹² It would not take long for the pasha to experience problems.¹⁰¹³ After his arrival, Abidin Pasha found out that the city was controlled by council members who eliminated a competent governor, discrediting the local government in the process.¹⁰¹⁴ Of Albanian in origin, the pasha was a stranger to the area and was compelled to cooperate with local notables of the city, a practice reminding of the one in the preceding decades. In this environment, the strict attitude of the Ottoman government with respect to provincial budgets tied the pasha's hands and stifled his attempts at police reform.¹⁰¹⁵

Having seen the urgent need to establish order in the province, Abidin Pasha made a fatal move by directing his authority at curbing the powers of the aghas. Hiding an ulterior motive, the pasha invited about a hundred of them to Diyarbekir to discuss the problems of the province. Once the aghas arrived, the pasha had them arrested to purge them from the district. Though the tribal aghas were expected to be

¹⁰¹¹ The rebellion is considered the first nationalist rebellion in Kurdish historiography. For a brilliant discussion of the rebellion in terms of administrative reorganisation, the rise of nationalist ideologies, and more importantly, the imperialist interventions in the region, see Ateş, "Empires at the Margin," 316-68. See also, Martin Van Bruinessen, "The Sâdatê Nehrî or Gîlânîzâde of Central Kurdistan," *Journal of the History of Sufism*, no. 1-2 (2000).

¹⁰¹² The six provinces, or *vilâyât-ı sitte*, were Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Mamuretülaziz, Sivas, and Diyarbekir, where Ottoman Armenians constituted the majority.

¹⁰¹³ Needless to say, Abidin Pasha was not the only one experiencing difficulties with local administration. The Albanian, Ferid Bey, who was the first judicial inspector appointed to the province of Diyarbekir, would encounter the same kind of problems. Abdülhamit Kırmızı, "1880'de Diyarbekir Vilayetine Gelen İlk Adliye Müfettişinin Sergüzeşti," *e-Şarkiyat*, no. 7 (April 2012).

¹⁰¹⁴ Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 143.

¹⁰¹⁵ In the decades to come, employing Armenian subjects in police forces proved complicated. An empire-wide survey conducted in 1894 regarding the number of non-Muslims employed as police revealed that only 77 of the total of 26,507 officers were Armenian. Özbek, "Policing the Countryside," 60 ff.

exiled to Albania, the homeland of the pasha, they made it no further than Aleppo due intervention of the Sublime Porte.¹⁰¹⁶ The decision to exile the aghas cost the pasha his office; the Sublime Porte was not ready to relocate some one hundred aghas on which the Hamidian regime was relying on to strengthen the Muslim foundation of the region. His success notwithstanding, Abidin Pasha was removed from the reform process and he was appointed governor of Sivas.¹⁰¹⁷

In different guises, the approach of the Ottoman government established Kurds as a Muslim buffer against Russian interests expanding into Ottoman Kurdistan, as well as against the British intent to establish an independent Armenia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Considering the ambivalent, if not nonchalant, manner of the Kurds toward Ottoman authority, the approach would prove difficult.¹⁰¹⁸ Though the policy of employing Kurds as a base of support in the region accelerated in the post-1878 period, the oft-cited cliché that the Hamidian regime used Kurds to balance the power of urban notables and provincial governments does not entertain the complex socioeconomic structure of the region.¹⁰¹⁹ Rather than simple clientelism dictated by the Ottoman government, it is necessary to note the eagerness of Kurdish aghas who “derived extensive rewards for

¹⁰¹⁶ Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 144.

¹⁰¹⁷ Justification on the part of the Ottoman government underscored the unlawful nature of the exile. Kırmızı, "1880'de Diyarbekir Vilayetine," 81.

¹⁰¹⁸ In addition to the Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments, the Hamidian era was notably characterised by the establishment of Schools for Tribes—in what could be described as a colonial venture—to educate the children of Kurdish tribal aghas in the capital in accordance with Ottoman ideals. Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*; Eugene L. Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes (1892-1907)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 1 (1996). See also, Alişan Akpınar, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Aşiret Mektebi* (İstanbul: Göçebe Yayınları, 1997).

¹⁰¹⁹ Applying a simplistic method, Duguid furthers this cliché by stating that “[r]ather than pursuing centralization, the Ottoman government was instead trying to maintain a balance of forces in the region, preventing any one of the indigenous power groups from attaining a dominant position.” Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 145. In accordance with a broader cliché that the Ottoman government was employing a politics of balance among the Great Powers, the policy of balance in Ottoman Kurdistan had a certain truth. Nevertheless, the policy was not isolated from the accelerated reform process. Conceding the oppressive nature of the regime, established studies now depict the era as a furthering of Tanzimat reform. See for instance, Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains*; Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet (1876-1914)*.

themselves from this beneficial association between tribe and state.”¹⁰²⁰ This association agitated the Armenian interests in Ottoman Kurdistan, however, and would cause yet greater turmoil in Ottoman Kurdistan, as well as in Hazro and Mihrani.

Exile in Hazro and Mihrani

Armenian fears were emerging in Diyarbekir even prior to the Russo-Ottoman War.¹⁰²¹ In 1876, rumours of intended massacres of Christians by Muslims in Diyarbekir were heard in missionary circles.¹⁰²² But the missionaries and non-Muslims of Diyarbekir were assured that the Ottoman government was taking every measure to preserve peace.¹⁰²³ They were comforted when twenty-three aghas were subsequently exiled from Diyarbekir. In November 1879, Clarissa H. Pratt’s letter expressed the relief among Christians; she was pleased that the aghas were exiled, “never to return to the scenes of their wicked deeds.”¹⁰²⁴ The exile of the aghas commanded by Abidin Pasha also pleased Mr. Andrus, as indicated in his letter of August 25, 1879. Comparing the general security of the region with the state of

¹⁰²⁰ Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 63.

¹⁰²¹ It should also be noted that interethnic and interfaith relations within the province of Diyarbekir were by no means idyllic during the nineteenth century. Rather, they resulted from the prolonged political and economic crisis, of which the Armenian Question was just a facet. Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 19.

¹⁰²² In the 1880s, missionary activities gained momentum in the Ottoman Empire. Deringil notes that this momentum was frequently regarded as a “confusion of minds” in Ottoman documents. For a brief synopsis of missionary activity in this period, see Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains*, 112-33.

¹⁰²³ C. H. Wheeler, a renowned missionary in Ottoman Kurdistan, referred in his letter to a certain Pastor Boiajian, who was British vice-consul of Diyarbekir. The latter had mentioned that rumours of the intended massacres of Christians continued even though they lacked foundation. C. H. Wheeler, “Progress in Turkey,” *The Missionary Herald* 72, no. 9 (September 1876).

¹⁰²⁴ Clarissa H. Pratt, “Gleanings from Letters,” *ibid.* 75, no. 11 (November 1879).

security one year before, he noted that travel had been impracticable because of insecurity created by the feudal endeavours of the aghas.¹⁰²⁵

Despite the optimism of the missionaries, local Armenians did not cease their agitation against Kurdish oppression. It was because of the rumour that the exiled aghas would soon return to Diyarbekir. Especially local Armenians who had informed on and testified against the aghas were terrorised by the idea of their return.¹⁰²⁶ Fear among Armenians was also palpable in Hazro. Even though Seyfeddin Bey, Receb Bey's son, was among the Kurdish aghas exiled to Aleppo in 1879, Armenians in Hazro maintained their complaints about Kurdish rule in the sub-district.¹⁰²⁷ As a collective telegram addressing the Ministry of Justice makes clear, the Armenians were not content with the exile of just Seyfeddin (Kur. Sevdîn) Bey:

Even though the sons of the late Receb Bey of Hazro, Sevdin, Bedri, and Avni Beys, whose violations are known by the [Ottoman] state and caused losses in millions for the Imperial Treasury, deserved execution due to their harassment and oppression following the arrival of the head commissioner, Abidin Pasha, it was only decreed that Sevdin Bey be banished with his family. However, Bedri and Avni Beys, who were left behind, are up to mischief [...] Now that it is rumoured that Sevdin Bey will return; it encourages all bandits. If by any chance he comes, either let us leave our hometown and migrate at once the entire Christian population of the sub-district of Hazro to any other place we are shown, since we cannot ensure the security of our lives, honour, and property; or we ask that Bedri and Avni Beys be uprooted along with their households.¹⁰²⁸

As the bold acts of Abidin Pasha were not backed by the Sublime Porte, it was unlikely that the aghas would serve out their full sentences in exile. With this in

¹⁰²⁵ Andrus, "Reform in Eastern Turkey," *ibid.* December 1879. The British consul in the region shared in the trust put in the pasha, as he was considered the type of man with which the British hoped to cooperate. Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 143.

¹⁰²⁶ Kırmızı, "1880'de Diyarbekir Vilayetine," 85.

¹⁰²⁷ A district (*kâzâ*) in the 1860s, Hazro apparently became a sub-district (*nâhiye*) in the 1880s. Noting that the term sub-district was first mentioned in the Provincial Reform Law of 1864, Ortaylı states that the unit was comprehensively defined in the 1871 Regulation. İlber Ortaylı, *Tanzimat Devrinde Osmanlı Mahallî İdareleri (1840-1880)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 98-106.

¹⁰²⁸ BOA. ŞD. 1457/25, 21 Mayıs 1296 (2 June 1880), a collective telegram of the Christians of Hazro. Bedri and Avni Beys were the sons of Nuri Bey—who was killed by Bulgarian bandits in Edirne—and thus the nephews of Seyfeddin Bey.

mind, the muhtars and notables of the villages in Hazro petitioned the government to prevent the return of Sevdin Bey. Furthermore they asked for the displacement of Bedri and Avni Beys, whose oppression—they claimed—was not different than that of Seyfeddin Bey.¹⁰²⁹ The oppression of Seyfeddin Bey's nephews resembled harassments by the relatives of other exiled aghas, as they considered the Armenians to be the instigators of the tension with their constant complaints against the suspects.¹⁰³⁰ In this sense, the exiles aggravated the oppression to which Armenians were subject.¹⁰³¹

In the game of petitioning the Sublime Porte, the Kurdish bey had the upper hand. Upon hearing of the Armenian telegram, supporters of Seyfeddin Bey dispatched a telegram to the Ottoman government to refute the accusations. The petitioners, composed of a religious leader of Hazro accompanied by one Muslim and two non-Muslims chieftains (*re'is*), argued that the former petitioners held grudges against the bey. They added that they, personally, were pleased with him as he was in no way associated with the crimes of which he was accused.¹⁰³² In the meantime, Seyfeddin Bey petitioned the government for his own release. Having noted that he was preoccupied with daily affairs and did not have any previous criminal record, he underscored the unlawfulness of the procedures to which he had become subject. Seyfeddin Bey claimed that he was kept for more than three months

¹⁰²⁹ Local Armenians notables (*mu'teberân*) from the villages of Dersil, Tercil, Keferhasan (?), Başnik etc. also petitioned the Ministry of the Interior on the same date. Whether these notables came from the villages of Hazro that were irrigated by the madrabs is a coincidence or not, it is telling in terms of demonstrating the discontent of the villagers. BOA. ŞD. 1456/78, 29 Cemaziyelahir 1297 (8 June 1880).

¹⁰³⁰ Mehmet Fırat Kılıç, "Sheikh Ubeydullah's Movement" (M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, 2003), 30.

¹⁰³¹ Such complaints were also made in Silvan. Hacı Reşid Ağa and Abdullah Bey, the local dynasts of Silvan, had been exiled to Aleppo. Following their exile, the Porte was interested to be informed whether there were further complaints with respect to their relatives. BOA. ŞD. 1457/11, 25 Şaban 1297 (2 August 1880).

¹⁰³² BOA. Y. PRK. AZJ. 3/86, 9 Şaban 1297 (17 July 1880).

in a barrack in Aleppo without any investigation or trial.¹⁰³³ He was also discontent that his revenues amounting to thirty thousand guruşes and his estates (*çiftlik*)—in addition to the fifteen thousand guruşes he submitted the state every year in the form of tithes, sheep and other taxes—were idle due to his imprisonment. Seeking refuge in the just laws of the Ottoman State, Seyfeddin Bey asked to be duly tried with his accusers in his hometown.¹⁰³⁴

Despite paying lip-service to Ottoman justice, Seyfeddin Bey did not wait for his petition to have an effect. As the Sublime Porte was dealing with increasing complaints by local Christians through their Patriarchates in Istanbul, as well as with foreign pressure; revoking exile decrees seemed unlikely.¹⁰³⁵ It was under these circumstances that Seyfeddin Bey fled the barrack in Aleppo in August 1879.¹⁰³⁶ Five other persons accompanied him on the prison-break, which took place as they were on their way to the bathhouse.¹⁰³⁷ According to Şakir Budak, Seyfeddin Bey offered money to the police escorts to get some food. Once the bey fled the custody of the police, he knocked on the first door he saw.¹⁰³⁸ The owner of the house is said to have hosted Seyfeddin Bey for a few days until showing the bey a way of escaping Aleppo on horseback. On his way back to Hazro, he is said to have found company in the mountains: someone from Silvan and presumably also a fugitive.¹⁰³⁹ In

¹⁰³³ BOA. ŞD. 1457/25, 21 Cemaziyelahir 1297 (31 May 1880), telegram sent by Seyfeddin Bey.

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁵ Kılıç, "Sheikh Ubeydullah's Movement," 30.

¹⁰³⁶ BOA. ŞD. 2432/5, 20 Ramazan 1297 (26 August 1880).

¹⁰³⁷ The escape compelled the Ottoman government to move those remaining in custody, who had been kept in the barracks. Kılıç, "Sheikh Ubeydullah's Movement," 31.

¹⁰³⁸ Interview with Budak.

¹⁰³⁹ According to the narrative, the fugitive did not know who Seyfeddin Bey was. Once they arrived at the crossroads of Hazro and Silvan, a passer-by greeted the bey, and it was at that moment the escapee found out that his companion was not an ordinary fugitive. Presumably to highlight the good character of Seyfeddin Bey, Şakir Budak notes that he protected the man after giving him his horse. Ibid.

Ayindar, in the environs of Hazro, Seyfeddin Bey spent a month in disguise. Then, as Budak tells it, Bedri Bey managed to obtain a pardon for his uncle.¹⁰⁴⁰

The arrival of Seyfeddin Bey did not stir up immediate reaction among the Armenians in Hazro. It was presumably a policy of Seyfeddin Bey to keep a low profile for a while. Despite the silence of local Armenians, reforms in the sub-district of Hazro did not yield the results desired. That is, the exile of the aghas, with which the Ottoman government was never fully on board, did not last long. Though the Porte did not dare release the exiles in Aleppo due to outside pressure, possibilities for bypassing the verdict were left open, as was the case for Seyfeddin Bey. Such a policy was in accordance with Ottoman interests as the Kurds were regarded as the dominant Muslim element in Ottoman Kurdistan, to the notable detriment of Armenians. Coincidentally, simultaneous with the escape of Seyfeddin Bey, the reform commission paid a visit to Hazro and its surrounding districts.

