

To my family

**RETHINKING *VAKA-İ HAYRİYE* (THE AUSPICIOUS
EVENT): ELIMINATION OF THE JANISSARIES ON THE
PATH TO MODERNIZATION**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to challenge the common perceptions regarding the Janissaries and their destruction in 1826. Our understanding of the Janissaries and *Vaka-i Hayriye* (the Auspicious Event) has been shaped by the official view of the Ottoman state as well as modern historiography, which has taken the accounts of the Ottoman official historians at face value. Conventional historiography has argued that while the Janissaries were the linchpin of Ottoman military strength from the 15th to the 18th century, their role and integrity began to erode in the 18th century and more intensely in the 19th century. The Janissaries were no longer the bulwark of the Ottoman state, rather, a clique of corrupt soldiers who terrorized the Ottoman civil population and a handful of traitors to the greater interests of the Ottoman state and society. Thus, destruction of the Janissaries had become indispensable for the good of the society as a whole.

This study presents a critique of historiography as such and questions the accusations leveled against the Janissaries. Moreover, it finds that the Janissaries had strong ties with both elite and non-elite groups in Ottoman society. The fact that these societal groups did not submit to the modernization policies of the Ottoman state pushed the Ottoman government to eliminate the groups who opposed its new policies. In this context, the Janissaries had become a bastion of resistance against the modernization project of the Ottoman state, as a result of their profound relationships with different societal groups. I argue that the connections of the Janissaries with the rest of the society constituted a serious threat to the modernization process and this was the main reason for their destruction rather than corruption or obsolescence.

ÖZET

Bu tez Yeniçerilere ve Yeniçeriliğin 1826 yılında ilgasına ilişkin yaygın görüşleri sorgulamaya çalışmaktadır. Yeniçerilere ve Vaka-i Hayriye'ye (Hayırlı Hadise) bakış açımız Osmanlı Devleti'nin resmi görüşü ve Osmanlı resmi tarihçilerinin anlatımlarını yüzeysel bir biçimde değerlendiren modern tarihçilik tarafından şekillendirilmiştir. Geleneksel tarihçiliğe göre Yeniçeriler 15. ve 18. yüzyıllar arasında Osmanlı askeri gücünün esasını teşkil etmelerine rağmen, daha önceki rolleri ve sağlımlıkları 18. yüzyılda ve daha da yoğunlaşarak 19. yüzyılda aşınmaya başlamıştı. Yeniçeriler Osmanlı Devleti'nin koruyucusu olmaktan çıkıp Osmanlı sivil halkını şiddete maruz bırakan ve Osmanlı devlet ve toplumunun yüce çıkarlarına ihanet eden yozlaşmış bir asker grubu olmuşlardı. Böylelikle, Yeniçerilerin toplumun iyiliği için yok edilmesi kaçınılmaz olmuştu.

Bu çalışma böyle bir tarih anlayışının eleştirisini sunmakta ve Yeniçerilere yöneltilen suçlamaları sorgulamaktadır. Araştırmamız göstermektedir ki, Yeniçerilerin Osmanlı toplumunun hem seçkin gruplarıyla hem de seçkin olmayan gruplarıyla güçlü bağları vardı. Bu toplumsal grupların Osmanlı Devleti'nin modernleşme siyasetine razı olmayışı, Osmanlı hükümetini yeni politikalarına karşı çıkan grupları ortadan kaldırmaya itti. Bu bağlamda, Yeniçeriler çeşitli toplumsal gruplarla varolagelen derin ilişkilerinin bir sonucu olarak Osmanlı Devleti'nin modernleşme projesine karşı direnişin kalesi haline gelmişlerdi. Bana göre, Yeniçerilerin toplumun diğer kesimleriyle olan ilişkileri modernleşme sürecine ciddi bir tehlike oluşturdu ve Yeniçeriliğin ilgasının asıl nedeni Yeniçerilerin çürümüşlüğü ya da kullanışsızlığından çok modernleşme sürecine karşı oluşturdukları tehditti.

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INTRODUCTION

The destruction of the Janissaries in 1826 by Mahmud II, known as *Vaka-i Hayriye* (the Auspicious Event), represents a crucial turning point in the history of the modernization of the Ottoman Empire. The reform events that had already started in the eighteenth century accelerated and the nature of the reforms changed significantly after 1826. This event paved the way for the more fundamental reform efforts of the nineteenth century. Indeed, only after the abolition of the Janissary corps could the state take serious steps in modernizing Ottoman state and society.

The Ottoman state's official view of this event is reflected by the name historiography has given to it, which is *Vaka-i Hayriye*. The Janissary corps has been presented as an institution that was an ideal establishment during the earlier periods of the Ottoman Empire but gradually became obsolete, useless, and even harmful to society. That the Ottoman state rescued Ottoman society from this institution was considered an 'auspicious event' by the *vak anüvises* (official historians of the Ottoman state) and their subsequent followers.

Conventional historiography provides us with a state-centered view of the Janissaries and the history of their destruction. Furthermore, the dominant historiography of the Janissary corps is unable to clearly present us a picture,

which would explain the real nature of this corps and its relationship with the rest of Ottoman society. Historiography as such does not recognize the social foundations and ties of the Janissaries to the rest of the society and treats it as an abstract institution that did not have any relationships with Ottoman society. Hence, placing all of its emphasis on the wrongdoings of the members of the Janissary corps.

This thesis aims to present a critique of the traditional historiography of the Janissaries and the destruction of the Janissary corps as well as to contribute to our understanding of the true nature of the complex structures and relationships between the Janissaries and the different elite and non-elite interest groups within Ottoman society. It will argue that the Janissary corps was not a mere military institution that had no profound relationship with the rest of Ottoman society. On the contrary, the Janissaries had, in fact, complex and strong ties with the other social groups of Ottoman society, which made their destruction a turning point in the modernization process of Ottoman society as a whole.

CHAPTER I: HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE JANISSARY CORPS AND *VAKA-İ HAYRİYE* (THE AUSPICIOUS EVENT)

Official Historiography

The earliest account of the destruction of the Janissaries is that of Mehmed Es ad Efendi, who actively participated in *Vak a-i Hayriye*. He was a member of the Ottoman *ulema* (religious scholars) class, and the official historian of the Ottoman Empire at the time of *Vak a-i Hayriye*. Modern historiography of the Janissaries has been under the influence of Es ad Efendi's work. Until recently, his views on the Janissaries were determinant in shaping the historiography of the Janissaries. Moreover, his views were identical to those of the Ottoman government, making his work crucial for the purpose of this study.

Es ad Efendi devoted a whole book to the destruction of the Janissary corps. In his book *Üss-i Zafer*¹, one can find the Ottoman state's ultimate official views about the Janissaries together with the reasons that were enumerated by the Ottoman government in explaining and legitimizing *Vak a-i Hayriye*. In Es ad Efendi's words, the Ottoman government abolished the Janissary corps because of their lack of discipline and the crimes they committed against the Ottoman public. These crimes, which were committed against almost all segments of the

¹ Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Üss-i Zafer*, İstanbul, 1243/1827.

society, were not unique to Mahmud II's reign according to Es ad Efendi.² Because of the crimes the Janissaries committed combined with the obsolescence of the Janissary corps militarily, they had to be destroyed and this was for the good of the Ottoman state and society.

Es ad Efendi's description of *Vak a-i Hayriye* represents an ideological standpoint of an opponent of a certain group, in this case the Janissaries, rather than an unbiased historical account written by an historian. He severely condemns the Janissaries and those who were affiliated with them or supported them, concluding that their destruction was absolutely necessary. Given his commitment to the Ottoman government's service as a *vak anivvis* (official historian) and his active participation in *Vak a-i Hayriye*,³ the accusations made by him should not be taken at face value. His central objective was to be able to show that the Janissaries were a corrupt military group, whose relations with Ottoman society were limited to the lowest and parasitic social classes. This is not to dispute that the Janissaries may have committed such crimes, however, the reasons why the Ottoman government attacked the Janissaries were much more complex than how it is described in Es ad Efendi's work. The significant historic contribution of *Üss-i Zafer* resides more in revealing the Ottoman state's official view about the Janissaries than in reflecting the historical facts. The

² "...al-i Osman sultan süleyman han tayyib zaman-ı intizam-nişanında dahi defa atle huruc iderek buyut-ı müslimini talan ve na-hak yere ulema ve rical ve kibar ve sigarı gerek ol asırda ve gerek sonralarda peyderpey hezaran nezar hun-ı mazlumini rızan edüb..." Esad Efendi, p.67.

³ Donald Quataert, "Janissaries, Artisans and the Question of Ottoman Decline," in *Workers, Peasants and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire 1730-1914*, ed. Donald Quataert, İstanbul, 1993, p.198.

complexities of the relationships between the Janissaries and the Ottoman government have yet to be fully studied.

The second *vak anüvis* who wrote about the Janissaries is Ahmed Lutfi Efendi. In his *Tarih-i Lutfi*,⁴ we find a similar, if not identical, approach to the Janissaries.⁵ Although *Tarih-i Lutfi* was written at a much later date, it presents the same arguments about the Janissaries. This indicates that the Ottoman government's view of the Janissaries did not change from the 1820s to the 1870s. There are various interesting details in Lutfi's account, which may not be found in *Üss-i Zafer*, but the ideological vantage point regarding the Janissaries is the same.

Lutfi Efendi provides us with valuable information about the efforts of Selim III in changing the military structures and in founding the *Nizam-ı Cedid* (New Order). He mentions the superiority of the European states in terms of their discipline and advanced military science⁶ at the time of Selim III. As a military institution that was supposed to compete with those contemporary foreign armies, the Janissaries represented a backward army, according to the Ottoman government. The logical conclusion of this argument is that the Janissary corps had to be either re-formed or abolished. As Lutfi Efendi describes, Selim III had two options: 1) destructing the Janissary corps and

⁴ Ahmed Lutfi Efendi, *Tarih-i Lutfi*, vol.1, İstanbul, 1873.

⁵ "...nizamat-ı mevzu alarına halel gelerek sonraları fuhşiyat ve ta addiyata...ita atsizliğe cür@tleri sebebiyle idareleri na-kabil..." Lutfi Efendi, p.7.

⁶ "...düvel-i ecnebiyye askerinin suret-i nizam ve intizam-ı hareketleri ve fünün-ı harbiyyede hasıl ettikleri asar-ı galibaneleri..." Lutfi Efendi, p.7.

founding a new military corps or 2) founding a new military corps under the name *Nizam-ı Cedid* without abolishing the Janissaries.⁷ Selim III chose the second alternative, which was considered by certain later historians as the reason why the Ottoman state was not successful in its “reform” efforts. Here, we can see the roots of ‘modernization paradigm’, which is largely based on the *vak anıvıis* histories.⁸

Lutfi Efendi puts a strong emphasis on the lack of discipline and organization of the Janissaries. Conventionally, historiography has argued that the Janissaries were the ultimate symbol of discipline and organization in the earlier days of the Ottoman Empire. When and how did this change? How did the Janissary corps come to be undisciplined? Was this an internal evolution or were the Janissaries actually never really disciplined in the modern sense of military discipline? The latter seems more possible because the military innovations and advance of the European states must have been the reason why the Ottoman state started viewing the Janissaries as backward in the eighteenth century and more intensely so in the nineteenth century. That is to say, the ideal Janissary image is probably a later fabrication of the Ottoman government to be

⁷ “...mütala at ve efkarın fezlekesi iki neticeyi müeddi olmuşdur ki birisi yeniçeri namının bilküllüye mahvıyle yeniden nizam-ı askeriyye tesisi...ikincisi yeniçerilik namı ortadan kalkmadığı halde Nizam-ı Cedid unvanıyla muntazam asker tertibidir.” Lutfi Efendi, p.8.

⁸ According to this paradigm, the Ottoman modernization was the outcome of the struggle between the enlightened elite and the backward/corrupt military, societal, and religious forces in the Ottoman society. The foremost constructors of this model are Bernard Lewis and Niyazi Berkes. They argued that the Ottoman state was unsuccessful in its reform efforts because it continued to keep the old institutions. See Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of the Modern Turkey*, London, 1961; Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Montreal, 1964.

able to argue that the Janissary corps was not “how it was supposed to be”. Therefore, their destruction proved to be an absolute necessity in that sense.

The last *vak anüvis* to be discussed in our study is Ahmet Cevdet Paşa. His account, titled *Tarih-i Cevdet*,⁹ presents the same type of accusations that had been put forward by the previous Ottoman historians. He accuses the Janissaries of terrorizing certain construction sites. In the example he gives, some lower class farmers and unskilled workers affiliate themselves with the Janissaries. Some Janissaries force the owner of the construction site to give them the money the laborers are supposed to receive. When they appropriate the wages of the construction workers, they give the workers only one half of the money and take the rest for themselves.¹⁰ This incident, which ends with a conflict between the laborers and certain Janissary soldiers and the following defeat of the soldiers, may be helpful to us in understanding the Janissaries’ ties to the workers. The Janissaries seem to have been involved in the disputes between the owner of the construction site and the workers. According to Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, the Janissaries’ involvement on the side of the workers meant terrorizing the construction site. However, their actions may very well be interpreted as efforts to protect the groups they had relations with. The official historian Ahmet Cevdet Paşa neither praises the efforts of the Janissaries to protect the workers nor criticizes the owner of the construction site for not giving the wages. Instead,

⁹Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1309/1893

¹⁰ “Bir müddettenberu birtakım rencber ve amele makulesi mücerred garaz fasidlerini icra için yeniçeri adadına dahil olarak bir binaya şuru iden müslim ve gayrimüslim gani ve fakir üzerine musallat olurlar...” Cevdet Paşa, p.32.

he uses the common accusative language of the Ottoman official historians against the Janissaries. Ahmet Cevdet Paşa does not focus on whether or not what the Janissaries did was wrong. Rather, the fact that this event caused disturbance is the main concern for him.

In Cevdet Paşa's work we come across an interesting order of the Ottoman government, asking the *Yeniçeri Ağası* to provide the government with Janissary soldiers to fight against the rebels in Morea. In this order, the Ottoman sultan qualifies the Janissaries as "devoted, trustworthy, and well-known for their bravery"¹¹ and asks for 5,000 Janissary soldiers to be sent to the Balkans in order to help the government to suppress the rebellion. The above-mentioned attitude of the Ottoman government towards the Janissaries is seemingly in contradiction with this decree. It is apparent that the Ottoman government was not able to raise enough soldiers from among the Janissaries during the Morea insurrection. This must have been one of the reasons why the Ottoman government changed the language it used towards the Janissaries in such a short period. The fact that the Ottoman government was not able to use the Janissaries as it wished seems to have coincided with the Ottoman government's willingness to modernize the military. It can be argued that the real reason behind the abolition of the Janissaries was not basically their corruption or lack of discipline. Rather, it was a grander question that had a lot to do with the centralization and the

¹¹ "...dergah-ı ali Yeniçerileri ocağ-ı devlet-i aliyyenin sadık ve mu temed ve şeca at ile meşhur ve esfar-ı sabıkada yüzlerinden devlet-i aliyyeye hıdmet eylemeleri gayretleri itizasından olduğundan naşi..." Cevdet Paşa, p.264.

modernization of the Ottoman central government along western lines. Whether or not Mahmud II really thought that the Janissaries had those qualifications at that time would not negate the argument here. The shift in the language seems to have resulted from the new policy the Ottoman state intended to pursue, regarding the Janissaries after they proved to be disobedient and disorganized compared to the European armies. The new modernization policy could not allow different centers of power to operate on their own.

In a careful reading of *vak anüvis* histories, certain contradictions are apparent. While acknowledging the past strengths of the Janissaries and their ties with diverse segments of the society, there is no explanation as to why, how, and to what extent the Janissaries deteriorated, if they did at all, over time. Furthermore, connections between the Janissaries and the other groups in the society are described as harmful. Two major arguments, namely the deterioration of the Janissary corps and the harm caused by their relations with the society, have constituted our understanding of the Janissaries to a large extent. What the official historiography labeled as backwardness, corruption, and deterioration has to be re-examined from other angles by taking into serious consideration the role of the non-elite groups in Ottoman society.

