

REASSESSING THE *TIMAR* SYSTEM:
THE CASE STUDY OF VIDIN (1455-1693)

A Ph.D. Dissertation

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June 2012

*To Dilek,
My Most Beloved*

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THE CASE STUDY OF VIDIN (1455-1693)

Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

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June 2012

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ABSTRACT

REASSESSING THE *TIMAR* SYSTEM: THE CASE STUDY OF VIDIN (1455-1693)

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This dissertation is based on a *long durée* approach and utilizes micro historical analyses to reconsider the nature and transformation of the *timar* system through a case study of the *sancak* of Vidin. It presents a method that I call *timar* tracking which allows a systematic analysis of various primary sources such as; *mufassal*, *icmal*, *ruznamçe*, *cebe*, *tahvil* and *yoklama* registers, which facilitates a better evaluation of the reliability of sources and a wider picture of the issue.

One of the main concerns of the study is to question the conventional understanding of the *timar* system that has been mainly built upon the terminology of the sixteenth century. The argument offered here is that the *timar* system evolved into its orthodox form after 1530. This transition is simply described as the change from two-layered to tripartite form of the *timar* system.

Moreover, the transformation of the *timar* system, so its degeneration, is handled as a matter of systemic paradoxes. The argument is that the development of the system also made it vulnerable. In this sense the process of the *hassification*, meaning the expansion and development of state/sultan's lands, both contributed to the further development of the *timar* system and made it dissolve. Similarly, centralization policies of the state resulted in the *timar* system being highly controlled by the government; but those same policies actually led to the central state losing control over the system. This occurred through what I term the abstraction of the *timar* is a conceptualization of the paradoxical transformation of the system.

Lastly, the *timar* system is approached as one of several components of a general Ottoman complex/system. What I call military sphere is the area on which the *timar* system was built. The three stages of the transformation of the organization of this sphere, as well as, the inter-relations between the other spheres are discussed in detail. Finally, it is concluded that the military sphere was occupied by other spheres, which occurred in Vidin through *hassification* and privatization.

Keywords: The *timar* system, *timar* tracking, systemic paradoxes, military sphere, administrative transformation, the Ottoman army, Vidin.

ÖZET

TİMAR SİSTEMİNİN YENİDEN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ:

VIDİN ÖRNEĞİ (1455-1693)

Soyudoğan, Muhsin.

Doktora, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Oktay Özel

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Timar sisteminin doğası ve değişimini Vidin örneğinde tekrar ele alan bu çalışma mikro tarih analizlerinden de yararlanmakla birlikte uzun dönemli (long durée) bir yaklaşımı temel almaktadır. ‘Timar takibi’ olarak adlandırılan, *mufassal*, *icmal*, *ruznamçe*, *cebe*, *tahvil* ve *yoklama* defterlerinin sistematik bir analizini öneren ve bu kaynakların güvenilirliklerinin daha iyi bir şekilde değerlendirilmesini ve konuya daha geniş bir çerçeveden bakmayı sağlayan, bir yöntem sunmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın belli başlı hedeflerinden birisi on altıncı yüzyıl terminolojisi üzerine kurulmuş timar sistemine dair geleneksel algının sorgulanmasıdır. Burada önerilen düşünce timar sistemin klişeleşmiş formuna ancak 1530’lardan sonra evrimleştiğidir. Bu değişim esas olarak timar sisteminin iki katmanlı yapısının klasikleşmiş üç katmanlı yapısına evrilmesi olarak betimlenmiştir.

Bunun yanında, timar sisteminin dönüşümü, aynı zamanda çözülüşü, sistemin kendi paradokslarının birer meselesi olarak ele alınmıştır. Buradaki argüman sistemin gelişiminin aynı zamanda sistemin kendi çözülmesine yol açtığıdır. Bu bağlamda, devletin/sultanın arazilerinin genişlemesi anlamında haslaşmanın timar sisteminin gelişmesinde rol oynamasının yanında onun çözülmesinde de rol oynadığı vurgulanmaktadır. Benzer bir şekilde, merkezileşme politikaları sonucunda timar sistemi büyük bir oranda merkezi devletin kontrolüne girerken; aynı zamanda bu politikalar devletin bu kontrolü yitirmesine de neden olmuştur. Bu çelişkili dönüşümünün bir kavramsallaştırması olan timarın soyutlaşması bu süreci anlatmaktadır.

Son olarak, bu çalışmada timar sistemi genel bir Osmanlı sisteminin ya da kompleksinin bir parçası olarak ele alınmaktadır. Askeri alan olarak adlandırılan yapı timar sisteminin üzerinde yükseldiği alanı ifade etmektedir. Bu alanın organizasyonun üç aşaması detaylı bir şekilde irdelenmekte, bu alanın Osmanlıdaki diğer alanlarla olan ilişkisi tartışılmaktadır. Bu tartışmadan hareketle varılan sonuç bu askeri alanın haslaşma ve özelleşme süreçlerinin sonunda diğer alanlara dâhil olduğudur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Timar sistemi, timar takibi, sistem paradoksları, askeri alan, idari dönüşüm, Osmanlı ordusu, Vidin.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMP: Asiatic Mode of Production

BDAGM: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü (Prime Ministry General Directorate of State Archives)

BOA: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives)

dp.: Page number of digital image

EI: Encyclopaedia of Islam

EI²: Encyclopaedia of Islam 2

FMP: Feudal Mode of Production

FOB: Forward Operation Base

IBBAK: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Atatürk Kitaplığı (Atatürk Library of İstanbul Municipality)

NLB: Cyril and Methodius National Library of Bulgaria

r.: Record Number

TKA: Tapu Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi (Archives of the General Directorate of Deeds and Surveys)

TSA: Topkapı Sarayı Arşivi (Archive of Topkapı Palace)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Scope

Once upon a time there was a donkey that was weak and thin. One day, his owner allowed him to graze in the abundant meadow. There he saw some full bodied and powerful oxen whose horns were like crescents and precious crowns. He had thought that all animals were born equal, so why then did oxen become fat and powerful while donkeys were always poor and weak? He decided to consult the wise donkey that was even respected by the donkey that had carried Jesus. The wise donkey replied that god gave oxen the duty of producing holy bread so they were rewarded with a pair of crown-like horns. However, a donkey's duty was just to carry wood and other heavy loads, so, let alone expecting to have horns, he should be thankful to God for having ears and a tail.

But the donkey was not satisfied with this reply and decided that he wanted to be respected like the ox. As he was thinking he saw a field covered with green wheat he could not resist trespassing into the field and began to eat the delicious ears of wheat. He ate and trampled so much, the green land turned into a brown barren one. He was so happy, and began to sing a song; the owner of the land heard him, ran to field and saw what the donkey had done. He was so angry that he not only beat the donkey but also cut off his ears and tail. The poor donkey ran away in great pain. On

his way he saw the wise donkey who asked the poor donkey what had happened, he replied “I lost my ears and tail when I was hoping for a pair of horns.”¹

According to some historians, this fable by Şeyhî in fact narrated the story of his life. Şeyhî was a physician living in the fourteenth century. When the Ottoman sultan Mehmed Çelebi (1413-1421) suffered from health problems Şeyhî was called to treat him. In return for his success he was bestowed a village as *timar*. When he went to settle in his *timar* the owners of the village and peasants did not allow him to pass and beat him.²

Almost all Ottomanists agree that the *timar* system was one of the two most important pillars (the other being the *devşirme* system) of the Ottoman State in the first three centuries. Thus, any attempt to comprehend the Ottoman history of the first three centuries can hardly deny the *timar* system. Therefore, it should not be surprising to see that the *timar* system always constituted an important problematic of the modern Ottoman historiography since its very beginning. While the preliminary studies analyzed the *timar* system using law codes (*kanunname*) and chronicles that were relatively easier to access, after the 1940s historians began to use *defters* (land survey books and registers of *timar* allocations) as the main sources for *timar* studies. Though Ömer Lütfi Barkan was one of the first scholars who made use of the Ottoman land survey books as early as the 1930s, his initial works did not go beyond analyzing the law codes contained in these *defters*. His article “Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu olarak Sürgünler” published in 1950 was kind of a turning point for utilizing these *defters* as statistical sources.³ Lajos Fekete for the first time

1 Şeyhî, Harname, ed. Mehmet Özdemir (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2011).

2 Ibid. p. 4.

3 Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu olarak Sürgünler," in *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi, Tetkikler-Makaleler*, ed. Hüseyin Özdeğer (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2000).

published and translated one of the *defters* in 1943.⁴ Secondly, a *defter* relating to Georgia was published in 1947.⁵ A commission founded by scholars decided in 1947 to publish these *defters* in series.⁶ Using these sources in the Ottoman historiography developed other research fields such as; demography, historical geography, economic and social history.⁷ However, it can be hardly said that such studies led to a serious change in perception of *timar* which matured in works done by Jean Deny, Mehmet Fuat Köprülü and Ömer Lütfi Barkan in the first half of the twentieth century.

First, the *timar* system in its form in the sixteenth century became a model for the common perception of the *timar* system which dominated Ottoman historiography, which led to a stagnant definition of the *timar*. Thus, the possibility that there might be a substantial difference between the *timar* system in the sixteenth century and that in the preceding period was simply overlooked. That is, the *timar* system was depicted as highly centralist organization that was fully controlled by a highly centralized state via highly developed laws/traditions and bureaucracy. As a result two questions were seriously discussed: “what was the *timar* rooted in?” and “why did it degenerate?” It appears that these questions have not really been answered therefore this thesis reevaluates these two questions and discusses this perception of the *timar* system which was an essential part of the Ottoman Empire.

In Chapter II the basic concept and components of the *timar* system mainly in the sixteenth century are introduced. Some of the concepts are reinterpreted and new

⁴ Lajos Fekete, *Az Esztergomi Szandzsák 1570 Évi Adóösszeírása* (Budapest: Magyar Történettudományi Intézet, 1943).

⁵ S. Djikiya, *Defter-i Mufasssal-i Vilayet-i Gürcistan* (Tiflis: G.S.S.C. Ulum Akademisi, 1947).

⁶ Halil İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1954). p. VII;

⁷ Mehmet Öz, "Tahrir Defterlerinin Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Kullanılması Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler," *Vakıflar Dergisi*, no. XXII (1991); Fatma Acun, "Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarının Genişleyen Sınırları: Defteroloji," *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi* 1, no. 1 (1999); Oktay Özel, "Osmanlı Tarih Yazımında 'Klasik Dönem'," *Tarih ve Toplum* 4(2006).

conceptualizations are employed. Thus a new, but may be not be so original, terminology is created to explain the historical transformation of *timar* institution.

Chapter III shows how the intellectual discussion was shaped by differing political atmospheres and how eventually this discussion became based on the perception that only reflects the situation of the *timar* system in the sixteenth century. In this sense making a comparison between western feudalism with the perceived Ottoman *timar* system is simply a fallacy. Many historians tried to explain the Ottoman advancement through the superiority of the *timar* system. That was one of the serious anachronistic fallacies in Ottoman history writing. Thus, Chapter III goes over the discussion on the origin of the *timar* system.

Such a perception of this history led to a dichotomous explanatory model. The main actors of the Ottoman progress were mutually conflicting “the Ottomans” or “we”, and the “others” or “non-Muslims”. The state is depicted as an almost omnipotent power that shaped the *timar* system with a teleological purpose. In Şeyhî’s terms the conflicts, between oxen and donkeys are just seen as sporadic events. In Chapter IV I attempt to explain what the oxen and donkeys represented and what their differing roles were in the *timar* system. Thus, I try to show how the political body that was depicted as omnipotent state could be constrained and shaped by such competitions.

The last two chapters focus on the *timar* system in Vidin. While Chapter V tries to determine the earliest form of the *timar* system and its transformation into its classicized form. The last chapter describes the change that the system underwent after that period. Here, I offer a self-explanatory model. That is, I do not emphasize the external factors that led to the degeneration of the *timar* system, technological changes, need for new types of armies and stagnation in territorial expansion usually

described by historians. Rather I will focus on the components of the *timar* system that paradoxically made it both a robust and vulnerable institution. Finally, in the last chapter some ideas are proposed concerning the replacement for the *timar* system.

I.2. Sources

Studying the *timar* system has both advantages and disadvantages in terms of sources. An advantage is that a researcher does not suffer from the shortage of sources. However, having so many sources can lead the researchers to lose their way. The best way to keep on track is to set a spatial and temporal limit for the research. In this study the scope of the study limited to Vidin however, the time period is more flexible. Thus, I examined every phase from the beginning of the *timar* system to its abolishment in order to achieve a holistic comprehension of the subject.

When discussing the *timar* system the first type of sources that come to mind are the survey registers (*mufassal defter* or *tahrir defteri*) and registers of the revenue allocation (*icmal*, *mücmel* or *tevzi defteri*) which were based on the survey registers. These two types of sources, which are the basic sources of research on the *timar* system, are well known and extensively used by historians. This thesis analyzes many full and fragmented *defters* of these kinds showing the results of eight surveys of Vidin. Although these registers are valuable sources, many historians have not paid sufficient attention to the registers of the day-to-day *timar* transactions (*timar-ruznamçe defteri*), the *timar* transfer books (*tahvil defteri*) and the roll-calls (*yoklama defteri* and *cebe defteri*); which were all prepared based on the *icmal defters*. Here I will not list all the *defters* analyzed in this research. However, all the *defters* of Vidin

that I could find during my research in Ottoman archives in İstanbul and Ankara were examined in the process of this research.⁸

Here is important to mention that the survey registers usually contain a law code (*kanunname*) that determines the sources of revenues, rates of taxes and other regulations. The earliest *kanunname* of Vidin that exists today was issued during the reign of Bayezid II (1481-1512). In addition, in one general law book there was an article about sheep tax in Vidin.⁹ Another issued in 1488 consists of 8 articles, published by Ahmet Akgündüz.¹⁰ Barkan mentions two other *kanunnames*, one dated 937 (1530-1531) and the other dated 960 (1553). Unfortunately, Barkan does not give their catalogue information. Barkan translated one text from each of them in his article.¹¹ As far as I can see, they are not very different from the last *kanunname* from Vidin. In the Ottoman Archive there is a fragment of the survey book of 1530 from Vidin. Therefore, if Barkan found these *kanunnames* in the survey books then another fragment of the *mufasssal defter* of 1530 should still be somewhere in a library or an archive.

Another *kanunname* published by Cvetkova is dated 1542.¹² The last *kanunname*, which is the most comprehensive and complete, is dated 1586¹³ and now housed in National Library of Austria. These two copies have been translated and

⁸ This research does not cover around 15 *ruzmançe* and *yoklama defters* housed in National Library of Bulgaria and several inaccessible *defters* housed in the Ottoman Archives in İstanbul.

⁹ Accordingly the tax in Vidin would be one akçe for every three sheep. Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Fey Vakfı, 1990). P. 55.

¹⁰ Ibid. pp. 528-30.

¹¹ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Çiftçi Sınıfların Hukuki Statüsü " in *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi: Toplu Eserler 1* (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1980). pp. 745, 754.

¹² Bistra Cvetkova, "Otkas Ot Podroben Registar Na Eodalnite Vladeniya V Liva Vidin Ot 1542 G.," *Izvori za Bългарската Istoriia* 16(1971). pp. 33-4.

¹³ TKA-TT 57, pp. 1b-11.

published into many languages.¹⁴ These *kanunnames* are useful for interpreting the data in survey registers. For example, some taxes were only demanded from households thus, where there is lack of information about population the amount of such taxes can help find the numbers of households.

This study tries to make a systematic analysis of all of these types of archival material. To begin with, it will take a closer look at the land surveys of Vidin and the two types of sources that were initially prepared based on these surveys.

I.3. Surveys of Vidin

It is already known by Ottoman historians that in the Ottoman realm some regions were subjected to land surveys at certain time intervals.¹⁵ These surveys were conducted on the lands where it was decided that the *timar* system was initiated to record revenues and revenue sources. These land surveys were repeated after important events that led to change in production level in certain locations or on

¹⁴ Joseph von Hammer - Purgstall, *Des Osmanischen Reichs Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung* vol. 1 (Wien: Camesinaschen Buchhandlung, 1815). pp. 311-321. Hadiye Tunçer, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Toprak Hukuku, Arazi Kanunları ve Kanun Açıklamaları*, Tarım Bakanlığı Mesleki Mevzuat Serisi (Ankara: Gürsoy Basımevi, 1962). pp. 374-377. Dushanka Bojanich, *Turski Zakoni i Zakonski Propisi iz XV i XVI veka za Smederevsku, Krusevacku i Vidinsku Oblast* (Beograd: Istorijski Institut, 1974). pp. 58-82. Bistra Cvetkova, *Fontes Turcici Historiae Iuris Bulgarici* (Sofia: Academia Litterarum Bulgarica, 1961-1971). pp. 45-55. Dushanka Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara* (Sofia: Nauka i Izkustvo, 1975). pp. 163-185. Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, vol. 8 (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1994). 555-581. For a partial translation of it see, Mihnea Berinedi, Mariele Kalus-Martin, and Gilles Veinstein, "Actes de Murâd III sur la Région de Vidin et Remarques sur les Qânûn Ottomans," *Sudost-Forschungen* 35(1976).

¹⁵ Lütü Paşa, an Ottoman intellectual of early sixteenth century, suggested that the surveys should be conducted every 30 years. Lütü Paşa, *Asafnâme*, ed. Ahmet Uğur (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1982). p. 27. Barkan alleges that surveys conducted for every 30 or 40 years intervals. Ömer Lütü Barkan, "Türkiyede İmparatorluk Devirlerinin Büyük Nüfus ve Arazi Tahrirleri ve Hâkana Mahsus İstatistik Defterleri I, II," in *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi: Tetkikler-Makaleler*, ed. Hüseyin Özdeğer (İstanbul: İsnatbul Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2000). p. 175. Mehmet Öz says that there are examples that support the idea that Ottomans conducted surveys every 30 years but that local conditions could affect the length of time between surveys. Öz, "Tahrir Defterlerinin Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Kullanılması Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler." p. 430.

occasion after the enthronement of a new sultan.¹⁶ After the completion of recording the resources into *mufassal defters* (detailed registers) they were distributed and redistributed (*tevzi*) to certain people or institutions and such distributions were recorded in *defters* called *icmal* or *mücmel defteris* (summary registers) and sometimes *tevzi defteris* (registers of allocation). For this purpose, in Vidin many surveys were conducted throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The records of some surveys did not survive, so their existence can be revealed only indirectly; however, there are others for which there is information in the *defters*, which have survived. Descriptions of each of the surveys of Vidin revealed through this research are given below:

Survey 1: In the early *defters* beneath the total values of a *timar* written sometimes another value that showed by a term “*fi’l-asıl*”, meaning “by origin”. This term referred to the value of the same *timar* in the preceding *defter*, i.e. the results of the previous survey. In *defter* of 1455 there were several such records. Also in the same *defter* we know that a quite important number of *timars* were granted by Murad II (1421-1451). Therefore, it can be estimated that Vidin was surveyed in the 1440s. However, unfortunately there is no direct remnant of the registers drawn on this survey.

Survey 2: Nicoara Beldiceanu alleges that during the reign of Mehmed II (1451-1458) three general surveys conducted in: 1454-1455; 1464-1465 and the last one after 1476.¹⁷ The survey in 1454 was conducted after the destruction of Vidin in

¹⁶ Barkan, "Türkiyede İmparatorluk Devirlerinin Büyük Nüfus ve Arazi Tahrirleri ve Hâkana Mahsus İstatistik Defterleri I, II." pp. 190-193; Ömer Lütfi Barkan and Enver Meriçli, *Hüdavendigâr Livası Tahrir Defterleri I* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988). pp. 14-18; Öz, "Tahrir Defterlerinin Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Kullanılması Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler." p. 430.

¹⁷ Nicoara Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*, trans. Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay (Ankara: Teori, 1985). p. 79.

a counter-attack by Serbo-Hungarian forces.¹⁸ Today there is not even a fragment remaining of the survey (*mufassal*) register however, there is a full revenue allocation (*icmal*) book dated 1455 housed in the Atatürk Library of the İstanbul Municipality (*İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Atatürk Kitaplığı*).¹⁹

Survey 3: The next survey was probably carried out in 1465. There are two fragments of the *icmal defter* but they do not contain the date of the survey. One fragment consists of a couple of pages housed in the National Library of Bulgaria (NLB)²⁰ and another part of the same *defter* is in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul (BOA).²¹ This *defter* contains notes about transfers of *timars* in the following period. Since the earliest *timar* transfers were dated 1466, it can be confidently said that the preparation of this *defter* was completed in 1466.

Survey 4: The last survey mentioned by Beldiceanu was completed in 1479 in Vidin. There are four fragments of the *mufassal* and *icmal* of this survey, neither of which contains the date of the survey. The first fragment, which is in BOA, is a part of the *icmal defter*.²² The second part of the same *defter* is in NLB.²³ Another piece of the *defter* is part of the *mufassal defteri*, which is in the BOA collections.²⁴ As far as I can see, in this last fragment the page numbered 39 is not the exact page

18 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2011). 14.

19 IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90. This *defter* was previously translated into Bulgarian by Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*.

20 NLB-OAK 265/27. This fragment was previously translated into Bulgarian by Petko Gruevski. Petko Gruevski, "Timari Vav Vidinsko, Berkovsko, Belogradchishko I Porechieto Na R. Timok," *Izvori za Bulgarskata Istoriia* 13(1966). pp. 151-59.

21 BOA-MAD.d 18. This fragment was translated into Bulgarian by Dushanka Bojanich. Dushanka Bojanich, "Fragmenti Zbirnog Popisa Vidinskog Sancaka Iz 1466," *Meshovita Gradja (Miscellanea)* 2(1973). pp. 17-77.

22 A.DFE.d 3.

23 VD 110/10. This piece of *defter* actually consists of two separate fragments the same *defter* that are translated into Bulgarian. Nikolas Popov and Asparuh Traianov, "Timari Vav Vidinsko, Berkovsko, Belogradchishko I Porechieto Na R. Timok," *Izvori za Bulgarskata Istoriia* 13(1966). pp. 104-151.

24 BOA-TT.d 814. This part also translated into Bulgarian. Dushanka Bojanich, "Fragmenti Opshirnog Popisa Vidinskog Sancaka Iz 1478-81," *Meshovita Gradja (Miscellanea)* 2(1973). pp. 117-177.

following page 38. It is obvious that there are some pages missing and of them four pages were catalogued separately in BOA²⁵ but there are still a few other pages missing. Lastly, another fragment catalogued BOA-MAD.d 16157 that is not available to readers due to the decay in the pages is most probably another fragment of this survey.

There is a question of how we know that these fragments contain the results of the same survey. First, although to the previous *defter* of 1466 there were notes added about transfers of *timars* in the period after the survey, these fragments contain notes about *timar* transaction before the survey. Since the last notes were dated 1479 we can estimate that the *icmal defter* finished in 1479. Moreover, there are many notes in the *icmal defter* of following survey of 1482-3 saying that in November 1479 many *timar* holders renewed their licenses. Therefore, we can be sure that the *icmal defter* of the survey was prepared in November 1479. Secondly, almost all of these records contain the value of the *timar* in the previous *defter* shown by the *fi'l-asıl*. If these values are compared with the results of the survey of 1466 they are seen to be exactly the same. Similarly the *fi'l-asıl* records of the following *defter* refer exactly to the result of the survey recorded in these fragments. Therefore, there is quite a good quantity of the data referring to the survey of 1479.

Survey 5: The next survey was conducted in 1482, and probably finished in 1483. There is a complete *icmal defter* dated 1483 housed in BOA.²⁶ This survey was conducted not because of the enthronement of Bayezid II in 1481 but was conducted after a Hungarian attack on Vidin in 1482 which accounts for the short time having elapsed between this survey and the previous one.

²⁵ A.DFE.d 1.

²⁶ BOA-MAD.d 1.

Survey 6: Unfortunately none of *mufassal* or *icmal defters* that were based on this survey exist today. The only proof of a survey having been carried out after 1483 is a *ruznamçe* containing the *timar* transactions between 1512 and 1515.²⁷ The last *timars* were prepared on the basis of a new survey. On the other hand, the records of previous years in the same *defters* do not agree with those of 1483. So there should be another survey. I believe that Vidin was surveyed after another attack in 1502 when Vidin was set on fire.²⁸ Anyway, due to the *ruznamçe* around 20 *timars* and some 10 *zi'amets* are revealed in this survey.

Survey 7: There is one complete *icmal defter* which exists from this survey.²⁹ This *defter* is dated April-May 1515. Some of records of the *timar* transactions in the *ruznamçe* of 1512-1515 were prepared according to this new survey. The new (*icmal*) *defter* is mentioned in the records as early as March of 1515. So it can be accepted that the survey began in 1514 and ended in early 1515.

Survey 8: A new survey was conducted as a part of a general survey of 1530. From the *mufassal* of the survey 16 pages exist today.³⁰ Yet, as mentioned before, Barkan somehow found a *kanunname* of Vidin dated 1530 so there must be another part of this *defter*. However, fortunately there it the complete *icmal defter* of the survey dated January 19, 1531.³¹

Based on this survey another *defter*³² was prepared that was published as a facsimile by BOA.³³ This *defter* contains not only Vidin but many other *sancaks*.

²⁷ BOA-MAD.d 7.

²⁸ Johann Wilhelm Zinkeisen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, ed. Erhan Afyoncu, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2011). p. 371.

²⁹ BOA-MAD.d 70.

³⁰ A.DFE.d 740.

³¹ BOA-TT.d 160.

³² BOA-TT.d 370.

Since the *defter* does not contain a date the editor of the publication cogently estimated that it was prepared based on the general survey of 1530. This *defter* is not an ordinary *icmal defter* since it does not contain the names of the owners of the *timars*. The villages and other production units were recorded together with total revenue that each unit yielded and the tax-paying population under headings such as; imperial revenues, *timar* and *zi'amet* and guards' *timars*. This *defter* complements the *icmal defter* of 1531 in terms of containing data about population. However, there is an important detail in this *defter* in that villages were updated in terms of their owner. For example, a village that had been a part of a *timar* in 1530 could be recorded as a part of imperial *hasses* in this *defter*. This is important because many villages that previously had been in *timars* were converted into imperial *hasses*. However, unfortunately the exact date of this conversion is not known since the date of the *defter* is unknown. However, it is certain this *defter* was prepared sometime between 1531 and 1540. In the *icmal* of 1531 there are many notes added later showing *timars* changing hands between 1531 and 1533. Since the latest date about a *timar* bestowal was dated December 1532 (9 *Cemaziyyelevvel* 939)³⁴ it can be estimated that the *defter* was prepared after that time. From now in this work the date of the *defter* will be shown as 1533–1539.

Survey 9: Another survey was conducted in 1540. A fragmented *mufassal defter* of several pages dated 1542 was certainly part of a copy of the *mufassal defter* of the survey of 1540.³⁵ This part only covers some neighborhoods of the town of Vidin. It does not mention *timars*. I found two *ruznamçes* which had been prepared

³³ *Muhâsebe-i Vilâyet-i Rûm-İli Defteri (937 / 1530)*, ed. Yusuf Sarımay, vol. 2 (Ankara: BDAGM, 2002).

³⁴ BOA-TT.d 160. p. 71.

³⁵ NLB-OAK 3/36. It was published in Bulgarian. Cvetkova, "Otkas Ot Podroben Registar Na Eodalnite Vladeniya V Liva Vidin Ot 1542 G.."

based on this survey. The first *ruznamçe* covers a period between 1540 and 1543.³⁶ In many records in this *defter* there is mention of the new *defter* i.e. the new survey. The earliest one dated November 1540. Then, surely the survey had been already finalized by that date. The distributions of *timars* based on this new survey continued until November 1541. That is, it can be estimated that the *icmal* of the survey ended in November 1541. Finalizing the *icmal* over such a long time was probably due to popular discontent with the survey. As will be shown later, since peasants reacted against the Ottoman administration policy of abolishing some of their privileges by converting their lands or their *timars* into imperial *hasses* in the previous period, the government was forced to conduct this survey.

The second *ruznamçe* that was prepared based on this survey covers the period between 1552 and 1554.³⁷ Due to these two *ruznamçes* it is possible to have an idea about 5 *zi'amets* and 34 *timars* in the lost *icmal defter* of 1541.

Survey 10: From this survey there are two remaining fragments of the *mufassal defter*. One is housed in NLB³⁸ and the other is in BOA.³⁹ These two say little about the *timars* but there is a complete *icmal defter* relating to this survey.⁴⁰ This *defter* previously published by Dushanka Bojanich translated into Bulgarian.⁴¹ Although this *defter* does not contain a date, she has discovered that it was prepared

³⁶ BOA-MAD.d 34.

³⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 5.

³⁸ NLB-OAK 265/62. This part was translated into Bulgarian. Asparuh Velkov, "Otkas Ot Podroben Registar Na *Timari* V Sandzhak Vidin Ot Vtorata Polovina Na XVI v.," *Turski Izvori za Bilgarskata Istoriia* 16(1971). pp. 496-523.

³⁹ A.DFE.d 14.

⁴⁰ BOA-TT.d 514.

⁴¹ Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*.

in 1560 and in the same records that she used it can be seen that the survey completed in December 1559.⁴²

Survey 11: The last survey of Vidin began in 1579 and continued until 1580.⁴³ Since the official who conducted the survey made some mistakes it was repeated in the Černa Reka region of Vidin in January 1580.⁴⁴ In July 1580 the official conducting the survey was sent to Temeşvar since there the survey had been completed and he was to help with revenue allocation.⁴⁵ Thus, it can be accepted that *icmal defter* of the survey had already been prepared by July 1580.

The first *mufassal* record of the survey has not been survived but there is a copy of the *mufassal defter* prepared in 1586, which is the only complete *mufassal defter* of Vidin.⁴⁶ Dushanka Bojanich who examined this *defter* stated that the last few pages of the *defter* were missing.⁴⁷ In fact, no pages are missing there were just a few pages misplaced at the end during the binding of the *defter*. Another copy of this *mufassal defter* was prepared during the reign of Osman II (1618-1622).⁴⁸ It is not clear why it was copied once more since there were no extra notes added. This *defter* does not contain the *nâhiye* of Krivina and records about the falconers. I found another copy of the same *defter* containing records of the falconers with few missing

⁴² BOA-ADV.N.MHM 3, r. 530.

⁴³ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 40, r. 97, 126, 538.

⁴⁴ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 39, r. 252.

⁴⁵ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 43 r. 172

⁴⁶ TKA-TT 57.

⁴⁷ Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*. p. 8.

⁴⁸ TSA-D 547-1. This *defter* does not contains a date but it had the *tuğra* (sultan's seal) of Osman II.

pages at the beginning.⁴⁹ A further copy of the same *mufassal* contains only imperial revenues and revenues of viziers in Vidin.⁵⁰

The *icmal defter* of this survey is also in a complete form.⁵¹ This *defter* does not contain the date of its preparation but as already stated the *icmal defter* of this survey was completed in 1580. However, this survey to some extent is unreliable. In particular, the data revenue sums of each village in imperial *hasses* were copied from the survey of 1559-1560. However, the production was not so stagnant between 1560 and 1580. Some *defters* shows the annual yields of villages in imperial *hasses*. If one examines them s/he can see that the revenue of each village fluctuates.⁵² Nevertheless, this survey is one of the most important since it was the last survey of Vidin and all other *defters* such as; *ruznamçe*, *tahvil*, *cebe*, and *yoklama* of the following period prepared based on the results of this last survey, in fact, more specifically based on this last *icmal defteri*.

I.4. Case Tracking

The Ottoman historian Mehmet Genç during his research for his dissertation realized that all the data he collected for the period after 1700 gave almost no information about the change in industrial production. Initially, he felt that all his research over several years was “a waste of time”. However, later he decided that the lack of information was due to a change in the operation of the Ottoman

⁴⁹ TSA-D 902-1.

⁵⁰ BOA-TT.d 664 pp. 58-64, 148-155.

⁵¹ TKA-TT 219.

⁵² TSA-D.BŞM.VDH.d 17085; BOA-KK.d 3062; BOA-MAD.d . 99. These three *defters* show the muktaas in different *nâhiyes* of Vidin more or less in the same period. They can be thought as parts of one *defter*.

bureaucracy.⁵³ This situation can be experienced by those who undertake research using *defters* therefore, a researcher should question the logic behind record keeping in the Ottoman bureaucracy and it is essential to understand the relations between the *defters*.

The point here is that the Ottomans conducted surveys and, on this basis, prepared various *defters*. What was the purpose of this? Before entering into an explanation, it is necessary to state that here I will not question the results of surveys, for now I propose that they supplied reliable information for the time period of the survey. After a survey the resulting revenue sources were written into *mufassal defters*. These revenues then were distributed among various imperial dignitaries and recorded in *icmals*. These *icmals* both drew the physical limits of the *timars*, i.e. determined which village would be in which *timar*, and fixed the value of a *timar*. If a *timar*, had, for example, a value of 3,000 *akçes* this means that this value would remain unchanged until the next survey. That is to say, a change in population or production was not updated in the records kept between two surveys. When one *timar* holder got promotion it would be shown as his *timar* plus the share he got. Here, the numbers did not refer to actual values but they had practical values through which state built a control mechanism.

The important point that historians should keep in mind in studying *defters* is that they can refer to more than one time period. Knowing the date on a *defter* in itself does not mean anything. What is important is to know which parts of the *defter* referred to which time span. For example, the values recorded between two surveys no matter when they were recorded refer to the values of the previous survey, while other information might reveal the situation during the time when the analyzed

⁵³ Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Ekonomi* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2000). pp. 27-31.

record was prepared. For example, there is a record of a *timar* with a value of 3,000 *akçes* bestowed on a certain Ali in Vidin in 1700. It can be confidently concluded that the value of the *timar* was 3,000 *akçe* in 1580, when the last survey was conducted, and Ali, if there is not a trick in the record, was the person enjoyed that *timar* in 1700.

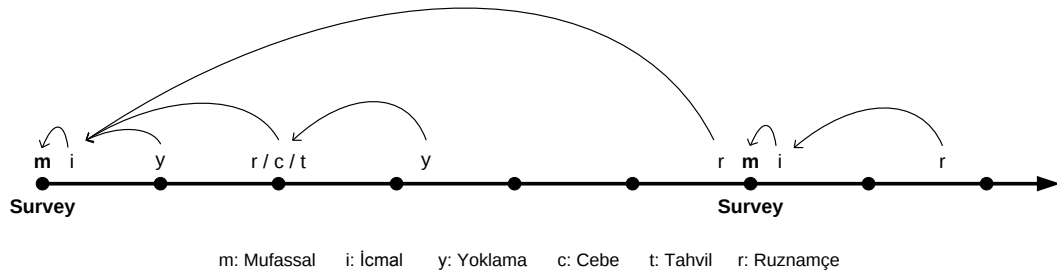


Figure 1: The Temporal Dimension of the Relations of *Defters*

Here two important points should be underlined. Firstly, a survey was the point of systemic optimization that allowed the refreshing of the data, not only because it updated the changes in revenue sources, economy and population, but it also defragmented *timars* that had become fragmented after the previous survey. Especially with development of *fiscal timars* that defragmentation became essential. So the health of the system was directly depended on conducting surveys. Secondly, it seems that the Ottoman state instead of administering strict control over revenue sources developed a control mechanism for tracking and controlling the possessors of revenue sources.

If the state bureaucracy used these *defters* for tracking then a historian should also be able to do the same. In this dissertation I attempt to do that. What I call case tracking means to track a person or a village or a *timar* over time between two

surveys or after the last survey. With this method the historian in a sense becomes an inspector or detective and there are several benefits of this method.

First, the reliability of data can be better comprehended. For example; after tracking *Alaybegi* of Vidin I found that somehow he possessed two different *timars* at the same time from 1609 to 1622, which was strictly forbidden but somehow he was able to bequeath them to his children.⁵⁴ He might have cheated officials; however it is possible to reveal such tricks.

The fundamental benefit of *timar* tracking is to better estimate the numbers of *timars* and *timar* holders in any given year when there was no survey conducted. In the initial stage the historian should number every *timar* in the survey.⁵⁵ Then track every *timar* in *ruznamçes* and other *defters*. In a *ruznamçe* register, one *timar* could be recorded more than once so every case should be recorded by the date of transaction, which is recorded at the end of each *tezkire* (explanatory part of transaction). A *defter* might contain the transactions of more than one year. So the date of *defter* might easily mislead the researcher.

On the other hand, one available *timar* might not appear in some *ruznamçes*. The basic assumption for *timar* tracking is that if a *timar* bestowed and re-bestowed at two different times the *timar* was used by someone in any time between these two points. Let us say, I give number 5 to a certain *timar* that I found in the *defter* of 1580. Then I saw that this *timar* was bestowed on someone else in 1600 then I can assume that this *timar* was possessed by someone in the period between 1580 and 1600 regardless of the availability of records prepared in the period between these two points. By tracking all *timars* then it is easy to count the numbers of *timars* for

⁵⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 260; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, p. 136; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 301, p. 240; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 391, p. 626. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 495-496.

⁵⁵ This step is essential for *timar* tracking. It is quite interesting that Ottoman bureaucrats tried everything to track *timars* but they did not think of numbering *timars*.

any year between 1580 and 1600. However, short term tracking does not provide reliable results and this is why in my research I tracked the *timars* from 1455, more effectively from the 1580s, until the abolition of the system in Vidin.

Another benefit of this method is that the researcher can better evaluate or reconstruct a source if it is fragmented or parts are missing, with the help of other sources. Let us say, there are no *mufassal* or *icmal defters* for 1580 for Vidin. If there are enough *ruznamçe* records it is possible to reconstruct the *icmal defter*. Let me share one of my experiences. Since the researchers are not allowed to make the copies of the *defter* housed in archives of the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadaster in Ankara I spent several weeks to analyze the *defters* of Vidin in the archive. After I finished my research there I began to analyze *ruznamçe* records and found several new *timars* that were not recorded in the *icmal defteri*. Initially, I thought that the number of *timars* in Vidin had increased after 1580s but decided to return to the same archive to recheck the *defters* I had already read. Then I realized that I had skipped one page of *icmal defter*. The new *timars* that I had discovered were the *timars* on that page. Thus, I discovered that even if a page were missing it is still possible to recover the information by analyzing *ruznamçe defters*.

In fact there are no *ruznamçes* for Vidin for the second half of the fifteenth century but the *icmal defters* of that period are also suitable for *timar* tracking. The transfers of *timars* from one person to another can be tracked through marginal notes added to *defters* whenever the *timars* changed hands. Moreover, as mentioned earlier the term “*fi’l-asıl*” provides us with the value of a *timar* in the previous survey book. After solving the relations between *defters* I reconstructed an important missing part of the *defter* of 1479. Let me give an example, since some initial pages of the *defter* BOA-A.DFE.d 3 were missing the first *timar* record of the *defter* is not complete.

After finding the same *timar* during the previous and later surveys I discovered that there two villages (Belborofçe, Mahninçe) were missing and the name of the *timar* owner was Yusuf bin Karaca. I also found out the total amount of taxes each village yielded and estimated the size of population. Therefore, the researcher should work on *defter* series rather of sporadic *defters*. That can facilitate the researcher to better comprehend the value of the data.

However, there are problems with this method as shown in this example. If the *timar* in question was, let us say, possessed by a certain Mustafa in 1580 and in the record of 1600 it is said that “Mehmed took the *timar* of Mustafa after Mustafa died” then it can be concluded that there was a non-ceased continuity of the *timar*. However, if we see in the record of 1600 such a note that “Ali’s license for this *timar* was renewed” then the period between 1580 and 1600 for this *timar* becomes uncertain. As in the Schrodinger’s paradox we can never be sure whether in the period in question that *timar* was possessed by someone or not. Of course, as historians, always deal with insufficient data we do not have the luxury of being that precise. However, it is certain that this method yield a better picture. For years historians used the data supplied by Ayn Ali who was an Ottoman bureaucrat who somehow counted the number of *timars* in all provinces. Today, I can see that Ayn Ali used the results of the last surveys of each region to construct his data. Even if we accept that he did not make mistakes, each region was surveyed in different years; therefore, it becomes difficult to estimate the total numbers of *timars* for a specific year. Using the *timar* tracking method the yearly changes in *timars* in a specific region can more or less be seen. A proliferation of such studies can provide better results for Empire-wide estimations. On the other hand sometimes historians used the results in roll-calls to find the numbers of *timars* in a certain year. However,

roll-calls are very unreliable sources for that information since those who are familiar with these *defters* already know that not everyone needed to be present during the roll-calls. For example, in many battles the owners of *timars* valued at less than 3,000 *akçes* were not called for active military duty and those who had special permission might not appear for roll-calls. However, with *timar* tracking it is possible to see all of them, if not in one record then, in the next.

Lastly, it is necessary to comment on the limits of sources. A researcher should know which types of sources are suitable for *timar* tracking. There are many types of sources that can be used for *timar* tracking. The best sources are *ruznamçes* that contain a range of information. Therefore, it is possible to learn why the *timar* become vacant, i.e. what had happened to its possessor and why the new possessor merited a *timar*. The place of production (village, *mezraa*, monastery etc.) was recorded with the revenue yielded in detail. This is very important for *timar* tracking.

On the other hand *tahvil defteris*, *cebe defteris* and roll-calls (*yoklama*)⁵⁶ are almost the same and provide limited information. A *tahvil* record is the record of the transfer of *timar* from one person to another. It contains the date of transfer and the reason why the *timar* became vacant and brief information about the *timar* consisting of the name of the first village and the total revenue of the *timar*. Based on this information it is not possible to carry out full tracking since it would not be possible to see the *timars* that were given as promotion. The results of this tracking should be compared with the information in the *ruznamçes*. Likewise, the first *cebe* records are almost the same as the *tahvil* records. In the second half of the seventeenth century

⁵⁶ We can add this group *derdest defteris* that were appeared in the seveneteenth century to track *timars* and their possessors. For a detailed description of these *defters* see, Erhan Afyoncu, "Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatında Defterhâne-i Âmire" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Marmara Üniversitesi, 1997). pp. 30-33; Emine Erdoğan Özünlü, "Derdest Defterlerinin Kaynak Değeri Üzerine Bir Deneme: 493 Numaralı Ayntâb Derdest Defteri'nin Analizi," *Bilig*, no. 56 (2011).

they were slightly changed no longer containing the full date of the transfers of *timars* only indicating the year of the transfer. Also the roll-calls are different in these *defters* in that they do not provide any information about the date of transfer. it can only be seen which *timar* was possessed by whom during the date of roll-call. Only after comparison with *ruznamçes* or/and *icmals* do these *defters* provide further information that can be used to complement the *ruznamçes* since they were in fact the summary of the *ruzunamçes*.

This study initially aimed to reveal what happened to the *timar* system after “its shining era.” The problem was that it is impossible to evaluate the second state of something without knowing its previous state. That is to say I needed first to understand what the *timar* system was then to construct a reasonable discussion about what it would become later. Thus, this problem expanded the scope of the research, which eventually led to a better understanding of how to use the sources. Finally, it is possible to offer a new, yet time consuming, method to analyze the *timar* system. This method does not only facilitate a better comprehension of the *timar* system but it also makes easier to interpret local changes.

CHAPTER II

THE ANATOMY OF A SYSTEM

II.1. What is *Timar*

From the fifteenth to the twentieth century, many scholars, especially Europeans, briefly or length discussed the *timar* [system] as a part research about the Ottoman army. Contrary to today's historians, who see the *timar* system as one of the most important pillars of the Ottoman Empire, these earlier historians were not as concerned with the *timar* army as they were with the central army.¹ Thus, often their interest did not go beyond a simple definition.

These early scholars usually defined the *timar* as one of the two kinds of salaries along with the *ulûfe* paid by the Ottoman Sultans to their soldiers.² Or sometimes they emphasized the point in a reverse way. That is, there were two types of Ottoman soldiers some receiving their salaries from lands and farms (*timar*) and

¹ Juius (Giovio) says: "All the puissaũce and strength of the Turkes wars cõsystethe in those mēne which they call the warryours of the Porte. ...Of these, they wiche be called Spachi Oglani, are most worthily esteemed." Paulos Jouius, *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles*, trans. Peter Ashton (London: Edward Whitechurch, 1546). Fol. cxix. 'Spachi oglani' or 'spahis' refer to a troop that was one of the six cavalry units of the Porte. After introducing *sipâhîs*, Giovio gives information about janissaries and then other central cavalries.

² Antoine Geuffroy, *The Order of the Greate Turckes*, trans. Ricardus Graston (1524). p. viii. Johannes Leunclavius Nobilis, "Pandectes Historiae Turcicae, Liber Singularis, ad Illustrandos Annales," in *Annales Sultanorum Othmanidarum* (Francofurdi: 1588). p. 390. Lazaro Soranzo, *The Ottoman*, trans. Abraham Hartvvell (London: John Windet, 1603). p.10b. Michel Baudier, *The History of the Serrail, and of the Covrt of the Grand Seigneur, emperour of the Turkes*, trans. Edward Grimeston, *The History of the Imperial Estate of the Grand Seigneurs* (London: William Stansby, 1635). p. 169.

the others paid in cash (*ulûfe*).³ Now, the question to be discussed is whether the *timar* was a type of salary and if it was different from *ulûfe*.

II.1.1. Fiscal *Timar*

Today most historians particularly underline that a *timar* was a sort of revenue (or revenue source), therefore, it was more a value rather than a land unit,⁴ which is contrary to those who see the *timar* as a fief or land ownership.⁵ Halil İnalcık, for example insists that what the state bestowed on *timar* owners was not property of land (*dominium eminens*) but right to collect the revenue of land (*usus*).⁶ So most Ottomanists accept that *timar* was a sort of revenue appropriated from the lands, or other resources, allocated to certain people in return for certain duties and obligations.

Some cases show that in 1555 some *timar* holders received *timars* in cash from the provincial treasury of Egypt as a reward for fulfillments of duties on behalf of the Porte.⁷ One soldier who had received a cash *timar* from the treasury of Egypt was later granted a *timar* in Vidin.⁸ This example is important in the rethinking of both the limits of the *timar* system and the nature of *timar*. If *timar* could also be a cash emolument then the attributed character of exclusiveness of *ulûfe* and *timar* should be questioned. Yet it is necessary to answer the question of why some

³ Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Mitre, 1668). p. 172.

⁴ Barkan underlined that *timar* was a revenue. Barkan, "Timar." p. 805.

⁵ Jean Deny, "Timar," in *EI* (Leiden: Brill, 1936). p. 767.

⁶ Halil İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. İnalcık Halil and Donald Quataert, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). p. 106.

⁷ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 1 (1555), p. 290: 1640, 1641, 1642, 1643.

⁸ "Akray Begi iken vefat iden Hüsam beg oğlu Mahmud Mısır hazinesinden ber vech-i nakd 13,500 akçelik timar tasarruf idüb Rumilinde bedel-i timar emr olunub hükm-i hümayun irad itmegin virildi. Eşer. Fi 16 Zilkade 949." BOA-MAD.d 34 (1543), p. 244b.

revenues were called *ulûfe* and others, *timar*. More than the method of payment, the method of calculation makes *timar* different from *ulûfe*. The former was calculated on an annual basis whereas *the latter* was calculated on a daily basis. Though, *ulûfe* was a fixed per diem payment; it used to be paid every three months or four times a year.⁹ On the other hand, the *timar* of a person consisted of a group of fixed and non-fixed taxes calculated on fixed-rates of estimated yields per annum. Depending on the nature of the economic resource, the *timar* holder could receive this yield from one to many times in a year. For example, the people of the Balkans celebrated St. Elijah's Day, *Ilindan*, on the second of August. On that day people collected their honey and *timar* owners collected their shares. However, the tax called *Ispençe*¹⁰ was collected in March¹¹ and the tithe (*öşür*) after harvest.

Another difference is usually constructed by historians between *iltizam* (tax-farming) and the *timar*. However, it is possible to see that sometimes tax-farms (*iltizam*) were given to a person as *timars*¹² and some *timar* holders farmed out their *timars* to *mültezims* during long periods of war. What does this mean? Again, we should underline the method of calculation of revenue. Though *timar* was yearly revenue, *iltizam* was calculated on three-year term that we see in the documents with the formulation "*fî selase sinin*". To clarify this, here is an example of *iltizam* as *timars* were bestowed on two people. In the first case the value of *iltizam* was 78,054 *akçes*, and 26,018 *akçes* were bestowed as *timar*. In the second case the *iltizam* value of the revenue was 150,000 *akçes*. However, the value that bestowed as *timar* was

⁹ Each salary was known by the abbreviation of months forming each period of the salary. *Masar* (muharrem, safer, rebiülevvel), *recec* (rebiülahire, cemazilyelevvel, cemazziyelahire), *reşen* (receb, şaban, ramazan), *lezez* (şevval, zilkade, zilhicce).

¹⁰ A poll-tax collected from non-muslim population.

¹¹ "*Kanunname-i Livâ-i Vidin*", in TK.TD 57, pp. 1b-11.

¹² MAD 141, p, 7.

50,000 *akçes*. That is to say 1/3 of the *iltizam* was bestowed in each case, which is equal to the annual revenue.

The cash *timar* mentioned above was in fact what was called *salyane* which was another type of payment in cash calculated on an annual basis. The main difference between the two was though the *timar* was calculated based on estimation; the *salyane* was a fixed cash payment. But why then did Ottomans, in this example, call such a cash payment *timar* but not *salyane*? The reason behind that was, most probably, the difference in the contracts that define the responsibilities to the state of the person receiving the remuneration.

These points give some important clues about the nature of the Ottoman fiscal system in general and about that of the *timar* system in particular. First, it can be said that all systems of revenue redistribution in the Ottoman Empire were based on contracts and all those who enjoyed those revenues were bound by contracts unless they were violating the law.¹³ Secondly, as a way of punishment/promotion or as a result of a demand one contract could be replaced by another. That is to say a person's *timar* could be turned into *ulûfe* or vice versa; as it could be turned into *iltizam* or *salyane*. For, example some *timar* holders in Vidin were taking a part of their revenues as *ulûfe*.¹⁴ It is already known that many *ulûfe* owners later became *timar* holders. The problem is how they converted one type of revenue to another.

¹³ In the earliest known *Ruznamçe* records many *timars* was taken from their owner "without reason" (*bila sebeb*). For some cases see, BOA-MAD.D 17893, (1487-1489), pp. 4, 6, 10, 19, 20, 25. And also see, BOA-MAD.D .7, (1513-1515), dpp. 91, 95, 96, 97. Using this phrase does not actually mean that state would remove or give their *timar* to someone else without any reason. See, Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. p. 67. It happened due to rearrangement of *timars*. Those who lost their *timars* were given other *timars*. This was normal procedure during the distribution of *timars* to people after conducting a new land survey.

¹⁴ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O. 90 (1554-1555), pp. p. 57, 59, 64. BOA-MAD.D 18, p. 12b.

In *hijra* calendar a year is 354 days; however, sometimes the Ottomans accepted a 360 day year.¹⁵ Accordingly, a person who received a 10 *akçe ulûfe* means that s/he received 3,540 or 3,600 *akçe* a year. Therefore, a historian can say that this soldier received a *timar* worth 3,540 or 3,600 *akçes* in exchange for his *ulûfe*. However, the Ottomans used two different methods of conversion. The first method was based on fixed rates defined by laws.¹⁶ Janissaries received a *timar* according to these laws. For example, an infantry low-rank Janissary according to law would receive 5,000 *akçes*¹⁷ and a Sekban Janissary would receive 10,000 *akçes*¹⁸ *timar* in exchange for his *ulûfe*. Since there is not enough data about such cases it is not possible to comment on the logic behind this conversion method. Yet it was obvious that the amount of *timar* raised parallel to a person's status/rank and thus, his *ulûfe*.

However, it has been possible to decipher the logic behind the conversion of *ulûfes* of horsemen to *timar*. However, the calculation for the cavalry of the Porte (*altı bölük halkı* or *ebna-i sipâhîyan*) was not that complex. Their *ulûfe* would be multiplied by 1,000 in order to calculate its equivalence in *timar*.¹⁹ That is to say, one that had 10 *akçes ulûfe* (per diem) based on a formula (*ulufe* × 1,000) would receive 10,000 *akçes timar*. I will call this one-to-one calculation.²⁰ As exceptions, or

¹⁵ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O. 90 (1554-1555). In this *defter* a year was calculated as 360 days.

¹⁶ A law on such rates for Janissaries can be seen in, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988). p. 350.

¹⁷ A janissary from Cyprus who had a 4.5 *akçes ulûfe* received 5,000 *akçes*. BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 92, (26 zilakde 994), p. 561. In another case a janissary of the Porte again recieved the same amount but his *ulûfe* is not clear. BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 100, (24 Safer 998), p. 938.

¹⁸ BOA-MAD.D . 15428, (17 Zilhicce 991), p. 469.

¹⁹ According to Barkan this calculation used for the conversion of *ulûfes* of members of the elite army (*hassa ordusu*) of the sultan, such as *cebeci* (armorer), *topçu* (gunner), *saraç* (saddler) and *nalbant* (farrier). Barkan, "'Feodal" Düzen ve Osmanlı Timarı." p. 887.

²⁰ See, Appendix I. Douglas Howard called it *bedel*. Douglas A. Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 1987). p. 165. However *bedel* was used in the Ottoman records in its generic meaning that denotes

calculated in a different method, in two cases they received 20,000 *akçe timar* for their 12 *akçe ulûfes*.²¹ Most probably they received extra promotions or it should be concluded that their revenues were calculated based on a formula as $\frac{5}{3} \times ulufe \times 1,000$.

On the other hand, the calculation for the conversion of *ulûfes* of provincial cadres was different. Their *timars* were calculated based on what the Ottomans called *sülûsan hesabı* (the calculation of two-thirds).²² According to this calculation a soldier would receive two-thirds of 1,000 (= 666.6666667) per *akçe* of his *ulûfe* or 1,000 *akçes timar* per two-third of his *ulûfe*. So a person's salary of 10 *akçe ulûfe* (per diem) according to the formula $\left(\frac{2}{3} \times 1,000 \times ulufe\right)$ would be calculated as = 6,666.6666667 $\approx$ 6,666 *akçes timar*.²³ So it should not be surprising to see *timar* values in such fractions.

On the other hand, multiplying the value of *timar* by three would be enough to convert it into *iltizam*. For example, a *zi'amet* valued 46,650 *akçe* was put to *iltizam* as 139,950 *akçes*²⁴ or, as mentioned before, an *iltizam* of 78,054 *akçes* was put to *timar* as 26,018 *akçes*.

Lastly, it seems that *salyane* was fixed at 20 to 30 percent of the value of *timar*. According to a law issued in the reign of Mehmed II, viziers would enjoy 1,200,000 *akçes hass* or 240,000 - 350,000 *akçe salyane*. Governors (beglerbegi) and the chief treasurers (*defterdâr*) would receive from 600,000 *akçes* to 1,200,000 *akçes*

'equivalent' or 'compensation.' For example, a *timar* holder could get another *timar* in another province as *bedel* (compensation) for his *timar*.

²¹ They might be captains or they might receive that amount for their extra services. BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 5, (16 Safer 960), p. 779; BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 203, (12 Cemaziyelahir 1006), p. 395.

²² Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656." p. 165.

²³ See, Appendix II.

²⁴ MAD 654, p. 179. For the details of this *zi'amet* see BOA-TT.D 514, pp. 26-27.

hass or they would be given 150,000 *akçes* to 240,000 *akçes salyane*.²⁵ Since the articles are not so clear it is not possible to be sure but most probably the *salyane* was fixed to 20 percent of *timars*. Similarly the salaries of those who would be retired might also calculated by fixed rates.²⁶

II.1.1.1. The Core Value and Supplement

In the sixteenth century after the land surveys the state used to divide economic resources into several types of grants. One share was reserved for pious foundations (*vakıf*), one share for the state treasury (*hass-ı hümayun*), and one share for *timar* salaries. The reserved economic sources for salaries were divided into three types; *hass*, *zi'amet* and *timar*. Technically a *timar* in the sixteenth century meant a remuneration whose annual value was estimated up to 20,000 *akçes*. Beside this, the salary that valued from 20,000 to 99,999 *akçes* was called *zi'amet*. And lastly, any value above *zi'amet* was called *hass*.²⁷ The reason behind such a division is to assure revenues for three-partite pyramidal organization of state army and administration. Let us say that after survey there were some 1 million *akçes*, of which 700,000 *akçes* were reserved for provincial army. The *sancakbegi* was traditionally granted *hass* so he receives 200,000 *akçes*, and 3 lower rank officials and soldiers (*zâ'îms*) receive *zi'amets* of 100,000 *akçes*. Lastly, there are 100 other generic cavalries (*sipâhî*) who traditionally received *timars* so the remaining 400,000 *akçes* are divided between them. Thus, on the one hand it is necessary to keep hierarchically a certain number of

²⁵ Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 2 ed., vol. 1 (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2006). p. 329.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 329. Lütü Paşa, *Asafnâme*. p. 26.

²⁷ Ayn' Ali entered some salaries as *zi'amet* while they were higher than 100,000 *akçes*. These are exceptionally high so these might have been wrongly recorded . See, Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, vol. 9 (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1996). pp. 43-44.

personnel for each types of salary and on the other hand each has to be paid according to the type of the salary they received.

One of the problems concerning such division was about the fact that they were not bestowed equally on each person; one person might receive 3,000 *akçes* and another might receive 4,666 *akçes*. Moreover, if a *timar* was a fixed amount, there would not have been such a thing as promotion; or if each *timar* holder had been promoted only once, it would have been easy to divide financial resources among soldiers. However, in order to motivate soldiers and bureaucratic cadres during the frequently launched wars, the Ottoman government did not hesitate to frequently promote soldiers on any occasion. In order to remove such problems the Ottoman bureaucrats designated a core value (*kılıç*) for each *timar*.

A core value which was called *kılıç* (sword) or *icmallü* (synopsis) *timar* or *zi'amet*, the equivalent for *ulûfe* was called *gedük*²⁸, was the arranged base value of a specific tenure or post.²⁹ Generally, the core value was 3,000 or 6,000 *akçes* for *timar*; 20,000 *akçes* for *zi'amet*; and *hasses*' core values were varied depending on the status of a *sancak*. If 3,000 to 5,999 *akçes* were bestowed on a soldier then it means the core value for his *timar* was 3,000. If it was 6,000 to 19,000 *akçes* then the core value was 6,000. Therefore, for any *akçe* above the core value was accepted as supplement (*hisse*).

²⁸ Since those cadres charged for defending fortresses generally received *ulûfe*, when their *ulûfes* were converted to *timar* their *timar* were called *gedük timar*. It means that the salary was reserved for a position. The person appointed to that position would receive that salary.

²⁹ Mustafa Cezar uses *kılıç* instead of *timar* holders. For him each land holder had one *kılıç*. Mustafa Cezar, *Mufasssal Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2010). p. 370. This is not true since one *kılıç* could be possessed by more than one person.

There were several important functions of that division. Firstly, the state forbade a person from having more than one *kılıç timar*.³⁰ But a *timar* could have more than one possessor if it were owned jointly (*müşterek*). That means the state assured a minimum number of soldiers for a specific unit of economic revenue. Secondly, the state forbade the division of the core value of a *timar* if it was not necessary. There are some cases where the state allowed temporary divisions in core value. In such cases the scribe would write the core value with a note beside it: “*icmallü/kılıç timar/zi’amet bozulmamak üzere ... akçeliğine mutasarrıf ola. – [he] shall be beneficiary of ... akçes without vitiating kılıç/icmallü timar/zi’amet.*”³¹ By doing this the state was able to synchronize the economic units and personnel who benefitted from them. Thirdly, as Barkan stated when a *timar* holder died, not all his *timar* but only the core value passed to his children. Thus, *timar* was prevented to be a means of making a fortune.³² Finally, such a conceptualization facilitated the state to control and track the economic resources over time. Figure 2 shows the changes in core value and supplement when *timars* changed hands over time.

³⁰ It was very rare to find a person who had been bestowed more than one core *timar*. There was only one such an example found in this research; a certain Laçın was allowed to have two *kılıç timar*. BOA-DFE.RZ.D.203, (7 Cemaziyelevvel 1006), p. 406.

³¹ For example a certain Hasan was bestowed with 3,000 akçes of a *timar* calculated as 7,000 akçes. A further 3,000 akçes were given to Mehmed under the condition that the core value should not be divided or destroyed. BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 411, (22/24 Rebiülevvel 1031), p. 477. As it can be seen that the core value of this *timar* was 6,000 akçes with 1,000 akçes accounted for as a supplement.

³² Barkan, "Osmanlı Devrinin "Eşkinçülü Mülkler"i ve "Mülk Timarlar"ı Hakkında Notlar." p. 898.

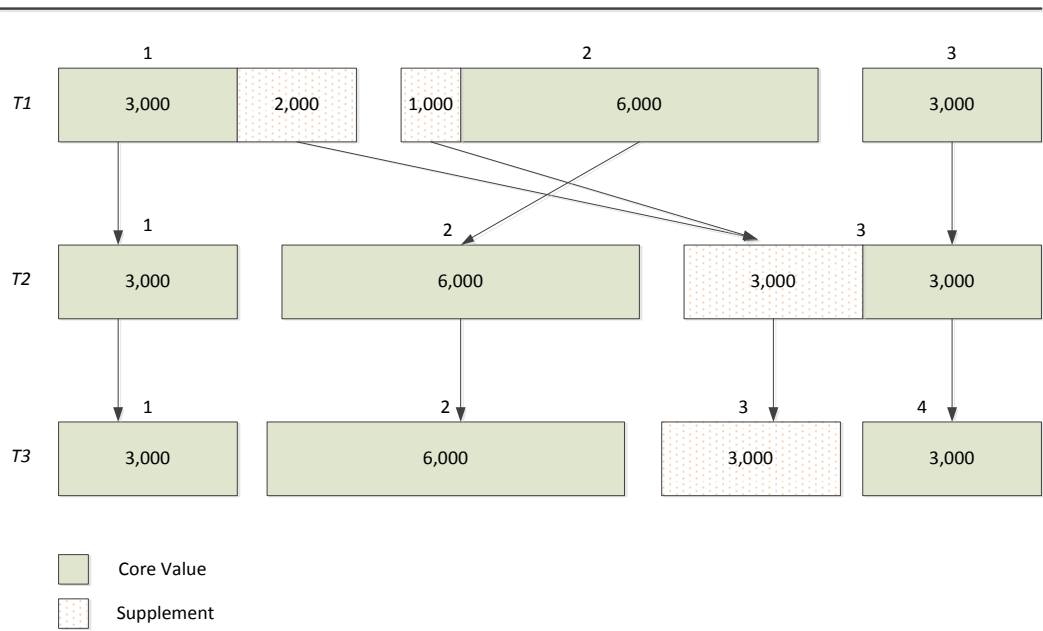


Figure 2: *Timar* Allocation and Promotion over Time

The state used two methods for promotion. Firstly, a *timar* holder could receive a higher valued *timar*. In particular, the locations of higher ranking administrators were often changed as a method of promotion.³³ For example, in 1560 the governor of Seksar was appointed to Sirem, the governor of Sirem was appointed to Vidin, the governor of Vidin was appointed to Lipova and the governor of Lipova was appointed to Seksar.³⁴ Instead of adding extra revenues to their salaries the state preferred to appoint them higher valued revenues after dispossessing them of their previous revenue sources. Such rotational exchange methods were widely used in the second half of the fifteenth century.³⁵ It can be seen in the *timar* records that low-

³³ For a detailed look see, I. Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). pp. 16-17.

³⁴ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 4, p. 170: 1759, 1760, 1761, 1762. In this example the governors of Lipova and Seksar seems to have a lower salary, but in the logic of promotion, it can be deduced that they had not received the whole of the former revenue. That is to say the governor of Lipova had received 300,000 or less of the 400,000 akces.

³⁵ There are many cases in BOA-MAD.D 17893. Also see, Feridun M. Emecen and İlhan Şahin, "Osmanlı Taşra Teşkilâtının Kaynaklarından 957-958 (1550-1551) Tarihli *Sancak Tevcîh Defteri*," *Belgeler* XIX, no. 23 (1998).

ranking soldiers were often resigned (*feragat*) their *timars* in order to be given a more valuable one.

Secondly, *timar* holders were given as promotion (*terakki*) extra revenues in addition to their existing *timars*. In the early sixteenth century the amount of promotion was fixed at 20 percent in the Ottoman bureaucracy this was known as *binde ikiyüz terakki* (200 *akçes* promotion per 1,000). For example, if one had 3,000 *akçes* salary, he would receive 600 ($= \frac{3,000}{1,000} \times 200$) *akçes*. Thus, his salary would be 3,600 *akçes* after the promotion. According to this calculation after the second time promotion the salary would be 4,320 *akçes* and after the third time it would be 5,184 *akçes* and so on.³⁶ To some contemporary intellectuals the amount of promotion was 10 percent (100 *akçes* per 1,000) of the *timar*.³⁷ However, in 1514 successful soldiers were awarded with 50 *akçes* per 1,000 *akçe* of their *timars*.³⁸ Likewise, what the Ottomans called *cûlus terakkisi*³⁹, a gift by new sultan for accession to the throne, was calculated with a similar method. When a new sultan came to the throne, it was tradition to renew *timar* contracts. However, unusually,⁴⁰ Murad III (r. 1574-1595)

³⁶ There are many examples about such promotions in (MAD 7, (1513-1515), p. 91-93. [The page numbers given here are the numbers of the images of the digital copy because original pages are not visible in the digital copy.]

³⁷ 1589, p. 963 (1 Zilkade 998); p. 939 (25 Safer 998). This point was emphasized by Koçi Bey saying that promotion was “one *akçe* per ten *akçes*” during the healthy years of the *timar* system. Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risaleleri*, ed. Seda Çakmakcioğlu (İstanbul: Kabalcı, 2007). p. 33. And Hezarfen Hüseyin states that a *sancakbegi* received 10 percent of their *hass*. Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Telhîsü'l-beyân fî Kavânîn-i Âl-i Osmân*, ed. Sevim İlgürel (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1998).

³⁸ Celâl-zâde Mustafa, *Selim-Nâme*, ed. Ahmet Uğur and Mustafa Çuhadar (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1990). p. 368.

³⁹ According to Emine Erdoğan there were special record books called *cûlus terakki defteri* reserved for recording such promotions. Emine Erdoğan Özünlü, "Osmanlı Ordusunda Bir Motivasyon ve Terfi Kaynağı: “Terakki” Tevcihi,” *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 3, no. 11 (2010). p. 240.

⁴⁰ It is also possible to have been a tradition up to Murad III. Unfortunately, there is no documentary evidence to determine whether previous sultans made such bestowals. Emine Erdoğan mentions that in an order issued by Murad III dated 1575 it is said that “it is law to bestow promotions” for *cûlus*. Ibid. pp. 240-1.

distributed promotions equal to 20 percent (200 *akçes* per 1,000)⁴¹ of *timars*. In the following period such calculations are not seen; instead, amounts for promotions fixed. Those who received less than 20,000 *akçes* were mostly given 1,000 or 1,500 or 2,000 *akçes* for promotion. For those who had more than 19,999 *akçes* the amount for promotion was usually 5,000, 6,000 or 10,000 *akçes*.

Here, the role of the supplement becomes important. If the Ottoman expansion had been steady, and if the number of salaried people had risen slower in proportion than the economic resources, it would then have been easier to find extra revenue for the promotions. The Ottoman bureaucrats were quite aware of that fact so by designating the *timar* as the core value and supplement, the system would be resistant to stagnation in terms of finding new economic resources. Thus, it also became possible to ensure that there were a certain number of soldiers even in times of economic stagnation and inflation. Nevertheless, probably due to inflation and abolition of *timars* over time, the method of promotion was changed from a percentage to fixed amount as described above. In the calculation of percentage only if a person had 10,000 *akçes* it would be possible to bestow 2,000 *akçes* as promotion. However, in the later period anyone, regardless of the value of their *timars*, could easily receive 2,000 *akçes* as promotion.

II.1.1.2. Scarcity of Supplements and Promised *Timar*

After a person was found to be useful (*yarar ve yoldaş*) in battles or in other affairs he would receive a license (*berat*) for a starting or base salary called *ibtida timar*. Generally, the base salary was equal to the core value of a *timar*. Thus when a

⁴¹ 1589, p. 941 (5 Rebiülahire 998)

person was dismissed or somehow a *timar* was available for a new appointment it became easier to transfer its core value as the base salary for someone else. During long battles many soldiers were promoted or had new *timars* bestowed upon them; however, there was a problem in that an excessive demand could not easily be satisfied even there was a certain amount of economic resources reserved as a supplement.

Sometimes soldiers would receive a *timar* long after they were issued a letter of permission for the *timar* (*emr*) furthermore sometimes they received only a small amount of their promised *timars*. In the *timar* record books most of time beside his actual salary can be seen the *sipâhî*'s promised salary which was stated in different phrases "*ba emr*", "*ber vech-i emr/iltizam/terakki/tekmil*" means "as ordered", "as promotion" or "to be fulfilled". For example, a scribe received 25,000 *akçes* in the year 1600, however, he had been promised 138,340 *akçes*.⁴² After several months he received other promotions and his promised *timar* reached 171,340 *akçes* while his salary actually had not changed.⁴³ Five years later his *timar* had already been bestowed on someone else⁴⁴ and there is no longer any trace of him in the sources. So it appears that he never received the promised additional amounts.

The type of grant (*timar*, *zi'amet*, *hass*) depended on the promised value rather than the actual value a person held. For example, if a soldier had a grant of 17,000 *akçes* but his promised value was 20,000 *akçes* the grant would be recorded as *zi'amet* but not *timar*. That is to say, the *timar* was not only an actual salary regardless of whether it had been correctly estimated or calculated but it was also a

⁴² BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 121, (17 Ramazan 1008), p. 162.

⁴³ BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 236, (17 Cemaziyyelahire 1009) p. 620.

⁴⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 286, (28 Muharrem 1014), p. 367.

virtual value that in a way can be seen as the state's indebtedness for various services.

II.1.2. Physical *Timar*

Some historians tend to identify *timar* with economic resources, more precisely with land. One of the earliest historians Cuspiniano claims that *timar* for the Turks means land.⁴⁵ Likewise, Giovio repeats the same idea: “*Timar* in their [Turkish] speech signified a field cusp.”⁴⁶ Again, Montalbanus was another historian who used the word *timar* as referring to lands and villages.⁴⁷ Moreover, Fleischer defines it as “a revenue producing land-unit, the tax income from which, but not its ownership, was granted by the government to a *sipâhî*.”⁴⁸ Parallel to such a definition, according to some Ottoman law books *timar* was one of the 22 types of lands and/or mode of land possession.⁴⁹ Lastly, as will be seen in Chapter III many historians tend to see *timar* as the equivalent of the western fief.

As noted above *timar* was a type of salary and there should be a process through which that value was created. The Ottoman revenue sources can be treated under four main categories:

⁴⁵ Ioanne Cuspiniano, *De Turcarum Origine, Religione ac Immanissima Eorum in Christianos Tyrannide* (Burgundiae: Ioan Steelsium, 1541). p. 60b.

⁴⁶ Jouius, *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles*. Fol. cxxvii/b. It is interesting to define *timar* in this way. It seems that by *timar* he refers to what the Ottomans called the uç.

⁴⁷ Johanne Baptista Montalbano, *De Turcarum Moribus Commentarius* (Lugduni Batavorum: Joannis Maire, 1654). p. 22.

⁴⁸ Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)*, Princeton Studies on the Near East (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986).p. 59.

⁴⁹ Midhat Sertoğlu, *Sofyalı Ali Çavuş Kanunnâmesi: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Toprak Tasarruf Sistemi'nin Hukukî ve Mâlî Müeyyide ve Mükellefiyetleri* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1992). pp. 44-45. Also see, Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, vol. 4 (İstanbul: Fey Vakfı, 1992). p. 474.

Rural Economy	Trade & Crafting	Special Production	Conditional-Taxes
agriculture	custom duties	mining	poll tax (<i>cizye/haraç</i>)
labor-taxes	tariffs	minting	<i>avarız</i>
animal husbandry	market taxes	salt production	<i>nüzul</i>
fees, etc.	fines, etc.	rice cultivation, etc.	<i>hazariyye</i> , etc.