In accordance with the reform commission, the governor of Diyarbekir visited Hazro in summer 1879, the first one among the sub-districts of Silvan to be visited.¹⁰⁴¹ The governor wrote that all necessary investigations with regard to the general environment of the district, as well as the treatments of officers, had been duly carried out; the people of the district seemed in perfect harmony and acted with good manners and unity (*hüsn-i mu'âşeret ve ittihâd*). Convinced that no unfriendly acts or opinions were present among the people toward one another, the governor was, however, preoccupied with violence in the countryside.¹⁰⁴² In addition to

¹⁰⁴⁰ Bedri Bey, Budak relates, was a person favoured (*sevilen*) by the government. In addition to administrative skills, this is why Bedri Bey was able to accomplish the legal return of Seyfeddin Bey. Ibid.

¹⁰⁴¹ The tour of the commission started in Hazro and continued in Hani, sub-districts of Silvan and Lice, respectively.

¹⁰⁴² The governor was informed that in the north-eastern part of the sub-district near the Mush border, close to the district of Kulb, there were some unruly (*vahşi ve uygunsuz*) people. When the governor and a retinue of local gendarmerie arrested the people in question, an investigation revealed that the dispute stemmed from five mules, and in turn, the issue was directed to court of first instance.

military measures, the governor also deemed public works such as establishment of primary schools for both Muslims and non-Muslims to be necessary.¹⁰⁴³

Ethnic Tensions in Hazro

Despite a tranquil period of a few years, ethnic tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims were aggravated during the 1880s. 1884 to 1894 is usually regarded as a period where public order prevailed in Ottoman Kurdistan, with only minor incidents of lawlessness.¹⁰⁴⁴ As silent as the region was following the disastrous atrocities that followed the 1877-78 war, the Zirki beys in Hazro expanded their indirect role. In contrast with the general tranquillity, an order addressing the governorate of Diyarbekir in December 1886 demonstrates that Kurdish oppression of Armenians was being perpetuated. Since petition by the locals of Hazro regarding oppression and intimidation by the emirs and bandit crews had not brought about any results, the document noted, the complaint was being redirected to the governorate for further investigation in order to enforce equality.¹⁰⁴⁵

Following the complaints about transgressions of the Reşkotan tribe, which is administratively subject to Beşiri, Siird, the governor deployed an officer supported by some cavalymen to maintain security. BOA. ŞD. 1457/23, 12 Ramazan 1297 (18 August 1880), the report of the governor of Diyarbekir.

¹⁰⁴³ Education during the Hamidian era was not confined to the School for Tribes. In addition to the Sunnification of ethnic groups that displayed tribal or nomadic social features or having confessions not acknowledged by the Sublime Porte as religious communities, e.g. the Alevis and the Yezidis, the educational policies of the Hamidian era also addressed non-Turkish Muslim populations with an intention of enforcing Ottoman law and administration. However, the Hamiddian pressure on Armenian schools was evident. Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 11-2; "Osmanlı Ermenilerinde Kültür Modernleşmesi, Cemaat Okulları ve Abdülhamid Rejimi," *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 5 (Spring 2007). See also, Edip Gölbaşı, "Turning the 'Heretics' into Loyal Muslim Subjects: Imperial Anxieties, the Politics of Religious Conversion, and the Yezidis in the Hamidian Era," *The Muslim World* 103, no. 1 (2013).

¹⁰⁴⁴ Duguid indicates the slow, quiet pace of decades-long change in the region as European pressure for reforms was being parried and the Kurds were being courted by the central government. Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 146.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Unfortunately there is no further information with respect to this complaint. BOA. DH. MKT. 1383/79, 12 Rebiülevvel 1304, (9 December 1886).

The Zirki beys directly endeavoured to take control of the administration of the sub-district of Hazro. In the summer of 1887, following the death of Abid Bey, the müdir of Hazro, the nomination of Bedri Bey was submitted to the Sublime Porte. That Bedri Bey was already vice-müdir of the sub-district is indicative of the power the Zirki beys possessed; his challenge for the post of müdir attests to the attempts to expand their power in the administration of the sub-district.¹⁰⁴⁶ The appointment, however, was disallowed by the Commission of Election of Officials on the grounds that Bedri Bey was not an elected administrator. Instead, Osman Nuri Efendi, who was a *mülâzım* (i.e., lieutenant) serving in the governorate of Suruç, was appointed.¹⁰⁴⁷

The term of Osman Nuri Efendi, however, was short. Following his dismissal in July 1888, Osman Efendi petitioned the government that his dismissal was without legal ground.¹⁰⁴⁸ The governorate of Diyarbekir was ordered to investigate the officer's case, and accusations of embezzlement soon surfaced, but Osman Efendi further petitioned the government, complaining that he was not restored to his office even though his accounts were acquitted.¹⁰⁴⁹ Though cleared, Osman Efendi was believed to have fled to Urfa just as the order returning him to his position was decreed. In the meantime, the Commission in Istanbul investigated two conflicting notes about the dismissed müdir. The first indicated his ignorance and sluggishness on matters of tax collection and official correspondence; it justified his dismissal as his lack of influence (*fikdân-ı nüfuz*) had rendered idle the subdistrict's affairs. The second note, on the contrary, reiterated that the müdir had nothing to do with any

¹⁰⁴⁶ BOA. DH. MKT. 1425/30, 19 Ramazan 1304 (11 June 1887).

¹⁰⁴⁷ Election of non-elected officers contradicted the terms of the Directives of Certification of Officers (*Tasdik-i Me'mûriyet Ta'limât-ı Mahsusası*). Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁸ BOA. DH. MKT. 1522/25, 8 Zilkade 1305 (5 July 1888).

¹⁰⁴⁹ BOA. DH. MKT. 1523/34, 10 Zilkade 1305 (19 July 1888). Since Osman Efendi was one of the elected officers, the Commission found his dismissal unlawful without substantiating a legal basis and asked the governorate of Diyarbekir to re-investigate. BOA. DH. MKT. 1566/52, 16 Rebiülevvel 1306 (20 November 1888).

embezzlement and was popular among fellow townsmen.¹⁰⁵⁰ There was nothing that explained the flight of the müdir, and rather than being confused by the two notes, the members of the Commission were simply frustrated that the second did not thwart the wrongdoings described in the first. Ultimately, the Porte decreed that someone else would be appointed to the post unless Osman Efendi refuted the accusations made against him in Hazro.¹⁰⁵¹ Considering the power the Zirki beys held among Hazro townsmen, one is tempted to regard the accusations as subterfuge by the family in retaliation for Bedri Bey's failure to become müdir. Speculation as it may be, the fact of two conflicting petitions is indicative of attempts to stall, if not manipulate, the central authority in Ottoman Kurdistan.

The unrest in the region was not entirely the work of Kurdish aghas. According to missionary letters, Ottoman Kurdistan suffered heavily from over-taxation. Mr. Andrus, who visited Syriac villages in Şirvan, wrote that the whole region “constantly suffers from the threefold exactions of government, Koordish [*sic.*] Aghas, and Kochers [*sic.*], or nomad Koords; and their poverty, ignorance and superstition cannot be matched in any other part of the field.”¹⁰⁵² By the late 1880s, the rumours and complaints among Armenians about the Ottoman government were not entirely economic in nature. Tevfik Efendi, the vice-governor of Diyarbekir, denied rumours that the Imperial Army had conducted inappropriate acts towards Armenians, who in turn started migrating to Russia. Complaints against Seyfeddin Bey, however, were not refuted.¹⁰⁵³ According to a telegram of the vice-governor, a few Armenians of Hazro had complained about the bey. As the investigation started, the vice-governor noted, the petitioners—without waiting for outcome—came to the

¹⁰⁵⁰ BOA. DH. MKT. 1596/33, 18 Cemaziyelahir 1306 (19 February 1889).

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵² Andrus, "Letters from Missions " *The Missionary Herald* 88, no. 10 (October 1892): 408.

¹⁰⁵³ BOA. DH. ŞFR. 141/51, 2 Eylül 1305 (14 September 1889).

centre of the province, i.e. Diyarbekir: a crowd of two hundred persons. As there is no further information with regard to what happened, the march to the centre and the threats of abandoning their homelands (*nakl-i hâne*) compelled the Sublime Porte to deploy a company (*bölük*) to Hazro. In an effort to prevent the event, Tevfik Efendi noted that Seyfeddin Bey, who had already been summoned to the centre, was sent to the courthouse. The vice-governor claimed that the rest of the incident was directed by Armenians to the Porte with mere purpose of agitation (*fikr-i muzır sâ'ikasyıla*).¹⁰⁵⁴

Typical of local politics in Hazro, it did not take long before a counter-telegram arrived at the Sublime Porte. In the spring of 1890, a certain Kalo (?) and others petitioned the government, noting that the accusations against Seyfeddin Bey were nothing but slander.¹⁰⁵⁵ Such complaints, accusations, and refutations were not confined to the subdistrict of Hazro, but rather became the status quo in the 1890s. In many cases, “the Armenian card” was played to further personal interests. For instance, Hacı Reşid Ağa of Silvan was said by the governor of the district of Silvan to have employed Armenians for his own interest. The agha made local Armenians petition the government about the immediate danger of being attacked by Muslims.¹⁰⁵⁶ In 1892, after Hacı Reşid Ağa had failed to be re-elected to the council of Silvan in the previous year, he seemed to have resorted to the same practice. Aware of the importance of a post in the local council, Hacı Reşid Ağa protested the election with the obvious intent to retain his position. While the Ottoman government was concerned with the general security of the region, it lost interest once the governor reported that the protest of the agha was “a Christian wrongdoing.” The

¹⁰⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵⁵ BOA. DH. MKT. 1721/99, 11 Ramazan 1307 (1 May 1890). Kalo might be a derivative of the Kurdish words *kalik*, meaning forefather or grandfather, or *xal*, meaning maternal uncle.

¹⁰⁵⁶ BOA. DH. ŞFR. 153/38, 10 Kanunusani 1307 (22 January 1892).

fact that there was no unrest among the Armenians of Silvan, however, did not conceal the complex underpinnings of local politics.

Competition among Kurdish aghas on a district level seemed to persist during and after the Armenian massacre of 1895.¹⁰⁵⁷ While not necessarily related to the Armenian killings, complaints about Seyfeddin Bey persisted in the mid-1890s. In addition to building a *çiftlik* with a name ending with the word *saray*, i.e., palace, the bey was accused of patronising villains and interrupting tax collection.¹⁰⁵⁸ Seyfeddin Bey was said to traffic Martini rifles, as well. While not denying the accusations *per se*, the governor of Diyarbekir noted that the accusations were the product of Hacı Reşid Ağa, who was under protection of the governor of Silvan.¹⁰⁵⁹ Thanks to his patron, the agha was said to want to defame Seyfeddin Bey with whom he maintained longstanding hostilities. Local competition for power evidently undermined the local administration of Hazro and its environs. While there was no conclusive evidence with regard to the accusations against Seyfeddin Bey, the governor of Diyarbekir deemed an objective investigation to be necessary.

It was evident that Seyfeddin Bey had conducted activities to the detriment of the Ottoman authorities, as well of Armenians, though the scope of the latter wrongdoings was not comparable to the massacres of 1895.¹⁰⁶⁰ For instance, a petition in 1900 accused Seyfeddin Bey of patronising killers and bandits, as well as

¹⁰⁵⁷ For the most comprehensive work on the massacre in Diyarbekir, see Verheij, "Diyarbekir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895."

¹⁰⁵⁸ The first part of the name of the estate is indicated only by the Arabic initials *mim*, *lâm*, *vav*, and *lâm*. BOA. DH. ŞFR. 203/59, 15 Kasım 1312 (27 November 1896).

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Hacı Reşid Ağa, for instance, was involved along with several other Kurdish tribes and leaders with the suppression of the Sasun revolt. As these men's prestige had grown among the Muslim population because of their role at Sasun, most became major participants in the events of 1895. The plunderers also included Kurdish aghas from surrounding districts such as Lice, Çermik, and Çüngüş. Verheij, "Diyarbekir and the Armenian Crisis of 1895." BOA. DH. ŞFR 187/98, 29 Kanunusani 1311 (10 February 1896).

rendering legal procedures ineffectual in Hazro.¹⁰⁶¹ Despite not participating in the atrocities against Armenians, his exile following the 1908 Revolution sheds light on his ideas about non-Muslims. According to Budak's narration of events, Seyfeddin Pasha was a religious (*şer'i*) person.¹⁰⁶² The Revolution was welcomed in Hazro, but Seyfeddin Pasha was discontent with the concept of religious equality, which constituted one of the three tiers of the Revolution. Popular slogans that suggested Muslims and non-Muslims alike would go together to mosques and churches in an egalitarian environment frustrated the pasha. Referring to his genealogical descent from the prophet and adding that he was a man of religion (*şer' çocuğuyum*), Seyfeddin Pasha explicitly protested the principles of the Revolution, a fact which soon caught the attention of the Committee of Union and Progress. In the end, he was exiled to Istanbul, never to return to Hazro.¹⁰⁶³

Apart from tensions in the towns, an increasing level of violence in the vicinity of Hazro was evident at the turn of the century. As a result of the atomisation of Kurdish society, it appears that the Zirki tribe became prominent in the last quarter of the century.¹⁰⁶⁴ Şakir Budak further claims that the tribe participated in the Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments.¹⁰⁶⁵ While being interviewed, Budak produced a document decorated with the tughra of Abdulhamid II: a reward for the contribution of Seyfeddin Bey to the state. Though the relations between the Zirki beys and the tribe are unclear, it appears that the charge that Seyfeddin Bey trafficked Martini rifles may be correlated with the increasing power of the beys in terms of their

¹⁰⁶¹ The bey was accused of patronising a certain Ömer who had killed the judicial scribe (*mahkeme-yi şer' iye ketebesî*) Sıdkı Efendi, yet wandered freely in the neighbouring villages. BOA. DH. MKT. 2407/66, 30 Cemaziyelevvel 1318 (25 September 1900). The local Armenians' complaint with the bey also continued. BOA. Y. PRK. ASK. 193/31, 4 Muharrem 1320 (13 April 1902).

¹⁰⁶² Interview with Budak.

¹⁰⁶³ A few years later he died in Istanbul and was buried in Karacaahmet Cemetary. Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁴ It is interesting that, despite the decisive role of the Kurdish beys throughout the nineteenth century, there was no significant tribal population that the beys were supposed to rule. This seems to change, however, following the establishment of Hamidiye Light Cavalry regiments.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Interview with Budak.

commanding armed units.¹⁰⁶⁶ Indeed, the Zirki tribe in Lice had been fighting off the Milan tribe in order to gain control over the northern region of the province of Diyarbekir.¹⁰⁶⁷ Furthermore, Aziz Sabri, the chieftain of the tribe in Lice, aligned with the Committee of Union and Progress when İbrahim Pasha of the Millî tribe refused to submit to their rule.¹⁰⁶⁸ The fact the Zirki tribes participated in the Hamidiye Regiments is substantiated by Dündar's account. During the First World War, the Zirki tribe was a reserve regiment subject to the Fourth Cavalry Regiment.¹⁰⁶⁹ Furthermore, 280 members of the Zirki tribe were to be settled with their families in empty villages of the district of Derik.¹⁰⁷⁰

Conclusion

In the chaos following the 1877-78 war, Ottoman Kurdistan became a playground for minor Kurdish aghas. As legacies of the war, nationalist and sectarian sentiments took root in Ottoman Kurdistan, ethnic hostilities emerged on an unprecedented scale, and local administrations were seriously challenged by local Kurdish aghas.