Modern Historiography

In his monograph on the *kapıkulu* army¹², I. H. Uzunçarşılı's main focus is the Janissary corps as he considers Janissaries as the most important corps of the Ottoman central military power. His study provides vast information on the structure and the history of the Janissaries derived from the archival materials and the Ottoman chronicles. Yet, his descriptive account is composed of repetitions of virtually the same arguments provided by the Ottoman official historians and translations of the Ottoman bureaucratic documents concerning the Janissaries.

Uzunçarşılı's work is a typical example of the official view on the Janissaries that presented the Janissaries as a corrupt military institution that was once pure. According to him, the Janissary corps was a pure military institution at the time of its foundation, which managed to retain its character until the late sixteenth century. He underlines that especially in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the Janissaries lost their military effectiveness as a result of accepting unqualified men into the Janissary corps.¹³ In addition to that, Uzunçarşılı lists down the crimes committed by the Janissaries and the instances of corruption in which some important pashas and military commanders were involved. According to him, registration of 'aliens' by bribery into the corps, *esnafization* of the Janissaries, and the increase in the number of the married

¹² I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatı'ndan Kapıkulu Ocakları*, 2 vol., Ankara, 1983.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.477.

Janissary soldiers¹⁴ were the major reasons of the gradual deterioration and collapse of the Janissary corps.

It is not possible to find an in-depth analysis of these causes in Uzunçarşılı's narrative. For instance, why Uzunçarşılı calls these new elements of the corps 'alien' is not clear in his study. Does the term *ecnebi*¹⁵ (alien) mean a person from among different societal groups? Or, does it merely mean an untrained person? The registration of a new person into the corps should not necessarily have an adverse impact on the corps since the Janissary corps, as a military institution, must have had the necessary means to integrate a new person into its body and also to educate him.

Uzunçarşılı argues that another important reason for the collapse of the Janissaries was the *esnafization* of the Janissaries. Uzunçarşılı assumes that the Janissaries were only soldiers who had not been involved in the economic processes beginning from the first centuries of the Ottoman Empire until the end of the sixteenth century. The 'ideal Janissary' according to the *vak anüvis* historiography, of which Uzunçarşılı is a consistent follower, should not have been involved in any economic activity. Such an idealistic typification of the Janissaries leads us to believe that the Janissaries were detached from Ottoman society for centuries and when they started to get involved in economic matters this caused their decline as an institution.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.478.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.479.

The reasons Uzunçarşılı lists down may well indicate that the Janissaries became more and more involved in the social processes and they had merged with certain groups in the society. The so-called '*esnafization*' of the Janissary soldiers and the integration of the 'aliens' into their corps can be interpreted as an indication of their 'socialization' as well. As their merging with different societal groups increased, the Ottoman government accused them of losing their capacities because of these connections. The classic explanation of why the Janissaries became ineffective in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries is that the Janissaries engaged in the economic sphere and lost their real functions as a result of having close relations with the rest of the society.

Furthermore, the Janissaries did not merely lose their original functions but they became the source of corruption and crimes. Uzunçarşılı gives many examples of the Janissaries' misdoings. His accusations are meant to demonstrate how necessary it was for the Ottoman government to abolish this institution. That is why, the destruction of the Janissaries in 1826 was named *Vaka-i Hayriye* (the Auspicious Event). It can be argued that the official historians called this event 'auspicious' since the Ottoman state had taken an important step in destroying the social opposition against its 'modernization project'. We may well assume that the Janissaries were, in fact, representing the social unrest against the new reform measures motivated by their social, cultural, and religious affiliations.

The description of the Janissaries as a mere corrupt military faction is widely accepted in traditional historiography. Bernard Lewis' account, which is rather a history of the Ottoman elite, on the modernization of the Ottoman Empire parallels the official view of the Janissaries. The different social groups and the dynamics they created in the society are not included in his study. According to Lewis, the Janissaries represented the backward institutions of the Empire. The Janissaries were the corrupt reactionary forces against the enlightened reformers. As the defenders of the *status quo*, the Janissaries collaborated with the *ulema* as well as the ignorant population of İstanbul in the revolt of 1807.¹⁶ In Lewis' account, we find a strong rejection of any possible relationships with the rest of the society that the Janissaries may have had. In this context, the Janissaries appear as mere military people whose corruption and incompetence accelerated over time and who struggled against the reforms with the other interest groups to preserve their traditional power and status.

Niyazi Berkes presents an account that is similar to that of Lewis but he recognizes the Janissaries' links to other societal groups. Berkes' study¹⁷ acknowledges the social bases of the Janissaries and does not consider the Janissary corps as a mere military institution. However, the nature of these social connections is rather simple in his work. The Janissary corps became a tool for "impoverished *esnaf* (artisans, petty tradesmen, and men of odd jobs)"¹⁸ to use

¹⁶ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London, 1961, p.73

¹⁷ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Montreal, 1964.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.52.

the treasury of the Ottoman Empire. Berkes confines the Janissaries' relations to the society to lower classes and he does not recognize even the possibility that they might have had more complex relationships with both the upper and the lower segments of the *esnaf* as well as of other groups.

Berkes' model is the same as Lewis' in the sense that they both see the transformations in the Ottoman Empire as a struggle between the reformists and the conservatives. In this context, impoverished *esnaf*, the Janissaries, and the *ulema* together constituted the traditional forces against the modernization process of the Ottoman Empire. These forces were the reason why the Ottoman society was backward and that is why they had to be abolished. Despite the fact that Berkes acknowledges the Janissaries' social connections, he maintains the general framework that was set out by the Ottoman official historians.

The only monograph on the destruction of the Janissaries in 1826 is that of Howard Reed's study on *Vaka-i Hayriye*.¹⁹ In his detailed account of the events that took place in *Vaka-i Hayriye*, he argues that Mahmud II did not intend to abolish the Janissary corps. The sultan's main objective was merely to reform and to organize the Janissaries for the better. The destruction of the Janissary corps had more of a coincidental character according to Reed. The war with Persia in the east and the Greek insurrection in the Balkans convinced Mahmud II that the reform of the Janissary corps was indispensable.²⁰ Reed opposes the idea that

¹⁹ Howard A. Reed, *The Destruction of the Janissaries by Mahmud II in June, 1826*, Princeton, 1951. (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation)

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.3.

Mahmud II had formulated a grand plan against the Janissaries and argues that Mahmud II attempted to re-organize the Janissaries but their opposition against the implementation of the new reforms caused their destruction. In Reed's picture, the destruction of the Janissaries seems almost accidental since the Janissaries might have survived if they did not oppose the new organizational changes.

In Reed's work, the focus is on the sultan and the military rather than the social or economic conditions of the Janissary corps. The same accusations set out by the official historians against the Janissaries are repeated in Reed's work, as they are described as "terrorists"²¹. One of the important examples of corruption given by Reed is that the Janissary officers who had been sent to Jerusalem to re-establish the order did not accomplish their mission, instead, they attempted to benefit from the existing chaos.²² According to Reed, these corrupt forces would not accept any change although Mahmud II's intention was merely to re-organize the military structure, such as in the *Eşkinici* (Eshkenji) attempt, rather than to offer a fundamental institutional change.²³

In this study, there is no discussion about the nature of the ties between the Janissary corps and *other* groups in the society. Reed's main concern is to prove that Mahmud II's aim was just to reform the military as a result of military losses in the wars at the time. Reed presents *Vak a-i Hayriye* as an event that

²¹ Ibid., p.42.

²² Ibid., p.68.

²³ Ibid., p.51.

involved military men, pashas, foreign states' representatives, the sultan, and the *ulema*. He refers to "public opinion" as an important factor determining Mahmud II's cautious steps but public opinion never appears to be a real actor in the course of events. There is no mention of any social, cultural, or economic background to this event in Reed's study. His study is rather a descriptive narration than an analytical examination of the destruction of the Janissaries.

Non-Traditional Historiography

Although official and traditional historiography, which were based on the *vak anüvis* histories, are prone to describe the Janissary corps as an institution that was isolated from the rest of the society, there have been certain historians who addressed the relations between the Janissaries and the other groups in the society. We can call these historians non-traditional. Mustafa Akdağ is the earliest historian that can be included in this category.

Akdağ's article²⁴, which was written essentially to criticize Uzunçarşılı, presents an interesting critique of the conventional historiography of the Janissaries. One of his strong points is that the social institutions should not be evaluated without reference to their inter-relations. He argues that abstraction of a single institution from other institutions with which it co-exists is the major problematic in Uzunçarşılı's work. According to Akdağ, Uzunçarşılı misses

²⁴ Mustafa Akdağ. "Yeniçeri Ocak Nizamının Bozuluşu," Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi, vol.5, no: 3 May-June 1947, (Ankara, 1947), TTK Basımevi, pp.255-352.

many important points because he isolates the Janissary corps from not only the other institutions but also from the rest of the Ottoman army.²⁵ Thus, Akdağ makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the Janissaries by reminding us of their relationships with other institutions and drawing our attention to what we can call an ‘isolationist’ approach in writing the history of a given institution.

Akdağ also confronts Uzunçarşılı’s assumption of the existence of a perfect set of laws that was specifically made for the Janissaries. For instance, he questions the existence of a law that prohibited the Turks and the Muslim subjects from becoming a Janissary.²⁶ Such a law did not exist according to Akdağ. A counter-argument could be made at this point because Uzunçarşılı introduced *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyân*²⁷ in his work as the source of the laws he attributed to the Janissary corps. However, Pal Fodor shows that *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyân* should be considered as a *nasihat-name*²⁸ rather than a *kanun-name*²⁹. The author of *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyân* must have written it to list down what he/she saw as the deficiencies of the Janissaries at the beginning of the seventeenth century as well as to suggest solutions to what he thought were

²⁵ Ibid., p.292.

²⁶ Ibid., p.293.

²⁷ The author of this book is unknown but its date is 1606. Uzunçarşılı uses this source extensively. See Pal Fodor, “Bir Nasihat-name Olarak Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyân”, Reprinted from Beşinci Milletler Arası Türkoloji Kongresi: Tebliğler III. Türk Tarihi vol.1, İÜEF Basımevi, İstanbul, 1986. pp.217-224.

²⁸ A genre of writing to give advice to the state’s officials on different subjects.

²⁹ A code of laws or regulations.

problems.³⁰ Uzunçarşılı uses *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan* as a source defining the regulations and laws according to which the Janissary corps was supposed to operate. Keeping Fodor's remarks in mind, Akdağ's challenge to the above-mentioned prohibition seems to have derived from Uzunçarşılı's method in using *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan* without questioning the nature of that source.

The process in which the Janissaries spread throughout Anatolia and were increasingly involved in the economic activity dates back to the middle of the sixteenth century. The collapse of the *timar*³¹ system in the mid-sixteenth century forced the soldiers to perform economic activities in Anatolia. The enormous increase in the number of the soldiers in the sixteenth century compared to fourteenth century made it impossible for the Ottoman government to pay the soldiers. Naturally, the Janissaries found other ways to sustain their livelihood. The economic conditions in the mid-sixteenth century, the *Celali* rebellions, and the rivalry between Süleyman the Lawgiver and Bayezid resulted in the stationing of the Janissaries in Anatolia as *yasakçıs*.³² It seems that it was not unusual to become farmers or shopkeepers while being a soldier since the soldiers were not able to live off the wages they were given. This eventually gave way to the merging of the Janissaries with the non-elite groups. As Akdağ shows, the involvement of the Janissaries in economic activities dates as early as the mid-sixteenth century. There does not seem to have existed any written law

³⁰ Fodor, "Bir Nasihat-name...", p.220.

³¹ A fief acquired through a sultanic diploma, consisting as a rule of state taxes in return for regular military service, the amount of which conventionally was below 20,000 silver coins (*akça*).

³² A person in charge of enforcing law.

apart from the testimonies of the official historians, stating that the Janissaries were not allowed to work and they had to come only from the *devşirme*³³ system.

Hamilton A. R. Gibb wrote about the links between the artisans and the Janissaries. In his well-known study with Harold Bowen³⁴ he argues that the artisans in the Ottoman Empire were able to oppose the central or legal authorities. This contrasts the idea that the artisans' corporations functioned as the government's means to establish control and regulation over the artisans. According to Gibb, the artisans' relative independence and influence on the administrative processes increased as their ties to the Janissaries intensified over time. The relationships between the two groups became so strong that almost all the members of the artisan corporations in the Arab cities like Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo were either of Janissary origin or Janissaries themselves.³⁵

Gibb's account is important in the sense that it provides a perspective that recognizes the different affiliations of the Janissary corps in the eighteenth century other than its military character. These affiliations were considered as the source of the ineffectiveness of the Janissaries by the official historiography. But in Gibb's account, the Janissaries and artisan corporations appear as groups that represented popular resistance against the local and central authorities. In contrast to the official view that the Janissaries' corruption and incompetence as

³³ Levy of boys from Christian rural population for services at the palace or the divisions of the standing army at the Porte. For the historical development and functioning of *devşirme* system, see V.L. Ménage, "Devshirme", *IEP*, Leiden, 210-213.

³⁴ H. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West; A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East*, vol. I, London, 1950.

³⁵ Gibb and Bowen, vol. I, p.280

a military institution derived from their merging with the other groups in the society, Gibb perceives the Janissary corps and the artisans as the agents of popular opposition.

Cemal Kafadar is the next historian who contributed to the literature on the Janissaries.³⁶ His study is based on the secondary sources and he surveys the relationship between the Janissaries and the *esnaf* (artisans). He limits his work to İstanbul. Kafadar takes a different position compared to conventional historiography. He draws our attention to the diversity of the two groups and their multifaceted relations, adding that the nature of their relations ranged from “uncompromising solidarity to armed conflict”³⁷. However, he argues that the Janissaries were affiliated with the “lower classes of İstanbul”³⁸. Limiting the Janissaries merging with societal groups to only certain ones is debatable but Kafadar’s work is important in its effort to understand the complexity of the Janissaries’ social situation.

Kafadar mentions the second half of the sixteenth century as the period when the Janissaries “began to acquire extra-military professions and merged with the civilian population of İstanbul.”³⁹ As we learn from Akdağ, this process was identical with what was happening in Anatolia during the same period. According to Kafadar, this meant the degeneration of the Janissaries as well as

³⁶ Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnaf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, McGill University, 1981. (Unpublished M.A. Thesis).

³⁷ Ibid., p.2.

³⁸ Ibid., p.92.

³⁹ Ibid., p.49.

the formation of a new group.⁴⁰ Kafadar seems to imagine a once-superior institution since he speaks of “degeneration”. To what extent this idealization of the earlier Janissaries reflect the historical realities needs further study of the earlier period. Yet, such an idealization has its own shortcomings since institutions cannot present a unitary character at any given moment in history. The Janissary corps was subject to variations within itself at any given time period as well as to changes over time just like any other institution in the course of history.

Kafadar presents a substantial critique of what we can call “corruption literature” in a later article⁴¹ arguing that the Janissaries’ image as soldiers who had no economic activities is a creation of later historians. He argues that the Ottoman viziers and even the rulers were involved in the economic sphere as early as the foundation of the Ottoman state and they were neither questioned nor criticized for their commercial activities. In this context, the Janissaries were allowed to engage in the economic sphere too.⁴² This short article is very helpful in understanding the Ottoman’s perception on the relationship between military and economic activity. It is clear that the Ottomans never drew a clear-cut distinction between the two.

Donald Quataert contributed to the literature on the Janissaries by taking an interesting standpoint. He argues that the Janissaries represented the armed

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.80.

⁴¹ Cemal Kafadar. “On the Purity and Corruption of the Janissaries,” TSAB, vol. XV (1991), pp.273-279.

⁴² Ibid., pp.275-276.

forces of the workers and the laborers in the Ottoman Empire.⁴³ Quataert asserts that the abolition of the Janissaries was an attack against labor. Having eliminated the Janissaries, it was only after 1826 that the Ottoman government was able to impose its restrictions on the monopolistic privileges that had been acquired by the urban guilds.⁴⁴ Ultimately, *Vaka-i Hayriye* was one of the “hallmarks of further Ottoman integration into the world market.”⁴⁵ We can confidently argue that the Ottoman government sought to destroy the privileges, which were acquired by different groups in the society through different means to establish a more centralized system. Quataert’s view is helpful in determining what the Ottoman state accomplished following the destruction of the Janissaries as far as economic groups were concerned. The new restrictions on guilds seem to have been a part of the larger transformation process from a decentralized system within which the existence of different centers of power was possible to a more centralized modern authority that would not come to terms with any fragmentation of power. However, interpreting this process as merely an attack on labor hardly gives the picture in its entirety.