Table 1: Basic Revenue Resources in the Ottoman Empire

The source categories given in the rightmost three columns were to a great extent under direct supervision of state treasure (*hazine-i amire*). Again, a fair amount of the rural economy was also directly controlled by the state treasury. Though it is possible to see other revenues distributed as *timars*, the main realm of *timars* was the rural economy. The use of ‘rural’ here may lead to misunderstanding therefore, it is necessary to clarify the word.⁵⁰ There were five units in which rural production was undertaken: town or city (*nefs*),⁵¹ village (*karye*, *köy*, *kasaba*),⁵² “periodic settlements or a deserted village and its fields” (*mezraa*),⁵³ monasteries

⁵⁰ As Selim Temo points out that in a sense all but Istanbul was rural in common perception in the Ottoman Empire. Selim Temo, *Türk Şiirinde Taşra* (İstanbul: Agora Kitaplığı, 2010).

⁵¹ Ottomans describe the city as the settlement where there was a market and a mosque for Friday prayers – “*bazar durur, cuma kılınur*”. Özer Ergenç, “Osmanlı Şehirlerindeki Yönetim Kurumlarının Niteliği Üzerinde Bazı Düşünceler,” in *8. Türk Tarih Kurumu Konferansı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1981). p. 1265; Özer Ergenç, “Osmanlılarda Esnaf ve Devlet İlişkileri,” in *Tarihte Türk Devletleri* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1987). p. 627. In Vidin there were six towns or cities; Vidin, Filordin, Feth-i İslam, Belgardçık, Bane and İsfirli. First, in Vidin the market and the size of the population cannot be criteria that distinguish the city from other settlements. There were several characteristics of the city in Vidin region. All these settlements had citadel or fortress (*kale*). The core of the city was a space surrounded by city walls which separated the outer-city that was called *taşra* or *varoş*. For a brief note on Varoş see, Layos Fekete, “Türk Vergi Tahrirleri,” *Belleten* 11, no. 42 (1947). p. 310. Due to the availability of fortresses a military-administrative bureaucracy became the main distinctive characteristic of these cities. As it will be seen in the following pages *imam* (prayer leaders of Islamic communities) were among the cadres of the guards of the fortresses. Over time in parallel with the increase of Islam as the state ideology cities became highly differentiated in terms of culture from the non-Muslim dominated villages and varoşes. Some cities were also judicial centers and İsfirli, Bane and Vidin had a judicial bureaucracy. That is, cities were focal points through which the Ottoman state assured its presence in a specific territory.

⁵² To see various dimensions of the Ottoman village see Chapter 2 in Oktay Özel, “XV-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Anadolu’da Kırsal (Ziraî) Organizasyon: Köylüler ve Köyler” (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, 1986).

⁵³ Halil İnalçık, “Mazra'a,” in *EF*² (1991).

(*manastır*)⁵⁴ and tribes (*aşiret, cemaat, oymak etc.*).⁵⁵ All kind of economic production and the human labor⁵⁶ in these units could be taxed. Besides the relatively limited economic activities in the settlements⁵⁷ the majority of production was carried out on the fields around them. These fields were; orchards (*bahçe*),⁵⁸ vineyards (*bağ*),⁵⁹ private farms (*çiftlik*),⁶⁰ peasant farms (*çiftlik* or *baştina*),⁶¹ and grasslands and meadows (*çayırılık*).⁶² The production in these spaces was the chief

⁵⁴ There were two types of monasteries. The first group was founded in or near settlements and usually there were small churches. Their taxes were calculated under the nerby village. The other group was relatively far from settlements and they were recorded as individual units.

⁵⁵ In Vidin there was no tribe recorded in the survey books. One fragment of a book contains a law code for gypsies and mentions two groups (*cemaat*) of people that worked in the fortress of Vidin. A.DFE.d 6, pp. 7-8. Most probably they were two small groups of gypsies. The Law codes of the Gypsies show such groups were taxed.

⁵⁶ With human labor I do not necessarily mean the active producers. In Vidin, of those eligible to taxation (not from military class, handicapped, special tax exempts) any mature male Christian peasant had to pay 25 akçe *ispençe* and widows paid 6 akçes. On the other hand, a Muslim married man had to pay 22 akçes and a single man had to pay 8 akçes called *resm-i çift*. For a detailed discussion on these taxes see Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlılar'da Raiyyet Rüsümü," in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Toplum ve Ekonomi* (İstanbul: Eren, 1996).

⁵⁷ One of such economic activities was milling. Some of grain mills were located in villages and some of them were in suitable places near streams. Millers had to pay a certain tax per mill (*resm-i asiya*). Taxes collected under names of *makiyan ve nan* and *bidat-ı henâzır* were related to poultry raising and pig raising. Also apiculture can be added to these activities since beekeepers paid a tax called *resm-i güvare*. Not only economic activites but aslo some cultural and traditional activates were also taxed such as the tax for Ilindan (*resm-i bojik*), and wedding tax (*resm-i arus*).

⁵⁸ They were private properties of peasants so they did not need a legal land title (*tapu*) that was issued by *timar* holders for possession. However, being private did not exempt them from taxation. In Vidin *öşr-i meyve* and *öşr-i besatin* are two types of taxes appropriated from these lands. For a detailed discussion their status see, Colin Imber, "The Status of Orchards and Fruit Trees in Ottoman Law," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 12 (1982).

⁵⁹ In Vidin, *avneg-i angur*, *resm-i şıra* and *dönüm-i bağat* were the taxes supplied from vineyards.

⁶⁰ A private *çiftlik* is considered to be a *mezraa* in terms of taxation. *Çiftlik* owners had to pay a tithe (*öşür*) of the crops they harvested. For a discussion on various *çiftlik*s see, Barkan, "Çiftlik."

⁶¹ Peasant farms were arable lands on which grain production took place. These lands were legally possessed by the state and the peasants had land titles that were issued by *timar* owners. For detail see, Halil İnalçık, "Köy, Köylü ve İmparatorluk," in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Toplum ve ekonomi Üzerinde Arşiv Çalışmaları, İncelemeler* (İstanbul: Eren, 1996); Halil İnalçık, "Çift-Hane Sistemi ve Köylünün Vergilendirilmesi," in *Doğu Batı Makaleler II* (Ankara: Doğubatu, 2009). On the other hand *Başitnas* were family farms founded in pre-Ottoman periods in Balkans. There were two types of *başitnas*: one was a military *baştina* that was the equivalent of private farm and the other was peasant *baştina* that was equivalent of peasant farm. İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*. p. XXX. The majority of grain that was taxed under the name of tithe (*öşür*) was produced on such land. In Vidin, wheat (*buğday*), barley (*arpa*) and rye (*çavdar*) constituted the majority of grain of which the *timar* holder took a share.

⁶² In Vidin grass cultivation was another economic activity. *Öşr-i çayır* was one of the taxes levied on grass owners. Furthermore, the tax of grass and woods (*gıyah ve hime*) and the taxes related to animal

economic revenue of a *timar*. The rural area reserved for *timars* was divided into units, physical *timars*, each consisting of a certain number of the population and the various economic activities that they performed. Thus, the economic production occurred in each unit was possessed by *timar* holders as salary or fiscal *timar*. In another word the physical *timar* was the embodiment of fiscal *timar* in production and relations of production. Table 2 shows a typical *timar* record.

<i>Timar</i> Owner: Mahmud bin Abdullah						
Revenue Unit	Unit Type	District	Household	Single	Widow	Yield
<i>Kiseleva</i>	village	<i>Polomiye</i>	57	23	5	5,000
<i>Gorni Kalenik</i>	village	<i>Vidin</i>	5	11		999
Total			62	34	5	5,999

Table 2: A *Timar* Record from Vidin in 1583⁶³

In this record it can be seen that the salary of Mahmud worth 5,999 *akçes* was produced by a certain number of people (62 families and 39 unmarried males and widows) who lived in a specific territory, in a defined address, which made it easier for the Ottoman officials to track the *timar* in the long term. Each *timar* was recorded under a specific district even though a *timar* might consist of many villages from various regions. In the example above, one village was located in Polomiye and the other was in Vidin, and this *timar* was recorded under the District of Polomiye. The first village that was called *baş karye* or *baş köy*⁶⁴ defined the address of the *timar* in a record book. On the border of some of such villages there were private farms

husbandry like sheep and sheep pen taxes (*resm-i ganem*, *resm-i ağıl*) are related to the economic activities undertaken in these areas.

⁶³ TKA- TD. 219. p. 20b.

⁶⁴ This term was not widely used I saw it only in two records. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 47, r. 469; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 49, r. 957. It might be related to villages that were possessed as *mülk* that became a part of a *timar* in time.

(*hassa çiftlik*) reserved for *timar* owners.⁶⁵ Also it was expected that the *timar* holder resided in that village.

Over time the value of *timar* could be divided or promotion added however, these villages were not allowed to be separated. Let us say, if the government wanted to give 5,000 *akçes* of this *timar* to one person and the remaining 999 *akçes* to another after the death of Mahmud, the son of Abdullah; it does not mean that the former possessed the first village and the latter possessed the second. In each case this unit was recorded as the same as it was recorded in the survey book and the value of fiscal *timar* was updated as shares (*hisse*). That is to say not only the core value of the fiscal *timar* but also the physical *timar* as a land unit could not be split or that the state did not want the address of the *timar* to be changed which would complicate the record keeping.

A *timar* was a closed unit in the sense that the registered population in it was not allowed to leave that unit without the permission of *timar* holder and if they did leave without permission the *timar* holder had the right to bring them back to the *timar*. However, a *timar* holder had no right to expel a member of the population in the unit, or, in another words, the inhabitants had the right to object to any attempt of displacement without their consent. Thus, the state tried to ensure the continuity of production in a particular geographical location. Moreover, by recognizing the rights of both of taxpayers and of *timar* holders the state tried to maintain production at a reasonable level and obviate the problem of overexploitation.

⁶⁵ Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. p. 49.

II.1.3. *Timar Contract*

It could be alleged that the real difference was not between the types of revenues but between those who received them. There is a tendency among historians to identify *timars* with *spahis* and *ulûfe* with central cadres. This is why, the provincial *spahis* and *zâ'îms*, not janissaries or central cavalries, were misleadingly termed timariots. It is true that most of the provincial *spahis* had *timars* rather than any other types of salary; however, *timars* were usually bestowed on central cadres as well. Especially in the sixteenth century many such soldiers were either received *iltizams* or *timars*. The question is whether their military titles change when their types of salaries were changed. In other words, when, for example, a janissary took a *timar* would he be a *spahi* or a janissary? In the *timar* registers it can be seen that they kept their titles; however, when they received *timars* they were also obliged to undertake what the *sipahis* had to fulfill in return for their revenue.⁶⁶ Such people are recorded nominally as “janissary” however in practice they were *sipâhîs*.⁶⁷ Moreover, their children also enjoyed the benefits that the sons of *sipâhîs* legally had.⁶⁸

What actually differed was that each type of salary was determined by a different type of contract between the state and the salary owner. These contracts were semi-formal contracts some being directly written on the licenses of the *timar* holders; others were informal rules that protected *timar* owners from the arbitrariness of the state or from the state agents occupying higher ranks.

⁶⁶ For example, a certain Mustafa, a janissary, had to bring three men with amour (*cebelü*) and one tent to the battle fields, which was not the obligation of the *ulûfe* receiving janissaries. BOA-MAD.D . 70, p. 33. For other examples see, pp. 40 and 51.

⁶⁷ However, some Janissary groups who performed their duties in fortresses might still continue to be Janissaries even if they had been granted *timars*.

⁶⁸ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, 1. p. 353.

The issue of the contract was closely related to the *timar* licenses (*berat*). A *berat* could be issued for a full *timar* as well as for one share of a *timar* (*hisse*). In each case each *timar* holder was bound with special contracts. However, sometimes a full *timar* could be bestowed jointly (*ber vech-i iştirak*) on more than one person so one *berat* could be issued for more than one person. In such a case the *timar* holders were bound by a common contract. In another word, what a person should do in return for a certain *timar* was exactly the same with what more than a person should do in return for the same *timar*. Thus, a *berat* was an embodiment of these contracts.

II.1.3.1. Generic *Timars* (*Timar-i Eşküncüyan*)

The word *eşküncü* seems to derive from the Turkish *eşkin* means cantering or ambling.⁶⁹ Eventually the verb “(*sefere*) *eşmek*” was derived that used to mean to amble (to a battle). That is, the first obligation of an *eşküncü timar* holder was to join the battle whenever he was called. Sometimes it is written in their *timar* licenses “*sefere eşmek şartı ile verildi/verile.*”⁷⁰ – “(the *timar*) be/has been given on condition of going to war;” furthermore, in some *timar* record books such *timars* were signified with the word “*eşer*” – “goes to war.”⁷¹ The obligation of joining the army was designated for one person per *timar* no matter how many holders there were for a *timar*⁷² thus, holders of joint *timars* would joined battle forces in rotation (*ba nevbet*).

⁶⁹ James W. Redhouse, “*eşkin*,” in *A Turkish and English Lexicon* (Beirut: A. H. Boyajian, 1890). p. 123.

⁷⁰ For an example, in one license it was written; “*sancağı züemasıyla bayrağı altında eşmek şartıyla tevcih idesin.*” BOA-DFE.RZ.d 255, (6 *Cemaziyelahir* 1011), p . 228.

⁷¹ BOA-MAD.D . 7 (1513-1515); BOA-MAD.D . 34 (1540-1542)

⁷² Of course there were some exceptions; during the reign of Mehmed II some owners of joint *timars* had to join the army together. They were recorded as “*ikisi bile eşerler*” – both of them to join the army. VD 110-10, pp. 6b, 9b.

A *timar* owner was legally expected to join the army with a specified number of armed men and a certain type of tent parallel to the value of his *timar*. As mentioned above, *timar* salaries were hierarchically grouped into three types; *hass*, *zi'amet* and *timar*, which refer to three different types of contract between the state and the *timar* holder. For example, *timar* owner had to bring one armed retainer called *cebelü* for each 3,000 *akçes* of his *timar*, and a *zâ'im* (*zi'amet* owner) one *cebelü* for each 4,000 *akçes* and a *hass* owner one *cebelü* for each 5,000 *akçes*.⁷³

Usually, in the early *timar* books the obligations of each *timar* holder was written in detail. A law code issued during the reign of Mehmed II,⁷⁴ which later repeated in many law books, defines these obligations for each range of *timar* values. In Vidin *timar* holders having *timars* below 700 *akçes* were obliged to only join the battle (*kendü eše*) however, this is not mentioned in the law books and it may signify auxiliary troops. Though the law books repeated the same obligations they changed over time and also they might change from one region to another (See Appendix III).

Nonetheless, in practice it was much complicated. As Mustafa Nuri Paşa stated, in order to be praised by the state as perfectly organized (*kapısı mükemmel*), *hass* owners brought more *cebelüs* than they were obliged to.⁷⁵ However, the reason for bringing more soldiers was not only to please the state but also as a demonstration of the power a person wielded. Especially, this display would be important for viziers and provincial governors who were in, sometimes cruel, competition with each other and had to stay strong against the state and any other power holder. More precisely, if a governor failed to secure the state authority in his

⁷³ See. Appendix III.

⁷⁴ Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. p. 85.

⁷⁵ Mustafa Nuri Paşa, *Netâyicü'l-Vukû'ât: Kurumlarıyla Osmanlı Tarihi I-IV*, trans. Yılmaz Kurt (Ankara: Birleşik, 2008). p. 147.

province he would have possibly been punished or dismissed. In this sense, it is obvious that supplying more soldiers was not disadvantageous.

The picture was different among the lower rank officials and soldiers. The state was forcing those who did not bring enough *cebelüs* to fulfill their obligations. Those who had less *cebelüs* than expected; one *cebelü* for each 3,000 *akçes*, were considered meager (*eksik*).⁷⁶ Nevertheless, since generally *timar* holders brought more than the expected number of men this compensated for the missing *cebelüs*. Of course, it will be wrong to think that every person the *timar* holders brought to wars were real soldiers. For example, several *çavuşes* receiving between 10,000 and 17,000 *akçes timars* brought seven men each and scribes (*kâtib*) receiving between 10,000 and 18,000 *akçes* brought six men each.⁷⁷ These men were registered as *cebelü*, but in reality they were *merdüm* or *adem* (man, servant). It seems that those who were not in the traditional hierarchy of provincial military organization had assistants who might not be generic *cebelü* soldiers. Similarly those soldiers who, at the same time occupying some administrative duties, brought more than expected. For example, a certain military officer (*serasker*) had eight *cebelüs* for his 17,222 *akçes* and a chief manager of state *hasses* (*voyvoda*) had seven *cebelüs* for his 12,893 *akçe timar*. Certainly, at least some of them were servants, not soldiers.

Under some circumstances *timar* holders could be exempted from this military obligation, for example, civil officials who were the recipients of *timars* did not have to go to war. During the reign of Mehmed II, judges (*kadı*) were also obliged to join the war as *bürüme*.⁷⁸ However, during the reign of Selim I they were not

⁷⁶ See, Appendix IV.

⁷⁷ TSA-D. 2204-1. pp. 119-119b.

⁷⁸ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O. 90, pp. 93, 116, 163. In another *defter* from the same period *kadis* were expected to send some soldiers (*cebelü*) to war. But it does not mention whether *kadı* himself would

expected to engage in battles and this is why such obligations were not noted.⁷⁹ Inspectors of vacant *timars* (*mefkufat emini*) were another group exempted from such obligations. Or if the owner of the *timar* was a young child possessing his father's *timar*, he should dispatch an armed man (*cebelü* or *eşkün*) in his place.⁸⁰ Although rare but if the *timar* holder was a woman she was not be expected to go to war.⁸¹ Likewise retired soldiers (*müteakaid*) were bestowed small stipends without any obligations. Moreover, sometimes some *timar* holders who were required to join the army were for some reason permitted to stay in their provinces however according to a regulation their names had be noted in the *ekâbir defteri*; a special record book of permittees. Sometimes a certain number of *timar* holders called *niyâbetgân* (regents or substitutes) were retained in their regions in turn. Lastly, some of the *timar* holders could be employed in ships under the commandership of a captain (*kapudan*).⁸² As long as they worked in ships they were free from military service. Otherwise staying out of battles without permission might result in them losing their *timars*. So it was important to be present during roll-calls before battles and for their names to appear in the roll-call books.

join the army. Melek Delilbaşı and Muzaffer Arıkan, *Hicri 859 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Tırhala*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001).

⁷⁹ BOA-MAD.d . 70, pp. 20b, 64b.

⁸⁰ The note written for two brothers says: “*Müşterek tasarruf edüp kendüler eşküncü yarayınca neybetçe ademileri eşer deyü emr olunmuşdur beratlarında.*” – “They possess together. It has been written in their license that “until they become *eşküncü* (grow enough) their men go to war in turn.” IBBAK-MC.YZ.O. 90, p. 7. In the first half of the sixteenth century legally a male child above ten years old age was expected to perform military duty. In the later periods the minimum age was sixteen for military service. See, Iréne Beldiceanu-Steinherr, “Loi Sur La Transmission du *Timar* (1536),” *Turcica* XI(1979). pp. 91-2.

⁸¹ For example, there are two female *timar* holders in the earliest *timar* registers. İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Arvanid*. pp. 63, 90. In another case a woman, daughter of İsfendiyar, possessed a *zi’amet*. Emine Erdoğan, “Ankara’nın Bütüncül Tarihi Çerçevesinde Ankara Tahrir Defterleri’nin Analizi” (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Gazi Üniversitesi, 2004). p. 257.

⁸² One was charged with the protection of the River Danube. He was also receiving a *zi’amet*. In 1587 for example, this was Mehmed, the son of Bali *beg* from Malkoç *beg* family the chief captain on the River Danube, who received a *zi’amet* worth 36,855 akçes. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92, p. 576.

II.1.3.2. Guards' Timars (*Timar-i Mustahfizan*)

Mustahfiz or *merd-i kala* was a soldier who was stationed in a fortress to secure a city or a town center and/or to control a wide hinterland or a strategic place. The *mustahfiz* was not in the warrior or combatant class (*eşküncü*) but in class of servants (*hizmetli*). That is to say a *mustahfiz* under the normal circumstances did not join battles but could chase bandit gangs and take part in local skirmishes (*çete muharebesi*). In case of a possible serious attack the warriors of the region, and if needed from other regions as well, together with janissary corps could be stationed in fortresses with the guards.

The term *mustahfiz* actually referred to several military classes. In its very classical sense, a fortress was governed by a warden (*dizdar*), under commandership of whom there was a certain number of guards (*merdan-i kala*). However, some footmen and horsemen groups as *farisan*, *beşlüyan*, *martolosan* and *azeban* were also among the guards as were soldiers as *tüfenkçıyan* and *topçıyan* who used fire arms. In some fortresses, janissaries also served as guards. Not only soldiers, but civilians such carpenters (*neccar*), mason (*taşçı*) and religious men (*imam*, *fakih*), who were living within the walls of a fortress, were also counted among the guards.⁸³

These groups would either receive *ulûfe* or *timar*, or both, and sometimes communal revenue (*ocaklık*) was bestowed on them.⁸⁴ Compared to *eşküncülü timars* of guards were lower in value. Generally, guards possess *timar* shares valued between 1,400 and 1,500 *akçes* and they did not need to feed or equip a *cebelü* or

⁸³ A note under the *timar* of an imam says that: “*mezkur hem ‘âlim ve hem hisar bekler*”– “the mentioned [İmam Hacı Fakih] is both a [religious] scholar and [he] guards the fortress”. İBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 82.

⁸⁴ The state could reserve some revenue sources only for guards of a certain fortress. The revenues were usually collected with tax farming and distributed among them according to the values of their salaries. To give an example from 1552 the *avarız* taxes of İsfilig district of Vidin was bestowed on the military personnel of the Egri Castle as *ocaklık*. For a further example see, BOA-MAD.d 3844, p. 27; BOA-MAD.d 3847, p. 42.

gulam. Lastly, though everyone who was seen as useful (*yarar ve yoldaş*) could be rewarded with a generic *timar*. In order to receive a guards' *timar* a person should be eligible, i.e. trusted and able to perform the job [*elinden* or *uhdesinden gelür*], for a position (*gedük*) reserved for guards to receive a salary. In another words a soldier could receive/promised a *timar* even if there was not a suitable *timar* available, but a guard could only receive a *timar* after finding a vacant *one*. This is why these *timars* were sometimes called positional (*gedük*) *timars*. Lastly, different from those bestowed on warriors the guards' *timars* had no core value or supplement. Nor there was such a thing as an initial (*ibtida*) *timar* and their *timars* had fixed values. So when they were given promotions they were either bestowed a higher valued *timar* or gave up their positions and become warriors.

II.1.3.3. Falconers' *Timars* (*Timar-i Bazdaran*)

Hunting parties were among the most important imperial leisure activities in the Ottoman Empire and hunting with birds of prey was particularly popular. For that purpose, in different regions, some people were appointed to catch and feed birds such as falcons and hawks (*şahin, doğan, atmaca, çakır, balaban*) and these people were called *şahinciyan, doğancıyan, çakırcıyan* or *bazdaran*.⁸⁵ These hunters were usually enjoyed special *timars* in certain *sancaks* reserved for them. Under normal conditions they were not expected to join the military. They only hunted and bred birds of prey, and sent them to the Porte when required and when called they would join the Sultan's hunting parties.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ For a detailed look to falconers in Vidin see, Bistra Cvetkova, "La Fauconnerie dans les *sancaks* de Nikopol et de Vidin aux XVe et XVI Siècles," *Istanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, no. 32 (1979).

⁸⁶ Güler Yarcı, "Osmanlıda Avcılık Yasaları," *Acta Turcica* 1, no. 1 (2009). pp. 124-125.

These *timars* were similar to guard's *timars* in that they were fixed *gedük timars* and there could be no promotion expansions. Thus, if there was a promotion these hunters had to change their *timars* to be bestowed a higher valued one.

II.1.3.4. Pseudo *Timars*

The expansion of the *timar* system was one step back from the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. In Anatolia, especially, many of the owners of private property (*mülk*, *malikâne*) could not be eliminated so easily in favor of the *timar* system. Nevertheless, sometimes the state found ways to penetrate this private ownership and erode some of owner's privileges. Thus, in some regions the state claiming the right of collecting taxes and made these owners share some of their revenues, which were then granted as *timars* to state agents and soldiers. What was called *malikâne-divânî* system⁸⁷ was such a method of eroding private ownership.

On the other hand, compared to *malikâne* owners other private property (*mülk*) owners did not lose much control over their properties. Yet they could not escape the state's demand for a certain number of armed men (*cebelü*, *eşküncü*). Similarly, some pious foundations (*vakıf*) were allowed to be established under the condition that they supply a number of armed men to the state. Lastly, there were those with private ownership or fully autonomous possession which were as *yurdluk* and *ocaklık* respectively. Such private ownership was shown with an Ottoman cliché as *mefruzu'l-kalem maktu'l-kadem min külli'l-vücuḥ serbestiyet üzere* which meant that the state authorities had no right to intervene nor did the state record the property, however, the owners were still obliged to send some soldiers. In the

⁸⁷ For a detailed view see, Barkan, "Türk İslam Toprak Huku Tatbikatının Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aldığı Şekiller: Malikâne-Dîvânî Sistemi."

Ottoman bureaucracy such private properties with special obligations were generally called *eşküncülü mülk*, *eşküncülü vakıf* and *eşküncülü yurd*.⁸⁸ However, sometimes in the law books private property (*malikâne* or *mülk*) of that kind were written *timars* as well.⁸⁹ Moreover, in some official documents they were called *mülk*, *vakıf* or *yurd cebelü timarı*.⁹⁰ Ömer Lütfi Barkan in one of his articles introduces this type of “*timar*,”⁹¹ and Oktay Özel called them “*eşküncülü timar*.”⁹² Such a usage might lead to confusion since, *eşküncü timarı*⁹³ or *eşkün timarı*,⁹⁴ as discussed above, referred to the most widespread type of *timar*. Lastly, Irene Belidceanu calls such *eşküncülü mülks* meaning a *timar* with hereditary character that according to her differed from what she called “ordinary *timar*” in the sense that the former was inherited by the siblings whereas for the latter as rule this was not possible.⁹⁵ Again the *timar* that Hedda Reinl-Kiel refers is such a limited private property.⁹⁶

What Ottoman intellectuals or modern historians called *timar* was in fact private property, a pious or charity foundation (*vakıf*), the owners or possessors of

⁸⁸ Barkan, "Osmanlı Devrinin "Eşküncülü Mülkler"i ve "Mülk Timarlar"ı Hakkında Notlar." pp. 902-904.

⁸⁹ First it can be seen in a law book prepared during the Reign of Süleyman I. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 4. p. 478 (article 51) and later it was cited by Aynî Ali in the early seventeenth century. Aynî Ali Efendi, (*Kanunname-i Âl-i Osman*) *Osmanlı Devleti Arazi Kanunları*, trans. Hadiye Tuncer, Tarım Bakanlığı Yayınları (Ankara: Resimli Posta Matbaası, 1962). p. 29. Also see, Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 9. p. 66 (article 119).

⁹⁰ BOA-MAD.d . 196, p. 13b.

⁹¹ Barkan, "Osmanlı Devrinin "Eşküncülü Mülkler"i ve "Mülk Timarlar"ı Hakkında Notlar."

⁹² Oktay Özel, "Changes in Settlement Patterns, Population and Society in Rural Anatolia: A Case Study of Amasya (1576-1642) " (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Manchester 1993). p. 111.

⁹³ BOA-MAD.d 70, p. 16.

⁹⁴ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 9. p. 65 (article 117.) Also see, Aynî Ali Efendi, (*Kanunname-i Âl-i Osman*) *Osmanlı Devleti Arazi Kanunları*. p. 29.

⁹⁵ Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Loi Sur La Transmission du Timar (1536)." pp. 82-86.

⁹⁶ Hedda Reindl-Kiel, "A Woman *Timar* Holder in Ankara Province during the Second Half of the 16th Century," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40, no. 2 (1997). The *timar* of Hatun Bula that was seen in Ankara again seems to be an *eşküncülü vakıf* in origin. Erdoğan, "Ankara'nın Bütüncül Tarihi Çerçevesinde Ankara Tahrir Defterleri'nin Analizi." p. 265.

which were obliged to send men to war. Such kind of limited private properties were mostly seen in Anatolia. Yet, throughout the Ottoman realm, depending on the conditions, the state could always demand warriors or revenue from any private property owner. Although not *timar* owners, many times the Crimean Tatars and other autonomous tribes supplied the Ottoman state many warriors. Private property cannot be categorically regarded as *timar*, unless the state claims its allodial ownership (*mirî*) or claims over taxes as in the case in the *malikâne-divânî* system.

II.1.4. Administration and Management of Revenue

If the fiscal *timar* denotes the relations between the state and *timar* holders, a physical *timar* refers much to the relations between the *timar* holders and revenues and the producers. When the state certified a person's right over a *timar*, at the same time it recognized a certain degree of autonomy of the administrative and the management rights of the possessor over the economic production. That affected not only the relations between the *timar* holder and the producers but also relations between the state/state agents and *timar* holders.

Though every *timar* holder was bound by laws and regulations, parallel to the value of their *timars* they enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy in the management of their *timars*. In particular, *timars* that were within the category of free *timars* (*serbest timar*) were exempt from almost all kinds of external intervention. As Özer Ergenç claims; all *hasses*, *zi'amets* and sultanîc *vakıfs* as well as some *timars* were

considered to be in the category of free *timars*⁹⁷ and these kinds of *timars* gave more autonomy than generic *timars*.

Under Ottoman law, peasants could not leave the *timars* in which they were registered. Otherwise, they had to pay a certain fee to their *timar* owners for relinquishing cultivation (*çift bozan resmi*).⁹⁸ In the event that the peasants leaving their places without permission the *timar* holders were given the right to declare them as a fugitive (*kaçgun*) and bring them back after paying a fee. Likewise, when the animals of one *timar* were found in another *timar* the owners of the former would bring them back after paying a certain fee (*yave*). The question is that who they would pay to ensure the return of their peasants and animals. According to the law if they were found in a free *timar* the owner would receive the fee however, if they were found in an ordinary *timar* (*serbest olmayan/gayri serbest timar*) the owner either gave all the fee to, or shared it with a *subaşı* or *sancakbegi* (a free *timar* owner).⁹⁹ Also, in some regions though the owners of the free *timars* enjoyed a full land tax (*çift*), the owners of ordinary *timars* had to share their taxes with the owners of these free *timars*.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, when a person was murdered or a serious crime was committed within the boundary of a physical *timar* a fee (*cürüm ve cinayet*) would have to be paid for the investigation. Again the free *timar* owners would receive the full fees, whereas the others received only a limited part or none of the fee.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ For detail see, Özer Ergenç, "Osmanlı'da "Serbest Dirlik" Uygulamasının Boyutları ve Bunun Mâlî-İktisadî Faaliyetlerinin Düzenlenmesindeki Yeri," in *Birinci İktisat Tarihi Kongresi Tebliğleri*, ed. Rahmi Deniz Özbay (İstanbul: İstanbul Ticaret Odası, 2010). p. 592.

⁹⁸ Barkan, "Timar." p. 835. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 1. p. 172.

⁹⁹ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 4. p. 374.

¹⁰⁰ Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. pp. 31-32.

¹⁰¹ Sertoğlu, *Sofyalı Ali Çavuş Kanunnâmesi: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Toprak Tasarruf Sistemi'nin Hukukî ve Mâlî Müeyyide ve Mükellefiyetleri*. p. 10.

The sharing taxes was just one part of a complex arrangement. In fact, the right to pursue and capture fugitives and criminals was only granted to certain state officials (*ehl-i örf*) who had their own *timars*. Therefore, the possessors of such *timars* naturally were involved in the affairs of other *timar* holders. This created a hierarchical surveillance and control mechanism.¹⁰² However, *timars*, especially the larger ones, were almost private property in terms of the autonomy of the possessor in terms of management to extent that as Sertoğlu comments; they were not under the commandership of *sancakbegis* unless there was a war. The government did not dismiss them even if they avoided fighting in the war but the revenue for that year would be demanded by the state instead. If they were sufficiently loyal they could bequest their revenues to their children after their death.¹⁰³ However, the smaller *timars* in many ways were open to intervention by higher ranking state officials. The state granted provincial governors (*beglerbegi*) the right of allocating the lower *timars*, which were called *tezkiresiz timar* or *timar-i bi-tezkire*. This unavoidably led to further dependency of the lower generic *timar* holders to free *timar* holders.¹⁰⁴

II.2. What is the *Timar* System

In Rycaut's opinion the *timar* reserve army was the "great nerve or sinew" of the Empire¹⁰⁵ and Ranke considered that the Ottoman feudal (*timar*) system was one

¹⁰² Özel, "Changes in Settlement Patterns, Population and Society in Rural Anatolia: A Case Study of Amasya (1576-1642) ". p. 66.

¹⁰³ Sertoğlu, *Sofyalı Ali Çavuş Kanunnâmesi: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Toprak Tasarruf Sistemi'nin Hukukî ve Mâlî Müeyyide ve Mükellefiyetleri*. p. 10.

¹⁰⁴ İnalcık points out how these small *timar* pretenders increased their chance of gaining a *timar* by giving gifts to or bribing the governors. İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1. p. 116.

¹⁰⁵ Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. p. 172.

of “the bases on which rested the essential strength and energy of this empire.”¹⁰⁶ In a similar manner, Douglas Howard describes the *timar* system:

The entire political and social structure of the Ottoman Empire, including its military order, taxation system and organization of land tenure, were defined through two fundamental institutions, the slave (*qul*) system and the *timar* system.¹⁰⁷

Not only have these historians, but almost all Ottomanists boldly emphasize the importance of these two institutions. However, it is problematic to equate the “entire” socio-political, also the economic, structure of the Empire with these slave and *timar* systems. This overemphasizing of the *timar* system is a common tendency that has existed since the first half of the sixteenth century.

Modern Ottoman historians usually depict the *timar* system from a legalistic point of view. From this perspective the state is portrayed almost as an omnipotent and omnipresent body. From bottom to top every social segment was carefully designated and managed.¹⁰⁸ Due to the Islamic roots of the state, the Ottoman Empire expanded with enormous speed and the revenue sources in all conquered places were quickly surveyed¹⁰⁹ and organized through the *timar* system. The lands conquered by the Ottomans came under the *fay*’ principle of Islam the “inalienable common

¹⁰⁶ Leopold von Ranke, *The Ottoman and the Spanish Empires*, trans. Walter K. Kelly (London: Whittaker and Co., Ave Maria Lane, 1843). p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656." p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ Barkan says that the Ottoman Empire was an absolute state that could easily mobilize any economic, social and demographic force to assure the order and harmony. From one end of the Empire to the other all prices, production and social life was controlled and regulated through sultans’ orders and laws. Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Çiftçi Sınıfların Hukuki Statüsü ". p. 725.

¹⁰⁹ İncalcık states that the “first act after the conquest was to put down in the registers all possible sources of revenue.” İncalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1. p. 132. This is surely an over simplification of the process of conquest and the establishment of the *timar* system. According to Fekete, in the years after the conquest people continued to pay the taxes that they had been paying to their lord before the conquest. After fully completing the administrative organization the revenue sources were surveyed. (Fekete, "Türk Vergi *Tahrirleri*." pp. 299-300). This might be more reasonable yet it only depicts the picture of a period when the *timar* system had matured and the places where the pre-Ottoman power elites had been pacified.

property of the Muslims or the Islamic state...as its embodiment”¹¹⁰ This was the base of the state-owned lands (*arazi-i miriyye, arazi-i memleket*). Peasants (*reaya*) were organized on this lands for cultivation through the principles of *çift-hane* system and also the land was bestowed as private property (*temlik*) or reserved for pious foundations, but to a great extent were divided into prebendal units based on an administrative-military classification called the *timar* system, which consists of imperial demesne (*hass-i humayun*), *hass* of dignitaries, *zi'amets*, *timars*, detained *timars* (*mevkuf*) and non-military appanages (*arpalık, paşmaklık, özengilik* etc.)¹¹¹ Overall, the *timar* system was a “land regime”¹¹² that was neatly regulated by Islamic property law. The system operated within the limits of state owned land which were different from; private properties (*mülk*), pious endowments (*vakıf*) and wastelands (*mevat*).¹¹³ However, the boundaries between state owned and other land were not so clear. Moreover, *mirî* lands at best can be defined as the lands of which the *dominium eminence* was in the hands of the state however, this is rather a murky definition.

Such a legalistic approach established on the behalf of the state was fully developed in the sixteenth century,¹¹⁴ and this led to a state-centric perspective in modern historiography. From this perspective, in a way, everything was under the state control and everything can be attributed to state centralization and explained by the state policies. For example, the state granted only the core value of the *timar* not

¹¹⁰ İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1. pp. 103-104.

¹¹¹ Ibid. p. 141.

¹¹² “The *timar* system is known as the general name of the land regime, in other words, the land administration in the Ottoman State sustained production on lands cultivated by peasants (*reaya*), and on which the grain production was carried out.” Fikret Yılmaz, “XVI. Yüzyılda Edremit Kazası” (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Ege Üniversitesi, 1995). p. 208.

¹¹³ İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1. p. 140.

¹¹⁴ According to İnalcık due to the obscure nature of the ownership of the property; many times people believe that they were the owners so they bought and sold the property. This is why the famous Ebu Suud had to define the legal status of property. Halil İnalcık, “İslâm Arazı ve Vergi Sisteminin Teşekkülü ve Osmanlı Devrindeki Şekillerle Muakyesesi ” in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu: Toplum ve Ekonomi* (İstanbul: Eren, 1996). pp. 23-4.

the promotion that a person's father had gained. Thus, land was prevented from becoming private property and the possessors could not establish an aristocratic class.¹¹⁵ The reason behind the higher frequency in changing a person's *timar* was a vigorous state policy to avoid a *timar* holder becoming rooted in a certain territory. Similarly, the state prohibited a person holding more than one *timar* also to prevent the rise of local aristocracy.¹¹⁶ Overall, the *timar* system was a purely rational choice and a teleological goal designated by the state from the very beginning of its foundation.¹¹⁷

On the other hand, according to Robert L. Staab, the *timar* system was a kind of method of tax farming:

In lieu of emoluments from Hazine-i Amire, the officials, rather, were assigned a regional holding and were allowed to retain a portion of the revenues for their own livelihood. In the sixteenth century, the term for these financial units was *mukata'a* – a lease of a tax farm. The *mukata'a* was basically divided into *emanets* and *timars*. ... In the sixteenth century, the lands ... were provincially organized in this ideal form and the land was parceled out according to the tenets of the *mukata'a* system.¹¹⁸

Similar to the perspective above Staab describes a *timar* (*mukta'a*) system as a constant phenomenon:

The Ottomans expanded rapidly from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries and inherited new reaya, new territories, and most of all, new revenues to exploit. The organization and management of these resources rested on the *mukata'a* system.¹¹⁹

Again this is a superficial state-centric perspective everything being explained by the single concept of *mukata'a*. When one accepts that the Ottoman Empire was

¹¹⁵ Barkan, "Osmanlı Devrinin "Eşkinçülü Mülkler"i ve "Mülk Timarlar"ı Hakkında Notlar." p. 898.

¹¹⁶ Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Loi Sur La Transmission du *Timar* (1536)." pp. 89-90.

¹¹⁷ According to Cin and Akyılmaz from the very beginning of its formation the Ottoman Empire followed a policy of founding a powerful and centralized state. Halil Cin and Gül Akyılmaz, *Tarihte Toplum ve Yönetim Tarzı olarak Feodalite ve Osmanlı Düzeni* (Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1995). pp. 168-9.

¹¹⁸ Robert Lee Staab, "The *Timar* System in the Eyalet of Rumeli and the Nahiye of Dimetoka in the Late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" (Unpublished PhD, University of Utah, 1980). pp. 2-3.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. p. 4.

organized in a single system theoretically it can be accepted that everything was a part of *mukata'a*. Similarly, based on the theory that everything conquered by the Islamic state was the *vakıf*¹²⁰ of the Muslim community (*umma*) it can be claimed that the *timar* was a kind of *vakıf* system. Again it could not, theoretically be negated. Therefore, based on these perspectives it is possible to define the sultan as the principal *timar* holder or the chief of janissaries or a Muslim imam. Finally, it is not possible to desist from seeing the sultan as an oriental despot or the ideal form of patrimonial authority and seeing the state as a central state by nature; however, this is rather an ahistorical proposal.

Hauke Brunkhorst describes systems as, “complexes of elements and relations, separated by boundaries from their environment, which is always more complex than the system itself.”¹²¹ If system means a social complex then it should be considered as a temporal dimension then, a system can briefly be defined as a dynamic body of a nexus between interdependent components. So, in order to understand a system, it is necessary to define the elements, and the nexus between them, and also its boundaries that make it possible to place it among others. Of course, the historical context in which this complex developed is as important as the description and definition of the system. Lastly, functions that the system carries in society should be analyzed.

¹²⁰ This approach was proposed by an Islamic thinker in the eighth century. Mustafa Demirci, *İslamın İlk Üç Asrında Toprak Sistemi* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2003). p. 75.

¹²¹ Hauke Brunkhorst, "System Theory," in *The Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Social Thought*, ed. William Outhwaite and Tom Bottomore (Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996). p. 658.

II.2.1. The *Timar* System in the Ottoman Complex

In terms of resource distribution and control the Ottoman realm can be divided into five intertwined spheres namely; bureaucratic, military, public, personal and congregational. The first two spheres were under the direct control of the state and the last three were controlled and supervised by individuals or groups. The expansion of the spheres depended on three factors. Firstly, when the Ottomans conquered a foreign land these spheres expanded at different rates. Secondly, social conflicts and resistance to the central state by different social segments could determine the advancement of any of these spheres. Though usually historians tend to underestimate this point it was an important factor not only in the corruption of the *timar* system but also behind its development. As an Ottoman statesman pointed out that only if there were security and economic exploitation would it be possible to talk about conquest.¹²² Then there was the gradual process to establish a full state control. Most of the time, the annexed land remained under the control of local communities or were left as private property for a long period. Only in the long run the state could establish a bureaucratic and a military control over the new lands. Therefore, in theory it might be true that the Ottoman state legitimated its control through the Islamic concept of dominium eminence (*rakabe*), but in practice it could be a long lasting process, which in the interim operated outside state control. Lastly, the policies of the central state could lead to expansion of one sphere at the expense of others.¹²³ In order to do that the state either granted individuals economic resources

¹²² In a petition to the Sultan the grand vizier Koca Sinan *Paşa* asked the question: “Was a village of two families taken under control since the foundation of those fortresses? Was a single akçe was yielded? Can the personnel of the fortress can leave in peace ... How then, can it be called conquest?” Koca Sinan *Paşa*, *Koca Sinan Paşa'nın telhisleri*, ed. Halil Sahillioğlu and Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu (İstanbul: İslam Tarih, Sanat ve Kültür Araştırma Merkezi, IRCICA, 2004). p. 147.

¹²³ Each sultan founded various public and religious buildings, such as baths, mosques, and bridges. For their maintenance some revenue sources were reserved as *vakıf* for them. Throughout the

under the direct control of the state and seized or confiscated the holdings of individuals to expand state control. For example, it is well known, that Mehmed II seized many *vakıfs* and *mülks* and distributed them among his soldiers and officials.¹²⁴ Again, there are many examples of the foundation of *vakıf* by sultans and their families. On the other hand since *vakıfs* were much immune to the state interventions individuals often turned private properties into *vakıfs*. So instead of losing their all properties they preferred to keep some of their revenues putting such a stipulation that their children would administer the foundation. Of course, the state found another solution to expand its control by forcing these foundations to supply soldiers.

sixteenth century it can be seen that some *timar* sources were seized on the behalf of the state treasure or revenues of sultanic *hasses* were granted as *timars*.

¹²⁴ For a discussion on the issue see, Oktay Özel, "Limits of the Almighty: Mehmed II's 'Land Reform' Revisited," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42, no. 2 (1999).

Spheres	Rule Definer	Overseer	Revenue Collector	Contract	Revenue Holder
Bureaucratic	State	Voyvoda, Nâzır, Emin	Emin, Emin-i Mültezim, Mültezim	Emanet, İltizam	State, Mültezim
Military	State	Hass Owner, Züema, Sipâhî	Manager, Voyvoda	Hass Zi'amet Timar	Overseer
Personal	State, Owner	Owner	Overseer	Mülkname, Malikâne, Arpalık etc.	Overseer
Public	Vakıf Founder	Mütevelli	Cabi	Vakıfname	Public Property
Congregational	Community Leader	Community Leader	Overseer	Ahidname, Amanname	Community Notables

Table 3: Revenue Management in Different Spheres

Another point is that in the Ottoman Empire there were three modes of revenue collection: tax-farming (*iltizam*), appointing a trustee (*emanet*) and first hand or direct management. Usually historians have attempted to associate *iltizam* and *emanet* with sultanic *hasses* and direct management with *timars*. This led historians to comprehend *timars* as opposite to tax-farming. And usually in a traditional historical approach, tax-farming was reflected as scapegoat of almost all predicaments in the Empire. However, the gradual annexation of military sphere to other spheres better explains the true nature of the change.

Moreover, historians generally think that the *timar* system was a natural result of an undeveloped cash economy. However, the Ottoman Empire allocated an important number of cash-paid troops to rural areas. The provincial treasurers successfully redistributed the revenue in the province where it was produced, without transferring the cash to or from the center. For example, in the second half of the sixteenth century the Ottoman government recruited many men to the Janissary corps who were stationed on the eastern fronts and their salaries were supplied by nearby

provinces.¹²⁵ Furthermore, it is already known that many auxiliary troops such as *akıncıs* were usually not paid but encouraged to pillage foreign lands and troops of *voynuks* and *yürüks* were directly financed by their communities.¹²⁶

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the *timar* army was one of the two most important Ottoman regular forces. Also, the Ottoman dominions, private property owners, auxiliary organizations and volunteers usually supplied many soldiers. As a matter of fact, in some important wars the *timar* army was defeated but these troops changed the course of the war and the Ottomans were victorious.¹²⁷ Therefore, the role of the *timar* system should not be exaggerated however; the *timar* system was only one of several components of the Ottoman imperial state.

II.2.2. Social Mobility and the *Timar* System

The *timar* system was a hierarchical administrative system of the central Ottoman Empire which was divided into some provinces called *eyalet* or *vilâyet* governed by *beglerbegi* or *mirimiran*. A *beglerbegi* could bear the title of vizier and

¹²⁵ Throughout the period between 1562 and 1572 an important volume of revenue that supplied by Vidin was transferred to the western fronts as salaries of the frontier guards. See, BOA-MAD.d 99. In 1582 about 600 men were recruited to be stationed in Çıldır And their salaries would be supplied by the treasury of Aleppo. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 48, r. 506. Also the salaries of some 200 men were to paid by the treasury of Erzurum. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 48, r. 546.

¹²⁶ For a detailed study of *voynuks* see, Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989). For *Yürüks* see, Rycout, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. p. 180. Also see, M. Tayyip Gökbilgin, *Rumeli'de Yörükler, Tatarlar ve Evlâd-ı Fâtihan* (İstanbul: İşaret, 2008). pp. 30-1.

¹²⁷ Many chronicles tell that the *timar* army was defeated in Varna in 1444, which was one of the most important wars in the history of the Ottoman Empire (Halil İnalcık and Mevlûd Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehemmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşı (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989). pp. 62-64). For other chronicles see, Colin Imber, *The Crusade of Varna, 1443-45* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006). And in the Battle of Keresztes (Haçova) in 1596 many *timar* soldiers deserted and the Ottomans only just won the war with the help of the Crimean Tatars. İsmail Hami Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1972). p. 176.

could command an army over several provinces as *serdar*¹²⁸ having this rank a *beglerbegi* could promote to carry up to three *tuğ* (horsetail signifying the rank). From several viziers one was chosen as a *sadrazam* or *vezir-i azam* the highest rank below the sultan.

Each province consisted of a certain number of sub-provinces called *sancak* or *livâ* that were under the supervision of *sancakbegi* or *mirlivâ* who enjoyed *hass*, and after him came the *alaybegi* or *mir-i alay* who was the second highest military officer – some historians prefer to call him colonel¹²⁹ – in a *sancak*. An *alaybegi* enjoyed *zi'amet* and if he performed an appreciated service he could receive the title of *sancakbegi*.¹³⁰

The highest rank among *timar* holding *sipâhîs* was *seraskerlik* or *çeribaşılık*, and a *serasker*¹³¹ retained a *timar*. It was possible for a *timar* holding *sipâhî* to be promoted the position of *zaim* or *zi'amet* holder. In such a promotion they usually were not bestowed core *zi'amets* but their *timars* were added supplements of up to 20,000 *akçes*. As described above, a *timar* holder with a salary of up to 3,000 *akçes* was called *cebelü*; those who received from 3,000 *akçes* to 30,000 *akçes* were *bürüme*. These terms refer to two different types of armor¹³² and certainly referred to

¹²⁸ It is known that in the fourteenth century Lala Şahin and Timurtaş Paşas were two *beglerbegis* who were promoted to viziers. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilâtı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988). p. 112. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *XIV-XVII. Yüzyıllarda Osmanlılarda Devlet Teşkilâtı ve Sosyal Yapı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007). p. 12.

¹²⁹ Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. p. 173. And François A. Belin, "Du Regime des Fiefs Militaires dans l' Islamisme, et Principalement en Turquie," *Journal Asiatique* 15(1870). p. 231, footnote 5.

¹³⁰ *Alaybegi* Şaban of Vidin was promoted to *sancakbegi* in 1599 as a reward for bringing back fugitive villagers to their villages. BOA-DFE.RZ.D 214, p. 257.

¹³¹ He was a medium between *alaybegi* and *sipâhîs*. During the call for war he led *sipâhîs* under the flag of *alayegi*.

¹³² Beldiceanu proposed that *cebe*, and *bürüme* were two different kinds of armor which soldier wore in battle according to the value of his *timar*. Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. pp. 87-90. *Cebe* obviously means armor but the meaning of *bürüme* is not that clear. For Ahmet Akgündüz it was a kind of turban that they had to wear and that differentiated some warriors from those who enjoyed lower *timars*. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî*

ranks among *sipâhîs*. A *bürüme sipâhî* had to equip and provision at least one *cebelü* to take to war with him.

According to Ayn Ali it was forbidden that a cultivator “ride a horse and carry a sword”,¹³³ that is to say, they could not be a warrior. In practice however, the state employed peasants as *nefir-i amm* warriors when needed. For example, when the European forces launched an attack on the Ottoman Empire in 1444, Murad II declared *gaza* (holy war) against his enemies and promised *timars* and *zi’amets* to whoever would join the battle.¹³⁴ There are further examples in the *defters* that such people, who called *serdengeçti* or *divane* went to the front and fought for a *timar*.

II.2.3. The *Timar* System and Assimilation

In the first two centuries, the *timar* system appeared not to be fully developed into the form that has been described so far. Nor was the Ottoman complex in its standard form. For example in the earlier periods it was common in the Balkans to see many non-Muslim *timar* holders.¹³⁵ In this period Islamic identity was one of the most important components of the state identity, yet it was not an obligation to be a Muslim to be a part of the ruling class. However, after Mehmed II the state became more identified with Islam and by the mid-sixteenth century almost no Christian was bestowed a *timar* except for some religious figures. Thus, the state was endorsing

Tahlilleri, 2. p. 45, footnote 2. It is obvious that they are two styles of apparel to wear when fighting. The important point is that they also refer to distinct military ranks.

¹³³ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 9. p. 65. Long before him, Lütü Paşa underlined the same point. Lütü Paşa, *Asafnâme*.

¹³⁴ İnalçık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*. pp. 12, 14.

¹³⁵ Halil İnalçık, "Stefan Duşan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri," in *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar I* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1954).

Islam among the ruling class. Converting to Islam became a *de facto* pre-requisite for the *timar* bestowals and almost a latent imperative of the *timar* contract. Then, many *timar* owners entitled as “new Muslim” (*Nevmüslim* or *Müslim-i nev*) appeared in the *timar* records.

Beside the *timar* holders, the *cebelüs* reflect another dimension of the *timar* system as assimilatory institution. Many war captives were employed as *cebelüs* by the *timar* holders.¹³⁶ In the 1530s in Vidin; of 322 *cebelüs* of *sipâhîs* some 13% were recorded as *gulam* (slave).¹³⁷ The percentage was even higher among those owned by *hass* and *zi’amet* owners. Of *zi’amet* owners and *timar* holders, who were not ordinary *sipâhîs* as *voyvoda*, *çavuş* and *katib*, half the *merdümans* (attendants) were slaves and out of 401 men of *sancakbegi* of Vidin 59 were slaves.¹³⁸ Furthermore, not all of these slaves were actually soldiers but they were stewards (*kethüda*), chief doorkeepers (*serbevvabin*) and cooks (*çaşnigir*).¹³⁹ That is to say the qualified slaves had been bought or seized by such officials with the remainder being either sold or owned by *sipâhîs*.

Those *cebelüs* who were registered as slaves in the Vidin area were Arabs (Black Africans), Albanians, Bosnians, Russians and Hungarians. The majority of the remaining *cebelüs* were from the Serbian and Bulgarian regions of the Ottoman Empire. Though almost all were recorded with Muslim names there were not such a dense Muslim population in those regions. In Vidin, for example, except for a small Muslim community who resided in the town centers and some villages the majority

¹³⁶ According to İncalık “Most of the *djebelis* in the *timar* system were of slave origin.” Halil İncalık, “*Djebeli*,” in *ET²* (Leiden: Brill, 1991). p. 529.

¹³⁷ TSA-D.2204.1, pp. 120-128b.

¹³⁸ See, Appendices IV and V.

¹³⁹ TSA-D.2204.1, pp. 113b-119b.

of population were not Muslims.¹⁴⁰ Yet, the majority *cebelüs* (165 men) who were from Vidin *cebelüs* had Muslim names. Only the *cebelüs* of few *timar*-possessing Christians *Knezes* (community leader in Slavic societies) had Christian names.¹⁴¹

<i>Sipâhî</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	From	Document Page # ¹⁴²
Vuka Kinez	Bogdan	Vidin	122b
Radoslav Kinez	Pavol	Vidin	122b
Yena(?) Kinez	İştubik	Timok	125
Marko	İstepan	İvranya	126
Hızır Kinez	Ahmed	Vidin	124

Table 4: Some *Sipâhîs* and their *Cebelüs*

As it seen in case of Hızır Knez in the table when a Christian *Sipâhî* converted to Islam their *cebelüs* should also be Muslims or converted to Islam. Under the Islamic conception of slavery the Ottoman state certainly followed a policy of converting slaves to Islam. However, since non-Muslims could not own a Muslim slave in an Islamic state, they would have to find non-Muslim slaves or if they had Muslim slaves they had to either immediately emancipate them or sell them to Muslims.¹⁴³ Not all *Cebelüs* were of Christian origin but it was obvious that in order to be a *cebelü* of a Muslim soldier they had to change their religion. Parallel to the decline in the numbers of Christian soldiers in the *timar* system the *cebelü* institution automatically became a kind of *devşirme* institution. There is not so much known about slavery in the Ottoman Empire but it was obvious that those captured in

¹⁴⁰ See, the demographic map at the end of the following article. Barkan, "Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu olarak Sürgünler."

¹⁴¹ Knez Vuka, Knez Radoslav, Knez Yena(?) and a *sipâhî* named Marko each owned one Christian *cebelü* from Vidin, TSA-D.2204.1, pp. 122b, 125, 126.

¹⁴² TSA-D. 2204.1

¹⁴³ William Gervase Clarence-Smith, *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery* (London: Hurst and Company, 2006). p. 41.

battle that remained within the Empire were forced to be Muslims. It seems that the warriors held some of these prisoners of war to supply the state demand with *cebelüs*.

II.2.4. Political Conflicts and Distribution of *Timars*

There is a consensus that money was one of the most important pillars of power. The Ottoman circle of justice was mainly developed on this principle – justice for money and money for power. However, it was not always easy to find the ready cash to mobilize people against enemies. That is, promising *timar* became an important tool for rulers to motivate soldiers and to reward their future achievements a good example is Murad II promising *timars* in return for joining the battle.

When historians discuss the *timar* system they usually mean a control over lands by the central state; however, this control was hardly absolute. A person could legitimate his power over another a person and no one could prevent him from distributing revenues as *timar* to his followers. For example, Şeyh Bedreddin, the famous rebel, initially issued *timar* licenses among his followers during his rebellion.¹⁴⁴

Nevertheless, the great majority of *timars* appeared to be under the control of the central state. However, this state was not a homogenous entity and there had always been conflicts between various power-holding groups. The *timar* was a good way of gaining an advantage over their competitors. In the second half of the sixteenth century an important power holder Canpolad of Kilis gradually ensured that all his men had *timars*. His nephew went a step further demanding *timars* for his allied noblemen in return for supporting the state in its wars on the western and

¹⁴⁴ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, ed. Kemal Yavuz and M. A. Yekta Saraç (İstanbul: Gökkuşbu, 2007). p. 135.

eastern fronts.¹⁴⁵ In addition, what was stated by *timar* holders as “the man of so and so *Paşa*” in *timar* records usually reflects such conflicts. When Koca Sinan Paşa was dismissed in 1582 from grand vizierate his 85 men lost their *timars* and *zi’amets* valued 551,450 *akçes*. In the same document his rival Siyavuş Paşa, who was the new grand vizier at that time, was recorded as having 117 men holding *timar* and *zi’amets* valued 1,508,108 *akçes*.¹⁴⁶ While Sinan Paşa’s men enjoyed *timars* in Anatolia, those of Siyavuş Paşa dominated Rumelia. Indeed it can be claimed that it was normal to see the men of notable people being bestowed with *timars*. If this was a normal procedure these men should not lose their *timars* when their patrons lost against their rivals. As we see in the following chapters the state embarked upon a conflict with these centrifugal powers to establish its full control over revenues via the establishment of a monopoly over *timars*.

Therefore, it is hard to talk about a monolayer *timar* system. The *timar* system on an upper level might be controlled by the state but on a lower level it was under the control of rival power holders and this led to endless tension between these two layers, which had great impact on transformation of the *timar* system.

II.2.5. Reserve Army of *Sipâhîs*

It becomes tradition among Ottomanists to cite some general surveys to give numbers of *sipâhî* army. One is a survey book dated 1527-1528 published by

¹⁴⁵ Muhsin Soyudoğan, "Aşiretlerin Ekonomi Politikası ya da Olağan Şiddet: Osmanlı Ayınab'ında Aşiret Eşkıyalığı Üzerine," in "*Ta Ezelden Taşkıdır...*" *Antep*, ed. Mehmet Nuri Gültekin (İstanbul: İletişim, 2011). pp. 132, 151. Also See, William J. Griswold, *Anadolu'da Büyük İsyan 1591-1611*, trans. Ülkün Tansel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2002). pp. 197-198.

¹⁴⁶ BOA-KK.d. 320. pp. 2-10

Barkan.¹⁴⁷ Another is Ayn Ali's calculation at the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁴⁸ It is relatively easier to calculate the numbers of *timar*-holding *sipâhîs* from the work of Ayn Ali who was once the head of the bureau of *timar* records. He used the last survey books of all *sancaks* and calculated the *sipâhîs* recorded in them. However, a *sipâhî* army also consisted of an important number of *cebelüs*, but it is not possible to see their numbers in *defters* especially after the 1530s. Ayn Ali calculated the number of *cebelü* army on the basis that each *zi'amet* and *hass* owners would bring one *cebelü* for every 5,000 *akçes* of his salary and *timar* owners would bring one *cebelü* for each 3,000 *akçes*. If a *timar* owner had a *timar* between 10,000 and 19,999 *akçes* he would bring three *cebelüs*.¹⁴⁹

Such a calculation can only furnish an approximate result. However, the numbers of rural *sipâhîs* were far above these estimations. In the Ottoman Empire the *timar*-holding *sipâhîs* had some privileges and that can be seen in the decrees sent from the center for the punishment of bandits. In many cases it was ordered that if the bandit was a *sipâhî* he should be imprisoned or be sent to the Porte.¹⁵⁰ But if he was not *sipâhî* he should be treated according to sharia law.¹⁵¹ In one case it was stated that a man illegally collected money from peasants and he cursed god and the prophet; however, "since he was a *sipâhî*" the local authorities could not punish him.

¹⁴⁷ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "H. 933-934 (M. 1527-1528) Malî Yılına Ait Bir Bütçe," in *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi*, ed. Hüseyin Özdeğer (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2000).

¹⁴⁸ Ayn Ali, *Kavânî-i Âl-i Osman der Hülâsa-i Mezâmin-i Defter-i Dîvân*, ed. M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, Enderun yayınları (İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1979).

¹⁴⁹ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 9. p. 51. Rycout used the numbers supplied by Ayn Ali then multiplied the numbers of *timar* holders by two and those of *zi'amet* holders by four. Rycout, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. p. 179.

¹⁵⁰ In Ottoman law codes it was formulated as "If the robber was a *timar* holder he would be imprisoned and be reported to the Porte." Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 4. p. 302/46. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 9. p. 501/50.

¹⁵¹ According to a firman some Dürzi bandits attacked a tribe. It was ordered that if they were *sipâhîs* they should be imprisoned. If they were not *sipâhîs* they should be punished according to Islamic law. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 48, p. 29/83.

So they asked the government what they should do.¹⁵² Contrary to the personnel of central army who were often executed for their crimes, *timar* holders had usually lost their *timars* as a punishment. One of the reasons for this might be related to the traditional privileges that remained from their noble past. Furthermore, those privileges had a practical purpose of maintaining a reserve *sipâhî* army.

From the earliest *timar ruznamçe* records in the second half of the fifteenth century the *timar* holders in the Anatolian provinces only kept their *timars* for a limited term. Usually after three years of *timar* possession the *sipâhîs* were dismissed.¹⁵³ However, we do not see the same thing in Vidin which was a Rumelian *sancak*.¹⁵⁴ But it was certain that when a *sipâhî* was dismissed or gave up his *timar* – such *sipâhîs* were called *mazul* (dismiss) – his rights were frozen for a certain period of time (*mülazemet*). If the dismissed *sipâhî* could prove that he was useful, i.e. that he joined battles (*yoldaş*) and helped the army (*yarar*), he could regain his old rights without any loss. That is to say if he had enjoyed 3,000 *akçes* and still had 1,000 *akçes* promised before dismissal, he would receive 4,000 *akçes* when he was re-bestowed, but legally this could only happen after waiting for a minimum period of two years¹⁵⁵ except for those who exchange their *timar* with each other. Furthermore, if the *timar* owner could not prove his usefulness over seven years he would lose his all his rights.¹⁵⁶ In practice the system was much more flexible. Some *timar* holders were able to regain their *timars* after fifteen years.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² BOA-A.DVN.MHM 49, p. 6/25.

¹⁵³ For some example see, BOA-MAD.D 17893 (1487-1489), pp. 26, 27, 48, 58, 60.

¹⁵⁴ In the first Vidin records there were many *sipâhîs* who enjoyed their *timars* for 10-30 years.

¹⁵⁵ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 9. p. 64/109.

¹⁵⁶ Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656." p. 87.

¹⁵⁷ A certain Ahmed regained his *timar* only after serving on frontiers for fifteen years. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 4, r. 541. In another case; an ex-*timar* holder finally in 1584 was again granted a *timar* after eighteen years after dismissal. BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 488.

Moreover, it is known that the sons of *timar* holders also enjoyed some privileges¹⁵⁸ and the dismissal of their fathers did not change their status. A case in this sense is significant: a *timar* holder died nineteen years of dismissal. The son was granted a *timar* six years after his father's death.¹⁵⁹ That is to say, all these dismissals and their sons formed a ready men power that both complemented provincial army and created a reserve army. An order sent in 1560 says that the "dismissed *sipâhîs*, their sons and anyone who joined army in expectancy for *timar*" should have been prepared to defend the castle of Azak against enemy attack.¹⁶⁰ Thus, not only active *timar* owners, but also those who were expecting a *timar* to be bestowed formed an important armed force which means that the real power of the Ottoman *timar* army was far beyond the numbers recorded in official registers.

II.3. Conclusion

It is not an easy task to find an exact definition for an institution such as *timar* that operated for centuries in a wide area consisting of different climates and cultures. Indeed the nature of the *timar* system radically changed over time and local practices were so varied that it could easily be claimed that there were different *timar* systems. However, it is not the purpose of this thesis to detail this idea.

This chapter aimed to familiarize the reader with the basic concepts of the *timar* system that will be encountered in the following chapters. The legal background of the system was not considered to depict a practical picture of the

¹⁵⁸ In some *sancaks* they were exempt from certain taxes. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Loi Sur La Transmission du *Timar* (1536)." p. 88.

¹⁵⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 80 (March 7, 1587), pp. 478-9.

¹⁶⁰ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 3, r. 1047. In another case a person who joined the battle with his 150 men was granted a *timar*. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 4 (July 13, 1560), r. 1034. A similar point underlined by, Pál Fodor, *In Quest of the Golden Apple: Imperial Ideology, Politics, and Military Administration in the Ottoman Empire*, Analecta Isisiana 45 (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2000). p. 282.

timar system. This depiction of the *timar* system is based on the context in the sixteenth century not because the *timar* system reached its standard form by that time but because it can be observed at its best in this century. In the following chapters its previous and later forms will be described and discussed. Finally, this chapter has not aim overemphasize the importance of the role of the *timar* system, rather it is claimed that the *timar* system was one of the several components of the Ottoman complex, and should be understood in relation to these other components.

CHAPTER III

DISCUSSING THE GENESIS OF THE *TIMAR* SYSTEM

III.1. Unilinear Approaches

III.1.1. Western Cultural Diffusionism

Timar as an institution in quite an early period became subjected to questions about its origin, and many scholars have proposed different sources from which the *timar* system was inspired. As Jean Deny convincingly proposed it was Johannes Leunclavius in 1588 who for the first time, etymologically connected the word *timar* to the Greek word *timarion*,¹ which, he thought was derived from the Greek word *τιμή* (*timi*) meaning honor.² This idea influenced many European scholars³ for a century until when Mesgnien Meninski published his famous corpus *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium* in 1680⁴ in which he referred to the Persian origin of the

¹ Deny, "*Timar*." p. 767.

² Nobilis, "Pandectes Historiae Turcicae, Liber Singularis, ad Illustrandos Annales." pp. 390-391.

³ Soranzo repeated what Leunclavius proposed about the etymology of the word *timar*. Soranzo, *The Ottoman*. p. 11. An excerpt that contains the same thesis, taken from Soranzo's book, can be seen in Officina Elzeviriana, *Turcici Imperii Status seu Discursus Varii de Rebus Turcarum* (Leiden: Elzevir, 1634). p. 221. Therefore, it is not true that Soranzo claimed a Persian Origin as Deny claims. See, Deny, "*Timar*." p. 767. Again the same thesis is repeated by Baudier. See, Baudier, *The History of the Serrail, and of the Covrt of the Grand Seigneur, emperour of the Turkes*. pp. 169-170, As did Du Cange. See, Carolo Du Fresne Domino Du Cange, *Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Graecitatis*, vol. 2 (Lugduni: Apud Amissonios, 1688). p. 1578.

⁴ Alexander Chalmers, *The General Biographical Dictionary* (London: J. Nicholas and Son, 1815). p. 53.

word.⁵ His work would inspire several other dictionary writers over the next two centuries.⁶ Meninski did nothing more but to give both meanings of the *timar* as used in Persian and in the Ottoman, however, these two meanings were different. This transition from the Greek to Persian origin was a reflection of the development of Orientalism in the Western world. Persian, Turkish and Arabic cultures began to be approached as a part of a whole known as the orient or the Muslim Orient.

Today no historian objects to the idea that the Ottoman term *timar* had a Persian origin.⁷ The Pahlavi (Middle Persian) *tēmār*, which means sorrow, grief and care,⁸ passed into the modern Persian as *tīmār* without undergoing a significant change in meaning. Most probably it stemmed from the same root with *bimar* (patient) that came from Avestan *vi-mad*, meaning ‘care-giver, physician’. Finally, it is connected to an ancient Indo-European root *me* meaning ‘to measure’.⁹ Thus, it

⁵ See “Tīmār” in Franciszek Meninski, *Thesaurus Linguarum Oriantelium - Turcicae - Arabicae - Persicae*, ed. Mehmet Ölmez, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Simurg, 2000). pp. 1508-1509.

⁶ It seems that even Du Cange’s other dictionary on Latin was also influenced by Meninski. In early editions there was no *timar* entry. However, in later editions there was an entry borrowed from his dictionary on Greek but did not mention the Greek origin. It was obviously Meninski’s effect. Even Du Cange mentions his name in this article. See, Carolo Du Fresne Domino Du Cange, *Glossarium Manuale ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, ed. Pierre Carpentarii, vol. 6 (Halae: Impensis Ioannis Iacobi Gebaveri, 1784). pp. 562-3. John Richardson was also influenced by Meninski, who first published his work; *A dictionary, Persian, Arabic, and English* in 1777 consisting of contributions from several other writers. For a shortened edition of Richardson’s work see, David Hopkins and Charles Wilkins, *A Vocabulary Persian, Arabic, and English* (London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1810). In which the Persian meaning of *timar* is given but the word is given as an Arabic word. I could not find a copy of the first edition of Richardson’s dictionary so it is not clear whether Richardson or Hopkins and Wilkins had made the mistake. Some other dictionaries that followed Richardson’s idea were Joseph Jr. Barretto, *A dictionary of the Persian and Arabic languages* (Calcutta: Greenway, India Gazette Press, 1804); Francis Johnson, *A Dcitionary, Persian, Arabic, and English* (London: W^M. H. Allen and Co., 1852). Finally Richardson’s dictionary perfected with seminal work of Steingass. See, Francis Joseph Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (London: W.H. Allen, 1892).

⁷ Barkan might be the exception sine he was not satisfied by the Persian origin and claimed that the etymological root of the *timar* was not clear. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “*Timar*,” in *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi: Toplu Eseler 1*, ed. Ömer Lütfi Barkan (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1980). p. 806. Years later in his article on *timar* İnalcık would repeat the same meaning. Halil İnalcık, “*Timar*,” in *Et*² (Leiden: Brill, 2000). p. 502.

⁸ D. N. MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi dictionary* (London, New York,: Oxford University Press, 1971).

⁹ Ali Nourai, *An Etymological Dictionary of Persian, English and other Indo-European Languages* (1999). p. 294.

was never used to mean a “military pension”, “prebend” or “fief” which is what it means in the Ottoman world.¹⁰ The curiosity about the origin of the word *timar* and thus the system continues thus, historians explore every avenue to discover the origin of the *timar* system.¹¹ To date there are three main roots: Greco-Turkish, Perso-Turkish, and Arabo-Turkish diffusions and these are discussed below.

The Greek origin of *timar* was the first hypothesis discussed by historians. The main proof presented by Leunclavius was a book written by Damascenus Studites¹² that mentions that the Roman emperor Licinius Augustus (308 to 324) bestowed on St. Theodore Stratelates¹³ a castle as a *timarion*. That is to say what Romans called *beneficium* that Greeks call *timarion* or *pronoia* was the true ancestor of the Ottoman *timar*.¹⁴

¹⁰ This is claimed by Jean Deny. See, Deny, "Timar." p. 767. It seems that this proposition convinced Köprülü and his followers. Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri* (Ankara: Akçağ, 2004). p. 120. Footnote 235. It was later used without any objection by other Turkish scholars. For example see, Barkan, "Timar." p. 806.