¹⁰⁶⁶ It is evident that the rifles that had been distributed during the Russo-Ottoman War were circulating in Ottoman Kurdistan in this period; basing her argument on British records, Klein argues that Hamidiye chiefs possessed rifles in considerable numbers, though they were not allowed to do so. In addition to smuggling, she states that some of the rifles "were government loaners meant for instruction while the remainder were obtained a raid on the government magazine." Other ways of obtaining the Martini rifles included taking them from deserters as well as stealing them from guards and soldiers. Ateş, "Empires at the Margin," 343; Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 70, n. 94.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 22.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ibid.; Seda Altuğ, "Sectarianism in the Syrian Jazira: Community, Land and Violence in the Memories of World War I and the French Mandate (1915-1939)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Utrecht University, 2011), 56.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Hamidiye Cavalry Regiments were retained following the 1908 Revolution, the change in the name to Tribal Regiments notwithstanding. Dündar further argues that the Reserve Cavalry Regiments maintained against Russian advances were simply the continuation of the abolished Hamidiye Regiments. Bayram Kodaman, "The Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments: Abdülhamid II and the Eastern Anatolian Tribes," in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), 421; Fuat Dündar, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskân Politikası (1913-1918)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 142.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 111; Dündar, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları*, 143.

Which is to say, the configurations of local politics in the region underwent drastic changes. As the Sublime Porte's policy resulted in a more decentralised state, tensions between Kurds and Armenians were aggravated. In this mess of decentralisation, the Zirki beys—like other Kurdish aghas in Ottoman Kurdistan—strove to further establish their power to the detriment of Armenians.

Having established an economic base with the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property in Hazro and Mihrani, the Zirki faction in Hazro sought to increase their local power in the region in the 1880s and 1890s. However, their efforts to revive the emirate given the Sultanate's implicit support for the Kurds were not straightforward. They found themselves among various actors vying for power, most notable of which were Armenians, so the Zirki beys had to compete with the Ottoman government, as well as with Armenian notables and other rival Kurdish aghas. The former was a relatively an easy task thanks to the good relationship the Zirki faction had established with the Sublime Porte, but the others remained a challenge. Bedri Bey's endeavour to become the *müdür* of the sub-district of Hazro was indicative in terms of the changes in the relations among the Ottoman government and the Kurdish emirs. Denied the office, the Zirki beys sought other means to strengthen their power base.

In this complicated state of local politics, the Zirki beys seem to have dealt with other rival Kurdish aghas. In a period when political order was largely dependent on central authority, the fact that the Kurdish aghas gradually started to command paramilitary units in the form of the *Hamidiye* Regiments had a devastating effect on the region. When juxtaposed with the aghas' will to power in the region, it became especially difficult to deal with the tribe-cum-regiments command of warfare in cases where Ottoman authority was subject to other internal

and external pressures. The fact that late in the century most of the struggles were inter-tribal in nature further aggravated the power balance in the region, as tribal conflicts had afflicted both the Kurdish and the Armenian peasantry.¹⁰⁷¹ In this age of turmoil, the Zirki beys struggled to keep their political and economic bases of power against encroachment by the Ottoman government and other aghas and Armenian notables.

During the Hamidian regime, the Zirki beys started to look like a new tribal emirate, as Klein maintains. The difference, however, was not due to direct participation in the Hamidiye regiments. Though the power wielded by the Zirki beys was less than that of the Miran tribe, Hazro and its environs witnessed the return of this new tribal emirate.¹⁰⁷² The increasing tribal power of the Zirki beys, however, was different than that of the earlier emirates. What van Bruinessen asserts for Mustafa Pasha of the Miran tribe seems to be valid for the Zirki beys, as well.¹⁰⁷³ First, van Bruinessen argues that the power of the new emirates was no longer based on consensus, but on violence. The political sphere in Hazro was already complex in the 1860s, and political power was contested in gradually more violent terms in later decades. The intimidation and fear Seyfeddin Bey commanded in the region was only part of the establishment of a violence-based rule. Second, Kurdish aghas in their struggle for more independent spheres vis-à-vis the central government had to increasingly rely on the protection by the Sultan rather than on self-promulgation. Following their rebellion in the early nineteenth century, the Zirki emirs pursued a moderate path with regard to their relation with the Sublime Porte. In the last quarter of the century, this seemed to necessitate acknowledgement of the Ottoman sultan. In

¹⁰⁷¹ Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 147.

¹⁰⁷² Klein, *The Margins of the Empire*, 63ff.

¹⁰⁷³ van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 187.

this sense, maintaining good dealings with the Ottoman administration served to ensure their relative autonomy.

The accusations of which Seyfeddin Bey was charged in the last quarter of the nineteenth century also demonstrate the implicit support of the Ottoman administration. The inconsequentiality of petitions by Armenians against of Seyfeddin Bey, regardless of how sound their grounds, demonstrates the subtle legitimisation of his acts, on the one hand, and the advent of nationalism in the region, on the other. In other words, the hostility between Kurds and Armenians in Hazro that began in the 1860s took a disturbing turn in the 1880s, and with the Hamidian regime evolved into the revolutionary activities of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation that lasted through the massacres of the mid-1890s. As a result of the common practice of the Hamidian regime to turn a blind eye to violations by Kurds, the bey was not uprooted from his power base. After his exile in 1879, the subsequent escape was gradually legitimated by Ottoman authorities to the detriment of local Armenians. Furthermore, control of the local administration by the Zirki beys by means of holding the vice-governor position in the Ottoman administration, as well as by residing in the provincial capital at the turn of the century further attests the mutual relationship the Sublime Porte and the emirs had developed in Hazro.¹⁰⁷⁴

The Armenian Question, however, was also an agrarian question.¹⁰⁷⁵ The possession of large tracts of land had given the Zirki emirs considerable power in the district of Hazro and its environs. Restoration of the property was a prequel to the

¹⁰⁷⁴ In addition to other Kurdish dynasties such as Cemilpaşazâdes, Hevedan, and Zazazâdes, the chieftains from Hazro, Kulp, and Lice had houses in the Ali Pasha Quarter of the city of Diyarbakir at the turn of the century. Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 24.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Even prior to land usurpations by the Kurds, Astourian notes that extra-taxation measures levied by Kurdish tribal leaders on Armenian peasants included forcing them to provide Kurdish tribesmen with winter shelter (*kışlak*). Astourian, "The Silence of the Land," 60.

power base the Zirki beys held by the late 1860s. The fact that the Kurdish emirs were landowners, while the Armenian peasants remained cultivators was aggravated following the disastrous war in 1877-78. Nationalist sentiments evoked by the war contributed to rising ethnic tension in the region. Frequent petitions by the Armenians of Hazro owed to ethnic discontent, of course, but as much to the changing agrarian status of the region along with Seyfeddin Bey's antagonistic attitude toward non-Muslims. Abdülhamid's policy in Ottoman Kurdistan tolerated atrocities committed by the tribes, further deteriorating the status of Armenians in Hazro. The ethnic tension in Hazro, which was not as palpable with respect to other districts in the region, nevertheless unfolded tragically during the genocide.¹⁰⁷⁶

¹⁰⁷⁶ For information on deportations and massacres in the province of Diyarbekir during the genocide, see Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 355-80.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has followed the fate of the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in Hazro and Mihrani and of the Zirki emirs that intermittently held them throughout the nineteenth century. By the beginning of the century, the yurtluk-ocaklık lands in the possession of Kurdish emirs were similar to freehold property. With the reconfiguration of the Ottoman government, which was attempting to have a more decisive say in the provinces, the fate of the lands was reshaped. While yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands have hitherto been studied with regard to politically-charged questions of autonomy, this dissertation has broadened the limited scope of such discussions of yurtluk-ocaklık lands by asking the questions: What did it mean to possess yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands in the eyes of their Kurdish, Georgian, and perhaps Turkish holders? How did the lands undergo such drastic changes in tandem with the fiscal centralisation of the Ottoman government? And most importantly, how was freehold-like property transformed into modern private property?

By conducting a detailed analysis of the making of private property out of yurtluk-ocaklık lands in Hazro and Mihrani, this dissertation has demonstrated a broader social, economic, and political transformation in a peripheral society. Arguing that the Zirki emirs were essentially similar to other provincial notables of the empire in the early nineteenth century, this study establishes that the emirs and notables underwent similar processes with respect to political and fiscal centralisation by the Sublime Porte. This was not confined to the emirs: the

transformations in Hazro and Mihrani allow us to see how a provincial Ottoman society with multiple actors contending for power experienced the age of reforms.

Tanzimat reforms facilitated a new language of reaction against the Ottoman government. By what this dissertation terms “the politics of petitioning,” the reaction of the exiled Zirki beys to the fiscal and political centralisation of the government shows how provincial society and notables were complicit in the direction that planned reform eventually took. Particularly, the politics of petitioning had two important results: First, provincial notables found new means of conducting politics despite the loss of their former political power. Second, their claims on confiscated property offered a new perception of private property in the mid-century Ottoman Empire, one contrary to state-dictated definitions.

While Tanzimat reforms offered a new means of politics in the provinces, this dissertation argues that they were partial and reflexive in Ottoman Kurdistan. The transformation of *madrabs* and shifts between centrally-appointed governors and members of local dynasties brought about this partiality and reflexivity. Following the introduction of the Tanzimat, *madrabs* were administered by state agents for a time, and administrators temporarily replaced local Kurdish rulers. The fact that the *madrabs* were soon tax farmed, and that local notables were sometimes appointed as administrators shows us that the Tanzimat reforms were not the unilateral dictations and coherent plans of an omnipotent state; rather they were result of ongoing negotiations among many, different segments of society.

Elaborating on the Land Code of 1858 in this context, this dissertation establishes that the making of modern private property was nuanced in the particular case of Ottoman Kurdistan. This process has been typically been attributed to the centrality of modern states, but this study shows that the process was more complex.

The complexity was first of all due to the nature of *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands. The issue of whether these lands were an extension of the *timars* of the early modern era or some sort of feudal fiefs along the lines of those of early modern Europe complicated their status. Focusing on the concepts that the *Zirki emirs* themselves appropriated with regard to the possession of these lands, this study has demonstrated that regardless of the *de jure* status of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands, they were private-like property in the early nineteenth century.

The second complication concerns the Ottoman government's alleged restoration of the lands to state possession. The holdings of most of the empire's provincial notables in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries suffered the same downfall, and *yurtluk-ocaklıks* were no exception. What distinguished the latter from the diversified landholdings of other provincial notables of the empire was the fact of the *Zirki emirs'* counter-challenges. In petitions penned by the emirs, it is evident that what came to stand for the term property preceded the legal terminology of the Land Code of 1858 and also differed from the rigid classifications of the centralising modern state.

True, the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands had been confiscated by the Ottoman government, but the post-confiscation process was subject to disputes, with further incidences of partiality and reflexivity. Through the struggle for land as well as for its definitions, the scope of these contested domains expanded beyond the limiting binary concepts of *mîrî* and *mülk* (state-owned and freehold property, respectively). Departing from that framework, this study offers an alternative to studies of the Land Code of 1858 that are poised between a political vision asserting the central control of the Ottoman state and an economic vision expressing a prior development of

private property in land.¹⁰⁷⁷ While the present study concedes that the Code facilitated the transformation of yurtluk-ocaklık lands from de facto possession into formal private ownership, it also demonstrates – thanks to the auction procedures of yurtluk-ocaklık property in Hazro and Mihrani – that the transformation was not straightforward, but complicated, involving many actors including state officials, the Kurdish beys, and local notables in the countryside.

The disputed status of the lands aside, struggles for possession throughout the mid-nineteenth century suggest the increasing importance of land in the commercialisation of agriculture. While yurtluk-ocaklık and hükûmet lands possessed by the Zirki emirs were turned into duly acknowledged family domains after 1858, these vast lands also constituted the fundament of commercial agriculture. In other words, this dissertation argues that in the post-1858 period the sale of vast yurtluk-ocaklık lands to powerful local notables changed the political and economic infrastructure of the region. That is, the sale of lands in Hazro and Mihrani in the 1860s restored the economic foundations of the hükûmets of Tercil, Hani, and Atak.

The extent of commercial production in these lands remains a subject for future research, but struggles for the madrabs in Hazro and Mihrani and the struggle for access to water resources hint at the emergence of commercial agriculture. The fact that not only provincial notables, but also state officials considered water resources as a commodity akin to land, at least for a time, demonstrates the extent of the sphere of private property. The commodification of land in accordance with principles of a market economy and the commodification of water resources envisaged by agricultural entrepreneurs make it evident that Ottoman Kurdistan, in general, and

¹⁰⁷⁷ Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*, 234.

Hazro and Mihrani, in particular, were moving toward incorporation into a world economy.

Needless to say, this endeavour was not a matter of merely hoarding land in the rural economy, but depended on politics. It has been this dissertation's intent to track down the developments undergone by *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands to delineate the sphere of politics in one peripheral province of the Ottoman Empire. Considering the politically-charged nature of either Turkish or Kurdish historiographies of Ottoman Kurdistan, this dissertation has contemplated Ottoman Kurdistan in the broader context of other Ottoman provinces. The Zirki emirs—provincial notables in the early nineteenth century—established a series of networks specialised in landholding, plunder, violence, and coercing local recognition in the manner of the notables of other provinces. Their negotiated legitimacy vis-à-vis the Ottoman government was crushingly defeated after their open rebellion against the centralisation policies of the government. Yet, this was not the end of the rule of provincial notables. As political relations extended to the citadel of Diyarbekir, the monopoly of the Zirki emirs in Tercil, Hani, and Atak was replaced to a certain extent with the rule of other provincial notables, albeit their politics had a more urban guise.

The fall of the emirates brought about a chaotic power vacuum in Ottoman Kurdistan, which was filled by an interconnected quasi-oligarchic body of state officials, urban notables, and minor emirs—remnants of the fallen emirates. That is, with respect to the making of private property in Ottoman Kurdistan, political centralisation did not follow a well-defined trajectory. This dissertation has unearthed the details of what actually happened in a district once administered by *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* practice. Centrally appointed officials were not an

established tradition, past allegiances still had a political currency, and most importantly, the influence that local notables wielded in their districts would not wane in the nineteenth century. In the post-1858 period, the Zirki Beys vying for power in their homelands reclaimed their traditional bases of power. Yet their experience was the very picture of Tanzimat reforms in the provinces. As they maintained their traditional power to an extent, they were not the ultimate authority. Rather, new power configurations in the making led the Kurdish emirs to negotiate shares of political power not only with the Sublime Porte, but with other notables of the district and its environs, as well—Armenians among the most notable.

The struggle to acquire a greater share of political power in the district brought about an active political environment in the Ottoman provinces. By following the political struggle of the Zirki family in Hazro, this dissertation has presented a view of the political developments in the post-1858 period. The picture painted is multifarious in the sense that the politics extended, by means of networks, to the dynastic families in Diyarbekir, to imperial notables in the capital, to re-emerging Kurdish tribes, to other Kurdish emirs rising to power, and to non-Muslims whose influence was increased following the Reform Edict of 1856.