As for the social composition of the Janissary soldiers, Quataert seems to be under the very influence of the historical tradition that he criticizes. He

⁴³ Donald Quataert. “Janissaries, Artisans and the Question of Ottoman Decline,” in *Workers, Peasants and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire 1730-1914*, ed. Donald Quataert İstanbul, 1993, pp.197-203. It should be noted that his research is limited to İstanbul and Aleppo in this article.

⁴⁴ Donald Quataert. “The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914” in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, eds. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, Cambridge, 1994, p.768.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.825.

acknowledges the idea that the Janissaries came from the “lower classes” of the society. In his writing, the phrase “the lower ranks of the working class”⁴⁶ sounds like the traditional historians who tried to show that the rebels in the Janissary uprisings were ignorant lower class people. Furthermore, reducing the Janissaries’ social roots to the workers is too simplistic given the existence of complex relationships between the Janissaries and the other social groups as the primary sources will show in the following chapters. His slightly different approach, which says that “these one-time professional soldiers had become a group who first of all were artisans and guildsmen and incidentally were on the military payroll”⁴⁷ assumes that ‘these one-time professional soldiers’ were originally not involved in the economic activities. As Kafadar shows, historical data reveal that this was not true. Although they are not exhaustive elaborations of the Janissaries and their relations with the society, Quataert’s articles on the Janissaries provide us with a useful interpretation of *Vaka-i Hayriye* in a more general historical context as well as its impact on the urban guilds and its members.

⁴⁶ Donald Quataert. “Social History of Labor in the Ottoman Empire,” in *The Social History of Labor in the Middle East*, ed. Ellis Jay Goldberg, Oxford, 1996, p.23.

⁴⁷ Quataert, “The Age of Reforms...,” p.764.

CHAPTER II: THE RELATIONS OF THE JANISSARIES WITH ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS

This chapter will attempt to explain the profound relationships between the Janissary corps and different groups of Ottoman society through the use of *hatt-ı hümayuns* (imperial rescripts). The nature and format of these documents will be examined before proceeding to their analysis, as they have been used in this study extensively. Most of the documents in question date from 1826 to 1827 and they concern the destruction of the Janissary corps, which took place in June 1826. In this chapter, we will first focus on the use of these documents in terms of historiography as well as on the significance of these documents for the history of the destruction of the Janissaries. Then, we will examine *hatt-ı hümayun* documents in order to shed light on the relations between the Janissaries and other societal groups and to suggest a different approach to the destruction of the Janissary corps.

The official nature of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents is fundamental in both understanding and using them. It was the Ottoman governors and bureaucrats who produced *hatt-ı hümayun* documents and this naturally determined the format as well as the content of these documents to a large extent. As for the format, in a typical *hatt-ı hümayun* document, one finds the summary of an event

or a problem and at least one possible solution suggested by one of the Ottoman bureaucrats. The report from a province occupies the largest space in a *hatt-ı hümayun* document. The Ottoman official gives a summary of the reports about a problem as well as the petitions from the localities⁴⁸ and suggests a solution, stating that the ultimate decision would surely be up to the sultan's opinion. Apart from this summary, it is possible to find separate petitions, recent developments in the situation, or additional information in the very same document since the Ottoman bureaucracy used the same paper during the whole process of corresponding and decision-making. And finally, the sultan's decision concerning the situation is generally found in these documents. This format of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents allows the researcher to observe the process of decision-making from the very beginning until the end.⁴⁹

As for the content, *hatt-ı hümayun* documents reflect the official view of the Ottoman government. Finding public opinion in these documents can be indirectly achieved through a close reading of the texts. Yet, the researcher is still left with a vague impression reflecting public opinion since the reports were prepared by government officials and they had to be brief. In the documents I have analyzed, it is interesting to see how a problem could be reduced to certain

⁴⁸ For the character of these summaries, see Pal Fodor "The Grand Vizieral *Telhis*: A Study in the Ottoman Central Administration 1566-1656," *Archivum Ottomanicum*, vol. 15 (1997), pp. 137-188.

⁴⁹ In his examination of *hatt-ı hümayuns* of Murad IV, Rhoades Murphey argues that one can observe the different viewpoints of the bureaucrats as well as the negotiations that took place during the bureaucratic writing process of these documents. Rhoades Murphey, "An Ottoman View From the Top and Rumbblings from Below: The Sultanic Writs (*Hatt-ı Hümayun*) of Murad IV (R. 1623-1640)," *Turcica*, Volume 28, 1996, pp. 319-338.

aspects and the reader is left with many questions about the content of the text. For example, in all of these documents, the Ottoman officials who reported from different regions have a similar, if not identical, approach regarding the Janissaries. They all argue that the Janissaries had been the source of misdeeds and they were terrorizing cities and provinces. What kind of harm did the Janissaries really do? What actions did the local governors label as terror acts? How is it possible that all the reports from localities, which were so far from each other, agreed on labeling the Janissaries as criminals? Were there no differences in behaviors of the Janissaries in regions as far apart as Damascus to Bosnia? How can one imagine that the Janissaries acted in one certain way in all the provinces of the Ottoman Empire? I believe that the analogous description of the Janissaries' actions in the *hatt-ı hümayun* documents derives from the official character of the *hatt-ı hümayun* documents.

A local governor's audience was the central government and he was to apply the decisions made by that same government. Once the Ottoman government decided to abolish the Janissary corps, arguing that they had been troublemakers, the only thing left for a governor to do was to carry out the necessary actions. So, the testimony of a governor has to be read carefully and cannot be taken literally. It should also be recognized that a governor might not mention certain difficulties or realities in his district because that could have resulted in his dismissal by the central government for reasons of inefficiency. For instance, a common assertion by the governors in *hatt-ı hümayun* documents

is that they had been able to destroy the Janissaries and secure the obedience of the local population. This common statement has to be evaluated carefully, since historical data suggest that there were people who called themselves Janissaries in Ottoman provinces as late as the 1850s and that some regional rebellions lasted as long as seven years, as was the case in Bosnia. In brief, the researcher has to be aware of the official nature of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents and be cautious in accepting the reports as being an accurate reflection of reality.

The Relations of the Janissaries with Economic Groups

Historians of the Ottoman Empire have argued that the Janissaries started to be involved in non-military activities in the 18th and the 19th centuries, which caused the decline of this institution. Thus, they have assumed that the Janissaries were mere soldiers and did not engage in non-military activities. They also claim that the Janissaries terrorized the population and their destruction had become an absolute necessity. However, an alternative view is possible through the reading of *hatt-ı humayun* documents, which reveal the opposite.

In the *hatt-ı humayun* numbered 17315, the governor of Damascus informs the Ottoman government that the Janissary rebellion in the Damascus district had been suppressed. The governor states that he had met with the public in the city center and warned/threatened⁵⁰ them against supporting the Janissaries or

⁵⁰ "...ve işbu ittifak-ı amme ve icma -ı ümmet-i Muhammediyyeye mugayir söz söyleyen ve karşı duranların ber-muceb-i fetva-yı şerife şer an lazım gelen ceza-yı sezaları icra kılınacağını goş ve hoşlarına ilka ve telkine mübaderet...olduğuna..." BBA. HH. 17315, 1241 (1826).

claiming to be one of them. He says that the Damascenes had conformed and had gone back to their daily activities after this meeting. The daily activities he mentions are agriculture, trade, and artisanship.⁵¹ This referral indicates that the people working in these areas had been involved in the rebellion against the destruction of the Janissaries. Besides the support of the population, it can also be assumed that the Janissaries were conducting such activities since the governor threatens the Damascenes not to claim that they were Janissaries. As was the case in many provinces of the Ottoman Empire, an important majority of the local population, in this case the Damascenes, had rebelled against the decision of the abolition of the Janissary corps. Although we know that the Ottoman officials sent from İstanbul were successful in suppressing the Janissary supporters in Damascus, the composition of the people involved in the resistance remains significant. The rebelling forces in Damascus were not a clique of soldiers but a combination of different groups within the society. We can comfortably conclude that peasants, merchants, and artisans of Damascus were engaged in the opposition. Modern historiography would argue that this document shows the corrosion of the Janissaries since the Janissaries should not have been conducting non-military activities. Yet, the Ottoman government does not express any reaction to the fact that the Janissaries returned back to their daily activities. So, modern historiography's assertion that the Janissaries were supposed to be mere

⁵¹ "...ve herkes ehl-i ırzlığı takınub kar u kesb ve zira at ve hırsaset ve ticaret ve san atlarıyla meşgul olarak..." BBA. HH. 17315, 1241 (1826).

soldiers derives from their idealized reading of certain classic Ottoman chronicles, which describe the Janissary corps as a once perfect institution that deteriorated and became corrupt as a result of their affiliation with certain societal groups.

The assertion of a strong relationship between the Janissaries and other economic groups in Ottoman society begs the following question: why did these groups support the Janissaries? We cannot completely answer this question. Nevertheless, one aspect of the matter can be assessed through our reading of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents. *Hatt-ı hümayun* records demonstrate that the Ottoman state banned the use of all Janissary titles.⁵² Some of these titles referred to the military ranks within the Janissary corps, whereas some of them were non-military terms. An important example for the latter is *yeniçeri yoldaşlığı* (Janissary comradeship). *Yeniçeri yoldaşlığı* is an interesting term in the sense that it does not refer to any military rank as the other titles do. The use of this term seems to be a means by which members of the other segments of Ottoman society could claim and establish relationships with the Janissaries. Having acquired such a title meant the protection of or affiliation with the Janissaries. In the documents we have examined, the Ottoman government strongly urges the state officials not to allow anybody to use these titles. This insistence upon the use of Janissary titles derives from the fact that different segments of the society had been able to

⁵² "...yeniçerilik namı ve anlara mahsus olan zağarcılık babası ve turnacılık ve düşman memalikde yeniçeri zabıtlığı ve serdarlık lafzı ve yeniçeri yoldaşlığı ta biri ve nişan du ası külliyyen ortadan kaldırıldığı herkese ifade ve tebyin ile..." BBA. HH. 17315, 1241 (1826). Also see "...yoldaşlık ve yeniçerilik namı lisana alınmayub..." HH. 17412, 1241 (1826).

escape from heavy taxation by the Ottoman government by using these titles. The Janissary titles meant tax exemptions for the small or large business owners, merchants, artisans, and guild members from both upper and lower classes. That is why, the Ottoman government sought to eliminate these privileges so that the state could subject different segments of the society to certain types of taxation. It can further be claimed that the more the Ottoman government laid taxes upon the Ottoman population the stronger the support for the Janissaries became. Yet, simplifying the matter by saying that the population supported the Janissaries merely for tax exemption purposes should be avoided since that would lead us to overlook the other types of connections such as the religious affiliations of the Janissaries.

Despite all these efforts by the government to stop the use of Janissary titles, many people still used these titles even as late as 1835 in İznikmid, Kocaeli, and Hüdavendigâr.⁵³ One wonders why people were so resistant against the ban of the use of the Janissary titles. The *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17388 provides us with important clues about the significance of these titles. The author of the document recognizes that it will take some time for people to stop using these titles. He argues that the use of these titles derived from the fact that the people were inclined to be Janissaries. He acknowledges that it would not be possible to stop people from having these feelings towards the Janissaries; however, they

⁵³ "...ağa ve bayraktar ta birlerini ... yalnız İznikmid ahalisi değil Kocaeli ve Hüdavendigâr sancakları ahalisinin cümlesinde bu ta bir cari olmakda..." BBA. HH. 17394, 1250 (1835).

could be controlled through use of fear.⁵⁴ It seems that the relationship between the Janissaries and the local people was more profound than a mere give-take relationship and it was imbedded in the local social fabric.

Another important question concerning the relationship between the Janissaries and the population is how the Janissaries established links with the other groups? What were the means for the Janissaries to establish connections with the rest of the society? If they had to stay in their barracks how did they manage to come into contact with the local population? Although it is not possible to answer these questions fully, it can be suggested that *kahvehanes* (coffeehouses) played a significant role in the interaction between the Janissaries and the local population. In the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 19334, the governor of İzniçmid (Kocaeli) informs the government that he had shut down a coffeehouse and jailed its owner since the owner had kept a symbol, which belonged to a certain Janissary group, after the official abolition of the Janissary corps.⁵⁵ It is clear that this coffeehouse owner was resisting the government's decision by not complying with the prohibition of the possession of Janissary symbols. It can be assumed that the coffeehouses, which were open to the public, also functioned as quarters for the members of that particular Janissary group prior to the

⁵⁴ "...kaldı ki ahalinin birbirine eski ta biratı kullandıkları mücerred lisanları alışmasından ise de bu senelerden beri lisanları alışdığı gibi tabiatları dahi ol tarafa meyyal olduğuna şüphe olmamağla birden bire bu sevdadan geçirmek mümkün olamaz ise de aralıkda bu vechle taharri olundukça dudaklarına havf düşerek ıslah olmaları memuldür." BBA. HH. 17388, 1241 (1826).

⁵⁵ "...İzniçmid ahalisinden Gazi nam mahalde kahvehanesi olan Sofuoğlu Mehmed nam kimesne kahvesi ocağının fevkinde cam ile mahfuz ocağ-ı mülğadan kırk altıncının nişanı olan balta nişanını kaldırmamış ve camın üzerini kireç ile sıvayıp olvechle hıfz etmiş olduğu mitesellim-i çakeri müşahade eyledikde merkum Sofuoğlu Mehmedi ahz ve habs birle kahve-i mezkureyi temhir eylediğini..." BBA. HH. 19334, 1241 (1826).

destruction of the Janissaries. The coffeehouses must have helped establish links between the Janissaries and the population by serving as a public space for interaction. As a similar example, we learn from the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17381 that a coffeehouse owner in Edirne (Adrianople) was executed and his body was hung in front of his coffeehouse as a public display because he had openly criticized the abolition of the Janissary corps, resisted the government officials, and endeavored to revitalize the abolished Janissary corps.⁵⁶ Moreover, many *kahvecis* (coffeehouse owners) are listed in the records of executed rebels in different regions.⁵⁷

These records also list the names of people from other professions such as *pazarıcı* (dealer or seller in a marketplace), *kutucu* (box maker/seller), *tacir* (merchant), *sabuncu* (soap maker), *kebabcı* (seller of roast meat),⁵⁸ *fesci* (fez maker), *yemenici* (headkerchief maker), *kahveci* (coffeehouse owner), *yorgancı* (quilt maker), *külahcı* (conical hat maker), *kantarıcı* (maker of weights), *doğramacı* (carpenter),⁵⁹ *kasab* (butcher), *boyacı* (painter), *demirci* (blacksmith), *çizmeci* (boot maker), *tütüncü* (tobacco maker),⁶⁰ *pastırmacı* (beef-bacon maker), *şişeci* (bottle

⁵⁶ “...turnacı kılkuşruk İbrahim nam habis ocağ-ı ma dumun mahv ve ilgasından dolayı halka ... kahvehanesinde bazı hezeyana ibtidar ... bunca yıllık ocak kalkdı yahud ve nasara içine çıkacak yüzümüz kalmadı diyerek ... kendisini ihkar için tayin olunan adamımıza ita at etmeyerek hanesinden çıkmamış ise de ... şahs-ı mezbur idam ile ocağ-ı sabık gayretinde olarak zikrolunduğu vechile kahvesinde ... dercine yafta yazdırılıb laşe-i mehusası üzerine vaz ettirilmiş olduğu ...” BBA. HH. 17381, 11 Cemaziyelahir 1242 (10 January 1827).

⁵⁷ For a list of Edirne region see BBA. HH. 17402, 17 Cemaziyelahir 1242 (10 January 1827). For a list of İznikmid (Kocaeli) region see BBA. HH. 17496-B (no date); HH. 17335; HH. 17335-A; HH. 17335-B; HH. 17335-C; and HH. 17335-D.

⁵⁸ BBA. HH. 17402, 17 Cemaziyelahir 1242 (16 January 1827).

⁵⁹ BBA. HH. 17493 (no date).