¹¹ According to Gibbons, the Ottoman military fief “was but an adaptation of the European feudal system.” Herbert Adams Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire: A History of the Osmanlis up to the Death of Bayezid I (1300-1403)* (Great Britain: The Century Co., 1916). p. 76. Though Scala claims that Karl Hopf already supported such a thesis, it is not mentioned from where he cited this information. See, Rudolf von Scala, "The Greeks after Alexander the Great," in *The World's History: A Survey of Man's Record*, ed. Hans Ferdinand Helmolt (London: William Heinemann, 1907). p. 115. Vladimir A. Gordlevski claims that the Ottoman *timar* was rooted in Chinese feudalism via the Mongolians. See, Vera P. Moutafchieva, *Agrarian relations in the Ottoman Empire in the 15th and 16th centuries* (Boulder, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988). p. 7.

¹² According to Jean Deny the book mentioned is *Βιβλίον ονομαζόμενον Θησανρός, όπερ συνεγράψατο ο εν Μοναχοίς Δαμασκηνός ο υποδιάκονος και Στουδίτης ο Θεσσαλονικεύς*. Deny, "Timar." p. 767. For an introduction about the book see, Émile Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique: Ou Description Raisonnée des Ouvrages Publiés en Grecs par des Grecs aux XVe et XVIe* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, l'Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes 1885). pp. 12-15.

¹³ He was verified by Soranzo, *The Ottoman*. p. 10b. A story about the passion of St. Theodore Stratelates by Damascenus was translated into Russian in 1660 by Arsenius the Greek. Boris Gasparov and Olga Raevsky-Hughes, *Christianity and the Eastern Slavs: Slavic Cultures in the Missle Ages*, vol. 1, California Slavic Studies XVI (Barkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993). p. 191.

¹⁴ Soranzo, *The Ottoman*. p. 10b.

Then Deny stressed how all these terms connoted similar meanings.¹⁵ Therefore, Claude Cahen claims, "it is possible that the Ottomans borrowed the usage directly from the Byzantines, by translating the Greek word *pronoia* (forethought), the meaning of which is exactly equivalent to that of *timar*."¹⁶ Rambaud underlined the similarity between *sanjak* and *theme*, between *sancakbegi* and *strategos*, and lastly between the fief of a *stratiôtai* and *timar* and *zi'amet*.¹⁷ Being "accurately assessed in value" was a common characteristic of the Byzantine *fia* (φία) and the Ottoman *timar*.¹⁸ Deny particularly emphasized the fact that similar to *timars* that were bestowed on seamen there were allocations for the naval forces in Byzantine.¹⁹ And lastly, Vryonis draws attention to the "coincidence between the geographical diffusion of the *pronoia* institution and of the term "*timar*"²⁰ To sum up; Colin Imber's paragraph was a synopsis of the reasons why it was thought that Ottoman *timar* system came from the Byzantine term *pronoia*:

It seems probable, therefore, that when Osman and Orhan made their conquests in Byzantine Bithynia and Thrace, they would have found the system of *pronoias* intact, and that as Ottoman territory spread westwards

¹⁵ Deny, "*Timar*." pp. 767-8. A similar point was made by Vryonis in that the "'*Timar*," of Persian origin, and "*pronoia*" have very similar meanings and underwent parallel semantological developments. They signify "care, providence, and finally a revenue granted by the ruler to the military and administrative officials for services rendered to the state.'" Speros Jr. Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh Through the Fifteenth Century* (London: University of California Press, 1971). p. 69.

¹⁶ Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey: A General Survey of the Material and Sipirtual Culture and History, c. 1071-1330* (London: Sidwick & Jackson, 1968). p. 183. Kazhdan defined *pronoia* as 'care', 'solicitude', 'providence.' Alexander Kazhdan, "Pronoia: The History of a Scholarly Discussion," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10, no. 1-2 (1995). p. 133.

¹⁷ Ernest Lavisse and Alfred Rambaud, eds., *Histoire générale du IVe siècle à nos jours*, vol. 4, Renaissance et Réforme les Nouveaux Mondes 1492-1559 (Paris: Armand Colin & Cie, 1894). p. 751. Oberhummer mentions similar points: Eugen Oberhummer, *Die Türken und das Osmanische Reich* (Leipzig & Berlin: Verlag Von B. G. Teubner, 1917). p. 55.

¹⁸ Scala, "The Greeks after Alexander the Great." p. 115

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 115. Deny, "*Timar*." p. 768.

²⁰ Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh Through the Fifteenth Century*. p. 170. For Cvetkova the *timar* system was "a fief system that paralleled the Byzantine system of *Pronoia*." Bistra Cvetkova, "Early Ottoman Tahrir Defters as a Source for Studies on the History of Bulgaria and the Balkans," *Archiwum Ottomanicum* 8(1983). p. 134.

beyond the former Byzantine realms, their successors would have encountered similar patterns of fief holding. In origin, therefore, the Ottoman *timar* seems to have been an adaptation of the Byzantine *pronoia*. Both *pronoias* and *timars* were grants of land made by the sovereign to a soldier; both were revocable; and in neither case did the soldier become the owner of the land. There are also striking similarities between vocabularies of Byzantine and Ottoman fief-holding. The Greek word *pronoia* means literally ‘care, attention’; the Turkish term *timar* means exactly the same thing. The Greek word for a peasant-holding on a *pronoia* is *zeugarion*, meaning literally ‘yoke, pair (of oxen)’; the Turkish terms for a similar holding, *chift* or *boyunduruk*, mean the same.²¹ The Byzantine unit of land measurement, of forty paces is *stremma*. The word means literally ‘twisting’ with reference to the measuring rope. The Ottoman equivalent for a plot forty paces square is *donum*, a word which means, literally, ‘turning’. The Ottoman term for ‘incidental taxes due to a *timar* holder’ is *bad-i hava* or ‘wind of the air’, a phrase which would be puzzling were the Byzantine terms for a similar group of taxes not *aer* or *aerikon*. These terms which are fundamental to Ottoman fief-holding, suggest a Byzantine model for the system.²²

On the other hand those who support Persian origin theory mainly refer to the military reforms during the reign of Kai Khosrau I or as the Ottomans knew him; Nuşirevan-i Adl (r. 531-579). During his sovereignty the tax system was reformed and the old system based on the yearly assessment on the harvest was replaced by a new method of fixed tax that was based on the calculation of the average yield of several years.²³ On the other hand the state was highly centralized with supporting of poor nobles called *dehkân* in expense of high noble landlords who had become very powerful in previous decades. These armored cavalries were each given villages as salary and equipped by the government in return for military duty.²⁴ That is, according to Hammer, this military class was the archetype of the *timar*-holding

²¹ This point has already been emphasized by İnalçık. İnalçık, "Çift-Hane Sistemi ve Köylünün Vergilendirilmesi." pp. 108-9.

²² Colin Imber, *The Ottoman empire 1300-1650: The Structure of Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). pp. 194-5.

²³ This tax system was later modeled by the caliphate. Richard N. Frye, "The Political History of Iran under the Sasanians," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). p. 153.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 154. Also see, Richard N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran* (München: C.H. Beck'she Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1984). p. 326.

sipâhîs,²⁵ which the Ottomans had inherited via the Anatolian Seljuks.²⁶ Therefore, concludes Hammer, the *timar* system was borrowed from the Persian system. Furthermore, the Byzantines already had this system before Ottomans adapted it.²⁷

Lastly, some scholars allege that the Islamic *ikta* (*iqta'*) is the true base on which the *timar* system was built. There were two types of Islamic *ikta*: in the first the land is given as private property (*temlik*); and in the second it is not the land itself but its revenue was given (*istiğlal*) as salary.²⁸ Although at the very beginning of the Islam there were *iktas*, they were only in form of private property. Only later on, together with new conquests was land given to Muslim soldiers as stipends for their military duty. It was during the Seljukid period with policies of Nizam Al-Mulk that the system was perfected.²⁹ Similar to this practice the Ottomans also distributed the conquered lands among the soldiers.³⁰ Therefore, the *timar* was nothing but a local name used for *ikta*.³¹

²⁵ Hammer - Purgstall, *Des Osmanischen Reichs Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung* 1. p. 44.

²⁶ Jan Grzegorzewski, *Z Sidzylatów Rumelijskich Epoki Wyprawy Wiedeskiej Akta Tureckie* (We Lwowie: Nakladem Towarzystwa dla Popierania Nauki Polskiej, 1912). pp. 63-4. Weber accepted this hypothesis. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenter Roth and Claus Wittich, vol. 2 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978). p. 1073.

²⁷ Hammer - Purgstall, *Des Osmanischen Reichs Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung* 1. p. 45. In particular, see the footnote on the same page.

²⁸ Demirci, *İslamın İlk Üç Asrında Toprak Sistemi*. pp. 253-267.

²⁹ Belin, "Du Regime des Fiefs Militaires dans l' Islamisme, et Principalement en Turquie." p. 216. Carl Heinrich Becker, "Steuerpacht und Lehnswesen. Eine historische Studie über die Entstehung des Islamischen Lehnswesens," *Der Islam* 5(1914). p. 89.

³⁰ Ignatius Mouradgèa D'Ohsson, *Tableau Général De L'empire Othoman*, vol. 5 (Paris: Chez Firmin Didot Père et Fils, 1824). pp. 94-5. Mayer-Gondchaux Worms, *Recherches sur la Constitution de la Propriété Territoriale dans les Pays Musulmans, et Subsidairement en Algérie* (Paris: A. Franck, 1846). p. 11.

³¹ Worms, *Recherches sur la Constitution de la Propriété Territoriale dans les Pays Musulmans, et Subsidairement en Algérie*. p. 12.

III.1.2. Modern Turkish Historiography and its Reaction

The discussion given above concerning the western wing of Ottoman historiography is eligible for genealogical curiosity, even if their methods may not be properly scientific. However, with the rise of the modern state, and with that, nationalism, the debate became more a tool for nationalistic reconstruction of history³² in the twentieth century. Before discussing the issue it is appropriate to take a short glance at the background of the reaction.

In the three major Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity and İslam, there is a belief that catastrophe will result from the invasion of the murky Gog of Magog. In the course of time many ideas were set forth to identify who he was and the place referred to. As early as the ninth century Muslim Arabs defined the Turks as the source of the trouble.³³ Europeans on the other hand were waiting for an apocalypse that would be triggered by a people who they believed, Alexander the Great had imprisoned behind a sealed bronze gate. They would release themselves after a millennium.³⁴ The legend gives some information that these people were *spurcissime gentes* (very impure nations) who were the sons of Japheth and would come from behind the Caucasus.³⁵ It seems that the obscure names mentioned in the Bible over time were interpreted to signify the Turks. Beginning with the first crusade launched several decades after the battle of Manzikert (1071), many times the Christian

³² Ziya Gökalp, M. Fuad Köprülü, and M. Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the modern republic "sought to bring new information to the field of scholarship about the purely Turkish elements of the Islamic and pre-Islamic past in order to place Turkish nationalism, the ideology of the Republic of Turkey, on a firm footing." Carl Max Kortepeter, "The Origins and Nature of Turkish Power," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 10 (1968). p. 244.

³³ "The hour will not be established until you fight with the Turks; people with small eyes, red faces, and flat noses. Their faces will look like shields coated with leather. The Hour will not be established till you fight with people whose shoes are made of hair." Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari*, (2009). Vol. 4: 179. Imam Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, (2009). Vol. 41: 6959.

³⁴ Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1985). pp. 186, 189.

³⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 185-189.

European powers attempted to prevent the Turkic tribes' westward expansion. Now in the second half of the fourteenth century Turks appeared as conquerors in the Balkans. This unstoppable expansion surely led to an important body of writing in Europe about the Ottoman Turks.³⁶ To make a crude generalization, they tried to understand these alien enemies and wished to expel them from Europe.³⁷ Nevertheless the western view³⁸ of the Ottoman Empire tragically changed over time. The "fearsome" image³⁹ of the Ottomans would be replaced by "fecklessness"⁴⁰ and finally ended with "sickness"⁴¹ in the nineteenth century.

³⁶ In Europe it is estimated that some 3,500 works were published about the Turks between 1501 and 1600. See Linda McJannet, "History Written by the Enemy": The Reception of Eastern Sources about the Ottomans on the Continent and in England," *English Literary Renaissance* 36, no. 3 (2006). p. 396. In the sixteenth century written more than 2,500 booklets, hymns, ballads, plays addressed the turmoil caused by the Ottomans. Adam S. Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Polemics and Apologetics*, History of Christian-Muslim Relations (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007). p. 53.

³⁷ "While the rulers of Europe, whether kings, clergy, academicians or merchants, wished to keep the common people ignorant of the true nature of the Islamic-Ottoman civilization, they personally sought information from every quarter about the origins, the strengths and the weaknesses of the Turkish state." Kortepeter, "The Origins and Nature of Turkish Power." p. 242. On the other hand, Adam Francisco emphasizes the diversity in ideas among Europeans against the Turks. "Catholic writers called for a united crusade to reclaim Constantinople and, occasionally, the Holy Land. Humanists and early Protestants, in addition to approving and urging defensive war strategies, began to study the Ottomans and their religion; some even optimistically hoped to instigate a missionary enterprise among them. However, radical authors of the Reformation urged a pacifist response to Ottoman imperialism with a few expressing hope in a Turkish conquest of Europe." Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Polemics and Apologetics*. p. 31.

³⁸ With this I do not mean a homogenous Europe or a homogenous European attitude against the Ottomans rather I would like to stress the dominant themes about Turks in the literature created in Europe.

³⁹ As Kortepeter points out the "Fear of Turks" dominated sixteenth and seventeenth century European texts. Kortepeter, "The Origins and Nature of Turkish Power." p. 242. Footnote 1. Many Christians, as Luther, believed that God had sent the Turks to punish Christians, who were not sufficiently religious and were in a moral deprivation. Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Polemics and Apologetics*. pp. 65-7. Also see, Fernando F. Lanza, "Habsburg-Osmanlı Rekabeti Bağlamında 16. Yüzyılda İspanya'da Türk İmajı," in *Dünyada Türk İmgesi*, ed. Özlem Kumrular (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2005); Özlem Kumrular, "Köpekler ve domuzlar Savaşında Kanuni'nin Batı Siyasetinin bir İzdüşümü olarak Türk İmajı," in *Dünyada Türk İmajı*, ed. Özlem Kumrular (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2005); Özlem Kumrular, *Avrupa'da Türk Düşmanlığının Kökeni: Türk Korkusu* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2008). pp. 179-193.

⁴⁰ This image was the Ottomans' self-reflection in the end of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Rycout, who cited the contemporary Ottoman writers, was one of the first European historians who mentioned the weakening of the Ottoman Empire. Rycout, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. pp. 169-170. Yet, until 1683 it seems that the Europeans were still waiting for an Ottoman invasion. In that sense an amazing astrological interpretation of the Ottomans written in 1683 predicted a catastrophe led by Ottomans that would hit the Spain, Italy, France and Germany. Finally, in 1722 Christianity will be victorious. John Holwel, *An Appendix to Holwel's Catastrophe Mundi: Being an*

In this western tradition the question of the origin of the Turks or the Ottomans has a specific importance. One way of answering this question contains a naivety since these historians directly or indirectly they mainly used what was proposed in the Ottoman chronicles. On the other hand their research went far beyond these chronicles. First, they saw the Ottomans as the descendants of the barbaric hordes coming from central Asia. This dichotomous view of “east vs. west” and “civilized vs. barbaric” which led to common prejudice against the east and the nomadic life style can be traced at least back to ancient Greece.⁴² Since the ancestors of the Ottomans had been nomads, at least this is what they had learned from the Ottoman chronicles, it is not surprising to see an effort of seeking some “civilized” communities behind the well-established Ottoman Empire and its institutions. Therefore, since the Ottomans were surrounded by other “equivalent principalities” and close affinity to Ottoman principality in geographical sense put the Byzantines in the limelight.

Astrological Discourse of the Rise, Growth and Continuation of the Othoman Family (London: J.G, 1683). Holwel does not mention Britain in that catastrophe. It might be that the wishes of British were that the catastrophe might be inflicted on their enemies in Europe. Nevertheless, they still expected that it would come from the Ottomans. Contrary to his prophecy, in the same year the Ottomans were seriously defeated by European forces at Vienna. After that “the Ottoman decline” became a dominant theme in the Western literature reflected in books such as that by Dimitrie Cantemir who completed his Ottoman history in 1716 entitled; “History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire.” Dimitri Kantemir, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Yükseliş ve Çöküş Tarihi*, trans. Özdemir Çobanoğlu (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Kitapları, 1999).

⁴¹ For the first time the Russian emperor Nikolai after the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi in 1833 uttered that the Ottoman Empire was sick. Then, in 1853 the British Ambassador Sir Hamilton Seymour would say: “*nous avons sur les bras un homme malade - un homme gravement malade*” – “we have on our hands a sick man - a man seriously ill” Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853-1856)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010). pp. 68-9.

⁴² According to Menzies: “The East and the West form two distinct worlds of populations, manners, beliefs, between which there has been perpetual hatred and strife, which have sought, down to the present time, to invade and dominate each other.” Firstly, the Persians attacked Greeks then Alexander took his revenge. The Christian Romans could not succeed in creating harmony between them. The eastern church that “vitiated by the sophistically and disputatious spirit” separated from the western church. That dangerous separation led to “a supreme heresy or the new religion Islamism, for Islamism is no other than a bastard Christianity, incomplete and barbarous, the offspring of the heresies of Arius, Eutychus, and Nestorius.” Sutherland Menzies, *Turkey Old and New: Historical, Geographical and Statistical*, vol. 1 (London: W^M H. Allen & Co., 1880). pp. 6-7.

There was some degree of truth in the idea of the Byzantine effect but that effect was exaggerated. At this point the intention of these historians can be legitimized for the reason that they did not have adequate sources and not only history but all disciplines were still far from being sufficiently scientific to make better analyzes. Alternatively, the Byzantine effect can be attributed to the ulterior motives of European historians. Eventually this second approach was adopted by the Ottoman and later by Turkish scholars in the republic period.

After centuries of the Ottomans' ignoring of the ideas and literature produced in Europe finally, in the early nineteenth century they began to take them into serious consideration. At the same time Ottoman scholars and politicians began to knit a nationalistic ideology around the Ottoman identity which later would be replaced by the Turkish identity. So it is not surprising to see a reaction to the European or Western ideas of the Ottoman Empire. The reaction of Ahmed Mithad, an Ottoman delegate to the 8th International Congress of Orientalists held in Stockholm in 1889, was that Orientalists had nothing to do with politics. They even avoided speaking about politics in their face to face conversations. Thus, the Ottoman Empire suffered politically due to prejudices and misinterpretations in Europe. In order to eliminate the problem the Ottomans should learn French and teach them their "true affairs."⁴³ Nevertheless, they would not be so successful in forming a new and alternative scientific viewpoint of the Ottomans.

The Ottoman Empire collapsed at end of the World War I at a time when the European dominance in Ottoman history writing still prevailed. A few years before the collapse, in 1916 an American journalist published "*The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire: A History of the Osmanlis up to the Death of Bayezid I (1300-*

⁴³ Ahmed Mithad, "Müsteşrikin Kongreleri," *Tercüman-i Ahval* September 5, 1889. pp. 2-3.

1403).’’⁴⁴ In many aspects this book repeated the previous theses; however, it was distinguished from other publications with its intensive analyses and not being an overview or a general history of the Ottoman Empire. Whether a person shares the ideas presented by Gibbons or opposes them, it should be accepted that the book has a remarkable inner coherence that is the one of the most important facets of the scientific method. Furthermore, Gibbons’ answers are not so speculative rather he tries to prove everything that he writes by referring to contemporary Ottoman and other chronicles. Though he was criticized for not using or not being aware of some sources,⁴⁵ to be fair, a better work could be hardly have been achieved in those hard times by a non-Turkish journalist.

Gibbons’ book translated into Ottoman Turkish in 1928. Unfortunately on November 1st of the same year the new Turkish Republic adopted the modern Turkish latinized alphabet and the book was not reprinted into Modern Turkish until 1998.⁴⁶ Though almost none of Turkish historians intend to credit Gibbons’ work in the modern Ottoman historiography, its value as being the pioneer of some themes in modern historiography cannot be denied. Even though these who do not share his ideas should be grateful to Gibbons, since the desire to criticize him was the driving force for the work of Mehmed Fuad Köprülü, who is accepted as the true founder of modern Ottoman history, specifically, and of Turcology in general.⁴⁷ Yet, it is hard to

⁴⁴ Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire: A History of the Osmanlis up to the Death of Bayezid I (1300-1403)*.

⁴⁵ Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, *Osmanlı devleti'nin kuruluşu* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959). pp. 16-17.

⁴⁶ For this detail see the preface for the new edition by Mustafa Everdi. Herbert Adams Gibbons, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Kuruluşu* (Ankara: 21. Yüzyıl Yayınları, 1998). pp. 1-3.

⁴⁷ For İnalcık he is “the founder of modern Turcology”. Halil İnalcık, "Impact of the Annales School on Ottoman Studies and New Findings," *Review* 1, no. 3/4 (1978). p. 96; According to Berktaş though Yusuf Akçura is the first person who had an understanding of scientific history, Köprülü is “the most prominent figure of modern Turcology.” Halil Berktaş, *Cumhuriyet İdeolojisi ve Fuat Köprülü* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1983). pp. 40, 89.

see Koprulu as Ottomanist since he wrote more on pre-Ottoman Turkish and Islamic history and Turkish literature.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, he succeeded in creating new route for Ottoman history, which is still followed by many Ottomanists.

One of the attitudes inherited from Köprülü is reactionism. Why should it be called reaction than critique? Critique is a *sine qua non* of scientific research and analysis. The purpose of critique is to show logical fallacies, to question the inner coherence of an idea and, if deserved, to eulogize based on methods accepted to be scientific. There is a thin line between critique and reaction. Reaction cannot be in pure form but always embraces critique and many times shows itself in form of echo-critique, which means a person committing the fallacy that s/he criticizes in the same text or speech. Mostly, the reactionary is in a romantic and a sentimental mood rather than being rational which is strongly expected in the scientific method. Moreover, a reactionary person does not hesitate to emphasize some proofs while ignoring some others. Lastly, though critique has an ideal of doing, thinking or approaching better, reaction may aim to destroy and replace one idea by another without considering intellectual improvement.

III.1.3. The *Timar* System as an Islamo-Turkish Synthesis

It is interesting to see what Köprülü brought to Ottoman history and how his perspective affected the research on the *timar* system. First, he presented a linear, he called it “*génétique*”,⁴⁹ historical perspective. He was influenced by the previous

⁴⁸ Köprülü at the beginning specialized on history of Turkish Literature and then moved towards history. In 1935 he gave three conferences on the foundation of the Ottoman Empire those conference papers were then published in French in 1939. Fevziye Abdullah Tansel, "Memleketimizin Acı Kaybı Prof. Dr. Fuad Köprülü," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 14(1966). His works were then published in Turkish in the book *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kuruluşu* in 1959.

⁴⁹ Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. p. 44.

dominant genealogical history. He spent much of his effort in building up an Islamo-Turkish lineage to minimize not only the Byzantine or in general the western effect,⁵⁰ but also the Persian one on the Ottoman Empire or Turkish culture. For Köprülü if there is equivalent of an Ottoman institution in Byzantine and in any pre Islamic “Turkish” society, surely that institution should be accepted to be descended from Turkish lineage⁵¹ which he felt started with Hyung-Nus (Xiongnu).⁵² That suggestion showed itself in many examples.⁵³

Köprülü approaches the problem as that like almost every other phenomena of Ottoman history; there should be a Turkish root of the *timar* system. So he forces us to consider that because previous Turkish societies had a similar system, then the Ottomans would have had it too. The lineage that he proposed for the *timar* system was the Islamic *ikta* that evolved into the Ottoman *timar*. However, the Islamic *ikta* was no closer to the Ottoman *timar* than the Byzantine *pronoia*. So the emphasis on

⁵⁰ As Setton says: “The question, however, of Byzantine influence upon Ottoman institutions remains nebulous and controversial; modern Turkish scholars usually deprecate or try to minimize it, insisting upon the antediluvian character of Turkish traditions.” Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, 4 vols., vol. 2 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1978). p. 49.

⁵¹ Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. p. 92.

⁵² Ibid. p. 44.

⁵³ As an interesting example, Uzunçarşılı gives the mourning and wearing black dresses by the Ottomans after a death as an old Turkish tradition. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1988). p. 71. İnalçık, after showing the laws that were based on traditions in Uyghur culture, stated: “It is no coincidence that notable Turkish sovereigns who founded states were promulgators of law codes (*kanunnâme*)” See, Halil İnalçık, “Turkish and Iranian Political Theories and Traditions in *Kutadgu Bilig*,” in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society*, ed. Halil İnalçık (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). p. 12. İnalçık after presenting a reflection of Iranian state theory in *Kutadgu Bilig*, written in the eleventh century, finds a Turkish state tradition based on “proverbs” contained in this book. All these “proverbs” point to the importance of a law in statecraft. This is why, for İnalçık, all Turkish statesmen gave importance to law making. There is no need to discuss the tautological side of this thesis; since, law making is a *sine qua non* institution of all politically organized societies. Furthermore, it is not necessary to emphasize the problem of a cultural lineage of Ottomans to Uyghurs. This thesis is accepted without any critique by Fleischer. “Islamic ideals of government did not always harmonize with those of the Central Asian steppe from which the Ottomans had come...” Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)*. p. 9. Surely this approach undermines the pragmatism and opportunism in the real politics of the Ottomans. Most probably Fleischer confuses *örf* with tradition. In fact *örf hukuk* means any kind previous regulations and any kind of sultanic order that was given *in situ*. Here previous regulations refer to the continuity principle of a state. Otherwise it does not mean tradition in a modern sense.

the Seljukid *ikta* became stronger. That is, the Seljukid *ikta* was the transitory form between Islamic *ikta* and the Ottoman *timars*.⁵⁴

This thesis of Köprülü with special emphasis on Seljukid antecedents was widely accepted by mainstream Turkish scholars⁵⁵, except for a few leftist or Marxist researchers, most not being historians who do not totally ignore, if not accept, the idea of Byzantine effect.⁵⁶ Unfortunately no one attempts to criticize Köprülü or add to his ideas thus, Köprülü's ideas are deeply diffused into those of later historians directly or indirectly, in one way or another. Together with dominance of Turkish historians in Ottoman history Köprülü's hypothesis is also followed abroad as well.⁵⁷

After claiming the Islamic *ikta* as a predecessor of Seljukid *ikta*, contrary to Scala and Deny, Köprülü alleges that assessment in value appeared first time in the Seljukid Empire. For that he shows what Nizamülmülk wrote in sections five and thirty seven (actually thirty eight) as proofs. Nizamülmülk suggests that an *ikta*

⁵⁴ Köprülü first offered this theory in Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, "Selçukiler Zamanında Anadolu'da Türk Medeniyeti," *Milli Tettebbular Mecmuası* 2, no. 5 (1331/1915). Then developed it in; Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*.

⁵⁵ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2011). p. 516. Osman Turan, "İktâ," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1993). p. 958. Coşkun Üçok, "Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtında Tımarlar," *Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi* 1, no. 4 (1944). p. 533-4. D. Mehmet Doğan, *Tarih ve Toplum* (Ankara: Rehber Yayınları, 1989). pp. 112-114. Halil Cin, *Osmanlı toprak düzeni ve bu düzenin bozulması*, Araştırma ve inceleme eserleri 3 (Ankara: Yenigün Matbaası, 1978). pp. 91-94. Cin repeats almost exactly what Üçok writes. Also see, Cin and Akyılmaz, *Tarihte Toplum ve Yönetim Tarzı olarak Feodalite ve Osmanlı Düzeni*. p. 227. Barkan again repeats what Köprülü proposed. Barkan, "Tımar." pp. 815-817. Coşkun Aktan is another author who repeated what Köprülü and then Barkan proposed. Coşkun Can Aktan, "Osmanlı Tımar Sisteminin Mali Yönü," *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 52 (1988). pp. 69-70. Some authors go further and place more emphasis on pre Islamic Turkish history: Mehmet Dikici, *Feodalizm, Mülkiyet ve Türk Toprak Sistemi* (İzmir: Hür Efe Matbaası, 1996). p. 351.

⁵⁶ According to Kırılcımlı, feudalism became the reality in the Byzantine Empire as it grew weaker. So it would not be expected that the Ottomans adopted their degenerated system. Nevertheless, they owed many institutions to the Byzantines. Hikmet Kırılcımlı, *Osmanlı Tarihinin Maddesi* (İstanbul: Tarih Bilimi Kitapları, 2000). pp. 34-40. According to Muammer Sencer accepting that the Ottomans taken the *timar* system, at least partially, from the Byzantines is not unscientific. Muammer Sencer, *Toprak ağalığının kökeni* (İstanbul: Tel Yayınları, 1971). pp. 53-54. Even such a liberal attitude was seen as unacceptable by Köprülü's followers. According to Mehmet Doğan, for example, such scholars have an allergy to the nationalization of history. Doğan, *Tarih ve Toplum*. pp. 112-115.

⁵⁷ For an example see, Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. pp. 11-12. Ernst Werner, *Büyük Bir Devletin Doğuşu: Osmanlı Feodalizminin Oluşma Süreci* (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1986). p. 18.

owner should not demand from peasants more than the determined amount since ultimately property (land) and people (*reaya*) belonged to the sultan.⁵⁸ Cogently, Köprülü emphasizes the similarity with the Ottoman practice however, why that idea developed in Seljukid period but not before? He says that although it is not certain whether Iranian feudalism affected Seljukid *ikta* but it was certain that some historical necessity led to it.⁵⁹ This necessity was the pressure from nomadic Turkish tribes from inner Asia that forced the state to settle them in those military fiefs in order that they could benefit from them.⁶⁰

This seems logical but if he had read several lines more in section five of *Siyasetname*⁶¹ Köprülü would have realized that Nizamülmülk was referring to the origin of this organization as being the Sassanid king, Khusrau I (Anushirvan, the just), (531-579 A.D.).⁶² At least it can be stated that Nizamülmülk used a story attributed to Khusrau I as a basis for his advice.⁶³ As a Persian statesman it would be quite normal for him to be aware of such popular Persian political stories and that there should be some factual points in that story.⁶⁴ Even if Nizamülmülk did fabricate the story, one point is certain that is the Persians already had a notion of the Seljukid type *ikta* when Seljuks first tried to establish the system and they would

⁵⁸ Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*, p. 41.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 100

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 105.

⁶¹ *Siyasetname* is an advice book so it may not reflect the common practices but the practices that should be applied. Therefore, proposing Nizamülmülk as the founder of the *timar* system might not reflect the truth. In fact it can be interpreted as he tried to establish a *timar* like system.

⁶² Nizamü'l-Mülk, *Siyasetname*, trans. Mehmet Taha Ayar, Hasan Ali Yücel Klasikler Dizisi (İstanbul: Türkiye İşbankası, 2009). p. 42-3

⁶³ Köprülü seems to ignore that what Nizamülmülk said were advice but not practices. As Suavi Aydın indisputably comments, it was illogical to advise something that was already practiced. Instead it was an ideal situation that he offered for centralization. Suavi Aydın, "Aydınlanma ve Tarihselcilik Problemleri Arasında Türk Tarih Yazıcılığı: Feodalite Örneği," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 91 (2001-2002). p. 58.

⁶⁴ It seems that those who claimed a Persian origin of the *timar* system had not yet noticed this point, they also pointed to Khosrau I as the founder of the Sassanid feudal system that was thought to be the base of the Ottoman *timar* system.

have practiced it. That is to say, Köprülü, let alone rejecting the Byzantine effect, ignores or at least minimalizes, the Persian impact throughout his discussion, despite the fact that Seljuks' accepted Persian as official language. Moreover, it is a contradiction that he points out that *timar* in some of the Old Persian texts had used to mean "care, benevolence and grace; the money, provisions, salaries and *iktas* bestowed for that purpose"⁶⁵ on the one hand, and then claims that it is uncertain that Persian had a similar system. How can it be possible that a word would signify an institution that had never been practiced? This shows how Köprülü tried to exclude the Persians in his linear perspective.

His response to thesis that *timars* were allocated to naval forces had Byzantine origin is quite weak. He states that the Seljukids had *emirs* (ruler, provincial governor) who were responsible for protecting the shores of the Black Sea and Mediterranean. "If they had naval force they should have had *iktas* reserved for them".⁶⁶ Seljukids might have had such *iktas* but the deduction that Köprülü used to prove the existence of this was rather primitive. With same logic it can be claimed that since the British, French and Venice had such naval forces therefore they also had *iktas* and this idea can be expanded to any society that had organized naval forces.

Furthermore, Köprülü tried to prove that Seljuks also used the term *timar*. Actually, there had already been a legend about the origin of the *timar* in the Seljukid period. Scala alleged that "as early as 1263 we have proofs of a fief (*timar*) being conferred by a Seljuk Sultan."⁶⁷ Later Beldiceanu claimed that during the reign of

⁶⁵ Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. p. 120, footnote 235.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 108.

⁶⁷ Scala, "The Greeks after Alexander the Great." p. 116.

Sancar (1117-1157) the word *timar* was used to signify administration.⁶⁸ Köprülü in one of his articles claims that Seljukid Sultan Alaeddin Keykubad (r. 1221-1237) distributed *timars* among his soldiers.⁶⁹ The point here is that the quotation that he showed as proof was taken from a Seljukid history written in the fifteenth century by Yazıcıoğlu long after the collapse of the Seljuks.⁷⁰ The book was supposedly a translation of Ibn Bibi's *El-Evamirü'l-Alaiyye fi'l-Umuri'l-Alaiyye* (or *Seljukname*) written in Seljukid period. Yazıcıoğlu sometimes made serious alterations to the text⁷¹ this chapter is one of the examples of this. Though there was not such term as *timar* in the original text, in Yazıcıoğlu's translation there was a perfect form of the institution.⁷² It is obvious that Köprülü observed Seljukid history retrospectively. In his later work Köprülü seems to realize that it was not a direct translation yet he concludes that even in the fifteenth century there was widespread belief that the Ottoman *timars* had a Seljukid origin.⁷³ Similarly Uzunçarşılı tried to show the similarity between the Ottoman and other principalities that emerged after the collapse of the Seljuks so to prove that there was a continuation from *ikta* to *timar*.⁷⁴

In fact it was not uncommon to see one culture describe another culture by the means of its own cultural codes. Even in modern texts historians used the terms

⁶⁸ Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*, pp. 11-12.

⁶⁹ Köprülü, "Selçukiler Zamanında Anadolu'da Türk Medeniyeti." p. 213.

⁷⁰ Yazıcızâde Ali, *Tevârih-i âl-i Selçuk [Selçuklu Tarihi]*, trans. Abdullah Bakır (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2009). pp. 347-348.

⁷¹ See the preface by Abdullah Çakır in *ibid.* pp. VII-VIII.

⁷² In order to see this point, compare Yazıcıoğlu's translation mentioned above with İbn Bibi, *Selçuknâme*, ed. Refet Yinanç and Ömer Özkan, trans. Mükrimin Halil Yinanç (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2007). pp. 75-76. Houtsma is the first scholar who published facsimile editions of these two texts. this can be compared with İbn Bibi [Yazıcıoğlu], *Historie des Seldjoudes d'Asie Mineure*, ed. Martijn Theodoor Houtsma, vol. 3, *Recueil de Textes Relatifs à l'Histoire des Seldjoudes* (Leide: E.J. Brill, 1902). p. 211, and İbn Bibi, *Historie des Seldjoudes d'Asie Mineure*, ed. Martijn Theodoor Houtsma, vol. 4, *Recueil de Textes Relatifs à l'Histoire des Seldjoudes* (Leide: E.J. Brill, 1902). pp. 91-94.

⁷³ Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. p. 109.

⁷⁴ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Ondört ve Onbeşinci Asırlarda Anadolu Beyliklerinde Toprak ve Halk İdaresi," *Belleten* 2, no. 5-6 (1938). Also see, Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri*. p. 238.

of one culture to describe the equivalent in another. Western scholars frequently use the word ‘fief’ to describe the Ottoman *timar*. Similarly the Ottomans many times used their own terminology to describe some other institutions. Turkish Historians usually shows as evidence that the records in the Ottoman *defters* that mentions a certain *timar* was possessed by a person in pre-Ottoman times, as the existence of *timar* in Seljukid or post-Seljukid principalities, and proof of the transition from *ikta* to *timar*.⁷⁵ Following exactly the same logic, other historians prove the transition from Byzantine *pronoia* to *timar*.⁷⁶ Therefore, since the same evidence cannot be used to prove two mutually exclusive ideas then there is no choice but to refuse the evidence.

Köprülü claims that in some Seljukid texts the meaning of the word *timar* was the same as used in the Ottoman Empire. However, as Vryonis stated, none of the examples that Köprülü gives are actually used to signify fief.⁷⁷ For example, he shows the following sentence extracted from İbni Bibi’s *Seljukname*:

و دیدند که بایجو کسی را که بدو تولا می کند تیمار می دارد⁷⁸

Which means “Baycu assured their protection of whoever becomes friends with him.” Therefore, in this sentence it is for sure that *timar* means protection and care not fief. In none of the Persian texts nor those of Seljuks that have been read for this current research is the term *timar* connoted a special terminological meaning. So the

⁷⁵ Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri*. p. 240.

⁷⁶ Ilias Kolovos, "A Biti of 1439 from the Archives of the Monastery of Xeropotamou (Mount Athos)," *Hilandarski Zbornik (Recueil de Chilandar)*, no. 11 (2004). pp. 304-5.

⁷⁷ Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh Through the Fifteenth Century*. p. 470, footnote. 94.

⁷⁸ İbn Bibi, *Historie des Seldjucides d'Asie Mineure*, 4, p. 242. It is transliterated by Köprülü as: “*va didan ki Baycu kasi-râ ki bad-û naval mî-konad timâr mî-dârad*.” Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. p. 120, footnote, 235. The mistake in his transliteration shows that Köprülü did not actually understand the sentence. Yinanç translates it in Turkish as “Şehirde mahsur olan ümera, kendine iltica eden kimseler için Baycu’nun *timar* tuttuğunu anladılar.” İbn Bibi, *Selçuknâme*. p. 179. In this translation “*timar* tutmak” does not mean revenue-holding and does not make sense in Turkish.

question as to why the Ottomans gave up the word *ikta* that had been used by almost all previous Islamic states and began to use *timar* refer to a similar military organization still needs to be explained by those supporting the Islamic lineage concept.

Similarly Köprülü tries to prove the existence of *hass*, *zi'amet* and *sipâhî* in Seljukid period by claiming that these words exist in some texts.⁷⁹ First, *hass* (*khas*) or *hassa* is an Arabic word that means private possession. In Islamic states it is a term that is used to signify sultan's possessions i.e. anything belong to the state. In the Ottoman Empire *hass* can be seen both a category in the *timar* system and an organization out of the system; however, this is not justification of the existence of the *timar* system in earlier Islamic societies. *Sipâhî* on the other hand is a generic Persian word meaning horseman and has no special connection with the *timar* system. In the Seljukid period *nöker*, *cünd*, *çeri*, *asker*, and *leşker* were at least as much widespread as *sipâhî* if not more. Moreover, it will be better to remember that the Ottomans used *sipâhî* not only for feudal cavalries but also central horsemen who had nothing to do with the *timar* system and sometimes in many archival documents it was used for pre-Ottoman Christian cavalries as well. Lastly, *zi'amet* is an Arabic word that means leadership. It is true that in Seljukid period this word was used but only with its generic meaning. As Osman Turan stated in the Ottoman usage it has a different meaning signifying an economic unit valued between 20,000 and 99,999 *akçes*.⁸⁰ More than that, those who are familiar with early *defters* may notice that there was no such a category as *zi'amet* until the end of the reign of Mehmed II.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. pp. 120-1.

⁸⁰ Osman Turan, *Türkiye Selçukluları Hakkında Resmi Vesikalar: Metin Tercüme ve Araştırmalar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988). p. 9.

⁸¹ See Chapters 3 and 4.

Even if it is possible to insist on the availability of the word *zi'amet* in Seljukid period, it should be accepted that it was not borrowed but reinvented in the Ottoman Empire. However, Köprülü is strictly against almost any Ottoman contribution to the *timar* system. Aşık Paşazâde's attribution of some regulations about *timar* to the laws of Osman I is rejected under the pretext that Seljuks already had such regulations. Therefore, Osman did "nothing but prolonged the old system."⁸² Even one of his followers, İsmail H. Danişmend goes further to reinterpret the supposed law code that was issued by Murad I assisted by Timurtaş Paşa in 1375 that for the first time made a distinction between *timar* and *zi'amet*.⁸³ To Danişmend, there was such a thing as *zi'amet* before the Ottomans. Therefore, Timurtaş only imitated the Islamic-Turkish states that used three layered *timar* grants, i.e. *hass*, *zi'amet* and *timar*.⁸⁴

To conclude, Köprülü, in fact, proved nothing but the existence of a similar institution in Islamic, especially in the Seljukid, period. However, the existence of similar institutions existed in almost all pre-capitalist agriculturalist societies beginning with the earliest civilizations. Köprülü was right in criticizing others, but his strict linear perspective made his analysis equally problematic. He claims that when looking for the root of a particular Ottoman institution the first thing to do is looking at the preceding Turks. If it is not found in their history, then look at other cultures. However, the historical journey of an institution, a word or a custom might not be that straightforward. Every invented object had the possibility of being reinvented independently of the original. To give a typical example; the Mayans did not learn the calendar and writing from Sumerian or another ancient civilization of

⁸² Köprülü, *Bizans müesseselerinin Osmanlı müesseselerine tesiri*. p. 111

⁸³ Deny, "*Timar*." p. 768.

⁸⁴ İsmail Hami Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971). p. 60.

the old world but independently invented them and erected pyramids which were similar to those in Egypt. Another point is that we cannot ignore the fact that what we can call synthesis assimilation; an assimilating culture can be assimilated back by the synthesis of the old assimilating factor. That is to say every cultural product can come and go between cultures. Each time the hosting culture adds something to these products. In time the exchanged product can lose its authenticity and borrowed again as if it is a totally new product. Lastly while one culture can affect another, at the same time the receiving culture can also affect the giver; thus usually the effect between cultures is not one way but reciprocal.

Though Köprülü criticizes European scholars in many aspects, he built his theory on the similarly flimsy methodological base of linearism. Linear history is like forming a constellation in an enormous universe; when you look from one angle at the sky on a starry night, the multi dimension in the universe reduced to one and some stars seems to be more related one another and form patterns, in fact they may not have any relation with each other when viewed from another angle. Similarly in linear history many dimensions were excluded and simply reduced to one line. As time passes, as with the stars the distance between them became smaller and the details, which may be essential for interpretation, become indistinct and they appear to be more related. A star, if it really is in a constellation could have a meaning only in relation to the other stars that are included in the same group. Similarly, in linear history very different entities can be brought together and any resemblance between them is more important than their differences. These perspectives simply ignore the

question about the general dynamics of changes, transformations and developments in the universe. For this reason particularism is a siamese sister of linearism.⁸⁵

Linearism is rather like a trick sometimes used by historians who recount more than one event or phenomenon in a row as if there is an unbroken continuum between them. This is nothing but an illusion because looking carefully at the way of constructing it, it can be seen that there are other ways. In particular in the case of the *timar* system it can be reconstructed in more than one way because it is true that similar technological and cultural levels facilitate a limited variation of institutions. For example, the administrative and economic organization of the Ancient Egyptian *septs*, Greek *themes*, European Feudal divisions and Ottoman *sancaks* more or less refer to similar phenomena. Therefore, it would be easy to prove that there was a linear transition from Ancient Egypt to Ottomans.

From Köprülü's perspective the east-west dichotomy or Islam-Christianity dilemma in historical writing could not be transcended, it was even to some extent deepened. As a result especially in the beginning period of the Ottoman Empire was reflected as an endless conflict between Muslim Ottomans and Christians ignoring the intra-Muslim conflicts among principalities of Asia Minor. Such a depiction can be seen in contemporary writings of, let us say, the age of religion. Even at that time the Ottoman chroniclers tried to legitimize the Empire's eastward expansion differently than the westward movement. Many western chronicles reflected the Muslim Ottoman-Christianity clashes as the main mode of the battle between good and evil. From such a historical perspective the clashes between Christian groups or the Ottoman eastward movement, that is to say the conquest of the lands of the other

⁸⁵ For a critique to particularism in Ottoman historiography see, Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Modern Devletin Doğası: 16. Yüzyıldan 18. Yüzyıla Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, trans. Oktay Özel and Canay Şahin (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2000). pp. 21-48.

Muslim polities, drew not much attention and they were considered as nothing but deviant incidents. They would only carry meaning if they were considered to be components of the main teleological conflict between good and evil. For example, the Ottomans' eastward expansion over the Turcoman principalities was usually explained in the context of betrayal or obstacle to the main conflict with the west.

An ongoing debate on the motives behind the Ottomans' westward expansion articulated that perception to the modern Ottoman historiography. The debate called the "gaza theory" had its root in very early Western writings. However, Gibbons, for the first time, seriously emphasized the role of Islam as the primary factor behind the Ottoman successes against the Byzantine or Christian world, in general. Then Paul Wittek formulated it under the name of *gaza*.⁸⁶ This perspective built upon an assumption of the two homogenized groups being almost ultimate enemies. Any support of the Ottomans by Christian segments was attributed to the good virtue of the Ottomans and or to the degeneration in the Christian societies; however, neither entity was unified. Class struggles or conflicting group interests should be taken into consideration as an explanation to understand the socio-economic and military organization of the Empire, i.e. the *timar* system.

Lastly, approaching Ottoman history in that way unavoidably emphasizes the state. If the state devoted itself to a holy war on western frontiers then there should be a strong Islamic ideology and which showed itself in the *sharia* (Islamic Law). Therefore, it is no coincidence to see development of a history of law before every

⁸⁶ Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* (London: The Royal Asiatic society, 1938). Halil İnalcık, who was one of Köprülü's pupils, defended that theory in many articles and books. Most of the discussion on the topic can be seen in Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

other field in the Ottoman historiography.⁸⁷ Anyway, focusing on the law was equal to focusing on the state.⁸⁸ To a certain level the mainstream Turkish Ottomanists were influenced by the Annales School, but they never gave up the old trend of viewing history from above. In the final analysis, the state was the center of everything in the Ottoman Empire. The successes against the Christian world were due to the good organization that was the state. The patrons of the *gazis* were very skillful sultans, who were if not “oriental despots” were surely almost omnipotent patrimonial authorities in the Ottoman realm.

III.2. Holistic and Multilinear Approaches

Today, many historians draw away from such linear approaches. The *timar* system has long been to be examined from multilinear or holistic-universalistic perspectives. To challenge these unilinear perspectives Setton claims that:

Ottoman "feudalism" appears by and large to have been a continuation of the Anatolian Seljuk ("Selchûkid") system, itself allegedly preserving older Turkish traditions as well as borrowing from Byzantine, Arab, and Persian practices.⁸⁹

Similarly İnalçık believes that the *timar* system was a common culture contributed by ancient Persians, Byzantines, Western Europe, the Islamic States and Turco-Mongol states.⁹⁰ Mutaščieva comments on the universalistic conditions that led to

⁸⁷ That was not the only reason. For long time access to the Ottoman archives was not easy and law codes had to be found in other sources. Furthermore, these sources were easier to analyse compared to the quantitative content of *defters*.

⁸⁸ Here has to be added that the mainstream Turkish scholars were strongly affected by the awakening of the Turkish nationalism, which began in the nineteenth century developing to its maturity and being strongly organized in the first half of the twentieth century with the founding of the new republic. They had a romantic view of the past that “they now their power was weak but once their ancestors (the ottoman state) had shaken Europe.”

⁸⁹ Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, 2. p. 49.

⁹⁰ İnalçık, "*Timar*.", p. 502. Also see, Fatma Acun, "Klasik Dönem Eyalet İdare Tarzı Olarak *Timar* sistemi ve Uygulaması," in *Türkler*, ed. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, and Salim Koca (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002). pp. 900-901.

such a system: “as a basic agrarian institution of the conquerors, [the *timar* system] could be neither “as found” nor “introduced” because it met the requirements of a definite set of historical circumstances.”⁹¹ For Hüseyin Avni Şanda, these historical circumstances were dominated by “undeveloped cash economy”⁹² and “primitive means of production”⁹³, and Barkan clarified the point further:

The difficulty in transferring revenues that were mostly collected in crops from one place to another or convert them into cash or to store them in a state treasury to redistribute as salaries which were insufficient to maintaining livelihood for personnel during the periods when the cash economy did not develop sufficiently; or due to some other historical military and political reasons [the *timar* system] was experienced in various forms both in the east and the west.⁹⁴

Lastly, Marxist scholars offer an analysis via an upper level of abstraction. What Karl Marx called the “mode of production” refers to a specific combination of means and the relations of production which universally occur in several ways. In Marxist progressive typology each mode of production refers to a specific level/stage of development. Once the mode of production of a society is defined, it becomes easier to predict its next stage. Thus, Marxism is proposing another kind of linearism, universal linearism. Yet in practice, Marx saw the difficulty of approaching some societies using these modes of production. What he calls the “Asiatic Mode of Production” was very alien to any of those systems seen in Europe, the history of which Marx examined and built his theory of historical materialism⁹⁵ which was

⁹¹ Moutafchieva, *Agrarian relations in the Ottoman Empire in the 15th and 16th centuries*. p. 8.

⁹² For Becker the transition from a cash economy to a barter economy is one of the main indicators of the transformation of antiquity into feudalism. Becker, "Steuerpacht und Lehnswesen. Eine historische Studie über die Entstehung des Islamischen Lehnswesens." p. 82.

⁹³ Hüseyin Avni Şanda, *Reaya ve Köylü* (İstanbul: Habora, 1970). p. 31.

⁹⁴ Barkan, "*Timar*." p. 806. See also, İnalçık, "*Timar*." p. 502. Acun, "Klasik Dönem Eyalet İdare Tarzı Olarak *Timar* sistemi ve Uygulaması." p. 899.

⁹⁵ François Bernier's observations about the east inspired Marx to conclude a distinct mode of production in the east. Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumunu, Marxist Üretim Tarzı Kavramı* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010). p. 3. Bernier after observing that “there was no private property” in Eastern countries such as India, Persia and the Ottoman Empire he

therefore, a highly Eurocentric perception of human history. Marx himself did not pay sufficient attention to the mode of production of the Ottoman Empire, but his followers have discussed whether the Ottoman mode of production was within the classical schema of Marxist theory or outside it. Therefore, the discussion to a great extent was based on a comparison of the Ottoman *timar* system and the European feudalism.

Actually, comparing the Ottoman *timar* with European feudalism was not new at all. From the earliest studies to recent ones the question of the similarity and/or the differences between the Ottoman *timar* system and the Western feudalism were continually discussed for different motives and on different theoretical frameworks. The first western scholars tried to find how to resist or surpass the “Ottoman power”. Therefore, the first comparisons were mostly in terms of the military strength. The Ottoman *timar* system was different and “superior” to that of European system(s) before the seventeenth century.⁹⁶ Paolo Giovio indicated three factors that made the Ottoman army powerful, these were; obedience, courage and robustness of soldiers.⁹⁷ As a matter of fact he draws attention to the superiority of the Ottoman Army in terms of discipline, motivation and provisioning. However, this

conclude that: “...take away the right of private property in land, and you introduce, as a sure and necessary consequence, tyranny, slavery, injustice, beggary and barbarism: the ground will cease to be cultivated and become a dreary wilderness; in short, the road will be opened to the ruin of Kings and the destruction of Nations.” François Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire, A.D. 1656-1668*, trans. Archibald Constable and Vincent A. Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1916). p. 238.

⁹⁶ A former Janissary points out that wearing light armor made the Ottoman cavalry superior to Europeans ones. Konstantin Mihailović, *Bir Yeniçerinin Hatıratı*, trans. Kemal Beydilli (İstanbul: Tativ Yayınları, 2003). pp. 104-105.

⁹⁷ Jouius, *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles*. Fol. cxxxiii. The superiority of the *timar* system to European feudalism was also admitted by later scholars.

view changed in the seventeenth century and the *timar* system was no longer superior but degenerated over time.⁹⁸ As Lane-Poole stated:

For several centuries these feudal soldiers formed a large proportion of the Ottoman armies, and during medieval times they were at least a match for any similar troops that the Christians could bring against them; but when the nations of Europe began to maintain regular standing armies, the Turkish feudal militia, without modern arms or systematic training, was no longer able to meet them upon equal terms..... we have seen, these feudal troops gradually became useless.⁹⁹

Thornton, who believes that once the Ottoman *timar* army was superior, stresses the motivation among the soldiers as the source of superiority of the Ottoman army.¹⁰⁰ It is possible to discuss extensively these ideas and make comparisons but for now it is enough to see how these scholars perceived the *timar* system as strong and more efficient but then later perceived it as ineffective in comparison to the western system(s).

However, some historians compare more concrete aspects. It might have been Rycaut who for first time emphasized the similarity between British feudalism and the Ottoman *timar* system: “both one [*zâ’im* and *timar*-holder *sipâhî*] and the other of these soldiers little differ from those in England which hold their lands in *Capite*, or the ancient tenure of Knights-service.”¹⁰¹ Another historian draws attention to the oppression of both systems¹⁰² and Menzies, though accepting the similarities, points

⁹⁸ Compared with the first half of the sixteenth century (during the reigns of Selim I and Süleyman I) Rycaut decided that in the seventeenth century the *timar* system was corrupted. Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. pp. 169.170.

⁹⁹ Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Story of Turkey* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1897). pp. 332-333.

¹⁰⁰ He says: “Enthusiasm and the hopes of reward or plunder formerly collected and held together the great bodies of men, whom the Ottoman sovereigns were enabled to call into the field.” Thomas Thornton, *The Present State of Turkey or Description of the Political, Civil and Religious Constitution, Government and Laws of the Ottoman Empire* (London: G. Woodfall, 1807). pp. 166.

¹⁰¹ Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. p. 173.

¹⁰² Olivier sees the *timar* system as “a sort of feudal system no less oppressive than that from which our ancestors have had so long to suffer.” Guillaume Antoine Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman empire, Egypt, and Persia, Undertaken by Order of the Government of France, during the First Six Years of the Republic*. (London: Printed for T.N. Longman & O. Rees, Paternoster-Row; and T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1801). p. 190.

out that both systems were different in terms of hereditary rights.¹⁰³ Thornton made a more comprehensive comparison both in terms of similarities and differences.¹⁰⁴

III.2.1. Marxist Approaches

The old Ottoman dominions in the Balkans which gained their independence in the nineteenth century experience serious cataclysms from 1912 to 1918 due to Balkan wars and World War I. After the October revolution in 1917 majority of the Balkans gradually articulated to Soviet Unions. That process had a deep impact on the writing of in the Balkans. Though some historians saw Ottoman sovereignty as less oppressive, and it had freed the Balkans people from the oppression of feudalism, the remainder determined the Ottoman Empire as being responsible for

¹⁰³ “That system resembled Western feudalism, but differed from it in that it was exempt from the principle of hereditary right.” Menzies, *Turkey Old and New: Historical, Geographical and Statistical*, 1. p. 235.

¹⁰⁴ “[T]hough it resembled in its leading features that which was introduced in all those parts of Europe where the Northern nations settled themselves, was in several particulars essentially different from it. In those countries the victorious chief assigned to his principal officers extensive tracts of land, which they subdivided among their inferior officers, and they again to the soldiers; each superior exacting from his immediate vassal the same fealty, by which he had bound himself to his own immediate superior, whether the sovereign or a mesne lord. Hence arose the great power of the barons, in whose defence, or at whose instigation their subordinate vassals have sometimes taken up arms, in opposition to, or in defiance of, the authority of their common sovereign. In Turkey all the land is held immediately from the sultan, and all grants, on the demise of the incumbent, vest anew in him. The reciprocal feudal obligations, which confirmed and cemented the relations between the nobles and their vassals, are there unknown: so that between the pashas and the inferior feudal proprietors, there exists no tie of generosity and benevolence on the one hand, or of gratitude and affection on the other; and though there be indeed subordination of rank, there is no concatenation of dependence. When inconveniences were felt from the abuse of the power of the lords, and the oppressed vassals, though they obeyed the summons to the field, yet were indifferent and even hostile to the cause they were engaged in, a remedy was adopted in several European states, by making the fiefs hereditary, and taxing the lands with the condition of furnishing a certain number of soldiers, armed and equipped; so that a numerous and powerful army was instantly assembled, and at once ready for action. In this era of the feudal history, when knight-service was introduced, the system more resembled that of Turkey, except that there the grants always continued precarious, and dependent on the pleasure of the sultan, as universal proprietor. Vassalage, properly speaking, did not exist, as all were equally crown-vassals; and from their being independent of each other, they never could form a counterpoise to the power of the sovereign. Thornton, *The Present State of Turkey or Description of the Political, Civil and Religious Constitution, Government and Laws of the Ottoman Empire*. pp. 162-163.

the backwardness of the Balkans, because Ottoman feudalism was in a more “primitive stage” than that in the Balkans.¹⁰⁵

The thesis that the Ottoman Empire led to a destruction and backwardness in the Balkans provoked another wave of reaction from mainstream Turkish scholars. According to Turkish historians, the idea that Ottomans were cruel to the Balkan peoples had no connection with reality; rather the Ottoman conquests had freed peasants from the cruelty and arbitrary rules of feudal lords.¹⁰⁶ Halil İnalcık in several works responded to Balkans’ nationalist and Marxist historians by showing how the Ottomans gained the trust of the Christian population by a peaceful process called *istimalet* (coaxing) and how these people were allocated to official posts in the state army.¹⁰⁷ Mehmet Doğan goes further and alleges that people were waiting for a savior and the Ottomans brought three essential things to the places they conquered which were; liberty, equality and justice.¹⁰⁸ Thus, the Ottoman *timar* system was perceived as totally opposite to Western feudalism.

The Turkish Marxist, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, agrees with mainstream Turkish scholars not for defending the Ottomans against Soviet and Balkans historians but for

¹⁰⁵ Wayne S. Vucinich, "Some Aspects of the Ottoman Legacy," in *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Charles and Barbara Jelavich (1963). Also for a detailed discussion see, Halil İnalcık, "On the Social Structure of the Ottoman Empire: Paradigms and Research," in *From Empire to Republic*, ed. Halil İnalcık (İstanbul: Isis Pres, 1995).

¹⁰⁶ Üçok, "Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtında Tımarlar." p. 527.

¹⁰⁷ According to İnalcık the Ottomans protected Christians against Germiyans’ pillages and with *istimalet* allow them to live in their sites and undertook their protection. Halil İnalcık, *Devlet-i ‘Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar-I* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası, 2010). p. 12. In one of his articles İnalcık simply tries to prove how Christian soldiers were used in the Ottoman military organization and how they also enjoyed military fiefs. İnalcık, "Stefan Dušan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri." In a recent article İnalcık says Balkans nationalist and Marxist historians failed to explain the Ottoman expansion. The *İstimalet* and *aman* principles of the Ottoman conquest convinced the Christian peoples to live with them in peace and rapprochement. İnalcık, ""Türk Korkusu"." p. 248.

¹⁰⁸ Doğan, *Tarih ve Toplum*. pp. 116-117. For İnalcık, the Ottoman regime gave the peasants more benefits when compared to the Balkans’ ancien régime. Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klâsik Çağ (1300-1600)*, trans. Ruşen Sezer (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003). p. 19.

reconstructing Ottoman history from a Marxist perspective. For him, when Turks came to Middle East they entered into two cultures, namely İslam and Byzantine, these were highly stratified class societies that pushed peasantry into slavery and poverty. The main conflict took place between the Turks and the wealthy lords of these societies, and poor peasants were not so willing to support their lords in these battles. As the Turks conquered the lands from these societies they redistributed them together with a pair of ox to poor people that had not resisted Turks. That was not because of the Ottoman ideals but because the Ottomans were in a stage of primitive communism.¹⁰⁹

Kıvılcımlı did not solely aim to rewrite Ottoman history. His main motive was to contribute to the present state and the future of Turkey.¹¹⁰ This intention was a part of the Marxist wave that culminated in 1960s and 1970s.¹¹¹ However, Marxists did not reach an agreement upon the way how to resolve the ongoing problems, however, they agreed on one point; that without studying Ottoman history the problems of the modern republic would not be understood. Or in other words, they tried to find the historical roots of what they saw as the problem. Furthermore, that approach was the core principle of Marxist historical materialism.

Eventually two distinct Marxist blocks began to discuss the conceptualization of the history of the Ottoman Empire. One side claimed that the Ottomans had a *Feudal Mode of Production* (FMP) and the other decided that it was *Asiatic Mode of*

¹⁰⁹ Kıvılcımlı, *Osmanlı Tarihinin Maddesi*. pp. 13-14.

¹¹⁰ This book was based on his notes from the 1950s. This theory was nothing but an analogy between the foundation of the Ottoman Empire and the Land Reform of 1945. In both cases the state distributed land and any tool necessary for production to the poor. The Ottoman Empire was seeing itself as the representative of İslam that originally had a primitive communist character. Therefore, to Kıvılcımlı, though the new Republic was strictly against communism in fact no one really knew what communism was. Even İslam in its pure form was not against it. Ibid. pp. 11-15.

¹¹¹ Oğuz Oyan, *Feodalizm ve Osmanlı Tartışmaları* (Ankara: İmaj Yayıncılık, 1998). p. 59. Suna Başak Avcılar, "Asya Tipi Üretim Tarzı'na Veda," *Bilig*, no. 22 (2002). p. 3.

Production (AMP). Those who supported AMP focused on the point that the land belonged to the sultan, and people could only have right of usage.¹¹² On the other hand their opponents claimed that there was private property in the Ottoman Empire.¹¹³ Supporters of AMP accused the feudalists as being Eurocentric because feudalism was connected to the West and the feudalists were trying to explain Ottoman history based on Western history. Similarly, feudalists accused the other wing of a narrow view in that they saw feudalism as something equivalent and only peculiar to Western European Middle Ages.¹¹⁴

Here, there is no need to discuss the detail of how they proved their claims but it would be interesting to see the reason why they could not persuade each other to accept the other view. First, the issue was much related to the comprehension of Marxism. It would be impossible for an orthodox Marxist-Stalinist to accept AMP since the Soviet doctrinaire and historians, as well as Stalin himself, were strongly against this theory to such an extent that they eventually forbade it.¹¹⁵ So supporting feudalism as an intellectual endeavor was a sign of strong attachment to the Stalinist ideology. AMP in this sense was a critique of orthodox or classical Marxism. Divitçioğlu, for example, claims that he aimed to explain Ottoman history from a multilinear Marxist perspective (late Marxism) rather than a unilinear Marxist

¹¹² Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumı, Marxist Üretim Tarzı Kavramı*, p. 28.

¹¹³ In particular, see Muzaffer İlhan Erdost, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Mülkiyet İlişkileri* (Ankara: Onur Yayınları, 1984).

¹¹⁴ Halil Berktaş, *Kabilelerden Feodalizme* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1983). p. 294.

¹¹⁵ John Millios, "Asiatic Mode of Production," in *Encyclopedia of Political Economy*, ed. Phillip Anthony O'Hara (London: Routledge, 1999). p. 19. Also see, Şükrü Hanioglu's short preface to Divitçioğlu's book which is a valuable source for Divitçioğlu's point. Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumı, Marxist Üretim Tarzı Kavramı*. pp. IX-XV.

perspective (classical Marxism).¹¹⁶ However, the opposite group claims that FMP takes a universalistic and a holistic perspective.¹¹⁷

Another point is that, everyone was aware of the fact that Turkey was far behind Europe in terms of economic development. The reason they offered for this determines the nature of their links to Marxism. The supporters of FMP underline inner causes and claim that the idea of AMP brings about stagnation and a resistance to historical progress.¹¹⁸ Such an approach is very suitable for orthodox Marxism that essentially explains development in terms of class conflict. However, for those who support an Ottoman feudalism try to show that the Ottomans were in fact once open to development but capitulations or giving privileges to European merchants in custom duties destroyed the commodity production.¹¹⁹

Similarly, Marxist scholars' relation with Kemalist ideology is also relevant here. It is a typical paradox of Modernity; on one hand it denies the past to legitimize itself, on the other hand, embraces it to define the nation as one of the main bricks of modernity.¹²⁰ Likewise, Kemalist ideology had controversial attitude towards Ottoman history, seeing the Ottoman age as an age of darkness, arbitrariness and conservatism. However, they knew that a Turkish national history would be impossible without including the Ottoman Empire. Claiming stagnation for the Ottomans suited Kemalist ideology. Despite this, there was a general tendency began among Marxists, especially with Nazım Hikmet, that the Turkish war of

¹¹⁶ Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumunu, Marxist Üretim Tarzı Kavramı*. p. XVII.

¹¹⁷ Berktaş, *Kabileden Feodalizme*. p. 21.

¹¹⁸ Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumunu, Marxist Üretim Tarzı Kavramı*. p. 77.

¹¹⁹ Erdost, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Mülkiyet İlişkileri*. p. 82.

¹²⁰ In order to reconcile this contradiction that modernity offers a reconstruction of the past. What Hobsbawm calls "the invention of tradition" was nothing but this reconciliation. Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions " in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

independence and thus, Kemalist ideology had an anti-colonial and anti-imperialist character which brought the pro-feudalists closer to Kemalism.¹²¹

Long before their discussions Köprülü warned Western scholars that it was not valid and reliable to discuss an Islamic feudalism while there was a great lack of information in terms of Turkish and İslamic studies. He says: “It will be in vain to try to understand a historical complexity, like an Islamic Turkish Feudality that has many facets, with only one dimension that is not of primary importance.”¹²² However, Turkish Marxists fell into the same trap because these scholars and essayists could not use and did not intend to use the Ottoman sources.¹²³ At this time the studies on Ottoman economic history and especially on the *timar* system that had begun, to a great extent, with works of Ömer Lütfi Barkan in the 1930s were still in their infancy and Turkish Marxists depended exclusively on such studies, which in fact they severely criticized. Berktaş, in particular, accused mainstream historians (he calls them academic historians) to have *narrow legal-formalist, particularistic, and sui generis* approaches.¹²⁴ Most of these critiques were politically correct but unfair. Particularism is one of such critiques however, although not being particularistic it is not possible to ignore unique dimensions of the Ottoman *timar* system especially in comparison with “Western feudalism”. Alleging that abstractions on an upper level or generalizations provide a better understanding than examining details is a methodological question and this point is open to debate.

¹²¹ In particular, see, his poem “Kuvayı Milliye” in Nazım Hikmet, *Kuvayı Milliye: Şiirler: 3: Kuvayı Milliye, Saat 21-22 Şiirleri, Dört Hapishaneden, Rubailer* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002).

¹²² Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, “Ortazaman Türk-İslâm Feodalizmi,” in *İslâm ve Türk Hukuk Tarihi Araştırmaları ve Vakıf Müessesesi*, ed. Orhan F. Köprülü (Ankara: Akçağ, 2005). p. 48.

¹²³ From poets to scientists, from students to politicians, and from journalists to sociologists, almost everyone somehow wrote or said something on the history of the Ottoman Empire. Most of them were amateur historians or not historians at all. Kıvılcımlı is one of the exempt in this sense. He used as the Ottoman archival sources as much as he could.

¹²⁴ Berktaş, *Kabileden Feodalizme*.

Instead of making generalizations based on insufficient details, it is preferable to collect or just describe more details. There may be nothing new under the sun, but for those who can see, the truth lies in the details.

As a part of the debate over particularism and holism, another methodological problem in this discussion is related to the comparative method. To explain it via another analogy, let us think that we have two pens, which were produced in the same factory and are exactly the same in size, in color etc. Now let us say that we give one each to two people. If we change their pens surreptitiously they would not be aware that they in fact at the moment holding the other pen and because they appear to be identical they would think there was only one pen. Yet, though no difference can be seen, it does not change the fact that they are *different in essence*. Now think that one pen was replaced with a pencil then it would be impossible to trick the people receiving these writing implements. Although the pen and pencil are different in many ways but still it cannot be denied that they are the *same in essence* because both of them on an upper level are writing tools no matter what kind they are. The important point is to emphasize one of these facts at the right time and for the right case. It will bring about a creativity that is more useful and appropriate for intellectual production.

This critique should not be understood as rejecting one approach over the other. The point stressed here is that there are different ways of reaching every truth or every phenomenon can be explained more than one way and it is unavoidable that no matter which way is chosen some dimensions explain the phenomenon in the question will be neglected. The important point is to try to see what is ignored while attempting to reveal something. In that sense the role of Marxist methodology and critique cannot be denied, yet in the Ottoman case and in the context of the

discussion of the mode of production, Marxists mostly did not extend beyond the repetition of Marx or other prominent Marxist theoreticians. They criticized each other but did not dare to criticize Marx. Instead they accused themselves of not understanding Marx properly and most of the time all discussion can be seen in a way, as whether rhetoric should be used as an integral part of the scientific language.

III.2.2. Anti-Marxism in the Ottoman Historiography

One of the dominant tendencies in mainstream Ottoman history is anti-Marxism. Though at the beginning it was disputed between Western scholars and Turkish scholars, later it turned into a dispute between mainstream Turkish historians and Turkish Marxists and leftists. Actually, from the nineteenth century onward the Ottoman-Turkish scholars also began to compare European Feudalism with the Ottoman *timar* system. Cevdet Paşa, though accepting that the *timar* system and European feudalism were similar, like Abdurrahman Şeref stressed that the main difference was that the European landlords enjoyed much more power than *timar* holders and *zâ'îms* in the Ottoman.¹²⁵ Another historian, İsmail H. Uzunçarşılı, claimed that there were some similarities between western feudalism and the Ottoman *timar* system in terms of the relations between the peasants and landlords or land holders. Yet, the main difference was that in Europe land belonged to the lords and the peasants were their slaves. However, in the Ottoman Empire the land belonged to the state and both peasants and *sipâhîs* were strictly under the surveillance of the state.¹²⁶ Barkan, having comprehensively compared the two systems, concluded that it was irrelevant to consider the relationship between

¹²⁵ Cited from Şanda, *Reaya ve Köylü*. pp. 24-25.

¹²⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri*. p. 242.

Western feudalism and the Ottoman *timar* system. He simply commented that the Ottoman state was highly centralized, therefore neither peasants nor the land were under the ultimate control of the *timar* holders, who had different social roots or “were rootless” so they could not form a social class as in western aristocracy.¹²⁷ Similarly, Halil Cin and Gül Akyılmaz, who compared “English Feudalism” and the Ottoman *timar* system, rejected the idea that the Ottoman system can be explained by Marxist conceptualizations of FMP and AMP.¹²⁸

In a general sense the Ottoman *timar* system as a “utilized eastern land regime” was different from Western feudalism and the difference was mainly resulted from the legal ownership of the land. Eventually, for mainstream scholars legality became the main method of explaining the social relations in the Ottoman Empire.¹²⁹ That is to say the role of the law in respect of social relations was highly idealized. In a sense the state was the mere performer of Islamic law, which was the absolute source of the ideal order.¹³⁰ From this perspective what is called corruption is the state of disobeying the law. That is to say; social, economic and demographic dynamics were less important than the law in comparing the Ottoman economic relations with those in Europe. To give a typical example, the main difference between these two was the legal ownership. In Europe the lords were the owners however, in the Ottoman Empire the state was the real owner.¹³¹

¹²⁷ See, Barkan, ""Feodal" Düzen ve Osmanlı *Timarı*."

¹²⁸ Cin and Akyılmaz, *Tarihte Toplum ve Yönetim Tarzı olarak Feodalite ve Osmanlı Düzeni*.

¹²⁹ When stressing the difference between the *timar* system and feudalism Beldiceanu states that while the Ottomans had written legal codes this was alien to the West. Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*, p. 101.

¹³⁰ Historians such as Ahmet Akgündüz and Sadık Albayrak devoted themselves to the struggle against those who question this ideal. See, Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 1. pp. 41-301; Sadık Albayrak, *Budin Kanunnâmesi ve Osmanlı Toprak Meselesi* (İstanbul: Tercüman, 1973).