It was the *yurtluk-ocaklık* property that ensured the success of the Zirki faction over other contending groups. However, disputes over access to land (and one can add access to water, the nominal value of which increased with the commercialisation of agriculture) resulted in communal relations that were increasingly expressed in the language of violence and domination. The Hamidian preference for Muslims over non-Muslims in the empire translated into the prominence of Kurds in Ottoman Kurdistan over the Armenians. The Zirki beys, with their established political and economic power, attracted a broad base among

the Kurds, leading to the increasing importance of the Zirki tribe in the late nineteenth century. Though the relations of tribal chieftains with the Zirki beys is in need of further research, the increasing Muslimisation of the empire in the post-1877 period and increased demand for land resulted in the deterioration of multi-party politics. While sidestepping the violence and atrocity of surrounding districts, the increasing hostility between Kurds and Armenians in Hazro took a more distorted track. The fact that Armenians had become the cultivators working lands that had become the property of the Kurdish emirs is decisive in terms of understanding the Armenian Question, which otherwise remains an exclusively diplomatic crisis.

In conclusion, this dissertation tells the story of the *yurtluk-ocaklık* lands in Hazro and Mihrani. Apart from exemptions earlier centuries had brought about, looking at these lands and actors associated with them offers a microcosm of the Tanzimat reforms and their impact on changing, nineteenth-century Ottoman society. In the countryside, land remained for the most of the century the vital political and economic means. What happened to *yurtluk-ocaklık* and *hükûmet* lands exemplifies not only the reforms of the Sublime Porte, but their impact upon the provincial society of Diyarbekir and the particular groups contending for power.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Selected Documents Concerning the Fall of the Zirki Emirs

4

مبارک خاکی کا مرام بیاضی حضرت وکیل الہی و مصلح الہی رقبہ زکیہ بنابر یہ کہ
 ایک قضا سہ کاندہ نیکو کار عہد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 اختیار کیا یعنی و شفا و ستیج اولاد کا ایک لکھ بیکہ نیکو کار عہد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 عہد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 حدود و بنا کردہ جو مابا قیہ سہ کاندہ نیکو کار عہد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 اولاد بنام ایک مصلح و مصلح الہی رقبہ زکیہ بنابر یہ کہ
 بدیلہ، جعفر کونو می و مذاکر و مشاورہ و بدیلہ بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 کلا و زبیر طرف عہد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 و یازدہ بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 قیام معاد معالینہ و معالینہ بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 اولاد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 و بدیلہ بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 بر طاق افادات و وصایا ایہ طرفہ کونو می و مذاکر و مشاورہ و بدیلہ بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 مرزا انشا قلاوہ ہوا الفدہ مناسب بہ قول کونو می و مذاکر و مشاورہ و بدیلہ بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت
 سلوک اولاد بنام نایب وزو غور لریہ لکھا کہ درازان خود بقوی مادہ خبر بخشی و مطالبہ بیوریلہ مشورہ و نظارت

HAT. 449/22346-E

HAT. 0449

Document 1. BOA. HAT. 449/22346-E, 4 Zilhicce 1250 (3 April 1835), Mehmed Emin Bey's letter on the activities of Timur and Receb Beys.

Transliteration

Mübâretek hâk-i pâ-y-i mürâhhim-i hazret-i veliyü'n-ni'am-ı ekremiye 'arz-ı hâl-i rikk'at(...) 'abd-i müstedîleridir ki

Eğil kazâsında kâ'in Tirkan 'aşiretiyle (...) ve Zoğorlar karyeleri ekrâdlarının tahrîr-i nüfûs madde-yi hayriyesini ve matlûb buyrulan Mansûre neferâtını kabûl etmeyüb izhâr-ı bagy ve şekâvet etmiş oldukları Eğil beylerinin savb-ı çâkerâneme olarak akdemce takdîm olunan tahrîrâtları ve ol bâbda bir kıt'a 'arz-ı hâl-ı 'abidânem me'allerinden mehât-ı 'ilm-i 'âlim-i ârâ-yı asafâneleri buyrulub tekrara hâcet kalmamış ise de bu günlerde Hani emini Timur Bey Hani ve Eğil kazâları hudûd başı olan Çumapak (?) karyesine gelüb sâlifü'z-zıkr Tirkan 'aşiretiyle sâ'irlerinin ihtiyârlarını 'indine celb edüb ba'de'l-mükâleme mahallerine i'âde etmiş olduğunu Eğil hâkimi Tayfur Bey kulları nezd-i 'abidâneme yazub ihbâr etmekle kendüsü Hani emini olub da Eğil kazâlusundan şekâvete meyl ve sülûk edenleri böyle açıktan götürmesi ve müzâkere ve müşâverede bulunması mugâyir-i emr ve rızâ olduğundna bahsile Timur Bey'e icâbınca biraz şey'ler yazub ne veçhile cevâbnâmesi gelür ise taraf-ı 'abidâneme göndermek üzere mumâileyh Tayfur Bey'e bir kıt'a tesdîd gönderilmiş ise de tesdîd-i mezkûr varmazdan akdem kendüsü yazmış ve yazdığı tahrîrât müsveddesiyle merkum Timur Bey'den tarafına gelen varaka' bu def'a gönderilmiş olmağın leffen takdîmlerine ictisâr kılınmağla tafsîl-i keyfiyet me'alinden (...) (...) mün'amâneleri buyrulacağı ve Timur Bey hâ'ini artık açığa çıkub her tarafa parmak urdukda ve günâ gün mel'anetlerde bulunmakda olduğu derkâr ise de henüz Receb Bey kendüyü açığa urmayub işte (...) veliyü'n-ni'am-ı ekrem efendimize bir kerre söz vermiş ve bende olmuşum 'âlem-ı 'isyâna yüz tutsa ve benim de bir helâlîm kalmasa da döneceğim (?) yokdur sözleriyle gidiyor ise de bunda be-tekrar-ı netice etmek emeliyle üç beşgün akdemce kethüdası bi't-takrîb celb olunub birtakım ifâdât ve vesâyâ ile tarafına gönderilmişdir bundan sonra bakalım ne sûret tebeyyün eder ise devrân 'arzı ve inhâ olunacağı ve istihrâc cihetiyle Mirza Ağa kulları da bu aralıkda münâsib bir kulunuz gönderilerek yoklanacağı ve ağa-yı merkûmun ele alınması (...) kâmile-yi mü'eddi olacağından celbi tarafına sülûk olunub bir kolayına bakılacağı ifâdesi vesile-yi mahsusa-yı 'arz-ı 'ubûdiyetim olmuştur bu bâbda ve her hâlde emr ve fermân hazret-i veliyü'l-emrindir.

27 L 50

Mehmed Emin Bey

Transliteration

Sa'âdetlû mürüvvetlû birâderim bey effendi

Merhamet(..) sünûh ve sūdûr buyrulan emr-i ve irâde-yi 'aliyye-yi hazret-i şehriyârîye binâ'en bu havâli ekrâd ve 'aşâyirinin te'mîn ve istimâle ve taraf-ı bâhirü's-şerif-i saltanat-ı seniyyeye celb ve imâleleri esbabının istikmâline şimdiye kadar pek çok çalışılmış ve ba'zı mütecâsir oldukları harekât-ı nâ-becâlarına dahi bakılmamış ise de bunlar ötedenberü me'lûf oldukları usûl-i reddiyeleri iktizâsınca bu keyfiyet kendülerine ağır gelüb ve (...) bir gâ'ilemiz vaktine dahi tesâdüf etmeyüb merkûz (...) habâsetleri olan fesâd ve mel'aneti icraya kalkışmış olduklarından nâ-çâr Harput'dan hareketle Diyarbekir'e 'azimetimiz icâb etmiş olduğu mukaddem ve sâye-yi şevket-vâye-yi hazret-i mülûkânede (...) Diyarbekir'e gelmiş ise de bârânın kesreti cihetiyle beş on güne kalkılamayub meks ve tevkif olunmuş olduğu keyfiyetleri dahi mu'ahharen beyân ve iş'âr kılınmışdı Nevroz sultanının ferdâsı olan Pazar günü müstenidü'l-(...) Diyarbekir'den hareket birle sekiz sâ'ât mesâfede vâki' olub Receb Bey didikleri hâ'inin birtakım haşerât ile tahassun etmiş olduğu Seyidhasan karyesine gelinüb derhâl üzerine hücum olunarak mahza (?) 'avn ve ihsân-ı hazret-i yâri ve kuvve-yi kâhîre-yi cenâb-ı şehriyârî ile bir yürüyüşde kaldırılmış ve imdadına gelmek niyet-i fâsidesiyle birtakım haşerâto larak öte taraftan hareket etmiş olan Timur Bey ve Behram Bey didikleri mel'ûnlar dahi bozgunluğa tesâdüf ederekyine gerüye firâr eylemiş olub karye-yi mezbûreden kaldırılmış olan haşerâtın arkalarına düşölerek bin bu kadar kelle alınmış ve altı yüz şu kadar dal (?) dahi ahz olunduğundan başka merkûm Receb Bey hâ'ini ile karındaşı olacak [Be]dirhan Bey mel'ûnu cüz'i yaralı olarak hayyen ele getirülmüş ve birer nefer oğulları dahi tutulub cümlesi Diyarbekir'e gönderilmiş ve işte mücerred semere-yi tâli' farzında muttali'-yi cenâb-ı pâdişâhi iktizâsınca merkum Receb Bey hâ'ini gâ'ilesi bu veçhile ber-taraf olarak şimdi yalnız zikrolunan Timur ile Behram didikleri hâ'inler kalmış ise de anların dahi işi bitmiş olmak cihetiyle ihsana (...) ve âsâr-ı teveccühât-ı 'adâlet-(...) pâdişâhi ile merkumların dahi karîben gâ'ileleri ber-taraf olarak sâye-yi himâye-(...) cenâb-ı mülûkânede on beş yirmi güne kadar buraları dahi oldukça bir usûle konulmak eltâf-ı ileyheden me'mûl ve müstedi' olub esas me'mûriyet-i 'acizânemize nazaran bunun eğerçe şimdi sırası değil ise de evvel ve âhir iş'âr olunduğu üzere zarûri bulaşılmak icâb etmiş ve bir de niyâz-ı 'acizânemiz olan piyâde livâsı ve sa'âdetlû Arif Bey Efendi (...) (...) dahi haylice vakte mütevakkıf idüğünden bâri vaktine kadar boş durulmasun ve 'ale'l-mahsûs (...) bir mahzûr kalmasun için teşebbüs olunmuş ve hamdû'l-illah-i te'ali böyle zararsızca ya'ni hiç telefimiz dahi olmayarak Receb Bey gâ'ilesi bitirilmiş olub ancak beyandan müstağni olduğu üzere mademki bunlara bulaşıldı artık arkasını boşlamak bir veçhile câ'iz olmayacağı zâhir ve (...) ve sâlifü'z-zikr livâ dahi erişinceye (?) kadar hayli vaktimiz olub ba-husûs bu havâli dahi kuvve-yi kâhîre-yi saltanat-ı seniyyeyi bi'l-müşâhede anlamış olduğundan bundan böyle tüfenk tutamayub cümlesinin dehâlet etmesi me'mûl ve mes'ûl-i (...) cenâb-ı kibriyâ olduğuna binâ'en (...) te'ali Yezidhane'nin dahi bir surete rabtı husûsuna teşebbüs olunacağı acilden 'avn ve 'inâyet-i hazret-i hüda ve kuvve-yi kudsiye-yi cenâb-ı pâdişâh (...) ile orası dahi imkânı müsâ'id olduğu mertebe taht-ı zabıtaya idhâl olduğu hâlde evvel emirde Bağdad caddesinin evveller (...) te'mînini mûcib ve (...) Revanduz beyi Muhammed Paşa maddesinden dolayı hayli fâ'idemiz müstevcib olacağı derkâr ise de (...) te'ali bundan sonra yine ne veçhile hareket olunmak icâb eder ise evvelce icrasına bakılarak yine keyfiyet beyânı ve iş'âr kılınacağı acilden şimdilik bu kadarca iş'âra ibtidâr olunmuş olmağla ifâde-yi hâl siyâkında şukka terkîmine ibtidâr kılındı.

Fî 25 Za 50 Mehmed Reşid

Transliteration

Sivas Vâlisi devletlû Reşid Paşa hazretleri tarafından vârid olub hâk-i pâ-y-i hümayûn-ı hazret-i şâhâneye takdîm olunan tahrîrâtından bir maddenin hülâsa me'alinde bundan akdem ahz ve girift ile Dersaadet'e gönderilen Zirki beyleri ta'bir olunur Receb Bey ve Timur Bey ve Hüseyin Bey ile Silvan ağası Mirza ve sâ'ir karındaşlarının emlâk ve 'akâr ve sâ'ireleri bi't-tahkîk zâhire ihrâcî mümkün olanların ve ba-berat ve bilâ-berat zabtlarında bulunan mukâta'ât voyvodalık ve ocaklık köyleriyle hiç kimesne 'uhdesinde olmayan ve Diyarbekir aklâmından olub eshâbının vefâtları cihetiyle sırf mahlûl olan kurâ ve mukâta'âtın ve Diyarbekir Kal'ası neferâtına mahsûs olarak elde olan ve elde olmayub da Yezidhane içinde (...) tarafında bulunanların bi't-tanzîm takdîm olunan defterleri mücebinece iki yüz elli senesine mahsûben hâsılât-ı vâkı'aları cem'en bin yedi yüz otuz üç kîse kûsur guruşa bâliğ olmuş ve merkûm Mirza'nın Diyarbekir'de bıraktığı eşyanın dahi Diyarbekir kıt'a defteri gönderilmiş olub bu takımın iskân olundukları mahalde idâre-yi ta'ayyüşleriçün tahsîs olunan ma'âşın icrâsı ve zikrolunan vâridât Mansûre Hazine-yi celilesinden zabt olunarak defter-i mûmzâsıyla hâsılât-ı vâkı'aları bildirilmek üzere emânet veçhile Diyarbekir vâlisi bulunan zâta ihâle mi olunur yohsa bu sene-yi mübârekede oralarda zahire fi'atı ziyadece olarak vâridât-ı merkûme ilerüde bu kadar tutmayacağından bir mikdârının tenzîliyle kezalik vali bulunanlara iltizama mı virilür iktizâsının tesvîyesi ve neferât-ı merkûmeye tahsîs olunan köylerden yirmi iki bin guruş almakda iseler de sâye-yi kesret-vâye-yi mülûkânede zâhire ihrâc olunarak iki yük bu kadar guruş tutmuş ve (...) fukaradan bulunmuş olduğundan kendülere otuz bin guruş virilmiş olub bundan böyle dahi maktû' veçhile merkûmlara beher sene otuz bin guruş virilüb beynlerinde taksîm etdirilmek ve mahlûl vukû'unda ahara virilmemek üzere icabının icrâsı ve mâre'z-zikr elli senesi hâsılâtı olan bin yedi yüz otuz üç kîse akçenin dahi ta'yînât-ı 'askeriyeden dolayı Mansûre Hazinesinde olan matlûbâtına mahsubu ve müşârünileyh hazretleri dâ'iresi emekdârlarından olub emekleri sebk eden bendegâna sâye-yi ihsân-vâye-yi mülûkânede virilmek üzere kırk iki bin yedi yüz seksen altı guruş hâsılâtı olan mukâta'aların mu'accesesi Hazine-yi 'Âmire'de olan matlubuna mahsûben tesvîyesi hususları menût-ı re'y-i 'âli idüğü müşârünileyh hazretleri başka ve Zirki beyleri merkumun geçen sene Ramazan-ı şerifin ibtidâsında Üsküdar'a vâsıl olarak Asitâne-yi Sa'âdete imrâr ve münâsib mahallerde ikâme ile ta'yînât-ı lâzîmelerinin i'tâsına ibtidâr olunması tarafına havâle buyrulması ve Ramazan-ı şerifin gâyetine kadar Nakıb (?) Hanı'nda iskân etdirilüb cümlesi yüz beş nefer i'tibâriyle revgan ve pirinç ve mum ve hatab ve kömür ta'yînâtları 'aynen ve gurra-yı Şevvalde takım takım konaklara ihrâc olunarak Zilhicce gâyetine değin bedelen i'tâ olunmuş ve ta'yînât-ı mezkûrenin iktizâ eden bahâlarıyla han ve konak kirâları (?) ve mu'ahhar Edirne'ye i'zâmlarında Çekmece-yi Kebir'e kadar 'araba ve bârgîr ücretleri ve Muharrerm ve Safer mâhiyesi olarak Edirne'ye havâle ile virilmiş olan iki aylık sekiz bin guruş ki ber-müceb-i pusla cem'en masârifâtı otuz altı bin beş yüz otuz guruşa bâliğ olub el-hâlet-i hazihi mezkûr beylerin mutasarrıf oldukları ve tagallûben zabt eyledikleri mukâta'ât ve emlâk ve sâ'irenin hâsılât defterleri vürûd ederek müşârünileyh hazretleri tarafından Hazâ'in-i Şâhâneye virilecek olmağla zikrolunan otuz altı bin beş yüz bu kadar guruşun mahsûbu husûsuna müsâ'ade-yi 'aliyyeleri irzân buyrulmasını müşârünileyh hazretlerinin kapukethüdâsı Hacı Edhem Bey bendelerinin Bâb-ı 'Âli'ye takdîm eylediği bir kıt'a takrîrinde başka inhâ ve iş'âr olunmakdan nâşi müşârünileyh hazretlerinin iş'ârı veçhile merkûmûnun (...) edecek suretle ma'âşları maddesinin iktizâsı icrâ olunmak ve müşârünileyhin Mansûre Hazinesinden zabt ve idâresini iş'âr eyledikleri şeylerin vâkı'a topdan zabtıyla Hazine-yi mezkûreden idâresi muhasenâtdan ise de vâridât-ı mezkûrenin ekserisi mukâta'at-ı mîriyeden 'ibâret olduğuna ve Hazine-yi 'Âmire'nin dahi idâre-yi umûr-ı hâliye ve hâliyesi ve ba-husûs açıktan virilmekte bulunan ba'zı ma'âşlara karşuluk tedârîki lâzîmeden idüğüne binâ'en mesela hâsılât-ı mezkûreden gayr-ı ez-ifrâzât sülûs hisse ma'âşı karşuluğu olmak üzere Mansûre Hazinesinden Hazine-yi 'Âmire'ye virilmek ve kûsur sülûsânı dahi Mansûre Hazinesinden zabt olunmak üzere bi'l-müzâkere iktizâ-yı tanzîmine bakılmak ve Diyarbekir Kal'ası neferâtının dahi ol vechile senevî otuz bin guruş ma'âşları Diyarbekir vâlileri ma'rifetleriyle virilüb mahlûl vukû'unda kimesneye tevcih olunmayarak hazine-mande kılınmak ve müşârünileyh Reşid Paşa hazretlerinin mahsubunu inhâ eyledikleri elli senesi hâsılâtı dahi emvâl-i mezkûre ne vechile kararlaştırılır ise ana göre iktizâsına bakılmak ve dâ'ireleri emekdârlarıçün müşârünileyhin