⁶⁰ BBA. HH. 17452, 28 Şaban 1242 (27 March 1827).

maker),⁶¹ and *hammal* (porter).⁶² The variety and diversity of people who were executed because of their support for the Janissaries clearly demonstrates that the support for the Janissaries did not come from a single group. How was it possible for the Janissaries to establish ties to groups as diverse as this? And, therefore, why are we emphasizing the importance of coffehouse owners rather than other professions in our attempt to find the means of establishing relationships between the Janissaries and other groups? The reason for this is the fact that coffeehouses were public places where, all groups of the society could assemble. The widespread involvement of the owners of these places in acts of rebellion reveals that the coffeehouses were the sites of interaction between the Janissaries and other societal groups.⁶³ On the other hand, the diversity of the professions of the people who were executed indicates that the Janissaries' interconnection with the society was not confined to a single group. In this context it should be acknowledged that it is unlikely that coffeehouses were the only places where the Janissaries and the rest of the society interacted. A broader study might uncover other realms and spaces for interaction.

⁶¹ BBA. HH. 17414-E (no date).

⁶² BBA. HH. 17388, 1241 (1826).

⁶³ It is reported that more than 10,000 coffeehouses were destroyed in İstanbul. See Şamil Mutlu, *Yeniçeri Ocağı'nın Kaldırılışı ve II. Mahmud'un Edirne Seyahati: Mehmed Daniş Bey ve Eserleri*, İstanbul, 1994, p.25. It is very difficult to estimate how many coffeehouses were destroyed through our analysis of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents. Yet, it seems that the coffeehouses constituted a major issue for the government during the *Vaka-i Hayriye* events.

The Relations of the Janissaries with the Local Notables (*Ayan*)

Historiography has conventionally tended to reduce the relations of the Janissaries to the societal groups of the lowest classes of Ottoman society. This seems to derive from the fact that the Ottoman state rarely acknowledged the ties between the Janissaries and the *ayan* (local notables) in its official papers. Given that official historiography, and to a large extent modern historiography as well, has relied on these documents, it has been assumed that the Janissaries were related only to a small group of people from the lowest ranks of Ottoman society. The documents in hand reflect that the Ottoman state sought to isolate the Janissaries from the rest of the society and to deprive them of their social connections in order to break down their resistance against the central authority in its decision to abolish the Janissary corps. However, a careful reading of state documents reveal that at least some local notables supported the Janissaries in their struggle against the center. Moreover, the Ottoman state was quite sensitive to the probable support of the local notables and attempted to make sure that the local power groups would not ally with the Janissaries.

References to upper classes of Ottoman society, which supported the Janissaries, are found in some accounts of the official historians of the Ottoman state. These references are made in the form of accusations, yet, they acknowledge the connections between the two groups. In his *Tarih-i Lutfi*, Ahmed Lutfi Efendi accuses certain local notables of using the Janissaries for their own future ambitions, stating that the Janissary soldiers were not the only

ones who initiated rebellions. He condemns the notables' support for the Janissaries and qualifies their actions as bad both for the society and the state.⁶⁴ Despite the fact that the official historians underscore the profound relationships between the Janissaries and the other groups, they occasionally mention the support for the Janissaries given by the upper classes of Ottoman society.

In *hatt-ı hümayun* documents, reporters from different provinces of the Empire inform the central government that they read aloud the decision regarding the Janissaries in the center of their locality before the *ayan*, *ulema*, and the Janissary soldiers. In the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17315, for instance, we learn that governor of Damascus read aloud the decision publicly before the *ayan*.⁶⁵ The *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17393 also states that the religious leaders, leaders of the Janissaries, and local notables were gathered in the residence of the local *ayan* to be informed of the government's decision.⁶⁶ Why did the Ottoman government attempt to ensure that the local *ayan* and other local power groups were informed of its decision? If the Janissary corps represented merely a regiment of soldiers and if the matter was solely military, why did the state feel the need to inform all the power groups in a province? This must have derived

⁶⁴ "...ihtilal ateşlerini uyandıran yalnız ocaklı güruhu olmayıp ... bazı atabegan-ı garaz-pişeganın mirvaha-i ta limiyyeleri eseri olduğu ma lumdur ... sebab-i tecemmuları soruldukda istemeyüz sözünden başka şey bilmedikleri ... iki günlük ikbale devlet ve milletini değişmiş olan rüesanın ayaktakımını öne sürerek devletin ve halkın başına kopardıkları kıyametler ... kendilerine mucib-i lanet olsa gerektir." Ahmed Lutfi Efendi. *Tarih-i Lutfi*, vol.1, İstanbul, 1873, p.9.

⁶⁵ "...cümle vücuh-ı memleket mahzarında emr-i şerif-i alişan feth ve kıra at..." BBA. HH. 17315, 1241 (1826). See also BBA. HH. 17315-C, 19 Zilka de 1241 (25 June 1826).

⁶⁶ "...sağ serdengeçtiyan ve alemdaran dahi ayan konağına celb ettirilerek yine ma nağ ve müftü cümle ulema ve meşayih-i memleket müctemi olduğu halde salifü'z-zikr fermannameleri gönderilib tekrar kıra at ve beyan ettirildikde..." BBA. HH. 17393, 25 Zilka de 1241 (1 July 1826).

from the fact that in many provinces the local powers had allied with the Janissaries and the government sought to prevent future rebellions as well as to end the rebellions that had already broken out.

Another *hatt-ı hümayun* shows that the support the Janissaries found in the provinces was not limited to lower classes. The local *ayan* of a neighboring district of Ayıntab supported them as the document reports. Moreover, the governor warns the central government that the Janissaries would resume their former rebellious and troublesome behaviours if the government chose not to press the *ayan* to deliver the Janissaries.⁶⁷ There seems to have existed a possibility that the Ottoman government might not act against the *ayan*. Did the Ottoman government act more cautiously when the Janissaries were supported by the upper classes, contrary to its attitude when the Janissaries had the support of the lower classes? It can be argued that it was much more difficult and costly for the government to punish the local *ayan* than the lower classes for supporting the Janissaries.

The *hatt-ı hümayun* documents concerning the İznikmid region indicate that the Ottoman government was careful and occasionally hesitant in executing the local *ayan* because of their relationships with the upper classes of the Ottoman polity. Moreover, the local governors might even protect the members

⁶⁷ "...eşkiya-yı merkume el-yevm ma den-i hümayun müzafatından Behisni civarında vaki Hısn-ı Mansur kasabasında mukim olup Behisni vücuhundan Murteza Beyin taht-ı himayesinde oldukları savb-ı senaveriye ihbar olunmağın...bunların itmam-ı karı te'fir olunduğu takdirde bir vakitden sonra bir takrifle Ayıntaba duhule ferciyab olarak cibilliyet-i asliyelerinde merkuz olan şekavet ve hıyaneti icraya başlayacakları..." BBA. HH. 17402-G, 23 Şevval 1242 (20 May 1827).

of these local groups. In the document numbered 17496-A, the *mutasarrıf* (local governor) of the Hüdavendigâr province inquires with the government as to the fate of the rebellious leaders in the İznikmid region. He mentions a local notable (*ayan*), Kurukahveci Hacı Ali, and some others, asking the government whether he should send them to the capital or if officials from the capital would come to İznikmid to take them.⁶⁸ However, we find out in a follow-up *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17496-B that *ayan* Mehmed Ağa, who had been reported as a supporter of the Janissaries, is now reported to be a harmless person. The document provides the list of individuals to be persecuted, including Mehmed Ağa. However, the report qualifies him as an individual who had no relations with the Janissaries. It adds that he was a former member of the military masters in the Ottoman palace and the nephew of an Ottoman pasha.⁶⁹ In contrast, the report specifies the social background of individuals who were not members of the local notables by naming them *ayak takımı* (people of the rabble).⁷⁰ Thus, these two documents show that the local notables, who supported the Janissaries, might survive government persecution, depending on their relations with the

⁶⁸ "...zikrolunan İznikmid ayarı ve Kurukahveci Hacı Ali naman iki neferden maada eşhas-ı merkumeden dokuz neferi bab-ı alilerinde olub İznikmidde icra-yı ceza-yı sezası için irsal olunacak merkum Sofuoğlundan başka dört nefer eşhas dahi daire-i çakeride mahbusen mevcut olmağla merkumların nefyeleri için bab-ı alilerine mi irsali münasib görülür yoksa mübaşirleri savb-ı bendeganeme irsal buyurularak ahzları mı münasib görülür..." BBA. HH. 17496-A (no date).

⁶⁹ "...Paşa biraderzadesi ayan Ahmed Ağa yeniçerilikle alakası olmayıp mukaddema enderun ağavâtı zümresinden ve ehl-i ırz güruhundan idüğü..." BBA. HH. 17496-B (no date).

⁷⁰ "...damadı karakullukçu Mehmed Ağa: ayak takımından olub Uzun eminin avanından idüğü Hırsovaya ... kahveci İnce Ağa: merkum ayak takımından olub odun emininin avanından idüğü Köstenceye ... nalçeci bayrakdar: bu dahi ayak takımından olub ... Osmanın avanından idüğü idam..." BBA. HH. 17496-B (no date).

upper classes of the Ottoman polity. Janissary members and supporters from the lower classes were subject to harsher measures compared to the local notables (*ayan*).

The Relations of the Janissaries with the Religious Groups

We know that the Janissaries had traditionally been associated with the *Bektaşî* religious order as early as the 16th century⁷¹ and they supported the Janissaries during the destruction of the Janissary corps. *Bektaşîs* did not merely provide the Janissaries with ideological support; these two groups seem to have had profound organic relationships, which must have pushed the Ottoman state to make a radical decision as to the fate of the *Bektaşî* order.

The *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17322 describes what the Ottoman government called '*Bektaşî mischief*'⁷² in İstanbul and Üsküdar. The reporter of the document complains about the inability of the government officials to prevent *Bektaşî mischief* despite orders by the sultan. According to this document, *imams* of the neighborhood and some people, who were knowledgeable and not 'dangerous', informed the government about the

⁷¹ Halil İnalcık argues that the reason why the Janissaries were affiliated with the *Bektaşî* order rather than *Sünni* Islam might have been that the Janissaries "tended towards the popular forms of religion" since they used to spend time with Turkish families in Anatolia for their religious and language training as a part of *devşirme* practice. Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire; The Classical Age 1300-1600*, London, 1973, p.194.

⁷² "...Bektaşî fesadı..." BBA. HH. 17322, 1241 (1826).

continuation of the misdoings of the *Bektaşis*.⁷³ It seems that the Ottoman state relied on *Sünni* groups in its effort to destroy the *Bektaşî* religious order both by using them as a source of information on the technical level and also by making sure that the highest official *Sünni* authority (*şeyhülislam*)⁷⁴ sided with the government on the ideological level.⁷⁵

We also learn from this document that the efforts made by the *Şeyhülislam* supporting the Ottoman government's decision on the abolition of the Janissary corps was not very effective in stopping 'Bektaşî mischief'.⁷⁶ The fact that the so-called *Bektaşî* mischief continued even after the issuance of a *fatwa* by the *Şeyhülislam* indicates that the official religious justification of the abolition of the Janissaries did not readily find wide acceptance in the population. This raises an important question against the idea that the Ottoman population was fed up with the wrongdoings of the Janissaries and the *Bektaşis*. If that was the case, why did the Ottoman government have difficulty in convincing the population, as exemplified in this document, about the religious illegitimacy of the *Bektaşî*

⁷³ "...gerek İstanbul ve gerek Üsküdar'da olan Bektaşilerin meşayih-i tarik ve ders hocaları ve meclis-i şer' vasıtasıyla mahlat imamları taraflarından ve sa'at bigaraz erbab-ı vukufdan gereği gibi taharri ve tahkikiyle ahval ve keyfiyetleri gadr u himayeden..." BBA. HH. 17322, 1241 (1826).

⁷⁴ The Minister of the Canon Law of Islam.

⁷⁵ Some reports indicate that *Bektaşî* prayer sites (*tekkes*) were converted to *Nakşî* ones after the abolition of the *Bektaşî* order. See BBA. HH. 17351, 1241 (1827). Certain rival *sufî* orders seem to have benefited from the elimination of the *Bektaşî* order in return for their support for the government.

⁷⁶ "...Bektaşî maddesinin tahkik ve icrası hususu semahatlı şeyhülislam efendi dağferi tarafına bab-ı alilerinden işler olun.. şayet i tizar itmeleri veyahud taraflarından tahkik olunacakların hakkında mukaddema saray-ı hümayun-ı şahanelerinde iken kendülerine havale olunan Bektaşîyan haklarında olduğu misillü fakat kendülerinin vaki olan nutk ve takrirleriyle iktiza olunarak Bektaşîlik fesadının yine külliye ardı alınamaması melhuz idüğine..." BBA. HH. 17322, 1241 (1826).

order? We can conclude that the Ottoman population did not support the persecution against the *Bektaşis* and that the above-mentioned support for the government from *Sünni* groups was limited to the government affiliated groups.⁷⁷

The Ottoman government refers to Islam and its *ehl-i sünnet* interpretation as the source of justification for the abolition of the Janissaries and the *Bektaşî* order in *hatt-ı hümayun* documents. The Ottoman state sought to destroy the religious references of the Janissaries by the *fatwas* of *Şeyhülislam*. Certain *şeyhülislams* as well as *imams* that were *Sünni* supported the government's decision. Yet, the opposition between *Sünni* and *Bektaşî* groups does not seem to have derived from a pre-existing ideological and religious conflict between the two groups. More than anything else, the main reason for the abolition of the *Bektaşî* order seems to have been their relationship with the Janissaries. It would be an over-simplification to argue that the religious zeal of the dominant religious group, the *Sünnis*, was the reason behind the decision to abolish the *Bektaşî* order.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Uriel Heyd argues that the *ulema* not only supported the reform efforts but they were also involved in the destruction of the Janissaries. See Uriel Heyd, "The Ottoman Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmud II," Reprinted from *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization, Scripta Hierosolymitana*, vol. IX, Jerusalem, 1961, p.64-65. See also Avigdor Levy, "The Ottoman Ulema and the Military Reforms of Sultan Mahmud II," *Asian&African Studies*, vol. 7 (1971), pp.13-39.

⁷⁸ Butrus Abu-Manneh presents a class conflict analysis, which, he claims, existed between the Naqshbandi elite and the lower classes including Janissaries who were affiliated with the *Bektaşî* order. He overemphasizes the religious zeal of the ruling classes and seems to suggest that ideological as well as religious differences constituted the hatred against the Janissaries on the side of the ruling elite. See *Ibid.*, pp.49-51. Although he recognizes the socio-political relations between the *Bektaşis* and the Janissaries in İstanbul as well as in other provincial centers, he

The *Bektaşî-Sünnî* conflict does not suffice in answering the following question: why did the Ottoman authorities wait until the destruction of the Janissaries to abolish the *Bektaşî* order? Abu-Manneh argues that the Janissaries were traditionally the protectors of the *Bektaşî* order and the Ottoman government was able to destroy the *Bektaşî* order only after the Janissaries became 'extinct'⁷⁹. It is true that both the Janissary corps and the *Bektaşî* order were destroyed as a result of *Vaka-i Hayriye* events. However, the *Bektaşî* order was not the main target. Other groups were as much of a threat as the *Bektaşîs* in different provinces of the Empire as well as in İstanbul.⁸⁰ If they had not collaborated with the Janissaries, the Ottoman government would probably not have decided to destroy them as well. The documents used in this study reveal that anybody who supported the Janissaries ran the risk of execution or expulsion. Thus, the *Vaka-i Hayriye* does not seem to have occurred out of a religious conflict. I would argue that it was more a result of a larger process, namely the modernization of the Ottoman government, which could not co-exist with independent or semi-independent power groups.

focuses his analysis on the opposition between the upper and the lower classes. He concludes that *Vaka-i Hayriye* was initiated by the upper classes and took its motivation from orthodox-Islamic ideals, which were also supported by Mahmud II. See Butrus Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century (1826-1876)*, İstanbul, 2001, pp.183-184.

⁷⁹ By speaking of the extinction of the Janissaries, Abu-Manneh presents an İstanbul-centered view since we know that the resistance against the abolition of Janissary corps continued in the provinces for a long time. See *Ibid.*, pp.67-70.

⁸⁰ "...bi'l-cümle eşraf-ı belde ve vücuh-ı ahali ve ulema ve meşayih ve ocaklı ve fukara ve zu afa muvacehelerinde ... ve kıraat ve ... me ali dehayik-i münifleri tefhim ve ilan ve goş ve hoşlarına ilka olundukda..." BBA. 17412, 1241 (1826).