¹³¹ For example, Barkan accepts that there were serf-like peasants in the Ottoman Empire but they constituted just a small number. See, Barkan, "Türkiye'de Servaj Var mıydı?." He added, that the

For many historians legality was the most important distinguishing factor however, *de facto* relations most of the time were not compatible with *de jure* regulations. To make an analogy: as result of rapid urbanization in the second half of the twentieth century in Turkey many poor migrants built houses illegally on public (state) lands and in many places they enjoyed the substructure facilities of municipalities. Then before elections many of these migrants were given the title to the land. Thus, their daily life did not radically change; the only change was when the municipalities tried to demolish their houses on the basis that they were illegal constructions. Similarly the peasants in the Ottoman Empire were the *de facto* owners of the lands¹³² and no one interfered with their lives unless they challenged the local authorities or the state launched a social policy that forced them to resettle or to work in some special production as mining and salt production.

Most historians did not go beyond crude comparisons however; Halil İnalcık offered an alternative to the Marxist conception of *Mode of Production*. Yet, what he calls the *çift-hane system* actually is only a simple conceptualization of the legalistic and state centric approaches. According to İnalcık, the basic unit of production in the Ottoman Empire was a unit that consisted of a family (*hane*), a pair of oxen (*çift*) and a piece of land (*çiftlik*) the size of which is determined by the fertility of the land and

ordinary peasants were not allowed to leave their lands, so in a way they were also bounded to the land as were European serfs. However, in the Ottoman Empire, peasants were not enslaved by landlords rather such bondages were resulted by their legal status that was a “requirement of the administrative and fiscal system of an organized state.” Ibid. p. 724. Also see, Barkan, ““Feodal” Düzen ve Osmanlı *Timarı*.” p. 881.

¹³² İnalcık says being tenants by ongoing leasing contracts peasants were *de facto* owners of lands. Halil İnalcık, “*Çiftliklerin Doğuşu: Devlet, Toprak Sahipleri ve Kiracılar*,” in *Osmanlı'da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010). p. 16. Thus, İnalcık sees the issue from a state-centric perspective. What made them *de facto* owners was not the long-term leases from the state but the peasants had already been the owners before the Ottoman period. Moreover, many of them had been Muslims living on lands that were not in the status of conquered lands, so according to Islamic law they should be accepted as owners. The *timar* system and the *mirî land* regime developed over the course of time, so then how can one describe the ownership of peasants in such a situation when there was no *sipâhî* and a *mirî land* regime? In fact, the state built a kind of arbitrary ownership that was different from legal ownership and this did not change the nature of possession of peasants.

the family endeavor by using a pair of oxen in a year. That unit was both a land organization and a fiscal unit that the state determined to keep intact and indivisible.¹³³ Lastly, for İnalcık, this system was exactly the same as the Byzantine *zeugarion* and *stasis*.¹³⁴ Thus, he in fact shows that an important pillar, the basic unit of land organization, of the *timar* system was inherited from the Byzantine Empire.

III.3. Conclusion

This chapter does not aim to reveal the genesis of the *timar* system or to vindicate one approach against the other, rather to show how and why one question led to one of the hottest debates not only concerning the *timar* system but also about Ottoman historiography. It can be seen that it is not a mere historical debate, but different motivations amalgamated it with contemporary problems. Therefore, the debate gained an ideological character rather than a scientific one but how it is impossible for a Marxist to accept that Marx can be falsified; for mainstream Turkish historians Köprülü is untouchable. Then a Marxist finds himself/herself trying to minimize the contradictions between the Marxist progressiveness and the enduring history of the Ottomans. Likewise a mainstream Ottomanist finds himself/herself minimizing the contradiction between linearism and the West-East similarities. Many mainstream historians in their first sentence praised how Köprülü proved that the roots of the *timar* system were Turko-Islamic in the second sentence do not hesitate to claim the universal conditions that led to similar institutions everywhere. Likewise, on one hand the Islamic law was basis of everything in the Ottoman

¹³³ İnalcık, "Çift-Hane Sistemi ve Köylünün Vergilendirilmesi."; İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1. pp. 143-154. Also for detailed discussion on the topic see, Kayhan Orbay, "Osmanlı Çift-Hane Sistemi" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2011).

¹³⁴ İnalcık, "Çift-Hane Sistemi ve Köylünün Vergilendirilmesi." p. 100.

Empire on the other hand similar phenomena are detected in many cultures regardless of the nature of the law. Lastly, the Ottomans did free enslaved peasants wherever they went, proving how the *timar* system was superior to its counterparts in other cultures, however, they also recognized the previous rights of the local elites who tyrannized over and overexploited their subjects.

It would be unfair to underestimate or totally deny the contributions of these debates to the understanding of the subject with diverse conceptual frameworks. The Marxist theory of mode of production, or dialectical materialism in general, gives an insight to the understanding of the multipartite state and the determinative characteristic of inner conflicts. Likewise, it is important to redefine the state's position in understanding society along with the conflicting parties or to see the state as an instrument used by conflicting sides unless wishing to exaggerate the role of the state as many mainstream historians do. In any case, the romantic views idealizing the state, its policies, any of its institutions or the ruler surely led to a poor comprehension of the nature of the *timar* system and of the pragmatisms and opportunism behind state policies. In the next chapter the foundation of the *timar* system will be reconsidered in the light of these points to attempt to reconstruct a history of the formation of the *timar* system purged from the inconsistency repeated by historians.

CHAPTER IV

THE PATH TO THE *TIMAR* SYSTEM

The Ottoman historiography on the period of foundation pays most attention to the conflicts between Ottomans and Byzantines or between Muslim and Christians. As a result, Ottoman history is constructed on the dichotomy between these two “mutually exclusive” entities. However, the Ottomans grew up in an environment in which many Christian and Muslim lords were interrelated in different ways. In this historiography, the fact that some Christian lords’ being offshoots of the Seljuks and at the very beginning of his career Osman being in alliance with the Byzantine lords against the Tatars and Germiyans,¹ were just insignificant details.² Ottoman history became much more a matter of expansion than of consolidation.³ Therefore, the history became that of warriors and warlords who were the main figures behind the glorious victories and embarrassing failures. All other segments of

¹ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, pp. 47, 54. In another story Osman and the Lord of İnönü fought against Selçuk regents of Eskişehir and Sultanöyüğü. Mevlânâ Mehmed Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2008), pp. 37-39.

² One exceptional idea was offered by Mustafa Akdağ, he considered that there was no conflict between Greeks and Turks on ethnic and religious grounds; instead, they lived in mutually dependent economic relations. Mustafa Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadî ve İçtimai Tarihi* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2010), p. 329. Though such relations were overemphasized by Akdağ it was an important rift in the dichotomous history. Yet he was never appreciated by later historians. Kafadar, when he mentions Akdağ's ideas, stated that “this thesis never had a chance to gain any recognition, however, since it was soon demolished on the grounds of flimsy evidence and sloppy reasoning by a student of Köprülü, Halil İnalcık.” Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, p. 45. That was a reflection of the fact that the majority of Ottomanists prefer to perceive the Ottomans in opposition to the Byzantines. For İnalcık, the Ottoman state was a small principality that devoted itself to holy war against Christianity on the the Byzantine border. İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klâsik Çağ (1300-1600)*, p. 9. İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1, p. 11.

³ Ottoman history in the traditional historiography was divided into periods that were mainly determined by the Ottoman ability to expand.

society were only minor players in this history and the conflicts between those segments were simply ignored.⁴ However, without considering such a complexity the foundation of the *timar* system in the Ottoman will remain untouched and the issue will be still treated in the simplification of having been borrowed from this or that society.

IV.1. Raider *Alps* and *Akıncıs*

Alp is a Turkic word that means brave and hero used as a prefix or suffix appended to personal names such as *alp* (hero) *arslan* (lion) giving the name Alparslan, the Seljukid leader. In the beginning of the formation of the Ottoman state there were many names with the suffix – *alp* such as Gündüzalp, Konuralp, Turgudalp and Hasanalp. Those warriors were the main agents of raids into the enemy territories. It seems that, Osman the founder of the Ottoman Principality at the beginning of the fourteenth century was nothing more than an *Alp* warrior. This class was mainly formed by professional warriors, most of whom probably had tribal origins or were former Christian soldiers, peasants and mystic *dervişes*.

There is another dimension that led to a serious discussion in Ottoman historiography that is their usage of another title “*gazi*” that had a religious connotation. This Arabic word originally means fighter and raider. In Islam it began to be used as the fighter for (the Islamic) religion. Though historians mostly discussed whether the main characteristics of the first expansions could be labeled as religious, for this thesis the reality of such a usage is more important. Though it

⁴ Halil İnalcık is one of these exceptional historians who mention those conflicts in his work.

might have a popular usage that skewed from the original usage, its ideological dimension cannot easily be ignored.⁵

Ottoman chronicles claimed that those warriors made some places *uc* or *uç* for themselves and began to conduct raids beyond them into enemy territories. *Uç* is a Turkish word meaning cusp, tip, point or end. Usually by *uç* Ottomanists mean border, marchland, frontier or an administrative and socio-political unit related to the frontier or a kind of buffer zone where the cultures were mixed and people move there to fight.⁶ However, it is hard to claim that Ottomans had a clear sense of border. John Fine cogently asserted that when he talks about Edirne; “since he [Murad I] was frequently there in connection with campaigns aimed to penetrate deeper into the Balkans, maybe the word *base-camp* better describes the city's function.”⁷ The term *forward operation base* (FOB) describes exactly what Ottomans meant by *uç*. In many cases an *uç* was an end point of a route surrounded by alien territory therefore, there might not have connections between those points. For example, when Vidin was one *uç* and Bosina was another after the battle of Kosovo (1389) and Serbia was lying between them was still outside the Ottoman control. More than that, when the Ottomans settled a garrison in Vidin (or near), it was still a tributary state ruled by Sratsimir. This is why İsmail Hami Danişmend comments that if one locates the conquered areas on a map, it will be clearly seen that they look like a “blade”

⁵ İnalçık in his later works softened, a little, his view of *gaza*. To him *gaza* was a holy ideology that motivated *alps* and *alp-erens* and made the raids more meaningful. İnalçık, *Devlet-i 'Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar-I*. p. 11.

⁶ For Heywood, the Ottoman *Uc* means marchland that was the equivalent of Islamic *thugur* that divide *dar al-harb* and *dar al-Islam*. Colin Heywood, "The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths," in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, ed. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (London: Macmillan Press, 1999). pp. 233-4. İnalçık stated that there was an *uc* culture that separated them from hinterlands. In this culture the Islamic *gaza* is dominant and ethnically they were quite heterogeneous contrary to the settled high culture of the hinterland in the *ucs* there was eclectic, mystic folk culture. Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Uc (Serhad)lar," in *Doğu Batı: Makaleler II* (Ankara: Doğubati, 2009). p. 49.

⁷ John Van Antwerp Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000). p. 407.

infiltrating the enemy territory.⁸ Thus, *uç* means an outpost; a stronghold where the attacks were organized on the enemy's economic resources and geo-strategic bases.

Booty was one of the most important revenue sources for the Ottoman warriors especially in the formative period. They were autonomous warlords who were coordinated predatory operations against outsiders. In these raids they both gained economic and human resources (slaves), moreover, taking an important figure hostage for ransom was one of the most profitable activities. Each warlord lived in his own fortified town and each was centered a fortress until they captured a new one to move to. At this point it is interesting to consider why those autonomous lords did not tend to further their autonomy but stayed dependent on the leadership of the Ottoman family.

There were several reasons for this. First they had an organic relation with the grand lord (the Ottoman ruler) since these warlords were looting lands until they captured the next strategic fortress, fortified town or city if they were unable to do this they either bestowed all surrounding villages on their warriors to ensure long lasting surveillance, or they needed help from the grand lord. That turned the character of the expansion from an autonomous expansion to the 'Ottoman expansion', which Heath Lowy calls "predatory confederacy."⁹ That kept the war lords weaker before the grand lord since they would not be able to capture important centers or resist serious counter attacks without the help of other comrades who were organized by the Ottoman family. Such cooperation then brought an Ottoman claim of overlordship on this captured land.

⁸ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 14

⁹ Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003). p. 3.

Secondly, the Ottoman family used its power to prevent these lords passing on their properties to their children or other family members. When the most active *alps* Akçakoca and Konuralp died one after another sometime in late 1320s or 1330s Süleyman, the son of Orhan, seized their possessions and unified all forward operational bases under his authority then deployed soldiers of Akçakoca to newly conquered places around Nicomedia (İznikmid).¹⁰ That is to say, the Ottoman family took possession of the lands of these warlords and bound their soldiers to itself by bestowing on them the newly conquered lands. This raises the question about what happened to the warlords' successors. Aşık Paşazâde mentions Fazlullah, the grandson of Akçakoca, who was a *kadı* (judge) and had a *tekke* (dervish lodge).¹¹ Likewise Orhan's brother Aleaddin had withdrawn into a *tekke*.¹² It seems that the aged Turgud Alp alive at about the same time retired and joined some dervishes.¹³ We are already familiar with this practice from Byzantine history.¹⁴ That is to say, Ottomans made sure that the descendants of the warlords were kept away from political military affairs.

The Ottoman family had already seized an important proportion of the revenues. In the first wave of expansion three revenue holders out of five were from the same family or in the case of Edebali they had close ties with the Ottoman

¹⁰ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 82. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*, trans. Necdet Öztürk (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2008). p. 17.

¹¹ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 82. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. pp. 551-552. Unfortunately we have no information about his father Hacı İlyas. But we are sure about that he was not among the famous warriors of the time. Therefore, it can be concluded that he did not inherit his father's privileges.

¹² Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 80.

¹³ Aşık Paşazâde mentions that Turgud Alp became the follower of a popular Derviş of Vefaiyye order. In the following paragraph we see that Orhan offers his lands (İnegöl) to this derviş. Ibid. p. 90.

¹⁴ In 1041 Emperor Michael IV and female members of the court were forced to withdraw to a monastery. and in 1354 John VI Kantakouzenos was forced to wear priest's robes. Georg Ostrogorsky, *Bizans Devleti Tarihi*, trans. Fikret İşıltan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999). pp. 301-302, 488.

family. In the expansion the Ottoman dominance was limited to the inner regions, while the other warlords tended to expand their land. However, about the time of the conquest of Bursa the other warlords somehow lost their power against the Ottoman family. Now, it was easier to control warriors who had previously been controlled by those warlords. So we can estimate that the Ottomans expanded the small scale *timars* all around the realm. In another words the Ottoman family, for the first time, expanded their authority over the entire land.

Thus, the age of *alps* had ended and now the Ottoman family had important power in northwestern Anatolia and the state that controlled that land, was, to a great extent, a centralized one. Removing the *alps*, was an important turning point for the formation of the Ottoman state and the process of institutionalization. Shortly after, the Ottomans annexed the lands of Karasi. Aşık Paşazâde implies that an Ottoman *timar* survey was undertaken in this new territory.¹⁵ It is not certain whether the Ottomans conducted the survey (*tahrir*) but Orhan did abolish all previous contracts and issued new ones. This is exactly what happened to men of *alps*, that is, now the Karasi warriors were directly bound to the Ottoman center.

In the second half of the fourteenth century the Ottomans gradually expanded over the Balkans. Süleyman for a time continued to lead the warriors until his death in the 1350s. The new generation of warlords consisted of ex-Christian lords or those of neighboring principalities who recognized the Ottoman suzerainty for example, Mihal was a Byzantine lord who had joined the Ottomans in the very early years of the foundation of the Ottoman state. Hacı İlbegi, Evrenos, Ece Halil and Gazi Fazıl

¹⁵ In a couple of verses Aşık Paşazâde writes “*Dürüldi Karasi defteri yandı. Yini defter ki Gâzi kâtib [ketb] itdi.*” This can be translated as “Karasi was defeated [and their order] was burned (collapsed). The new *defter* was written [the new order was established] by the Gazi [Orhan].” Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 317. The word that written as *kâtib* should be *ketb* (to write) otherwise it means scribe. In another version of this chronicle “*defter itdi*” was used which means to compile or to write in a *defter*. Aşık Paşazâde, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman: Aşık Paşazâde Tarihi*, ed. Maarif-i Umumiyye Nezareti (İstanbul: Matba-i Amire, 1332 (1914)). p. 45.

were among the notables of the Karasi principality.¹⁶ Like their predecessor *alps*, these lords also, in a short time, captured many fortresses, especially after a serious earthquake that hit Rumelia, and they launched further raids from their own bases. Over time in particular; Mihaloğlus, Evrenosoğlus and Turahanoğlus became the most influential *akıncı begis/uç begis* (raider lords).

IV.2. Organizer ‘*Âlîms*

In addition to the *alps* and *akıncıs* there were the – ‘*âlims/ulemâ*’ (men of knowledge) – which was the main group behind the ideological formation of the Ottoman State. All chronicles, all epitaphs, inscriptions carved on tombstones, on the walls of madrasas and mosques, which remained from earlier periods of the Ottomans carry their signatures. One of the characteristics of this group is that their members usually had the title *Al-din* that means ‘the religion’ in Arabic. When it is used as a suffix it means “something/someone of religion (Islam)”. It is not certain when this exactly began but the Seljukid Zengi atabegs of Mosul, Aleppo, Sinjar and Cizre (c. 1100 – 1250) frequently used the title *Al-din*. The tradition was then partially followed by the Ayyubids who ruled in the same period. After Kılıçarslan II (1156–1192), the ruler of the Seljukid Sultanate of Rum, who officially used İzzeddin as a second name and all the succeeding sultans began to use names that ended with *al-din* together their Persian names; likewise, almost all the viziers and other bureaucrats used this title.¹⁷ In the first two centuries of the Ottoman Empire

¹⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 124.

¹⁷ Of 14 viziers mentioned by Taneri 12 used *al-din* as title. Aydın Taneri, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Kuruluş Döneminde Vezîr-i A'zamlık* (İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1997). p. 14.

this title might have been used by some sultans¹⁸ but usually used by those who had been educated at a madrasas.¹⁹ These scholars formed the core of the ‘*âlims*’ class in the Ottoman state and *mevlana* was another title that symbolized their status.

This does not mean that the Ottoman system was faith-centered but *al-din* symbolized knowledge and trust. The former does not always mean religious knowledge rather it might refer to the knowledge of statesmanship. For example, when Çandarlı Halil became vizier to the Ottoman court he was named Hayr-al-din (Hayrüddin). In the dominant culture of the Ottoman state ‘*âlims* were not only men of wisdom (*ilmiyye*) but also they were men of pen (*kalemiyye*). That is to say, they were in the very central cadres of bureaucracy. In that sense they were quite different from *ulemâ*’s of the sixteenth century and later. In particular, the state’s finance and jurisdiction was under their control which is why the trust dimension was important in this class.²⁰

The choice of Aladdin the son of Osman, who it was said, abnegated the throne, can be interpreted as that class having an organic tie with mystics (*derviş*). It is known that Davud-i Kayseri who was the top scholar at the first madrasa (Orhaniyye) in İznik was affected by mystic views of Al-Arabi and at that time

¹⁸ According to Mustafa Cezar in a letter that the Selçuk’s sultan sent to Osman call him Nasırüddin. Cezar, *Mufasssal Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 44. On the other hand, İbni Battuta a traveler that visited Orhan called him “İhtiyaruddin Urkhan Bek”. Ebû Abdullah Muhammed İbn Battûta, *İbn Battûta Seyahatnâmesi*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2000). p. 430. Lastly some sources indicate that Bayezid I used the name Celâlüddin. Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 82. Paul Wittek, *Menteşe Beyliği*, trans. Orhan Ş. Gökyay (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999). p. 145. It is not certain whether they used these titles officially but they were attributed such titles.

¹⁹ One of the exceptions might be Şehabeddin *Paşa* who was an Ottoman vizier in the first half of the fourteenth century. It is not clear whether this was his original name or a title given to him. On the other hand seeing such a title among the military class might be an evidence of the influence of ‘*âlims* on the central army.

²⁰ A letter that Murad I sent to Everenos Beg warns him about trusting his men. He briefly says in order to control one place one needs to employ many soldiers and bureaucrats. However, profane interests many times surpass moral wellbeing, so these people could easily forget the religion and fear of god when they see property. Mehmet İnbaşı, "Sultan I. Murad'ın Evrenos Bey'e Mektubu," *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 17 (2001). p. 229. Therefore, in such a lack of confidence giving someone the title of *al-din* might be a good way to remind them the religion and the fear of god.

mysticism was easily diffused the Ottoman society.²¹ Besides, they had ties with *ahis* (artisans who organized around charity organizations and religious clubs)²² as well. Based on the limited knowledge about the first viziers at the beginning of the Ottoman Empire it is possible to see their relations.²³ It is also known that first Ottoman Sultans had close ties with *ahis*²⁴ and this web of relations '*âlims* in a sense represented the *ahis* influence on the throne.

IV.2.1. Building and Consolidating the Center

Sheyk Edebali, a Turcoman mystic, was the father-in-law of Osman the founder of the Ottoman Empire.²⁵ That marriage, in the words of Ottoman chroniclers, was the new moon of fortune that rose on the Ottoman family.²⁶ It is certain that his alliance with Osman gave him an important power not only against his Christian foes but also against his companion warrior *alps*. That was an important step in the consolidation of the status of Osman as a *primus inter pares*.

²¹ A. Adnan Adıvar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim* (İstanbul: Remzi, 1982). p. 16.

²² For a description of the *ahi* organization see İbn Battûta, *İbn Battûta Seyahatnâmesi*, 1. pp. 403-5.

²³ The famous Çandarlı had an *Ahi* origin. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Çandarlı Vezir Ailesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988). p. 6. Another vizier Nizâmüddin Ahmed *Paşa* was the son of *Ahi* Mahmud and Sinanüddin Yusuf *Paşa* was one of the leaders of the *ahis*. See. Nazım Tektaş, *Sadrâzamlar: Osmanlı'da İkinci Adam Saltanatı* (İstanbul: Çatı, 2009). pp. 9-11.

²⁴ Cezar, *Mufasssal Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 65.

²⁵ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 49. Anonim *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Friedrich Giese and Nihat Azamat (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1992). p.10; According to some historians Edebali might not be the father in law of Osman since some sources points to Ömer as the father of his wife. Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 13.

²⁶ The chronicles mention the famous dream of Osman that a tree grew out of his navel after a moon rises from bosom of Ede Bali and moves into that of Osman. Then the shadow of that tree covers the entire world. For chroniclers it was the good news of the foundation of a powerful empire. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 49. It seems that everyone was quite aware that the alliance of Ede Bali with Osman was one of the most important developments in Ottoman history.

Sheyk Edebali himself had already married the daughter of Taceddin-i Kurdi²⁷ who was one of the few names mentioned names, except for warriors, in the very earliest periods of the state. Furthermore, the famous Çandarlı Halil was married Taceddin's another daughter. Therefore, Osman's familial relations gave him great power against others. Ede Bali was a mystic of the Vefaiyye religious order²⁸ and was an important figure among *ahis* as was Çandarlı Halil.²⁹ Taceddin-i Kurdi, as it can be understand from his name, was a scholar studying at the Medrese of İznik. These groups had both important economic and social power³⁰ moreover, they had spiritual power. Adding these to the military power of Osman clearly shows how he held the leadership of the all other warlord *alps*.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 50.

²⁸ İnalçık, *Devlet-i 'Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar-I*. p. 11.

²⁹ Uzunçarşılı, *Çandarlı Vezir Ailesi*. p. 3.

³⁰ Şeyh Edebali for example was described as owning “abundant property and had many animals.” He had created miracles and people were strongly attached to him. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 49.

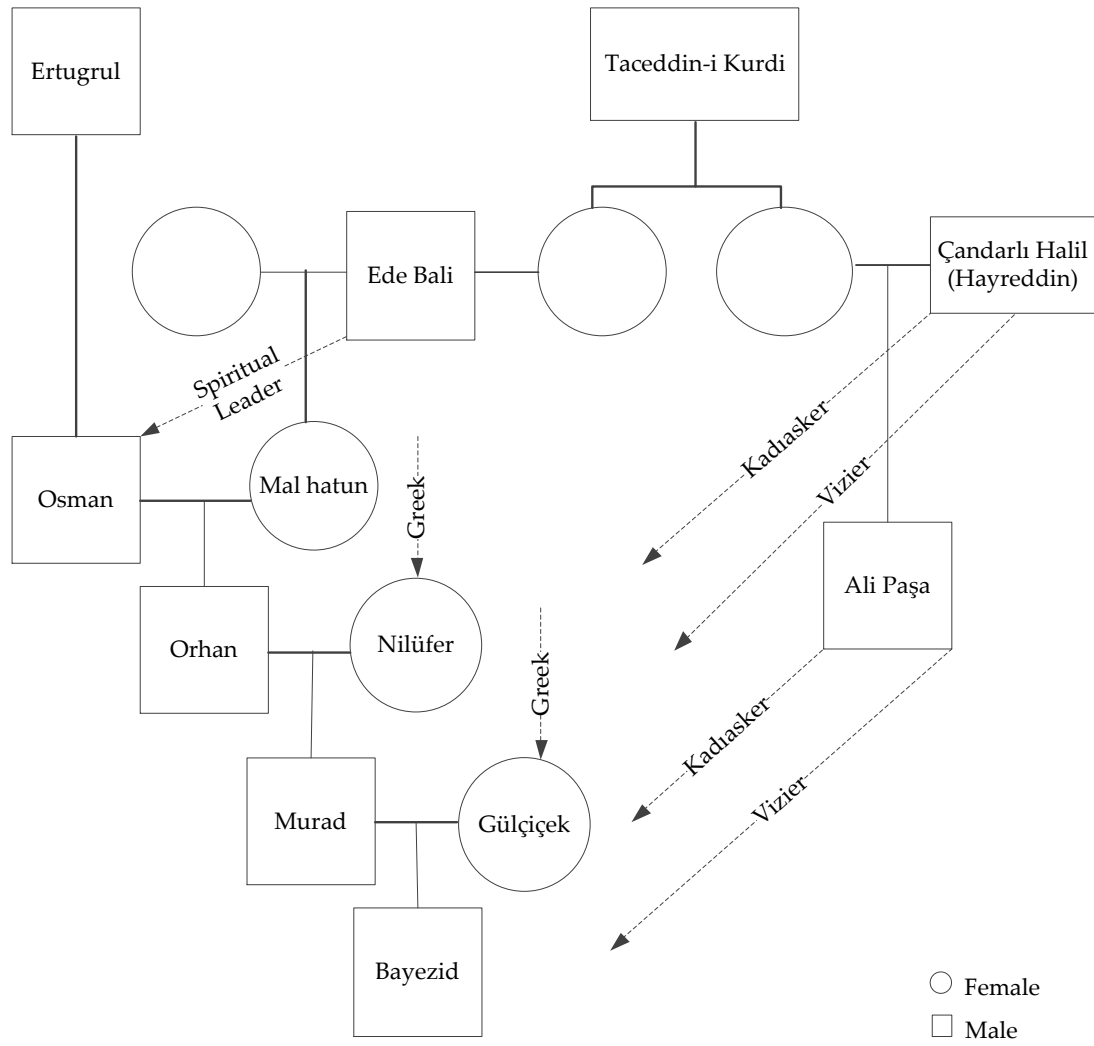


Figure 4: Osman's Familial Relations³¹

In chronicles an *‘âlim* was a stereotypical figure, who used to give advice to rulers and played important roles in the foundation of social and economic control apparatuses. They also played an important role in the evolution of the *beg* (lord) from more equal to a higher status. Due to the diligence shown by that group the symbolic representation of the ruler become clearer during the reign of Orhan. This

³¹ When taking the polygyny into consideration the picture will become broader. At this point it should be stated that in some cases the female parent was not clear. For example; it is said that Çandarlı Halil married the daughter of Taceddin but it is not certain that Ali Paşa was the son of that woman.

was not due to forming of a regular and central army,³² which surely consolidated the *beg*'s power further, but the idea of equipping the grand lords' men with different clothing was directly for that purpose. Aleaddin, the son of Osman,³³ advised his brother Orhan to found a central army who would wear white headgear while other warlords' wore red ones.³⁴ Thus, they were aware of the importance of the symbolic differentiation in the creation of a real hierarchy. This resembles the symbolic power of a metal crown which a king without it would not be a real king. Likewise, the Ottoman's leader did have a powerful group backing him but now he was symbolically a different man, a real *şehinşah*, the lord of lords.

Another story mentioned in chronicles was about the birth of the idea of collecting of the market taxes. Once a man came from the land of Germiyanogulları and asked Osman to sell him the right to collect taxes in a certain market place. However, Osman had never heard about such an exercise of taxing shopping activities in a market place. Then the man convinced him by saying that it was a

³² The idea of *yaya* and *müsellem* army was attributed to Çandarlı Halil Hayrüddin Paşa. Halime Doğru, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Yaya-Müsellem-Taycı Teşkilatı* (İstanbul: Eren, 1990). pp. 7-8. Likewise, he and another 'âlim Rüstem took the initiative to the form the Janissary army. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 98.

³³ İbn Battuta mentioned a certain Hacı Aleaddin Sultan Öyüki who had close relations with the Ottoman family. İbn Battûta, *İbn Battûta Seyahatnâmesi*, 1. p. 431. It is also possible that Ottoman chroniclers confused the brother of Orhan with this Aleaddin. As we see below an Aleaddin was a vizier in this period so it is more reasonable it was the vizier Aleaddin who gave that advice. Furthermore, Hacı Aleaddin Sultan Öyüki was quite a good model for a vizier.

³⁴ After comparing related passages of the chronicle of Oruç Beg and that of Aşık Paşazâde, Palmer decided that of Oruç Beg was more reliable. The main difference was in the sentence written by Oruç; "Ali Pasha said "Oh! brother, let all thy army put on a red cap: put thou on thyself a white cap and let thy dependent slaves put on a white cap." Similarly, Aşık Paşazâde writes "Alâ ad-din Pasha said to Orkhan Ghazi, ... Now the caps of the Begs round about are red, let thine be white." According to Palmer the white cap was offered not to differentiate "Ottoman troops and those of other Begs," but to differentiate "between the slave-troops and the rest of the Ottoman forces." Julian A. B. Palmer, "The Origin of the Janissaries," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 35, no. 2 (March 1953). pp. 452-456. Overall Aşık Paşazâde's chronicle was more reliable and more consistent and his use of *beg* does not connote the other *begs* ruling over principalities as Aydınoğlu, Karmanoğlu and Germiyanoglu as was understood by Palmer, but refers to the warlord *alps* who allied with Ottomans. Therefore, in essence these two chroniclers say the same thing. But the detail of the latter indicates the efforts of the Ottoman family to centralize their states at the expense of the other warlords.

common traditional practice in all countries.³⁵ This story is told by Aşık Paşazâde to give a basis to the *mukataa* system. Indeed, we cannot believe that Osman had not heard of such a widespread practice.³⁶ But the identity of the man in this story is more important than the story itself. He was well educated about other cultures and would have a certain amount of savings to make such an offer. That description best fits a well-educated artisan/tradesman *ahi* thus; he was a typical '*âlim*.

Parallel to the story give above; a man called Kara Rüstem who came to Ottoman lands from Karaman led the formation of Janissaries corps and launched new taxes. According to Rustem it was religiously legitimate for the state to demand one of every five war captives or 25 *akçes* per slave. That idea with the support of Çandarlı Halil was quickly accepted and applied.³⁷ I will not insist on the reliability of this story however, in other stories Aşık Paşazâde implies that Ottomans had already extensively made use of war captives.³⁸ For example, after the conquest of Karatigin, Orhan bought many captives warriors.³⁹ Finally, it seems that the Ottomans had found a cheaper way to maintain a central army and this in time would be developed into the most crucial part of Ottoman power. With this policy the state not only found new economic resources but also ensured sufficient human resources that constituted the very core of a powerful army.

³⁵ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 62.

³⁶ It is certain that taxing bazaars or trade was an earlier practice in the history of the Ottomans. Aşık Paşazâde mentions how Osman formed market in Eskişehir and secured the trade. If that was true it will be unreasonable to think that he did it without considering any profit. Ibid. p. 54.

³⁷ Ibid. 98.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 69. For the similar practices in the Selçuk era see, Speros Jr. Vryonis, "Selçuklu Gulamı ve Osmanlı Devşirmesi," in *Söğüt'ten İstanbul'a*, ed. Oktay Özel and Mehmet Öz (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2000). p. 522.

³⁹ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 70.

As Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay cogently states, the right or monopoly over justice was one of the most important factors behind the empowerment of the central state.⁴⁰ ‘*Âlîms* were the sole people qualified for that role. Ibn Battuta’s narrations clearly show the difference between ordinary mystics and ‘*âlîms*. Many times he complained that many religious men were ignorant of Arabic. On the other hand he did not hesitate to praise people such as; Aleaddin Sultan Öyuki, Fakif Şemseddin, Taceddin Sultan Öyûki, and Fenikeli Sadreddin Süleyman.⁴¹ This point is important because it made them the only people who knew Islamic law (*fıkıh*), and also statesmanship.⁴² Thus, it is quite understandable that these people dominated the-second position after the grand lord. Even more, after the vizierate of Çandarlı Halil (Hayrüddin) the office almost became the hereditary property of Çandarlı family.

⁴⁰ Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay, *Feodalite ve Klasik Dönem Osmanlı Üretim Tarzı* (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1982).

⁴¹ İbn Battûta, *İbn Battûta Seyahatnâmesi*, 1. pp. 431-439. Likewise Aşık Paşazâde mentions a story that Bayezid I tried to kill all the kadîs. One of his men, in order to prevent that, demanded that the Sultan send him to Constantinople to bring some Christian monks. When the Sultan asked the reason he replied that all soldiers were illiterate. If he kills *kadîs* then they would have no choice except to bring these monks. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 114. This story is important to illustrate the common perception about “illiterate soldiers and literate ‘*âlîms*.”

⁴² To Danişmend the viziers who came before the conquest Constantinople were usually from the *ulemâ*’ class (men of knowledge). İsmail Hami Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971). p. 7.

Vizier	from	to
Alâüddin	1323	1331
Nizamüddin Ahmed	1331	1340
Hacı Paşa	1340	1348
Sinânüddin Yusuf	1348	1360
Taceddin-i Kurdi! ⁴³	1360	1368
Hayrüddin Çandarlı Kara Halil	1368	1387
Çandarlı Ali	1387	1406
Osmancıklı İmamzâde Halil	1406	—
Şeyh Ramazan	1406	—
Şah Melik	1410	—
Celalüddin Bâyezid	1413	1421
Çandarlı İbrahim	1421	1429
Nizâmüddin Koca Mehmed	1429	1438
Çandarlı Halil	1438	1453

Table 5: The Early Ottoman (Grand) Viziers⁴⁴

Of course their power, to a great extent, came from their education that legitimated the ideological bases for important maneuvers. Due to the *fetva* (religious approval or instruction) of Taceddin-i Kurdi, for example, Lala Şahin was allowed to keep quite a large amount of booty in return for building a madrasa in İznik.⁴⁵ He said in his *fetva* that the property one took (loot) was his/her right unless he was a slave, but if s/he was slave then the property would belong to *beytü'l-mal* (of all Muslims i.e.

⁴³ None of the Ottomanists shows him as vizier. Though Uzunçarşılı shows that Çandarlı Halil became vizier right after Sinânüddin Yusuf other historians agree that there should be at least one another vizier between them. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. pp. 582-3; Tektaş, *Sadrazamlar: Osmanlı'da İkinci Adam Saltanatı*, p. 15; Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı*, p. 8. For Şerefhan, he was once the vizier of Orhan and began to be known by the name Hayrüddin. Şerefhan Bitlisi, *Şerefname*, trans. M. Emin Bozarslan, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1971), p. 23. Şerefhan Bitlisi, *Şerefname*, trans. M. Emin Bozarslan, vol. 2 (Ant Yayınları, 1971), p. 36. Nişancızade also states that Taceddin-i Kurdi later became known as Hayrüddin Paşa. Uzunçarşılı, *Çandarlı Vezir Ailesi*, p. 3. Footnote 1. Most probably since his name already ended with al-din Taceddin had never been called Hayreddin. But it is worth to taking the idea into consideration that he had once been a vizier.

⁴⁴ Table 7 was based on Tektaş, *Sadrazamlar: Osmanlı'da İkinci Adam Saltanatı*. For the same chronology compare it with that presented by Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı*, pp. 7-10. According to Danişmend the dates of office of the viziers were not so clear.

⁴⁵ Adivar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim*, p. 16.

state treasure).⁴⁶ This *fetva* is important to understand how a scholar could be effective at least in legitimizing a decision. Moreover, such a view should have played a role in the autonomy of the later *akıncı* begs. Though it is difficult to estimate the legitimating base for the decision of seizing the lands of Akçakoca and Konur Alp after their deaths, it would not be wrong to claim that most probably their lands were confiscated via a similar process.

During the reign of Murad I a new official figure *kadıasker* (military judge) appeared in Ottoman history.⁴⁷ One of his main duties was regulating the distribution of the revenues (booty) and resources (newly conquered lands). This new official played a great role on the legitimation of the leadership of the Ottoman family taking decisions in favor of the state (the Ottoman family). Moreover, during the viziership of Çandarlı Hayrüddin Halil the vizier began to actively command the army.⁴⁸ That is the peripheral powers did not only obey the Ottoman Sultan but also his vizier. Thus, the concept of the state now denoted something broader than a mere dynasty.

It can be claimed that some stories mentioned in the chronicles were fabricated but overall this does not change the fact that some people were discontent with the centralized policies planned by the *‘âlims*. Aşık Paşazâde clearly blamed *danişmends* (madrasa graduates) who used their *fetvas* for “malpractices” (centralization), such as the strict control over trade and the *kadıs*’ charged people for proceedings.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, ed. Nuri Akbayar, trans. Seyit Ali Kahraman, vol. 5 (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996). p. 1610.

⁴⁷ The first Ottoman *kadıasker* ever known was Çandarlı Kara Halil who was given that position in 1362. Uzunçarşılı, *Çandarlı Vezir Ailesi*. p. 7.

⁴⁸ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 583.

⁴⁹ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 114.

IV.2.2. The Paradox of Centralization

As the Ottoman state developed and was further centralized, it was pestered by the conflicts between different interest groups. As in a Turkish proverb: “There are many who throw stones at a red apple”, the state was now a ripened apple that appeals to the appetite of any conflicting group to control the state. As a result of this, fratricide became almost institutionalized phenomenon in the history of the Ottoman family. It is well known that from 1389 almost all sultans came to throne after murderous and cruel quarrels. Some historians recount the story in the chronicles that tells of Osman murdering his uncle Dündar as proof that the Ottomans had a tradition of murder from the very beginning of the formation of state.⁵⁰ More reliable is that Murad I succeed throne after Orhan in 1360 after killing his two brothers.⁵¹ Though this point was not so clear it is certain that Orhan’s son Halil was captured by Christian pirates and the Byzantine Emperor tried to take advantage of that situation. It is also known that the resistance to Murad of some groups delayed his enthronement for a while.⁵²

Another paradox was related to the geographical distantiation. The rise of the Ottoman power led to a rapid expansion over Rumelia and Anatolia. However, the geography was still one of the main determinants of the future of the control mechanisms and the level of technology had not developed sufficiently to resolve the problem. After Süleyman carried the FOB to Rumalia, operational forces were divided into several groups yet they were still under the commandship of a member

⁵⁰ According to Mustafa Cezar this was a result of conflict over the throne. Cezar, *Mufasssal Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 48. On the contrary, for Lindner Osman was elected by his tribe his uncle Dündar “gave up his hopes for the chieftaincy and swore allegiance to Osman.” Rudi Paul Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1983). p. 23.

⁵¹ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 33.

⁵² See, Halil İnalcık, "The Conquest of Edirne (1361)," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 3(1971).

of the Ottoman family. Although the Ottoman realm was *de facto* divided into two parts separated by the Marmara Sea and the Dardanelles strait, which the Ottomans did not yet fully control, father and the son could manage to keep the unity of the state. When Süleyman and Orhan died at the end of 1350s, Murad found himself dealing with rivals therefore; he either made his brothers to wear the dervish robe or annihilated them, to become the only man ruling over the state. However, this still left the main problem of how to keep these two parts together. As a solution he formed *Rumeli Beglerbegliği* (*Rumelian Province*) and appointed his mentor Lala Şahin as governor. Now the Ottoman family stayed at the core of the state, in north western Anatolia,⁵³ and left Rumelia to the semi-autonomous warriors, of which the most famous were Evrenos, Köse Mihal, Lala Şahin and Paşa Yiğid. We can also add some Christian lords, as Constantine Dejanovich, Krali Marko, Ivan Sratsimir and later Stephan Lazarevich.⁵⁴ Such a fragmentation in Balkans led a balance of power that facilitated the Ottomans achieving sovereignty there.

Nevertheless, compared to the first generation (*alps*), the second generation of raiders (*akıncı*) could manage to pass their privileges to their children so established powerful families who played important roles in the following centuries. In particular, Mihaloğulları and Evrenosoğulları would be dominant in the Balkans for more than one and half centuries. One of the reasons behind that empowerment was the Ottoman policy in the Balkans. After the death of the tributary Christian

⁵³ After a while Savcı the son of Murad rebelled against his father. To some sources he rebelled in Balkans and to some other he rebelled in Anatolia. And some claims that he formally demand Rumelia from his father. Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. pp. 68-69. Such demand never realized except for a short period of the partial sovereignty of Selim I in Balkans.

⁵⁴ As we learn from Neşri there were many other Christian lords. In his words, once the lord of İskenderiyye (Bosnia), who was tributary to Ottomans, call for an army to raid into Bosnia. And Murad sent Lala Şahin to him. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. pp. 109-110. In another case, the Christian lord of Pravadi (Bulgaria) helped the Ottoman conquests of Bulgaria. Ibid. p. 113.

rulers, the Ottomans annexed their properties⁵⁵ so the balance was changed in favor of Muslim *begs*, and those Christian lords who had already converted to Islam. The state recognized their autonomy in return for loyalty and a share of the revenues gained from raids and conquests.⁵⁶ As earliest chronicles state when Evrenos captured some places “he always paid his tribute (*haraç*) to the sultan.”⁵⁷

In the second half of the fourteenth century the state was under the control of several families. The Osman family was at the very center, the Çandarlıs family dominated the central bureaucracy by occupying vizierate and the Evrenos and Mihal families and others dominated the Balkans, and the periphery. From now on the frictions between warriors and central bureaucrats to control the Ottoman family would become apparent. This friction gradually gained a geographical characteristic and *de facto* turned into the clashes between Anatolia and Rumelia. Mustafa Akdağ remarks on the conflict between Mustafa, the pony, and Murad II. For Akdağ on the Rumelian side there were the real Turkish forces; the Turkish aristocrats, *timar* holders, *azabs*, and *tavcis*; on the Anatolian side there were *ulemâ*’ and *kapıkulus*

⁵⁵ The lands of Constantine Dejanovich (Köstendil) and Prince Marko (Pirlepe) were annexed to the Ottoman after their death in the battle of Rovine in 1395.

⁵⁶ Evrenos Beg after conquering the land around Gümülcine Murad I sent him a letter confirmation recognition of his rule over the area. According to the letter the value of the revenue of Gümülcine bestowed on Evrenos was 1,000,000 akçes. Moreover, he could take whatever he wanted in terms of private property and *mülk* for conquering Selanik. The only thing that Murad wanted was to not forget that the conquered places “firstly belong to God, then to his prophet and then to his caliph (Sultan).” İnbaşı, "Sultan I. Murad'ın Evrenos Bey'e Mektubu." Ayşegül Çalı's research on the possessions of Evrenosoglus is useful article to see the autonomy he enjoyed. Ayşegül Çalı, "Akıncı Beyi Evrenos Bey'e Ait Mülknâme," OTAM, no. 20 (Güz 2006). I am grateful to her for sharing another copy of the letter mentioned above that is housed in library of the University of Ankara.

⁵⁷ “Evrenez dahı Gümülcine’yi uç idinüb otururdu. Burı’yi, İskete’yi, Marula’yi bunları fethetmiş-idi. Haracını hana dâyim göndürürdü ve gayrısına segirdülerdi.” Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. pp. 332-3. Also see, Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 99. In Oruç's chronicles it is written that he took its *haraç* but does not mention that he sent it to the Sultan. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. p. 28. Also see, Şamil Çan, "XVI. Yüzyıla Ait Anonim Bir Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman (Gramer İncelemesi-Metin-Sözlük)" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Dumlupınar Üniversitesi, 2006). p. 67. In the Anonymous chronicle published by Giese the word *haraç* was used to mean poll-tax not a tribute. *Anonim Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*. p. 27. It is possible to object to this point on the basis that they were just collecting poll-tax (*haraç*) and sending it to the Sultan but not paying tribute (*haraç*). Whatever the situation, in any case what they paid to the state was no different from that paid by Christian tributary lords.

(central army) occupying the positions of *vezirlik* and *beglerbegilik*.⁵⁸ The acceptable part of this view is that there was a conflict between Edirne and Bursa. On the Rumelian side there was a dominance of *Akıncı-begs* no matter whether they were ethnically real Turks. Similarly there might have been more *kapıkulus* on Anatolian side however, the Anatolian land-holding cavalries cannot be ignored neither the fact that Rumelian sultans also had *kapıkulus*.⁵⁹

When Murad I died and Bayezid I was enthroned, the conflicts apparently appeared on the battlefield in Kosovo in 1389. Just after the defeat of the enemy forces, while the grand lord and the bureaucratic wing stayed on the battle field and the warriors were chasing the enemy fugitives Murad I was stabbed by a Serbian soldier. The retinue bureaucrats called Murad's son Yakub, who was among those who were chasing fugitives, and killed him in favor of Bayezid I. That led to a discontent among warriors but they neither had a legitimating power nor had formed a unified and organized power to stand against the Janissary-backed center. According to İnalçık, in anonymous chronicles it is more likely to see "the reaction of the classes upholding the traditions of the *Ucbeğligi*... against the imperial centralist policies of the Sultan"⁶⁰ in that period.

Further problems arose from the distribution of the newly annexed lands of Anatolia to members of the Ottoman army, which led to discontent among the former soldiers and *begs* of the conquered states.⁶¹ As a result, all those suffered from the Sultan's policies joined Timur's army in the battle of Ankara in 1402. Even, those

⁵⁸ Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadî ve İçtimai Tarihi*. p. 250.

⁵⁹ For example, it is said that in the so called interregnum period Musa who was enthroned in Edirne was supported by 7,000 *kapıkulus* in his war against Mehmed. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 239.

⁶⁰ Halil İnalçık, "Periods in Ottoman History," in *Essays in Ottoman History*, ed. Halil İnalçık (İstanbul: Eren, 1998). p. 15.

⁶¹ In a couple of verses Aşık Paşazâde writes "*Bâyezid aldı ilin virdi kula, Âvâre oldu sipâhî vü merdân.*" Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. pp. 344-5.

Anatolian soldiers who remained loyal to Bayezid changed sides in the course of the battle. Eventually no one remained on the battlefield except for some soldiers of central army. All those who could save their lives together with the Ottoman princes deserted the field.

Similar events were seen in other battles. In Varna (1444), the Ottoman cavalries left the battle while the Sultan remained with janissaries on the battle field. This is hardly effective control of the center over periphery especially; there was a little room for the central control over Rumelian *timar* holders. The most probable reason behind that was traditionally all princes were appointed to the different sanjaks in Anatolia. In any friction the Anatolian forces could easily be divided among different princes while Rumelian armies could stay relatively independent. Thus, those who controlled Rumelia would, in most cases, be victorious in a clash for the throne. There is a good example during the so called “interregnum period” (1402-1413) when brother princes, Süleyman, Musa, Mehmed and İsa, struggled for throne. Usually, anyone of the brothers who was backed by Rumelian soldiers defeated his siblings. During the clashes between Süleyman and Musa, Evrenos Beg supported Süleyman while Musa had the support of Mihal-oğlu Mehmed. Eventually Musa defeated his brother. In the final round Musa was enthroned in Rumelia while his brother Mehmed was in Anatolia. Musa naturally rewarded Mihal-oğlu Mehmed and discarded the elderly Evrenos who had been the main partner of his brother Süleyman.⁶² It was a mistake that he paid for with his life. Evrenos Beg sent his son Ali to support Mehmed. Later many other *begs* like Yahşi Beg, the son of Mihal-oğlu

⁶² According to some chronicles, since Musa was afraid of Evrenos he planned to punish him. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. pp. 44-45. Anonim *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*. p. 54.

Mehmed who were dissatisfied by Musa's policies, changed sides.⁶³ These *begs* changed the fate of the throne. After all his successes Musa lost everything to Mehmed who became the only ruler in 1413.

It seems that Mehmed realized the strength of the power of the Rumelian periphery. After the establishment of his reign he imprisoned Mihal-oğlu Mehmed, whom his brother, Şehzade Musa, had appointed as governor of the province of Rumelia. That was the center's most serious attempt to control Rumelian warriors. However, soon after, Sultan Mehmed died and again the succession to the throne became problematic. While Murad II was accepted as the formal leader, his uncle Mustafa, who chroniclers called "phony Mustafa" (Düzme Mustafa), stood against him in Rumelia. With the help of *akıncı-begis* such as Turahan Beg, Kümüllüoğlu and Evrenosoğlu once more between 1419 and 1422 Rumelia was an independent state standing against Anatolia.⁶⁴ Mustafa captured some regions and found enough power to attack Bursa. In order to remove the threat, Murad's viziers released Mihal-oğlu Mehmed from prison. Eventually, that maneuver brought Murad victory since many Rumelian soldiers changed side. When Mustafa fled from the battlefield *akıncı-begis* were obliged to show their loyalty to Murad.⁶⁵

As mentioned before, after the establishment of the *beglerbeglik* of Rumili there was a reaction against *paşas* who were appointed by the central state. In İnalçık's words a "tradition" of conflict between the "noble *uç-begis*" and

⁶³ According to Aşık Paşazâde Musa did not trust Rumelian soldiers and the Pashas, so he replaced many important local power holders with his own men. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 126-128. To Neşri, he destroyed many famous *begs*. Neşri, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. pp. 227-8.

⁶⁴ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 181.

⁶⁵ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 142; Anonim *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*. p. 63.

beglerbegis of Rumili who were generally chosen from the *devşirmes*.⁶⁶ As a solution, the central state was strengthened by finding new human and economic resources and the center gradually forced peripheral power holders to share their economic resources with the center at an increasing rate. However, this led to further tension between the *uç-begis* and the central state and as a result they were unwilling to support military expeditions. It seems that they were aware that those new conquests were no longer in their favor but contributed to the empowerment of the center against them. Their interest lay in continuous raids and pillages⁶⁷ and sometimes it was difficult for the state to control them. For example, the famous *uç-begi* Turahan took responsibility for the crusade of İzladi in 1443 and to protect the Serbians from the Ottomans⁶⁸ and for that he was arrested. According to İnalcık the reaction of the center against their independent relations with the neighboring Christian lords was inevitable.⁶⁹

IV.2.3. Rousing the Dragon: *Kapıkulus*

As İnalcık remarks, in the period following the battle of Ankara the “*uc-begis* gained comparative independence”⁷⁰ But at the same time this period marked the beginning of the decline of their power. Firstly, as described above those *begs* were divided in the clashes between Beyazid’s sons for throne. Secondly, the families of

⁶⁶ İnalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*. p. 101.

⁶⁷ For that Aşık Paşazâde blames *uçbegis* for failure in siege of Belgrade. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 192.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 176. İnalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*. pp. 13, 31.

⁶⁹ İnalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*. p. 102.

⁷⁰ İnalcık, "Periods in Ottoman History." p. 23.

these *akıncı-begis* grew and that led to a division of power between family members. During the interregnum period while Mihal-oğlu Mehmed become the *beglerbegi* of Rumelia of Şehzade Musa, his son Yahşi Beg allied with Sultan Mehmed.⁷¹ As seen in the later periods there were many members of these families appointed as *sancakbegis* and other lower ranks compared to those appointed as *beglerbeglik* and former *uç-beglik*.⁷² Thirdly, one another reason was related to the fact that in time they become inefficient in raids, but more important than any other factor was that the central army created by the '*âlims* was about to destroy all classical relations and classes in the second half of the fifteenth century. When Mehmed I died they were already powerful enough to play role in choosing the sultan⁷³ and when Mehmed the Conqueror came to the throne for the first time they had enough self-confidence to rebel against him.⁷⁴ This was important because it can be considered that Murad II was forced to leave the throne by Rumelian soldiers who reacted against him for punishing Turahan Beg on behalf of central forces of Rumelia⁷⁵ now, the janissaries brought Murad to throne once more, meaning that they proved their superiority over *uç-begis*. Ironically, Mehmed II, who resigned as a result of the pressure of '*âlims* and *kapıkulus*, had followed a policy that raised them to the top.

All central policies controlling the periphery worked in the medium term and the Ottoman Empire by the sixteenth century became sufficiently centralized for Western scholars to conceptualize the Ottoman rule as despotic. Such centralist

⁷¹ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 128.

⁷² For example, the document published by Barkan. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "H. 933 - 934 Tarihli Bütçe Cetveli ve Ekleri," in *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi*, ed. Hüseyin Özdeğer (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2000). pp. 676-680.

⁷³ According to Aşık Paşazâde they were hardly calmed down when they suspected about the death of the Sultan. In order to prevent their interventions viziers and *paşas* secretly sent a message to his son Murad to capture the throne. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 139.

⁷⁴ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 216.

⁷⁵ İnalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehemmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavât-nâme*. p. 102.

policies in short term paradoxically eroded the *‘âlims’* power in the center. After the conquest of Constantinople the *‘âlims* lost their privileged position. Although after the death of Mehmed II the Conqueror, one member of the Çandarlı family was appointed as grand vizier, after that almost all grand viziers were selected from *devşirmes*. Secondly, during this period *kadıs’* privileges⁷⁶ were abolished. They were obliged either to participate in battles or send soldiers in return for their *timars*.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, after the reign of Mehmed II’s reign the *kadıs* were again exempted from those obligations; however, they had lost their position in controlling state economy.

While warriors earned their holdings through fighting, it is necessary to clarify how the men of knowledge gained their share in the distribution of economic resources. The Ottoman chroniclers and the writers of the *nasihatname* (book of advice) often emphasize the temporality of this world and preference of seeking faith and wisdom rather than wealth.⁷⁸ Usually mystics were seen to show these characteristics. As mentioned above, the Ottoman *‘âlims* had strong ties with those mystics so “they should also fit that ideal type”. According to a story, Orhan decided to appoint a person as judge. For that he asked the madrasa teachers and graduates of madrasa of İznik if they would like to be appointed as *kadı* to his army but none

⁷⁶ During the reign of Murad II *kadıs* were exempted from such obligations that a warrior had to fulfill them. See *kadıs* in İnalcık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*. Also see, NLB-D. 707; NLB-OAK 45-30; BOA-MAD.d 525.

⁷⁷ See the obligations of *kadıs* published in Hamid Hadžibegić, Adem Handžić, and Ešref Kovačević, *Oblast Brankovicha: Opshirni Katastarski Popis iz 1455. Godine* (Sarajevo: Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu, 1972); Delilbaşı and Arıkan, *Hicri 859 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Tırhala*, 1. Also see the *defter* of Vidin dated 1455 published in Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*.

⁷⁸ In the example from Aşık Paşazâde that while the Sultan offered land to the dervişes which they refused for the reason that all property and land belong to god and he gives it to whom they deserve it and the dervişes were not such people. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları’nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 90.

accepted the offer. Adnan Adivar interprets their refusal as they did not want to use their wisdom for practical and pragmatic profane purposes.⁷⁹

However, contrary to that ideal type, various chronicles write of the malpractices of judges. In a case Bayezid I locked several judges, who were found to be fraudulent, in a house and attempted to burn them to death with their children but one of his men saved them from the Sultan's wrath. When Bayezid asked the reason behind their defrauding, Çandarlı Ali claimed that their income was insufficient. Then Ali Paşa issued a law that facilitated judges to take 20 *akçes* per 1,000 for dealing with cases of inheritance and they could ask for 2 *akçes* per letter or petition that they wrote for a plaintiff.⁸⁰

The reliability of all these stories can be questioned I use these stories to say few words about the revenues of the *'âlims*. It is certain that the story above was related by Aşık Paşazâde to inform the reader of the origin of the revenues of *kadis* already known in the second half of the fifteenth century. As mentioned above one *'âlim* was taken to be responsible for the foundation of the *mukataa* system. As a matter of fact, the early *mukataa defters* clearly show how *'âlims* were effective in controlling imperial revenues. For example, in a *defter* dated 1490, published by M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, half of the 62 people who controlled the poll tax of various regions had names ending with *al-din*.⁸¹ Similarly, in a *defter* that contains records of *mukataas* of various *sancaks* in the second half of the fifteenth century can be seen

⁷⁹ Adivar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim*. p. 16.

⁸⁰ Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. pp. 34-5. Aşık Paşazâde, *Tevarih-i Âl-i Osman: Aşık Paşazâde Tarihi*. pp. 114-5.

⁸¹ M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2007). pp. 155-158. Similarly, there is an abundance of names ending with *al-din* in another *defter* published by Barkan. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "894 (1488/1489) Yılı Cizyesinin Tâhsilatına âit Muhasebe Bilânçoları," *Balgeler* 1, no. 1 (1964).

many names referring to their *ulemâ*’ class.⁸² This is not surprising since it is probable that those men of knowledge had controlled those resources since the very beginning of the state because they were really powerful at that time if they were not at the zenith of their power. Furthermore, their education increased the possibility of their appointments, and since there was no evidence for an education system for bureaucratic needs it is unlikely that they had no rivals for such positions.

From the evidence in another *mukataa defter* from the 1550s, it can be seen that the names ending with *al-din* were noticeably absent.⁸³ Instead members of the *kapıkulus* (*ebna-i sipâhîyan* and *silahdaran*) dominated the *mukataa* affairs. Thus, the monster that *’alims* fed with their conflict with peripheral powers finally destroyed their own power. First they lost their political power in the second half of the fifteenth century,⁸⁴ and then they to a great extent lost their role in the economy. However, they could keep their spiritual power that was the sole sphere immune to *devşirmes* (converts). Of course, this point is also controversial: in the sixteenth century on one side was the very powerful figure of Şeyhülislam Ebusuud on the other side there were many rebellious madrasa students who were dissatisfied with their positions. That is to say, compared to the situation in the past, in the sixteenth century the *ulemâ* class was no more a distinct and unified group.

⁸² BOA-MAD.d 176 (1470s).

⁸³ BOA-MAD.d 141 (1550s). As we can be seen from analyzing the *mukataas* of Vidin after 1522 members of *ulemâ*’ were no more controlling them. BOA-MAD.d 656; BOA-MAD.d 468; BOA-MAD.d 654; BOA-MAD.d 3229; BOA-KK.d 3062; BOA-MAD.d 99. Of course, in time using *al-din* might decline but mostly such people, especially the *kadis*, were shown with the title *mevlana*. Therefore, it can be said that the *kadis* who were members of *ulemâ*’ class appeared in such *defters* not as collectors or overseers of *mukataas* but as figures who were responsible for the correspondence of *mukataas*. Also it should be added that many documents were compiled in the folder BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1 state that it was almost a tradition that the *kadis* performed the duty of inspection (*müfettiş*) of some port *mukataas* (*iskele mukataası*) but they had almost no function in relation to the land *mukataas* (*haslar mukataası*).

⁸⁴ Here it should not be understood in an absolute sense. For example, the power of Hoca Saadeddin in the sixteenth century is unquestionable.

IV.3. The Formation and Development of the *Timar* System

The Ottoman *timar* system cannot be simply considered to be an organization inherited from earlier socio-political entities. Rather it was a gradual formation parallel to the evolution of the state and clearly shaped by the conflict between different groups in the Empire. Yet, after reading Ottoman chronicles, it can easily be claimed that the *timar* system was an Ottoman institution from the very beginning of the formation of the Ottoman state. Insofar as Aşık Paşazâde claims that Osman passed a law that ensured the rights of the *timar* holders over their bestowals:

Whoever I granted a *timar* no one should seize it [arbitrarily] without a reason. When he [*timar* holder] dies let it be given to his son even if he was small. His servants should attend battles in return for the service until the child grow and join battles. Whoever violates this law god may not bless them. If any of my successors replace this law with another one, god almighty may not bless both those who changed and those who made it change.⁸⁵

By saying that it seems that Aşık Paşazâde made a retrospective and ideal projection of *timar* nevertheless, it can be found to be reasonable unless one understands a typical form by *timar*. There are no official documents about *timar* bestowals; or that mention *timars* in the early period of the formation of the state. The few remaining documents are about private property (*mülk*) and social and religious foundations (*vakıf*). After removing the imperative of service in this law the remainder can be seen in any *mülk* or *vakıf* diploma. In that sense there is a realistic side of this law.

When Aşık Paşazâde first mentions the *timar* allocations he provides information about the identity of the owners. The İnönü region was bestowed on Orhan, the son of Osman. Hasan Alp and Turgud Alp were bestowed Yarhisar and İnegöl respectively and Edebalı was given the revenue of Bilecik.⁸⁶ It is certain that

⁸⁵ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 62.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 63.

they were not the ordinary *timar* holders that we know. Edebali and Orhan were from the family of Osman and the other two were warrior lords. This story of bestowal is in keeping to the more egalitarian characteristic of the first phase of the state. It is obvious that all those regions were not bestowed as simple *timars*. In fact, as İnalçık says at the beginning those *alps* were acting independently and only after Osman proved himself as the most active one, they began to cooperate with him.⁸⁷ When they recognized his leadership this does not mean that they lost all their privileges in fact they were still enjoying full autonomy in their activities. As proof of this point, after they conquered a place it began to be known by the conqueror's names. Akçakoca was the ruler of Koca İli, Konur Alp was the ruler of Konur Alp İli or Konrapa and Turgud Alp was that of Turgud İli.⁸⁸ In this context *il* appears to signify an autonomous, if not independent, political entity. Likewise the country of Constantine Dejanović was named by Ottomans as Köstendil and that of Sratsimir (Srachimir) would be named Sarac-ili, and Dobruca-ili, Kuvac-ili, Baflu-ili, Laz-ili all refer to autonomous or independent polities.

The word *il* even before Islamic period was used in Turkish as signifying a state or country.⁸⁹ It seems that in the early periods of the Ottoman state the term was still used with the same meaning. When Orhan captured Karasi “he made that *il* a *vilâyet*.”⁹⁰ *Vilâyet* is an Arabic word that also means the state or country. In this context it means subordinated province and each *vilâyet* had its own banner

⁸⁷ İnalçık, *Devlet-i 'Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar-I*, p. 11.

⁸⁸ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, pp. 63, 74. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*, pp. 32-33. Anonim *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, p. 16.

⁸⁹ Tuncer Baykara, *Anadolu'nun Tarihi Coğrafyasına Giriş I: Anadolu'nun İdari Taksimatı* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünün Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1988), p. 29; Cin and Akyılmaz, *Tarihte Toplum ve Yönetim Tarzı olarak Feodalite ve Osmanlı Düzeni*, p. 169.

⁹⁰ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 316.

(*sancak*).⁹¹ Therefore, it can be estimated that *sancak* and *vilâyet* were used interchangeably at the beginning.⁹² The conclusion is that the fundamental difference between *il* and *vilâyet* was shaped by the Ottoman discourse for legitimating its authority over a region. The warning that Murad I gave to the raider leader Evrenos is meaningful in that sense:

Never be conceited with saying that “I conquered *vilâyets* of Rumili.” You shall know that these *vilâyets* belong to the lord god, glory be to him. And after him [they] belong to his prophet. On the order of the lord god [they] belong to his caliph.⁹³

The *Vilâyet* was a regional unit under the direct control of the Ottoman State however, at most *il* could be a dependent or tributary state and that perception affected the sub-administrative units of a *vilâyet* but they were also called *vilâyet* in the early *tahrir defters*. The reason behind that is that they were subordinated to the ruler/governor of the *vilâyet* (*sancak*), who enjoyed a great degree of independence.

Under these circumstances chroniclers consider that *timar* resemble feudal fiefdom in which land was possessed by overlords who had relatively more autonomy compared to the Ottoman *timar* holders of later periods.⁹⁴ Thus, each overlord distributed these lands among their own soldiers as stipends. The *defter* catalogued as BOA-MAD.d 544 (d. 1455) is one of the most authentic in that sense. The majority, approximately 85%, of the grants in the realm of one of such *begs*, İsa

⁹¹ In his letter to Evrenos Murad I writes “we sent you drum (*tabl*) and alem (*banner*) and *sancak* (*banner*).” İnbaşı, "Sultan I. Murad'ın Evrenos Bey'e Mektubu." p. 229.

⁹² In the same letter in which the *Sancak* that “granted” to Evrenos contained Gümülcine, Siroz and Horpişte, was valued at 1,000,000 akçes. Ibid. p. 228. This value, as given in the *tahrir defters*, was equal to that granted to the *Eyâlet* begis, not *Sancakbegis*, who were bestowed with at most 700,000, in the sixteenth century.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 228.

⁹⁴ İnalcık says, these were appanages or types of *yurd* like *tiyul* or *ülke*. İnalcık, "*Timar*." p. 502. I think of *tiyul* as a “non-hereditary tax exemption” which is not suitable for defining these early land possessions. İlber Ortaylı, "Osmanlı Toprak Düzeninin Kaynakları (15. Yüzyılda İran Toprak Rejiminde Görülen Muafiyet ve İmtiyaz Sistemi Üzerine)," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 4 (1977). p. 74. But other types such as *yurd*, *ülke* or what Ortaylı calls *soyurgal* best explain their nature.

the son of İshak Beg, were enjoyed by relatives and their servants⁹⁵ and some records showed that he distributed his *hasses* among his relatives and servants. “*Hasha-i İsa Beg veled-i İshak Beg, der tasarruf-u hatun-i mu'temed(?)*.”⁹⁶ “*An hasha-i İsa Beg-i mezkur, der tasarruf-u veled-i Mehmed Çelebi*.”⁹⁷ “*Timar-i Manol veled-i Yagri(?)*, an hasha-i İsa Beg.”⁹⁸ “*An hasha-i İsa Beg-i mezkur, der vilâyet-i Kalkandelen ki der tasarruf-u hizmetkaran-i hod est*.”⁹⁹ These examples can help to make sense of the nature of the earliest *timars* and local relations. Then a reasonable explanation for the transition from such a decentralized entity to the Ottoman centralization should be found.

c.1300-1330		c. 1360-1460		c.1520-1600	
Central	Autonomous	Central	Autonomous	Central	Autonomous
-	<i>İl</i> ¹⁰⁰	[<i>Beglerbeglik</i>]	<i>Vilâyet/Beglerbeglik</i>	<i>Eyâlet/Vilâyet</i>	<i>Eyâlet/Vilâyet</i>
<i>Vilâyet</i>	[<i>Vilâyet</i>]	<i>Vilâyet/Sancak</i>	<i>Akıncı Vilâyeti</i>	<i>Sancak/Livâ</i>	<i>Hükûmet</i>
<i>Vilâyet</i>	<i>Vilâyet</i>	<i>Vilâyet/Subaşılık</i>	<i>Vilâyet/Subaşılık</i>	<i>Kaza</i>	<i>Kaza</i>

Table 6: The Transformation of Administrative Divisions

A similar discourse can be alleged for the use of the word *timar*. It is known that in the early *defters* there are two types of (*timar*) grants; *hass* and *timar*. However, it is not clear what the exact criterion is that separates one from another. According to İnalçık, *timar* was a generic term that included *hasses* as well. Then he

⁹⁵ As İnalçık calculated earlier, 160 out of 189 *timar* holders were servants and slaves of *akıncı beg* İsa, the son of İshak. İnalçık, "Stefan Duşan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri." p. 149.

⁹⁶ BOA-MAD.d 544, p . 181.

⁹⁷ BOA-MAD.d 544, p . 184.

⁹⁸ BOA-MAD.d 544, p . 187.

⁹⁹ BOA-MAD.d 544, p . 188.

¹⁰⁰ In one of the chronicles independent polities were usually called as *eyâlet*. Cihan Çimen, "Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osmân" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2006).

added that *hass* specified the *timars* that the *beg* was entitled to.¹⁰¹ However, in the same *defter* that he published the possessions of some *begs* were recorded as *timar*. Moreover, some of fortress wardens bore this title but they still possessed *timars*. That is, bearing the title *beg* cannot be considered as a criterion for the type of grant. Moreover, if everything was *timar* in the eye of the government, why did they use *hass* and not just *timar*? For example, for the Seljuks the word *ikta* was used both for small and big land grants. In the sixteenth century there was a logic behind the definition of a *hass* in that should be above a certain value, i.e. 100,000 *akçes*. But in the earlier period there was no such a criterion to define categories. If *hass* was peculiar to *begs* then why did some *begs* have *timar* but not *hass*? One possible answer is that some people did not gain the title *beg* from the birth but later. At the same time such a claim would be a confession that there was an aristocracy class, the existence of which was insistently refuted by some scholars. Or could the answer be found in the historical development of the system.

Hass or *hassa* is an Arabic word meaning ‘private, excellent and noble’. If it is used for individuals it means ‘elite’ and ‘noble’. *Hassa askeri* for instance means imperial guards or simply means excellent or elite army and *hassa ve amme* signifies ‘state servants and public’. When it is used for property it means ‘private’ or ‘reserved’ property. A *hassa çiftlik* of a *timar* holder was the farm reserved for him and *hass bahçe* means the private garden of sultan or simply the excellent garden. Lastly, a *hass* was also the title of lands reserved for the central state (*hass-ı padişahi*). Then it can be said that *hass* was denoted both nobility and private property here it is differentiated from *mülk*, which is a generic term for private

¹⁰¹ İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*, p. XXIV.

property or ownership. That is, like *il* it also signifies political authority. Thus, it can be said that *il* and *hass* are the same in essence.

In terms of political authority there should be some apparatuses that facilitated a person's authority one of the most important was what Althusser calls "repressive apparatuses"¹⁰² i.e. army. A traditional justice-based state theory that would be known in the Ottoman context as the 'circle of justice' (*daire-i adliyye*) points out, it is not possible to ensure authority without the military; and military cannot exist without money.¹⁰³ Thus, the ruler had to share some of his *hass* revenues with his soldiers and basically that the shared-portion was the *timar*. However, in practice neither the border of a *hass* or of authority was as clear as classic theories claim it to be, and as widely believed in the Ottoman historiography. In any society there are many interest groups and each group should be persuaded into recognizing the state's authority. Inducing peasants to share their property might be relatively easier. How can it be possible to persuade those power elites, especially who had greater roles on the state power, or those whose lands had been annexed? There must have been some socio-psychological processes through which the persuasion was realized and the demands of each side stabilized in a balance of order. In order to manage this process, the government needed some "ideological apparatuses"¹⁰⁴ or a discourse. As mentioned above, the '*âlims*, who were masters of Islamic ideology or real politics, had a great role in this management.

¹⁰² Such as military forces, court and prison. Louis Althusser, *İdeoloji ve Devletin İdeolojik Aygıtları* (İstanbul: İthaki, 2010). pp. 134, 168.

¹⁰³ For an early example, see İbn Haldun, *Devlet*, trans. Osman Arpaçukuru (İstanbul: İlke Yayıncılık, 2008). p. 71.

¹⁰⁴ Like religion, justice, culture etc. Althusser, *İdeoloji ve Devletin İdeolojik Aygıtları*. p. 169.

The terms *timar*, *ikta*, *dirlik*, or *etmek/ekmek* all had the same meaning.¹⁰⁵

What is the common element in of these words? *Dirlik* is a Turkish word derived from *diri* (alive). In this sense *dirlik* is the thing that gives life. Likewise *timar* that means cure or care also something that gives life and, of course, bread (*ekmek*) needless to say has the same connotation. *Ikta* is derived from the Arabic *qata* ' that means 'to cut'. *Ikta* as a technical term used to mean fief and/or prebend. Though it seems that it had no relation with previous terms in terms of its generic meaning, we know that 'bread' was in widespread use for possessed lands or revenues and 'eating' instead of possession. Persian '*nânpare*' (a loaf of bread), or Arabic '*hubz*' (bread) were also used for such possessions.¹⁰⁶ The point that I would like to emphasize is that: the use of the word 'bread' is the key to understand the insertion of authority. It seems that the state tried to create a perception that bread/*timar* was something bestowed more than something earned.¹⁰⁷ Even today we can see the tradition by looking at a popular phrase in Turkey – eating this country's bread shows that people are thankful to god then to the state for their livelihood. Thinking about the long lasting struggles between the center and the peripheral powers it became meaningful that the state first tried to *timarize* (subordinate) some lower rank soldiers and then treat *hasses* of *begs* as just a kind of *timar* this is the reason why *hass* and *timar* could be used interchangeably.