istediği mukâta‘ât dahi sâlifü’z-zikr bin yedi yüz şu kadar kîse akçeye dâhil olduğundan anlar dahi kâ‘ide-yi Hazine-yi ‘Âmire üzere müzâyede olunarak bu bâbda dahi müşârünileyhin iltimâsı icrâ kılınmak üzere keyfiyetin taraf-ı çâkerânelerimize havalesiyle ba‘de kararına dâ‘ir takdîm olunacak takrîr tekrar ‘atiyye-yi ‘ulyâ-yı hazret-i şâhâneye ‘arz ile müte‘allik buyrulacak idâre-yi (...) şâhâne mücebince iktizâ ve tesviyesine bakılması taraf-ı vaz‘u’ş-şeref veliyü’n-ni‘amîlerinden medâr-ı işâret olunarak hâk-i pâ-yi hümâyûn hazret-i şâhânenen lede’l-istizân keyfiyetin taraf-ı çâkerânelerimize havalesiyle icrâ-yı iktizalarına seri‘en mübâderet olunması husûsuna irâde-yi mükârrim-ifâde-yi hazret-i mülûkâne müte‘allik buyrulduğu ve defâtir-i vâride takımıyla merbûten gönderilmiş olmağla iktizâ-yı tesviyeleri kararkaşdırılarak icâblarının ifâdesi bâbında sâdır olan fermân-ı ‘âlileri mucibince keyfiyet kuyudu Baş Muhâsebe ve Defterhâne-i ‘Âmire kalemleriyle malikânenen ihrâc ve defâtir-i vâride hülâsa etdirilerek anların dahi Mansûre Hazinesinden bi’t-takdîm merbûten takdîm-i hâk-i pâ-yi sâmilîleri kılınan iki kıt‘a hülâsatü’l-hülâsanın birinde mastûr olduğu vechile bunların bir tarafı bilâ-berat zabt ve tasarruflarında olan kurâ ve timâr ve sâ‘ire olub süvâri ‘asâkiri Mansûre ve (...) ve kal‘a-yı hâkânîye neferâtına mahsûs olan timârât voyvodalık ve ocaklık suretiyle bulunan havâss-ı kurânın mahlûlâtı ba-irâde-yi seniyye-yi şâhâne karargîr olan nizâmları mücebince Mansûre Hazinesine ‘â‘id olduğu cihetle kura ve timâr ve sâ‘ire-yi mezkûre dahi bu kabilden olarak zâten ve nizâmen hazine-yi merkûmeye ve mezkûr hülâsatü’l-hülâsanın diğerinde muharrer olduğu üzere ba-berat ve bilâ-berat zabtlarında olan mukâta‘ât ve sâ‘ire ile maktû‘ât-ı mahlûle Hazine-yi ‘Âmire’ye râci‘ bulunmuş ve bunların cümleten Mansûre Hazinesinden bi’z-zabt gayr-ı ez-ifrâzât sülûs hâsılâtı Hazine-yi ‘Âmire’ye ve sülûsânı Mansûre Hazinesine tahsisi her ne kadar serhde gösterilmiş ise de maslahatda çatallık olmamak ve hazâ’in-i şâhânenen meri‘iyûl-icrâ olan şurût ve nizâmâtâ hâlel gelmemek için ber-minval-i muharrer hasbe’n-nizâm Mansûre Hazinesinden zabt--- lüzûm gelenlerin elli senesi hâsılâtı olan cem‘en altı yük seksen sekiz bin yirmi bir buçuk guruşu hazine-yi merkûmeye ve Hazine-yi ‘Âmire’ye râci‘ olanların sene-yi merkûme hâsılâtı olan cem‘en iki yük dokuz bin seksen iki guruşu hazine-yi mezkûreye irâd kaydıyla tesvîyesi lâzımeden görünmüş ve merkûmûn beylere (...) olacak suretle ma‘âş tahsisi icâbindan ve irâde-yi seniyye muktezasından olduğundan merkûmûna tahsîs buyrulacak ma‘âş Mansûre Hazinesinden zabt olunacak vâridât-ı merkûmeden kayd-ı (...) şartıyla tahsîs buyrulduğu hâlde ber-müceb-i sülûs ve sülûsân husûsu dahi hâsıl olmuş olacağından ol vechile merkûmûna ne mikdâr ma‘âş tahsisi emr ve irâde-yi seniyye buyrulur ise tahsîs olunacak adamların isimleriyle her birinin mikdâr-ı ma‘âş-ı mu‘ayyenesi kayd olunmakdan (...) olduğundan ol vechile defteri kapukethüdâsı mumâileyh Edhem Bey ma‘rifetiyle bi’l-istizân tanzîm ve takdîm kılınarak ana göre tesvîye ve zikrolunan Diyarbekir Kal‘ası neferâtına senevî maktû‘en i’tâsı gösterilen otuz bin gurunun elli senesinden i’tibâren kezaîk Mansûre Hazinesinden zabt olunacak vâridât-ı merkûmeden tahsîs ile kûsurları hazâ’in-i mezkûreye irâd kayd ve imlâ ve mahsûsât-ı merkûme irâd ve ma‘rifet-i ‘aleyhe ahz ve istifâ ve sâye-yi hümâ-vâye-yi hazret-i şâhânenen müşârünileyh hazretleri bunların cümlesinden elli senesinde mezkûrû’l-mikdâr hâsılât istihsâl etmiş ise de ilerüde oraları taht-ı zabıtaya idhâl olundukça bunlardan daha ziyâde hâsılât husûlû me’mûl olduğundan ol vechile Mansûre Hazinesi ‘â‘idâtı olan kura ve timâr ve sâ‘ire-yi mezkûrenin ma‘â ifrâzât sene-yi merkûme hâsılâtı olan mâre’z-zikr altı yük seksen sekiz bin yirmi bir buçuk gurunun elli bir senesi Martından i’tibâren şimdilik bedel-i takdîriyle müşârünileyh hazretleri el-hâlet-i hazihi Diyarbekir vâlisi dahi bulundukları için sene-yi merkûmeye mahsûben kendülere iltizâm ihâlesi icrâ olunmak ve bunların içinde Midyat --- nâhiyelerinde olan timâr ve sâ‘ire hâsılâtı olarak dâhil bulunan seksen üç bin dokuz yüz gurunun mezkûr nâhiyelerin zabt ve teshîr olunan mahallerinden ‘aliyü’l-‘imâ (?) tahsîl olunarak müfredâtı şimdilik nâ-ma‘lûm ve nâhiyeteyn-i mezkûreynin elli bir senesi Saferine (?) kadar külliyyen fethi me’mûl ve meczûm olduğundan cümlesi ba‘de’t-teshîr müfredatıyla Mansûre ve Hazine-yi ‘Âmire defterdârları efendiler kullarının müşterek takrirleridir --- ve emlâk-ı sâ‘ire keyfiyâtına dâ‘ir olmağla bend bend inhâ ve istizân olduğu üzere --- medâr-ı ta‘ayyüşleri zımnında mikdâr-ı kifâye ma‘âş tahsîsi husûsuna irâde-yi ‘inâyet --- tahsîsi münâsib olacağı vukû‘u cihetle Sivas vâlisi bendelerinin --- etmiş idüğüne defter-i mezkûre ile beraber manzûr-ı mürâhhim-i --- defter-i mezkûre gösterildiği vechile merkumlara --- bedelinden olarak Mansûre --- icrâ-yı iktizâ ---

Transliteration

Bu kulları Diyarbekir ahâlisindne olub yirmi iki senedenberü Edirne'de ikâmete me'mûr olduğum hâlde yedi mâh mukaddem me'zûnen ve muvakkaten Der-Sa'âdet'e gelerek 'afv-ı 'acizânem istidâ'sına ve emlâk-ı 'abidânemin ihsân-ı şâhâne buyrulmasına dâ'ir makâm-ı vâlâ-yı sadâretpenâhîye takdîm kılınan müzekkire ba-tezkire-yi sâmiye savb-ı sâmi-yi nezâretpenâhîlerine gönderilmesinden nâşî Meclis-i Muhâsebe-yi Mâliye'den havâle buyrulmuş ve memleketim canibinden ba-berat-ı 'âlişân mutasarrıf olduğum yüz kıt'adan mütecâviz kurâ ve bağ ve bağçe ve değirmen misillû ve sâ'ir emlâk-ı 'acizânemin isti'lâmı meclis-i mezkûrdan tensîb kılınarak bir kıt'a emirnâme-yi nezâretpenâhîleri tasdîr ve emlâk-ı mezbûrenin bir kıt'a defteri dahi kendisinden ihrâc etdirilerek sûreti leff olunmuş olub hâlbuki defter-i mezkûrda mutasarrıf olduğum emlâkın ba'zısı zıkr olunmayub ve ba'zısı dahi mine'l-kadim emlâk-ı hümayûn bulunduğundan bu suretçe memleket-i 'acizânemde hakk-ı çâkerânemi ibtâl etmek dâ'iyesinde bulunacakları derkâr bulunmuş olduğundan emirnâme-yi mezkûre ile defter tevkîf kılınmış ve altmış üç tarihinde emlâk-ı 'acizânemizin bedelinden ma'âş tahsîsine dâ'ir vâkı' olan istidâ'-yı 'âli-yi kemterânemiz üzerine evvel vakitler keyfiyet mahallinden isti'lâm olunarak cevâbında emlâk-ı mezbûreye dûn olarak yüz bin gurusş bedel gösterilmiş olduğu misillû şimdi yine böyle 'uhde-yi çâkerânemde olmayan emlâk isti'lâm olunduğu gibi memleketçe bütün bütün gadr dâ'iyesinde olacakları aşikâr idüğüne ve ba-berat-ı 'âlişân mutasarrıf olduğum emlâk-ı 'acizâneme merbûten takdîm-i hâk-i pâ-yi 'âli-yi asafâneleri kılınan defterde gösterilmiş olduğuna binâ'en mürahhim-i 'aliyye-yi veliyü'n-ni'amlarından mercû ve müstarhemdir ki velini'metimizi pâdişâhımız efendimiz hazretlerinin başı için kullarının kayd-ı menfadan istihlâsimle beraber emlâk-ı 'acizânemin tesvîyesi zımnında kulunuzu Meclis-i Muhâsebe-yi Maliye'ye celb buyurarak ba'de'l-istintâk haklı olduğum tebeyyün eylediği hâlde taraf-ı çâkerâneme red ve i'tâsı ve yâhud idâre-yi çâkerânem için vâfî mikdâr ma'âş tahsîsi husûsuna hemm-i şâyân buyrulmak bâbında emr ve fermân hazret-i veliyü'l-emrindir. Ümerâ-yı Zirki'den Telli Beyzâde Mir Bedirhan

مرشد علی پاشا زکی بیکان اور دود
یت غرض

مروضی حاجی زکی بیکان
دو قی بیگاری اولوب اورده اقلندری قیصه اداوه سیه سقاچه بیگاری و حقیقا بودیاری دودنه نقوسی اولوب الیه برنا یغیغ دیاد بیکه اولونه اعلایه کورخ فاشو له صدقه نه اقلندری
موقوفی بودیاری سیه اولوب سیک الیکوز الیه عیسی اید اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
اولوب کجینه ساسیه سیه یازانه و سیه یازانه اقلندری قیصه اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
بیکه یازانه کجینه قیصه بودیاری سیه اولوب سیک الیکوز الیه عیسی اید اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
دیار عیسی سیک الیه یازانه قیصه بودیاری سیه اولوب سیک الیکوز الیه عیسی اید اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
باز قاده ساهیه اولونه اولوب سیک الیکوز الیه عیسی اید اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
و کاب نهانه عیسی نقیصه اقلندری قیصه اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
امان اقلندری قیصه اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
قطع و برشیه و بریویه اقلندری قیصه اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه
بیکه یازانه کجینه قیصه بودیاری سیه اولوب سیک الیکوز الیه عیسی اید اداوه اولونما یکه برحقای یقی لونه ایسه قیصه صدقه بودیاری سیه رکر سیه سیه قطع و برشیه و بریویه

i.mvl 99/2124

İ.MVL.00099

Document 2. BOA. İ. DH. 99/2124, 10 Receb 1263 (24 June 1847).
Collective Petition of the Zirki beys on the stipend-cut.