The *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17078 informs us about an Iranian *Bektaşî* called Haydar Baba, who was residing in the 99th regiment of the Janissary corps. The reporter says that he made sure that the head of the Janissary corps (*Yeniçeri Ağası*) understood that Haydar Baba was a spy from Iran and he should have been sent to Iran like the other Iranians (this might be a referral to some other individuals that were previously accused of the same crime).⁸¹ The same report says that some 40-50 Janissary masters (*ustalar*) questioned the above-mentioned accusation and argued that Haydar Baba's origin as an Iranian and the fact that the Ottoman state was at war with Iran were insufficient reasons to expel him. Since Haydar Baba had been residing within the Janissary regiments for a while and he was a *Bektaşî*, the Janissary leaders would not approve his expulsion and they demanded his release.⁸² The reporter says that the *şeyhülislam* had previously witnessed Haydar Baba's close dialogue with the Iranian government ministers during his visit to Iran.⁸³ It is also reported that the

⁸¹ "...geçen mevacic akabinde mübarek rikab-ı mülükanelerine semahatlü şeyhülislam dağferiyle ... olduğumuzda doksan dokuzun kışlasında sakin İranlı Bektaşî Haydar Babaya dağfer güzeran eden sohbet vechile merkumun İran casusu olduğu ve sağfer İranlılar misillü İrana def i lazım geldiği yeniçeri ağası kullarına etrafiyle ifade ve tefhim olunup..." BBA. HH. 17078, 1230 (1815).

⁸² "...Haydar Baba maddesi için kırk elli kadar ustalar ağa kapısına gelip sebab-i nefyini sual ettiklerinde ağa-yı mumaileyh kulları dahi merkum sahih İranlı ve İranlının bu tarafa casusu olup el-halet-i hazihi İranlı ise devlet-i aliyye ile muharib olarak asker-i İslama kurşun atmakta olduklarından bu makule adamın Dersa adette bile durması caiz olmayub hususan padişah ocağı olan yeniçeri kışlasında ikameti bir vechile cağfer değıldir ve böyle adama habs olunmak bir vechile münasib görünmez yollu vafir söz söylemiş ise de ustalar cevablarında bu adam İranlı olsa bile güya Bektaşî zinde ve fahrinde bulunmuş ve bir vakitden beri kışlada sakin olmuş olduğundan hakkında bu mu ameleyi tecviz etmediklerini ve fimaba ad kışla derununda oturup kat an taşraya çıkmamak üzere ıtlak ve iğdesi niyazları idüğünü ifade ısrar eylediklerini..." BBA. HH. 17078, 1230 (1815).

⁸³ "...effendi-i müşarünileyh daileri bu Haydar Baba dedikleri herifi mukaddema kendileri sefaretle İrana azimetlerinde İran vükelasıyla muhallat eder olduğunu reğfui'-ayn gördüklerini..." BBA. HH. 17078, 1230 (1815).

Janissaries continued their efforts to secure Haydar Baba's release but the government stood by its decision, saying that the *fatwa* of the *şeyhülislam*, which is presented in the document as the representative of the opinion of Islam, was on the side of the government's decision.⁸⁴ According to the report, some cliques within the Janissaries invited some other groups to rebel against the expulsion of Haydar Baba but the majority did not join them arguing that one man's expulsion would not bring the Janissary corps harm.⁸⁵ As this document shows, the Janissaries respected and protected the *Bektaşî* leaders to the degree that at least some of them attempted to rebel against Haydar Baba's expulsion. As the history of the Janissary corps is full of mutinies, another rebellion is not anything new. However, the expulsion, not even the execution, of a *Bektaşî* leader was enough to arouse a very strong resistance. It is virtually impossible to determine if Haydar Baba was really a spy or not. The Ottoman government may have taken this step in order to decrease the importance of the *Bektaşî* order for the Janissaries as well as to abate the power of the Janissaries by dividing them. More importantly, the analysis of this document demonstrates the apparent profound ties between the *Bektaşî* order and the Janissaries.

⁸⁴ "...bu herifi istishab etmek şer an ve dinen caiz değil imiş Kitabullahın ve şer -i şerifin hükmü böyle olunca bunun hilafı lakırdı söylemek elimizden gelmez siz dahi bildiğiniz ulemeden sorun..." BBA. HH. 17078, 1230 (1815).

⁸⁵ "...bu geceki odalar takımı eski odalılara haber getirip meclis-i cem iyetlerine celb ve da'vayesinde olmuşlar ise de eski odalılar biz böyle şeye karışmayız devlet bir herifi nefy etmeyle bunda ocağımıza ne zarar vardır deyu geri çekilmiş olduklarını..." BBA. HH. 17078, 1230 (1815).

As stated above, *kahvehanes* must have been the sites where the Janissaries and the *Bektaşis* met and socialized. However, as this document indicates, the presence of the members of *Bektaşî* order inside the Janissary regiments was another way for these two groups to establish and advance their relationships. The presence of Haybar Baba inside the Janissary barracks and the fact that this was considered natural, demonstrates that the encounter between the two groups was not limited to public spaces such as *kahvehanes*.

This chapter has argued that the Janissaries were intermingled with different segments of Ottoman society. Their relations with the socio-economic and religious groups were far beyond temporary alliances. The members of the Janissary corps could conduct economic activity and this was not considered a new thing as conventionally argued by historians. Their relations with the *ayan* prove that the Janissaries were not associated only with the lower classes. And finally, they were also closely affiliated with the *Bektaşî* order. *Kahvehanes* seem to have functioned as one of the public spaces for the Janissaries for the establishment of their ties with the rest of Ottoman society.

To conclude, I have argued that a close examination of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents reveals the interconnections between the Janissaries and societal groups. Thus, the established belief that the Janissaries oppressed the civil population seems to be unfounded. On the contrary, one could argue that one of the main reasons of the destruction of the Janissaries was these existing relationships between the Janissaries and the societal groups.

CHAPTER III: REACTIONS TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE JANISSARY CORPS: COMPLIANCE OR OPPOSITION?

In this chapter, we will attempt to understand the characteristics of the reactions of Ottoman society to *Vaka-i Hayriye*, with special references to the varied responses of the provinces as well as the capital. The questions this chapter will seek to investigate with regard to *Vaka-i Hayriye* and its implications are as follows: which provinces opposed the abolition of the Janissary corps? Who were the main supporters of the Janissaries? What kind of similar patterns can be detected in the provinces that rebelled? Which provinces complied with the government's decision? What kind of methods were used by the state to secure the compliance of the local power groups?

As the previous chapter has attempted to demonstrate, the Janissaries allied with and even represented various economic, religious, and political power groups within Ottoman society. When modern institutions were to be introduced, the Ottoman state could not carry out modern reforms as fully as it wished because of the pre-existing structures and the society's unwillingness to adapt to new institutions. The resistance from different groups within the society made it difficult for the Ottoman government to implement these modern

changes.⁸⁶ In this context, the Janissaries represented the interests of the socio-economic groups they were aligned with. The modernization process was in contradiction with the relative independence of these groups. That is why, the abolition of the Janissaries, who had become the protectors as well as members of these groups, would mean that the Ottoman government could conduct reform efforts more easily. However, perceiving the Janissaries as the expression of the voice of Ottoman society at that time might be misleading given the fact that their resistance against the reforms could have resulted from the conflicts between different interest groups within the Ottoman state. In the end, they were still the soldiers of the government. It is crucial to understand this dual nature of the Janissary corps. Yet, it was their alignment with certain groups in Ottoman society that prompted the Ottoman state's decision to destroy the Janissaries rather than a mere technical necessity to replace a corrupt army with a stronger one.⁸⁷

From the viewpoint of the Ottoman state, the Janissaries had become an institution whose actions were not predictable and determined. For a modern

⁸⁶ For the discontent among the population in Anatolia against the reforms of Mahmud II, see Halil İnalcık. "The Nature of Traditional Society" in *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, Ward, Robert E. and Rustow, Dankwart A. (eds.), Princeton, 1964, p.54.

⁸⁷ Avigdor Levy shows that Mahmud II incorporated the Janissary leadership into the newly established army (*Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye*) but this new army did not achieve any significant success. Avigdor Levy, "The Officer Corps in Sultan Mahmud II's New Ottoman Army, 1829-1839," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 2 (1971), pp.21-39. This is in contradiction with the *hatt-ı hümayuns*, arguing that the replacement of the Janissary corps with a new corps was a prerequisite for the military success.

state, which sought to control and design every aspect of life⁸⁸, this was not acceptable and that is why they had to be eliminated. However, as the *hatt-ı hümayun* documents illustrate, replacing the Janissaries with some other groups was a far less smooth process than it has been portrayed by conventional historiography. It can be observed in the documents that the abolition of the Janissary corps caused financial problems as well as social disturbances. Even in the compliant provinces, the Ottoman government had to negotiate with the local groups in an attempt to ease the reactions to the abolition of the Janissaries.⁸⁹

The Capital

The destruction of the Janissaries in İstanbul did not arouse wide-range disturbance among the population of the city. The state was able to acquire the support of the higher *ulema*, certain Janissary masters (*ağa*), as well as the *esnaf*. As is revealed from various accounts of the *Vaka-i Hayriye* events, İstanbul witnessed an intense Janissary cleansing accompanied by the persecution of the *Bektaşis*, which does not seem to have taken a long time for the government to

⁸⁸ Michel Foucault discusses the disciplinary character of the modern state. He argues that the personalized nature of power in the pre-modern West took on an institutionalized character with the advent of modern institutions. These institutions sought to construct the society by organizing every individual. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: Birth of the Prison*, New York, 1995. These modern institutions were borrowed by the Ottoman Empire from the West during the 18th and the 19th centuries. It seems that the punitive character of the modern state had begun to operate in the Ottoman Empire, as the modern institutions were imported.

⁸⁹ Stanford J. Shaw emphasizes the reluctant attitude of the Ottoman government in introducing new military reforms during the reign of Selim III. See "The Origins of Ottoman Military Reform: The Nizam-ı Cedid Army of Sultan Selim III," *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 37, Issue 3, (Sep., 1965), p.297.

accomplish. Some of the Janissaries escaped the city but most of them were persecuted in Et Meydanı in Sultanahmed Square, a nearby area to the palace. Some Janissaries and *esnaf* seem to have obeyed the new decision because of the promise of the government not to cut their salaries and privileges. The higher *ulema* allied with the government but some *medrese* students seem to have acted in opposition.⁹⁰ The relatively smoother process in İstanbul might have led some historians to believe that the *Vaka-i Hayriye* took a similar course of events in the provinces.

An analysis of *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17338 shows that the Ottoman government kept a hostile attitude towards the ex-Janissaries and Janissary affiliates in İstanbul even after the destruction of the Janissary corps out of its fear of a possible revolt. In this document, the palace *kethüda*⁹¹ reports that the head-butcher of the palace had informed him that some *bostancis* (gardeners), who were bringing meat to the palace, were ‘inappropriate men’. The reporter argues that these people had been causing existing ‘inappropriateness’ in Yedikule neighborhood. We also learn from this document that the palace took these people, whose number amounted to 120, to be Janissary and *Sipahi* (cavalry) soldiers prior to the abolition of the Janissary corps. The reporter concludes that there was no more need for these people given the fact that the

⁹⁰ For the opposing attitudes of the higher and lower ranks of the *ulema* class towards the modernization efforts, see Uriel Heyd. “The Ottoman Ulema...,” p.70-73.

⁹¹ Literally a ‘steward’. The steward of the establishment of the Grand Vizier was called *kethüda* in Ottoman bureaucratic terminology. Thus, this report was written by the office of the Grand Vizier.

Janissary corps was abolished and they should be exiled from the city. He adds that he could take over and handle the job of bringing meat to the palace, assuring the government that no problem would occur as to the delivery of the meat supply.⁹² The reporter cites some vague accusations against the ex-Janissaries and asks the government to exile them. He does not mention any sign of rebellious acts by these people as a reason for their exile but says that they were 'inappropriate men'. It seems that the government refused any tolerance towards any former Janissaries although they were not reported to be rebellious. One feels that the Ottoman government did all it could to free the capital from any individual who might have a tendency to rebel against the government in the aftermath of the *Vaka-i Hayriye*.

The Provinces in Compliance

The Ottoman government secured the compliance of the provinces through different means. In the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17393, the governor of Erzurum El-Hac Salih Paşa says that almost all of the indigenous people and the

⁹² "...kasabbaşı ağa bendeleri kethüda-yı çakeri kullarına gelip vaki olan ifadesinde Yedikuleden saray-ı hümayuna et taşıyan bostancılar uygunsuz adamlar olup şimdiye kadar Yedikuleden zuhur eden uygunsuzluklar bütün bunlar neşet edegelmiştir ve bunların bazan seksen ve bazan yüzyirmi nefer kadar olup kendi beynlerinde bir kolu yeniçeri ve bir kolu sipah olarak eskileri bir sene yeniçeri ocağı ve bir sene sipahi ocağı tarafından bölükbaşılıkla cerağ olagelmişler ise de el-halet-i hazihi bu ocaklar ma dum ve mülga olmakla işleyecek tarikleri dahi kalmayıp bunların hizmetleri ... saray-ı hümayunun ve saif ba zı ashab ta yinatının ta yinlerini taşımaktan ibaret ve saray-ı hümayun ta yinatı taşımak kasabbaşılarının fariza-i zimmetleri olmağın ben kendi adamlarımla taşıtırım ... bunların kat an lüzumları olmadığından ... ve ol makule eşhas takımından ol mikdarın değil bir tanesinin bile bırakılması caiz olmayarak ... dersaadetten def ve te dibleri cihet-i lüzumlarından ziyade elzem ve enfa olduğu bedidar olmağın..." BBA. HH. 17338, Rebiyülevvel 1242 (October 1826).

local notables were Janissaries in the Erzurum region.⁹³ The reporter assures the government that he knew from his experiences that most of these people were trustworthy and obedient to the sultan.⁹⁴ However, the same document shows that the local governor had to gather the local notables and religious leaders to explain to them the important reasons why they should comply with the government's decision. The local governor reports that he told these people in a meeting in his residence that the Russian and Iranian threat in the East would require the Ottoman government to have soldiers that were capable of responding to the enemy in the battlefield as described by the Quran. According to his testimony, the people who were present acknowledged the need of the government for such qualified soldiers.⁹⁵ At first glance, the document describes a smooth process in which the local governor and the local groups agreed that the replacement of the Janissary corps with new soldiers was appropriate. The question to be raised here is: why did these local power groups accept the government's decision whereas they were Janissaries themselves? The answer is

⁹³ A whole population of a single region carrying Janissary titles does not seem to be a rare instance. For a similar situation in Bosnia in the mid-eighteenth century, see Bruce McGowan. "The Age of Ayans, 1699-1812," in H. İnalcık and D. Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, Cambridge, 1994, p.665.

⁹⁴ "...Erzurum vücuh ve ahalisinin heman mecmu u kavi yeniçeriden ibaret ise de ekseren ehl-i ırz ve muti ve padişah kulluğunu iltizam etmiş oldukları bi't-tecarib ma lum-ı çakeri idüğünden..." BBA. HH. 17393, 25 Zilka de 1241 (1 July 1826).