That is to say at the beginning the *alp* leaders, rulers of *ils*, distributed the lands to their warriors – either permanently or temporarily, either as private property

¹⁰⁵ Şeyhoğlu Mustafa, *Kenzü'l-Küberâ ve Mehekku'l-Ulema*, ed. Kemal Yavuz (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, 1991). p. 93.

¹⁰⁶ Erkan Göksu, *Türkiye Selçuklularında Ordu* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2010). p. 80.

¹⁰⁷ In Islam everything is bestowed by god. The state is a 'god's favor'. So the ruler always should be thankful to god for that favor. And all other livelihood can be possible due to an order that was given to the ruler by god. So other all other subject should be thankful to the ruler. The above citation from Murad I's letter is a good example of this perception.

or as salary – as breads/*timars*. When the Ottomans annexed and conquered the independent or autonomous polities around, they usually followed different policies for each class in each case. Nevertheless, it can be said that local aristocracy were usually eliminated during confrontations or shortly after their captivity if they did not accept the suzerainty of the Ottomans. The notables including those from the family of former military aristocracy together with retinues were driven away from their home land and sent to *uçs* or different regions. The remaining lower ranking notables and soldiers were usually allowed to enjoy their former status under a commander appointed by the center.¹⁰⁸ Lastly, producers usually enjoyed their previous status, if they were not executed, enslaved or migrated.

In any case, the process of *timarization*/centralization took a time. The *malikâne-divani* system that we see in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Anatolia was the state policy of *timarization* of the lands of former private owners and soldiers who had recognized privileges. A similar process was seen in the Balkans as well. The former family farms (*baştina*) remained for a long time with certain immunities. However, the greater obstacle was the vague status of the *akıncı-begis*. At first glance, they were just commanders in the Ottoman army however, as discussed above, they were *de facto* autonomous/independent lords and could distribute the lands they possessed or had conquered among their own soldiers. Therefore, in the first one and half centuries it will be better to state that the Ottoman realm consisted of multiple *timar* systems instead of one centralized *timar* system.

¹⁰⁸ To see how the notables enjoyed some immunities and privileges in the Amasya region for long period of time, see, Oktay Özel, "The Transformation of Provincial Administration in Anatolia: Observations on Amasya from 15th to 17th Centuries," in *The Ottoman Empire. Myths, Realities and 'Black Holes'. Contributions in Honour of Colin Imber*, ed. Evgenia Kermeli and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2006). p. 65-6.

Beside these obstacles, there were some catalysts in the centralization of the *timars*. Firstly, in an atmosphere of rapid expansion a kind of military nomadism could be expected. As mentioned above, the very logic behind the *uç* was the perpetual expansion over the enemy territory that might have weakened the bond of a proportion of soldiers with the land and which made easier for the state to grant these lands to other soldiers. Secondly, it was easier for the central state to control the lands where the peasants had already lost their private ownership in favor of the previous landlords. Tending towards feudalism was not only a Byzantine fact in the thirteenth century, but it was also experienced by the Seljukids in the same period.¹⁰⁹ Thirdly, the policy of settling tribes or other people on land that became vacant after the conquest was another factor.¹¹⁰ Lastly, the strategies that the Ottoman governments followed in their conflict with the *akıncı-begis* to a great extent led to the formation of a centralized *timar* system. Signs of these policies are witnessed in the early *defters* where can be seen that many *timar* holders were *gulam-ı mîrs*¹¹¹ or *beg kulu*.¹¹² This term, as Heath Lowry asserts, can be translated as ‘sultan’s servants’ or ‘sultan’s slave’.¹¹³ On the other hand in the same *defters* there were

¹⁰⁹ Claude Cahen, "Selçuki Devletleri Feodal Devletler mi idi?," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 17, no. 1-4 (1955-6).

¹¹⁰ For a detailed analysis of the issue of settlement policies see, Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Sürgünler." In this collection, in particular, the second article discusses the settlement policies in the early periods.

¹¹¹ Especially see, İnalcık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid.*; Delilbaşı and Arıkan, *Hicrî 859 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Tırhala*, 1; Hadžibegić, Handžić, and Kovačević, *Oblast Brankovicha: Opshirni Katastarski Popis iz 1455. Godine*.

¹¹² In a *defter* recording the area around Skopje dated 1455 sometimes *beg kulu* was used instead of *gulam-ı mir*. "*Beg kullarından Yeniçeri Ahmed'e verildi* – given to Ahmed the janissary, one of *beg kulus*." BOA-MAD.d 544, p. 53.

¹¹³ Heath W. Lowry and Sinan Çuluk, "Prof. Dr. Heath W. Lowry ile Mülakat," *Arşiv Dünyası Dergisi*, no. 5 (2005), <http://www.sinanculuk.com/?p=67>. In a *defter* of Vidin it is recorded; "*Muhammedi, gulam-ı mir-i azam ve hakan*." MAD. D. 18, p. 16. Barkan also uses this term to mean the Sultan's slaves. Barkan, "*Timar*." p. 824. İnalcık vaguely calls them a slave of a *beg* (*beg kulu*). İnalcık, "Stefan Dušan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri." p. 146. After İnalcık, his pupil Uğur Altuğ repeats the same "Most of the slaves that possessed *timars* were slaves of *begs* [*beg kulu*]. In *defters* they were expressed as *gulâm-ı mîr*. Of

timar holders who were recorded as a servant of this or that *beg*. Especially in the *defter* of Albania (Arvanid) dated 1432 published by İnalçık it can be seen there were also many *timar* holders who had migrated from Anatolia.¹¹⁴ It means that the state attempted to have more control these lands by replacing local *timar* holders' and those holding local power with *kapıkulu* soldiers or exiles. The best example of this process can be clearly seen in BOA-MAD.d 544. In this *defter* though many *timar* holders were the slaves or servants of İsa Beg, as can be seen in the notes added later they began to be granted to central cadres or exiles in a later period.

IV.4. From a Two-Layer to a Tripartite System

As can be seen in the discussion above Ottoman land possession was divided into two parts. i.e. *hass* and *timar*. That two-layered structure continued until the end of the reign of Mehmed II. After that the *timar* system gradually developed into its very classical tripartite form.

In order to understand the process it is necessary to look closer at the *subaşı*. Literally *subaşı* means the military chief or "commander of the army"¹¹⁵ and was a title in the Seljuk state.¹¹⁶ According to various chronicles, Gündüzalp, the brother of Osman, was appointed as the *subaşı* of *vilâyet* of İnönü in *Sancak (Vilâyet)* of Karcahisar that was administered by Orhan.¹¹⁷ Therefore, a *Subaşı* can also be

such kind of slaves of begs some were clearly shown to whom they belonged. Another group of slaves consisted of Sultan's slaves who were sent from center." Uğur Altuğ, "II. Murad Dönemine Ait Tahrir Defterlerinin Yayına Hazırlanması ve Bu Malzemeye Göre Timar Sistemi, Demografi, Yerleşme ve Topoğrafya Üzerinde Araştırmalar" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Gazi University, 2010). p. 219.

¹¹⁴ İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*.

¹¹⁵ Johannes Hendrik Kramers, "Su Bashi," in *EI*² (1997).

¹¹⁶ For a detailed analysis on the term *subaşı* and its usage in Selçukids then in the Ottoman Empire see, Özel, "The Transformation of Provincial Administration in Anatolia: Observations on Amasya from 15th to 17th Centuries." pp. 63-4.

¹¹⁷ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 291.

defined as a military officer and head of an administrative division.¹¹⁸ Based on this information it can be claimed that the rulers of *ils* also should have some *subaşı*. It is highly likely that Gazi Rahman was once the *subaşı* of Konur Alp,¹¹⁹ and Kara Mürsel was that of Akça Koca.¹²⁰ Hasan Alp should have been one of the *Subaşı* of Osman¹²¹ furthermore, it seems that Samsa Çavuş would have liked to be a *sancakbegi* but he was obliged to content himself with *subaşılık*.¹²² The common characteristics of these people were that, all had been granted fortresses and they were warriors. In the case of Kara Mürsel, he was granted a *vilâyet*, which should have been a *subaşılık* in this context. Then lastly, after the death of Osman, Orhan moved to Yenişehir which had been Osman's central base and his *sancak* was bestowed on Gündüz. That means that a *subaşı* could be promoted to *sancakbegilik* from the very early periods of the state.

Nevertheless, most probably not all such people bore the title of *subaşı*.¹²³ But I will refer to all those occupied the highest administrative offices of the towns (*nefs*)¹²⁴ and surrounding (*nâhiye*) other than *sancak* centers as *subaşı*s. Those

¹¹⁸ Neşri mentions how *subaşı*s like *sancakbegis* commanded armies in battles in 1387. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*, p. 105.

¹¹⁹ In Aşık Paşazâde's words Konur Alp after conquering Bolu returned to Karaçepiç and Absuyu and left Gazi Rahman there. Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 303.

¹²⁰ Karamürsel was granted the *vilâyet* of Karamürsel. At the same time, a certain Yahşılı was granted Ermen Bazaru and Akbaş was given Kandırı. Ibid. p. 310.

¹²¹ Hasan Alp was bestowed Yarhisar. Ibid. p. 291.

¹²² "Samsa Çavuş said "My lord, give this *vilâyet* to me..." Osman Gazi said: "I will not give some parts of the *vilâyet*. And near Lefke, by the Yenişehir stream there was a small fortress; [Osman] gave it to Samsa Çavuş." Ibid. p. 67.

¹²³ For example, in Arvanid several *vilâyet*s were administered by those who were not officially *subaşı*s. See, *vilâyet-i Pavlo Kurtik in İncalcık, Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*, p. 85. In another case although İlaldı the son of Hamza Beg was not shown as *subaşı* his obligations were the same with those of *subaşı*s. BOA-MAD.d 544, p. 299.

¹²⁴ In the *defter* of Arvanid of *subaşılık* only *Vilâyet-i Çartolos* had not recorded any *nefs*. Ibid. pp. 97-102. But there should be at least a fortress to have made that region a *subaşılık*.

subaşı' bearing the title *beg* made them among the noble class¹²⁵ but their status were lower than that of *sancakbegis*.¹²⁶ In the earliest *defter*s there are two types of *subaşı*; those who received *hass* and those who received *timar*. Although it is true that the terms *hass* and *timar* could be used interchangeably, the reason behind that was not related to the use of *timar* as a generic term for all kind of grants as İnaclık claimed,¹²⁷ rather it was related to the nature of the administrative unit that the *subaşı* governed. The *vilâyet* that had a *serasker* or *çeribaşı* (military commander)¹²⁸ was ruled by *hass* owner *sancakbegis* or *subaşı* / *zaims*¹²⁹ and probably it referred to the administrative unit called *seraskerî* in some Anatolian provinces.¹³⁰ On the other hand, in the *vilâyet* that had no such military figure was administered by *timar*-holding *subaşı*s.

¹²⁵ Konstantin Mihailović, makes an interesting point. According to him those who raised the Ottoman banner on the wall of a fortress were promoted to *sancakbeglik* and those that followed him were promoted to *subaşılık*. Konstantin Mihailović, *Bir Yeniçerinin Hatıratı*, p. 112. Of course, such a thing could be possible, but as it can be seen in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries *sancakbegis* usually came from noble (*akıncı*) families. No study has been conducted on the identity of these early *subaşı*s yet but it would be no surprise to see that they also were descended from noble families.

¹²⁶ "When the campaign season started...the *ceri-bashis* rounding up the *sipâhîs* in the *zi'âmet* joined *subashi*. The *subashis* then met the *sancak beyi*." İnaclık, "Timar," p. 503.

¹²⁷ In a *defter* of Braničeva under the *hasses* of the *Sancakbegi* of Vidin some villages that were called *çiftlik* were recorded as his *timar*. Momčilo Stojaković, *Branicevski Teftar: Poimenicni Popis Pokrajine Branicevo iz 1467. Godine* (Beograd: Istorijski Institut, 1987), p. 88. I do not think that they were erroneously recorded as *timar* since this might be related to their previous status of that unit or these villages as *çiftliks* refer to some special possessions among the *hasses*.

¹²⁸ These military commanders were mainly the heads of *timar* holding cavalries of specific *sancak* or *vilayet/nahiye* as seen in the example that "Ali *serasker-i sipahiyan-ı nahiye-i mezbure [Bane]* – Ali, the *serasker* of *sipahis* of the mentioned region [Nahiye-i Bane]." BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236 (11 Receb 1006). These military commanders in *sancaks*, where there were special/auxiliary troops as *voynuks* (explained later), also commanded such troops who usually were not granted *timars*. see, Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar*, pp. 61-67.

¹²⁹ One exceptional case was the *subaşı* of Premeti whose grant was recorded as *timar* while there was a *seraker* under him. BOA-MAD.d 231, p. 4.

¹³⁰ For the case of Amasya see Özel, "The Transformation of Provincial Administration in Anatolia: Observations on Amasya from 15th to 17th Centuries," p. 64. Özel, "Changes in Settlement Patterns, Population and Society in Rural Anatolia: A Case Study of Amasya (1576-1642)," p. 53.

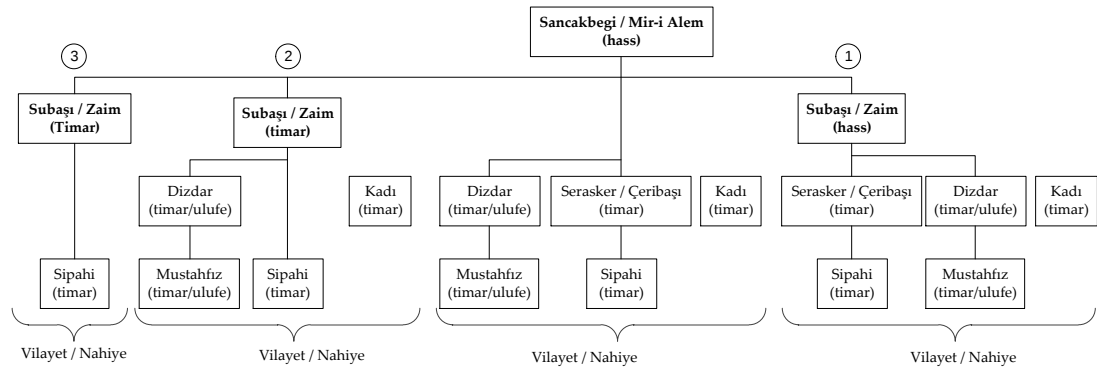


Figure 5: Administrative Organization of Arvanid in 1432

Serasker, *çeribaşı* and *subaşı* all literally mean the head (*ser*, *baş*) of soldiers (*asker*, *çeri*, *su*) i.e. the commander. In the Ottoman administrative-military organization *serasker* and *çeribaşı* referred to the same military figure and these words were used interchangeably. On the other hand the words *subaşı* and *zâ'im* were also used interchangeably. As mentioned in Chapter III *zâ'im* is an Arabic word that means leader or chief. It will not be wrong to claim that the title *subaşı* denoted nobility more in the early periods and they gradually lost their powers in the course of time.¹³¹ Even in Figure 5 above the *sancakbegi* in the 15th century referred to something more than it referred to in the sixteenth century. Besides, *hass*-holding *subaşı*s were more or less the equivalent of the *sancakbegi* of sixteenth century.¹³² Moreover, it can also be said that comparing the first type (*hass*-owner) *subaşı*s and the second type *subaşı*s the latter were less autonomous in their relations with *sancakbegis*. Otherwise, the organizations of both *subaşılık* were about the same and

¹³¹ According to Beldiceanu, the Ottoman *subaşı* was in the category of *timar* (grant) holding class. Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tımar*. p. 18. However, the existence of a *subaşı* does not always mean there was a *timar* system.

¹³² According to Tuncer Baykara *Subaşı* in the Selçukid period there was the equivalent of the Ottoman *sancakbegi*. Baykara, *Anadolu'nun Tarihi Coğrafyasına Giriş I: Anadolu'nun İdari Taksimatı*. pp. 22, 31. For Mustafa Akdağ this person was something more than *sancakbegi* and much more resembled a *beglerbegi*. Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadî ve İçtimai Tarihi*. p. 397. Bahaeddin Yediyıldız also claims that around 1455 the early *subaşı* was highest official rank in the Vilâyet-i Bayramlı. Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, *Ordu Kazası Sosyal Tarihi* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1985). pp. 64-65.

they had a *kadı* (judge) each. In the sixteenth century when the *subaşı*s further lost their privileged positions¹³³ such administrative units would begin to be called *kaza*.¹³⁴ Such *kaza*-administering *subaşı*s were authorized to demand, at least a share of fees related to proceedings and crimes (*niyabet*)¹³⁵ in their regions (*vilâyet*). However, the third type lacked such privileges. Nevertheless, most probably when comparing the *timars* of lower ranking soldiers (*sipâhî*) their *timar* were had the status of free grants (*serbest timar*) and they did not share their *niyabets* with their superiors. Another point is that, under the authority of the third type of *subaşı*s usually no *dizdar* are seen.¹³⁶ Then it can be said that these *subaşı*s also functioned as *serasker* who at the same time occupied the position of *dizdar*.¹³⁷

After studying of various *defters* I would argue that the above organization chart more or less depicts the Ottoman *sancak* administration of the Balkans before the 1460s. Of course it is not easy to observe this organization in all sources. Some *defters* contain only *vilâyets* (*subaşılık*) and therefore it is not possible to see the

¹³³ For the change in this institution in sixteenth century see, Mücteba İlgürel, "XVII. Yüzyıl Balıkesir Şer'iyye Sicillerine Göre *Subaşılık* Müessesesi," in *VIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1981).

¹³⁴ In his research Gökbilgin realized that in the *defters* of the Province of Rum of fifteenth century there is no such an administration unit as a *kaza*. As he persuasively asserted, it does not mean that there were not *kadis* appointed there. M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "15 ve 16. Asırlarda Eyâlet-i Rûm," *Vakıflar Dergisi*, no. 6 (1965), pp. 53-4. Similarly Mehmet Öz underlined the same fact. Mehmet Öz, *XV-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Canik Sancağı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), p. 31.

¹³⁵ This can be seen in practice in the *defters*. Also, in various law codes it was stated that the *subaşı* and *sancakbegis* could seize the half of *niyabet* of non-free *timars*. This point is closely related to the availability of judge in certain region. In such regions *Subaşı*s were responsible for public security. Therefore they must have cooperated with judges in process of justice and punishment. This makes sense in terms of why they seized the *niyabet* in their regions.

¹³⁶ Only, the *vilâyet-i İskarpar* had *dizdar*. İnalcık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*, p. 79.

¹³⁷ Under the title "*Mustahfızan-ı Kala-i İzveçin – Guards of Fortress of İzveçin*" the first *timar* valued at 5,075 akçes was that of Yusuf *Subaşı*. BOA-MAD.d 544, p. 46. Therefore, it can be expected that he was both *Subaşı* of the region of İzveçin and the warden of the fortress however; the value of his *timar* was too low for a *subaşı*. Moreover, he was under no obligation to attend battles. Therefore, he fits the warden position more than a *subaşı*.

usual *Sancakbegi*.¹³⁸ In other *defters* after mentioning the name of the region, i.e. *Vilâyet-i Avret Hisarı*, the *subaşı*s were recorded as *zâ'îmeş* in Persian – meaning “its’ *zâ'îm* (*subaşı*)”.¹³⁹ In such cases there is no information about the types of grants received by these *subaşı*s. However, Uğur Altuğ mistakenly read the word *zâ'îmeş* as *zi'amet*.¹⁴⁰ As İnalçık has already points out, such usage was seen in the *defters* prepared during the reign of Murad II, except for the earliest two *defters*. Then Altuğ concluded that the state rearranged the *timar* types in the last decade of the reign of Murad II and the difference resulted from the duration under which the region remained under the Ottoman rule.¹⁴¹ However, this is does not seem to be the case. First, such differences were much related to the styles of the *defters*,¹⁴² as will be seen later, though Vidin had a long past under Ottoman rule the earliest records much resemble those in Arvanid. Second, the word here does not refer to a grant type but an administrative title. The *defters* might not record the types of their grants but they were either *timars* or *hasses*. Based on the criteria offered above it is useful to examine the *defter* NLB-D 707 (including BOA-MAD.d 525 and NLB-OAK 45-30) dated 1444-5. For example, it is known that Selanik and Köprülü had *kadıs* and *seraskers* and their *subaşı*s collected the *niyabet* of the regions for themselves so the *subaşı*s of these places should have been the *hass* owners. On the other hand, the

¹³⁸ BOA-MAD.d 5 and BOA-MAD.d 544 are such kind of *defters*.

¹³⁹ There were many examples in the *defters* NLB-D. 707; BOA-MAD.d 525, BOA-MAD.d 250, BOA-MAD.d 303, and NLB-OAK 45-30.

¹⁴⁰ Altuğ, "II. Murad Dönemine Ait Tahrir Defterlerinin Yayına Hazırlanması ve Bu Malzemeye Göre *Timar* Sistemi, Demografi, Yerleşme ve Topoğrafya Üzerinde Araştırmalar." pp. 109, 112. If he had read the work of İnalçık more carefully he would see that the author had already stated that they were called *zâ'îm* and such terms were read as *zâ'îmeş* but not *zi'amet*. See footnote 125 in İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*. p. XXIII.

¹⁴¹ Altuğ, "II. Murad Dönemine Ait Tahrir Defterlerinin Yayına Hazırlanması ve Bu Malzemeye Göre *Timar* Sistemi, Demografi, Yerleşme ve Topoğrafya Üzerinde Araştırmalar." pp. 112-3.

¹⁴² For example, over a short period the *timars* were recorded together with their values in previous surveys.

Zâ'im Etmekçi Zaganos (his region is unreadable) and the *zâ'im* of Kaloyan, who did not meet such requirements, should have been *timar* owners.

During the reign of Mehmed II, the *subaşı*'s power was diminished further. First, in 1470s their possessions began to be named *zi'amet* and usually granted to low ranking state officials. Though in a law code that is attributed to Mehmed II the term *zi'amet* was used to mean a grant valued between 20,000 and 99,999 *akçes*¹⁴³ – the usage in the *defters* tells us that in this period *zi'amet* was still denoted a possession related to a *subaşılık*.¹⁴⁴ As seen in the Chapter 5, *zi'amet* in this period, was used for the revenue of a particular region therefore, it could be lower than 20,000 *akçes*. Furthermore, the term *zi'amet* did not gain its widely-known meaning until the reign of Süleyman the lawgiver (1520 – 1566).

IV.5. Conclusion

Historians usually claim that the Ottomans conquered a place then conduct surveys and established the *timar* system. However, the establishment of the *timar* system was a long process. In each period there was a decentralized sphere in the Ottoman realm. The Ottoman center did not often venture to eliminate those power

¹⁴³ An article says “*Ve sancak beği oğulları otuzbin akçe zeâmet ala.* – And the sons of *sancakbegi* take 30,000 akçe *zi'amet*.” In another article it is stated that “*Ve yeni mülâzım, zeâmet istese yirmibin akçe zi'amet verile.* – And if a novice demands a *zi'amet*, a 20,000 akçe *zi'amet* let be given.” Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 1. p. 325. Looking at the *defters* prepared in that period it can be easily seen that such a usage of *zi'amet* does not fit the reality of the period. This usage was either added to the law code later or the law code was not prepared in the period of the reign of Mehmed II. Similarly, in the *Gazavatname* of Murad II it is said that the sultan promised *timars* and *zi'amets* to whoever attended the war. “*eğer timar isteyen ve eğer ze'âmet isteyen ve eğer yeniçerilik isteyen ve eğer sipâhilik isteyen ve eğer yörüklikden çıkmak isteyen her birinin murâd (u) maksûdları makbûlündür.*” İnalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtname*. p. 14. In another place it is said that “*ehl-i timar ve za'im*” *ibid.* p. 43-4. This usage also does not fit with the common use of the term in the early fifteenth century.

¹⁴⁴ As will be seen in the following chapter contrary to ordinary *zi'amets*, the early ones were recorded by the name of the administrative unit (*subaşılık*) that they referred to. This seems to be a general trend in Ottoman history. For a similar process in Amasya see, Özel, “The Transformation of Provincial Administration in Anatolia: Observations on Amasya from 15th to 17th Centuries.” p. 63.

holders especially in the Balkans but in order to diminish their power it seems that the center tried to control their warriors. The means the surveying (*tahrir*) revenues were used to build a central control over resources, holders of resources and the process of resource distribution among users. Therefore, the center could abrade the feudal powers in favor of the empowerment of the center. Thus, the establishment of the *timar* system was much related to the central expansion over such spheres.

Another point is that the question of the genesis of the *timar* system occupied a great place in the Ottoman historiography. However, in this chapter an attempt to rethinking of the conditions in which the *timar* system was developed was presented in order to show that the *timar* system was not something that the Ottomans just adopted but an institution that owed its existence to socio-political relations and conflicts. This will provide a firmer base for understanding the *timar* system in Vidin from 1455 onward.

CHAPTER V

SYSTEMIC DIFFUSION INTO VIDIN

V.1. Development of Ottoman Administration in Vidin

V.1.1. From Kingdom of Vidin to the Ottoman Appanage Principality

Vidin, an old Roman town located in the north-west Bulgaria, in the second half of the fourteenth century was the center of the autonomous principality of Ivan Sratsimir (r. 1356-1365; 1369-1396) under the second Bulgarian Empire ruled by Ivan Alexander (r. 1331-1371). On the eve of the Ottoman advancement over Balkans, the Hungarian King Louis I (r. 1342-1382) conquered Vidin and took Sratsimir captive in 1365. In the Hungarian Banat of Vidin the Orthodox population systematically converted to the Catholicism.¹ Eventually, Ivan Alexander restored his authority in Vidin with the help of Vladislav I of Wallachia in 1369.² As a part of the negotiations Hungarians released Sratsimir and he once more began to rule Vidin.³ After the death of Ivan Alexander in 1371 the relative stability in Bulgarian lands disintegrated and the Empire was divided into three independent kingdoms. Ivan

¹ Svetlana Ivanova, "Widin," in *Eİ²* (2002). p. 205. Şerif Baştav, *Osmanlı Türk-Macar Tarihi Münasebetlerinde İlk Devir, 1456* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1991). p. 47.

² Ayşe Kayapınar, *Le Sancak Ottoman De Vidin Du XV^e À La Fin Du XVI^e Siècle* (Istanbul: Les Éditions Isis, 2011). p. 61.

³ Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*. pp. 366-367. Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, ed. Erhan Afyoncu, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2009). p. 220.

Shishman took Tarnovo; Dobrotitsa, and later his son Ivanko, ruled over Dobruca (Karvuna) and Ivan Sratsimir was the ruler of the Tsardom of Vidin.⁴

After the death of the Serbian king Stephen Dushan in 1355 many independent states and despots mushroomed on the lands of the former Serbian Empire. The continuous tension in their mutual relations led each to seek alliances against their rivals. The pragmatic policies of the Ottomans gave them advantages in these relations. After the conquest of Hadrianopolis (Edirne)⁵ some Serbian states sensed the danger that could come from the Ottomans. An expedition by Vukashin and Ugljesha, and most probably Shishman gave support, ended in failure and destruction in the battle of Marica (*Sırb Sindüğü* also *Çirmen*) led by Lala Şahin in 1371. Immediately after the battle, Prince Marko, the son of Vukashin, and Konstantin Dejanovic accepted Ottoman sovereignty as a result of the conflict with other Christian states.⁶ Furthermore, the Byzantine and Serbian Prince Lazar agreed to pay tribute shortly after the battle. Lastly, in order to prevent any further Serbo-Bulgarian coalition the Ottoman armies attacked the state of Shishman immediately after the battle of Marica. Eventually in 1376 Shishman recognized Ottoman

⁴ Mercia Macdermott, *A History of Bulgaria 1393-1885* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1962). pp. 20-21.

⁵ There is a dispute about the date of the conquest. According to the oldest Ottoman chronicles it was conquered in H. 761 (1559-60). Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. For İnalcık it happened in 1361. For a detailed discussion on the issue see, İnalcık, "The Conquest of Edirne (1361)." He repeated his thesis in İnalcık, *Devlet-i 'Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar-I*, pp. 55-57. John A. Fine recently found a eulogy of the metropolitan of Adrianople to the Byzantine Emperor John V proving that the city was still in the realm of Byzantine in 1366. So for him the true date of the Ottoman conquest should be 1369. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*. p. 406.

⁶ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 52; Feridun M. Emecen, "Pirlepe'nin İlk Osmanlı Tahrirleri," *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 12(1998). p. 66 ; Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*. p. 382.

Suzerainty and agreed to pay an annual tribute and give his sister in marriage to Murad.⁷

In 1387-8 another event took place that radically affected the Ottoman domination in the Balkans; the Bosnian and Serbian armies defeated an Ottoman army led by Timurtaş Paşa near Ploshnik. After this, Murad planned serious punishment for those states. He sent his Vizier, Ali Paşa, to conquer lands belonging Shishman and Ivanko. In short period, Ali Paşa conquered many important fortresses and reached the river Danube. Ali Paşa annexed the territory along the border between these two states thus he was able to prevent any attempt at an alliance between them. As a result Shishman moved his center of operations from Tarnovo to Nikepolis; a town on the south bank of Danube. After this expedition southern Bulgaria became more vulnerable, and also this conquest supplied the Ottoman army with revenue for the expenditure to fund the Battle of Kosovo in 1389.

A recent study undertaken by Plamen Pavlov provides an interesting detail. According to Pavlov, Sratsimir was the same person with the legendary Sarac mentioned three times in Neşri's history.⁸ First, this Sarac together with Köstendil (Konstantin Dejanovic) fought against Karamanids on the behalf of the Ottoman Army in 1387.⁹ Secondly, according to Neşri when Murad I summoned the Christian lords, two Bulgarian lords, Shishman (Kaleksandoros-ogli Sosmanoz) and Ivanko (Dobruca-ogli), did not come but Köstendil and Sarac obeyed the call.¹⁰ Lastly, Neşri

⁷ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. pp. 54-59; Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*. p. 382.

⁸ Plamen Pavlov, "Tsar Konstantin II Asen (1397-1422) - Posledniyat Vladetel Na Srednovekovna Balgariya," *E-magazine LiterNet*, http://litenet.bg/publish13/p_pavlov/konstantin_II_asen.htm. However, for Hammer and Uzunçarşılı Saraç was the prince of Tatars of Dobruca. Joseph von Hammer - Purgstall, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Üçdal Naşriyat-Sabah, 1994). pp. 181, 185; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 253.

⁹ Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 105.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 111.

mention about how Sarac's forces joined the Ottoman army at *İhtiman* plain and how then they entered Köstendil's territory and he joined the army and supplied them with provisions, on the way to Kosovo in 1389.¹¹

As Pavlov correctly explained that Sarac-ili, which was also mentioned in another source, was in the country of Sarac and it was definitely principality of Vidin.¹² However, it was not certain if by Sarac Neşri was referring to Sratsimir. It seems that the Ottoman chronicler confused Sratsimir with Prince Marko. First, Neşri always wrote Sarac and Köstendil together. As mentioned above, Marko and Konstantin Dejanovic immediately after the battle of Marica became Ottoman Vassals. Also in folk songs these names usually mentioned together.¹³ Another point is that the name of horse of the legendary Marko was called Sharatz/Şarac¹⁴ and that might be the reason why Neşri called him Sarac. Lastly, according to Pavlov Sarac possibly died in the Ottoman battle of Rovine in Wallachia in 1395. According to an anonymous Serbian chronicle it was Marko and Konstantin that died in that battle.¹⁵

On the other hand, another detail in Neşri's book leads to the belief that Pavlov is right in associating Sarac with Sratsimir. When the Ottoman army marched to Kosovo Sarac joined the army at *İhtiman* plain and then Köstendil joined them when they entered his territory. If this Sarac was Marko then he would have joined the army after Köstendil since his territory was behind that of Köstendil. The Ihtiman

¹¹ Ibid. p. 121.

¹² Abdullah Satun, "Kemal Paşazâde Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman III. *Defter*" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2009). p. 74. And, İnalçık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*. pp. 41-42. For İnalçık and Oğuz Sarac-ili was around Timok. See, p. 105, footnote 36.

¹³ In particular, see the ballad "*Marko Kraljevic and beg Kostadin*" in David Halyburton Low, *The Ballads of Marko Kraljevic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922). p. 84.

¹⁴ For the adventures of Marko and his horse see, *ibid*.

¹⁵ Akdes Nimet Kurat, "Osmanlı Tarihinin İlk Devrine ait Bulgar ve Sırp Kronikleri," *Ankara Üniversitesi D.T.C. Fakültesi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3, no. 4-5 (1965). p. 184. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*. p. 424.

plain is located about fifty kilometers south-east of Sofia and more than 200 kilometers from Marko's lands. It would be strategically unreasonable to march an army for 200 kilometers instead of joining the army at a later point. As Neşri says Ihtiman plain was on a crossroads one going north to Sofia and then to Vidin and the way going south-west to Kosovo. It seems that Murad encamped there for three days to await the arrival of Sratsimir's army.¹⁶

There was, of course a reason for Sratsimir to cooperate with the Ottomans. When Sratsimir was released from the Hungarian court he left his two sisters there to show his loyalty to the Hungarian King. His enmity to his brother Shishman made his tie with the Hungarians stronger.¹⁷ However, after the death of King Louis I in 1382 the conflicts escalated concerning who would take the Hungarian throne. In that period Sratsimir probably leaned toward the Ottomans.¹⁸ Since the conflict between him and his brother Shishman had never been solved and without the protection of another power he would not have survived in that isolated area surrounded by states more powerful than his, especially against his brother. In that situation it was to be expected that he joined the battle of Kosovo on the side of the Ottomans.¹⁹ Therefore, the name Sarac was used by Neşri both for Prince Marko and Ivan Sratsimir; thus, he considered them to be one person.

¹⁶ Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 121.

¹⁷ Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*. p. 367.

¹⁸ Sratsimir already had relations with Ottomans long before that. According to Uzunçarşılı the Ottomans protected him against the threat of the Prince of Transilvania Dionys Lackfi (1360-1367) in 1367. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 2. p. 437. Since at that period Vidin was under the sovereignty of the Hungarians the event that Uzunçarşılı mention should be around 1365.

¹⁹ According to Kayapınar, Sratsimir submitted to Ottoman state as a vassal in the period of 1388-1393. Kayapınar, *Le Sancak Ottoman De Vidin Du XV^e À La Fin Du XVI^e Siècle*. p. 62. His story resembles that of many other lords who were forced to accept or voluntarily accepted the Ottoman suzerainty against their rivals. For the case of Marko see, Emecen, "Pirlepe'nin İlk Osmanlı Tahrirleri."

After the battle of Kosovo, the Ottomans undertook the conquest of remaining lands of Shishman. In 1393 Tarnovo, the capital of the second Bulgarian Empire and then in 1395 Nikopol the last center of Shishman fell to the Ottomans and Shishman was executed immediately after the conquest. Thus, the largest Bulgarian Kingdom was totally conquered. That event provoked Hungarian Empire to claim suzerainty over Bulgaria so in 1396 a crusade was launched on the Ottomans. When they crossed the Danube into Vidin Sratsimir decided to take a position on the side of the Christian alliance. After leaving a garrison there, the Crusader army marched forward to Nikopol.²⁰ According to Schiltberger, who was a soldier in the expedition, Sratsimir attended the battle on the side of the crusades and at the end of the battle he was captured and was about to be executed. However, the Duke of Burgundy persuaded the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid to spare his life.²¹ According to another view Sratsimir was captured and imprisoned in Bursa²² but, it is not clear what happened at that period however, it is mentioned by chroniclers that immediately after the victory of Nikopol the Ottoman forces attacked Hungarians and captured Vidin.²³

Historians generally accept that Vidin Principality ended after the battle of Nikopol. Unfortunately, Ottoman documents say almost nothing about Vidin in following several decades. The only event they mentioned was the Bulgarian

²⁰ Johann Schiltberger, *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger, A Native of Bavaria in Europe, Asia and Africa, 1396-1427*, ed. Philip Bruun, trans. Johannes Buchan Telfer (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1879). p. 2.

²¹ Ibid. pp. 5, 112.

²² Pavlov, "Tsar Konstantin II Asen (1397-1422) - Posledniyat Vladetel Na Srednovekovna Balgariya".

²³ Kurat, "Osmanlı Tarihinin İlk Devrine ait Bulgar ve Sırp Kronikleri." p. 192.

upheaval (1408-1413) that was suppressed by Musa during the interregnum period.²⁴ A rebellion was led by Konstantin, the son of Sratsimir, and Fruzin, the son of Shishman to liberate Bulgarian lands. Pavlov estimates that the kingdom of Vidin under the rule of Konstantin survived from 1397 to his death in 1422, sometimes as vassalage of Hungary and sometimes that of the Ottomans.²⁵

V.1.2. Formation of *Uç-Sancak* of Vidin

In the fifteenth century Vidin was “more an *uc* than a regular administrative unit.”²⁶ The earliest Ottoman chroniclers say that after the battle of Kosovo (1389) certain *akıncı-begis* were sent to various regions for plunder and Firuz Beg was sent to Vidin to conduct raids into Wallachia.²⁷ Some other chronicles interpret it as conquest²⁸ and some other sources mentioned the name of Evrenos Beg as the conqueror of Vidin.²⁹ Lastly according to Jorga that expedition was launched in

²⁴ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 355. An anonymous Serbian chronicle also says that Musa suppressed the Bulgarian revolt in 1412-3. Kurat, "Osmanlı Tarihinin İlk Devrine ait Bulgar ve Sırp Kronikleri." p. 185.

²⁵ Pavlov, "Tsar Konstantin II Asen (1397-1422) - Posledniyat Vladetel Na Srednovekovna Balgariya".

²⁶ Rossitsa Gradeva, "Between Hinterland and Frontier: Ottoman Vidin, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, ed. Andrew Peacock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). p. 333.

²⁷ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, pp. 108, 336. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*, p. 141. An anonymous chronicle interprets that Firuz Beg conquered Vidin. *Anonim Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, p. 30.

²⁸ The later chroniclers interpreted it as Firuz *beg* had conquered Vidin as a result of defeating Sratsimir. İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Koji Imzawa, vol. 4 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000). pp. 39, 109.

²⁹ According to Oruç *beg* and İdris-i Bitlisi he was Evrenos *beg* that conquered Vidin and Firuz *beg* raid into Wallachia. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*, p. 31; İdris-i Bitlisi, *Heşt Bihişt*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Bitlis Eğitim ve Tanıtma Vakfı, 2008). p. 33. Similarly in an anonymous chronicle Firuz *beg* was with Evrenos Beg. Çimen, "Anonim Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân." p. 39. Evliya Çelebi says that Vidin was conquered by Evrenos Beg in 1390 (h. 792). Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı, vol. 6 (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002). p. 91. On the other hand some other sources mention other names. It was Gündüz that was sent together with Firuz Beg. Çan, "XVI. Yüzyıla Ait Anonim Bir Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman (Gramer İncelemesi-Metin-Sözlük)." p. 68. The reason that chroniclers mention Evrenos is that he raided into what Aşık Paşazâde called Vüdine (Vodina?). Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-*

1388, before the battle of Kosovo, to assure the obedience of Sratsimir. To him, Firuz Beg with a small military force went to Vidin and pillaged the rural districts of Vidin.³⁰

Unfortunately, these early years of Ottoman rule over Vidin are not so clear. During the reign of Murad I it seems that there was more than one commander named Firuz. One Firuz Beg attended the Ottoman battle with Karaman in 1387.³¹ He was the *sancakbegi* of Ankara in 1388 whom, according to Neşri, Murad left in Anatolia for security while he himself went to Rumelia.³² This raises that question of whether this the Firuz of Vidin? For Mehmed Süreyya they were the same person and he died during the battle of Ankara in 1402.³³ However, according to Paul Wittek, the Firuz that died during the battle of Ankara was Hoca Firuz Bey who built a mosque in Milas in 1394.³⁴ Neşri mentions the captivity of Hoca Firuz Beg during the battle³⁵ and Doukas confirmed this by stating that Hoca Firuz, who was the chief-eunuch, was beheaded before Bayezid's eyes.³⁶

Based on research on the chronicles it would not be possible to verify that one of these Firuz was the commander sent to Vidin. If it is believed that the first

i Osmân. p. 108. That similarity in names might lead to the confusion. Lastly, Evleiya Çelebi in one another volume claims that the sons of Gazi Mihal chased the enemy fugitives until Feth-i İslam. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, and Robert Denkoff, vol. 7 (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003). p. 165.

³⁰ Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 1. p. 254.

³¹ Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. pp. 105-6.

³² Most of the commanders who remained in Anatolia had attended the battle with Karaman one year earlier. Ibid. pp. 113-114.

³³ He states that Firuz *beg* of Vidin had a son named Yakub. Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, ed. Nuri Akbayar, trans. Seyit Ali Kahraman, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996). p. 538. It is well known that Yakub *beg* was the *sancak beg* of Ankara during the interregnum period. When he did not attend the expedition he was imprisoned in Tokat in 1411/1412. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 233.

³⁴ Wittek, *Menteşe Beyliği*. p. 85.

³⁵ Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 162.

³⁶ Doukas, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, trans. Harry J. Magoulias (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975). p. 96.

Firuz was the *akıncı-begi* that we are focusing on then it must be accepted that he did not attend the battle of Kosovo. As a matter of fact, when Neşri gave the details of the battle, he never mentions his name among the attendant warriors.³⁷ Then, it can be said that Firuz Beg was sent to Vidin at least several months after the battle. Then, Jorga's idea that he pillaged Vidin in 1388 would not be appropriate. If the second Firuz was the supposed *akıncı-begi*, then it can be concluded that Firuz Beg returned to Anatolia immediately after his raids. Therefore, he could not be the *sancakbegi* of Vidin.

There was another Firuz Beg who conducted raids into Wallachia in 1424.³⁸ According to historians he was, "the *sancakbegi* of Silistre at that time and he had a son, named Mehmed", who was also a famous *uç-begi* in Niğbolu.³⁹ Most probably this is the same Firuz as the one in Vidin. Actually, chronicles do not mention him as the *sancakbegi* of Silistre. What chronicles say is that Vlad II Dracul of Wallachia was always crossing the border and pillaging Silistre so Murad II sent Firuz Beg an order asking him to raid Wallachia until Murad II came to punish him after he finished his campaign in Anatolia.⁴⁰ Firuz Beg [or maybe one of his sons] died together with many other lords during a raid in 1442.⁴¹ After him his son Mehmed was the *sancakbegi* of Niğbolu in 1444.⁴²

³⁷ The most detailed information is given by Neşri. pp. 120-136.

³⁸ Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*, p. 265. In another chronicle in 1422 "Firuz beg the raised his banners on Wallachian fronts". Hoca Sadettin Efendi, *Tacü't-Tevarih*, ed. İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, vol. 2 (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1992). p. 138.

³⁹ Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, 2. p. 538; Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 189.

⁴⁰ Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*, p. 265; Hoca Sadettin Efendi, *Tacü't-Tevarih*, 2. pp. 140-1.

⁴¹ Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*, p. 63.

⁴² Ibid. pp. 65-6. In Anonymous Serbian chronicle it is said that a certain Ferizbegovic was killed in Krusevac (Alacahisar) in 1454-5. Kurat, "Osmanlı Tarihinin İlk Devrine ait Bulgar ve Sırp Kronikleri." p. 186. He is no one but Mehmed Beg, the son of Firuz Beg.

In the survey book of Vidin dated 1483 we see mosques named after their founders.⁴³ We can easily estimate that Mezid Beg's Mosque (*Mescid-i merhum Mezid Beg*) was founded by Mezid Beg who was once the *sancakbegi* of Vidin around early 1440s. As Dushanka Bojanich alleged, *Dizdar* Karaca, who was the founder of another mosque, most probably was the *dizdar* of Vidin recorded in *defter* of 1455.⁴⁴ Then who was Çavuş Beg, who founded another mosque and who was the founder of *Cami'-i Atik* (the old Mosque)? Neşri mentions a certain Çavuş Beg, together with Firuz Beg of Ankara, were among the forces in the battle with Karamanids in 1387.⁴⁵ In another document we learn that Çavuş Beg's name was Süleyman.⁴⁶ If this Çavuş Beg was the one who founded the mosque in Vidin then he could be one of the earliest *subaşı* or *sancakbegi* of Vidin. Lastly, the *Cami'-i Atik* might have been founded by Firuz Beg, but more likely it was built by Sinan Beg who was the famous *sancakbegi* of Vidin in the 1430s.

Did Firuz Beg really conquer Vidin, or had he ever been in Vidin? If he was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin, then why was the son of Firuz Beg dominant in Niğbolu but not in Vidin in later periods?⁴⁷ First, there is no proof that he was ever in the city of Vidin except for a sentence that "he was sent to Vidin after the battle of Kosovo" that was repeated by all chroniclers but without any detail. This simple sentence was gradually transformed into the fact that Firuz Beg had conquered Vidin. Only a few

⁴³ BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 2b.

⁴⁴ Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*, p. 92. "Dizdar-ı Vidin, [be] nam-ı Karaca Ma'cuni" IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 57.

⁴⁵ Neşri, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*, p. 106.

⁴⁶ "Mescid-i Süleyman Çavuş" BOA-MAD.d 654 (1575), p. 171.

⁴⁷ İncalcık says Niğblu was the uç of Mihaloğulları and Vidin was that of firuz beg-oğulları. İncalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzadi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtname*, p. 89. He might be confused since the opposite was truer. In the second half of the fifteenth century Mihal-oğlus began to dominate in Vidin.

years after the alleged conquest or expedition of Firuz Beg, Schiltberger, who attended the crusade of 1396, wrote:

[Sigismund] took the people and led them to the Iron Gate, which separates Ungern from Pulgery and Walachy, and he crossed the Tunow [the Danube] into Pulgery, and made for a city called Pudem [Vidin]. It is the capital of Pulgery. Then came the ruler [Sratsimir] of the country and of the city, and gave himself up to the king; then the king took possession of the city with three hundred men, good horse and foot soldiers, and then went to another city where were many Turks. There he remained five days, but the Turks would not give up the city; but the fighting men expelled them by force, and delivered the city to the king. Many Turks were killed and others made prisoners. The king took possession of this city also, with two hundred men, and continued his march towards another city called Schiltaw, but called in the infidel tongue, Nicopoly.⁴⁸

Virtually similar points were touched on by Jean II Le Maingre (Boucicaut) who was a French commander on the same expedition. He recollected that when they reached Orissa (Orşova) the “the Greek ruler” of Vidin brought them the key of the city. After leaving a garrison in Vidin the army marched toward the fortress of Raco (Rahova). The Turks defended the fortress so vigorously against a French troop it could not be possible to capture. Only after a general attack by Sigismund the city fell to the Crusaders. The great majority of the town’s population was Christian and they left the city then the army put the garrison (Muslims) to the sword and reduced the city to ashes.⁴⁹

The point here is that in 1396 Vidin was still ruled by the Bulgarian tsar (not Greek) Sratsimir. As far as it can be seen, none of the chronicles mention the presence of the Turks in Vidin during the expedition. Nevertheless, some chronicles

⁴⁸ Schiltberger, *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger, A Native of Bavaria in Europe, Asia and Africa, 1396-1427*. p. 2.

⁴⁹ De Pilham, *Historie du Maréchal Boucicaut* (Paris: Charles Coignar, 1697). pp. 66-70. Less reliable, Froissart mentions three fortresses two of which (Comette, Quaire) were taken by force by Christian army and one (Brehappe) that was defended by three brothers – Corbadas, Maladius, Balachius and Ruffin – could not be captured. “Jean Froissart, *The Chronicles of Froissart*, trans. John Bouchier and Lord Berners (London: Macmillan and Co., 1904). p. 437. Interestingly he does not mention Vidin. Instead he mentions the names of fortresses which were most probably were made up by Froissart.

mention that Vidin was among the conquered Ottoman territory.⁵⁰ Therefore, it can be said that Sratsimir was an Ottoman Vassal. However, somehow the later historians began to suppose there had been a Turkish defeat at Vidin⁵¹ however; there is no show proof for that. Most probably the chroniclers' saying that Vidin was in the Ottoman realm misled historians. Actually, it seems that what the Ottomans called the conquest of Vidin was the conquest of Oryahovo (Rahova) or another fortress between Vidin and Nikepolis (Niğbolu). At most it can be alleged that when Niğbolu was conquered by the Ottoman forces in 1395 the region began to be ruled by Firuz Beg.

As Jorga writes; the area that called Niğbolu might include Vidin as well.⁵² Nevertheless, Vidin as a *sancak* appeared in the documents only from the 1430s on. In 1432-3 Sinan Beg, who was known by the name of Sinan of Vidin (Vidin Sinanı),⁵³ seemed to be the *sancakbegi* of Vidin. Brocquiere, who passed through Rumelia mentioned Cénasnin-Bey who ruled over the “vast frontier country,”⁵⁴

⁵⁰ In a contemporary chronicle it is said that they entered the lands of Saracens when they crossed the Danube. Jean Juvénal des Ursins and Théodore Godefroy, *Histoire de Charles VI. Roy de France* (Paris: L'Imprimerie Royale, 1653). p. 124. Froissart describes the Danube as the border between Turkey and Hungary. Froissart, *The Chronicles of Froissart*. p. 437.

⁵¹ In a book prepared by Turkish military staff it the Turkish resistance at Orşova and Vidin is mentioned. While Christian people changed side Turks were slaughtered. pp. 22-3. This point was mentioned by some other historians. However, as A. Suryal Atiya says Orşova was on the other side of the Danube so there could not be Turks at that time therefore; he says the first encounter took place at Vidin, where only a few Turks, who were part of the garrison of Vidin, were slaughtered. Aziz Suryal Atiya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1934); Genel Kurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı, *Niğbolu Meydan Muharabesi ve Yıldırım Bayezit* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1985). p. 58. As a matter of fact, the primary sources do not record such encounters. As mentioned in above footnote Froissart talks about a few towns were captured by the Crusades after passing Timok. Even if that accepted as true in any case he does not mention Vidin most important fortress in the region.

⁵² Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 1. p. 411. According to Konstantin Mihailović frontier lords were organized against the enemy forces into four main units and the *sancakbegi* of Niğbolu was responsible for securing the lands and raids against Wallachians and Hungarians. Konstantin Mihailović, *Bir Yeniçerinin Hatıratı*. p. 107.

⁵³ During the same period there was another Sinan who was the governor of Rumili and in order to not confuse historians called him by that name.

⁵⁴ Bertrandon De La Brocquiere, *The Travels of Bertrandon De La Brocquiere*, trans. Thomas Jhones (Hafod: James Henderson at the Hafod Press, 1807). p. 273.

which he described as the region between the Danube and River Morava. According to Brocquiere Sinan Beg spent part of the year in the town of Corsebech (Alacahisar) and he was also the governor of the fortress of Coulumbach (Güvercinlik).⁵⁵ Similarly, the Ottoman chronicles contained information about how Sinan Beg defeated a Hungarian army that besieged Güvercinlik in 1434. They mention him that he was *sancakbegi* of Vidin. However, the same sources state that Sinan Beg was in fact an *uç-begi* and an *akıncı-begi* and under his command there were volunteers (*gönüllü gazi*).⁵⁶ Thus, it can be said that the *uç* area in which Vidin was located consisted of several other centers. This is why; the *sancakbegi* of Vidin in the early period is seen to be the governor of some other *sancaks* as well. The confusion occurred due to the fact that an *uç-sancak* in the later period could be divided into several *sancaks*. Another point is that it seems that a centrally organized *timar* system was not so developed in these regions yet. This is why Sinan Beg was depicted as commandership of volunteers but not that of *timar*-holding *sipâhîs*.

As far as can be seen, Sinan Beg was not a member of any famous *akıncı* family either.⁵⁷ Uzunçarşılı talks about a certain Sinan Beg who was the Brother of Saruca Paşa⁵⁸ He was probably the Sinan of Vidin. Brocquiere says that he was of Greek origin⁵⁹ similarly, Jorga comments on the Greek origin of Saruca Paşa.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Ibid. pp. 272, 283.

⁵⁶ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*. p. 164. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. pp. 280-282.

⁵⁷ Uzunçarşılı published the family trees of these families. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. pp. 551-579. A detailed study on the Evrenos family see, Heath W. Lowry and İsmail E. Erünsal, *Notes & Documents on the Evrenos Dynasty Of Yenice-i Vardar (Giannitsa)* (İstanbul: Bahçeşehir University Press, 2009).

⁵⁸ Sinan beg together with his brother attended to the battle of Kosovo in 1448. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 1. p. 447.

⁵⁹ Brocquiere, *The Travels of Bertrandon De La Brocquiere*. p. 273.

⁶⁰ Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 1. p. 413.

Mezid Beg⁶¹ became the *sancakbegi* of the region after Sinan Beg who was probably dismissed after his failure in a raid in 1436.⁶² Similarly, Mezid Beg was not a member of any of famous *akıncı* families.⁶³ It is not surprising that he was sometimes presented as the *sancakbegi* of Alacahisar⁶⁴ and sometimes that of Vidin.⁶⁵ As mentioned earlier the existence of a mosque founded by Mezid Beg proves that he was once the *sancakbegi* of Vidin.

The end of the 1430s and early 1440s brought bad luck to the *akıncı-begis*. Mezid Beg died during a raid in 1441.⁶⁶ The Ottoman army led by Kula Şahin that went for revenge in 1442 was also destroyed.⁶⁷ In 1443 the Western forces launched another crusade that initially could not be stopped by the Ottoman forces. That failure led to imprisonment of the famous *akıncı-begi* Turahan Beg. Finally, in 1444 a further crusade followed the same path of the previous one of 1396. They crossed

⁶¹ However, according to Chalcocondyles at the same time Turahan was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin. Ferhan Kırıldökme Mollaoğlu, "Laonikos Chalkokondyles'in Kroniği ve Değerlendirilmesi (V.-VII. Bölümler)" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2005). p. 156. According to some chronicles, when Semendire was conquered in 1439 its lordship was given to Turahan Beg. Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ [Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485)]*. p. 288. Hoca Sadettin Efendi, *Tacü't-Tevarih*, 2. p. 200.

⁶² Oruç Beg mentions Sinan Beg as Uç Şahmelik'i. He conducted a raid into Wallachia in the hard winter of 1436. According to him many soldiers died due to the cold weather. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. p. 60. Sinan Beg was most probably dismissed after that raid.

⁶³ Zinkeisen writes about Mezid Beg as a brave lord who rebelled against Mehmed I in the second decade of the fourteenth century. He was imprisoned in Tokat for a while then released sent to Balkans to conduct raids into northern neighboring territory. Johann Wilhelm Zinkeisen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, ed. Erhan Afyoncu, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2011). pp. 304, 403. In anonymous chronology he was introduced as the lord of the royal stables (*emir-i ahur*). Osman Turan, *İstanbul'un Fethinden Önce Yazılmış Tarihî Takvimler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007). p. 31. There was a neighbourhood called mahalle-i Mezid Beg in Edirne. Gökbilgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar*. p. 244. Therefore, Mezid had been in Edirne before he appointed to Vidin.

⁶⁴ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 1. p. 207; Gökbilgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar*. p. 243.

⁶⁵ Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 1. p. 372; Zinkeisen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 1. p. 448.

⁶⁶ Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. p. 62.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 63. According to Oruç, in that raid 16 *sancakbegis* were killed. Most probably he included the subaşı as well as *sancakbegis*. If it was true that many *sancakbegis* were died most probably one of them was Vidin who was active on the Danube front.

the river Danube around Orşova and entered Vidin. After plundering the region around Krivina they appeared before Vidin. Though the crusaders pillaged the surroundings, they did not lay a serious siege to the fortress of Vidin. After small scale confrontations with the garrison of the fortress they left in order not to waste time on their way to Edirne.⁶⁸ The anonymous chronicle that gives the details of this expedition mentions a certain Kümülü-oğlu⁶⁹ as the *sancakbegi* of Sarac-ili,⁷⁰ which, as mentioned before, was the former principality of Vidin. Unfortunately, no other chronicle verifies his governorship of Vidin. If he was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin we can expect that he was among the defenders of Vidin when crusaders arrived there. However, according to the chronicle he was on inspection around the area when the enemy entered the Vidin region. When villagers plundered Kümülü-oğlu's tents he rode to east and found his 150 men and then went İvrace (Vratsa) where he found Mehmed the son of Firuz Beg.⁷¹ That is to say he left the defense of Vidin and ran to the defense of Niğbolu.⁷² Although it is also possible that he left a *subaşı* as a commander of the garrison when he went to Niğbolu, no chronicles mention him after that. Thus, it is possible that he died in one of confrontations in 1444.

The next *sancakbegi* of Vidin was Mehmed Beg (Minnet-oğlu), a Tatar (Mongol) chief, whose tribe settled around İskilib (Çorum) but was resettled around Plovdiv (Filibe) during the reign of Mehmed I to diminish the power of the Tatars in

⁶⁸ Imber, *The Crusade of Varna, 1443-45*, p. 29.

⁶⁹ Chalkokondyles says that he attended the battle of Zlatitsa (İzladi). Mollaoğlu, "Laonikos Chalkokondyles'in Kroniği ve Değerlendirilmesi (V.-VII. Bölümler)." p. 150. İncalcık mentions three Kümülü-oğlus, Saltık, İskender and *Paşa Yiğid*, and then he estimated that he was *Paşa Yiğid*. İncalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*, p. 105.

⁷⁰ İncalcık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladi ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*, p. 41.

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 41.

⁷² Ibid. p. 41.

Anatolia, as well as to recruit them for army.⁷³ Mehmed Beg would become a famous *akıncı-begi* in the later period.⁷⁴ There was only one reference that could be found about his governorship of Vidin.⁷⁵ The only information about him was that he was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin sometimes between 1444 and the beginning of the governorship of Hasan-oğlu İsa Beg, who was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin in 1455. After the conquest of Bosnia in 1463 Minnetoğlu Mehmed Beg was appointed as *sancakbegi* in Vidin.⁷⁶

İsa Beg, son of Hasan Beg,⁷⁷ another famous *akıncı-begi* who held the position of the governorship of Vidin, appeared in the records as the *sancakbegi* of Vidin. He appears in the records of the battles of 1444 and 1448 and a confrontation on the Danubian front.⁷⁸ However, it is not certain of which *sancak* he was *sancakbegi* at that time. A note in a record leads to the conclusion that he was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin before the survey in 1454.⁷⁹ He was one of the most active *akıncı-begi* in the second half of the fifteenth century. He was in the siege of

⁷³ Aşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi: Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân*, p. 134.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 135.

⁷⁵ “*Timar-i Ahi Ali*, kapudan: *Ulûfeci* imiş. Minnet-oğlu *sancakbegi* olıcak verilmiştir. Elinde *tevkî-i şerif* vardır.” İBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 56.

⁷⁶ Solak-Zâde Mehmed Hemdemi, *Solak-zâde Tarihi*, ed. Vahid Çabuk, vol. 1 (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1989). p. 309. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 2. pp. 82-3.

⁷⁷ This Hasan Beg might be the one who Şerafettin Turan called Ceneviş oğlu Hasan Beg. İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 4. p. 122. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*, p. 115. An Ottoman chronicle mentions an *uç-begi* with same name. That İsa son of Hasan was died in 1443. İnalçık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*, p. 9. Either he was a different İsa or the chronicler made a mistake.

⁷⁸ İnalçık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavâtnâme*, pp. 52, 61. Oruç mistakenly wrote him as Hasan the son of İsa instead of İsa the son of Hasan. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*, p. 71. In an anonymous chronicle he was called Hasan Beg oğlu Mustafa. Çimen, “Anonim Tevârih-i Âl-i Osmân,” p. 89.

⁷⁹ “*Hasan Beg oğlu Vidin'e Sancakbegi olıcak verilmiş timardır*. – It is the *berat* that was given when the son of Hasan *beg* became *sancakbegi*.” İBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 25. If İsa *beg* had become the *sancak beg* during the survey there would be no need to specify that fact.

Belgrade in 1456⁸⁰ and the chronicles call him “the *sancakbegi* of Vidin” when he raided Wallachia in 1457.⁸¹ The last time he appears as the *sancakbegi* of Vidin was in a raid into Hungary in 1459 when he was defeated by the Hungarian commander Szilagy Michail (İsvilac oğlu Miloş). However, eventually, due to the efforts of Mihal-oğlu Ali Beg, the raid ended in success.⁸² According to Dushanka Bojanich this raid led to dismissal of İsa Beg and Ali Beg was appointed as the *sancakbegi* of Vidin.⁸³ And the records show that he was in another raid together with Malkoç-oğlu Bali Beg in 1473 when his troop was seriously defeated once more. He survived that calamity with help of the forces of Bali Beg⁸⁴ however; he was not to be that lucky in the raid of 1479 when he lost his life.⁸⁵

Jorga states that many fortresses, including Vidin, located on the southern bank of the Danube was under the control of Mihal-oğlus.⁸⁶ As shown above until the end of governorship of İsa Beg none the *sancakbegis* of Vidin were from Mihal-oğlu’s family. According to İbn Kemal, at the time of the raid of 1459 Mihal-oğlu Ali Beg was not yet in possession of a *sancak*.⁸⁷ Ali Beg’s governorship of Vidin can

⁸⁰ İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Şerafettin Turan, vol. 7 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991). p. 124.

⁸¹ Çimen, "Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osmân." p. 98.

⁸² İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 7. pp. 167-168; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. p. 115.

⁸³ Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*. p. 91. İbn Kemal says that for his success *Sancak* of Vize was granted to him. İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 7. p. 172. The name of Vize and that of Vidin written in Arabic alphabet are very similar. These two names can easily be confused in the transliteration. I did not see the original text but I think the editor of the book mistakenly transliterated Vidin as Vize.

⁸⁴ İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 7. pp. 402-403.

⁸⁵ Different dates are given for that raid. Ibid. p. 423, fn. 1. However, the most probable is the one proposed by Oruç: Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. pp. 130-131. İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 7. Agâh Sırrı Levend, *Gazavât-nâmeler ve Mihaloğlu Ali Bey'in Gazavât-nâmesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000). p. 193. Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*. p. 91.

⁸⁶ Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, ed. Erhan Afyoncu, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2009). p. 181.

⁸⁷ “ol zamanda dâhi Sancağa çıkmış değildi.” İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 7. p. 168.

be traced in the *defters* from 1466 to 1475.⁸⁸ In the *defter*, it was noted that some *timar* holders died in the raid of 1476 led by Ali Beg.⁸⁹ In the June of the same year the *sancakbegi* of Vidin was İskender Beg who was most probably Ali Beg's brother. The two men rode together in many raids. In January of 1478 Bali Beg appears as the *sancakbegi* of Vidin and it is most likely that he was appointed in 1477. Ali Beg has another brother named Bali Beg but he died in 1476-7.⁹⁰ The *sancakbegi* of Vidin was most probably Malkoç-oğlu Bali Beg who died in 1503.⁹¹ In the same year Hasan Beg became governor of Vidin and after him Mehmed Beg, who kept his position until 1513.

When Mihal-oğlu Ali Beg died he had five male heirs who were also became *uç-begis*. In particular, Hasan Beg, who raided Serbian territory, and Mehmed Beg who was at the battle of Çaldıran in 1514 were famous *akıncı-begis*.⁹² Such a resemblance in names should be more than just a coincidence furthermore, the *defter* of 1586 mentions a mosque founded by a member of the Mihal family.⁹³ A document dated 1560 concerning the mosque states that it was founded by Mihal-oğlu Mehmed.⁹⁴ It seems that this Mehmed was the one dismissed from the *sancakbegilik* of Vidin in 1513. The last *beg* from the Mihal family was Yahşi Beg who governed

⁸⁸ See, List of *Sancakbegis* in Appendix.

⁸⁹ BOA-MAD.d 18, pp. 1, 21.

⁹⁰ Gökbiçgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar*. fn. 108, p. 57.

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 482. According to Evliya Çelebi Bali Beg, who was the commander (*serasker*) of Semendire, conquered and became commander of the fortress of Feth-i İslam. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 7. p. 165. It is known that Malkoç-oğlu Bali *beg* was the lord of Semendire in 1475-76. Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. p. 127. Therefore he could be the same Bali recorded in the *defter* of 1483.

⁹² Levend, *Gazavât-nâmeler ve Mihaloğlu Ali Bey'in Gazavât-nâmesi*. p. 195.

⁹³ "Mahalle-i Cami'-i Mihalzâde" can be seen in BOA-TT.d 57 (1586), p. 23.

⁹⁴ "Vidin'de Mihal-oğlu Mehmed beg binâ itdürdüğü câmi '-i şerîf" BOA-A.DVN.MHM 3, r. 1339. in 3 *Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966-968 / 1558-1560)*, ed. İsmet Binark, *Dıvan-ı Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi* (Ankara: BDAGM, 1993).

Vidin in the 1520s. Therefore, it can be said that Mihal-oğlu dominated Vidin until the 1530s.⁹⁵

So far the governors that have been mentioned cannot be thought as ordinary *sancakbegis*; rather they were *uç-begis* or *akıncı-begis* who were more privileged rulers of a wider territory than an ordinary *sancak*.⁹⁶ Although the policies of Murad II and Mehmed II diminished their power on the way towards a more centralized state, in the first *defters* of Vidin can still be seen the remnants of their previous administration. For example, those governors could grant *timars* contrary to an ordinary *sancakbegi*, who lost ground to *paşas* (beglerbegi) especially in the sixteenth century.⁹⁷ As mentioned above, the authority of *uç-begis* could expand beyond their *sancak*. In 1455 there were villages around Şehirköy (Piro) and around Montana of Berkofçe (Berkovitsa), which were the districts of the *sancak* of Sofya that appeared in the *defter* of Vidin among the grants to local soldiers and the governor of Rumili.⁹⁸ The “*Vilâyet-i Braniçeva*” was under the governance of Mihal-oğlu Ali in 1466, when he was the *sancakbegi*, “*emir-i sancak*” of Vidin.⁹⁹ As mentioned above Sinan Beg was at the same time governing Alacahisar and Braniçeva (Güvercinlik). During the reign of Murad II the Ottomans lost Braniçeva to the Serbs and reconquered it in 1458. Probably when Ali Beg was appointed as *uç-*

⁹⁵ After that period of the Mihal-oğlu there is one another Mihal-oğlu, who was an *akıncı-begi* at the same time *sancakbegi* of Vidin, in 1567. In the 1620 there is another Mihal-oğlu, Koca Hızır Paşa, who was the *paşa* of Vidin. There were probably other *sancakbegis* from the same family but their influence in Vidin was never as strong as in the period between 1460 and 1530.

⁹⁶ İnalçık and Oğuz, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna savaşları (1443-1444) üzerinde Anonim Gazavât-nâme*. p. 101. fn. 29.

⁹⁷ “*Elinde berat yok. Sancak[begi] ma’rifetiyle tasarruf eder.*” IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 22. “*Elinde berat yokdur. Sancakbegi marifetiyle tasarruf eder.*” IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 24.

⁹⁸ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, pp. 33, 62, 111. Also there was a tax exempted family, who lived between İsfirig and Şehirköy, appointed to organize the security groups for mountain passes (*derbendci*). IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 66.

⁹⁹ He had a *hass* valued ≈170,000 akçes in Braniçeva and he was the highest authority in that region. See. BOA-MAD.D 5, pp. 8-71.

begi of the region in 1459, he was authorized for the governance of the Braniçeva as well.¹⁰⁰ In 1474/75 Braniçeva was still under his rule.¹⁰¹

V.1.3. Vidin in Transition

Though the dominance of the *akıncı-begis* in Vidin lasted until the 1530s, in fact the period from 1455 was a period of transition. In this period the dominant form of *sancak* administration gradually evolved into a new form and the *akıncı-begis* were reduced to ordinary *sancakbegis*.

In 1455, there were four sub-provinces (*subaşılık*, *vilâyet*) of Vidin, which were Vidin, Belgrad, Bane and İsfirliĝ. Since the reserved grant of *subaşılık* of İsfirliĝ was added (*muzâf*)¹⁰² to the *hass* of the *sancakbegi* in 1455 or before. It was no longer a *subaşılık* its administrative status was diminished to an ordinary *nâhiye*.¹⁰³ In Vidin there was only one *serasker* therefore, the other two *subaşılıks* was *timar subaşılıks*. As a matter of fact in the *defter* of 1466 the grant of the *subaşı* (*zâ'im*) of Belgrad (Belogradcik) Koca Salih was written as *Hass*.¹⁰⁴ Likewise, in 1479 İsfirliĝ once more became a *subaşılık* and its *subaşı* enjoyed a *hass*.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ According to some historians, the first governor of Semendire after its fall in 1459 was Đerzelez Alija and this legendary figure was Mihal-oĝlu Ali Beg. p. 156. Braniçeva was historically a part of Semendire but probably the governance of the Ali Beg did not expand beyond Morava since according to Oruç when Semendire was conquered it was given to Minnet-oĝlu Mehmed. Oruç Beĝ, *Oruç Beĝ Tarihi [Osmanlı Tarihi 1288-1502]*. p. 115.

¹⁰¹ “ol vakt Mihal-oglu Ali beg Beranoço sancağını yirdi.” Ibid. p. 125.

¹⁰² This term can be seen in the early *defters*. In the later period it was replaced by “*ilhak*” which literally means annexation.

¹⁰³ In the *defter* of 1455 all *vilâyets* were named *nâhiye*. Though the terms; *nâhiye* and *vilâyet* could be used interchangeably here *vilâyet* is used for the quarter of *subaşı* of or *sancakbegi*.

¹⁰⁴ BOA-MAD.d 18, p . 15b.

¹⁰⁵ TD 814, p. 4.

<i>Vilâyet (Nâhiye)</i>	<i>Sancakbegi (Mir-i sancak)</i>	<i>Subaşı (Zâ'im)</i>	<i>Serasker (Çeribaşı)</i>	<i>Kadı</i>	<i>Dizdar</i>	<i>Dirlik of Subaşılık</i>	<i>Grant Type</i>
Vidin	1	-	1	1	2	189,075	<i>Hass</i>
İsfirliğ	-	-	-	1	1	48,493	-
Belgrad	-	1	-	-	1	31,395	<i>Timar</i>
Bane	-	1	-	1	1	31,068	<i>Timar</i>

Table 7: Administrative Organization of Vidin in 1455

Since the *timar* system underwent a serious reorganization in this period it was natural that terms began to be used in a more elastic way than before. There is only a record of the *subaşı* of Belgrad in 1466 thus; it is not known what the grants of other *subaşılıks* were called. In 1479, however, it can be seen that the term *zi'amet* was, for the first time, used as the equivalent of the grant of *subaşı*. A part of the *subaşılık* of Berkofçe, the villages around Vereniçe (Gorna and Dolna Veranitsa), was among the *hasses* of the governor of Rumili in 1455. However, in 1479 these villages were recorded in a *zi'amet* with a value of 89,607 *akçes* granted to two *begs*.¹⁰⁶ Being granted to two people made that unit more resemble a typical *zi'amet* of the sixteenth century rather than to a *subaşılık* of the fifteenth century. However, having the name as *zi'amet-i Vereniçe* shows that it did not totally differentiated from classical *subaşılık*, i.e. an ordinary grant of a *subaşı*.

In 1483 the *zi'amet* of Vereniçe was divided into two different grants and all grants of the *subaşıs* began to be called *zi'amet*, i.e. *Zi'amet-i Bane*, *Zi'amet-i İsfirliğ* and *Zi'amet-i Belgrad*.¹⁰⁷ Though, the owners still did enjoy the *niyabet* of their *vilâyets*, it seems that they were no longer *subaşıs*. However, such grants cannot be accepted as simple *zi'amets*. Firstly, some *zi'amets* were valued at fewer than 20,000 *akçes*. Secondly, the *zi'amet* of İsfirliğ at this date was recorded as the *hass* of

¹⁰⁶ *Zi'amet* of Emir Beg, the son of Yörgüç Paşa, and Hüseyin Beg, the son of Azeb Bekir (?). NLB-VD 110/10, p. 3a.