Transliteration

Ma'rûz-ı çâker-i kemîneleridir ki

Zirki beyleri olup Edirne'de ikâmetlerimiz husûsuna irâde-yi seniyye müte'allik buyrulmuş ve cem'en yüz yirmi dört nüfûs olup elli bir tarihinde Diyarbekir'de olan emlâklarımıza karşuluk sadaka-yı şâhâne olarak tahsîs buyrulan şehriye on beş bin iki yüz elli guruş ile idâre olunamaz iken ber-muktezâ-yı tahayyül bundan iki sene mukaddemce sadaka buyrulan ma'âş-ı mezkûr bütün bütün kat' ve perişân ve medyûn olup geçen sene seyâhat-ı seniyye ile zât-ı hazret-i pâdişâhî Edirne'yi teşrif-i şâhânelerinde rikâb-ı şâhâne takdîm olunan 'arz-ı hâlimiz bir seneden sonra bu esnâda dört bin yüz altmış altı guruş yirmi para yirmi akçe tahsîs buyrulmuş mukaddemâ on beş bin iki yüz elli guruş virilür iken geçinemez idik şimdi ne sûret ile geçinelim 'ıyâl evlâd ve ta'allukât yüz yirmi dört can diyâr-ı gurbetde sâalik mi edelim perişâniyet-i hâllerimiz ve (...) cenâb-ı merhametleri gibi efendimiz var iken kime varub ifâde-yi hâl edelim ma'rûziyet ve perişâniyet-i hâllerimiz bi'l-ifâde mâhiyemiz olan on beş bin iki yüz elli guruşun kat'ı târihinden i'tibâren sadaka-yı şâhâne olarak kemakân tevcih ve ihsân buyrulması niyâzıyla her ne kadar rikâb-ı şâhâneye 'arz-ı hâl takdîm olunmuş ise de husûl-i murâd-ı 'âcizânemiz ve perişâniyet-i vâkı'adan daha buyrulmaklığımız efendimin (...) mermametlerine muhtâc olup âmân efendim (...) aşkına olsun cümle haklarında derkâr ve sezâvâr buyrulan 'inâyet-i 'aliyeleri iktizâ-yı 'aliyesince rikâb-ı şâhâneye takdîm olunan 'arz-ı hâlimiz mücebince ma'âş-ı kat'iyemizin merhameten kat'ı târihinden i'tibâren sadaka-yı şâhâne olarak yine sâbıkı vechile tamamen i'tâ ve ihsânı husûsuna müsâ'ade-yi 'aliyeleri irzân buyrulmak bâbında emr ve fermân lütuf ve ihsân hazret-i veliyü'l-emrindir

Mir Haydar (?)

Mir Selim

Mir Bedirhan

- Mir Es'ad

- Mir Şerif kulları

- Mir Sa'id

- Mir Şerif

- Mir Eyüb

- Mir Receb

- Mir Faris

- Mir Behram

Transliteration

Mübârek hâk-i pâ-yi (...) cenâb-ı hazret-i Tanzimat riyâset-i ‘aleniyesine ma‘rûz-ı --- kemîneleridir ki

Sâye-yi mu‘adelet-vâye-yi cenâb-ı hazret-i şehinşâhîde Tanzimât ‘adliye-yi muktezasınca hiç bir kimseye mugâyir-i nizâm-ı seniyye gadr olunması tecvîz görölmediği derkâr iken bu ‘âcizeniz (...) kemîneleri ‘an-asıl Diyarbekir eyâletinde Zirki beylerinin familyalarından olub hasbe’l-kader tal‘-ı (?) ‘âcizânemiz iktizâsınca bundan yirmi sene akdemleri ba-irâde-yi şâhâne her ne vechile ise familya-yı ‘abidânelerimiz ile beraber mahal-i merkûme --- ve akraba-yı ta‘allukâtlarımızı terk ve mufâreket birle irâde-yi mülûkâneye imtisâlen bi’l-ehil ve’l-‘ıyâl der-bâr-ı şevket-karara celb ve menfiyen Edirne’de ikamemize irâde-yi şâhâne müte‘allik buyrulmuş olmağla ol vechile i‘zâmımız vukû‘bularak (...) mahal-i merkûmede ikâme üzere bulunarak cenâb-ı mevlâdan hamd ve senâ ve da‘vât-ı hayriye-yi şâhâneye müdâvemet etdiklerimiz hâlde familya-yı ‘abidânelerimizde re’islerimizdahi bi’l-(...) dâr-ı bekâyâ ‘âzim olduklarından ta‘rîfi mümkün olmayacak derecelerde perişâniyetlerimizi mûcib olub dâ’imâ merhamet-i ‘ulyâ-yı mülûkânenin irzânıyla kemâfi’s-sâbık kayd-ı menfilikden i‘tâk ve vilâyet-i kemterânelerimize ruhsat ihsân buyrulması ümidlerinde iken iki senedenberü ba‘zı iğrâzın (?) kulları gibi ‘âcizâne ve bî-kesan derkâr olan nefşâniyetlerine mebnî üç beş nefer esnânda bulunan ve tecâvüz eden evlâdlarımızı bayağı yerlü hükmünde tutmak ve ‘asker kur‘asına idhâl ve esnânı tecâvüz edenlerini silk-i redife nakl etmek iddi‘âlarında bulunduklarından geçen sene-yi mübârekeke zât-ı seniyyelerinin Seraskerlik esnâsında vukû‘bulan istidâ‘-yı kemterânemize müsâ‘ade ve merhamet-i seniyyeleri şâyân buyrularak menfî olan kimselerin kur‘a-yı şer‘iyye ve silk-i redife idhâli mugâyir-i nizâm bulunduğundan ol bâbda tastîr buyrulmuş olan emr-i sâmilere üzerine ‘afv olunarak sarf-ı nazar olunmuş idi bu sene-yi mübârekeke be-tekrar merâmlarını icrâ etmişler bu ise ‘âcezeleri gibi eksik etek bî-kesan haklarında mesmû‘ olunmamış bir cezâ ve ‘azâb demek olacağından şimdilik adar çend kıt‘a ‘arz-ı hâller takdîm kılınmış ise de henüz icrasına müsâ‘ade buyrulmuş eğerçe ‘âcezelerini sâ’ir ahd-ı (?) nâs (...) yerlü hükmünde tutulmamız icâb eder ise nizâmen itlâkımız husûsuna müsâ‘ade buyurarak vilâyetlerimize i‘zâm olunduklarımız hâlde gerek ‘askerî ve gerek sâ’ir matlûbât-ı şâhâneyi cümlelerin der‘uhde ettiği gibi kulları dahi hiç bir vechile mümâna‘at ve muhâlefet etmeyerek hizmet-i şâhâne bir vechile kusûr olunmayacağı derkâr ve buna müsâ‘ade buyrulmadığı hâlde familyalarımızda bulunan üç beş nefer kimseden hiçbir fâ‘ide husûle gelmeyeceğinden ‘afv buyrulamamız husûsuna nizâmen ve kânûnen icrâ-yı icabına sened-i ‘inâyet buyurmayub eski yaralarımızı yeniden cerâhatlendirüb de (...) almamak üzere kısmının birinden birisinin icrasıyla da‘vât-ı hayriye-yi ‘âcizânemizin be-tekrar isticlâline râğbet buyrulması niyâzlarımız bâbında ve her hâlde emr ve fermân hazret-i men lehü’l-emrindir. Fî 15 C 285

Müteveffi Eyüb Bey’in zevcesi (...) câriyeleri
Müteveffi Receb Bey’in zevcesi Zeyneb câriyeleri
Müteveffi Behram Bey’in zevcesi Vesile câriyeleri

Transliteration

Ma'rûz-ı çâker-i kemîneleridir ki

Çâkerleri Zirki beyleri familyasından müteveffî Receb Beyzâdelerden olub otuz sene mukaddem ba-irâde-yi seniyye Edirne'ye nefy olunduğumuz esnâda pederim merhumun kâffe-yi emlâk 'akârı Hazine'den zabt olunduğunun tafsîlâtına hâcet mesy etmez çend sene akdemi kayd-ı nefyden azâd vilâyetlerimize 'azimetimize irâde-yi seniyye-yi şeref-sudûr buyrulduğuna teşekkür olunarak Edirne'den hareket birle vilâyetlerimize 'azimet etmek üzere Der-Sa'âdet'e geldiğimiz esnâda emsâllerimiz misillû vilâyetlerimizde bulunan emlâk 'akâr-ı mazbûtamızın ihsân-ı şâhâne olarak i'âdesini me'mûl eder iken yalnız ma'âşât-ı mahsûsalarımız ile i'zâm olunacağımız ma'lûm olduğuna ve vilâyetlerimizde kâ'in ma'lûmü'l-mikdâr arâzilerimiz Hazine'ce (...) (...) görülmüş olmağın sâ'ir ahâli gibi kulları dahi mahal-i merkûmede mevrû'ât ile uğraşmak üzere mezbûr (?) Edirne'de ticâretimiz semeresi olarak otuz sene zarfında tedârik eylediğimiz sermâyemiz ile yetmiş beş bin gurus bedel mukâbilinde arâzi-yi mezbûre Hazine'den iştirâ olunmuş ve mahalline gidildikde daha bu kadar akçeler sarf ederek i'mârına teşebbüs olunmuş ise de tarla-yı mezkûrelerimizin mâ câriyesi teslîm olunmayub mahal-i aharda pederimizin arâzi-yi mazbûtasında bulunan kırk iki kile tohum isti'âb eder madrablara tevkif olunmağla taht-ı tasarrufuma ferâğen virilen arâzi mâ câriyesi olmadıkça altından çıkılamayacağından mezbûr madrabların dahi münâsib bedel ile alınmasına lüzûm görünmüş idüğünden bunun için iki sene evveli der-bâr-ı mu'adelet-karara gelinmesi ve keyfiyet-i hâl hâk-i pâ-yi şâhâneye ba-'arz-ı hâl niyâz ve istirhâm olduğu üzerine mezbûr madrabların dahi 'uhde-yi kemterâneme virilmesine irâde-yi seniyye ta'lik buyrulmuş ve keyfiyet-i hâl Maliye'de Divan-ı Muhâsebât'a ihâle olunmuş olmağla mahallinden ba-tahrîrât ve ba-telgraf-ı müte'addide muhâbere ve isti'lâm olunmuşken bir gûna netice virilmemiş ve Divân-ı Muhâsebât'da mezbûr madrabların beş senelik icâr bedeli üzerine ihalesine karar virilmişken yine mahallince tâlib-i ahârı olub olmadığı tekrar isti'lâm olunmuş ise de henüz cevâb gelmediğinden husûsât-ı meşrûham evrâkları ba-tezkire-yi nezâret-i Mâliye Şurâ-yı Devlet'e havâle olduğu üzerine makâm-ı sadâretpenâhiden Diyarbekir Valiliği'ne keşide olunan telgrafa gelen cevâbda keyfiyât-ı mezkûr Mâliye'ye virilmiş haberi iş'âr olunmuş oradan sû'al ederisem Şurâ-yı Devlet'e cevabını yazdık diyorlar Şurâ-yı Devlet'e mürâca'at olundise şimdi Mâliye'ye keyfiyeti yazdık gayrı netice kararı çend gün zarfında virilür emirleri buyrulamakda idüğünden bu madde için iki senedenberü kulunuz hayratda kalub dermânım kalmamış eğerce Divân-ı Muhâsebât kararı üzerine arâzi-yi mezbûre virilmeyecek ise redd-i senet (?) icrâsına 'inâyet ve kulunuzu kayd-ı sürüncemeden azâd buyurmanızı niyâz ederim virilecek ise mukaddemâ Mâliye'den iştirâ ve tefvîz eylediğim arâzinin nısfından ziyâdesi sulu olduğu Defterhâne-yi 'Âmire'de kayden dahi tebeyyün etmekle mâ-ı mezbûrda hakkım olduğu tahakkuk etmişdi eğerce mezbûr madrabların 'uhde-yi kemterâneme ihalesine müsâ'ade buyrulur ise (...)ü'l-matlûb olmadığı takdirce infe'l-beyân (?) iştirâ eylediğim arâziyi dahi kabûl edemeyeceğimden virmiş olduğum bedel-i mezkûrun i'âdesiyle beraber ba'demâ oralarda barınamayacağımdan perişânen evlâd ve 'ıyâlimi alub ahar mahalle naklim lâzımgeleceğinden istediğim mahalle naklim husûsuna müsâ'ade-yi seniyyeleri şâyân buyrulmasını niyâz ve istirhâm ederim bu dahi şu 'adâlet esnâsında lâıyk olamayacağından lütfen ve merhameten şikkîndan birinin icrasıyla kullarını burada vilâyet-i kemterânemde sabi sıbyânı iki senedenberü bilâ-mücib kayd-ı perişâniyetden rehayab buyrulmaklığım husûsu her ne esbaba menût ve re'y-i sâmiyelerinize muvafakat eder ise icrâ-yı hakk etdirilmesi niyâzı bâbında ve her hâlde emr ve fermân-ı hazret-i veliyü'l-emr ve'l-ihsândır.

Fî 11 Zilkade 285

Zirki beylerinden müteveffî

Receb Beyzâde Mir Yusuf kulları

برقاج سے جو رو است کله مانی اولیہ المہ اولہ و لہ کمالک افادہ

Document 1. BOA. A. MKT. 29/3, 10 Şevval 1261 (12 October 1845).
Report on the rice lands in Diyarbekir.