⁹⁵ "...evvela naçib ve müftü ve a yan ve saçib birkaç münasibi celb ve keyfiyyet ifade ve istişareden sonra müderrisin ve ulema ve meşayih-i belde ve ocaklı agavat ve serdengeçti ta bir olunanlardan ba zısının ve ihtiyarları nezd-i bendegiye getürdülüb bir zamandan berü düşman-ı din-i muhammedinin galebesinden bi'l-husus bu esnada Rusyalının ve diğer arıza-i çakeride mübeyyen olduğu üzere İranlının ba zı hareketından iktizasına göre bahs ve cihadda mukabele-i bi'l-misle müte allık Kur'an-ı Kerimde mensus ayet-i kerime tezkar ile bu suretde devlet-i aliyeye düşmana cevap vermek için işe yarar mu allem askerın lüzumu ve gayr-i lüzumu suç olundukda elzem idüğü icraflarından sonra..." BBA. HH. 17393 25 Zilka de 1241 (1 July 1826).

found in the very same document which reveals that the local governor promised them that their salary payments as Janissaries would not be disrupted. Moreover, the governor promised them that the Janissary leaders (*ağā*) who had previously served in the military campaigns and some others would be awarded by the sultan with certain titles.⁹⁶ Therefore, it is clear that the Ottoman government used it as a method to give government positions to the individuals in important positions in order to ease the reactions and acquire the compliance of the local power groups.⁹⁷

In a petition sent to the sultan by the local *ayan* and *ulema* of the same region, Erzurum, the local power groups state their compliance with the decision of the Ottoman government. What is interesting about this petition is that it was written after the meeting between the governor and the local groups. That is, the local groups did not take initiative to write a petition to the sultan independently of the local governor. The phrase “it was preached into our ears that those who have the miniscule amount of comprehension and reason would obey the decision”⁹⁸ leads us to believe that the governor’s tone was not very pleasant at

⁹⁶ “...herkesin mutasarrıf olduđu maaşına müdahale yokdur ve seferlerde emek vermiş ağalar ve sağı iktiza edenlerin saye-i hazret-i padişahide aher rütbeleriyle taltifi mümkündür yollu avam-pesend olacak ba zı kelimat dahi taraf-ı çakeriden beyan ve nusus ve pende mübaderet olunmağla cümlesi izhar-ı ita at ve inkiyad ile bila-tereddüd ve kıl ü kal-i irade-i behiyyeyi ez dil ü can kabul etmiş...” BBA. HH. 17393 25 Zilka de 1241 (1 July 1826).

⁹⁷ The Ottoman government used similar tactics during the reign of Selim III by promising the *ayan* continuation of their privileges. See Deena R. Sadat, “Rumeli Ayanları: The Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 44, Issue 3 (Sep., 1972), p.362.

⁹⁸ “...Erzurumda mütemekkin bi’l-cümle ulema ve salih ve ... ve ayan ve eşraf ve yeniçerilik nam ve şifârından rugerdan olarak fermude-i devlet-i aliyyeye gerdandade-i ita at olan ağvat kullarının arz-ı mahzar sıdk-ı hakikat müesseseleridir ki...zerre kadar akl u i zanı olan kimesne ferman-ı kaza ceryan-ı şahaneye ita at ve inkiyad eylemesi vezir-i müşarünileyh hazretleri

their meeting. These meetings between the central government's representatives and the local powers seem to have taken different forms, in terms of the nature of the conversations. In some cases, the government publicly threatens the local powers and proceeds to apply the decision, demonstrating its absolute power. In some other cases, the government negotiates with the local powers promising them titles. Different forms of acquiring compliance were determined by the particularities of a given locality. One can also see the fearful and hesitant language of the *hatt-ı hümayuns* when they concern certain regions that are known to be the supporters of the Janissaries. This proves that the *Vaka-i Hayriye* was not a smooth process for the government. This threat by the state seems to have coexisted with the above-mentioned promises not to alter the existing situation.

It seems that people in the Erzurum region had their reasons to abide by the abolition of the Janissaries. On the one hand, they seem to have avoided acting in a way that would benefit the enemy, namely Russia and Iran at that time. On the other hand, the promises made by the government must have alleviated their worries about their privileges acquired through the Janissary titles. Although it is difficult to judge if these promises were more or less effective than the threats, both seem to have been tools for the government to secure the compliance of the province. Whether or not the local groups would

tarafından goş ve hoşlarımıza ilka ve telkin buyuruldukda...bundan sonra ferman-ı ali mantukunca hareket olunacağı...işbu mahzar-ı acizanelerimiz ile arz ve ifade olundu..." BBA. HH. 17315-B, 1241 (1826).

rebel against the state if the Ottoman government did not make promises or if there did not exist Iranian and Russian threats is open to speculation. However, we know from the examples of other provinces in the Empire that local people did rebel at times when they thought they would lose their privileges or they would have to pay more taxes. The Ottoman government offered the continuation of the privileges acquired through affiliation with the Janissaries in order to reduce the social unrest in the provinces. Thus, the example of Erzurum illustrates well that the Ottoman government had to negotiate⁹⁹ with the local power groups in order to apply the decision concerning the abolition of the Janissary corps, even in regions that were known to be compliant with the central government.

The *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17475-I provides us with an idea about what kind of hostility against the Janissaries existed and how it operated around the time of *Vaka-i Hayriye* events. The governor of Vidin, İbrahim Paşa, complains about certain Janissary officers who had been exiled from their provinces to Vidin after the *Vaka-i Hayriye*. The governor reports that these Janissary exiles

⁹⁹ The local governor seems to be pleased with the result of the secret negotiations. See "...Erzurum ve mahall-i sa'fede dahi yeniçeri zabiti yedinde olan kal a miftahı ve sa'fe rüsum-ı beldenin fimaba ad vülat tarafından ru'feti irade kılınmış olduğundan...iktiza eden ba zı efendile hafice celb ve istişare olunup ba dehu yeniçeri ağası ma zulleri ve alemdaran ve serdengeçtiyan ve sa'fe ağavat celb ve kimsenin esami ve yevmiyyesine hanel gelmeyeceği ve sa'fe keyfiyyet delailiyle kendilerine ifade ve bu babda emr-i devlet-i aliyyeye imtisal haklarında mucib-i hayr olacağı telkin ve tefhim olunarak emrname-i mezkur sureti dahi kıraat ettirildikde içlerinden ba zıları ima-yı tereddüd eder gibi olumşlar ise de li'l-lahi'l-hamd semere-i tevcihat-ı aliyyeleri meclis-i vahidde iskan olunarak cümlesi kabul..." BBA. HH. 17331, 6 Cemaziyevvel 1241 (17 December 1825). See also "ilga olunan yeniçeri ocağından esami mutasarraflarının ulufeleri kemakan i ta olunması hususuna inayet-i aliyye-i şahane ta alluk edib..." BBA. HH. 17332, Rebiyülevvel 1242 (October 1826).

had not exhibited any misdeeds. The governor acknowledges that their stay in Vidin did not create a problem or inconvenience. Yet, he asks the government to send these officers back to their own regions because “they seem like pigs in a flock of sheep.”¹⁰⁰ One can easily see that the governor is disturbed not because of a crime committed by these Janissaries¹⁰¹ but because of their mere presence in his district. It can be argued that the Janissaries were feared as a result of their previous crimes. However, as we clearly see in this document the governor does not complain that these Janissaries may do evil acts. He complains that they have an image of pigs in a flock of sheep. It seems that the governor is disturbed by a possibility of support for the Janissaries (pigs) by the local population (sheep). We can assume that the governor had in his mind the popular revolts in other regions and he feared a possible revolt triggered by the Janissaries against his authority. This document shows us that reports from the provinces cannot be taken literally since the prejudices and censorship of the local authorities were involved to a large extent. It is revealed in this document that there existed a fragile atmosphere in Vidin, a region where the compliance of the population had already been assured.

Amasya seems to be a province where the government did not have much difficulty in applying its decision. In a *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17405-G,

¹⁰⁰ “...Vidine geleli ... defterde isimleri tasrih olunan birkaç odabaşı varestede bulunanlardan bir su-i hareket müşahade itmemiş isem de ve bunların ba de’l-yevm Vidinde eğlenmelerinde zerre düşme ba is ve mahzur bulunmasa da ehl-i iman arasında keennehu koyun sürüsünde donuz kerez gibi barid görünmeleriyle vilayetleri tarafına def olunmaları münasib ise ... savb-ı işğra himmet buyurmaları milletimin senaveridir efendim.” BBA. HH. 17475-I (undated)

¹⁰¹ For the names of these individuals see BBA. HH. 17475-A, 11 Zilhicce 1241 (17 July 1826).

religious leaders of Amasya region state their submission to the state's decision. In their writing, they promise that Muslims and members of Janissary corps would unite as brothers of Islam from now on. They also refer to the order of the central government, carrying the 'advise' to obey the decision on the abolition of the Janissary corps.¹⁰² This relatively short submission is far from presenting an accurate picture of the situation in Amasya. It is difficult to determine what kind of negotiations went on in Amasya. However, we see that the petitioners' promise to unite might imply that there existed a fragmentation among some local groups and the Janissaries. His reference to unification as Muslim brothers might indicate that there existed a religious tension between the local *ulema* and the local *Bektaşî* groups because of the abolition of the Janissaries. Neither the existence nor the character of such an opposition is present in this document.

The above-mentioned petition makes a distinction between the people of Amasya and the Janissaries before the abolition of the Janissary corps. However, such a clear distinction between the local people and the Janissaries must have derived from the desire to present a smooth picture.¹⁰³ The willingness on the

¹⁰² "...Amasyada sakin ulema ve ... eñme ve huteba ve sadat-i kiram-ı zulihtiram ve bi'l-cümle vücuh ve hanedan ve fukara ve za ifanın ala tariki'l-mahzar arz-ı hal-i eserleridir ki ... bundan böyle mecmu -i ehl-i islam ve sañe ocaklar halkı bir vücud gibi olup birbirlerine din karındaşı nazarıyla bakarak miyanelerinde ayrılık ve gayrılık olmamak ... ve sañe tenbihat-ı seniyyeyi muhtevi hala Sivas valisi devletli es-seyyid Mehmed Paşa hazretlerine ve Tokad naibi ve Amasya naibine va sañe kullarına hitaben şerefriz-i südur buyurulan ferman-ı alıšanın ... cümleye i lan ve işa at olundukda hepsi ita at ve buna göre hareket edeceklerini bildirmiş..." BBA. HH. 17405-G, Zilhicce 1241 (July 1826).

¹⁰³ The reports from Selanik (Salonica) and Kars present similar smooth pictures. For Selanik, see "...bu def a canib-i çakeriye ve sañe hitaben şeref bahşa-yı sadır olan bir kıt a ferman-ı cihan-muta mübaşir-i dergah-ı ali gediklilerinden Abdullah Ağa kullarıyla lede'l-vürud imtisalen bi'l-cümle eşraf-ı belde ve vücuh-ı ahali ve ulema ve meşayih ve ocaklı ve fukara ... okunup manası

part of the petitioners to present a relatively smooth picture is a common pattern seen in *hatt-ı hümayun* documents. Although there does not seem to have occurred wide-range social disturbances in Amasya, it is difficult to conclude that there was no resistance at all. The so-called unification of the local people must have required the submission of the non-compliant forces to the new order.

In the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17389, an official of the Ottoman government sent from the capital reports the results of his inspections in certain regions in Anatolia. He says that he neither saw inappropriate men nor heard the banned words, such as *beşe* and *bayrakdar*, in Ankara. He says that he did not witness any conversations against the abolition of the Janissaries in the market place in Kayseri. In the town of Develi, he reports, where people were mostly former Janissaries, he did not witness any bad conversations either. He goes on to repeat the same thing for Niğde. In Konya, the official walked around with the soldiers appointed by the center to find that nobody used bad words against them. Lastly, in the village of Kilisehisar in Yenişehir, he did not witness any bad words against the government when he visited a *kahvehane* (coffeehouse), despite the fact that the residents of the village had been exiled from İstanbul.¹⁰⁴ It seems that the Ottoman government conducted policing activities in the aftermath of the *Vaka-i Hayriye*. The state sought to ensure that there was no underlying

anlatılıp ve hepsi ita at edip bellerinde olan çaprazları çıkartıp teslim etmişler sonra kışlarında ve saĞer yerlerde olan kazanlarını ve saĞer eşyalarını mutasarrıfa teslim etmişler...” BBA. HH. 17412, 9 Zilhicce 1241 (15 July 1826). For Kars, see “...yeniçerilerin ilgasına daĞer ferman Kars’da ahaliye okunduğunda herkesin ita at ettiğini yeniçerilere aid edavatın alınıp deftere kaydedilerek kale cephanesine konduğunu...” BBA. HH. 17343, 29 Muharrem 1242 (2 September 1826).

¹⁰⁴ BBA. HH. 17389, 21 Muharrem 1243 (14 August 1827).

opposition to the state as a result of the abolition of the Janissaries. The accuracy of the report used here can be examined in a separate study. More importantly, the efforts of the central state to ensure the establishment of central authority is clearly exemplified in this document.

The Provinces in Opposition

The destruction of the Janissary corps resulted in rebellions of the local populations throughout the Empire. The hatt-ı hümayun numbered 17402 shows that the Edirne (Adrianople) region witnessed widespread mutinies supported by all segments of society. The local governor reports that there were too many Janissaries in Edirne who would cause 'mischief'. He adds that these people were being searched for in a meticulous manner all over the region.¹⁰⁵ He also states that especially tanner workshops (*debbağhanes*) were being searched for and there was a need for stationing soldiers in these places.¹⁰⁶ This document is particularly interesting since it shows that tanners were supporting the Janissaries in the Edirne region. Furthermore, their workshops had become dangerous places in the eyes of the government, as they could provide the Janissaries with means to organize their efforts to resurrect the abolished corps.

¹⁰⁵ "...Edirne'de fesad çıkaracak yeniçeri ta'ifesinden haylice adam olduğundan ihmal gösterilmeyip bunların köşe bucak arandığı..." BBA. HH. 17402, 17 Cemaziyelahir 1242 (16 January 1827). For the list of people who were exiled or killed by the local governor, see BBA. HH. 17493 (no date). The lists in these two documents demonstrate the large scale of the rebellion.

¹⁰⁶ "...debbağhaneler mecma-ı mefsed olduğuna bina'ın ahalinin kefalete rabtı iradesi bi lutf'i-llahi te ala hitamına değın debbağhanelere asker ikamesi münasib-i vakt ü hal olacağından..." BBA. HH. 17402, 17 Cemaziyelahir 1242 (16 January 1827).

The İznikmid region seems to be one of the most troublesome regions for the Ottoman government. As the *hatt-ı hümayun* 17335 shows, certain coffeehouse owners, the leaders of the local notables, and even a government official continued to claim to be Janissaries in 1827.¹⁰⁷ Their opposition to the abolition of the Janissary corps was not individualized. As the *hatt-ı hümayun* 17335-A reveals, these individuals represented a wider threat for the government. The reporter pleads that the sultan should not execute these individuals for the time being until the government manages to arrest another coffeehouse owner, Ali Fevzizade. The reporter's reasoning is that the execution of these individuals might result in a widespread revolt in the region that would be triggered by Ali Fevzizade.¹⁰⁸ This document is an example of the government's hesitation in persecuting the rebels in its efforts to suppress the rebellion out of fear of a more far-reaching rebellion.

An analysis of a *hatt-ı hümayun* concerning the Ayıntab region in the eastern province of Maraş indicates that the cleansing of Janissary members took more than six months¹⁰⁹ and the indigenous people allied with the Janissaries and continued their support even after the defeat of the Janissaries by providing

¹⁰⁷ "...kahveci Sofuoğlu Mehme nam şahıs ... merkurum Sofuoğlu Mehmed'den başka İznikmid vücuhundan diğerleri ve İznikmid ayamı va hattab emininin dahi yeniçerilik gayret-i batılasında oldukları..." BBA. HH. 17335, 1242 (1827).

¹⁰⁸ "...kerem-i inayet edip hakipaya varan adamlara şimdilik gazab etmeyesin efendim ta ki kurukahveci Ali Fevzizade Hacı Ahmed Ağayı hakipaya getirtmedikçe sakınıp gazab etmeyesin zira Ali Fevzizade gayet müzevvidir memleketi bir ihtilale vermesin hal-i fesadını bilir erbab-ı vakıfın zannları böyledir..." BBA. HH. 17335-A, 1242 (1827). For the correspondence between the local governor and the central government about these individuals, see BBA. HH. 17335-B, 1242 (1827); 17335-C, 3 Zilhicce 1242 (28 June 1827); 17335-D, 3 Zilhicce 1242 (28 June 1827).