¹⁰⁷ BOA-MAD.d 1, pp. 5b-10.

sancakbegi.¹⁰⁸ That is to say, the term *zi'amet* in that date was still referring to the remnants of *subaşılıks*.

In 1515 the *zi'amet* of Bane appears among the *hasses* of *sancakbegi* and that of İsfirliğ was granted upon a certain Pırbende, the son of Dulkadir¹⁰⁹ and we no more see the *zi'amets* of Vereniçe and that of Belgrad were abolished. One *ruzmançe* shows that the *zi'amet* of Vereniçe was not abolished but it was among the *hasses* of the *sancakbegi* however, most probably that of Belgrad was abolished since, the villages of Falkofçe, Drajoviçe and Çupriyan, which were traditionally among the reserve of the *subaşı*, had already been granted as an ordinary *timar* before 1513.¹¹⁰ Also in this *defter* there are many other *zi'amets* which were totally new and had no connection with the *subaşılık* administrative unit. Given that the *ruzmançe* of 1513 was prepared based on a survey around the year 1500 then it be proposed that around that time the *zi'amet* began to be formed as a new type of grant. For example, in the *defter* of 1515 it can be seen that there were 10 new-type *zi'amets* besides the old type *zi'amet* of İsfirliğ and that of Bane. Yet, 7 of them were below 20,000 *akçes* thus the *zi'amet* was still in a premature form.

In many aspects 1530 was a turning point for the *timar* system in Vidin. Firstly, for the first time imperial *hasses* [lands reserved for the central state] appeared in Vidin. Secondly, all remnants of the classical *subaşılık* were abolished¹¹¹ and *zi'amet* in a full sense began to refer to a new type of grant in addition to *hass* and *timar*. As can be seen only one of the *zi'amets* was below 20,000 *akçes* however, unlike previously, the promised value of the grant was above that amount. That is to

¹⁰⁸ BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 5b.

¹⁰⁹ BOA-MAD.d 71, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁰ BOA-MAD.d 7, pp. d95-d97.

¹¹¹ This does not mean that there was no official entitled *subaşı*. The point is that they were no more the top administrator and military officers of a district.

say, a *zi'amet* from now on would be used as a type of grant valued between 20,000 to 99,999 *akçes*. Any grant below the base level of that range would be called *timar* and any one above the upper limit would be *hass*, thus, the famous tripartite organization of the *timar* system would only be fully seen after 1530.

V.1.4. Vidin as a Generic *Sancak*

The *sancaks* from the sixteenth century usually had fixed *hasses* reserved for *sancakbegis*. In Vidin from 1530 the core *hass* of *sancakbegi* fixed to $\approx 300,000$ *akçes* except for the minor ones, when given promotion they were usually appointed to another *sancak* that had a higher valued *hass* thus, the length of service of the *sancakbegis* in a *sancak* radically declined. In Vidin after 1542 this duration declined to a few years. Muzaffer Beg (1553-1560) who governed for seven years being an exception, from 1550 as shown in the list of *sancakbegis* of Vidin in the Appendix V at the end of this study, the time in office of *sancakbegis* clearly diminished a period up to two years.¹¹² Most probably they were only appointed for a period of one year. As far as can be seen in the records the majority of *sancakbegis* appear between May and July for the first time. Most probably, if there were no problems they occupied one post for one-year period and sometimes they were allowed to hold their position for one or two more years after the end of their formal duration.

Parallel to the structural transition of the *sancak*, the military figure *serasker* (*çeribaşı*) also lost his dominant position in the *timar* system. *Hass* was no more defined according to the existence of a *serasker* in a *sancak*. In Vidin until 1513

¹¹² According to Metin Kunt's findings based on 100 appointments, the duration of the office for *sancakbegis* up to one year was; 28 in 1568-74 and 55 in 1632-41. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*. pp. 70-71.

there was one *çeribaşı* and in 1513 there was one *serasker* and two *çeribaşıs*.¹¹³ While *serasker* and *çeribaşı* which were used interchangeably it seems that in this period these terms began to be used for different positions. Thus, *çeribaşı* appeared as a new minor position in the *sancak*. In 1515 there was one *serasker* and one *çeribaşı*¹¹⁴ then in 1531 there was no *çeribaşı* but *serasker* İskender, who was appointed in 1513, was still performing the commandership this shows that the number of *çeribaşıs* could change depending on the need. In the second half of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century *seraskerlik* and *çeribaşılık* were used for some minor ranks.¹¹⁵

Seraskers were the top cavalymen under the authority of *sancakbegis* and the *subaşı*s had a role in *timar* bestowments in the fifteenth century. In 1466 some *timars* were bestowed with the mediation of *seraskers* (*Serasker Burak marifetiyle virildi*).¹¹⁶ With the formation of *zi'amet* as a new status, those *timar*-holding commanders mostly lost their functions to be replaced in terms of function by *zi'amet*-holding *alaybegis* (*mir-i alay*). In Vidin *alaybegilik* appeared for the first time in 1543.¹¹⁷ Most probably, this new position was formed immediately after the survey of 1540. *Alaybegi*, from now on would be the top military commander after *sancakbegi* in Vidin and this position at the same time was a signal of the total reorganization of the *sancak*.

¹¹³ BOA-MAD.d 7, pp. d96, d97.

¹¹⁴ BOA-MAD.d 70, pp. 16, 19b.

¹¹⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 123 (d. 1590), p. 976.

¹¹⁶ BOA-MAD.d 18, pp. 1, 5b, 17b. Also see, Kayapınar, *Le Sancak Ottoman De Vidin Du XV^e À La Fin Du XVI^e Siècle*. p. 287.

¹¹⁷ BOA-MAD.d 34, p. 244. In 1553 the *zi'amet* of Alaygebi Mustafa was given to Bosnalı Ramazan. BOA-DFE.RZ.d. 5, p. 779.

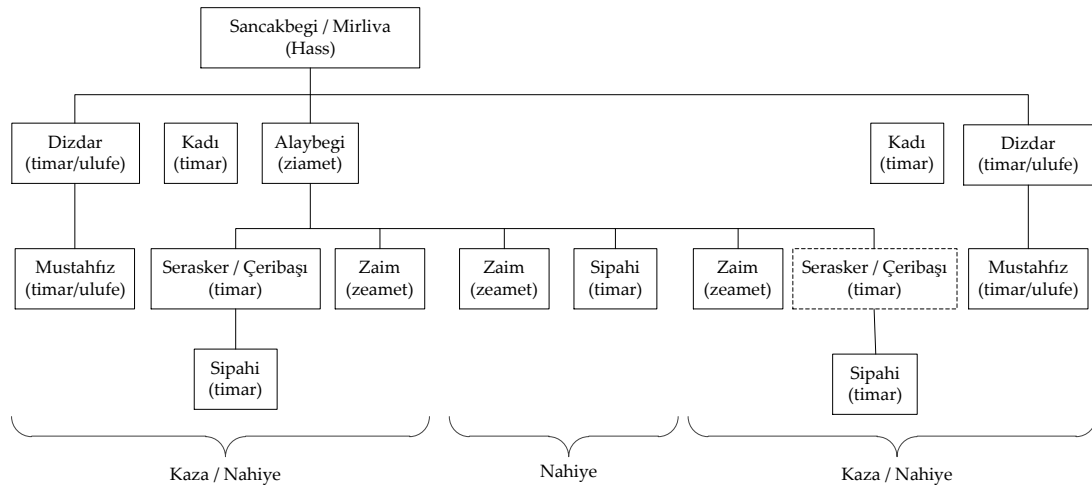


Figure 6: The *Sancak* Organization of Vidin after 1540

Comparing this figure with the *sancak* organization of the fifteenth century shown in the previous chapter it can clearly be seen that the administrative organization of the *sancaks* had changed and hence, the nature of the *timar* system. With the elimination of the *subaşı*s, especially the *hass*-holding ones, the *timar* organization assumed a more centralistic character at *sancak* level. The diversity in sub-*sancak* administration units almost disappeared. There was no serious difference in these uniform units except for the judicial apparatus. It will be better to add that the *sancakbegis* also lost their power vis-à-vis provincial governors (*beglerbegis*). While in the fifteenth century *sancakbegis* could bestow *timars*, in the sixteenth century that right at local level was only given to *beglerbegis*.¹¹⁸ Each *beglerbegi* kept the *defters* of his own province, and had to be in coordination with *defterhâne-i âmire* during the *timar* transactions in his province. As will be seen in Chapter 6 this

¹¹⁸ When the earliest *defters* are checked it can be seen that *sancakbegis* could grant *timars*. In Arvanid there were many *timar* holders who enjoyed their grant by licence (*biti*) issued by *sancakbegis*. For examples see, İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*, pp. 42, 43, 48, 49, 50. Later, among rural officials only *beglerbegis* were authorized to grant *timars*. From the 1530's the *beglerbegis*' authority was further limited to *timars* valued up to 3,000 *akçes*. See firmans about the issue in Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 4. pp.578-9

coordination can best be seen in *timar-ruznamçe defters* of the second half the sixteenth century.

V.2. Flourishing the *Timar* System

It is not certain when the revenue sources in Vidin were granted as *timars* for the first time. The oldest record in Vidin was of a guard's *timar* that Murad II granted to two brothers in 1441-2 (h. 845).¹¹⁹ In fact about 25% of the *timars* in the *defter* of 1455 were granted by Murad II. Even, though the some values were specified in this survey by the phrase “*fi'l-asıl*”, which certainly referred to the values in the previous *defter*.¹²⁰

Dirlik Holder	Before 1455	1455
<i>Sancakbegi</i>	270,874	189,075
<i>Subaşı</i> of Belgrad	36,335	31,395
<i>Subaşı</i> of İsfirli	25,269	48,493
<i>Subaşı</i> of Bane	22,425	31,068

Table 8: The Records of Earliest *Timars* in Vidin

Thus, the development of the system had already reached a certain level in the 1440s. Yet, the *timar* system was not fully applied all over the *sancak* until 1530. Looking at the growth in the number of villages shown in Figure 7, it can be seen that the villages in the core districts (Vidin, Zagorye, İsfirli, Bane, Černa Reka and Polomiye) proliferated from between 1455 and 1531 and after that time the numbers of villages only slightly changed.

¹¹⁹ TD 814, p. 45. Yusuf and Yakub continued to receive that grant for more than 40 years. They can be seen in the *defter* of 1455. “*İmam Ali Fakih oğulları Yusuf ve Yakub*” IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 90. In *defter* of 1466 see, MAD 18, p. 23b and finally we see them in 1483. BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 70b.

¹²⁰ This phrase was used almost for all grants in the *defters* of 1479 and 1483.

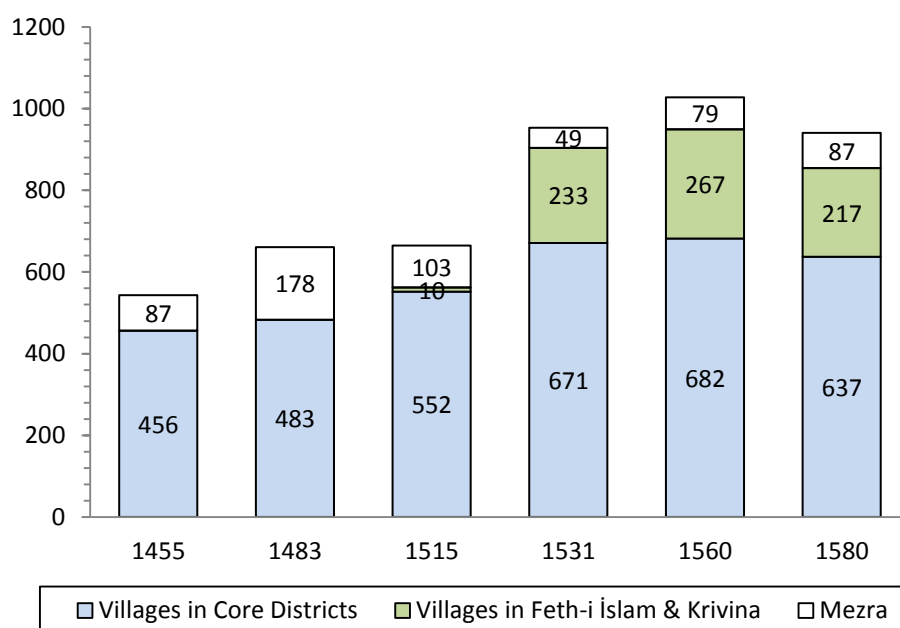


Figure 7: The Number of Villages and Mezraas in Vidin

Changes in population and migration can affect the numbers in Figure 7 and the change in the period between 1455 and 1515 can to a great extent be explained by these factors. Vidin had already been burned during a Serbo-Hungarian attack in 1454¹²¹ thus, in 1455 there would be an absence of the villages that had been destroyed or temporarily abandoned. It can be estimated that the revenue sources allocated for *timar* salaries in 1455 were lower than in previous years and at least some of the *mezraas* had previously been villages. However, this does not explain the rise in the number of *mezraas* in 1483. While the number of villages increased $\approx 6\%$ the number of *mezraas* rose by $\approx 105\%$.

This change surely indicates an abnormality although the records of 1466 and 1479 are not complete, thus, it is not possible to show the number of villages in these

¹²¹ The Ottomans captured Ostrovica (Sivricehisar) in 1454 but their further attacks were not sufficient to capture Smedrovo (Semendire). After the retreat of the army, a Hungarian army with the alliance of the Sebian despot attacked the Ottoman troops left behind and the area between Vidin and Pirov was destroyed. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 2. p. 14.

years yet there is enough data to explain the situation in 1483. Figure 8 reflects the change in 75 villages however, before analyzing the data an explanation of why 75 villages were used will be given and to what extent this number can explain the general situation in Vidin.

Since there not all of the surveys have complete data, of each survey only 75 villages were found that exist in all the *defters* from the fifteenth century. It was possible to select towns as well but village life was not as dynamic as that of the urban localities; therefore, villages are more appropriate for understanding the natural population increase. In the majority of villages the population was purely Christian but in towns there was always a Muslim population that over time increased at expense of the Christian population. This means that villages were more immune to migrations and artificial population increase and yet they were much more vulnerable to pillages, raids and other such disasters. Therefore, the local events can be better seen in this way. The *defters* of the sixteenth century are better for tracking more villages over time, but the problem is that many new villages emerged in the sixteenth century. Not all of them were newly established villages, but they just recently added to *defters* and adding them to the analysis would lead to a serious bias. This is why only 100 villages that appear in all survey books of the period between 1483 and 1580 were analysed. However, there is only a small part of the *mufassal defter* of 1560 that contains 40 villages which can only be compared with the situation in 1480. Then I recalculated based on a sample of 75 villages. Though such a way of sampling can contain biases to a certain extent, overall it successfully summarizes the change in Vidin.



Figure 8: Population and the Production in Vidin (n=75)

As shown in Figure 8 there is an abnormality in 1483 in that the population increased until 1479 and then had sharply declined by 1483. Since the survey of the 1479 was completed at the end of the year there must have been some extraordinary event between 1480 and 1483. Chronicles mention that Vidin was set on fire sometime in 1467-9¹²² there is nothing about any disaster that Vidin underwent in the period between 1479 and 1483. However, it is known that quite a substantial *akıncı* army, about 30,000 soldiers according to some sources was annihilated by Hungarian forces on their territory in 1479. Among them was the ex-*sancakbegi* of Vidin, İsa Beg, the son of Hasan Beg¹²³ that would have negatively affected the Ottoman defense at the Danubian border. In November 1481 a Hungarian army of 32,000 men passed the Danube at the *sancak* of Semendire. They pillaged Alacahisar for twelve

¹²² İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 7. pp. 281-3.

¹²³ Ibid. pp. 423-8; Hoca Sadettin Efendi, *Tacü't-Tevârih*, ed. İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, vol. 3 (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992). p. 172.

days and then returned home.¹²⁴ Though, there is no mention of Vidin in this event but it seems that Vidin region, especially the countryside, was seriously affected by that incursion. Therefore, a new survey was conducted in 1482 and finalized in 1483.

In fact, many villages recorded in 1479 were abandoned and ruined; they were recorded as *mezraas* during the following survey furthermore, in the majority of villages the population and production fell to the pre-1466 level. Thus, the radical difference between the rise of villages and *mezraas* between 1455 and 1483 becomes meaningful.

The disaster of 1481 was so serious that the population of many villages could not reach their previous 1479 levels throughout the sixteenth century in terms of production and productivity. Though there was a slight decline in population per village in 1531 compared to 1515 and, overall, the *timar* system developed further. Some old *mezraas* began to be repopulated and new villages emerged. The decline was most probably related to the populating policies (*şenletme*) of the state.

In 1515 a new development was experienced in Vidin in that the villages that fell into the Krivina region appeared in the *defters*. Initially 10 villages were distributed among *timar* holders. In 1531 almost the entire regions of Krivina and Feth-i İslam were added to Vidin. In the following periods the *sancak* of Vidin did not change in a geographical sense. Finally, in the 1570's many villages were depopulated once more due to a problem that will be discussed below.

¹²⁴ Zinkeisen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 2. p. 359.

V.3. Revenue Allocation in Vidin

In Vidin there were three main groups to whom the *timars* were granted; warriors, guards and falconers. There had always been a community of falconers in Vidin but they were not usually recorded in the *icmal defters*. In 1466 there were 34 falconers (*doğancı*)¹²⁵ and in 1580 there were 299 falconers (*çakırcı & şahinci*) and they had 229 sons.¹²⁶ Normally, they were a tax exempted group in return for their service.¹²⁷ In Vidin there had always been two or three falconers who enjoyed *timars* and in 1455 there were two *timar* holders recorded as falconers.¹²⁸ Then in 1531 there were three, in 1560 there were two and in 1580 there were three heads of falconers who were granted *timars*.¹²⁹ In the following discussion they will be added to generic *timars* and the *hass* of *sancakbegi* will be treated separately.

Moreover, the fall in the period between 1560 and 1580 in Figure 8 was directly related to the *hassification* policies. Though imperial *hasses* (bureaucratic sphere) were not part of the *timar* system, as will be shown later, the effect of *hassification* on the *timar* system was explicit and therefore, it should be examined as well.

V.3.1. Formation of Imperial *Hasses* and Resistance

Sultanic revenues in Vidin comprised three main groups. First, poll-tax (*cizye*) but this was not recorded in the *timar defters* so it would be difficult to

¹²⁵ MAD 18, pp. 25.

¹²⁶ BOA-TT.d 57, pp. 439b-454; TSA-D 902-1, pp. 1-4b.

¹²⁷ BOA-TT.d 57, p. 9b. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 8. p. 569.

¹²⁸ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, pp. 22, 31. In another *defter* dated around 1479 that mainly recorded falconers, there was a man, İsmail veled-i Yakub, who had *timar* valued 2,039 akçes. NLB-D. 649, p. 14.

¹²⁹ BOA-TT.d 160, p. 165; BOA-TT.d 514, p. 73; BOA-TT.d, 50b, 51.

estimate its value in the period of land surveys therefore, it will not be included in this analysis. The second revenue group consisted of various taxes related to trade and any kind of economic activities on the Danube that was organized under *iskele mukataası* (imperial port administration). Sheep tax (*adet-i ağnam*) and revenues of vacant *timars* (*mevkufat*) are also included in this group. The third revenue source was related to agricultural production on imperial land (*havass-i hümayun*) organized under *haslar mukataası* (imperial land administration).

Imperial *hasses* (land reserved for the state/the sultan)¹³⁰ did not develop in the fifteenth century in the Balkans nor did they develop in Anatolia, except for the core *sancaks* (north-western Anatolia and may also eastern Balkans).¹³¹ Initially, state revenues (*mukataa*) consisted of taxes such as poll taxes and sheep tax and the places where performed special production as mining and rice cultivation were mostly added to the state revenues.¹³² There were several *cizye defters* that show the amount of poll tax collected in Vidin for the state treasury in the last two decades of the fifteenth century.¹³³ However, in Vidin the imperial *hasses* do not appear before

¹³⁰ The term *hass* sometimes used for other *mukataas* as well. For example, "*hasha-i cedit-i maden-i Kratova* – New *hasses* of the diggings of Kratova." BOA-MAD.d 149. pp. 19, 41. To be not misunderstood, I would like to clarify that the term imperial *hass* in this dissertation is used only to mean the rural economy (See, Chapter II) that directly managed for the imperial treasury.

¹³¹ There is almost no such a thing as imperial *hass* in the *defters* of the fifteenth century that were studied for this research except for a small *hass* in the *defter* of Baniçeva. BOA-MAD.d 5, pp. 2-7. Also there was a small *hass* in the *sancak* of Gelibolu. BOA-TT.d 12, pp. 22-23. As Mehmet Öz found in his research the imperial *hasses* did not appear until 1512-1513 in the *sancak* of Canik. See, Öz, *XV-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Canik Sancağı*. pp. 128-131. On the other hand in the *Sancak* of Hüdavendigâr there were *hasses* in 1487. See, the *defters* published in Barkan and Meriçli, *Hüdavendigâr Livası Tahrir Defterleri I*.

¹³² One of such villages in Selanik specialized in silver production was part of the state revenue. NLB-OAK 45/30 p. 24b.

¹³³ This entire collection was published by Barkan, "894 (1488/1489) Yılı Cizyesinin Tâhsilatına âit Muhasebe Bilânçoları." p. 20. Also see, Hamid Hadžibegić, *Glavarina u Osmanskoj Državi* (Sarajevo: Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu, 1966). pp. 53, 58. And Gökbilgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar*. p. 157.

1530, their appearance at this point in time seems to be directly related to the inclusion of the Feth-i İslam and Krivina regions into the *sancak* of Vidin.

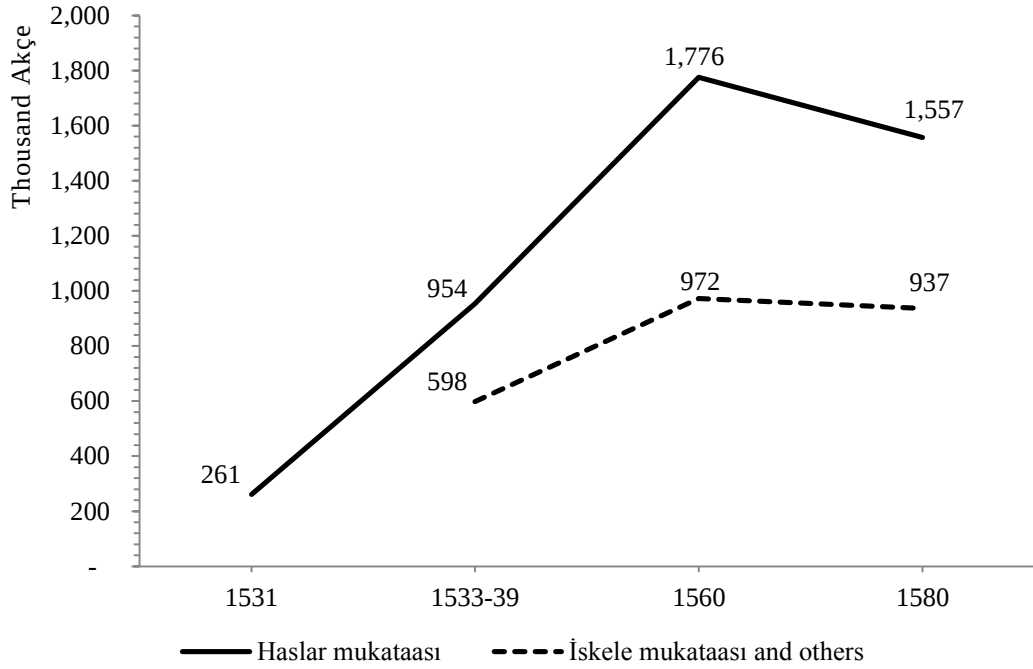


Figure 9: Sultanatic Revenues in Vidin

The North of Timok, i.e. Krivina and Feth-i İslam was not mentioned in any previous *defters*. It is alleged that the fortress of Feth-i İslam was conquered and rebuilt by Bali Beg (Malkoç-oğlu)¹³⁴ this most probably occurred in 1477 when Bali Beg became the *sancakbegi* of Vidin. Yet, as far as the records show this region was not under the governance of any *sancakbegi*.¹³⁵ Nor had the state obtained poll tax or any other tax from this region. In the *defters* of Vidin after 1530 they were recorded as *floriciyan* (florin payers), which were a group whom the Ottomans called *Eflâkan*

¹³⁴ Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 7. pp. 164-5.

¹³⁵ According to Yavuz Ercan all *voynuks* were organized under a *voynuk begi* or *voynuk sancakbegi*. Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar*. pp. 57-61.

(Wallachians), who formed a special military troop called *voynuk*.¹³⁶ Those Wallachians not only resided in the Krivina – Feth-i İslam region, but some were also dispersed in the core districts of Vidin. This second group had some privileges such as not paying poll-tax and extra-ordinary taxes (*avarız*) but they did pay two *akçes* per household under the charge of *resm-i gönder-i voynugan*¹³⁷ to the *sancakbegi* of Vidin. Furthermore, they paid half of the crime fees (*niyabet*) to the *sancakbegi* and the other half to the *serasker*.¹³⁸ Those who live on the lands of *timar* holders paid them nothing.¹³⁹ However, in an exception, in 1483 some 54 households paid 83 *akçes* (= 1 florin + a sheep with a lamb)¹⁴⁰ each to the *sancakbegi*.¹⁴¹

In 1530-31 the state attempted to reform the *voynuk* communities so the community leaders (*knez*) were granted *timars* each¹⁴² thus, they became *timar* holding warriors.¹⁴³ Other peasant *voynuks* became ordinary reaya who paid their taxes to the *timar* holders or overseers (*voyvoda*) of the *hasses*.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, they would pay half of their crime fees to the *sancakbegis* and the other half to the *timar* holders to whom they were subordinated.¹⁴⁵ According to Dushanka Bojanich after the fall of Belgrade and the victory of Mohac in 1521 and 1526, respectively, the

¹³⁶ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 4. pp. 398-99; BOA-MAD.d 5, p. 13. For a detailed discussion on the issue see, Ayşe Kayapınar, "Les Filorici Dans La Region Timoko - Danubienne A L'epoque Ottomane (Xve- Xvie Siecles)," in *Enjeux politiques, économiques et militaires en mer Noire (XIVe-XXIe siècles), études à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu*, ed. Faruk Bilici, Ionel Cîrdea, and Anca Popescu (Braïla: Musée de Braïla-Éditions Istros, 2007).

¹³⁷ BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 3b; BOA-MAD.d 70, p. 1.

¹³⁸ ADFE.d. 3, p. 19; BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 3b, 10b; BOA-MAD.d 70, pp. 1, 16.

¹³⁹ In such cases when the salary of *timar* holders was calculated the *voynuk* population was excluded (*gayri ez voynuk*). BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 22b; BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 24b, 33b; BOA-MAD.d 70, p. 37b.

¹⁴⁰ Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, 4. p. 398.

¹⁴¹ "Mezbur hali karyeler üzerinde Eflaklar oturub sancakbegine seksen üçer akçe virirlermiş. İспенçe ve avarız-ı seniyye virmezler." BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 5.

¹⁴² BOA-TT.d 160, pp. 43, 45, 101, 106, 135, 137, 139.

¹⁴³ Those who were eligible had to take *cebelüs* with them. TSA-d 2204-1, pp. 122b., 124, 125.

¹⁴⁴ Those villages that were denoted as "an filoriciyan", "an voynugan" or "el-mezbur" were refering to the revenue of Wallachians.

¹⁴⁵ BOA-TT.d 160, p. 10.

state no more needed florin-paying Wallachians.¹⁴⁶ This postulation can only be partially true and the real reason should be sought in the comprehensive systematic reformation of the period. As described above, in this period the traditional relations were reformed in a much centralistic way and taxing Wallachians as ordinary peasants was only what fell to the share of florin payers.

However, those florin payers did not easily accept these new arrangements which began immediately after the survey of 1530. Several years later, probably due to popular discontent, almost all of these florin payers who subordinated to *timar* holders were added to the imperial *hasses*. Thus about 399 villages fully or partly populated by *voynuks*, i.e. $\approx 7,233$ Wallachian households, were added to the imperial *hasses*.¹⁴⁷ That situation did not diminish the tension. As a result, in 1540 the state recognized their previous status.¹⁴⁸ But, in 1560 the government once more attempted to change their status and this led to further upheavals in the summer of 1560.¹⁴⁹ However, this time their resistance did not change the decision¹⁵⁰ so by 1580 many peasants left their villages and sought refuge in Wallachia. In the *defter* of 1586 it is claimed that because of the “atrocities of oppressors” (*zâlimin zulmünden*)¹⁵¹ they had migrated. It is not clear what should be understood by this phrase. In the

¹⁴⁶ Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*. p. 12.

¹⁴⁷ Compare TTd. 160 and BOA-TT.d 370.

¹⁴⁸ BOA-MAD.d 34. In this *defter* there are many *timar* holders whose florin payer peasants previous status was recognized. In the prelude of a *defter* dated 1542 it is written that since peasants did not accept the status of ordinary peasants (poll-tax payer peasants) they abandoned their villages. Then their previous status was recognized again. Cvetkova, "Otkas Ot Podroben Registar Na Eodalnite Vladeniya V Liva Vidin Ot 1542 G.." pp. 34-5. Also see, Bistra Cvetkova, "Za Etnicheskiya i Demografskiya Oblik na Vidin Prez XVI v," *Izvestija na Etnografskija Institut i Muzej* 7(1964). pp. 12-13.

¹⁴⁹ A.DVNS.MHM 3, r. 1251. Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*. p. 12.

¹⁵⁰ During the survey of 1579 peasants from the Çerna Reka district somehow registered themselves as florin payers but after a complaint they were later recorded as ordinary peasants. BOA-ADV.N.MHM 39, r. 252.

¹⁵¹ A.DVNS.MHM 40, r. 124. TKA-TT 57, pp. 173b, 206, 275, 379.

same source it is said that every year in the spring enemy bandits came to Kuçayna Mountain to rob people. This is why a troop of *martoloses* (a type of traditional Christian militia troop who usually served as guards in fortresses) was appointed to protect the region.¹⁵² Also in 1574 some *sipâhîs* robbed the people and burned down their houses when the Vidin army was in Wallachia on an expedition.¹⁵³ Interestingly, all the abandoned villages were among the imperial *hasses*. In the *defter* of 1586 the names of 94 villages and 8 monasteries were noted as abandoned places. However, in an order sent in 1583, it was written that the “peasants of 298 villages and 5,730 natives” had left their places.¹⁵⁴ They did not return to Vidin until Şaban, the *alaybegi* of Vidin, brought them back by the policy of *istimalet* to Vidin in 1599.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, for the government, *hasses* located in different *nâhiyes* of the *sancak* were open to brigand assaults so each *nâhiye* was protected by a number of *martoloses* and *kinezes* (traditional leaders in local Christian communities) appointed for collecting taxes.¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, it seems that the real reason behind that migration was related to public discontent concerning *hassification*.

V.3.2. Hasses of Sancakbegi

The reason that the salary of *sancakbegi* is treated separately is that first, the amount of his *hasses* in 1466 and 1479 are unknown, and these are crucial years for

¹⁵² TKA-TT 57, pp. 10b-11. Kuçayna Mountain had always been a nest for bandit groups. In 1560, for example, a *sipâhî* who headed a troop of *martoloses* and 50 villagers was appointed to defeat the bandits. BOA-ADV.N.MHM 3, r. 821, 822.

¹⁵³ BOA-MAD.d 123, pp. 16b, 17, 18b, 21.

¹⁵⁴ “298 *pare karyelerin kadimi reayası ve 5,730 nefer yerlüsü yerlerin ve yurtların terk idüb Vilâyet-i Eflak’a firar itmekle karyeleri hâli kalmışdır.*” A.DVNS.MHM 49 (April 27, 1583), r. 108.

¹⁵⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 255.

¹⁵⁶ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1 (1657), p. 81; BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1 (1659), p. 91. BOA-D.BMK.VDM 2 (1661), p. 13. Since their numbers increased over time, many *kinezes* and *martaloses* who were seen as useless were later dismissed after an inspection in 1664. BOA-D.BMK.VDM 2, p. 25.

the advancements of *timars*. Secondly, the fluctuation in the salary of *sancakbegi* was so high that would affect the calculation of the average size of *timars*.

Figure 10 below may not reflect the exact revenue of the *sancakbegi*. As mentioned earlier, it is known that the *sancakbegi* of Vidin at the same time was the governor of Güvercinlik in the second half the fifteen century. For example, in 1466 Ali Beg's revenues in Güvercinlik was calculated as 146,504 *akçes*¹⁵⁷ and the revenue of the *sancakbegi* was dependent on his salary before coming to Vidin. For example, the increase in the revenue of *sancakbegi* in 1515 was most probably related to the revenue of Mesih Beg, who had been the governor of Köstendil,¹⁵⁸ before being appointed to Vidin.

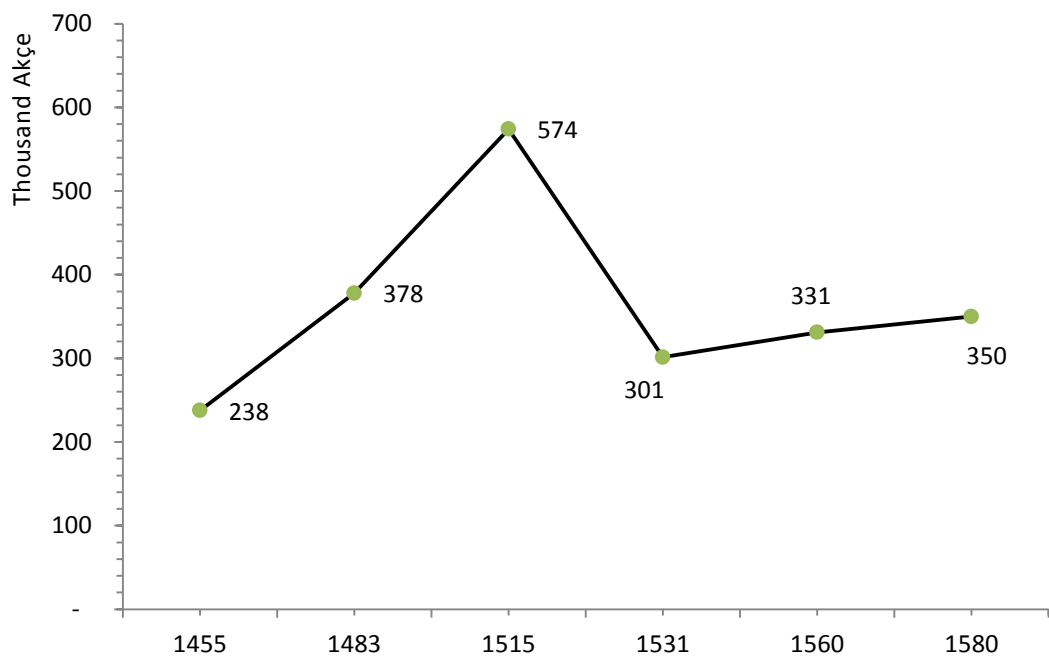


Figure 10: Hasses of the Sancakbegi of Vidin in Vidin

¹⁵⁷ MAD 5, pp. 8-71.

¹⁵⁸ BOA-MAD.d 7, p, d95.

As mentioned above, after 1530 the reserved revenue for *sancakbegi* in Vidin was around 300,000 *akçes*. That was the base value of the *sancakbegilik* of Vidin. That is to say, under normal conditions only a *sancakbegi* who deserved a salary of that amount could be appointed to Vidin. In other words, a *sancakbegi* that had a salary of 600,000 would not be appointed to Vidin. In 1541 the reserved revenue of *sancakbegi* in Vidin was calculated as 292,008 *akçes*. In order to compensate for the deficit 14,678 *akçes* from the *sancak* of Çirmen was added to the salary of Bali Beg.¹⁵⁹

Traditionally, one important income source of the *sancakbegi* of Vidin was the fees from crimes (*niyabet*), as mentioned above; the *niyabet* of *voynuks* was shared between the *sancakbegi* and *serasker*. Moreover, until the early sixteenth century parallel to the classical *subaşılık* organization of *sancak*, each *subaşı* enjoyed such fees and market taxes (*bac-ı bazar*) that from his *vilâyet*. Since the *sancakbegi* of Vidin sometimes controlled the *vilâyet* of İsfirli and sometimes that of Bane he also took those taxes and fees of these districts. After the change in the classical organization of the *sancak*, *niyabets* began to be appropriated by those who enjoyed the *hasses* or the *zi'amets* of the old *vilâyets*. Finally, from 1560 onwards, parallel to reorganization of the *sancak*, the *sancakbegi* became the sole authority after the sultan who could enjoy these tax and fees.¹⁶⁰

V.3.3. Guards' *Timars*

In the fifteenth century in Vidin there were five fortresses Vidin, Bane, İsfirli, Flordin and Belgrad/Belgradçık. In the sixteenth century with annexation of

¹⁵⁹ BOA-MAD.d 34, p. 241.

¹⁶⁰ BOA-TT.d 514, p. 24; BOA-TT.d, 219, p. 12b-13.

Feth-i İslam (Kladovo) this number rose to six. In each, there might be some *ulûfe*-paid troops and *Martoloses* were among such groups. In 1466 there were 56 *ulûfe*-receiving *martoloses*.¹⁶¹ In the 1530s there were 52 such soldiers among the personnel of the fortress of Vidin.¹⁶² There were also a group of gunmen (*topçu*) and musketeers (*tüfenkçi*) receiving *ulûfe*. In 1580 in the fortress of Vidin there were 15 such soldiers¹⁶³ and approximately 42 musketeers were recorded as tax-exempt. The guards to be examined here are only those who were granted *timars*.

In 1515 almost half the guards received their *timar* licenses (*berat*) during the reign of Murad II thus, in the 1440s there was already a developed defense organization based on the *timar* system in Vidin. Yet, some of these guards received *ulûfe* rather than *timars*.¹⁶⁴ In 1455 some of them, as an exceptional practice, were bestowed with *ulûfe* in addition to their *timars*.¹⁶⁵ Their *timars* were calculated as the total of these two types of salaries. This means that the need for defense did not diminish but rose in the sixteenth century. Yet only few guards received *timars* (see Appendix X). Therefore, the numbers in Figure 11 only reflects part of the personnel in the fortresses.

The data in the *defter* of 1466 refers to 58 people but the total calculations at the end of the *defter* show that there were 79 *timar* holding guards. However, the data in the *defter* of 1479 gives information only about 21 guards. However, based on the data in the *defters* of 1483 and 1466 there is information about 32 people. In normal conditions their numbers were not below the mean of the period and the

¹⁶¹ BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 25.

¹⁶² BOA-TT.d 370, p. 594. In 1460 there were 45 *martaloses*. A.DFE.d 14, pp. 7-8. In 1480 there were 48 *martaloses*. BOA-TT.d 57, p. 36.

¹⁶³ BOA-TT.d 57, p. 30.

¹⁶⁴ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, pp. 56, 61. Even in 1456 there were many *ulûfe* taking personnel. For Vidin castle while there were 22 *timar* holders but 45 *ulûfe* owners. BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 14b.

¹⁶⁵ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O. pp. 57-60, 64; BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 12b.

number of the personnel in the fortress of Bane was 19 in both in 1479 and 1483 therefore more or less equal.

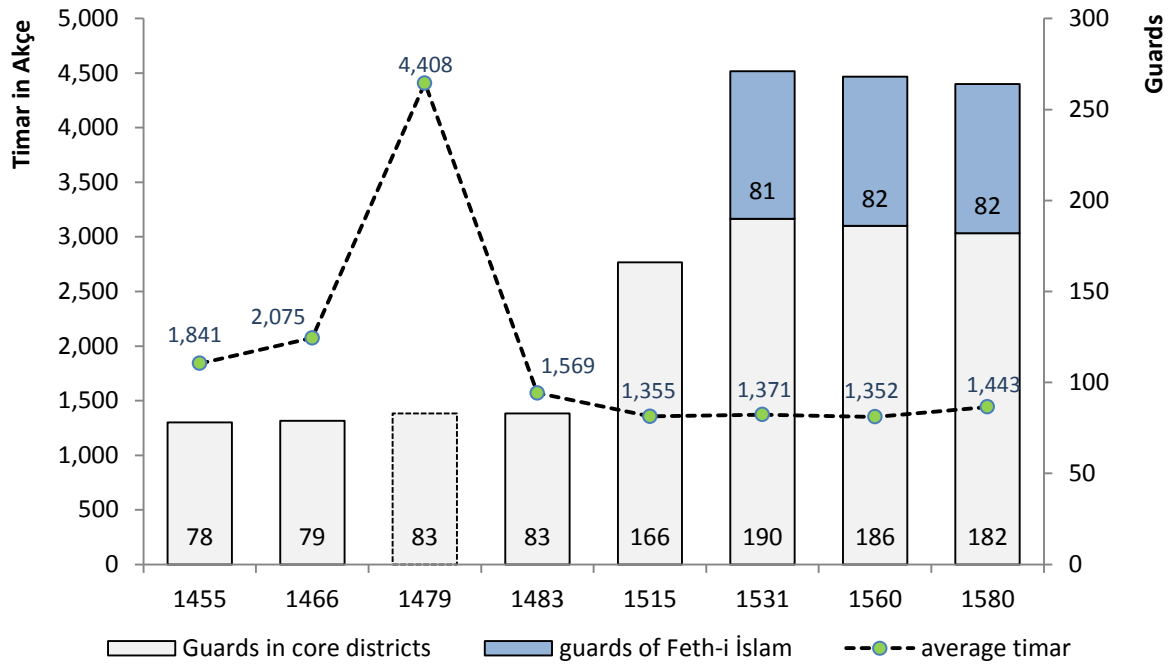


Figure 11: Fortress Guards and *Timar* Salary per Person

The most noticeable aspect of Figure 11 is the enormous increase in the average *timar* in 1479. If there were complete data, the average *timar* would probably be something between 3,000 and 4,000 *akçes* and this was the highest level in the history of Vidin. The lowest level in the fifteenth century was in 1455 yet this was still higher than at any time in the sixteenth century. The upward tendency from 1455 to 1479 was surely related to the increase in the peasant population (see Figure 8). However, the real reason was that the state did not attempt to employ more people parallel to that increase. As explained below, it was strictly related to the perception and the organization of the *timar* of the period. Thus, while the guards of the fifteenth century were affected by the rise and fall in the prosperity of the region, in

the sixteenth century their salaries were fixed to the posts (*gedik*) that each *timar* referred to. Thus, for promotion they would change their current *timars* to one of higher value.

V.3.4. Generic *Timars*

Again it is necessary to state that the data for the *timars* in the years 1466 and 1479 was not complete. However, the total calculations at the end of the *defter* of 1466 show that there were 144 *timars*¹⁶⁶ and there enough information to prove that about 103 *timars* were granted to 127 people. Therefore, approximately 177 people were enjoying *timars* in 1466. For the year 1479 about 139 *timar* were granted to 181 people. After comparing this *defter* with that of 1483, there are still about 10 missing *timars* with the number of *timar* holders in 1479 being about 195. Despite the absence of some data the available information is more than enough to see the general tendencies in the *timar* system.

¹⁶⁶ BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 25.

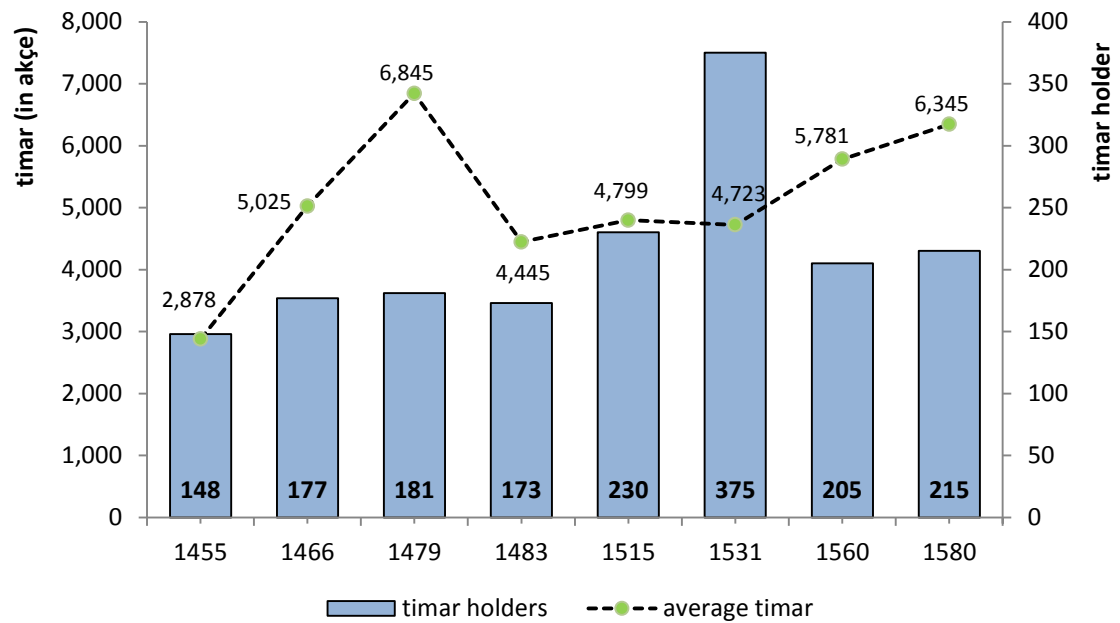


Figure 12: *Timar* and *Zi'amet* Owners and *Timar* Salary per Person

The only explicit difference in Figure 12 is the substantial increase in the number of *timar* holders in 1531. As mentioned above in 1530 Krivina and Feth-i İslam was annexed to Vidin and a relatively small portion of this new revenue was reserved for the state treasurer and the remained was granted as *timars*. However, this state of affairs it did not last long, after a few years almost all the new resources began to be reserved for the state treasury so the number of *timar* holders declined to a certain level.

However, the change in the value of average *timar* was more fundamental in understanding the change the system underwent. All the data analyzed so far, in terms of production, population and the value of *timars*, points to the period between 1455 and 1482 being an era of prosperity. As can be seen in Figure 13 the rise in taxed revenue in a *timar* was not as sharp as the rise in the population. However, as shown in Figures 11 and 12 the increase in the number of *timar* holders was not as

sharp that of the per-capita revenue in the figure below. The situation was definitely in favor of both the *timar* holders and producers.

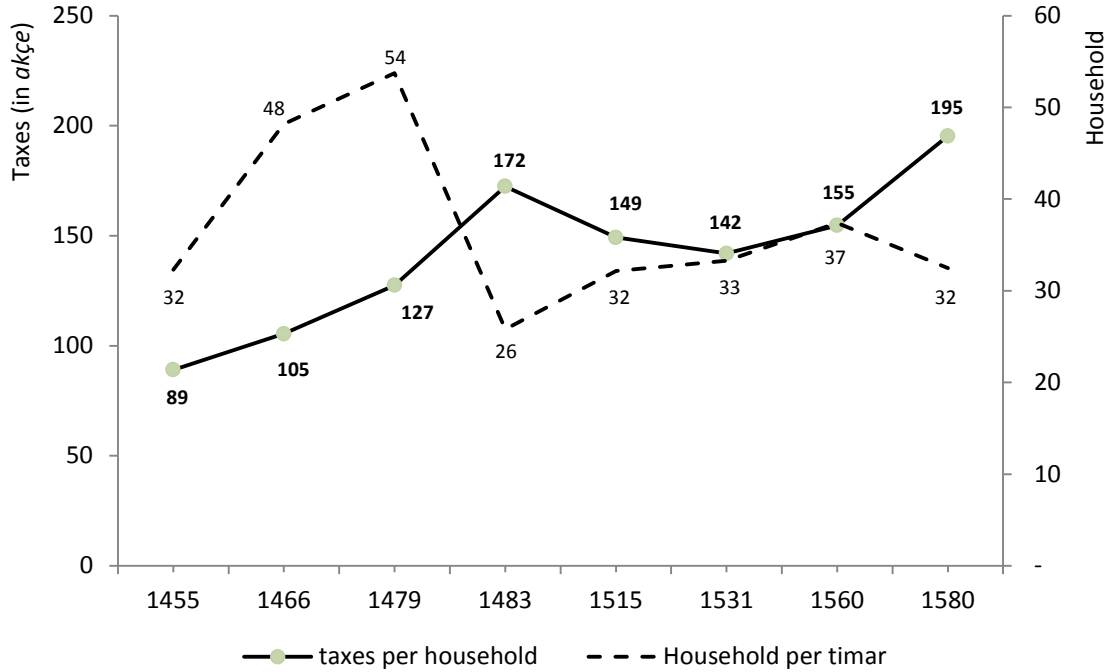


Figure 13: Average Number of Households in a Timar and the Average taxes each Paid to *Timar*-Holders.

Overall, beside these facts taking the inflation rates into consideration, the period between 1455 and 1482 was a kind of golden age of the *timar* system in Vidin.¹⁶⁷ The age of prosperity refers to an economic and demographic boom after the disaster of 1454 and ended with another disaster in 1482. However, the impact of the disaster was greater especially for peasants in the second event. The reason behind this downfall is mostly related to the fact that the level of production (amount of taxes) did not decline as much as the decline in population which can be seen in the comparison between Figures 13 and Figure 8. This surely raised the peasants'

¹⁶⁷ For some price rates and the value of the akçe see, Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, ed. Ali Berktaş, trans. Gökhan Aksay (İstanbul: Türkiye Bankası, 2007). pp. 88-9.

burden in terms of tax obligations. Furthermore, the situation of the peasants only recovered slowly throughout the sixteenth century.

Prosperity in this period cannot be solely explained by the population growth and the rise of production. The real reason was the relative stability in the number of *timar* holders and this is related to the very nature of the perception of *timar*. In the fifteenth century a physical *timar* was much appropriate since in this period the physical boundary of a *timar* did not change so easily. For example; the *timar* showed in Table 11 consisted of exactly the same villages in all *defters*. The only difference was that the last *mezraa* was not recorded in the first survey. The *timar* did not change hands throughout the period. Thus, it can easily be shown how a *timar* holder could depend on the yield of a specific land unit. Until 1479 the value of the *timar* increased and thereafter, rapidly returned to a level lower than its value in 1466. The reason for this was that in this period the idea of promotion was not fully developed. Certainly, there were those who were sometimes granted extra revenue sources, especially the high-ranking officials and soldiers but it was not so widespread among lower-ranking *timar* holders.

The <i>timar</i> of Bali and Burak, sons of Musa				
Production Place	1455	1466	1479	1483
Village of Voynofçe	895	2,416	–	1,974
Village of Budomirofçe	1,006	2,460	–	2,172
Mezra' of Kovaç				
Mezra' of Tırboniçe				
Total Revenue	1,901	4,876	7,128	4,146

Table 9: A *Timar* in the Period between 1455 and 1483¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 15; BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 7; BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 16b, 17. The value of the *timar* in 1479 can be seen in the record of the *timar* in BOA-MAD.d 1.

Now, here is another case. A certain Kavlak Hamza already possessed a *timar* valued 1,132 *akçes* in 1455.¹⁶⁹ In 1479 his *timar*, which consisted exactly of the same villages, yielded 5,930 *akçes*.¹⁷⁰ Probably he died and the *timar* passed to his son Asilhan with a value of 4,068 *akçes* in 1483.¹⁷¹ The reason in this decline was obviously due to the disaster that occurred in 1482. Thus, the idea of a core value (*kılıç*) had not been developed at this time. If there was such a notion at work then Hamza's son should have received the core value of 3,000 *akçes* as the initial *timar* with the remaining 1,068 *akçes* being given to as promotion (*terakki*) to another soldier.

In the early sixteenth century the perception of *timar* gradually changed as shown in the next example. In 1512 the *timar* of Yeniçeri Yusuf was calculated as 8,000 *akçe* but his promised *timar* was 10,800 *akçes*.¹⁷² This person during the survey of 1515 granted a totally new *timar* consisting of different villages and the value of his *timar* now rose to 10,802.¹⁷³ Thus, in order to provide the promised value he was granted totally new lands. There were also such cases of replacing *timars* in the fifteenth century as well, but this practice was not so common as it had been in the sixteenth century. Comparing the *timars* of 1483 with those of 1515 it can be seen that they were very different in terms of the villages that constituted them. Thus, during the reign of Bayezid II the perception of *timar* gradually shifted from a physical *timar* to a fiscal *timar*. What I call the abstraction of *timar* was a result of the state intention to protect *sipâhîs* from the destructive impacts of natural

¹⁶⁹ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 46.

¹⁷⁰ ADFE.d 3, pp. 9-10.

¹⁷¹ BOA-MAD.d 1, p. 29.

¹⁷² BOA-MAD.d 7, dp. 93.

¹⁷³ BOA-MAD.d 70, p. 40.

and human-made catastrophes. Nevertheless, there is no proof that the idea of core value was developed until the reign of Süleyman.¹⁷⁴

The changes in the organization of the *timar* system and the administration of *sancak*, as well as the development of imperial *hasses* all refer to centralization policies moving towards the abstraction of the *timar*. The practical benefit of the diffusion of imperial *hasses*, in this sense, was that in case of shortage of revenue it would be easy to compensate a person's loss by granting them new lands from the imperial *hasses*. This is why the imperial *hasses* were not concentrated in particular areas but were diffused all around the Ottoman provinces. That is, *hasses* facilitated both the easy transfer of provisions and cash salaries to distant places and created insurance for *timar* holders. This is shown in the fact that many villages that were recorded as imperial *hasses* in 1560 later granted as *timar* or promotion to warriors.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ In BOA-MAD.d 34, pp. 244-244b there are many who only received the core value of their fathers' *timars* in 1543.

¹⁷⁵ See *timar-i İslam* and *timar-i Umur* BOA-DFE.RZ.d 25, 830, 853, 854. Also various *timars* in BOA-MAD.d 123, pp. 15b, 17, 19; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 42, pp. 889, 895, 897, 899, 900m.

CHAPTER VI

SYSTEMIC CONTRACTION IN POST-SULEYMANIC ERA

VI.1. The Paradox of the Rationalization of the System

As described in the previous chapter, during the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566), especially after the 1530s the *timar* system was reorganized along certain centralist policies and thus there were changes in the administration of the *sancak*. The system was also rationalized in the sense that everything was strictly regulated with careful calculations. Such policies justifiably gave Suleyman the title of “lawgiver” however, although not during his reign but soon after, the imperial administration began to face symptoms of the paradox of centralization.

One of these symptoms was that the warrior raiders lost their motivation, whether this was because they were no longer as important as before, or it was just their fate in the new conjuncture. These warriors raided enemy territories filling their saddlebags with as much precious property as possible and captured healthy and high-priced slaves. They legitimized their action by supposing that they were following the path of Islam. These warriors became the recipients of *timar* which was related to a piece of land that more resembled a private property than a salary. Furthermore, in those times *timar* holders were not so alienated from their physical *timars*. Now the situation is one where almost every action had a value in the eye of the state. If a warrior brings a number of the enemy heads they would have

been granted a *timar*. One action will be rewarded by this amount and another will result in a punishment. Even though they may lose their rights they will be able to retrieve them within a certain period.¹ Especially after building up the idea of the core value of *timar*, it became almost impossible to pass their wealth to their children in normal conditions. It will not be difficult to see how a fight gradually became an act of collecting heads to exchange for something of an abstract value; it was totally uncertain if that amount in reality referred to a real economic value. Koçi Beg's observation clearly reveals this situation:

Previously when a county received the sacred order of the sublime rule, the towns and villages of the region turned into an atmosphere of panic and all people, from the young ones to the old, began to be afraid and dreadful and all would carefully listen to. Now, many orders and licenses are issued for every thing. Every year issued a thousand royal orders and ordinances that contradict each other. For this reason, the state of *zi'amets* and *timars* became very grievous...*sancaks* and provinces turned into soulless forms on paper with no substance.²

Yavuz Cezar explains the degeneration in the *timar* system as the loss of equilibrium among the *timar* areas, the imperial treasure and the sultan's personal treasure. For Cezar, in the "classical period" the whole Ottoman fiscal system was based on such a tripod. Any loss in one area could easily be compensated with small interventions. However, none of these areas was totally empowered against others. After the second half of the seventeenth century the system lost this balance, and

¹ People found their own solutions to fulfill legal obligations. Giving gifts and bribery to governors become widespread to obtain a *timar*. İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 1, p. 116.

² "Evvelce bir diyara saltanat-ı âliyye tarafından bir mübarek emir gelse, o diyarın köylerine ve kasabalarına velvele, küçüğüne ve büyüğüne korku ve heybet düşer, padişah fermanı gelmiş diye herkes kulak tutardı. Şimdi her iş için çeşitli emirler ve beratlar karşılıksız bir şekilde bol bol verilmekte, yılda birbirine aykırı bin berat-ı hümayun ve mukarrername yazılmaktadır. Bu sebepten *zi'amet* ve *timarların* durumu gayet keder verici olup...Çünkü İslam memleketlerinde olan *sancaklar* ve *eyâletler*, ismi var cismi yok bir ruhsuz kalıba dönmüştür." Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risaleleri*. p. 53.

accordingly the amount of intervention increased. This opened the door to economic depression.³

Cezar is partly right in his comment; as demonstrated in the previous chapter, contrary to the common perception in the historiography *hasses* in fact functioned as insurance for *timar* holders, or in general, for the Ottoman state. When stating this it is necessary to keep in mind that first, such a tripartite structure did not fully develop until the 1530s, and in the case of Vidin not until 1560. Thus, this theory cannot explain the previous period. Second, at least in Vidin there was a *hassification* process long before the period to which the degeneration of the *timar* system is often attributed. Therefore, whether the *hasses* expanded at the expense of *timars* or of the areas that remained outside the direct control, such a sphere gradually grew during the very heyday of the so called classical period. Therefore, the problem was not directly caused by the loss of such a balance.

Another point is that in the second half of the sixteenth century there are many examples showing that the state tended to reserve productive areas for the imperial treasure and to distribute barren places to *timar*-demanding warriors.⁴ That is to say, *hassification* did not need to be in a form of a geographical, territorial or spatial expansion over *timar* areas⁵ but *hasses* grew in terms of value and quality. That was the first direct negative affect of *hassification* over the *timar* system.

Mustafa Akdağ, touches on another point in relation to degeneration of the *timar* system. For him, one of the main problems was that inflation was not

³ Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi: XVIII. Yüzyıldan Tanzimat'a Mali Tarih* (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1986). pp. 28-9.

⁴ BOA-ADV.N.MHM 46, r. 106, 107, 305.

⁵ In the 1570s in order to suppress some tribes in Musul the state decided to distribute their lands among local governors (*ümera*) and to annex the lands of these governors into imperial *hasses*. BOA-ADV.N.MHM 12, r. 142. Thus, when the state could not directly expand the imperial *hasses* they used such governors as the medium.

compensated by a rise in the salaries of *timar*-holders. The rate of some taxes per taxpayer, which were collected in cash, did not change throughout the sixteenth century while the value of the Ottoman coin seriously declined especially, in the second half sixteenth century.⁶ In fact, in Vidin poll tax (*ispençe*) was 25 *akçes* per household (*hane*)⁷ and the same for each single male (*mücerred*) and that rate did not change throughout the sixteenth century. The mean proportion of *ispençe* (i.e. tax in cash) in the total taxed revenue was calculated as approximately 25%.⁸ When we consider the effect of the debasement (the decline in the silver content) of the coin on the real value of *ispençe*, it can be seen that a *timar* valued 3,000 *akçes* in 1474 was calculated as 2,794 *akçes* in 1574, *ceteris paribus*.⁹

Another point, made by Akdağ was the surplus (*ifraz*) between the two surveys.¹⁰ If during a new survey the value of a *timar* was calculated higher than the value that had already bestowed on the *timar* holder, this extra revenue was confiscated to imperial hasses under the name of *ifraz*. Actually the state never reduced the nominal value of a person's *timar*. If one already had 3,000 *akçe* prior to the survey, he would be granted 3,000 *akçes* or more during the new survey. Therefore the question arises as to how the state could make up the difference in an declining economy. One method, as seen in Vidin, was that the state found new sources which had not been taxed yet. Of course this did not have a direct effect on the *timar* system unless the state agents became more careful and found the sources

⁶ Mustafa Akdağ, *Türk Halkının Dirlik ve Düzenlik Kavgası* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2009). p. 47.

⁷ Those people who were appointed to maintain mountain passes (*derbendci*) paid 12 *akçes ispençe* each.

⁸ This calculation based on the data collected from 96 villages in the 1570s. BOA-MAD.d 99; BOA-KK.d 3062; D.BŞM.VDH.d 17085.

⁹ The silver content of *akçe* was estimated to be 0.84 gr. in 1474 and 0.61 gr. in 1575. Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*. p. 88.

¹⁰ Akdağ, *Türk Halkının Dirlik ve Düzenlik Kavgası*. p. 53.

that had previously been hidden by *timar* holders.¹¹ Another source of *ifraz* was the increase in the number of unmarried male subjects who were taxed. As shown in the previous chapter, the surveys give evidence to the enormous rise in the number of unmarried men after 1560 in Vidin however; such an increase cannot be fully explained by population growth or poverty. One possible reason is that in order to create a surplus the minimum age of taxpaying was reduced or there were certain groups whose sons were tax-exempted and these exemptions were abolished later. Such policies would only indirectly affect the *timar* holders. If we consider the fact that each unmarried taxpayer had to pay 25 *akçes*, it would surely have contributed to the rise of poverty among the peasants, especially within extended and crowded families.

The last point was related to the prices of cereals recorded in the survey books. Figure 14 shows the rapid increase in the prices of barley and wheat from 1483 to 1515 which was most probably related to the change in the weight standards. In the fifteenth century weight was calculated as *kile*. However, in 1530 it was calculated as *himl* and in 1560 and 1580 again calculated as *kile*. I think the later *kile* was the same weight with the *himl* of 1530. Therefore, in the analysis the data after 1530 is used.

¹¹ As Cvetkova says, “*sipâhîs* often tried to conceal the actual number of their *reyyas* in order to show a lower income and thus legitimize their request for an increase in tax levies.” Cvetkova, "Early Ottoman Tahrir Defters as a Source for Studies on the History of Bulgaria and the Balkans." p. 135.

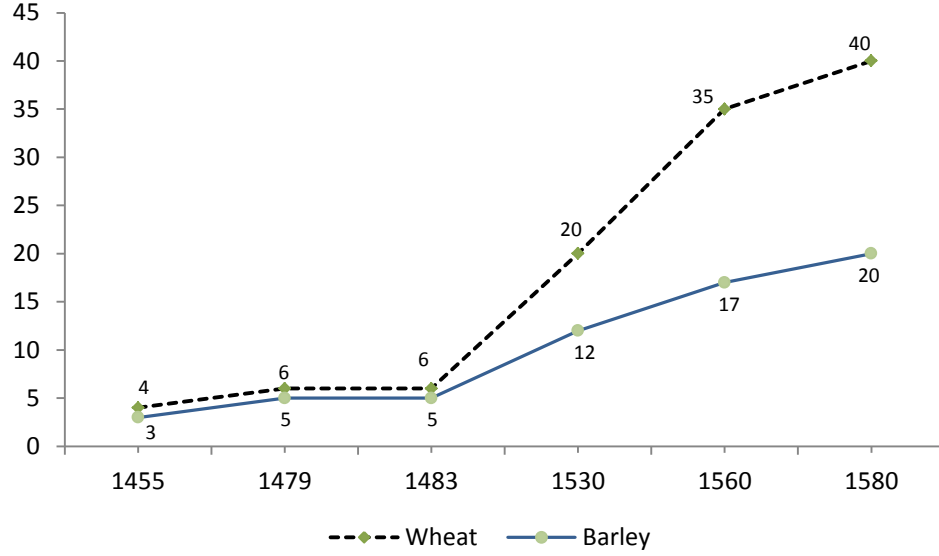


Figure 14: Price of Wheat and Barley Recorded in Land Survey Books¹²

Using the data from 10 villages a simple calculation was made of the wheat production per *timar* of 3,000 *akçes*. From 1530 to 1560 the decline in wheat production per *timar* was 38.6%. However, the value of the produced wheat rose to about 7.41% and the price of wheat raised 75%. Crop failure or changes in crop patterns would have had an effect on these changes, but such a result cannot be solely explained by this kind of natural inflation.

¹² The data from 1455 was based on estimation using the following data. In the last three *sancak* the *lukna* was used for standard weight. It was converted to *kile* based on the formula that 1 *lukna* = 4 *kile* as stated in BOA-MAD.d 5, p. 1.

<i>Defter</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Sancak</i>	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Barley</i>
BOA-TT.d 7	883	Paşa	5	3
BOA-TT.d 10	854	Mora	5	2
BOA-TT.d 12	856	Gelibolu	5	4
BOA-TT.d 9	859	Priştine	5	2.75
BOA-MAD.d 5	872	Braniçevo	3	2.5
BOA-TT.d 16	854	Semendire	2	2.25

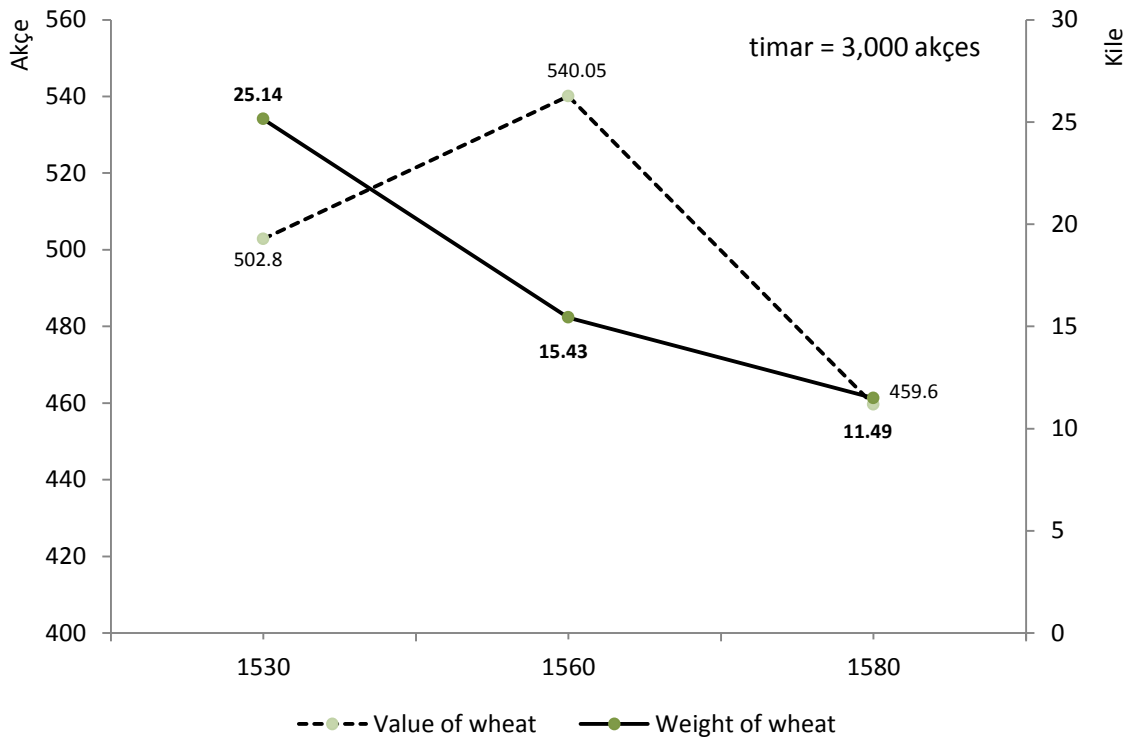


Figure 15: Taxed Wheat in a *Timar* Valued 3,000 Akçes (n=10 villages)

In order to create a surplus it seems that the government arbitrarily determined the price of cereal. For example, in the availability of 25 *kile* taxed wheat, if the wheat's price is calculated 26 *akçes* a *kile* instead of 25 *akçes* there is 1 *kile* surplus at a stroke of the pen without expending any extra effort. This policy is related to an important surplus that was produced in the second half of the sixteenth century. An order sent to the registrar of Kastamonu and Meneteşe in 1581 states that when recording entries into the new *deFTER* he should add one *akçe* to the price (*narh*) of wheat and a half *akçe* to the price of barley. Then the surplus would be recorded for imperial *hasses*¹³ and this represented the second direct effect of *hassification*.

Indeed what opened the *timar* to such interventions was the abstraction of *timar*, i.e. the transition from physical to fiscal *timar*. In the fiscal *timar*, the nominal value became the core of the assessment and setting a core value for each *timar* made

¹³ BOA-ADV.N.MHM 46, r. 107.

timar-holders more vulnerable to real and arbitrary inflation. Thus, in such cases, the rise in the value of a *timar* should be accepted as no more than a virtual rearrangement. What we actually see as promotion was nothing but a cover for the additional exploitation of *timar*-holders.

VI.1.1. Development of the *Timar* Bureaucracy

The abstraction of the *timar* became possible only after the development of a central bureaucracy that administered the recording and tracking of *timars* in the sixteenth century. While the personnel of the center of *timar* tracking and recording (*defterhâne-i âmire*) were 10-15 people at the beginning of the sixteenth century; their number rose to 40 by 1577 and to 85-90 around 1620s.¹⁴ This office began to control the *timar* system at an increasing rate in the sixteenth century. Their primary duty was to conduct surveys and control the *timar* transactions between surveys.

When the early survey registers are examined it is easy to notice that the *icmal* registers contain numerous notes concerning the situation of each *timar* in the years up to a new survey.¹⁵ Thus, the Ottoman bureaucracy could more easily track *timars*. From the reign of Bayezid II this method was abolished and tahrir *defters* began to be differentiated from the *timar-ruznamçe defters*.¹⁶ While the *icmal defters* recorded the fresh *timar* allocations after surveys, the *ruznamçe defters* were used for the systematic recording of any change in a *timar* between surveys.

¹⁴ Afyoncu, "Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatında Defterhâne-i Âmire." p. 8.

¹⁵ This side notes misled some historians who thought that such *defters* were the duplicated copies of the main *defters*, which were sent to provincial governors. Altuğ, "II. Murad Dönemine Ait Tahrir Defterlerinin Yayına Hazırlanması ve Bu Malzemeye Göre Timar Sistemi, Demografi, Yerleşme ve Topografya Üzerinde Araştırmalar." p. 16.

¹⁶ Sometimes notes added to the later *timars* as well but these notes usually show the change in the status of the land. For example, a *timar* could be later annexed to the imperial *hasses*. Such information could be noted on both the *icmal* and *mufassal defters*. However, in the early *defter* it can be seen how and why a *timar* changes hand, which was a typical *ruznamçe* record.

Under normal conditions before granting a *timar* the officials looked at the *icmal defters* to determine the geographical border and value of the *timar*. Only after finding its record in the *icmal* book could they perform the transaction, since it was forbidden to transfer one *timar* solely relying on the *ruznamçe* books.¹⁷ The probable reason was that in these books the *timar* might not be recorded in its original form. For example, its core value could be granted to one person while the supplement was given as promotion to another or new supplements could be added to a *timar* that had not been recorded in *icmal* registers. Since candidates usually received core value at the beginning, it would be important to identify the *timar*'s core value from the *icmal*. Only after that, would the scribes check the records in *ruznamçes* and the former licenses (*berat*) that candidates provided to identify the last owner.

After re-granting a *timar*, usually a short note about the new bestowal with the date was written at the top of the previous record in the *ruznamçe* to invalidate the record (*kayıt bozma*).¹⁸ Invalidating was an old practice the roots of which can be traced back to the notes added to earliest *icmal* records and was an important practice since this aimed to prevent granting one *timar* more than once at the same time. However, in the earliest known *ruznamçe* such practices were quite rare but after the 1580s they can be observed more frequently. However, principally it was seen in the *ruznamçe* registers of the seventeenth century. In the period when Ayn Ali Efendi became the director (*defter emini*) of *defterhâne-i âmire*, the scribes began to add their signature after invalidating notes on the previous records.¹⁹

¹⁷ BOA-ADV.N.MHM 12, r. 1175.