Birkaç senedenberü rast gelene mü'ekkel olunub kalmış olan çeltikâtın ifâdesidir

Diyarbakir'deki Mihrani ve Hazro ve Mifarikin kazâları sulak ekser arâzileri kadiminde mirlivâ hassı ta'yîn olunduğundanmıdır yoğsa arâzi-yi mahlûle bulunduğundanmıdır ve yâhud çok müddetler oraları istilâ edib Reşid Paşa zamanında ahz ile Edirne'ye nefy olunmuş olan Receb Bey ve sâ'ireleri emlâk ve arâzileri mirîden zabt kılınmış olmağla anların 'uhdesinde bulunduğundanmıdır nasıl ise dâhili-i defter olmamış arâzi-yi mîriye olduğundan tohumu mîrî virilmek ve ahâli meccanen eküb husûlünde pirinci kazâlara tevzî' ederek satmak 'âdetleri idüğünden ol vechile müşârünileyh Reşid Paşa ekdirib biçdirmiş ve sonra Hafız Paşa dahi bir sene Şeyh Hacı Mehmed Bey'e ve ertesi sene Gevranlı oğlu Ömer Bey'e şu kadar kile 'aynen pirinç virmek şartıyla der'uhde eylemiş ve üçüncü sene el-yevm Anadolu Ordu-yı Hümâyûnu re'is-i erkânı Ferik İsmail Paşa Diyarbakir kâ'immakamı bulunmağla vekil-i harç Hüseyin Ağa'ya ol suretle iltizâm etmiş olub hatta defterdâr bey bu def'a Diyarbakir'e vardıkda çeltik-i mezkûrun tohumu mirîden virilib virilmediği ferik-i müşârünileyh tarafından ba-tahrîrât isti'lâm etdikde müşârünileyh dahi tohumluk mirîden virilmek 'âdet olduğunu tahrîr ve ifhâm ettiği işidilmiş ve ertesi sene Faik Efendi defterdâr olmağla yine ol vechile ekdirib Diyarbakir kâ'immakamı bulunan Sami Bekir Paşa ile Zekeriya Paşa mühürdârı Hüseyin Ağa'ya bi'l-iştirâk iltizâm eylemiş sonra Vecihi Paşa gelüb Diyarbakir vücûhundan Yusuf Efendi sen ekdir masârıfını viririm deyû havâle edüb zer' etdirdiğinden mahsûlün idrakinden evvelce 'azlinde İsmail Paşa gelüb zabtla mahsûlü olan bin kile pirinci sâbıkı üzere kazâlara tarh ve tevzî' edüb altmış guruşdan parasını almış ve ertesi sene kendüsü ekdirmeyüb altmış bin guruşa yine mumâileyh Yusuf Efendi'ye iltizâm etdikden sonra dönüb tohumu demirbaşdır (?) deyû (...) olan on üç bin üç yüz guruşa istirdâd etmiş ve üçüncü sene yetmiş bin guruşa ahâliye maktû'en virmiş ve bu sene defterdâr efendi tarafından zabtla ekdirilmiş olub bu suretle arâzi-yi mezkûre mîriye 'â'id olduğundan şimdiye kadar hâsılâtı kimlerin zimmetinde kalmış ise taharrî ve tahsîli iktizâ eylemekl müşârünileyh Hafız Paşa zamanı olan senelerin hâsılâtı anın tarafında ve müşârünileyh Faik Efendi müddeti dahi dâhil-i defter olmuş olsaydı şimdicek derdest olan emvâl-i mürettebe (?) defterinde kaydı bulunur idi olmadığı sebeble açıkda kaldığı anlaşılmagla evvel senenin hâsılâtı dahi efendi-yi müşârünileyh tarafında ve müşârünileyh Vecihi Paşa ekdirmiş ise de müşârünileyh İsmail Paşa gelüb zabt edüb altmış bin guruşluk pirinç satmış ve ertesi sene altmış bine iltizâm tohum bahâsını dahi istirdâd etmiş ve üçüncü sene ahâliye yetmiş bin guruşa maktû'en virmiş olduğundan bu suretle üç senelik hâsılâtı olan yüz doksan bin guruş dahi müşârünileyh tarafında mîrinin matlûb-ı sarihi olduğu bu def'a ba-irâde-yi seniyye müşârünileyh İsmail Paşa ile mumâileyh Yusuf Efendi'nin hesâbları rû'yetinde meydana çıkmış olduğu inşallah-ı te'ali ma'lûm-ı âli-yi hazret-i veliyü'n-ni'amları buyrulmak için 'arz olunur.

مقدمه هیئت مدیره دارالخلافه

لشکر کرده بودند و حال حاضر و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
صرف ملک انقضایه ستم میرید ملک و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
صورت مزایع و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
بوفیض یا علیکد و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
چنانچه و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
نه به صمد ستم و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
م را از این تقدیم نموده و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
مزایع و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
ان نه چنانچه فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری
کیفیه ایاده و فتنه و اینده ستم میرید ملک صورت مزایع و فروشی مقدمه تعلیم و کانیها تعلیمه با اوقات سبب ایاده چنانچه انقضایه بود ملک اکثری



Document 2. BOA. A. MKT. UM. 474/89, 19 Zilkade 1277 (29 May 1861).
Memorandum of the Council of Kurdistan with respect to the sale procedures of the state-owned property.

Makâm-ı ‘âli-yi hazret-i sadâretpenâhîye

Taşralarda bulunan çiftlik ve han ve ebniye-yi sâ’ire-yi mîriyenin sûret-i müzâyede ve fûrûhtu mukaddema makâm-ı celil-i vekâletpenâhîlerinden ba-emirnâme-yi sâmi irâde buyrulmuş olduğundan bu mahalde ekserisi sırf mülk olacağı misillû ba’zısı dahi vakıf dâhilinde ve bunlar bi’t-tasdîk usûlü üzere tefvîz olunmadıkça bi’l-âhare sızladıdan hâlli olmayacağı cihetle bna mahal kalmamak için sûret-i müzâyedelerini mutazammın alınan i’lânnâmelerin icâbı kadar nüsha-yı matbû‘ası leffen irsâl buyrulacağı ve mu‘âmelât-ı atıyyesinin ıslâhı zımnında mücebince (...) ıslâhı muktezâ-yı irâde-yi sdeniyye iktizâ-yı ‘âliyesinden bulunduğu beyân-ı ‘âliyesiyle ol vechile müzayedeye konularak kimin üzerinde kalur ise mazbatasının sür‘at-i irsâli fi 14 Şevval 277 târihiyle şeref-i vürûd eden emirnâme-yi sâmi-yi vekâletpenâhîlerinde irâde ve fermân buyrulmuş ve bu kabilden ya‘ni emlâk ve çiftlik misillû mîriye müte‘allik şeylerden Diyarbekir’e muzâf Hazro ve Hani ve Beşiri kazâlarında ba‘zı bağ ve bağçe ve değirmenler olub mukaddemâ Mâliye Nezâret-i celilesinden vârid olan pusla mücebince burada müzâyede-yi ‘aleniyesi bi’l-icrâ rağbâtı inkıtâ‘ından sonra tâliblerin üzerlerinde ne suretle ve ne mikdâr bedel ile takarrür eylediğini mutazammın Hazro ve Hani kazâlarıçün fi 21 Safer 277 târihiyle ve Beşiri kazâsındaki değirmen ve arâzi içün dahi fi 14 Cemaziyelahire 277 târihiyle üç kıt‘a bâlâsı defterlû mazbata yazılarak ol vakit nezâret-i celile-yi müşârünileyhâya takdîm kılınmış ve tâliblerinin isimlerine tasrîhi eğerçe şimdiye kadar mülknâme-yi hümâyûnları şeref-vürûd etmemiş ise de kazâ-yı mezkûrede kâ’in olub mukaddemce minval-i muharrer üzere müzâyede ve inhâ olunan bağ ve bağçe ve sâ’ire-yi mezbûre bir vechile vakıf dâhilinde bulunduğu ve sırf emlâk-ı mîriyeden bulundukları ve mu‘âmelâtı dahi mukaddemâ nezâretin derciyle nezâret-i müşârünileyhâdan alınan tahrîrâta tatbîk olunarak müzâyedesı icrâ kılınmış olduğu cihetle bu bâbda tekrar müzâyede icâb edüb etmeyeceğinin istizanına lüzûm görünmüş olmağla tekrar müzâyedesı icâb eylediği takdîrde keyfiyetin irâde ve iş‘ârı bâbında emr ve fermân hazret-i men lehü’l-emrindir. Fî 19 Zilkade 277

Mâliye Nezâret-i celilesinin 25 Cemaziyelevvel 80 ve 27 Teşrinievvvel 79 târihiyle Meclis-i Vâlâ'ya havâle buyrulan bir kıt'a tezkiresinde Diyarbekir sancağında kâ'in Hazro kazâsında olub fûrûhtu muktezâ-yı irâde-yi seniyyeden bulunan Zirki beylerinden müteveffî Receb Bey ile ümerâ-yı sâ'ire 'uhdelerinden münhal olan tarla ve bağlar ile dükkân ve 'arsaların mahallince lede'l-müzâyede yetmiş bin beş yüz guruş mu'accele ile tâlibi 'uhdesinde takarrür etmiş ve emlâk-i mezkûrenin usûlü vechile burada dahi müzâyedesi bi'l-icrâ mumâileyh Receb Beyzâde Yusuf Bey mahallî kararına beş yüz guruş daha zam ile mu'accele-yi mezkûreyi yetmiş bir bin guruşa iblâğ edüb otuz altı bin guruşunun nakden ve peşinen ve küsûru olan otuz beş bin guruşunu dahi seksen senesi rûz-ı Kasımı ibtidâsında kezalik nakden teslîm-i Hazine edeceğini dahi beyân etmiş ve mu'accele-yi merkûmenin ol vechile tesviyesine sarraf Tangıroğlu Apik Efendi tarafından sened alınmış idüğü beyanıyla emlâk-ı mezkûrenin mîr-i mumâileyhe tefvîzi istizân olunmuş olub siyâk-ı iş'âra nazaran işbu emlâk mumâileyh Yusuf Bey'in pederi 'uhdesinden mahlûl olduğu ve kendüsünün memleketine 'avdet ve 'azimeti husûsuna bu kere ba-irâde-yi seniyye ruhsat virildiği cihetle emlâk-ı mezkûrenin bedeli bulunan yetmiş bir bin guurşun ol vechile tesellüm-i Hazine kılınmak üzere mîr-i mumâileyh 'uhdesine tefvîzi zımnında Hazine'ce ifâ-yı muktezasının nezâret-i müşârünileyhâya havâlesi tezekkür kılındı ise de ol bâbda emr ve fermân hazret-i veliyü'l-emrindir. Fî 11 Cemaziyelahir 280 ve fî 11 Teşrinisani 279

ع ۲۷

معدله چاکر کیرد که از پست کجای نفوسه تمدن اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
زنی بکدرنه سولی صیابک زار پست کجای نفوسه تمدن اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
چاکر ادرنه دیوانه یا سبانه حواله اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
نقدی انجمنی ریختی داخل دفتر ادرنه دیوانه یا سبانه حواله اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
مدلولات واقع حلقه اجوائی نایب حیوایات اعراضه نشه اولده ادرنه سبانه حواله اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
ایدراره حیایه اید سدرده اصحاب ارضیک بایق قوتدرده سادیه دیکاماسنی اولیغی جمله تحقیقاته و سحالی دیار بکر مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
فروتنی سنی حلقه کاده اجلاطف سادیه اصحاب ارضیک انقضای سادیه سبیت ویرجی چند کادری داعی اولیغی دجر موسیایه نفوسه خجوب چورلیغی حلاله ده بولاق قدم دوق قلی نورانی سدرده
غورته حباب بلوغت راه دوشی ملول اولیغی اول داعی حلقه تلغ ایلور معنایه بوی بورد بر حلقه سادیه ساری عون لدرنه برلیغی نظار اندر بورد ادای عمده ایراسی عیلا اندرک و قی
ادایس تحت نایب اندرده و حساب الامول موقع نایبیه قوتدرده حلقه سادیه ساری عون لدرنه برلیغی نظار اندر بورد ادای عمده ایراسی عیلا اندرک و قی
برش ندیده حلقه دیوانه یا سبانه حواله اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
دیوانه یا سبانه حواله اندکی مضرب حقه خاروی شریل مذکره ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر
ننده ادرنه سولی دولت آزیم ده، مصلحت ما یقین طبع جریده جرایعانی خیر انجمنی مدله کدر

Document 4. BOA. ŞD. 235/13 12 Rebiulevvel 1286 (22 June 1869).
Investigation of the Council of State with respect to the rice lands in Hazro.

Ma'rûz-ı çâker-i kemîneleridir ki

Zirki beylerinden müteveffî Receb Beyzâde Yusuf Bey'in tefevvüz etmek istediği madrablar hakkında muhâbereyi şâmil tezkire üzerine Şurâ-yı Devlet kararıyla ve 24 Safer 86 târihiyle tastîr buyrulan cevâb-ı 'âli-yi (...) (...) mütâla'a-güzâr-ı çâkerî olarak Divân-ı Muhâsebât'a havâle ile tedkîk-i maslahat olundu Filibe'ce sû'al buyrulan çeltüklere dâ'ir istihsâl olunan ma'lûmât-ı kuyûdiyeye nazaran çeltük mukâta'âtı ber-vech-i mâlikâne mu'accele takdîriyle ba-berat-ı 'âli ve ba-kayd-ı hayat tasarruf olunub birtakımı dâhil-i defter olarak bedelât-ı mukayyedesi Hazine'ce eshâbına virilmekde ve birtakımında hâric-ez-defter eshâbı 'uhdelerinde olduğu ve bunların mahlûlü vukû'unda tekrar tefvîz olunmayub mukâta'ât-ı sâ'ire gibi mahlûle (...) mahlûlât-ı vâkı'a çeltük üçrât nâmıyla hubûbât a'şârından başka olmak üzere sene-be-sene cânib-i Hazine'den maktû'en ihâle kılınmakda bulunduğu anlaşıyor ve fakat bunlar çeltük zer' olunan arâzi demek olarak bu çeltükler orada cereyân eden nehirden eshâb-ı arâzinin yaptıkları harklardan münâvebeten ve meccânen saki olduğu cümle-yi tahkîkâtından ve şu hâlde Diyarbekir madrablarının Filibe çeltüklerine kıyâs olunamayacağı vâzihâtdan olub çünkü Diyarbekir madrablarının fûrûhtu saki çeltükâtında icrâ olunan münâvebe usulünce ahâlinin inkıtâ'-ı menâfi'ine sebebiyet vireceği cihetle mahâzir-i dâ'i olduğu ve mücerred mumâileyhe tefvîzi tecvîz buyrulduğu hâlde de buna mukaddem ve mu'ahhar mahallince yüz elli beş bin guraşa tâlib bulunub daha da zammı me'mûl bulunduğu evvel ve âhir mahallinden teblîğ olunur ma'mâfih bu madrabların bir takımında sâ'irleri 'uhdelerinde bulunduğu nazaran anlar ne yolda idâre etmekde iseler mebhûs (...) olanların dahi öylece idâresi taht-ı te'mîne alınarak ve hasbe'l-usûl mevki'-yi müzayedeye konularak satılmasında be'is olmayacağı hatırlara gelse bile meclis-i idâre-yi vilâyet şunda beyân-ı mahzûr etmekde iken mahalli ile tekrar muhâbere olunmaksızın şu sûretde Hazine'ce bir şey denilemeyeceğinden bununla beraber Filibe'nin çeltük mukâta'âtı şunlar satılmayub ve diğerleri 'uhdelerinde bulunanların dahi mahlûlü vukû'buldukça tefvîz olunmayub hükûmet idâresinde bulundurulmasında eğerçe madrabların bedelât-ı seneviyesinden Hazine biraz şey gâ'ib ederse de bu yüzden vukû'bulacak teshîlât ve tehvînât semeresi olarak teksîr-i zirâ'atden menâfi-yi kesîre istihsâl ederek ahâli hakkında da pek büyük hayr ve menfa'at olacağı gayr-ı tezekkür --- --- artık şuralarının temyîz ve tedkîki mücerred Şurâ-yı Devlet'in ârâ-yı sâ'ibesine (?) vâbeste olduğu divân-ı mezkûrdan ifâde ve evrâk-ı meb'ûse zikrolunan muhâbere tezkiresiyle beraber takdîm ve i'âde kılınmağın ol bâbda emr ve fermân hazret-i men lehü'l-emrindir.

Fî 12 Rebiülevvel 286 ve fî 11 Haziran 285

[illegible]

Document 1. BOA. MVL. 347/135, 25 Rebiülevvel 1272 (5 December 1855).
Magsi Kazaz's undertaking of the tax farm contracts of the Babak and Barkuş
madrabs.