¹⁰⁹ The date of this petition is 31 January 1827. The abolition of the Janissary corps was in June 1826.

them lodging and helping them escape. In the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17399, the *wali* (viceroys) of Maraş reports that he entered in Ayıntab with a lot of soldiers to wipe out the Janissary rebels. He says that there was resistance at the beginning but he was able to crush the resistance and the Janissaries escaped the town. The viceroy also mentions the difficulties he had faced, namely the exhaustion of his soldiers and animals.¹¹⁰ The executions of Janissary leaders and their supporters seem to have followed the repression of the rebellion as an example for the people who might intend to betray the state by not obeying its orders.¹¹¹ Yet, it seems that these executions could not prevent at least some of the local groups from supporting the Janissaries. According to the document, the viceroy ordered the arrest of the Janissaries who had fled to the regions in the east of Ayıntab, such as Nizib, Nizar, and Birecik.¹¹² In spite of this order, the Janissaries seem to have found refuge in the town of Birecik whose population had previously been members of the Janissary corps. The Janissaries stayed in the town of Birecik for three days and then they went to the province of Rakka with the help of the people of Birecik. The viceroy concludes that the people of Ayıntab had been saved from the Janissary suppression and order had been

¹¹⁰ "... Ayıntabda bulunan yeniçerilerin temizlenmesi için daire halkı ve çok sayıda askerle Ayıntaba gelen Paşanın kuvvetlerine ilk başta direniş gösterip çatışmaya giren yeniçeriler daha sonra tutunamayıp firar etmişler... asker ve hayvanat-ı mevcudemiz bi-tab olmuş ise de hayvanatın adem-i kudret ve yorgunluğuna bakılmayarak..." BBA. HH. 17399, 3 Receb 1242 (31 January 1827).

¹¹¹ "...güruh-ı bagiyenin kuvvet zuhuru olan Tüysüzoğlu Mehmed nam ha^ı bir takrib-i eshel ile ahz ü girift olunub izaka-i seyf-i siyaset ve ma^ı-i fesad ve hıyanet olanlara ibret kılınıp..." BBA. HH. 17399, 3 Receb 1242 (31 January 1827).

¹¹² For the list of these individuals, see BBA. HH. 17452-B; 28 Şaban 1242 (27 March 1827); 17402-A, 28 Şevval 1242 (25 May 1827); and 17402-H, Şevval 1242 (May 1827). Many of these individuals are of *esnaf* origin.

established.¹¹³ As is clearly seen, the viceroy does not seem to have acquired support neither from the people of Ayıntab nor from other regions. He does not mention any emotions of relief from the people in Ayıntab after he crushed the Janissaries. On the contrary, we find that his testimony illustrates the support from the people in Birecik for the Janissaries.

Damascus was another region where the central government came across rebellion against the abolition of the Janissaries.¹¹⁴ Yet, as the reports from Damascus reveal, the Janissaries' rebellion did not last long and the local governor prevailed within hours.¹¹⁵ How did the local governor succeed in suppressing the rebellion among the Janissaries although Damascus had always been a troublesome region for the central government as a result of its irregular taxation policies?¹¹⁶ The previous chapter has argued that the people, who joined

¹¹³ "...bakıyye-i firar-ı eşkiyanın dahi ahz ü girifti için Rakka eyaletine müzaf Nizib ve Nizar ve ... ve Birecik taraflarına der akab tatar çıkarılıb buyuruldu neşr olunmuş ise de firar-i merhumeler havf ü hıras ile bir takrib Birecik kasabasına can atmış ve ahali-i kasaba-i mezburenin ekseri ocağ-ı mülga mensubatından olmak takribi firari-i merhumlara sahabet ile üç gün mesafet ve yanlarına adam terfikiyle Rakkaya azimet ettirmiş olmalarıyla...Ayıntabdaki reaya-i beraya ve fukaranın yeniçerilerin tazallumundan kurtulduğu asayişin sağlandığı..." BBA. HH. 17399, 3 Receb 1242 (31 January 1827).

¹¹⁴ For the petition of the *kadı* of Damascus, confirming the compliance of the people in Damascus, see "... şerefsüdur iden ferman-ı alişan Şam-ı şerife lede'l-vürud mütesellim mumaileyh ve Şam-ı şerifim cümle vücuh-ı ahalipleri ve lazım el-huzur olanlar bi-cem ihim ... mahlata nida ettirilerek ammeye ilan ve işa at olunub cümlesinin memleket-i merasim sem ü ta ati ba de'l-eda devam-ı eyyam-ı umur-ı devlet ve şevket ve saltanat-ı hazret-i zıllallahı ve kiram-ı hünkam furu ubuhhet cenab ve katibnahileri da vat-ı hayriyelerine mürazabat idüb...herkes emr-i hazıra-yı padişahiye mutiğ ve münkad olmağla..." BBA. HH. 17315, 1241 (1826).

¹¹⁵ "...birkaç saat zarfında perişan ve tenkil kılınarak yeniçeri ocağı namı bi'l-ittifak ref ve ilga..." BBA. HH. 17315-A, Gurre Zilkade 1241 (7 to 17 June 1826).

¹¹⁶ Roger Owen argues that attempts by the Ottoman officials to increase taxes or strengthen their rule had always aroused popular opposition. According to him, local notables or the Janissaries could lead such opposition out of their concern as to the extension of the central authority. Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800-1914*, London&New York, 1981, p.77. For a

the rebellion, were from a variety of origins. However, the fact that the Janissaries in Damascus were stationed outside the city walls¹¹⁷ may have been the reason why the local population, as a whole, did not support the Janissaries. It seems that the relations between the local population and the Janissaries were not strongly established, as was the case in the other provinces of the Empire. The local governor managed to acquire support from the local groups in destroying the Janissaries in Damascus. The regional differences seem to have played a major role as to the fate of the Janissaries.

In the *hatt-ı hümayun* numbered 17321¹¹⁸, the governor of Çirmen,¹¹⁹ Es ad Paşa reports that the Janissary corps, whom he qualifies as the source of malice, in his district had been destroyed and the Janissary members were executed. The governor argues that since Çirmen is a vast locality, it would not be appropriate for him to lack power.¹²⁰ He asserts that keeping his region in order required power because of the threat of sedition from the Janissaries was still present.¹²¹ As a result, the governor expresses his desire to recruit new soldiers and complains that he had difficulty in feeding these soldiers. He mentions certain

similar argument about Aleppo in the eighteenth century, see Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1989, pp.58-59, 74.

¹¹⁷ Philip S. Khoury, "Continuity and Change in Syrian Political Life: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 96, Issue 5 (December, 1991), p.1379.

¹¹⁸ BBA. HH. 17321, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1242 (7 December 1826).

¹¹⁹ Çirmen is a district northwest from Adrianople. However, the name Çirmen seems to be used for the whole Adrianople region at that time.

¹²⁰ "...Edirne dahi cesim memleket olarak kaffe-i evkatde vilatın miknete noksanlığı ca^o olmayub..." BBA. HH. 17321, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1242 (7 December 1826).

¹²¹ "...erbab-ı fesad ... def ve tard olunmuş iseler de ... kaffe-i memalik ve biladel nizam ve fesadı herhalde kadr'ülhiye me^out ise de ekser halde nizam u intizam-ı memleket vilatın miknetlüce bulunmasına me^ouniyetle..." BBA. HH. 17321, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1242 (7 December 1826).

taxes,¹²² whose collection was previously banned by the Ottoman government, and the insufficiency of *mukata a*¹²³ revenues in order to show that he was not able to pay the monthly salaries of the new soldiers as well as other expenses, which amounted to 80.000 to 90.000 silver coins monthly. In response to the request by Es ad Paşa, the sultan states the concern of the government over the collection of certain taxes arguing that the local population would hear of this and it would discredit the sultan's authority.¹²⁴ Finally, the sultan orders that Es ad Paşa could take the revenues from two neighboring districts for the time being. The sultan wanted to make sure that the governor would not try to collect other taxes because this would upset the poor in the sultan's words.

This *hatt* whose content I have summarized above gives us an idea about the situation in the aftermath of the destruction of the Janissaries. It shows us that the Janissaries played an important role in maintaining the local governor's power in his district. We understand this from Es ad Paşa's remarks about the necessity of recruiting new soldiers in retaining his power and establishing order. The Janissaries, as an institution, must have fulfilled this duty before their abolition. Why is that significant? This conclusion is important because it may help us see how the agents of power are replaced in the new era. Ironically, the

¹²² "... ayanıye ve sıhhiye ve cerime ve kudumiye namıyla alınagelen mebalığın alınmaması..." BBA. HH. 17321, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1242 (7 December 1826).

¹²³ A branch of the public revenue of the Ottoman Empire farmed out for a term of years for a fixed sum.

¹²⁴ "... haliye ve harac defter namıyla akçe alınmasına ruhsat virilse şuyu bulmamak mümkün değildir ne kadar i tidalane hareket ider ise de sa mahallere refte refte sirayet iderek fukara hakkında mazarratı müztezim olacağından başka mukaddem ki emr-i şahanemize münafi görüneceğinden..." BBA. HH. 17321, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1242 (7 December 1826).

former agents of power, the Janissaries, are accused of spreading trouble. Why are the Janissaries labeled corrupt? Is that because the Janissaries really started to terrorize the civilian population in the cities and provinces or is it because the Janissaries' strong association with the society was not acceptable to the government, which sought to establish a central, modern form of power?

In the same *hatt-ı hümayun*, we find the complaint of the local governor about the lack of financial resources. His referral to specific taxes is important because it shows how the government officials had difficulty in maintaining the necessary expenses as a result of the destruction of the Janissaries. In attempting to destroy the Janissaries, the Ottoman state had declared that the population would not be subject to new taxes. Almost every reform had meant new taxes for the Ottoman population during the 18th and the 19th centuries¹²⁵ and the public probably assumed that the destruction of the Janissaries would mean new taxes as it had before. To discredit this common belief, the Ottoman sultan issued decrees guaranteeing that new taxes would not be introduced. The above decree shows us that this promise resulted in the government officials' inability to raise sufficient revenues to meet their expenses. Although the Janissaries had been destroyed in the capital, in many provinces the situation was quite fragile and in many districts rebellions continued. The government was careful in not breaking its promise about taxes because this might increase the support among the

¹²⁵ "...the military reforms were universally unpopular because they were accompanied by increased taxation, inflation, food shortages, and other economic hardships." Avigdor Levy, "Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization in the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century," *Middle East Studies*, vol.18, no.3, July 1982, p.240.

population for the Janissaries. That is why, the sultan is urging the governor of Çirmen that he limit his tax-collection to the two districts stated by the government and not disturb the poor. This *hatt-ı hümayun* sheds light on the financial difficulties of the Ottoman government in building a new form of power, while trying not to provoke any rebellious acts against the state.

In sum, the nature of resistances differed from one province to another. As shown above, the participation of a local population in the rebellion was limited and indirect whereas, in some other provinces, the Ottoman government had to cope with extensive social disturbances inaugurated with the destruction of the Janissary corps.¹²⁶ *Hatt-ı hümayuns* demonstrate that the abolition of the Janissary corps resulted in the difficulties for the local governors who were expected not only to establish order but also to handle the resistance of the local power groups. Thus, the abolition of the Janissaries seems to have created an unstable situation in the provinces for the local governors and the central government.

¹²⁶ For instance, the rebellion in Bosnia was an organized widespread movement. Only 15 out of 48 districts sent letters of obedience to the center. See Ahmet Cevat Eren, *Mahmud II Zamanında Bosna-Hersek*, İstanbul, 1965, pp.73-79. Bosnia is not discussed in our study because of our lack of *hatt-ı hümayun* documents concerning Bosnia. However, secondary sources point to a large mutiny in Bosnia.

CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to raise questions as to the validity of certain common assumptions about the destruction of the Janissary corps in June 1826. The historians of Ottoman history have generally shared the idea that the destruction of the Janissaries was an indispensable necessity because of their obsolescence and corruption. I have attempted to uncover the underlying suppositions of this idea, which were generated by the modernization paradigm, and provides a critique of historiography of the Janissary corps in general. The so-called corruption of the Janissaries seems to be a mere pretext of the Ottoman government to legitimize *Vaka-i Hayriye*. The Janissaries might have committed crimes as described by the official historians. However, these crimes seem to have had secondary importance when compared to the social threat posed by the Janissaries and their affiliates.

I attempt to challenge the above-mentioned conventional perceptions of the Janissaries by using the imperial rescripts (*hatt-ı hümayuns*) of the Ottoman government. The *hatt-ı hümayun* documents are of great importance in writing the history of the abolition of the Janissary corps. The method employed in using these documents is critical because of their official nature, as this paper has attempted to show. Yet, it is still possible to comprehend many diverse aspects of

the matter through a meticulous examination of these documents. As these documents show, the Janissaries had profound relationships with various socio-economic and religious groups, which were established in public spaces such as coffeehouses and *esnaf* workshops, in contrast to the picture presented by modern historians who perceive those connections as the source of corruption of the Janissaries. I argue that the intermingling of the Janissaries with these societal groups paved the way for their destruction since they had become an obstacle for the project of modernization of the Ottoman state and society.

Differing responses of the population in the provinces and in the capital help us understand the methods employed by the Ottoman government in establishing the new order. The reactions to the destruction of the Janissaries varied from one province to another, depending on the extent to which the Janissaries were associated with the local population. The reactions of the population took diverse forms, namely collaboration with the government, mere submission, acceptance, disturbance, and rebellion etc. I argue that the instability triggered by the Janissaries in the provinces was perceived as a threat to the new reforms, which aimed to institute a centralized modern government as opposed to the previous times where the localities had relative autonomy. The Ottoman government pursued various methods in order to ensure the compliance of the provinces and ease the tensions created by the destruction of the Janissaries. It is demonstrated that the Ottoman government could not proceed with its reform

efforts because of the strong resistance, which appeared in different forms, from the provinces.

Vaka-i Hayriye should be interpreted in the context of the centralization efforts of the Ottoman government in relation to the modernization process of the Ottoman state. The establishment of modern institutions was in contradiction with the interests of the societal groups that were not identical with those of the Ottoman government. The central government targeted the Janissaries in an attempt to dispose these groups of their privileged position in Ottoman society. Centralization of power entailed the elimination of groups who posed a threat to the ultimate authority of the central government. Thus, *Vaka-i Hayriye* was the result of a clash between the disciplinary nature of modern power and the opposition of certain societal groups in Ottoman society.