¹⁸ Afyoncu, "Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatında Defterhâne-i Âmire," p. 29.

¹⁹ It became routine that scribes signed under invalidating notes in the period between 1605 and 1610. Ibid. p. 29.

Ayn Ali Efendi was the person who noticed that the health of the *timar* system could be assured through a better method of *timar* tracking and he initiated reforms in record keeping. By bringing the regulation of signing the invalidating notes, he tried to prevent fraud by the scribes. For Ayn Ali Efendi it was essential to regularly keep roll call (*yoklama*) registers and to be attentive when writing invalidating notes on the *timar* records. Thus, it was possible to prevent the disputes concerning rights over a *timar*.²⁰ As a matter of fact, conducting new surveys was essential for keeping the system up-date. However, it is interesting to note that he did not offer to conduct new surveys.

Indeed, as time passed, the surveys as well as the reliability of the data recorded in survey books became more problematic. The total yield produced in a village that was recorded during the survey of 1579 could be seen one century later as exactly the same however it was still not possible to claim the reliability of that given value. The abstraction of the *timar* had become an irrational phenomenon due to the inability to update the available statistics and tax rates. The relationship between the records and reality almost totally disappeared. With the abandonment of the survey tradition the state *de facto* lost its control over economic resources within the military sphere however, the state continued to track the *timar* owners for centuries. Thus, there was a contradiction, on the one hand trying to keep the *timar* system alive and on the other hand giving up the essential practice of surveying which was fundamental to the system.

²⁰ Ayn Ali, "Kavanîn-i Âl-i Osman der Hulâsa-i Mezâmîn-i Defter-i Dîvân," in *Osmanlı Kanunâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, ed. Ahmet Akgündüz (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1996). pp. 66-8.

VI.1.2. Topsy-turvy in *Timar* Bestowal Organization

The Ottoman government first diminished the power of the *sancakbegis* by subordinating them to the provincial governors who were usually appointed from among the central cadres. However, the centralization policies went beyond that and this time, in the 1530s governors' influence in *timar* bestowals was also substantially reduced by the transfer of some of their rights to the center.²¹ Moreover, they had to serve as a kind of agents of *defterhâne-i âmire* in provinces. In the *ruznamçe defter* of the second half of the century (see Appendix XIII) it can be seen how the *beglerbegis* and the central bureaucracy co-operated in *timar* transaction process.

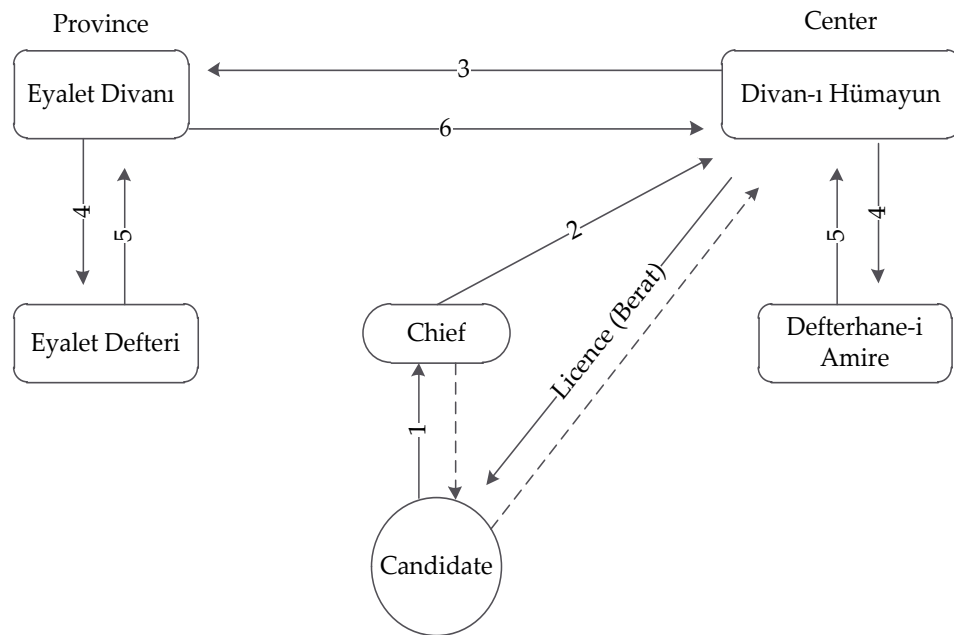


Figure 16: Coordination between the Center and Province in *Timar* Bestowal

First, a candidate requested from a superior a letter of eligibility (*arz*) for a certain *dirlik*. He either took that letter to apply to the Sultan's court (*divan-ı hümayun*) for a *timar* or his superior sent the letter directly to the court. There was a

²¹ According to a firman dated 1531 governors could not bestow some *timars* without permission of the center. M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Kanûnî Sultan Süleyman'ın Timar ve Zeamet Tevcihi ile İlgili Fermanları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 17, no. 22 (1979). p. 37.

complex procedure in the imperial court, which has already been analyzed by İnalçık.²² Then an order was sent to the court of provincial governor (*eyâlet divanı*) to investigate the claim in the letter of recommendation. A similar procedure to the one at the imperial court was followed between beglerbegi and *defterdâr-ı timar* (responsible for *timars*) and *defter kethüdâsı* (responsible for *zi'amets*). After completing the investigation in both courts the new record was registered in both *ruzmançes*, one of which was housed in the governor's court and the other in the imperial court. Finally, the candidate received his license (*berat*).

At this point, to which beglerbeglik a *sancak* was attached became important. The *Sancak* of Vidin was traditionally among the *sancaks* of the province of Rumili. When the beglerbeglik of Temeşvar was formed in 1552 Vidin was attached to this beglerbeglik.²³ Thirty years later, Vidin was annexed back to Rumili in 1582.²⁴ That is, any transaction about a *timar* in Vidin was under the responsibility of those beglerbegis.

This mechanism and organization collapsed in the early seventeenth century and there were several reasons for that. First, by limiting the duration of the office of *sancakbegis* in a certain *sancak* to one year, they became alienated to *timar* holders and the *timar* transaction process.²⁵ Instead of *sancakbegis* the *alaybegis* become dominant in *sancak* affairs. The most important reason for this was that *Alaybegis* could remain in office for a longer period this is shown by the fact that no more than

²² Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlı Bürokrasisinde Aklâm ve Muâmelât," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 1 (1980). Also see, Bilgin Aydın, "XVI. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Bürokrasisinde Tımar Tevcih Sistemi," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 24 (2004).

²³ TSA-K 888, p. 446a. This record proves that Dushanka Bojanich's estimation about the date was true. Bojanich, *Vidin i Vidinskiyat Sandzhak Prez 15-16 Vek: Dokumenti ot Archivite na Tsarigrad i Ankara*. p. 11.

²⁴ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 47, r. 167, 168.

²⁵ A contemporary Ottoman writer, Koçi Beg, also claims that the system operated better when the *sancakbegis* were in their position for a longer time. Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risaleleri*. p. 29.

10 *alaybegis* were appointed to Vidin for one hundred years after the mid-sixteenth century. For instance, *Alaybegi* Ali occupied a post in Vidin for some 24 years from 1599 until his death in 1622.²⁶

Moreover, throughout the sixteenth century *akıncı* troops lost their importance. Although the last *akıncı* troops were believed to be destroyed by enemy forces during an expedition into Wallachia in 1595,²⁷ in fact, in 1602 there were still *akıncı* troops under the commandship of an *akıncıbegi* (Hacı Beg) but they were no longer the active raiders as they had been in the past.²⁸ While the frontier regions previously were under the semi-autonomous *akıncı* rulers, who were traditionally located on the western fronts, in the second half of the sixteenth century the Ottoman Empire found itself fighting on the two fronts, with Iran (1578-90/1603-39) in the east and the Habsburgs (1593-1606) in the west.²⁹ The *sancaks* that were close to fronts became battle fields of mutual assaults. If there was any suspicion of enemy attack the government used to send *paşas* to defend the border *sancaks*. A *paşa* was either chosen from among viziers at the center or provincial governors and this brought about the subordination of interior provincial governors to these generals. These, *paşas* (*serdar*, *muhafız*, *serasker*) were fully authorized for *timar* bestowal thus the dual-structured *timar* bestowal organization began to collapse.

²⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 260; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 495.

²⁷ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, 3. p. 157.

²⁸ In 1602 many *akıncı* undertook logistical duties as, coal supplier (*kömürcü*), oil supplier (*yağcı*), miner (*küreci*) etc. Moreover, those who were recorded as raiders in the *defters* were organized as a special military division, as a standing troop, and joined the army under commandship of their *akıncıbegi*. BOA-KK.d 70, p. 501.

²⁹ Georgian and Russian fronts can also be added, especially in the early seventeenth century. According to Mustafa Akdağ the first of many exhausting wars was the siege of Cyprus began in 1570. Mustafa Akdağ, "Timar Rejiminin Bozuluşu," *AÜDTCF Dergisi* III, no. 4 (1945). p. 424.

Enduring small scale raids had always been Vidin's fate, but after 1594 Vidin turned into a much more serious battlefield.³⁰ The list of *Paşas* in Appendix V shows a few of them who were mentioned in chronicles during important assaults on Vidin. Some of these *Paşas* were directly known as the Guard of Vidin (*muhafız-ı Vidin*) and the others were commanders of the Danube (*Serasker-i Tuna*).³¹ In the first half of the seventeenth century the province of Özi became the center of the protection of the Danubian frontier. A document dated 1632 shows Vidin under the Province of Özi³² however; the *timar* roll-call of 1633 shows Vidin as a *sancak* of Rumili.³³ Moreover, the information in the *ruzmançes* does not confirm that Vidin was a *sancak* of Özi, nor confirms that Vidin was a *sancak* of Rumili after 1633.

As the *sancakbegis* were *de facto* replaced by *alaybegis*; *beglerbegis* seem to have also been replaced by those *serasker paşas*.³⁴ That led to a chaos in *timar* transactions. Especially after 1616, since *defters* were sent to frontiers with the *paşas*, in many cases the *defterhane-i amire* began to use *cebe defters*, *ahkam defteris* and even licenses (*berat*) as bases for renewal of bestowals.³⁵ That is to say, the dual structured *timar* transaction organization turned into at least a three-centered one. On one hand provincial governors continued to perform their duties and on the other the *paşas* of frontiers were authorized for transactions. And lastly instead of

³⁰ Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, ed. Mehmed İpşirli, vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999). pp. 494-5, 733, 769-70. Mustafa Efendi Naima, *Târih-i Na'imâ*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007). p. 88.

³¹ In 1600 the Guard of Tuna was Mehmed *Paşa* and then Mahmud *Paşa* was appointed. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, p. 138. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 625.

³² BOA-KK.d 266, pp.44-5

³³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522.

³⁴ Appointing *paşas* as governors to *sancaks* and provinces became a common regulation in the eighteenth century. Özer Ergenç, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Taşra Yönetiminin Mâli Nitelikleri," *Journal of Turkish Studies/Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 10(1986). p. 89.

³⁵ "İcmal ve Ruznamçesi sefer-i hümayundadır ve atik beratından berat itmek ister deyü arz olundukda" BOA-DFE.RZ.d. 353, p. 521. For similar cases see, BOA-DFE.RZ.d 371; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 366; BOA-MAD.d 107; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 488; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 462; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 474; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 68.

directing candidates to *paşas* or governors, the central government continued bestowing *timars*. In such a situation, with whom the *beglerbegis* had to synchronize their operations became problematic and if sometimes during a battle a *timar* could change hands several times, it is easier to see how the bestowal of *timars* led to disputes.

VI.1.3. Vidin as *Nezaretlik Sancak*

The famous traveler Evliya Çelebi describes Vidin as a *nezâret* that was governed by a *nâzır* who had been authorized to carry out execution since the time of Şakşakî Paşa.³⁶ It is known that Şakşakî İbrahim Paşa was appointed as the commander of the Black Sea in 1615,³⁷ most probably he was the *paşa* of Özi. So the connection that Evliya Çelebi claimed became more realistic.

What does it mean for a *sancak* to be *nezâret*? As shown in the previous chapter, after 1530 by reserving some lands for the imperial *hasses*, the imperial revenues in Vidin began to be recorded in two parts: port administration, and *hass* administration. In the second half of the sixteenth century we see that the former was administrated by an inspector (*müfettiş*) who was usually a judge (*kadı*). The *Kadis* conducted surveys and inspecting *emins* who were authorized to collect taxes and fees. The imperial agricultural revenues, on the other hand were administered by *voyvodas* or *emins* (the chief overseer of an imperial *hass*), who were under the direct

³⁶ Şakşakî Paşa'dan beri bu Vidin sancağı nezâret olup hâlâ hâkimü'l-vakti salb u siyâset sâhibi nâzırü'n-nuzzâr ağadır kim üç yüz âdem ile hükm-i hükûmât eder. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 6. p. 91.

³⁷ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, ed. Nuri Akbayar, trans. Seyit Ali Kahraman, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996). p. 786.

supervision of a supervisor (*nâzır*) who was usually appointed from among *çavuşes* and *müteferrikas*.³⁸

There is also another administrative organization along with *timar* organization in Vidin. In the first half of the seventeenth century *sancakbegis* had almost no role in *timar* organization. As a result, they began to be appointed as *nâzırs* of *hasses*, or *nâzırs* began to take over their duties. In 1622 it is known that some *sancakbegis* become supervisors of imperial revenues.³⁹ Also a former governor of the province of Rumili became the provincial chief of imperial revenues (*defterdâr*) of Tuna.⁴⁰ For the first time Ahmed (1657-8) is both *sancakbegi* and *nâzır* of Vidin.⁴¹ In the list of *sancakbegis* in Appendix V the last *sancakbegis* were given the title *ağa* which was traditionally used for *nâzırs*. After 1660 *sancakbegis* are no longer seen and it seems that this title was no longer used by anyone. This is why Evliya Çelebi did not mention any *sancakbegis* but a *nâzır*.

It is obvious that Evliya Çelebi did witness the transformation but why did he mention around 1615 as the foundation of the *nezâret*? In terms of the *sancakbegis* of Vidin it can be seen that after 1611 *kaymakams* more frequently appeared in the documents. A *kaymakam* was formally a deputy of a *sancakbegi*. When one *sancakbegi* was dismissed from his post a *kaymakam* would be appointed until the arrival of a new governor.⁴² Or when a *sancakbegi* was outside of his *sancak* due to expeditions or for any other reason he could appoint a person as a deputy to manage

³⁸ See documents in folio BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1. Also see, BOA-MAD.d 6148 (d. 1583), p. 46.

³⁹ “*Kili Sancağı begi olub Tolci ve İsakçı ve tevabii mukatâtı nâzırı olan Ahmed.*” BOA-MAD.d 7266, p. 8.

⁴⁰ BOA-MAD.d 7266, p. 9. Defterdarlık of Tuna was that of Özi Province. BOA-KK.d 266, p. 46.

⁴¹ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, r. 88.

⁴² Halil İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration," in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History, Papers on Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977). p. 30

his revenues and run other *sancak* affairs.⁴³ Since the *sancakbegis* began to be changed more often at an increasing rate there are more *kaymakams* or *mütesellims*. However, that is not the real reason it was that from the early seventieth century on there are hardly any *sancakbegis* managing the *sancak* affairs, it was usually the deputies performed their duties.⁴⁴

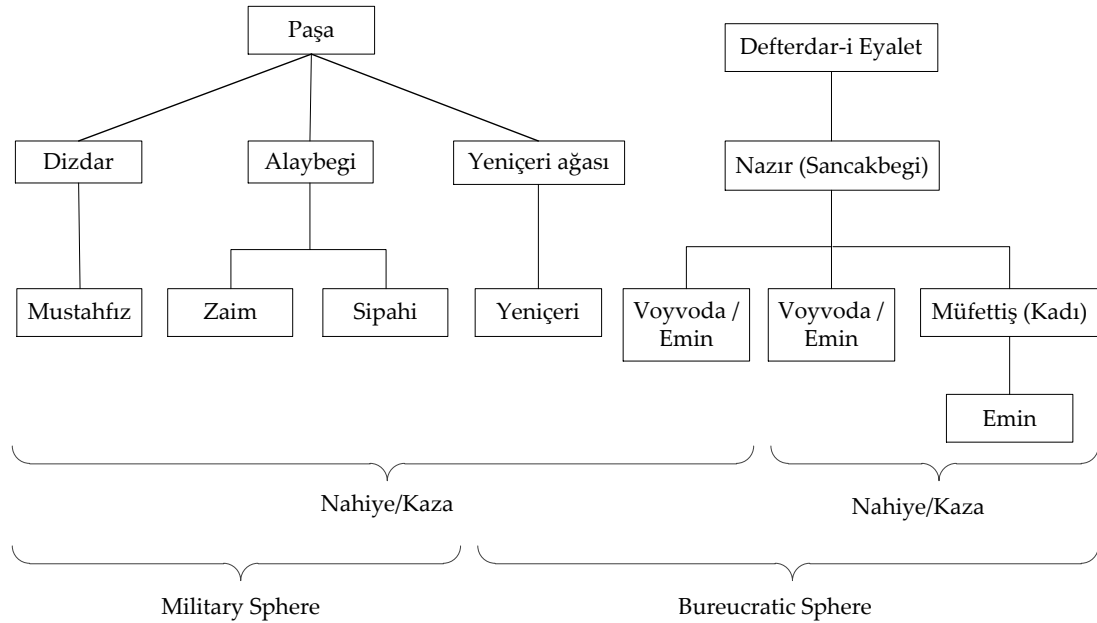


Figure 17: *Sancak* of Vidin in the Second half of the Seventeenth Century

A *paşa* might not always be appointed to Vidin but when this happened he was the highest authority. In the periods when there were no *paşas*, Vidin was probably under the authority of the *paşa* of Özi.⁴⁵ In the late sixteenth century all agents of imperial revenues were under the supervision of the provincial *defterdâr*. It

⁴³ In 1602-1603 the *sancakbegi* of Vidin Ahmed Beg appointed Sefer Çavuş as *kaymakam* and *mütesellim* to collect taxes while he was at the battle front. Cengiz Orhonlu, *Telhisler, 1597-1607: Osmanlı Tarihine âid Belgeler* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1970). p. 64.

⁴⁴ The majority of the information for the construction of the list of *sancakbegis* of Vidin was gathered from *timar ruznamçe* records which show their roles in *timar* transactions.

⁴⁵ After 1626 the *Paşas* of Özi granted more *timars* of Vidin than the *Beglerbegi* of Rumili. The main reason was that the *timar* holders of Vidin were usually called to defend Özi.

is not totally clear but it can be stated that with performing the duty of *nezaret*, *sancakbegi* was subordinated to the provincial *defterdâr* of Tuna. Therefore he was no longer in the military hierarchy. Under his supervision there were *voyvodas* or *emins*.⁴⁶

Halil İnalçık explains this process as the government's empowerment of *defterdârs* and *kadıs* to curb the power of the governors who ceased to be loyal to the government.⁴⁷ This hypothesis might explain the ongoing rebellions in the Anatolian provinces, however, in the Balkans, especially in provinces close to frontiers; the change resulted in a general transformation that led to the rise of new provincial actors as *paşas* and the decline of *sancakbegis* and ordinary *beglerbegis*. This was another effect of *hassification* but that process does not necessarily mean that the revenues distributed as *timars* in the past were annexed to imperial revenues. Rather, those cadres whose functions in the *timar* system had been eroded began to search for posts in the bureaucratic sphere. Does this mean that, for example, the *dirliks* of *sancakbegis* were annexed to imperial revenues? It is hard to find a clear answer to this question but probably their revenues over time were granted to *paşas*. For example, it is known that the *sancak* of Vidin was granted as an *arpalık* to Hüseyin Paşa of Özi in 1638 (see the list of *sancakbegis* in Appendix V). Probably what was granted to the *paşa* was the land reserved for imperial *hasses*, so it is not certain whether the revenues of *sancakbegis* were among them.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *Voyvoda* was the chief overseer of the imperial revenues of a specific region (*nâhiye* or *kaza*) in a *sancak*. The terms *Emin* and *Voyvoda* could be used interchangeably. BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, p. 110-111.

⁴⁷ İnalçık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration." pp. 27-8.

⁴⁸ According to an anonymous chronicle, sometimes in the second half of the seventeenth century, the *hasses* of Vidin were granted upon *veziriazams* but later they were reserved for *ocaklık* of the fortress of Temeşvar. *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000). p. 114.

VI.2. Tracking *Timars* in Vidin

According to the last *timar* allocation records of Vidin in 1580 there were; 1 *hass* of *sancakbegi*, 15 *zi'amets*, 199 generic *timars* and 264 guards' *timars*. The *hass* of *sancakbegi* can be tracked until 1617, when it was granted to Meydan (1617-1618). In the record it was said that the *hass* was in ruin and it no more yielded 360,000 *akçes*.⁴⁹ During the governorship of Ebubekir (1605-1606) Vidin had *araplık* status. That is, probably around that time the *dirlik* somehow became vacant so, temporarily, the salary of *sancakbegi* began to be paid from imperial revenues. It seems that by 1617 the *dirlik* was partly recovered but thereafter, it is not seen again. Therefore, the *hass* of *sancakbegi* was probably abolished and the *sancak* reorganized under *nezâret*. That is, the exact date Evliya Çelebi attributed to the foundation of the *nezâretlik* of Vidin should have been 1618.

Of the *zi'amets*; two were granted as promotions to *hasses* of high-ranking officials; another was enjoyed by Sinan Çelebi, the *defterdâr* of the second branch (*şıkk-ı sani*) of the imperial treasure and on the other hand, the *zi'amet* of the village of Drenofçe valued at 55,155 *akçes* was granted to the *sancakbegi* of Kırkkilise, Yusuf Bey, a descendant of Evrenos Beg. That led to friction between two elite families. Ağnam Mehmed Beg, the son of Malkoç-oğlu Bali Beg, objected to that bestowal under the pretext that his father had many farms and private property in that village. As a result the *zi'amet* was divided between them as two equal shares.⁵⁰ In the *ruzmançe defters* of Vidin only the share of Ağnam Mehmed Beg can be tracked. The other share was most probably was recorded in the *defters* of Kırkkilise.

⁴⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 366, p. 360.

⁵⁰ TKA-TT.d 219, pp. 13b-14., BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 487.

Moreover, two generic *timars* were annexed to the *hasses* of viziers⁵¹ so; these two units cannot be tracked in the *ruznamçe defters* of Vidin. However, from a fragmented *defter* it can be learned that they were either confiscated for imperial *hasses* or were added to the *hasses* of the grand vizier in the second decade of the seventeenth century.⁵² On the other hand, three *timars* were owned by falconers but these cannot be tracked in the *ruznamçe defters*.⁵³ Likewise, it is possible to see the records of guards' *timars* in *ruznamçes* but they were not systematic records. Probably, they were recorded in other special *defters*⁵⁴ this is why they could not be tracked.

Lastly, those *dirliks* which were formed after the survey were not included. In 1596-7 two new *zi'amets*, whose values were indefinitely estimated 20,000 *akçes*, were recorded in the *defter* of 1580.⁵⁵ They were not recorded in *ruznamçes* but I found them in a *tahvil defter* in which were recorded only the *dirliks* of *çavuşes*.⁵⁶ Besides, there are also some villages which were not recorded in the *defter* of 1580 but appeared later in the *ruznamçes*. One was the village of Küçük Visokad which for the first time was recorded in 1616.⁵⁷ That village was noted as previously "unregistered" (*haric ez defter*) since it had been ruined therefore, during the survey the village was empty, but repopulated later and there were a few of these villages.

⁵¹ One was given to siyavuş Paşa who would soon be grand vizier and the other was given to Mehmed Paşa. TKA-TT.d 219, p. 12.

⁵² A.DFE.d 786/1, pp. 13, 14, 141. In this *defter* there were many records about the confiscations of the *dirliks* owned by noblemen.

⁵³ A transaction about one of these *timars* can be seen in BOA-TT.d 684, p. 210. As far as I can see this *defter* was a special *ruznamçe* for falconers. No other record about *timars* of Vidin could be found in this *defter*.

⁵⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 941 is one of guards' *ruznamçes*.

⁵⁵ TKA-TT.d 219, pp. 51b-52.

⁵⁶ A.DFE.d 69, p. 19.

⁵⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 353, p. 518. This village remained in *ruznamçe defters* until 1676. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 864, p. 235.

Some of them were granted as *timars* but they were not recorded more than once meaning that they were either mistakenly recorded or granted temporarily.

Figure 18 shows the result of tracking of 209 *timars* and *zi'amets* from 1582 to 1693 (*hijra* 990 - 1104). Area 1 shows the core *timars* (active *timars*) that were bestowed on a person. The *timars* shown in Area 2 are *timars* whose core values had disappeared but their supplements were granted to *timar* owners (promotional *timars*). And lastly the Area 3 shows the *timar* which were no longer granted, i.e. the revenues that were not included in the *timar* system.

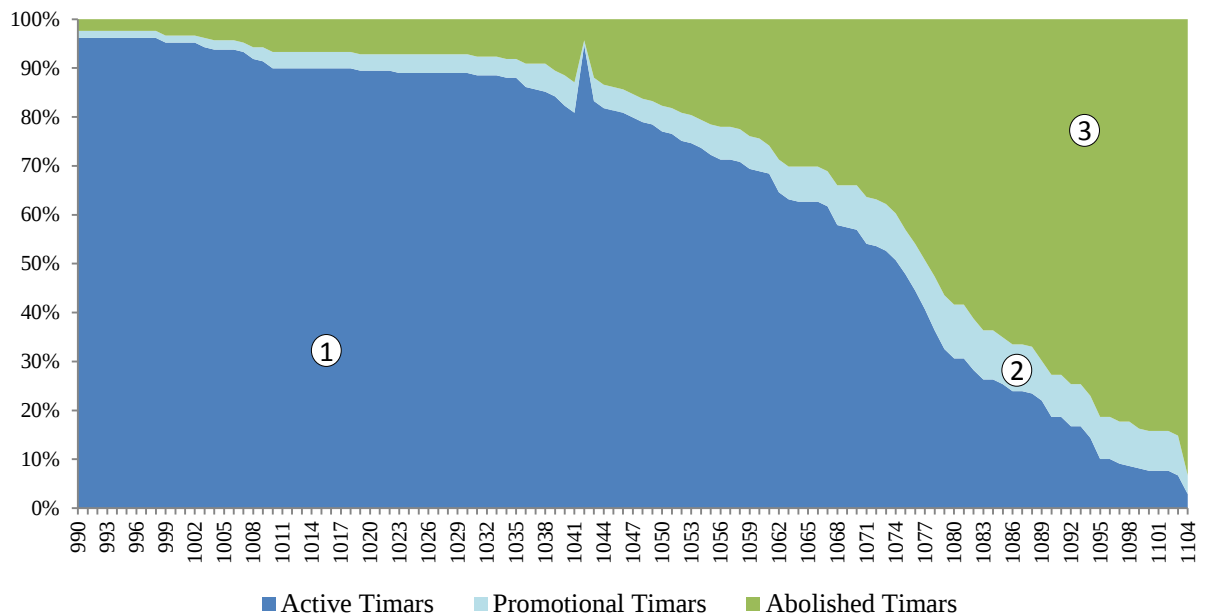


Figure 18: The Change in Numbers of *Timars* in Vidin between 1582 and 1693

There was not such a significant decline in the number of the active *timars* until 1626, when the 90 percent of *timars* were still enjoyed by someone. However, the reduction in the number of *timars* from then on would be an unavoidable phenomenon, despite the reform efforts in 1632-3. Why did the state need *timar* reform?

In the second half of the sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century murmurs about social and moral corruption became so rampant it embodied in many treatises and chronicles.⁵⁸ The main points concerning the corruption of the *timar* system were that: first, with the rise of the central cadres in *timar* transactions, merit was no longer considered in *timar* bestowal. As a result *timars* fell into the hands of many non-eligible outsiders (*ecnebi*), i.e. those who were not descendants of *timar* holders or those who had received a *timar* without spending a time in the service of field commanders. Secondly, due to those outsiders as well as economic and moral deprivation *timar*-holding warriors began to be corrupted and undisciplined. Lastly, the number of *timar* holding warriors declined as a result of proliferation of what is called “*timar* in the basket” (*sepet timar*), that is, *timar* owners began to enter the service of a notable service or some notables seized *timars* for their own slaves and servants.⁵⁹

For Ottoman intellectuals these factors, together with the corruption in outnumbered janissary troops, were the main reasons behind the Ottoman military failures on the frontiers. Such advice or complaints firstly led to an attempt to reform the central army, which tragically failed with the murder of Osman II in 1622.⁶⁰ Then the central government decided to improve the *timar* system. In a governmental assembly in 1632 the state decided to initiate a general inspection of *timar* holders to

⁵⁸ Many such treaties were examined in, Mehmet Öz, *Osmanlı'da Çözülme ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 1997).

⁵⁹ Yaşar Yücel, *Osmanlı devlet Teşkilâtına Dair Kaynaklar: Kitâb-i Müstetâb; Kitabu Mesâlihi'l Müslimîn ve Menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn; Hırzû'l-mülûk* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988). p. 186. Ayn Ali, "Kavanîn-i Âl-i Osman der Hulâsa-i Mezâmîn-i Defter-i Dîvân." p. 66. Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risaleleri*. pp. 29, 33, 51-54. Such ideas that proposed by Ottoman intellectuals are repeated in detail in, Yücel Özkaya, *18. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Toplumı* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2010). pp. 43-46.

⁶⁰ Baki Tezcan, "Searching for Osman: A Reassessment of the Deposition of the Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618-1622)" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 2001).

reveal the conditions of *timars*.⁶¹ The inspection that began in 1632, but was mainly undertaken in 1633, and there were two purposes of the reformation attempt: firstly, to find out which *timars* were ‘in the basket’ and to ensure that *timars* were granted to those who merited them.⁶² Secondly, since many *timar* and *zi’amet* holders had been promoted to the positions of *çavuş*, *müteferrika* and *katib* (scribe) over time. Their number would be limited to 400 *çavuşes*, 200 *müteferrikas*, and 80 *katibs* in general and in Rumelia they would not exceed 200 *çavuşes*, 100 *müteferrikas* and 40 *katibs*.⁶³

Then the question is whether the reform was successful. First, as can be seen in Figure 18 the reform was not so successful in Vidin in terms of reviving lost *timar*. All but two revived *timars* during the inspection disappeared immediately after 1633. That is, only 7.4% of disappeared *timars* were actually revived. Moreover, three promotional *timars* were also revived. Thus, in total 12.5% of lost *timars* revived and began to be actively bestowed on people.

Granting *timars* to men of notables was not a new phenomenon. However, somehow the contemporary Ottoman intellectuals believed that it was one of the reasons behind the corruption of the *timar* army. It is understandable to see something as problem in an extraordinary period whereas it has not been treated as such before. Nevertheless, they were not so wrong in thinking that way. After building a solid centralized system the central cadres became the main figures on conflicting sides. In particular, viziers and *paşas* were the main actors of the conflict with each trying to grant *timars* for his own men. For example, Sinan Paşa and

⁶¹ Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656." pp. 202-224.

⁶² “*Guzat-ı müslimine mahsus ve tayin olan zi’amet ve timarların ekseri sepet timarı olup sefer ve hizmet ferman olundukda her biri bir tarikle seferden kalub ol vechile asker ahvali ve kılıçlar muhtell ve müşevveş olduğu...*” This cliché can be seen in many records in the *defter* in which the result of the investigation was recorded. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, pp. 643, 647, 648, 649.

⁶³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, pp. 749, 765, 180.

Siyavuş Paşa the former was dominant in Anatolia the latter in the Balkans, each had hundreds of men enjoying *timars*.⁶⁴ Sometimes Ottoman intellectuals reflected their discontent about the role of central cadres in *timar* bestowal and this has been taken up by some modern historians too. According to Mustafa Akdağ, *timars* either gradually turned into imperial *hasses* or were appropriated by *paşas* to feed the *sekban* and *saruca* troops who were paid in cash. Thus, by 1630 there was no such an army of *timar* holding *sipâhîs*.⁶⁵

It seems that Akdağ was satisfied by the hyperbolizing assertions of the contemporary Ottoman writers; however he did not realize that dramatization was a method of persuasion in Ottoman correspondence and critique writing. Over and over, it was repeated in the *timar* records of the inspection of 1632-3 that the majority of *timars* became *timars* in the basket (*sepet timarı*) however, the results do not confirm that assertion. In fact there were 18 *sepet timarı*s which constituted just 9% of the active *timars* recorded during the investigation in Vidin. Adding to this result all the fully or partly lost *timars* the total would be 27.8% by 1632. That means that 72.2% of army was still working.⁶⁶

What should be understood by the *timar* in the basket? Pakalın explained that this *sepet timarı* was a *timar* which became vacant when their possessor left no meritable candidate to inherit. Licenses of such *timar* were put into baskets used for

⁶⁴ BOA-KK.d 320 [1582-3]. This *defter* also recorded the men of certain begs and female relatives of the Sultan.

⁶⁵ Akdağ, "Timar Rejiminin Bozuluşu." Of course Akdağ's the last thesis has no base. One contemporary historian has argued that based on the information supplied by some witnesses that in the eighteenth century there were 132,000 *zâ'ims* and *timar* holders. But only few of them could be seen on the battle fields. William Eton, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire* (London: Printed for T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies in the Strand, 1798). pp. 65-7. That number might be exaggerated but it is known that there was still a *timar* army in the eighteenth century. Some other sources argued that when the sultan decided to declare war on Russia in 1768 he only found 20,000 *timar* and *cebelüs*. Coşkun Üçok, "Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtında Tımarlar," *Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi* 2, no. 1 (1944). p. 91.

⁶⁶ This does not take into account errors or fraudulent entries in the records

filing.⁶⁷ This definition does not reflect the reality behind such a conceptualization. In the *ruznamçes* of Vidin whenever a person was labeled as slave or servant (*kul*, *köle*, *ıtk*, *hizmetkâr*), his *timar* was denounced as a *sepet timarı*. Moreover, sometimes *timar* owners were noted as “*mevcudu’l-isim ma’dumu’l-cisim* – existing in name, not existing in substance”, which means that the owner did not join the battles and was not found during roll calls. The only proof for the state that he existed was his name in the *timar* records. In one case a *zi’amet* was recorded for a certain Hüseyin but in fact it was possessed by a person called Derviş.⁶⁸ Here it is not certain whether Hüseyin was a real or fictitious person. Calling a *timar* as *sepet timarı* was a reactionary usage.⁶⁹ The Ottoman intellectuals reflected that governors, viziers and other local notables lusted after *timars* so much that it led to the state to develop an obsessive behavior that tended to see all those who were not present at roll calls were in fact men of those people. It is true that 18 such people were revealed in Vidin. However, no evidence that any of those slaves belonged to a *paşa*, vizier or governor. For the majority of the slaves the owners were not specified however, in two out of eighteen cases the owners are known. In one case the *timar* owner was found to be the slave of a *zâ’ım*⁷⁰ for the second case there is a little more detail and this is given in the next section.

⁶⁷ Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1983). p. 175.

⁶⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, p. 756.

⁶⁹ This term was not used in *timar* records until the great inspection. Many writers complained about the situation describing the *sepet timarı*. However, this term was probably used by Koçi Bey for the first time in his writings. The term should have had a common usage in daily speaking especially by a party in the 1620s. When their complaints were heard by the Sultan, due to writings of Koçi Bey, the government decided to take a step to remove the corruption and rehabilitate the system. This is why the term appeared for the first time in *defters* during the inspection.

⁷⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, p. 769.

VI.2.1. A Fight for a *Timar*: The Story of Divane Müslüm

The story of Divane Müslüm tells much about *timar* bestowal in general and the *sepet timarıs* in particular. *Divane* (lit. crazy, mad) was the word used for frontier warriors who voluntarily joined army with a hope for a *timar*.

It is not known since when Müslüm began serving a frontier commander but he joined the assault on an enemy troop gathering on the other side of the Danube to attack Vidin in 1596. Since his effort in the incursion was appreciated Alaybegi Şaban sent a letter on his behalf to the center. In response, the government issued an order (*emr*) showing that he deserved an initial *timar* valued at 3,000 *akçe*. Now he had to wait for a suitable vacant *timar*. After four years of waiting, in autumn 1600, the opportunity arose, when a *timar*-holder, Mustafa bin Derviş, died and the Divane Muslum now had a *timar* valued at 3,000 *akçes*.⁷¹

Since he missed the harvest season he could benefit from his salary in the next year but, unfortunately just a few months later his *timar* was given to a certain Mehmed, a dismissed *sipâhî* (*mâzul*).⁷² Why had this happened? There must have been a mistake since all the correct procedures had been followed. The answer was that a few days after bestowing the *timar* on Müslüm, a person called Mehmed who had been waiting for a *timar*, heard about Mustafa's death had applied to the imperial court to be granted that *timar*. The state personnel of *defterhâne-i âmire* checked *ruznamçes* but were unable to find the record of the deceased Mustafa. This was probably because of Mustafa had been granted the *timar* by the provincial governor. So his record would be in the *defters* of the governor of Rumili. The person who had checked the records, had either not realized this situation, or had intentionally

⁷¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 634.

⁷² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 636.

skipped, the page of the *ruznamçe* where that *timar* had already been recorded for Müslüm.

It can be expected that Müslüm and Mehmed argued over (*niza*) the *timar*. In such cases of a dispute both sides either applied to the imperial court or the provincial governor to determine which one would take the *timar* in question. After the trial (*müräfaa*) one of the sides could abnegate (*kasr-i yed* or *feragat*) his right; or the court could dismiss one and approve (*mukarrer*) the other's right; or the court might dismiss both sides and give it to a third person. The outcome was that Müslüm was not able to take possession of the deceased Mustafa's *timar*.

After that, Divane Müslüm was now in a dismissal state which meant that he had to attend marches if he did not want to lose his rights to a *timar*. He attended many battles after that and for his services his promised *timar* reached 6,500 *akçes*. Again he had to wait 22 years until 1621 to take another *timar*. A certain Kurd, who possessed a *timar* valued at 4,000 *akçes*, died immediately Müslüm went to Hüseyin Paşa, the *beglerbegi* of Rumili, to request this *timar*. Hüseyin Paşa did not hesitate to grant the wish of such a veteran warrior. However, he did not know that at the same time Osman, the brother of the deceased Kurd, already had the *timar* recorded for himself at the Imperial court.⁷³ These two men had not solved the problem of possession yet, but Osman died and Müslüm became the possessor of the *timar*.⁷⁴

However, the story did not have a happy ending. There was a challenge to Muslum's possession of the *timar*. A certain Mustafa claimed that the Kurd had a son so the *timar* was his by right. Muslum went to the Imperial Court to present his case before the grand vizier Dilaver Paşa in 1622. After the investigation, revealed that the son had been born three months after his father's death. The grand vizier decided

⁷³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 405, p. 470.

⁷⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 481.

in favor of Müslüm and he would be paid all taxes for the year 1621 that those who challenged his right to the timar and had prevented him from collecting his dues.⁷⁵ However, the tale is not complete.

At this time the tension between the janissaries and the reigning Sultan Osman II, the Young, escalated just a couple of months after Müslüm had successfully defended his right to the timar. The young sultan and his grand vizier Dilaver Paşa were toppled and killed in the coup d'état of May 1622.⁷⁶ This was not only one of the most tragic events of Ottoman history but was also another problem for Divane Müslüm, since the family of Kurd, who had possessed the timar, brought the case once more to the Imperial Court. This time Mustafa appeared in the court as the son of Kurd. He came with his uncle and explained the event quite differently; when his father died his uncle Osman was given the *timar*. But since Müslüm was the man of the *alaybegi*, the *alaybegi* of Vidin applied to the court of *beglerbegi* on his behalf and obtained the license for him. When Osman heard that he went and brought a *çavuş* and took Müslüm to court. When Osman died Mustafa obtained a letter for transaction (*tevcih mektubu*) but Müslüm, the man of the *alaybegi*, came to court and claimed that Mustafa was born after his father's death. This was unfair since he was not present at the court. Then Dilaver Paşa, violating the laws, had bestowed on Müslüm their hereditary (*ocak*) *timar* where they had estates (*çift ve çubuk*).⁷⁷

In 1580 this *timar* was enjoyed by Süleyman, the son of Koçi, who was Mustafa's supposed grandfather.⁷⁸ Therefore, Mustafa was right in saying that the

⁷⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 481.

⁷⁶ Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı*. p. 31.

⁷⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, pp. 489-91.

⁷⁸ TKA-TKA-TT.d 219, p. 48.

timar was their hereditary *timar*. The rest of the claim was opposite to Müslüm's testimony. Though Mustafa claimed that he was not present at the former trial, the record about the former case says that a certain Mustafa was available for the trial. The second point is that, while Mustafa claimed that it was unlawful to have trial without defendant, Müslüm was not called for the second proceeding. Nevertheless, he convinced the new grand vizier Hüseyin Paşa, who decided in June 1622: "As long as the relationship was verified, it is the law to give father's *timar* to the son, no matter when he was born."⁷⁹

Once more Divane Müslüm was left without a *dirlik*. He was again a dismissed (*mazul*) *sipâhî* and he waited a further seven years before he found a new *timar*. In 1629 when a certain Rıdvan died, Hüseyin Paşa of Özi offered Müslüm that *timar* valued 3,240 *akçes*.⁸⁰ However, at least, this time there was no obstacles to his possession. Although the value for the *timar* was far below what he had been promised (6,500 *akçes*). One year later, in 1630, the clerks realized that Muslum had tried to obtain a second *timar*, valued at 3,000 *akçes*. He was not seriously punished just banned from possessing the second *timar* while being allowed to keep the first one.⁸¹

But he never gave in if the system did not allow him to have another *timar* which would give him the amount he had been promised, he would dismiss the first *timar* to get a second one. Several months later in April 1631 Muslum gave his license (*berat*) to (he demanded his dismissal in favor of) Yusuf who supposedly had been dismissed from a *timar* of 3,000 *akçes*.⁸² Thus, he could get another *timar*.

⁷⁹ "Sahih sülbi oğlu olduğundan sonra her ne zaman doğarsa doğsun [babası] timarını yine oğula vermek kanundur." BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 490.

⁸⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 68, p. 170.

⁸¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 498, p. 156.

⁸² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 498, p. 174.

Unfortunately this did not work and one year later Müslüm was still waiting for a *timar* without being aware of the fact that the government was about to take a serious step to prevent such behavior that had already aroused somebody's aggression. In the investigation of 1632-33 it became not so difficult to discover that Yusuf was the slave of Müslüm. The officers invalidated Yusuf's possession of *timar*, but interestingly they did not attempt to punish this old man. Rather they returned his *timar* and probably warned him to not do that again if he did not want to lose it completely.⁸³ There is no mention of Müslüm in the records so he never attempted such things again. He would never receive his promotion and Divane Müslüm after his long lasting battle for a *timar* died in early days of 1639.⁸⁴

This story reveals two important facts about the actual functioning of the *timar* system and its corruption. First, the *sepet timarı* was more about low ranking warriors seeking revenue than being related to *Paşas* who had begun feeding the crowds of *ulûfe* receiving troops. Second, there was a tension between sons of *timar* holders and those who went to the front to serve frontier commanders in return for *timars*. Both of these put pressure on the *timar* system in that the demand for *timar* increased and the supply remained the same or declined. It is not surprising to see a xenophobic and family-centric discourse developing in such an atmosphere. In the disputes and clashes between sons of *sipâhîs* and other candidates such as the frontier warriors (*divane*, *serdengeçti*, *gönüllü*) the intellectuals were mostly affected by the former and reflected the latter as aliens.

Previous studies on the *timar* system and its functioning questioned indirectly this discourse by testing the change in rates of *timars* bestowal on sons of former *sipâhîs*. Douglas Howard found that for the *sancak* of Aydın that the portion of *timar*

⁸³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, p. 645.

⁸⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, p. 645; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 1058, p. 422.

from father to son among initial bestowals was 63.8% in 1563-1564, and reduced to 9.5% by 1611.⁸⁵ On the other hand, Mehmet Doğan, found that in Ankara the portion was 5.5% in 1633-1645.⁸⁶ Instead of comparing to any other data, Doğan argued that it can be expected a downward tendency similar to Howard's findings. Doğan's finding is based on a calculation of father-to-son *timars* among all other transactions however; he did not notice that Howard calculated them only among initial *timars*. Based on the data supplied by Doğan the percentage of father-to-son *timars* in Ankara in the period of 1633-1645 was actually 25.9%.⁸⁷ This was not so low as Howard's prediction.

There were some fallacies in Howard's analysis as well. First, using a single *defter* for each historical point might mislead the researcher. For example; the following figure shows the father-to-son *timars* (excluding years with 0%) on an annual basis. If the data of 995 is used the result will be different, but if the data of 997 is chosen the conclusion will be totally different.

⁸⁵ Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656." pp. 167-174. The findings of Howard as follow.

Years	Father to Son <i>Timars</i> (%)
1563-1564	63.8
1576-1577	53.9
1588-1589	19.3
1610-1611	9.5

⁸⁶ Mehmet Doğan, "Ankara Sancağı'nda *Timar* Sisteminin Dönüşümü" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, 2006). p. 148.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 150.

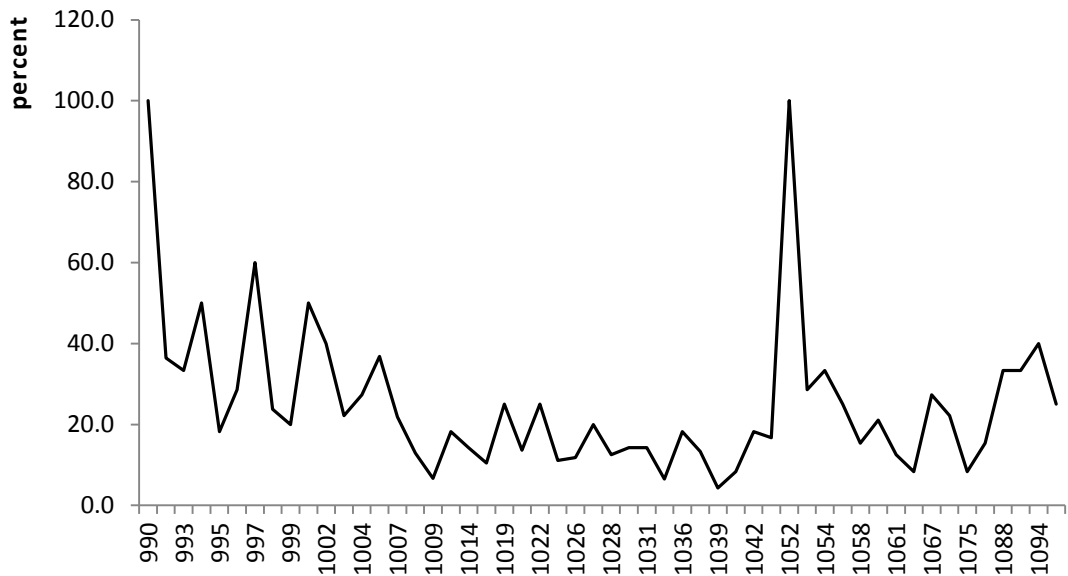


Figure 19: Annual Percentage Father-to-Son *Timars* among Initial *Timars* in Vidin between 1582 and 1693

Forming time interval time series will yield better results. In Figure 20 the data is mostly grouped into 20 year intervals. The result for the period from the 1560s to the 1630s resembles Howard's finding. However, the decline is not as sharp as Howard found for Aydın.

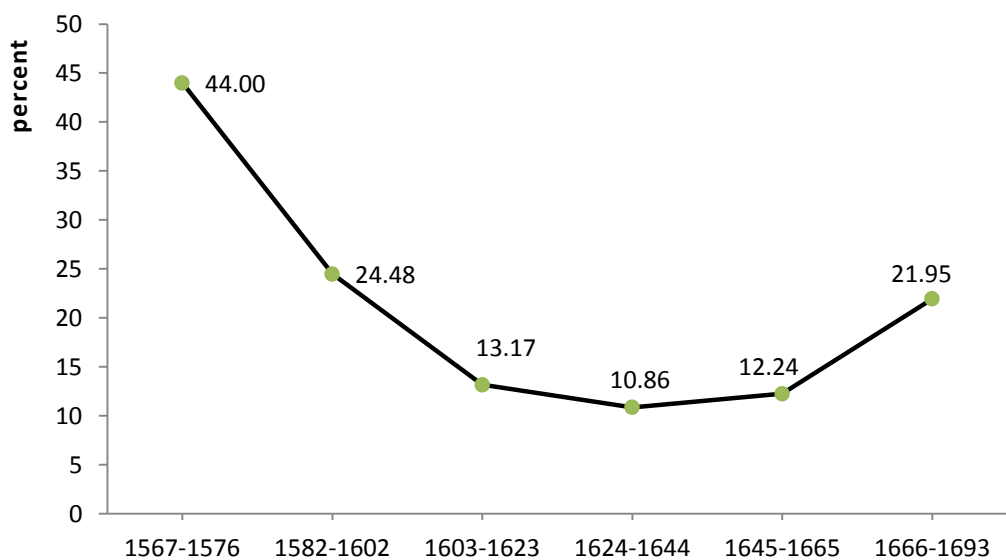


Figure 20: Percentage of Father-to-Son *Timars* among Initial *Timars*

Another misjudgment was that while Howard analyzed data up to 1611, he reached a conclusion about a later time: "By the middle of the seventeenth century this hereditary provincial military class no longer predominated, becoming only a small minority of those receiving initial *timar* bestowals."⁸⁸ If Aydın's next decades resembles that of Vidin he should expect an upward tendency in the percentage of father-to-son *timars*. The level at the end of the seventeenth century was almost equal to that at the end of the sixteenth century. Howard tried to show that a hereditary *sipâhî* class began to disappear and its revival was not expected nor was possible.⁸⁹ However, analyzing the period following the inspection of 1632-33 Howard could have seen that the reform attempt was not that unsuccessful.

The last point is that, Howard tries to analyze the decline of a "hereditary *sipâhî* class" and for that he analyzes the *timars* passed from father to son. Then how can he be sure that the father was not a man recently entering the *sipâhî* class. For example, a janissary could enter into the *sipâhî* class and leave his *timar* to his son. Does it make this an example of unbroken line of hereditary *timar* bestowals, and the son a hereditary *sipâhî*? If it is so, then outsiders' (*ecnebi*) entering *sipâhî* class might not have a significant meaning after the second generation. Also relevant here is that, Howard did not see that hereditary does not necessarily relate specifically to father-to-son transmission. There are numerous cases in which a candidate inherited his father's *timar* indirectly. For example, the son could receive his father's *timar* after his brother or uncle. Also a candidate could get core value of his father's fiscal *timar* but possess someone else's physical *timar*. For instance, the father of Ahmed had

⁸⁸ Howard, "The Ottoman *Timar* System and its Transformation, 1563-1656." p. 176.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 182.

been dismissed from his *timar* valued 3,220 *akçes* 25 years before⁹⁰ then he died six years after his dismissal. When Ahmed demanded a *timar*, his father had already been dead for 19 years. But Ahmed received a *timar* that was totally different than that of his father.⁹¹ In the following figure we add such children to those who were granted their father's *timars*.

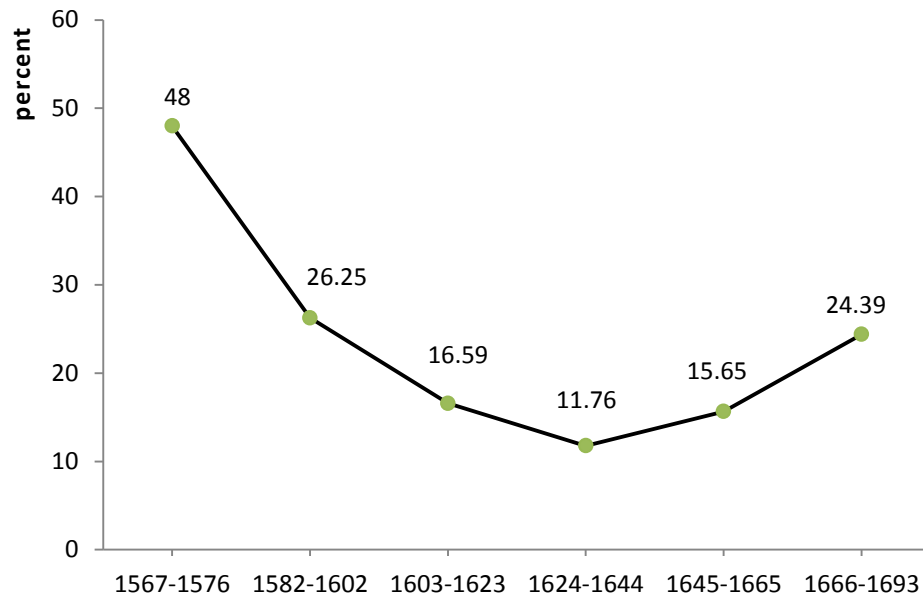


Figure 21: Sons of *Sipâhîs* Who Received *Timars*

This raises the question as to who were the outsiders. If this meant slaves, as already mentioned, their numbers were not so high among *timar* holders, and in the following period after the great inspection the incidence of *sepet timar* possessing slaves declined. On the other hand, quite a substantial number of *cebelüs* and men of governors were slaves in origin and they could receive *timars* after the death, or with the permission of their patrons. This had been a widespread practice since the early periods of the *timar* system. On the other hand, if outsiders referred to frontier

⁹⁰ His father would have been Mustafa bin Mehmed who had *timar* valued 3,220 *akçes* in 1560. BOA-TT.d 514, p. 40.

⁹¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 100, pp. 478, 479.

warriors, their receiving *timars* was also not a new phenomenon. Besides, as mentioned before, *timars* could be granted to those who converted to Islam, and personnel of the central army as well as those of provincial fortresses could also enter the *sipâhî* class. That is, there was nothing new in all these practices. Nevertheless, the answer to the question of who raised the demand for *timars* and what led to the tension still needs to be found.

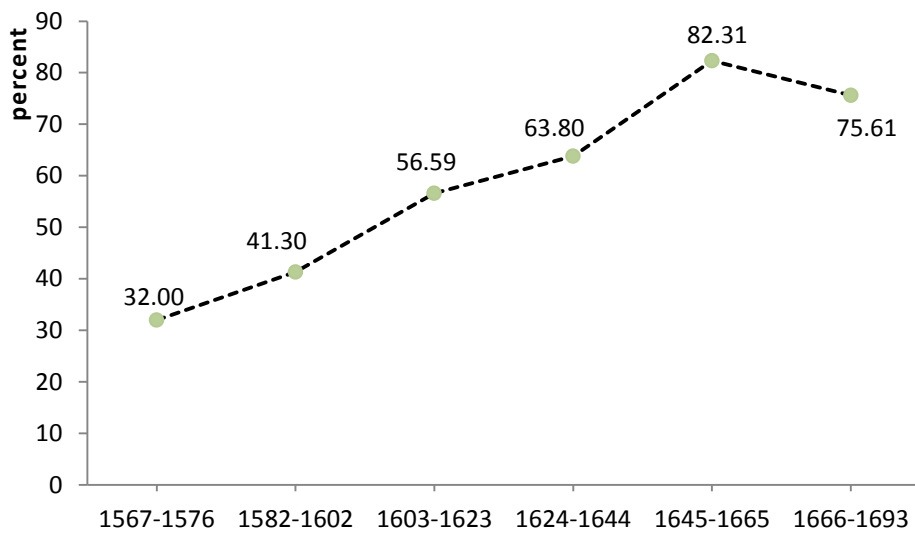


Figure 22: Percentage of Those Who Merited a *Timar* for Their Services

In the *ruzmançe* records many people were recorded as “they merited an initial *timar* for their services (*yarar ve yoldaş*).” If a person was not either a convert or a child of a person from military class, he had to be found meritorious, in order to be granted a *timar*. A number of such people’s identities can be revealed but the remainders were just recorded without detailed notes about the reason behind their bestowals. Some of the identified ones were what the Ottomans called *divane* or *garib yiğitler* (rootless frontier warriors) and possibly they were ex-slaves and the landless poor. These best fitted the category of “outsiders” or *ecnebis*. However, it can be seen that their numbers also declined over time.

The other point is that, over time the *ulûfe*-paid cadres, among them were *müteferrikas*, *katibs* and *çavuşes*, began to be less willing to receive *timars*. *Ulûfe* became more attractive for them so they demanded *ulûfe* instead of *timar*.⁹² Therefore, it can be argued that after the inspection the numbers of *timar* holders were diminished further diminished.

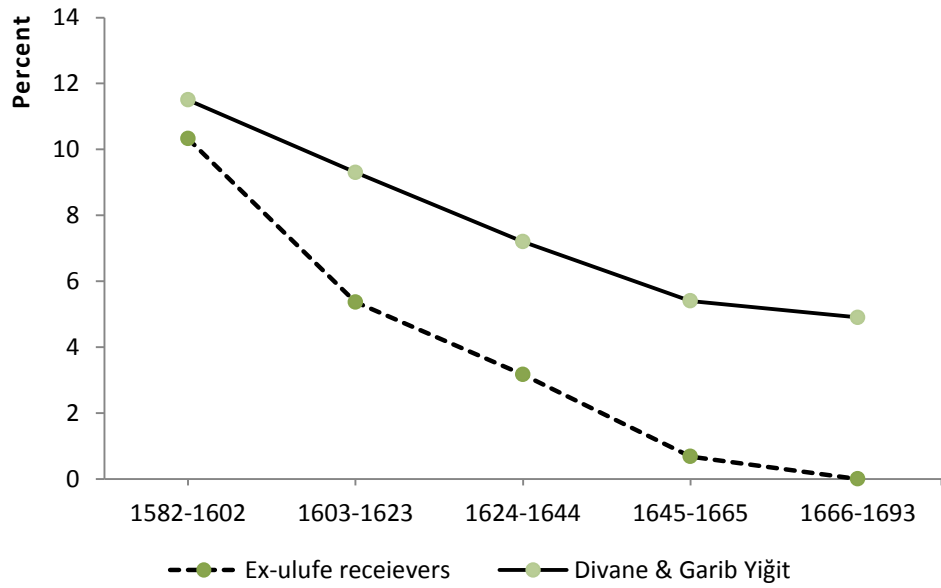


Figure 23: Ex-*ulûfe* Receivers and Rootless Frontier Warriors who Receiving *Timars*

Then, remained one possibility to explain the tension between those who try to keep family *timars* and those called outsiders. The children of *sipâhîs* (*sipahî-zâde*) who could not for whatever reason receive their fathers' *timars* and the poor who sought for a piece of revenue either became *ulûfe*-receiving troops under the commandership of *paşas* and *begs* or tried to obtain *timars*. Seeking revenue possibly

⁹² In one case a *timar* holder gave up his *timar* and become Janissary of Budin. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 474 (1628), p. 240.

pushed some of them to illegality in such an atmosphere, nepotism and bribery became unavoidable. Thus, the sons of *sipâhis* who tried to keep their family revenues began to be more reactionary and therefore, all who demanded their family *timar* became outsiders in their eyes.

VI.2.2. Physical Expansions of *Timars*

In his research Mehmed Doğan found that while the number of *timars* declined in the *sancak* of Ankara, the average value of a *timar* rose from 4,225 *akçe* in 1569 to 5,393 *akçe* in the period 1633-1645.⁹³ A similar tendency can also be seen in Vidin. Figure 24 shows the *timars* with values exceed 20,000 *akçes* and thus they were temporarily granted as *zi'amets*.

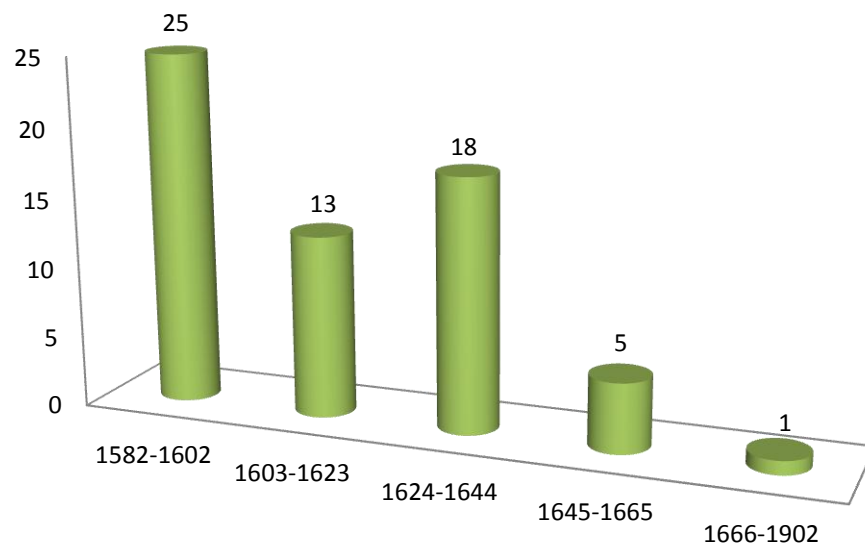


Figure 24: The numbers of *Timars* Granted as *Zi'amet*

Based on Figure 24 it is possible to comment on the physical dimension of a *timar* but not about its fiscal aspect. The decline in the number of the *timars* can be calculated through the *ruznamçe*, *yoklama* and *tahvil* records. However, as stated in

⁹³ Doğan, "Ankara Sancağı'nda *Timar* Sisteminin Dönüşümü." pp. 148-49.

the introduction, these sources are not suitable for calculation of the value of a *timar*, since the values recorded in these *defters* were the values calculated during last land surveys conducted years before. Indeed the reason behind this difference in value resulted from the supplements that were added to *timars* for promotion. In case of insufficiency of supplements in a *sancak* a *timar* holder's demand could be compensated by importing revenue from other *sancaks*.

Figure 25 shows how the number of promotional *timars* in the area 2 in Figure 18 gradually increased over time. The ratio between promotional and active *timars* reflects shows the expansion of area 2 and the shrinking of the area 1.

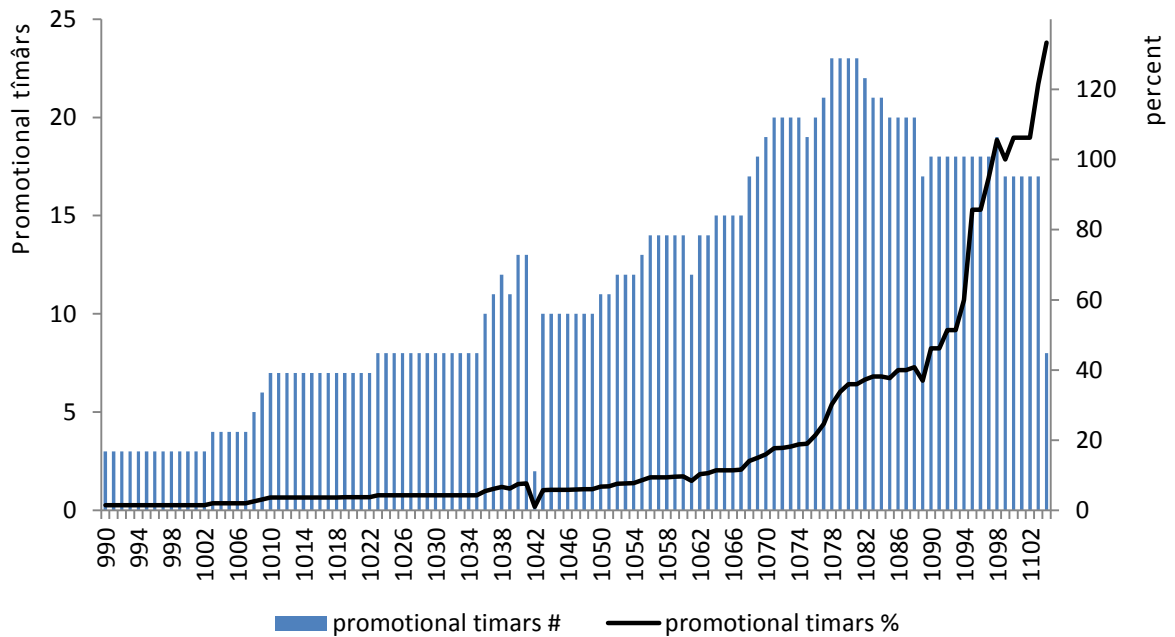


Figure 25: Ex-Timars that Became Supplements for Active Timars

Such an increase can only be interpreted as actively bestowed *timars* gradually proliferated in terms of their composites. For example, while an average *timar* consisted of two villages in 1580 it might rise to 3 villages per *timar* in 1680. That is, they were physically expanded but just looking at the *ruzmançes* does

not allow the researcher to interpret the value of *timars*. This process can be rather interpreted as decline in production or that the *timars* gradually lost value due to inflation.⁹⁴ In order to compensate the holders for their loss, extra revenue sources were added to the *timars*. This proves that the state did not easily relinquish its intention to maintain the *timar* system and thus the *sipâhî* army. However, the state was unable to develop the means to implement that intention. In particular, it failed to grasp the vital role of surveys for *timar* system and did not manage the conflicts that occurred over the ownership of *timars*.

VI.2.3. Abolition of the *Timar* System in Vidin

The decline in the numbers of *timars* accelerated during the 1660s. A series of wars in this period was probably one reason for that decline. However, none of those wars was as destructive as the Ottoman attempted siege of Vienna in 1683. The Ottoman failure in this attack led to retreat of the army and advancement of Hapsburgs over Ottoman territory in the Balkans. Eventually, in 1689 they reached Vidin, when the governor of Vidin had already evacuated all fortresses and retreated to Niğbolu.⁹⁵ Vidin remained under the Habsburg rule for about ten months. Finally, in 1690 a counter attack led by Tursun Mehmed Paşa of Karaman brought Vidin back under the Ottoman sovereignty.⁹⁶ The confrontations in 1689 and 1690 were a

⁹⁴ İnalçık argued that 100% inflation in the period after 1584 led to further impoverishment of *sipâhîs*. İnalçık, "*Timar*." p. 506.

⁹⁵ *Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, Zübde-i Vekayiât*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995). p. 336. However, according to Rossitsa Gradeva Vidin fell to the hands of Habsburg at the end of the fourteen-day siege. Rossitsa Gradeva, *Rumeli under the Ottomans, 15th - 18th Centuries: Institutions and Communities* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2004). p. 111.

⁹⁶ *Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, Zübde-i Vekayiât*. pp. 336-369. *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*. pp. 6-12. There are many records about this re-conquest in BOA-ADV.N.MHM 100. See, Muzaffer Fehmi Şakar, "1101\1102 (1690\1691) Tarihli 100 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2007).

deadly blow to agriculture in Vidin and agricultural production came to a halt. Many villages were abandoned and the fate of the remaining peasants was miserable. The analysis of the population of 32 villages tells us that decline in poll-tax (*cizye*) payers was about 77% (excluding totally abandoned villages) from 1628 to 1690-1691.⁹⁷ Moreover, since the people living in districts of Bane and Timok were so poor that the tax standards of people reduced from high (*ala*) and medium (*evsat*) to low (*edna*).⁹⁸ That is to say, the government reduced the tax rates for the people living in these districts. Nevertheless, in such a situation it became difficult for the populace to pay their taxes. Though some *timar* holders tried to keep their *timars*, the government decided to officially abolish all *timars* and annex them to the imperial *hasses* in 1693 (see the firman of abolition in Appendix XIII).⁹⁹ Only a very few *timars* might have been bestowed in the following years.¹⁰⁰ However, after that, there are no records about *timars* in Vidin thus it was one of the first places where *timars* were completely abolished.¹⁰¹

So what happened to the *timars* that disappeared from register books and how can the expansion in the area 3 in Figure 18 be explained? Ottoman historians often emphasize the process of converting *timars* into the imperial revenues as *timar*

⁹⁷ Compare BOA-MAD.d 6636 and BOA-MAD.d 3630.

⁹⁸ “*Defter oldur ki, 1102 senesine mahsub olmak üzere Vidin Sancağı'na tabi' Timok Kazası kura ahalileri zayıfı'l-hal olub fi'l-cümle edna üzerine tahsil olunan cizye defteridir ki beyan olunur. Der tarih-i el-mezbur.*“ BOA-MAD.d 3630, pp. 522, 530.

⁹⁹ A *defter* showing records of guards' *timars* of various *sancaks* in 1688 does not contain any records about *timar* bestowal after that time, while in the same *defter* the *timars* of other *sancaks* were noted to be granted to others in the following years. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 941, pp. 338-352.

¹⁰⁰ In a catalogue of National Library of Bulgaria one of the *defters* dated 1695 shows *timars* in Vidin. Bistra Cvetkova, *Zapazeni v Orientaliski Otdel na Narodnata Biblioteka Kiril i Metodij* (Sofya: Narodna Biblioteka Kiril i Metodij, 1970). p. 65.

¹⁰¹ According to Halil Cin, in 1703 in Girid *timars* were abolished and soldiers began to be paid in cash. That was the first abolition act in Ottoman history. Halil Cin, *Mirî Arazi ve Bu Arazinin Mülk Haline Dönüşümü* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Yayınları, 1969). p. 80.

system degenerated.¹⁰² Some historians claim that during the vizierate of Rüstem Paşa (1544-1553; 1555-1561) for the first time *timars* were annexed to the imperial *hasses* and began to be managed under tax-farms.¹⁰³ Moreover, Melek Ahmed Paşa (1650-1651) confiscated 50% of *timar* revenues.¹⁰⁴ According to Yavuz Cezar, though it cannot be completely and clearly revealed, throughout the seventeenth century many *dirliks* were added to the imperial *hasses*. Finally with the abolition of the *hasses* of governors in the eighteenth century, the Ottoman military-administrative system underwent a rapid transformation.¹⁰⁵

However, I found no record that can prove that some of the disappeared *timars* in the seventeenth century were transferred to the imperial *hasses*. Only in a *ruzmançe defter* on the top of a record it was noted that the *timar* in the record was annexed to the imperial *hasses*.¹⁰⁶ However, few years later the same *timar* was once more bestowed on two *sipâhîs*¹⁰⁷ therefore the *timars* might have been confiscated temporarily. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that some *timars* were reorganized into a new economic organization.

On the other hand, some chronicles emphasize the impoverishment of peasants in Vidin. In 1594-1595 due to danger of enemy attack Hasan Paşa was appointed to protect of Vidin.¹⁰⁸ In the same period probably after Hasan Paşa's dismissal Yahya Ağa, commanding 1,000 janissaries, was appointed to protect the

¹⁰² Barkan, "Timar." p. 856.

¹⁰³ Cin, *Mirî Arazî ve Bu Arazinin Mülk Haline Dönüşümü*. p. 78.

¹⁰⁴ Üçok, "Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtında Tımarlar." p. 91.

¹⁰⁵ Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi: XVIII. Yüzyıldan Tanzimat'a Mali Tarih*. pp. 34-40

¹⁰⁶ "Timar-ı mezbur havas-ı hümayuna ilhak olmak ferman olmağın yazılıb sefer-i hümayunda şikk-ı evvel defterdarı olan Ahmed Efendiye mühürlü tezkire irsal olundu. 2 Muharrem 1009." BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, p. 143.

¹⁰⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, pp. 134, 136.

¹⁰⁸ Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, 2. p. 458.

region.¹⁰⁹ According to Selaniki, due to being mistreated by the soldiers, peasants began to lean toward and help the enemy.¹¹⁰ During the confrontations in 1598-1599, again due to misdeeds of the soldiers many peasants left their villages and crossed the Danube. Now “they recognized the sovereignty of enemy kings.”¹¹¹ The *ruzmançe* records provide information about some *timars* where agricultural production stopped for a certain period. In this research eight such *timars* were found, some of them disappeared again just after the bestowal on a new *sipâhî*, and only two of them were bestowed several times in a row. It appears that attempts to restore abandoned villages did not work. So, it can be estimated that an important portion of disappeared *timars* became vacant simply because the revenue-producing subjects were not there anymore. Maybe only after a period in vacancy some people revived them for themselves.