Mâliye Nezâret-i celilesinin Meclis-i Vâlâ'ya buyrulan takririyle merbût hülâsa me'alllerinden müstebân olduğu üzere Diyarbekir sancağında kâ'in (...) kazâsıyla ma'lûmü'l-esâmi kurâ a'şârının yetmiş bir senesine mahsûben karar-ı müzâyedesini mübeyyin vârid olan defter üzerine Hazine-i celilede dahi bi'l-müzâyede tâlibi bulunamaması cihetiyle mahallince olan tâliblerine ihâlesi ve diğer iki 'aded karyenin dahi icrâ-yı müzayedesıyla kararının iş'ârı husûsuna dâ'ir müte'allik buyrulan irâde-yi seniyye mücebince itâre (?) kılınan tahrîrâta cevâben livâ-yı mezkûr meclisinin vârid olan mazbatasında zikrolunan (...) kazâsı a'şârıyla Beşiri kazâsına tâbi' Kefer Zo (?) ma' Bazbut (?) kurâlarıy a'şârına münhâsiren tâlib zuhuruna mebnî bunlar ile Mihrani kazâsında kâ'in Babaki ve Barkuş madrabları a'şârı müzâyede olundukda kazâ-yı mezkûr a'şârının mukaddemki bedel-i mukarrerine dört yüz elli gurus zam ile ahâlisi ve Beşiri kazâsına tâbi' Kefer Zo ve Bazbut (?) karyeleri a'şârına bin gurus zam ile Ohan ve Babaki ve Barkuş madrabları a'şârı bedel-i sâbıkı dört bin üç yüz gurus ile Magsi Kazaz nam kimesneler 'uhdesinde takarrür edüb a'şâr-ı merkûmenin bedeli cem'en otuz bin altı yüz gurusâ bâliğ olduğu gösterilmiş olmağla zikrolunan (...) kazâsıyla Kefer Zo ve Bazbut karyeleri a'şârının mukaddemki ihalesinden sarf-ı nazarla mezkûr madrablar ile beraber sene-yi merkûmeye mahsûben mezkûrü'l-mikdâr bedel ile itâ ve mezkûrü'l-isim tâlibleri 'uhdelerine ihâlesi zımnında icrâ-yı icabının nezâret-i müşârünileyhâya havâlesi Meclis-i Vâlâ'da tezekkür kılınmış ise de ol bâbda ne vechile.

مقام عن حق نظامی

دیاربکر سنجاقه تابع صبی فصب سیم سواد و قون و خلیفه و مهران و دیجی قضااری مجبیره ملت دیکر از دود حسب النظام بولسی لوزمکویه اعضا ملت مرقومند انتخاب
اورین اجرا اولمیه محلی مدبری کند استعاری امدری خود بود حسب امتیاز و استمدادی غری الملیک کنی دیکر نه قدری اندر کوی لوک استخار اوسن و ملت کفره نوز
اعضا انتخاب و نمیش ماده که الیه ذکر اولیانه قضاالرده موطه اولیاده افراد ملت مرقومند انتخابی اورینیه افر اوسن نظامی اقتضایه بولسی اولمیه اولمیه ذکر اولیانه
قضاال مجبیره ملت مرقومند انتخابی افر اولیاده اولیاده ذکر اولیانه مرقومند و در حق اسامی استحقاقی
اراده عدلی سنی سنی کرسانه والیسی دولو باش دوزیریه بر قسطه ارماده سنی دوزیریه صدارتیه لیک قدری بانی و لهر حاله ارماده دوزیریه مهران اولمیه

مه الاکتفا مرای ریسر اوعلی لکوی	مه الاکتفا مرای آساده اوعلی لکوی	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو	مه الاکتفا مرای لکوی ماریو
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Document 2. BOA. MVL. 640/20, 21 Rebiülevvel 1279 (16 September 1862).
The Note of the Patriarchate concerning the appointment of Armenian members in
the local councils of Diyarbekir.

Makâm-ı ‘âli-yi hazret-i nezâretpenâhiye

Diyarbakir sancağına tâbi‘ Hani kasabasıyla Silvan ve Kulb ve Hiyan ve Mihrani ve Lice kazâları meclislerinde millet-i çâkerânemizden hasbe’n-nizâm bulunması lâzımgelen a‘zâlar millet-i merkûmenin intihâbı üzerine icrâ olunmayarak mahallî müdürleri kendü istedikleri adamları hod-be-hod nasb etmek ve istemediklerini ‘azl eylemek gibi harekâta tasaddî eyledikleri bu kere istihbâr olunmuş ve millet-i ‘âcizânemizden a‘zâ intihâb ve ta‘yîni maddesi ise zikrolunan kazâlarda mutavattın olan efrâd-ı millet-i merkûmenin intihâbları üzerine icrâ olunması nizâmı iktizasından bulunmuş olmağla ol vechile zikrolunan kazâlar meclislerinde millet-i merkûmenin intihâb-gerdeleri olan adamların a‘zâ ta‘yîni ile müdürân taraflarından ‘azl ve tebdîl misillû vâki‘ olan harekâtın men‘ ve def‘i esbabının istihsâli irâde-yi ‘aliyesini şâmil Kürdistan vâlisi devletlû paşa hazretlerien bir kıt‘a emirnâme-yi sâmi-yi hazret-i sadâretpenâhînin tasdîri bâbında ve her hâlde emr ve fermân hazret-i men lehü’l-emrindir.

Fî 21 Rebiülahir 1279 fî 3 Teşrinievvel 1278

Transliteration

Telgrafnâme

‘An
Diyarbakir

İlâ
Der-Sa‘âdet

Numero Kelimat
1905 200

Vâsitasıyla merkeze vusûlü	Telgrafnâmenin mahalline irsâli
Gündüz Gece fî sene	Sâ‘at Dakika
Sâ‘at Dakika Sâ‘at Dakika	2 Mürselünileyhine gönderildiği
1 25 (...) 25	Merkezine geçirildiği
Tekmîl-i muhâberât	Fî sene 26 Mayıs 96
Telgraf keşide eden me‘mûr Ahz eden me‘mûr	Me‘mûr-ı telgraf mekâtib Me‘mûr-ı ser-nevbet
Sıdkı	Dâ‘im

Dâhiliye Nezâret-i celilesine

Devletçe tuğyânlığı meşhûd milyonlarla Hazine-yi celileye hasârlar irâs eden Hazrolu müteveffî Receb Bey oğullar Sevdin ve Bedri ve Avni Beyler serrimize (?) gözetmiş oldukları zulum ve ta‘addiyâtları icrâsı hakkında geçen sene Serkomiser Abidin Paşa teşriflerinde i‘dâmları müstahak iken Sevdin Bey’i teb‘idle familyalarının üleşdirilmesine karargîr oldu ise de gerüde kalan Bedri ve Avni Beyler tarafından fazlasıyla fenâlıklar husûle gelüb günleri (?) kaldıracak gözedirken şimdi Sevdin Bey’in i‘âdesi söylenmekde büsbütün eşkıyâları canlandırub harâbetde bulundukları şâyed kendüsü gelecek olur ise nefsimize ‘ırmımıza malımıza emîn olamadığımız cihetle Hazro nâhiyesinde bulunduğumuz kâffe-yi Hristiyana diğer mahal irâ‘esiyle hicret edüb terk-i vatan edelim yohsa hâneleriyle Bedri ve Avni Beylerin de beraberce kaldırılmasının istirhâmında bulunduğumuz Bâb-ı ‘Adâlete dehâlet eyledik fermân. Fî 21 Mayıs 96

Muhtar-ı karye-yi Tercil Luzho (?)	Muhtar-i karye-yi Keferce (?) Odilis (?)
Hazro mu‘teberândan Kigork	Hazro mu‘teberândan Mıgırdiç
Hazrolu mu‘teberân Sarkis Markiz (?)	Vekil-i millet-i Hristiyan nâhiye-yi
Hazro Tovsoman (?)	Muhtar-ı karye-yi (...) Mardo
Muhtâr-ı karye-yi Hedigân (?) Petr	Muhtâr-ı karye-yi (...) Duno (?) -
Mu‘teber-i karye-yi (...) Garabed	Mu‘teber-i karye-yi Manuk
Mu‘teber-i karye-yi Dersil Bubo (?)	

[illegible][illegible]

Dâhiliye Nezâret-i celilesine

C. 29 Ağustos 305 şems-i sabah Buraca ‘asâkir-i şâhâne tarafından Ermeniler hakkında yolsuz mu‘âmele vukû‘u ve bu yüzden Ermenilerin Rusya’ya hicret eylemesi kat‘iyen bî-esâsdır Geçende merkez vilâyetine merbût Silvan kazâsına tâbi‘ Hazro nahiyesinin ahâli-yi Hıristiyanıyesinden birkaç kişi nâhiye-yi mezkûre hânedânından Seyfeddin Bey ‘aleyhinde şikâyet der-‘akab tahkike mübâşeret kılınmışken müştekiller neticeye intizâr etmeksizin iki yüz kadar galabalıkla ve nakl-i hâne (...) merkez-i vilâyete geldiklerini ve sûret-i şikâyet ve mu‘âmelenin (...) esâs eylediği lüzûma mebnî huzûr-ı ‘âli-yi sadâretpenâhîye ve Dördüncü Ordu-yı Hümayûn müşîriyet-i celilesine bi’l-mürâca‘a alınan me’zûniyet üzerine nâhiye-yi mezkûrede bir bölük ‘asâkir-i şâhâne ikâmet ve Seyfeddin Bey de merkez-i vilâyete celb edilerek zât-ı maslahatın ‘â’idiyeti cihetle mahkeme-i ‘adliyyeye tevdi‘ edilmişdi bir fikr-i muzır sâ’ikasıyla bu madde kalb-i ahara ifrâğ ve makâm-ı ‘âlîye ismâ‘ edilmiş ise hakikat-i hâl sûret-i ma‘rûzadan ‘ibâret bulunduğu ve Bâb-ı ‘Âli’ye de ol vakit ‘arz-ı ma‘lûmât olunduğu ma‘rûzdur ferman. Fî 2 Eylül 305

Vekil-i vâli ve defterdâr-ı Diyarbekir
Tevfik

Transliteration

Evrak numerosu	Müsevvidi ismi	Tesvîdi târîhi		Tarih-i teblîği
1856	Ramazan	30 Ağustos 314	Diyarbakir vilâyet-i ‘alisine	4 C 1316

Vilâyet-i ‘aliyeleri dâhilinde kâ’in Hazro nâhiysinde ikâmet etmekde olan Seyfeddin Paşa’nın kendüsüne ilticâ eden erbâb-ı cinâyet ve şekâveti himâye ile ta’kîbât-ı kânûniyeyi neticesiz burakmak ve mahkeme-yi şer‘iye ketebesinden ‘Emmi Sıdkı Efendi’yi ahiren bir tekkede kalt ile firâr eden Ömer nâm şahıs dahi paşa-yı mumâileyhin himâyesi tahtında olarak civâr köylerde kemâl-i serbestî ile gezmekde bulunduğundan bahs-i şikâyetle niyâz-ı mu‘adeleti hâvi Diyarbakir ahalisinden Şevket imzâsıyla virilen ‘arz-ı hâl leffen irsâl kılındı Mündericâtına nazaran *tahkîkât-ı lâzıme bi’l-icrâ kânûnen muktezi mu‘âmelâtın* ifâsına hemm-i ‘atûfileri (...) buyrulmak bâbında

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Sadaret Divan (Beylikçi) Kalemi (A. DVN): 5/74, 12/45, 58/89.

Sadaret Mektubi Kalemi (A. MKT): 19/27, 23/59, 25/40, 28/2, 29/3, 32/41, 41/33, 89/60, 113/69, 225/82.

Sadaret Mühimme Kalemi (A. MKT. MHM): 6/18, 15/40, 40/24, 96/15, 120/50, 206/31, 224/68, 238/41, 238/53, 238/79, 388/59, 389/52.

Sadaret Meclis-i Vâlâ Evrakı (A. MKT. MVL): 61/36, 84/50, 113/37, 139/63.

Sadaret Nezaret ve Devair Evrakı (A. MKT. NZD): 7/39, 68/14, 82/81, 125/89, 196/71, 297/71.

Sadaret Umum Vilâyât Evrakı (A. MKT. UM): 20/27, 113/48, 120/41, 175/79, 233/96, 359/93, 397/17, 405/71, 462/45, 474/89, 499/32, 527/81.

Cevdet Askerî (C. AS): 611/25784.

Cevdet Dahiliye (C. DH): 2/68, 47/2335, 52/2585, 77/3814, 85/4225, 201/10033, 221/11039, 249/12449, 304/15182.

Cevdet İktisat (C. İKTS): 25/1224.

Cevdet Maliye (C. ML): 163/6854, 210/8665, 224/9305, 273/11232, 274/11620, 312/12782, 364/14929.

Dahiliye Mektubi Kalemi (DH. MKT): 1383/79, 1425/30, 1522/25, 1523/34, 1566/52, 1596/33, 1721/99, 2407/66.

Dahiliye Şifre Kalemi (DH. ŞFR): 141/51, 153/38, 187/98, 203/59.

Dahiliye Umur-ı Mahalliye ve Vilayat Müdürlüğü (DH. UMVM): 105,41.

Hatt-ı Hümayûn (HAT): 447/22314, 447/22314-B, 447/22314-C, 447/22314-E, 448/22326, 449/22346-C, 449/22346-D, 449/22346-E, 449/22346-F, 449/22346-H, 449/22346-İ, 449/22346-J, 450/22351, 450/22351-A, 450/22351-G, 450/22351-N, 450/22351-P, 450/22351-Ü, 450/22351-Y, 451/22359, 451/22361, 451/22361-A, 451/22361-B, 451/22366, 453/22345-A, 476/22343, 1597/65.

Hariciye Nezareti Tercüme Odası (HR. TO): 405/58.

İrade Dahiliye (İ. DH): 99/2124, 103/5217.

İrade Hariciye (İ. HR): 195/11045, 199/11323.

İrade Meclis-i Vâlâ (İ. MVL): 218/7293, 253/9363, 442/19633, 444/19773, 458/20595, 475/21520, 482/21877, 483/21906, 497/22480.

Maliye Nezareti Varidât Muhasebesi (ML. VRD.d): 3073.

Meclis-i Vâlâ (MVL): 2/24, 77/5, 80/17, 95/89, 109/8, 122/8, 122/50, 124/89, 125/48, 172/97, 191/92, 242/19, 245/11, 254/106, 262/16, 347/135, 357/52, 358/2, 359/106, 363/82, 369/31, 424/64, 441/35, 443/108, 447/56, 447/81, 453/63, 479/14, 480/16, 484/56, 499/134, 522/83, 565/13, 585/34, 586/105, 589/75, 630/38, 640/20, 660/19, 669/48, 710/51, 724/79, 738/71, 742/42, 807/31, 814/141, 819/53, 898/4, 912/19, 916/32, 959/91, 978/27, 990/28, 1009/24, 1046/92, 1047/8.

Şura-yı Devlet (ŞD): 103/38, 235/13, 1452/21, 1452/27, 1452/38, 1452/40, 1453/21, 1453/22, 1456/78, 1457/25, 1457/11, 1457/23, 2432/5, 2586/11, 2854/69.

Yıldız Perakende Askeri Maruzat (Y. PRK. ASK): 193/31.

Yıldız Perakende Arzuhal Jurnal (Y. PRK. AZJ): 3/86.

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