APPENDIX
DOCUMENTS

محمد سعید ...
معدودی عساکر تجرید و تزیین بوردی و کویک نامی و اندک شخصی اولادک ز غریبوی باغکلی و طود ماجوی حسن حالت ...
تعییری و نشانه دعوتی کلنا اور توده فالدر لرغی هرکس افاده قییمه ایه شام شریف کویک اولادکن اولدر لوزن توده ساز افراد مهنه منلو جات شریف خزانه
و طرف اشرف حضرت بادشاهده منعمه و ندای عظم و حکام و ساز مملکت ضابطه اطاعت و انقاد ابرون و هرکس اهل غرضی طاقوب کادو کب و ذریعت حضرت و کبار
و معتقدیه مستغول اولدر هر مصلحت منقضای شریف مطرون و اصلک طمانعه لاذم اولاد طود و مسلک افنده حکم ایلدی و ایجاز غلوف شریف غرا حکمی وقوعه کلندرک
ایشو افاده عامه و اجماع امت محمدیه مغایر سو سولیده و فارشو طود اولدرک بر موجب قوی شریفه شرعا لاذم کلایه جزای سزای اجرا فذیضی کوش و هوشلر
القاق قییمه مبادیت و بطرف موجود کویکی ضابطی و فزونی بینه بطنه قرغانه و جبراز و ساز بوندگی او صاغه شفا هرت اولدی بعد از نه کویک ملقا اولدغه
منی بلرون دکش لوی قرغانه و ساز اشایی شام قلمکی جه خائنه وضع نسیم بره مقدار کلینی مینه و قریب بیت المال نسیم اجویه عینا جبرازی و سعادت
ارسال و تقییمه سارقت و الحاصل فیما بعد کویک نایب الیقوب مجموع اهل اسلام دینه و دولت نرسیمی اولور و اهل و صلفه محمد و کویکوی اولدره مسالمت
بر طود اولدره اولرجه مبارزین اربوی و غیر لوی اولدره و ایجاز بر نرسیمی نایب اولدرک لاذم کلایه نایب اولدری اجرا کلنله خصوصانه بالوقاعه اهتمام وقت
اولدی باین نینه و نایبک حاکم بودلدره و شام شریف قاضی قضاوت افندی عبد لعلدره جمله خطا تا شرفیه صحیفه صدور اولدره قرغانه جلجل شاه دوله کللا
قوی باشلدره و لوزن و محمد کویک فولدی مبارزه رسین دست نعلیم و مضمونه بنی قریه طلع بن صدقوسجاری اولور هر مکنه انفاذ امر و اولدره سلطت نسیم
سارقت واجبه وقت عبور بفر اولدغه نایب در حال نحاس شرع انوره جمله و چون مملکت محضه ام شریف عایشه فتح و قران و مضمونه بنی نایب سوسه ایه نا
ایشیر لدرک عامه اعلامه و شاعت اولوب جمله کتبه مملکت نایب سمع و طلقی بعد از اولدره نام عمر و دولت و شوکت سلطت حضرت ظل الاهی و قوام هلال قریه و شایع
و کالتا هدلی و کورت خیر بر نینه مؤلف ادیب شام شریف موجود اولون اولدی بلوک و بلدی دق جماعتک نصف او طبری جمله ایه بالوقاعه دفع و انفا و طوع
فرموده نسیم اولدی کویکی ضابطی و هزاره بلرون بطنه قرغانه و جبراز و قلیابه و قلذقات و اندر متعلق هرت و نایب معرفه شرع و منیر میر لوی و بالجملة و چون معزیه
و انفا اولدی و شریک در ولایه صفای جاکری لقا تقییم خاکلی و ایجازی هرکس ارضه بادشاهی مطیع و نقاد اولدغه کویکی منعمه اولدره شام شریف یکی عدد نسیم جبراز معزیه
هزا وضع و حرکت و اراده نسیم شاهانه مغایر حکم و قوه کویکی هرکس ارضه بادشاهی مطیع و نقاد اولدغه کویکی منعمه اولدره شام شریف یکی عدد نسیم جبراز معزیه
ایکه شام الیسی سوره مرسوم حذر سعاده باشلک و لیکلی هکامن شام قلمکی کویکی اولدره و نمازین آناسنه سالف لدرکی عدد نسیم جبراز اولوقت ضایع نایب
بوده ایه منافی مشارایه طرفیایا اولدره مجاری ایه قلمه مدعی کویکی اولدره و بعد جبراز امتداد لایر بودر صکره در عیبه اسال اولدی شام شریفک اطراف قضا رینه
اولدنی وضع بلون افاده و تقریر کلمه الحاکم قلمه و وضع اوضاعه نحاسه اولدره بعد جبراز امتداد لایر بودر صکره در عیبه اسال اولدی شام شریفک اطراف قضا رینه
بر قطعه صورت امر شریف خائنه نایب اولدره ملوکانه اولدره و شاعره قدره امر بادشاهی اجرا قلمکی افاده سی کیفیت حال شام شریف قاضی قضاوت افندی عبد لعلدرک
اعلی مالدنه دق مستانه و محاکم و نظارتی بوردی اولدره و سینه عرض معزیه اولدره شام شریفک اطراف قضا رینه و نظره عیبه عیبه منافی نظارتی عدلدره نایب اولدره
و لطف و احسان و صفای منعمه اولدره و لطف و احسان لطف و لطف اقامه مطامع حضرت لیدر

امام محمد تقی
شیرازی
کتاب ...

فراوردن ای صفا و سعادت بیانه حاجت و بیتی امر بار...
عزیزان ارادته اندوگی ای بیانه کوه تهر...
ای بیانه کوه تا دیدن مانع از حق موعظه خدا اولاده حبیبه صمیم عبیه برید ستمدیه و کیمه و از خدایه...
کیمه کیمه...
چهره نظری بیوانده عاقلان کبره جزیه سنگ ایشی و ایمانه و حجه و جریه و قدریه فایده اولاده بیانک ایشی...
مردمی وارده منصب یا کثره فالله کما کفرا ایشی...
دقی بیک بیک...
و برکنده و از یک یک...
مویقت...
و بنامه...
باوقوف...
بوردن...
اداره...
اینها...



بیم و ذمیرم

ه
شهو تقریر کرده بیاورد بدینک عصاره بریده اودونیه اولورجه اودومیه بیاید ایدرک طرفه کونردم همه اخذی داعیزه کومزوب شوکباتنی فسادجا
کلیتاً اودی الفتنه غیرت اولورجه و اخذی داعیزه کومزوب دمی کونردک لونا فتنی اکلور ایساک لوجیه فتنه برسی لوزم کله بلکنی نه تقریرده همد زجره
دیگر تقریری باطله نه جوایبی بالاسنه یا زادم

کرمانلو مرانلو قرزلو و بیغم اوزم
تقدیم خاکبای همایونه ملک آری قلنا دیگر تقریر جا کزاده محرر اولدیمی و چه بنکاشی ماره سنک تحبیه و جزئی زبونی سما فاند
تیج اسلام قری داعیزی طرفه با جابلدیده اشعار اولورجه سابعذر ایتدی و با خود طرفدیز تحبیه ونه همدک هغه هغه
سزی همایونه شاهانزده بلکه کند وزنه حوالا فضا نه بنکاشانه همدارن اولدیمی نلو فقط کند دلربانک وضع اولدیه نظمه و تقریر بیلله
انفا اولدیه بنکاشیک فایدهک نه کلیتاً اودی نه ماسی مخلوط ایدرک طرفه موافق زده سینه مالک آری جور لیمی هاده قری
بیوی شاهانزیز اولجه وزره کرک استانبول و کرک اسکدرده اولدیه بنکاشیک مشایخ فریق و درس خوانداری و امامت
واسطه سینه همدت ساری طرفدیز و سائر بیغضو ایجاب و قوفدیز کرکی کئی قری و تحقیقه بکانه بکانه حوال و بیغضاری عدم و محابیه
عماری و جمله خارجه بیغضو بدرد و همدارن نوجله حکام شرعیه ترتب ایدرک ایجا جز اولدیه شوکباتنی ساری ایدرک
اهل سنت اراشدیز کلیتاً نظیر نه اقری ساریه داعیزی باذن نصیبتنک اوزره کند وزنه مخصوصی اورتیه شاهان
و با خود بوجله ارا سینه مالک آری تمامه بیوردیمی طرف هاکر بیز کند وزنه فاده اولورجه قوبدیزه خطاباً امردوزبان
یا دست هازی سرفیز صدور بیوردیلورجه اده سالی بوسورنه مقاصده اولدیه بنکاشیک مقاصدینک منقطع و سی
مأمول و ملحوظ اخلله همدارن اوزره سینه مالک آری شیخ صدور بیوردیلورجه امردوزبان
کرمانلو مرانلو قرزلو و بیغم اوزم یادشهم

DOCUMENT IV
Hatt-ı Hümayun 17328 (1st Part)

۵۰

بموردیم
تقریرک مع معلوم معلوم الخ... بودیدر بابا علی...
اولدولر ایسرسنکده اخلاکدی جو برنقشی دی بولوب...
منابلی عوشیده قابوب اولسوک یو خضاک یازدیلوب اغیاراشنه...
عالیدن زای اولدیجو ملک دیکدر سنک اینکدر...
طرقدن ویاغیورد یو کوزاری طرقلندن کیفیت...
مفید اولدولر اونقیدر و تفضیل هیج افضایتم...

توکلو	کرتلو	ویاتلو	قردلو	تعمیم اقم
دوستلک ابتدا هییدر بابا ماده سندم طرلابی و مؤخر ایشا بولره اولدوم...	تعمیم اقم	قردلو	ویاتلو	توکلو
استعماری و کجوی اغاسنک و سنک ویردیگرجه اولدوم معلوم...	تعمیم اقم	قردلو	ویاتلو	توکلو
کتابنامه نوجده امر ایسیر بنده ایسیر اوی و غیره...	تعمیم اقم	قردلو	ویاتلو	توکلو
موضوعه مازیمه مذکوریم حفته اوقضا ایله فتاوی شریفینک...	تعمیم اقم	قردلو	ویاتلو	توکلو
موضوعه مازیمه مذکوریم حفته اوقضا ایله فتاوی شریفینک...	تعمیم اقم	قردلو	ویاتلو	توکلو
موضوعه مازیمه مذکوریم حفته اوقضا ایله فتاوی شریفینک...	تعمیم اقم	قردلو	ویاتلو	توکلو

DOCUMENT IV
Hatt-ı Hümayun 17328 (4th Part)

وتمیکم چاره بدارم بولمک بس
اورقندره انمای مویله قناری بولمکه اولر باغ ابدیم سبب
استغما اولمک بوسنه ونجی انکارنک او جا قه تبدیلی اولم کلیم ایسه عئل دیرینه اوی دعب رز
روم ایلی وناططیه اصداری استغما ابد کلای اولمک دیریشی ایوم در سعادتزه جاری ورش اولدیشی دجهام شموری بوز صوب
سالم وکل ایسه ده اصدار اولوب صدا و ندرت مکر اولدیشی صاده طشه ده اولدیکجه کیوی رضی ایجه جوی کلور بایزکن سخته اولدیشی نایوب دیریشی هر سبب
و صوفت شمع شریف اولدیده ناک وزیر دیا خود و بورد و مستنک انصاف بر ایسه ابر اولم اولدوره انقضا نه کوره اولمکده اصدار اولمقدنه غلغی چاره اولدیشی بوسمه خوص قنار
بینه مذکره اولم ایسه بابی یاری قناریک مؤخر واقع اولد انفا نه کوره اولمکده اصدار اولمقدنه غلغی چاره اولدیشی بوسمه خوص قنار
چو بنویسده بوشه صفتی ایچون اولوب یعنی ک صفتی بولای اولدیشی کیوی انعی رضی مجور اول کجسک و صحتون انقضا نه باقیلور دردن صاوس اولدیشی
و هر ایسه چو ایسه کونی انمای مویله باغ ابدیم کلد کینه کند سبه رضی صحت اولدوره حقیقت کیفیت انقضا نه صفتی سولیم اولدیشی نایوب انقضا نه باقیلور دردن صاوس اولدیشی
قناریه صفتی اولدوره بویا بده آنک رضی قول و زانی اکلندورده صکره انقضا نه قلمی مخصوص فوجده اولدیشی نایوب انقضا نه باقیلور دردن صاوس اولدیشی
موانع قدرند
بدرناهم
حضرت نیکور

۵

در حفظ مشاهد ابراهیم مشهور فانی سید اهدوم نظور دیوانی و مشهور مشاعریم محمود درون و قزاق
 دخی مسه ارا ساید هم در سبزه قوس در شرح ایری آهنگه کور اطرکون جوان
 یازولم

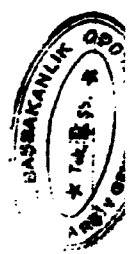
اینها نظریه سبباً قولینک وارد اولاد فامسیر
 غلامی نظریه در حال عبودیت و رعایت و رعایت فامسیر
 کجا اولاد در فامسیر و اضافی دخی برینده نقل از شرح و سایر
 هرگز نظریه سبباً قولینک و اضافی دخی برینده نقل از شرح و سایر
 اینها نظریه سبباً قولینک و اضافی دخی برینده نقل از شرح و سایر

در حال نرد غلظت مه دور و به
 دوده خبثت انوره طوائف کجریلک فی الاصل دیده و کلمه محمدیه به بر مقدار خرم و عیندی
 کز اینمخ ایده سینه و قهره دبر و کفره نف و هانت دیده و هانتی اعتباریه بیان موصوف
 دونه سید بی مودت و هم و مضار اولاد نیجه شایع شیعه لره امت لر زره غیری بورشه
 واقع اولاد اجماع امت و قوی ترفی هادی حادف موجبیه محضا اعدا کلمه الله امبیا و حبیب
 دیده سیدیه حقی سید اولاد بن فاصیله بوفیه الله تعالی ااده میدنه هفت بیرونه شوع اعدا
 عا کرمین ازاله و اطفا را عیینه ووشک خروج علی سلطانه جناب غنیله اطرا بی
 و فیه امثالیده لله الحمد و الله در حال فوق ظهره حقی الی و حیره هیره فی رانته
 ظهوریده اشباع ضربوده نیک جزئی زلری ترتیب و عا که و ما والری اضره و قوی اولاد
 عونه و عتابه حقی هادی و اسیل برله او جانغ مرکوده کیمیا محو و تبیل و کجریلک نامی

اولقدر نشی مینه اوزیر و کجیک بیک ارعاسنه اولند داغنه منکوک دسه تبری برله سات
افراد مؤنیه منلو جان شریف غزاده و طرف اترق مهرق شاهانه دسه تنعیه وزرا
و حکام و سازمکنه ضابطه نیه اطاعت ابرک اهل عرصه اولوب کار و کب و زراعیه و خزان
و تجارت و صنعتیه منقول اولوب و خلاق شریف غزاده و مغایر شاهانه عامه اسلام اولوب
واجع امت سید لاریه ایشار ابره اولوب بدامرال خراسی تریب اولوبه و کجی ضابطه
و نظری برلری بوظه قرغانه و هیزاز و اوهاغه منقله هیزاز و ازاب برلریه افند
و اوزیر قهدهی جبه خانه سنه وضع و مقارری سیده مضی رقرنی و هیزاز مقول لرلی
بین المال ابریک در حانیه ارسانه سارعت اولوبه ابرک طرف اترق صدور اولوبه و
دگاه عالی قوی با تیزره حاد نعلی بیک مبارزه لری اولور و ایشا اوله دجال اترق ابرلی
نزد عجزانه مه جیب و دعوت و مدبر لرزه فتح و قران و مضایبه منفی حرف بحرف عجزیه
و اشاعت اولوب کمال برین و سر سینه مزیم معنی بدلا و فرموده سینه شاهانه
نقشای عبیه و جمله طرف عجزیه دجال شریف سارعت برله قوه خالیز و کجه
سازه لرزه اولوبه نشانه تحلیری دفع و ازاله و کجیک دلوله ابرک کافه علوم لری احکا
و اطاه اولوبه او جاع منکوک منقوع و منقوبی تیه و بعد ازیه کجیک اری
بر طرف اولوبه هر برلی ساز افراد مؤنیه منلو سر فرورده شرع احمدی اولوبه
ابرک اهل عرصه اولوب کار و کب و صنعتیه و تجارتیه منقول اولوبه فقولری جمله سینه
تیه و ناکید اولوبه بورتد جمعی شاهانه اطاعت رعیت لولک و او جاع منقوع
تیری نام صحنی دمی منوک و کنو مال و تجارتیه اشتغال مبارزه سینه اولوبه
غیری اهتماماً للنظام هر براضافی بر برینه و عدویع عدویع کفویه ربط اولوب
اولوب کافه کجه مکنه سینه معنویه مطرف ایشا هیزاز و هیزاز انواع و فاه و راحت
و فائز منق و اسب و استراحت ایزیر برک دعای بقای عمر و کجه مطرف سینه
مدومه اوزره اولوبه و مینه مزبوره اوزره و قرغانه و هیزاز و او جاع منقله
سینه اولوبه فقط بسا الفه مفع کب کمال اوزره مافره ساکه اولوب کبری برق
اوسه دواتر طائفه منقوع کمال و اجمالی و او جاع مزبوره کمال منقوع کمال

DOCUMENT VII
Hatt-ı Hümayun 17412 (2nd Part)

قلمش و دستمزد و ...
 بکسر و بطرفه اوسال ...
 اصفه اولجه ...
 قوردا ...
 اصداروش ...
 آقضا ...
 سون ...
 قرقند ...
 منور ...
 آغی ...
 چکن ...
 جانب ...
 قناری ...
 مارج ...
 اطلاع ...
 وزیر ...
 ران ...
 سم ...
 ران ...
 چه ...
 داعی ...
 ضیات ...
 عند ...
 وقت ...
 امداد ...
 در ...
 عی ...
 اول ...
 نظیر ...
 گنده ...
 رکنا ...
 ابر ...
 اقام ...



...

۵

و رسیده منتهی ابراهیم پاشا فرزند تکلیب

عشق شعرا
مقدور علی بیگ هدایت فریبی بهما برشته ها زده تاوردی و دین کلبی بودف اسر و عطف فری قنانه و فترده آمدی تصیح اولیانه بر قاج او طربشی داوسته اورد
بوق فترده بر سو حرکت مشاهدت قسح ایسه ره دین کلبی بملیوم دین کلبی دزه قلمه باس و محذور بوغیسه ده اهل ایمان راسته کانه
قیوم سوریسه طوکوز کوز کبی بارد کور فخریه و لایتدی طرفه وقع اولمادی من سلبه صوبه وریه اشعار همت بویری منقر تاورد بر فرقم



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