VI.2.4. Privatization of Revenues and Capitalization of Relations

In his dissertation in 1942 Halil İnalçık examined the Vidin rebellion of 1850. His argument was that the main factor behind the rebellion was the friction between Bulgarian peasants and Muslim land owners who in time captured the *mirî* lands.¹¹² Christo Gandev in one of his articles reveals in part the same transformation. He proposes that capitalist relationships emerged in the north-east of Bulgaria, i.e. Vidin, with the development of big farms (*çiftlik*), of which there were 120 in the eighteenth

¹⁰⁹ Zeynep Aycibin, "Kâtib Çelebi Fezleke" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Mimar sinan Üniversitesi, 2007). p. 286.

¹¹⁰ Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, 2. p. 458.

¹¹¹ Ibid. p. 770.

¹¹² Halil İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* (İstanbul: Eren, 1992). p. 83.

century.¹¹³ However, the roots of such relations can be traced back as early as the sixteenth century.

First, these farms should not be confused with peasants' family farms (*çiftlik*), where they cultivated mostly cereals, that were *de facto* under the possession of peasants but *de jure* possessed by the state and the *timar* owners were given right to collect taxes. Nor should they be confused with that of *sipâhîs* called *hassa çiftlik*, which was a small farm possessed by *sipâhîs* for their personal and family use. Bruce McGowan stresses two features of these new farms. Firstly, they were "devoted to a single crop – a monoculture – which would be marketed to obtain a profit." Secondly, a person other than the cultivator used to claim right resembling ownership over the arable land constituting the *chiftlik*.¹¹⁴

In Vidin the emergence of these types of farms, kinds of private farms, dates back to the first half of the sixteenth century and their roots lay in pre Ottoman times. In Slavic languages there was a kind of hereditary familial farm called a *baština*. When Ottomans conquered these territories they did not convert all these *baština* into generic peasants' farms. It is certain that privileged groups as florin-payer (*filorici*) Wallachians retained their farms with certain immunities for long periods. In 1530 the state recorded them separately from the other generic farms and probably forced them to pay extra taxes. As seen in the *defters*, each *baština* was counted as a family. That is each *baština* would pay 25 *akçes ispençe*. Interestingly, almost all *baştinas* were owned by widows with only a few being recorded as under the possession of

¹¹³ Christo Gandev, "L'apparition des Rapports Capitalistes dans l'économie Rurale de la Bulgaire du Nord-Ouest au Cours du XVIII^e S.," in *Études Historiques* (Sofia: Académie des Scinces de Bulgarie, 1960).

¹¹⁴ Bruce McGowan, *Economic life in Ottoman Europe: taxation, trade, and the struggle for land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). p. 122.

the all villagers living in the village where *baştina* located.¹¹⁵ During the conflicts between the state and florin-payers after the 1530s almost all the *baştinas* fell into the hands of Muslims, usually soldiers. Furthermore, in some villages where *baştinas* existed before, they were later recorded as private farms (*çiftlik*).¹¹⁶ There is insufficient data for the 1530s, however, the available fragmented *defters* give the idea that some of these *çiftlik*s were actually Islamized *baştinas*.

The early farms only gave a certain amount of cereals as tax to the *timar* holders. In this sense, these farms do not meet the first requirement in McGowan's definition. That is the classical cereal production dominated in those farms. In addition to these farms in the second half of the sixteenth century there are also many meadows under private ownership and at this point there seems to be a specialization of economic activities focused on animal husbandry.

The size of farms and the population that took part in production were not recorded in the *defters*. However, their possessors or owners were recorded the majority of the farms were either owned or administered by *sipâhîs*, janissaries and others from military class. Such kind of ownership must have had a degenerating effect on the *timar* system. Though they were still part of the *timar* system the *timar*-holders could only control a limited part of it. In this sense they resembled the *mülk timars* in Anatolia. Moreover, since the owners of this land were usually from military class the classical distinction between them and the peasants (*reaya*) began to disappear. A *sipâhî* could be a tax-payer of another *sipâhî*.¹¹⁷

The geographical location of Vidin was surely the main catalyst in the transformation of the economic relations. Being on the front both had advantages and

¹¹⁵ A.DFE.d 740.

¹¹⁶ Compare A.DFE.d 740 with NLB-OAK 265/62; A.DFE.d.14.

¹¹⁷ In an example it is stated that one *sipâhî* and his brother paid their tithe. TKA.TT 57, p. 430.

disadvantages. As already mentioned, Vidin had been destroyed many times due to confrontations on the border and each time peasants endured great miseries. On the other hand, the border created an opportunity for peasants to escape the authorities. Whenever they suffer from social disruption or economic deprivation or political surveillance they could find a relative emancipation by migrating to the other side of the Danube. The partial freedom of escaping from the strict surveillance also facilitated a private economic organization. As early as 1565 some peasants established dairy farms on the Wallachian side.¹¹⁸

Similarly, on the other side of the Danube peasants came and began to work on the farms of notables (*ekâbir çiftliği*). That reciprocal population movement probably created a seasonal work force flowing from one side of the river to the other side.¹¹⁹ What the Ottoman calls *haymanes* (wanderers) were probably such seasonal migrants and in order to articulate them into the Ottoman economic system, the state added the following article to the law book (*kanunname*) of 1586 of the *sancak* of Vidin:

And if *haymanes*, who are not being peasants of anybody, come from surroundings to the lands of some *sipâhîs*, or if [*sipâhîs*] hide out [peasants] during the survey of the *sancak*, it cannot be objected on the ground that “we were not recorded so we won’t pay anything!” They pay their tithe and other taxes to their *sipâhîs* like other peasants.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ BOA-ADV.N.MHM 6, r. 1155, in *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972 / 1564-1565)*, ed. İsmet Binark, vol. 2 (Ankara: : BDAGM, 1995). pp. 181-2.

¹¹⁹ In 1694, for example, the *alaybegi* of Vidin led 400 peasants to Wallachia to appropriate their taxes for himself. BOA-ADV.N.MHM 105, r. 99, in Bekir Gökbunar, "105 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Sakarya Üniversitesi, 1996). pp. 119-120.

¹²⁰ “*Ve bazı sipâhînin toprağına etrafından haymane gelse amma kimsenin raiyyeti olmasa veya hin-i kitâbetde saklayub yazılmamış olsa “yazılmadık; nesne virmeziz!” demek olmaz. İспенçesin ve ö’şrün ve sair rüsumun sair reaya gibi sipâhîsine bi’t-tamam virirler.*” TKA-TT 57, p. 3b.

It was not possible to control them by such a law. As the state's control over *timar* revenues getting disappeared in the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century such economic relations developed further.

In the 1620s and 1630s many firmans were sent to local authorities about the unstoppable population flows and emergence of the new privatized farms. Wallachian peasants came and settled in farms of “*müteferrikas, çavuşes, sipâhîs* and *yeniçeris*”. Such movements not only reduced the tribute (poll tax) that Wallachian governments had to pay but also eroded the state control mechanisms of revenues. Farm owners resisted state agents attempts to collect taxes.¹²¹

De facto private farms not only emerged on *timar* lands but also were established on imperial *hasses*. One example was the farm established in the village of İbsar in the 1650s. One person came to this village and established a farm. He probably hired Wallachians to cultivate land and meadows of peasants (*reaya*). The documents show that this farm specialized in onion production and paid a large amount of tax to the state. When the owner of the farm died, the *nâzır* of Vidin sold the lands to people who did not pay their taxes.¹²² That is, lands began to be possessed as private property.

¹²¹ BOA-ADV.N.MHM 83, r. 9, 11, 17 in *83 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1036-1037 / 1626-1628)*, ed. Yusuf Sarıınay, *Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi* (Ankara: DAGM, 2001). BOA-ADV.N.MHM 83, r. 214, 584 in *85 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1040-1041 (1042) / 1630 -1631 (1632))*, ed. Yusuf Sarıınay, *Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi* (Ankara: DAGM, 2002).

¹²² BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, p. 95-96.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The *timar* system is one of the longest enduring institutions of the Ottoman Empire, so, naturally, it is one of most studied subjects in the Ottoman historiography. Yet, at this point I can say that this thesis is still nothing but a kind of introduction to the field.

Studies on the *timar* system mostly focus on the sixteenth century and all attempts to analyze the whole history of the *timar* system have been carried out within the conceptual limits of the sixteenth century. The early periods of the system are seen in the context of the question of its genesis and unfortunately the answers produced for this question have been sacrificed to the political tensions surrounding historians. The most ironic point in this debate is that the points that were criticized to refute a person's idea in another dimension used as base for his/her own assertions. Here, this thesis calls for a rethink of this debate by focusing more on the development of the *timar* system in the first two centuries rather than dealing with its genesis in preceding polities.

Likewise, the post Suleymanic era was simply treated as the degeneration of the *timar* system that was conceptualized particularly by Ayn' Ali and Koçi Beg. The most serious work that directly handles this issue is still the article by Mustafa Akdağ's "*Timar* Rejiminin Bozuluşu." In this article Akdağ criticizes other historians for not surpassing Koçi Beg and Ayn Ali's assertions. However, Akdağ himself

began with an assumption that by 1630s the *timar* system had already lost its characteristic of being a military institution, is nothing but a repetition of the ideas of the Ottoman intellectuals. Douglas Howard's dissertation is the first work to deal seriously with this problem by using the *ruznamçe* registers. His findings are similar to those of Akdağ. According to Howard, the hereditary *sipâhî* class no more predominated among those who received initial *timars* and they became a minority group by the mid-seventeenth century. Secondly he stereotypically concludes that the type of service of the *timar* holder shifted from combat duty to logistical and support-related duties. Although my findings allow me partly accept Howard's first thesis, his way of using the *ruznamçes* is highly problematic. Since selecting four different *defters* from different periods is not a suitable method for generalizations. However, Howard's second thesis has no basis at all. Lastly, Mehmed Doğan recently tried to conduct a similar thesis on the *sancak* of Ankara, however, his work was too superficial and sketchy. Instead of comparing two or more periods, he gathered sources from the same period and based on that data, with miscalculations, he tried to prove Howard's first thesis.

Focusing on Vidin for a long-duree analysis that covers about two and a half centuries allows a view of both the rise and the fall of the *timar* system. As a frontier or semi-frontier *sancak*, Vidin was open to confrontations and for this reason; local events had great impact on the *timar* system in this place. On the other hand, being on the frontier did not exclude Vidin from the rest of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, Vidin had its peculiarities but it was also a mirror for the general changes in Ottoman history. This is why this thesis usually avoids making generalizations. Instead, it offers a picture that will become more meaningful through knowledge and the intention of the reader.

The *timar* system was one of the ways the state controlled revenues and their possessors. In Vidin, this control mechanism was transformed through several stages. In the first stage state control was low. Though we had no powerful direct evidence for this stage of Vidin, an analysis of the nature of early *akıncı* organization make me think about such a stage, which seemed to stretch from the 1420s to the 1440s. The second stage roughly lasted until the 1540s, in which the state control over *timars* increased while the power of *akıncı-begis* gradually declined. In the third stage until the 1590s state control over *timars* was consolidated by replacing local power owners with disempowered state agents. In the last stage which continued until the 1690s the state began to lose its control over the *timar* system and began to search for alternative mechanisms.

At the same time this process refers to a more generalized transformation of the *timar* system at an upper level, which affected reorganization of *sancak* administrative and the *timar* system. In this sense, the centralist policies of Murad II and Mehmed II had a great impact on the reorganization of the *timar* system. The Empire-wide gradual erosion in the state control over the *timar* system led to the emergence of new administrative organizations. In Vidin, roughly around 1650s a new type of administrative organization appears as a result of the development of bureaucratic sphere.

My analysis of the efficiency of the system shows that the 1470s represents the apex of the *timar* system in Vidin. To date the existing researches do not mention the importance of the second half of the fifteenth century for the *timar* system. If such a fact can also be experienced in other *sancaks*, especially those of Anatolia, this finding about this period may change the general understanding of the *timar* system and produce a rethink the existing theses that focused on the role of

demography on the transformation of the Ottoman Empire. The idea of the demographic pressure in the sixteenth century might be revised after revealing a population boom in the second half of the fifteenth century.

Analyzing the *timar* system in a period when the tradition of land surveys had ended was not an easy task. There are some sources, especially the *rużnamçes*, from the post-survey period. But they are not really appropriate to make generalizations when they are handled randomly. Unfortunately, no study to date has offered a method that facilitates a better analysis of the records. In this thesis I present a method that I call *timar* tracking which uses all sources in a systematic way based on the last survey. The practicality of the method tested in Chapter VI.

This tracking shows the *timars* that were still under state control and to see those which were partially controlled as well as the former *timars* which were no longer part of the *timar* system. While the overall number of active *timars* slightly declined until roughly 1625, in the following period the downfall increased. The reform attempt of 1632-1633 had almost no effect however; the reform did succeed in revitalizing the rate of *timar* bestowal to the sons of *sipâhîs*, which had declined to its lowest level by the time of attempted reform. However, this might not be a direct result of the reform but a tendency towards privatization in economic relations.

Finally, my attempt to test the thesis, usually accepted by historians, that *timars* were converted into imperial *hasses*, were in vain because of the lack of archival materials showing the imperial *hasses* in the seventeenth century. Yet we can credit this thesis to a certain level. However, all the *timars* that disappeared from the *rużnamçes* were not annexed to imperial *hasses*. Some of the evidence shows us that private entrepreneurship was developed in this period thus, in this period the seeds of capitalist relations germinated on both banks of the Danube.

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1466	BOA-MAD.d 18	<i>icmal</i>	fragment
1479	BOA-TT.d 814	<i>mufassal</i>	fragment
1479	BOA-A.DFE.d 1	<i>mufassal</i>	fragment
1479	NLB-VD110/10	<i>icmal</i>	fragment
1479	BOA-A.DFE.d 3	<i>icmal</i>	fragment
1483	BOA-MAD.d 01	<i>icmal</i>	complete
1515	BOA-MAD.d 70	<i>icmal</i>	complete
1530	BOA-A.DFE.d 740	<i>mufassal</i>	fragment
1531	BOA-TT.d 160	<i>icmal</i>	complete
?[1531]	TSA-D 2204-1	<i>cebelü</i>	complete
[1533–1539?]	BOA-TT.d 370	<i>icmal-muhasebe</i>	complete
1542	NLB-OAK 3/36	<i>mufassal</i>	fragment
1560	BOA-TT.d 514	<i>icmal</i>	complete
1560	NLB-OAK 265/62	<i>mufassal</i>	fragment
1560	BOA-A.DFE.d 14	<i>mufassal</i>	fragment
1586 [1579]	TKA-TT 57	<i>mufassal</i>	complete
? [1579]	TSA-D 547-1	<i>mufassal</i>	complete
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1580	TKA-TT 219	<i>icmal</i>	complete
1600 [1580]	BOA-TT.d 664	<i>icmal</i>	complete

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1540-1543	BOA-MAD.d 34
1552-1554	BOA-DFE.RZ.d 5
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1647-1649	BOA-DFE.RZ.d 634
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1672	BOA-DFE.RZ.d 834
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[1584]	BOA-A.DFE.d 60

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: One-to-One Conversion of *Ulûfe* to *Timar*

Title	<i>Ulûfe</i>	<i>Timar</i>	Also
<i>Dergah-ı Âli Saracı</i> ¹	6	6,000	
<i>Silahdar</i> ²	6	6,000	
<i>Silahdar</i> ³	7	7,000	
<i>Silahdar (müteferrika bölüğü)</i> ⁴	9	9,000	
<i>Kapu Dragomani</i> ⁵	12	12,000	20,000 ⁶
<i>Silahdar</i>	16	16,000	
<i>Silahdar</i> ⁷	17	17,000	
<i>Spahi oğlanı</i> ⁸	29	29,000	
<i>Silahdar</i> ⁹	40	40,000	
<i>Dergâh-ı Âli Çaşnigiri</i> ¹⁰			

¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 25 (24 Rebiülevvel 976), p. 835.

² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 625, p. 197 (11 Zilkade 1056)

³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 286, p. 370 (25 Receb 1016)

⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 272 (8 Cemaziyyevvel 1007)

⁵ MAD 7, dp. 97.

⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 5, (16 Safer 960), p. 779; BOA-DFE.RZ.D. 203, (12 Cemaziyyelahire 1006), p. 395.

⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 632 (6 Ramazan 1009)

⁸ BOA-MAD.d 123, p. 21b (1 Zilkade 982)

⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, p. 140. (8 Şevval 1019)

¹⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 474, (24 Muharrem 1031)

Appendix II: Two-Thirds (*Sülûsan*) Conversion

Title	<i>Ulûfe</i>	<i>Timar</i>	Also
<i>Faris</i> ¹¹	6	4,000	
<i>Faris</i> ¹²	7	4,666	
<i>Faris</i> ¹³			
<i>Martolos</i> ¹⁴	8	5,333	8,000 ¹⁵
<i>Faris, Odabaşı</i> ¹⁶	9	6,000	
<i>Mısır Gönüllüsü</i> ¹⁷			
<i>Azeb Ağası</i> ¹⁸	10	6,666	10,000 ¹⁹
<i>Faris Ağası</i>			
<i>Dizdar</i> ²⁰	18	12,000	
<i>Budin Gönüllüsü</i> ²¹	20	13,333	
<i>Erzurum Kulu</i> ²²	21	14,000	
<i>Azeb Ağası</i> ²³	25	16,666	
<i>Azeb Ağası</i> ²⁴			
<i>Faris Ağası</i> ²⁵			
<i>Budin Gönüllü Bölükbaşı</i> ²⁶			
<i>Budin Gönüllü Ağası</i> ²⁷	30	20,000	
<i>Diyarbakir Divanesi</i> ²⁸			
<i>Tiflis Müteferrikası</i> ²⁹			

¹¹ BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 482 (1 Cemaziyyelahire 992); BOA-DFE.RZ.d 178, p. 767 (28 Şevval 1003); BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 267 (23 Cemaziyyevvel 1007)

¹² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, p. 136 (22 Receb 1008).

¹³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 42, p. 896. (18 Safer 983.); BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 486 (9 Ramzan 992); BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92, p. 568 (10 Cemaziyyelahire 995); BOA-DFE.RZ.d 100, p. 477 (16 Rebiülevvel 996).

¹⁴ BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 478 (13 Rebiülahire 992)

¹⁵ In case one Faris who had 8 akçe *ulûfe* was beetowed 8,000 akçe *timar*. Most probbaly due to his extra effort as a promotional his *timar* was calulted base on one-to-one calculation. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 258, (14 Zilhicce 1007).

¹⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 42, p. 893. (9 Za 982)

¹⁷ BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 471 (23 Muharrem 992)

¹⁸ BOA-MAD.d 107, p. 262b. (16 Muharrem 1027)

¹⁹ Most probably it was miscalculated. Or his extra promotions were not considered in the document. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 249, (18 Zilkade 1007).

²⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 253. (18 Zilkade 1007)

²¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, p. 474 (12 Şaban 1031)

²² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92. P. 565 (1 Rebiülevvel 995)

²³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 166, p. 192 (24 Şaban 1003)

²⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 203, p. 403. 19 Ramazan 1006.

²⁵ BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 466, (20 Zilhicce 991); BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92, p. 566 (9 Cemaziyyevvel 995); TR, BOA-DFE.RZ.d 121, p. 956 (15 Cemaziyyevvel 956)

²⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 314, p. 786 (18 Ramazan 786)

²⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, p. 135, (11 Ramazan 1019)

²⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 341, p. 458. (1 Cemaziyyevvel 1023)

<i>Faris Ağası</i> ³⁰	38	25,333	26,666
<i>Gence Gönüllüsü (Müteferrika bölüğü)</i> ³¹			
<i>Faris Ağası</i> ³²	40	26,666	
<i>Erzurum Gönüllüsü (Müteferrika bölüğü)</i> ³³	45	30,000	

²⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 484 p.165 (26 Şaban 1035).

³⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 234, (26 Rebiülevvel 1007). It seems that it was confused. That is to say, either his *ulûfe* was 40 or the scribes miscalculated.

³¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 614, (18 Muharrem 1009)

³² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 301, p. 244 (26 Cemaziyyelahire 1018)

³³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 341, p. 454, (24 Safer 1023)

Appendix III: Obligations of Holders of Generic Timars

Kanunamme-i Padişah-ı Alempenah³⁴

*Bin akçelik timar yere kendü cebelü.
İki bin akçelik tasarruf iden kendü cebelü bir gulam.
Üç bin akçelik yere kendü bürüme bir cebelü.
Dört bin, dört bin beş yüz akçelik yere kendü bürüme bir cebelü bir gulam.
Ve beş bin akçelik tasarruf iden bir tenketür.
Ve beş bin beş yüz ve altı bin akçelik timar yerine(?) Kendü bürüme, iki cebelü,
bir tenketür.
Ve yedi bin ve yedi bin beş yüz ve sekiz bin akçe yerine(?) Kendü bürüme, iki
cebelü, bir gulam, bir tenketür.
Ve dokuz bin akçelik kendü bürüme üç cebelü ve bir çadır.
On bin ve on bin beş yüz ve on bir bin akçe tasarruf iden kendü bürüme üç
cebelü bir gulam, bir çadır.
Ve on iki bin yerine(?) Kendü bürüme, dört cebelü bir çadır.
Ve on beş bin akçe tasarruf iden kendü bürüme beş cebelü, bir çadır.
Ve bundan yukarı olan hâsılın üç binliğine bir cebelü ve bin beşyüz iki bin
olana gulam.*

Ve sancakbegilerinin

*Her beş bin akçeye bir cebelü
Ve her elli bin akçeye geçim
Alâsına iki Günlük
Ve kendü oturduğu çadır sukaklı
Ve bir çadır-ı hazine
Ve bir çadır-ı kilar
Ve bir matbah ve bir serrac-hane.*

Ve subaşıları ki

*Her dört bin akçeye bir cebelü
Ve her otuz bin akçe bir geçim
Alâsına iki çadır ve bir tenketür
Ve ednasına bir çadır ve bir tenketür.*

³⁴ BOA-TT.d 166. p. 211. (1530)

Obligations of *Timar* holders in Vidin during the Reign of Mehmed II³⁵

<i>Timar</i>	Owner	<i>Oğlan/Gulam</i> (Page/Slave)	<i>Cebelü</i> (Armed Retainer)	<i>Tenketür</i> (Tent)	<i>Çadır</i> (Tent)	<i>Geçim</i> (Armor)
≤ 699	<i>Eşe</i>					
700 - 1,299	<i>Cebelü</i>					
1,300 - 2,499	<i>Cebelü</i>	1				
2,500 - 3,499	<i>Bürüme</i>		1	1		
3,500 - 4,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1	1	1		
5,000 - 6,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		2		1	
7,000 - 8,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1	2		1	
9,000 - 9,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		3		1	
10,000 - 11,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1	3		1	
12,000 - 13,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		4		1	
14,000 - 15,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1	4		1	
16,000 - 17,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		5		1	
18,000 - 19,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1	5		1	
31,000	<i>Bürüme</i>		7	1	1	1
33,000	<i>Bürüme</i>		8	1	1	1

The Obligations of *Timar* Holders in Vidin during the Reign of Selim I³⁶

<i>Timar</i>	Owner	<i>Oğlan/Gulam</i> (Page/Slave)	<i>Cebelü</i> (Armed Retainer)	<i>Tenketür</i> (Tent)	<i>Çadır</i> (Tent)	<i>Geçim</i> (Armor)
≤ 1999	<i>Cebelü</i>					
2,000 – 2,999	<i>Cebelü</i>	1				
3,000 – 3,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1				
4,000 – 4,999	<i>Bürüme</i>	1	1	1		
5,000 – 8,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		2	1		
9,000 – 9,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		3	1		
10,000 – 10,499	<i>Bürüme</i>		3		1	
10,500 – 14,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		4		1	
15,000 – 19,999	<i>Bürüme</i>		5		1	
35,000			7	1	1	1

³⁵ This table is based on the data supplied in IBBAK-MC.YZ.O. 90; BOA-MAD.D . 18. The range of obligations is slightly different in these *defters*. Though the upper and lower limits of each range were not so clear, based on the frequency of the association of obligations and the value of *timars* such a table has been prepared. It more or less reflects the logic behind the obligations.

³⁶ Prepared based on the data supplied by BOA-MAD.d 70.

Appendix IV: *Cebelü* Obligations of *Timar*-Holders in Vidin in 1531

<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	Eksik	<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	Eksik	<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	Eksik
992	–		2,000	1		2,227	1	
1,117	–		2,000	–		2,230	1	
1,264	–		2,000	–		2,238	1	
1,450	–		2,000	–		2,244	1	
1,496	–		2,000	1		2,250	–	
1,500	–		2,000	–		2,263	–	
1,500	–		2,006	–		2,270	1	
1,500	–		2,007	–		2,273	1	
1,500	–		2,012	1		2,276	1	
1,500	–		2,012	–		2,277	1	
1,500	–		2,015	–		2,278	–	
1,517	1		2,020	1		2,279	–	
1,546	–		2,039	–		2,279	1	
1,550	–		2,044	1		2,284	1	
1,550	–		2,050	–		2,300	–	
1,600	–		2,059	–		2,300	1	
1,609	–		2,060	2		2,300	1	
1,666	–		2,067	–		2,308	1	
1,666	–		2,070	–		2,325	–	
1,700	–		2,086	1		2,325	–	
1,748	–		2,086	–		2,325	–	
1,748	–		2,094	–		2,347	1	
1,774	1		2,094	–		2,347	–	
1,800	1		2,130	–		2,353	1	
1,800	–		2,139	–		2,355	1	
1,806	1		2,141	–		2,373	1	
1,873	1		2,163	–		2,383	–	
1,874	–		2,170	–		2,400	1	
1,959	2		2,184	1		2,400	–	
1,973	–		2,188	–		2,400	–	
2,000	1		2,200	1		2,400	–	
2,000	–		2,200	–		2,445	1	
2,000	–		2,200	–		2,458	–	
2,000	1		2,205	–		2,470	–	
2,000	1		2,206	–		2,472	1	
2,000	–		2,213	–		2,473	1	
2,000	1		2,217	–		2,477	1	

<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	<i>Eksik</i>	<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	<i>Eksik</i>	<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	<i>Eksik</i>
2,488	–		2,959	–		3,500	1	
2,500	–		2,960	–		3,500	1	
2,500	1		2,985	1		3,500	–	1
2,500	–		2,985	2		3,520	1	
2,500	1		2,999	1		3,549	–	1
2,500	–		3,000	1		3,565	–	
2,500	–		3,000	1		3,575	1	
2,523	1		3,000	–	1	3,616	1	
2,527	–		3,000	1		3,655	1	
2,530	–		3,000	–	1	3,660	–	1
2,540	1		3,000	1		3,705	1	
2,550	–		3,000	1		3,751	1	
2,600	–		3,000	–	1	3,756	1	
2,620	–		3,000	–	1	3,760	–	1
2,622	1		3,000	–	1	3,770	1	
2,623	1		3,007	1		3,770	1	
2,657	1		3,017	1		3,775	1	
2,661	–		3,018	1		3,800	–	1
2,663	–		3,025	1		3,815	2	
2,665	–		3,025	2		3,828	2	
2,670	1		3,025	1		3,849	2	
2,672	–		3,027	–	1	3,880	1	
2,677	1		3,035	–	1	3,900	1	
2,684	1		3,041	–	1	3,900	–	1
2,719	–		3,070	–	1	3,900	10	
2,732	–		3,100	–	1	3,916	1	
2,750	1		3,111	1		3,929	2	
2,756	–		3,168	1		3,972	1	
2,760	1		3,187	2		3,978	1	
2,763	2		3,215	–	1	3,990	1	
2,769	2		3,232	1		3,990	1	
2,776	1		3,233	–	1	4,000	2	
2,780	2		3,245	1		4,000	1	
2,804	–		3,268	1		4,000	1	
2,833	1		3,287	–	1	4,000	1	
2,882	–		3,303	1		4,000	–	1
2,900	1		3,325	1		4,000	1	
2,900	1		3,362	1		4,010	2	
2,953	3		3,365	–	1	4,024	1	
2,953	1		3,416	1		4,025	1	

<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	Eksik	<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	Eksik	<i>Timar</i>	<i>Cebelü</i>	Eksik
4,037	1		5,247	1		9,349	–	
4,052	2		5,280	2		9,554	3	
4,108	2		5,282	1		9,751	7	
4,140	1		5,291	1		9,939	3	
4,166	1		5,443	–	1	10,000	5	
4,396	1		5,454	1		10,000	3	
4,422	1		5,500	1		10,400	7	
4,423	1		5,500	–	1	10,780	2	1
4,435	1		5,504	2		11,140	4	
4,480	1		5,641	1		11,266	–	
4,500	1		5,664	2		11,490	–	
4,558	1		5,757	2		11,900	3	
4,570	2		5,772	–	1	12,893	7	
4,635	1		5,790	–	1	13,170	7	
4,677	2		5,900	1		13,806	3	1
4,687	2		5,900	5		14,022	6	
4,700	1		5,986	2		14,400	4	
4,824	1		5,989	3		15,103	3	2
4,870	2		5,991	1		15,350	4	1
4,896	2		5,997	4		15,804	7	
4,900	1		5,998	2		17,222	8	
4,923	4		5,999	2		18,217	6	
4,990	1		5,999	3		18,308	–	
4,995	1		6,000	2				
4,999	2		6,200	2				
5,000	3		6,225	5				
5,000	3		6,295	1	1			
5,000	1		6,500	3				
5,000	2		6,624					
5,000	–	1	6,703	2				
5,000	2		6,743	2				
5,035	2		6,944	4				
5,077	2		7,228	2				
5,077	1		7,300	2				
5,086	2		7,315	2				
5,093	2		7,617	2				
5,146	1		7,726	2				
5,170	3		8,600	5				
5,179	1		9,000	2	1			
5,220	3		9,040	3				

Appendix V: *Sancakbegis* and *Paşas* of Vidin

Years	<i>Sancakbegi</i>	<i>Muhafız/Serdar (Vezir)</i>
1390 >	Firuz Beg (!)	
< 1432 – 1436 >	Sinan Beg	
? – 1444?	Kümülioğlu	
1443 > – < 1454	Mehmed Beg (Minnet-Oğlu) ¹	
< 1454 – 1459	İsa Beg (Hasan Beg-Oğlu) ²	
1459 – 1476	Ali Beg (Mihal-Oğlu) ³	
1476 – 1477	İskender Beg (Mihal-Oğlu?) ⁴	
1477 – 1483 >	Bali Beg (Malkoç-Oğlu) ⁵	
? – 1503 >	Hasan Beg (Mihal-Oğlu?) ⁶	
? – 1513	Mehmed Beg (Mihal-Oğlu) ⁷	
1513 – 1517 >	Mesih Beg ⁸	
< 1522 – 1527 >	Yahşi Beg (Mihal-Oğlu) ⁹	
< 1531 – 1542	Bali Beg ¹⁰	
1542 – 1545	Bali Beg ¹¹	
1545 – ?	Velican Beg ¹²	
? – 1550	Cafer Beg ¹³	

¹ IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 56.

² IBBAK-MC.YZ.O 90, p. 1.

³ BOA-MAD.d 5, p. 8; NLB-VD110/10, pp. 1b, 2; BOA-MAD.d 18, pp. 1-2, 19b, 21.

⁴ BOA-MAD.d 18, pp. 1, 7b, 13b, 14b.

⁵ BOA-MAD.d 18, p. 5b. BOA-MAD.d 1, pp. 19, 34, 35b, 38b, 41, 51b, 52b.

⁶ Gökbilgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar*. p. 481.

⁷ BOA-MAD.d 7, p. d95.

⁸ BOA-MAD.d 7, p. d95. TSA-D 9772-1, p.1. For Barkan this record dated around 1520. Barkan, "H. 933-934 (M. 1527-1528) Malî Yılına Ait Bir Bütçe." p. 676. For Çakar it was dated 1517. Enver Çakar, "XVI. Yüzyılda Şam Beylerbeyliğinin İdarî Taksimatı," *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 13, no. 1 (2003). p. 357. Fn. 49.

⁹ Çakar read this name as Bahşı Bey. Enver Çakar, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Kanun-nâmesine göre 1522 Yılında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İdarî Taksimatı," *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 12, no. 1 (2002). p. 279; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Kanunî Sultan Süleyman Devri Başlarında Rumeli Eyaleti, Livaları, Şehir ve Kasabaları," *Belleten* XX, no. 78 (1956). p. 252; Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*. p. 105.

¹⁰ BOA-TT.d 160, p. 10; BOA-MAD.d 34, p. 241. TSA-D 2204.1, p. 113b.

¹¹ According to Cvetkova Bali beg was the son of Yahya Beg. Cvetkova, "Otkas Ot Podroben Registar Na Eodalnite Vladeniya V Liva Vidin Ot 1542 G.." p. 35. Fn. 2. However, Yahya Paşa-oğlu Bali beg was died in 1526. İbrahim Peçevî, *Peçevî Tarihi*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Son Telgraf Matbaası, 1968). p. 32. This Bali beg was ex-sancakbegi of Akkerman. See, BOA-MAD.d 34, p. 241.

¹² Halil Sahillioğlu, *Topkapı Sarayı Arşivi H.951 - 952 Tarihli ve E-12321 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (İstanbul: IRCICA, 2002). pp. 23, 25, 151. This Velican beg probably was the one who Hammer said he had a Persian origin. Joseph von Hammer - Purgstall, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Üçdal Naşriyat-Sabah, 1994). p. 375.

1551 – 1552	Bali Beg (Malkoç-Oğlu) ¹⁴
1552 – 1553	Rüstem Beg ¹⁵
1553 – 1560	Muzaffer Beg ¹⁶
1560	Ahmed Beg (Turahan-Oğlu) ¹⁷
1560 – 1561	Hüsrev Beg ¹⁸
1561 – ?	Bayram Beg ¹⁹
1563 – 1566 >	Mehmed Beg ²⁰
< 1567 – 1568	Süleyman Beg (Mihal-Oğlu) ²¹
1568 – 1569	Ali Beg ²²
1569 – 1570	Bali Beg ²³
1570 – 1572	Kara Hamza Beg ²⁴
1572 – 1574	Hüseyin Beg ²⁵

¹³ Emecen and Şahin, "Osmanlı Taşra Teşkilâtının Kaynaklarından 957-958 (1550-1551) Tarihli *Sancak Tevcih Defteri*." p. 58.

¹⁴ We know that a certain Bali *beg* was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin in March-April of 1552. TSA-K 888, pp. 86b-87, 142. Hammer mentions a certain Malkoçoğlu who was the *sancakbegi* of Vidin in 1551. Hammer - Purgstall, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, 3. p. 377. He should be Malkoçoğlu Bali *beg* who was appointed to the *Sancak* of Hüdavendigar in 1551 but short after that in July of the same year was appointed to another *sancak*. Emecen and Şahin, "Osmanlı Taşra Teşkilâtının Kaynaklarından 957-958 (1550-1551) Tarihli *Sancak Tevcih Defteri*." p. 68. In February of 1553 he had already dismissed from Vidin *sancakbegilik*. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 5, pp. 783, 792, 793. The same *defter* mentions two men of Bali bin Malkoç Beg, who granted *timars*. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 5, pp. 776, 783. It was a standard procedure that when one dismissed or died his men received *timars*. Moreover, in 1580 a certain amount of *hasses* of Mehmed the son of Malkoçoğlu Bali *beg* was in Vidin. TKA-TT 219, p. 13b.

¹⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 5, p. 788.

¹⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 5, p. 789; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 3, r. 530, 1054, in *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (966-968 / 1558-1560).

¹⁷ Ibid. r. 1289. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 4, r. 754, 890, 1815.

¹⁸ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 4, r. 889, 951, 967, 1759, 2105.

¹⁹ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 4, r. 1759.

²⁰ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 6, r. 146, 807, in *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (972 / 1564-1565). ed. İsmet Binark, *Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi* (Ankara: BDAGM, 1995). Fodor, *In Quest of the Golden Apple: Imperial Ideology, Politics, and Military Administration in the Ottoman Empire*. pp. 233, 240.

²¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 25, p. 847. In January 1569 he was recorded as had already died. In November 1567 he was still *sancakbegi* of Vidin so he most probably died in 1568. One of his son named Hasan was given [*sancakbelik*] Vulçitrin. And the other one Mustafa was a *zi'amet* owner in Vidin.

²² BOA-MAD.d 563, p. 61.

²³ BOA-MAD.d 563, p. 61.

²⁴ BOA-MAD.d 563, p. 61; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 12, r. 1166, in *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (978-979 / 1570-1572), ed. İsmet Binark, vol. 1, *Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi* (Ankara: BDAGM, 1996).

²⁵ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 10, r. 98, 196, in Zülfiye Kaygusuz, "10 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri'nin (1-178) Transkripsiyon ve Değerlendirmesi" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2006); İbrahim Etem Çakır, "10 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri'nin (179-356) Transkripsiyon ve Değerlendirmesi" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2006). BOA-A.DVN.MHM 10, r. 1158, in *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (978-979 / 1570-1572), ed. İsmet Binark, vol. 2, *Dîvân-ı*

1574 – 1576	Mustafa Beg ²⁶
1576 – 1578	Arslan Beg ²⁷
1578 – ?	Hamza Beg ²⁸
< 1580 – 1583	Hacı [Ali] Beg ²⁹
1583	Hüseyin ³⁰
1583 – 1584	Ali ³¹
1584	Mustafa ³²
1584	Ali [Again] ³³
1584 – 1585	Mustafa [Again?] ³⁴
1585 – 1588	Mehmed ³⁵
1588	Kaymakam ³⁶
1589 – 1591	Ahmed ³⁷
1591 – 1592	Mustafa ³⁸
1592 – 1593	Abdi ³⁹
1593	Muhammed, Kaymakam ⁴⁰
1593 – 1594	Haydar ⁴¹

Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi (Ankara: BDAGM, 1996). BOA-MAD.d 123, pp. 16; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 42, p. 897.

²⁶ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 26, r. 59; BOA-MAD.d 123, pp. 16b, 17, 18b; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 42, pp. 896, 897, 900m.

²⁷ BOA-KK.D 262, p. 28

²⁸ BOA-KK.D 262, p. 28

²⁹ In some documents the name of *sancak* begi was Hacı. TKA-TD 219, p. 12b. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 42, r. 857; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 49, r. 142, in Hasan Yıldız, "49 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1996). In some other documents he was Ali Beg. BOA-A.DVN.MHM 45, r. 1084; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 100, p. 479. Or Maybe Hacı *beg* was dismissed and a certain Ali was appointed to Vidin. And he reappointed later once more.

³⁰ BOA-MAD.d 15428, p. 478; BOA-MAD.d 6209, pp. 1, 2.

³¹ BOA-KK.D 262, p. 28; BOA-MAD.d 15428, pp. 476, 485; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92, pp. 569, 573-4; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 121, pp. 947, 963; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 123, p. 976.

³² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92, pp. 558, 568; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 121, p. 963; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 55, r. 260, in Musa Günay, "55 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Undokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, 1996).

³³ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 55, r. 260; BOA-KK.D 262, p. 28.

³⁴ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 55, r. 260; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 166, p. 179.

³⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 92, p. 576; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 100, pp. 480, 483; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 123, pp. 990-1.

³⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 100, p. 476.

³⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 121, pp. 937, 958; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 123, pp. 972-3, 993.

³⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 123, p. 995; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 166, p. 176.

³⁹ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, p. 9; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, p. 152.

⁴⁰ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, pp. 34, 44.

⁴¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 178, p. 768.

1594 – 1595	Ahmed, Kaymakam ⁴²	Hasan Paşa ⁴³
1595 – 1596	Mehmed ⁴⁴	
1596 – ?	Mustafa ⁴⁵	Satırcı Mehmed Paşa ⁴⁶
? – 1597	Ali ⁴⁷	
1597 – 1598	Musa ⁴⁸	
1598 – 1599	Hasan ⁴⁹	Hafız Ahmed Paşa ⁵⁰
1599	Mustafa ⁵¹	
1599	Ali ⁵²	
1599 – 1600	Şaban ⁵³	Mehmed Paşa ⁵⁴
1600 – 1601	Muhammedi ⁵⁵	Mahmud Paşa ⁵⁶
1601 – 1602	İsmail ⁵⁷	
1602 – 1603	Ahmed ⁵⁸	
? – 1605	Ahmed ⁵⁹	
1605 – 1606	Ebubekir [<i>Arpalık</i>] ⁶⁰	
1606 – ?	Osman ⁶¹	

⁴² BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, p. 25; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 166, p. 188.

⁴³ Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, 2. p. 458, 494-5; Naima, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1. p. 88.

⁴⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 203, pp. 407-8; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 611.

⁴⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 178, p. 761.

⁴⁶ Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, 2. pp. 573, 632.

⁴⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 203, p. 401. Topçular Kâtibi Abdülkâdir, *Topçular Kâtibi Abdülkâdir (Kadrî) Efendi Tarihi*, ed. Ziya Yılmaz, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2003). p. 205.

⁴⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 203, pp. 398, 400, 411; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, p. 158; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 341, p. 462; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 484, p. 174.

⁴⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, pp. 281-2, 267, 278; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, pp. 145, 147.

⁵⁰ Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, 2. pp. 733, 769-70. BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 266.

⁵¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, pp. 127, 162.

⁵² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, p. 246.

⁵³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 214, pp. 135, 255; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, pp. 131-2, 141-2, 157; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, pp. 608, 610.

⁵⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 229, p. 138.

⁵⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, pp. 612, 619-20; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 255, p. 224; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, p. 137; BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, pp. 53-59.

⁵⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 236, p. 625

⁵⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 255, p. 224.

⁵⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 255, p. 230; BOA-MAD.d 107, p. 263. Cengiz Orhonlu argued that he was dismissed from this post on June 1, 1603. Orhonlu, *Telhisler, 1597-1607: Osmanlı Tarihine âid Belgeler*. p. 64.

⁵⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, p. 137.

⁶⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318. pp. 141, 143.

⁶¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 318, p. 144.

? – 1609	Mehmed ⁶²	
1609 – ?	Lütfullah ⁶³	
? – 1610 >	İsmail ⁶⁴	
1611	Yusuf Kaymakam ⁶⁵	
? – 1617	Ahmed ⁶⁶	
1617	İhtiyar Kaymakam ⁶⁷	
1617 – 1618	Meydan ⁶⁸	
1618 – 1619 >	Mustafa Kaymakam ⁶⁹	
? – 1620	Mustafa ⁷⁰	
1620	Zülfikar ⁷¹	Koca Hızır Paşa (Mihal-Oğlu) ⁷²
1620 – ?	Osman Kaymakam ⁷³	
? – 1622 >	Sinan ⁷⁴	
? – 1623 >	Mustafa ⁷⁵	
? – 1624 >	Hüseyin Kaymakam ⁷⁶	
? – 1626	Rıdvan Kaymakam ⁷⁷	
1626	Sinan ⁷⁸	
1626 – ?	Mustafa Kaymakam ⁷⁹	
? – 1627 >	Ahmed Kaymakam ⁸⁰	

⁶² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 301, p. 238.

⁶³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 301, pp. 239, 248.

⁶⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 301, p. 248.

⁶⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 314, p. 735.

⁶⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 371, p. 414.

⁶⁷ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 82, r. 165, in *82 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1026-1027 / 1617-1618)*, ed. Yusuf Sarıncay, *Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Sicilleri Dizisi* (Ankara: DAGM, 2000).

⁶⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 366, p. 360; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 488, p. 418. Meydan *beg* was killed due to his role in the murder of Sultan Osman. Hasan Bey-zâde Ahmed Paşa, *Hasan Bey-zâde Târîhi*, ed. Şevki Nezihi Aykut, vol. 3 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2004). p. 953.

⁶⁹ BOA-MAD.d 107, pp. 270b, 271b; BOA-DFE.RZ.d 488, p. 438.

⁷⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 391, p. 641.

⁷¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 405, p. 464.

⁷² Mustafa Efendi Naima, *Târîh-i Na'îmâ*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007). p. 453.

⁷³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 405, p. 467.

⁷⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 411, pp. 494-6, 512.

⁷⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 427, p. 555.

⁷⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 427, pp. 569, 578.

⁷⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 452, p. 561.

⁷⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 452, p. 568.

⁷⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 452, p. 568.

⁸⁰ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 474, p. 245.

? – 1628 >	Memi ⁸¹	
? – 1629	Mustafa ⁸²	
1629	Mehmed Kaymakam ⁸³	
1629	Mehmed, <i>Sancakbegi Müsellimi</i> ⁸⁴	
1629 – ?	Mustafa Kaymakam ⁸⁵	
< 1630 – 1631	Mustafa ⁸⁶	
1631	Mustafa Kaymakam ⁸⁷	
1631	Mustafa ⁸⁸	
1631	Mehmed ⁸⁹	
1631 – 1632	Osman Kaymakam ⁹⁰	
1632	Ahmed ⁹¹	
1632 – 1634	Hüseyin ⁹²	Abaza Mehmed Paşa [In 1633] ⁹³
1634	Bayram ⁹⁴	
1634 – ?	Tatar Süleyman Mirza ⁹⁵	
1638		Hüseyin Paşa, of Özi ⁹⁶
1639 – 1641 >	Mehmed ⁹⁷	
< 1644	Mehmed ⁹⁸	
? – 1644 >	İbrahim ⁹⁹	
? – 1647 >	Ahmed ¹⁰⁰	

⁸¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 484, p. 190; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 83, r. 64, in *83 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1036-1037 / 1626-1628)*. BOA-KK.d 382, p. 20.

⁸² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 484, pp. 166-7.

⁸³ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 484, p. 173.

⁸⁴ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 68, p. 166.

⁸⁵ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 68, p. 175.

⁸⁶ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 498, pp. 157, 163, 167.

⁸⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 498, p. 168.

⁸⁸ BOA-MAD.d 17671, p. 245; BOA-A.DVN.MHM 83, r. 536, in *85 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1040-1041 (1042) / 1630 -1631 (1632))*.

⁸⁹ BOA-MAD.d 17671, 246.

⁹⁰ BOA-MAD.d 17671, pp. 249, 261.

⁹¹ BOA-MAD.d 17671, pp. 262-3.

⁹² BOA-DFE.RZ.d 522, p. 646; BOA-KK.D 266, p. 45.

⁹³ Naima, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 2. p. 741.

⁹⁴ BOA-KK.d 266, p. 45

⁹⁵ BOA-KK.d 266, p. 45

⁹⁶ BOA-KK.d 266, p. 45

⁹⁷ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 2181, p. 3; BOA-KK.d 266, p. 45; BOA-MAD.d 105, p. 107.

⁹⁸ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 603, p. 169.

⁹⁹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 603, p. 169.

?	– 1649	>	Mustafa ¹⁰¹	
		<	1657	Osman ¹⁰²
1657	– 1658			Ahmed ¹⁰³
	1658			Mustafa Ağa Bin Halil, Kaymakam ¹⁰⁴
1658	– 1659			Mehmed Ağa ¹⁰⁵
	1687/8			Tökeli İmre ¹⁰⁶
	1689/90			Hüseyin Paşa ¹⁰⁷
	1690			Dursun Mehmed Paşa ¹⁰⁸

(<) = probably before

(>) = probably after.

¹⁰⁰ BOA-A.DVN.MHM 90, r. 502, in Mertol Tulum, *Mühimme Defteri 90* (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1993).

¹⁰¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 634, pp. 214, 217.

¹⁰² BOA-A.DVN.MHM 90, r. 135, in Selçuk Osmanoğlu, "92 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H. 1067-1069 / M.1656-1658)" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2004).

¹⁰³ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, pp. 87-88, 98.

¹⁰⁴ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, p. 89.

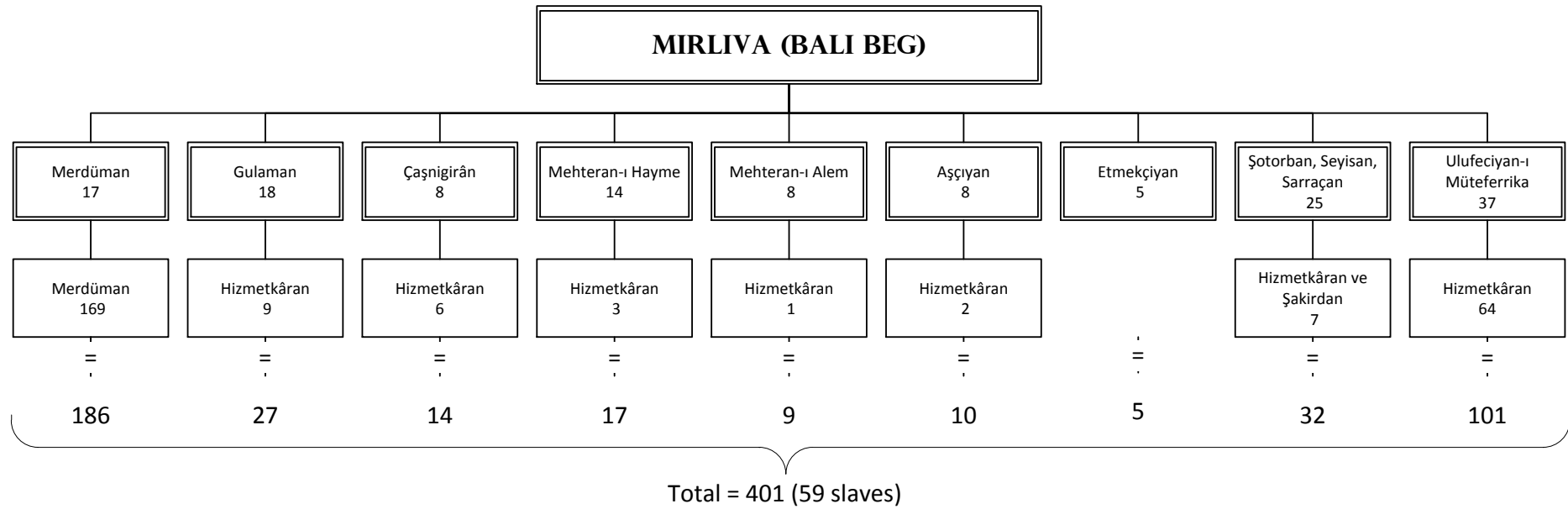
¹⁰⁵ BOA-D.BMK.VDM 1, p. 118.

¹⁰⁶ Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât*. pp. 304, 316.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 336. *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*. p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât*. p. 348; *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*. p. 12.

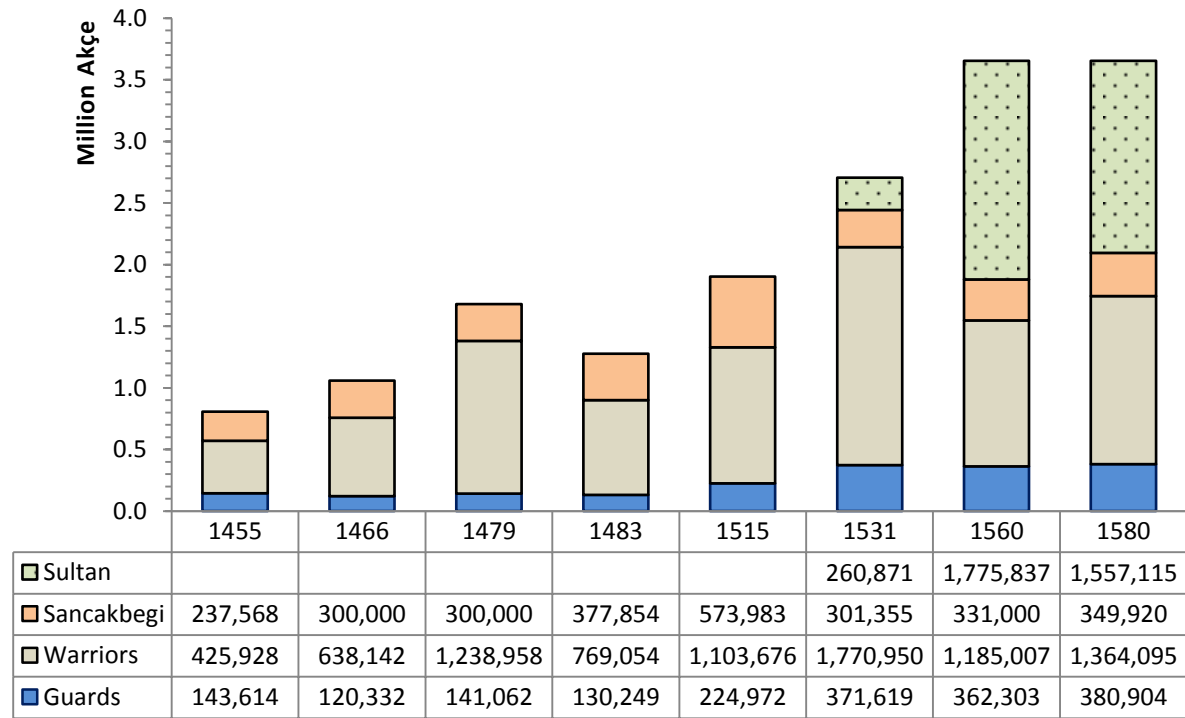
Appendix VI: The Servitors of the *Sancakbegi* of Vidin in 1531¹



¹ TSA-D 2204-1, pp. 113b-117.

Appendix VII: Sources of Impreial *Mukataas*

Year	Source	İsfirliğ	Bane	Çerna Reka	Feth-i İslam	Krivina	Polomiye	Timok	Vidin	Zagorye	Revenue1	Revenue2
1530	Village	-	-	23	6	56	-	-	-	-	260,871	
1533– 1539	Village	5	-	143	101	141	2	58	6	24	931,064	-
	Monastery	-	-	2	-	5	-	1	-	-	1,110	-
	Ports etc.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	598,314
	Town	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	21,562	-
	Total	5	1	145	102	146	2	59	6	24	953,736	598,314
1560	Lake	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	600	-
	Village	4	4	150	126	141	30	70	12	35	1,695,555	-
	Ports etc.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	972,410
	Monastery	1	-	8	5	7	-	1	-	3	5,370	-
	Mezra	-	-	12	1	1	-	4	-	-	2,414	-
	Town	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	46,200	-
	Fair	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	150	-
	Meadow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	25,548	-
	Total	5	4	170	135	150	30	75	15	38	1,775,837	972,410
1580	Lake	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	600	-
	Village	2	1	122	117	100	25	56	11	28	1,492,475	-
	Ports etc.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	936,744
	Monastery	-	-	3	5	7	1	-	2	3	3,649	-
	Mezra	-	-	-	1	1	5	-	2	-	2,041	-
	Town	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	46,200	-
	Meadow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	12,000	-
	Fair	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	150	-
	Total	2	1	125	126	109	31	56	18	31	1,557,115	936,744



Appendix VIII: Revenue Distribution in Vidin

Appendix IX: *Timar*-Holding Guards in the Fortresses of Vidin

1455

	<i>Dizdar</i>	Kethüda	Bevvab	Topçı	imam	Merdan	Total
İsfirliğ	1		1			17	19
Bane	1		1	1	1	17	21
Belgrad	1				1	6	8
Flordin	1		2		1	5	9
Vidin	1	1	1			18	21
Total	5	1	5	1	3	63	78

1483

	<i>Dizdar</i>	Kethüda	Bevvab	Topçı	imam	Merd	Total
İsfirliğ	1		2		1	10	14
Bane	1	1	1	1	1	14	19
Belgrad	1				1	12	14
Flordin	1			1	1	15	18
Vidin	1	1	1			15	18
Total	5	2	4	2	4	66	83

1515

	<i>Dizdar</i>	Kethüda	bevvab	Topçu	imam	Merd	Total
İsfirliğ	1	1	.	.	1	8	11
Bane	1	.	.	1	1	22	25
Belgrad	1	.	.	.	1	18	20
Flordin	1	.	1	1	1	15	19
Vidin	1	1	.	2	2	85	91
Total	5	2	1	4	6	147	166

1531

	<i>Dizdar</i>	Kethüda	Bevvab	Serbölük	Topçu	İmam	Surneyi	Tabbal	Neccar	Anbarcı	Merd	Total
İsfirliğ	1	1	1			1					13	17
Bane	1	1	1			1					22	26
Belgrad	1	1	1	1		1					23	28
Feth-i İslam	1	2	1	9	5		1	1	1	1	59	81
Flordin	1				1	1					19	22
Vidin	1	1		3		2	1				89	97
Total	6	6	4	13	6	6	2	1	1	1	225	271

1560

	<i>Dizdar</i>	Kethüda	Serbölük	Sertopçu	Topçu	İmam & Hatib	Tabbal & Surneyi	Anbarcı	Merd	Total
İsfirliğ	1	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	13	16
Bane	1	1	.	.	.	2	.	.	21	25
Belgrad	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	27	28
Feth-i İslam	1	2	7	1	7	.	2	1	61	82
Flordin	1	.	.	.	1	1	.	.	22	25
Vidin	1	2	1	.	.	2	2	.	84	92
Total	6	6	8	1	8	6	4	1	228	268

1580

	<i>Dizdar</i>	Kethüda	Serbölük	Sertopçu	Topçu	Bevvab	İmam & Hatib	Tabbal	Anbarcı	Merd	Total
İsfirliğ	1	1	.	.	.	.	1	.	1	10	14
Bane	1	1	2	.	1	1	2	.	.	16	24
Belgrad	1	1	1	.	.	.	2	.	.	23	28
Feth-i İslam	1	2	6	1	1	.	.	1	.	70	82
Flordin	1	1	2	.	.	1	1	.	.	18	24
Vidin	1	1	8	.	.	1	2	1	.	78	92
Total	6	7	19	1	2	3	8	2	1	215	264

Appendix X: Guards' *Timars* in Vidin

Year	Value of <i>Timar</i>	<i>Timar</i> #	Percent	Owner (O)	Y/O	Yield (Y)
1455	≤ 2,999	62.0	92.5	73.0	1,195.7	87,287.0
	6,000–9,999	2.0	3.0	2.0	7,495.5	14,991.0
	10,000–19,999	3.0	4.5	3.0	13,778.7	41,336.0
	Total	67.0	100.0	78.0	1,841.2	143,614.0
1466*	≤ 2,999	43	87.8	49	1,566.1	76,740.0
	3,000–5,999	3	6.1	6	1,550.8	9,305.0
	6,000–9,999	2	4.1	2	9,111.5	18,223.0
	10,000–19,999	1	2.0	1	16,064.0	16,064.0
	Total	49	100.0	58.0	2,074.7	120,332.0
1479*	≤ 2,999	8	33.3	8	2,283.8	18,270.0
	3,000–5,999	10	41.7	16	2,591.6	41,466.0
	6,000–9,999	2	8.3	2	8,201.5	16,403.0
	10,000–19,999	3	12.5	5	7,535.0	37,675.0
	20,000–49,999	1	4.2	1	27,248.0	27,248.0
	Total	24	100.0	32.0	4,408.2	141,062.0
1483	≤ 2,999	45.0	83.3	63.0	1,075.4	67,750.0
	3,000–5,999	3.0	5.6	5.0	2,172.4	10,862.0
	6,000–9,999	5.0	9.3	14.0	2,674.1	37,437.0
	10,000–19,999	1.0	1.9	1.0	14,200.0	14,200.0
	Total	54.0	100.0	83.0	1,569.3	130,249.0
1515	≤ 2,999	38.0	57.6	63.0	1,115.2	70,259.0
	3,000–5,999	19.0	28.8	61.0	1,270.4	77,496.0
	6,000–9,999	7.0	10.6	33.0	1,642.9	54,215.0
	10,000–19,999	2.0	3.0	9.0	2,555.8	23,002.0
	Total	66.0	100.0	166.0	1,355.3	224,972.0
1531	≤ 2,999	62.0	58.5	91.0	1,222.5	111,247.0
	3,000–5,999	28.0	26.4	85.0	1,372.7	116,682.0
	6,000–9,999	12.0	11.3	65.0	1,448.7	94,167.0
	10,000–19,999	4.0	3.8	30.0	1,650.8	49,523.0
	Total	106.0	100.0	271.0	1,371.3	371,619.0

* Incomplete Data

Year	Value of <i>Timar</i>	<i>Timar</i> #	Percent	Owner (O)	Y/O	Yield (Y)
1560	≤ 2,999	261.0	97.4	261.0	1,269.4	331,323.0
	3,000–5,999	6.0	2.2	6.0	3,896.7	23,380.0
	6,000–9,999	1.0	0.4	1.0	7,600.0	7,600.0
	Total	268.0	100.0	268.0	1,351.9	362,303.0
1580	≤ 2,999	256.0	97.0	256.0	1,326.5	339,580.0
	3,000–5,999	6.0	2.3	6.0	4,287.3	25,724.0
	6,000–9,999	2.0	0.8	2.0	7,800.0	15,600.0
	Total	264.0	100.0	264.0	1,442.8	380,904.0

Appendix XI: Generic *Timars* in Vidin¹

Year	Value of <i>Timar</i>	<i>Timar</i> #	Percent	Owner (O)	Y/O	Yield (Y)
1455	≤ 2,999	84.0	68.3	98.0	1,264.6	123,926.0
	3,000–5,999	29.0	23.6	37.0	3,168.9	117,248.0
	6,000–9,999	5.0	4.1	7.0	4,671.3	32,699.0
	10,000–19,999	2.0	1.6	3.0	7,196.7	21,590.0
	20,000–49,999	2.0	1.6	2.0	31,231.5	62,463.0
	50,000–99,999	1.0	0.8	1.0	68,002.0	68,002.0
	Total	123.0	100.0	148.0	2,877.9	425,928.0
1466*	≤ 2,999	29	28.2	36	1,540.9	55471.0
	3,000–5,999	47	45.6	56	3,502.7	196153.0
	6,000–9,999	18	17.5	25	5,539.3	138482.0
	10,000–19,999	6	5.8	6	13,294.8	79769.0
	20,000–49,999	1	1.0	1	33,385.0	33385.0
	50,000–99,999	2	1.9	3	44,960.7	134882.0
	Total	103	100.0	127.0	5,024.7	638,142.0
1479*	≤ 2,999	16.0	11.5	19.0	1,824.3	34,661.0
	3,000–5,999	45.0	32.4	56.0	3,584.2	200,713.0
	6,000–9,999	46.0	33.1	59.0	5,950.2	351,063.0
	10,000–19,999	25.0	18.0	38.0	9,120.2	346,569.0
	20,000–49,999	5.0	3.6	6.0	21,081.0	126,486.0
	50,000–99,999	2.0	1.4	3.0	59,822.0	179,466.0
	Total	139.0	100.0	181.0	6,845.1	1,238,958.0
1483	≤ 2,999	40.0	30.3	55.0	1,502.2	82,622.0
	3,000–5,999	50.0	37.9	59.0	3,742.4	220,801.0
	6,000–9,999	25.0	18.9	30.0	6,635.9	199,078.0
	10,000–19,999	13.0	9.8	22.0	7,467.7	164,289.0
	20,000–49,999	4.0	3.0	7.0	14,609.1	102,264.0
	Total	132.0	100.0	173.0	4,445.4	769,054.0

* Incomplete Data

¹ This table includes *zi'amets*, falconers' *timars* and *timars* that added to *hasses* of high officials.

Year	Value of <i>Timar</i>	<i>Timar</i> #	Percent	Owner (O)	Y/O	Yield (Y)
1515	≤ 2,999	102.0	45.3	105.0	1,895.7	199,049.0
	3,000–5,999	76.0	33.8	78.0	4,098.0	319,647.0
	6,000–9,999	23.0	10.2	23.0	7,400.5	170,211.0
	10,000–19,999	20.0	8.9	20.0	13,681.4	273,628.0
	20,000–49,999	3.0	1.3	3.0	29,707.0	89,121.0
	50,000–99,999	1.0	0.4	1.0	52,020.0	52,020.0
	Total	225.0	100.0	230.0	4,798.6	1,103,676.0
1531	≤ 2,999	155.0	44.8	162.0	2,007.2	325,162.0
	3,000–5,999	132.0	38.2	149.0	3,788.2	564,445.0
	6,000–9,999	28.0	8.1	32.0	6,647.0	212,703.0
	10,000–19,999	22.0	6.4	23.0	13,343.7	306,906.0
	20,000–49,999	5.0	1.4	5.0	27,573.0	137,865.0
	50,000–99,999	4.0	1.2	4.0	55,967.3	223,869.0
	Total	346.0	100.0	375.0	4,722.5	1,770,950.0
1560	≤ 2,999	32.0	15.6	32.0	2,412.5	77,200.0
	3,000–5,999	131.0	63.9	131.0	3,584.0	469,507.0
	6,000–9,999	22.0	10.7	22.0	6,632.4	145,913.0
	10,000–19,999	7.0	3.4	7.0	12,773.0	89,411.0
	20,000–49,999	12.0	5.9	12.0	28,985.1	347,821.0
	50,000–99,999	1.0	0.5	1.0	55,155.0	55,155.0
	Total	205.0	100.0	205.0	5,780.5	1,185,007.0
1580	≤ 2,999	2.0	0.9	2.0	2,285.5	4,571.0
	3,000–5,999	153.0	71.2	153.0	3,787.3	579,457.0
	6,000–9,999	34.0	15.8	34.0	6,812.7	231,632.0
	10,000–19,999	11.0	5.1	11.0	14,254.4	156,798.0
	20,000–49,999	15.0	7.0	15.0	26,109.1	391,637.0
	Total	215.0	100.0	215.0	6,344.6	1,364,095.0

Appendix XII: The Minimum Numbers of *Timars* in Vidin Calculated through *Timar* Tracking

Year	Zi'amet	Timar	Year	Zi'amet	Timar	Year	Zi'amet	Timar
988 ¹	15	194	1031	15	170	1073 ³	13	97
990	15	186	1032	15	170	1074	13	93
991	15	186	1033	15	170	1075	13	87
992	15	186	1034	15	169	1076	13	80
993	15	186	1035	15	169	1077	13	72
994	15	186	1036	15	165	1078	12	64
995	15	186	1037	15	164	1079	12	56
996	15	186	1038	15	163	1080	12	52
997	15	186	1039	15	161	1081	12	52
998	15	186	1040	15	157	1082	12	47
999	15	184	1041	15	154	1083	11	44
1000	15	184	1042 ²	15	183	1084	11	44
1001	15	184	1043	15	159	1085	11	42
1002	15	184	1044	15	156	1086	10	40
1003	15	182	1045	15	155	1087	10	40
1004	15	181	1046	15	154	1088	9	40
1005	15	181	1047	15	152	1089	9	37
1006	15	181	1048	15	150	1090	9	30
1007	15	180	1049	15	149	1091	9	30
1008	15	177	1050	15	146	1092	9	26
1009	15	176	1051	15	145	1093	9	26
1010	15	173	1052	15	142	1094	8	22
1011	15	173	1053	15	141	1095	6	15
1012	15	173	1054	15	139	1096	6	15
1013	15	173	1055	15	136	1097	6	13
1014	15	173	1056	15	134	1098	6	12
1015	15	173	1057	15	134	1099	6	11
1016	15	173	1058	15	133	1100	6	10
1017	15	173	1059	15	130	1101	6	10
1018	15	173	1060	15	129	1102	6	10
1019	15	172	1061	15	128	1103	4	10
1020	15	172	1062	15	120	1104	2	4
1021	15	172	1063	15	117			
1022	15	172	1064	15	116			
1023	15	171	1065	15	116			
1024	15	171	1066	15	116			
1025	15	171	1067	15	114			
1026	15	171	1068	14	107			
1027	15	171	1069	14	106			
1028	15	171	1070	14	105			
1029	15	171	1071	13	100			
1030	15	171	1072	13	99			

¹ The Last Survey

² The Great Inspection

³ For Evliya Çelebi there were 12 *zi'amet* 65 *timar* in Vidin.

Appendix XIII: A Ruznamçe Record¹

<i>Timar-i Murtaza bin Cafer – An tahvil-i Cafer bin Sefer, pedereş, el-mütevvefa</i>			
Karye	Gorne Zoranofçe	Timok	3,500
Mezra	İskrivnik	İsfirilig	500
Yekun			4,000

Vidin Sancağibegi Ahmed dergâh-ı muallaya mektub gönderip mezkur Murtaza için livâ-i mezburda Timok nâhiyesinde Gorne Zoranofçe nam karye ve gayrıdan 4,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf iken fevt olan Cafer bin Sefer'in sülbi oğlu olduğuna Rumili'nin defter kethüdası olan Piri dame mecduhu ve Berkofçe nam karye ve gayrıdan 22,000 akçe zi'amete mutasarrıf olan Ahmed ve Çerkvişte nam karye ve gayrıdan 20,000 akçe zi'amete mutasarrıf olan Hızır Çavuş ve Perilofçe nam karye ve gayrıdan 6,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf olan Hüsrev, Sredne Vir karyesi nam karye ve gayrıdan 5,999 akçe timara mutasarrıf olan Ali ve Dobre Polye nam karye ve gayrıdan 5,999 ake timara mutasarrıf olan Mehmed ve Yoşaniçe nam karye ve gayrıdan 6,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf olan diger Mehmed ve yine Bane'ye tabi İstudenik(?) nam karye ve gayrıdan 4,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf olan Mustafa, ve Budimirofçe nam karye ve gayrıdan 3,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf olan diger Mustafa, ve İsvinyar nam karye ve gayrıdan 3,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf Hüseyin ve Gorne Kraviye'de 3,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf olan Mehmed ve Dobruyofçe? nam Timok nam karye [Timok'a tabi Dobruyofçe? nam karye] ve gayrıdan 3,000 akçe timara mutasarrıf Ali nam kimesneler şehadet eylediklerin arz itmegin zikr olunan timar mezkurun üzerinde iken fevt olub mahlul ise ve mezbur müteveffa-i mezkurun sahih sülbi oğlu olub kılınca yarayıb kanunları üzere timara müstehak ise ve bu makule sipâhîzadeler kanunu üzere ne mikdar timar virilegelmiş ise ve mezburun babası fevt olalı iki ay ise kanun üzere babası timarından tevcih idesin deyü Rumili begerbegisine sene 999 Ramazanının beşinci günü tarihiyle müverrah hükm-i şerif virildikten sonra tezkiresi bab-ı saadetden ihrac olunmak ferman olunub sipâhîzadedir beglerbegiden gelür deyü arz olundukda bunda berat ola deyü ferman olunub bade 701 akçe ziyadesi dahi arz olundukda verilmek buyurulmağın ber muceb-i emr-i âli zikr olunan 4,000 akçe timar vech-i meşruh üzere babası Sefer oğlu müteveffa Hızır tahvilinden kanun üzere ibtidaü'l-hak olduğu emri ve bir defa ferman olan ziyadesinden maada kabil-i ifraz olmıyan 299 akçe ziyadesiyle oğlu merkum Murtaza'ya ber muceb-i kanun-ı kadim der-i devletden tevcih olunub berat-ı alışan için tezkire virildi.

Fi 10 Şevval sene 999²

¹ BOA-DFE.RZ.d 123, p. 993.

² August 1, 1591

Appendix XIII: The Imperial Edict for the Abolition of the *Timar* System in Vidin³

Bundan akdem Vidin Sancağı reayasının emval ve erzakları Nemçe keferesi istilasından hasâret olunub mukaddema(?) dahi etraftan cem' olmuş hoş-nişîn reaya olmağla bir mikdarı dahi perakende ve perişan olmağla bazı karyede bir-iki nefer fakirü'l-hal reaya ve bazılarında asla kalmayub mevcut olanları dahi ziraate ve hirasete kadir olmayub kuvveti lâ-yemût ile geçinirler iken livâ-i mezburda zi'amet ve timara mutasarrıf gereklü ve gereksüz züema ve erbab-ı timar ve doğancı ve şahinci reaya fukarasını himaye ve şen ve abadan itmege sa'y etmediklerinden gayri güzeşte senelerin öşr ve rüsumların taleb ile teaddilerinden bundan akdem ref' ve mirî mukataata ilhak olunub teaddileri def' olunmuşken yine zi'amet ve timar ashabı ve şahinci ve toğancı timar ve zi'ametleri zabtı için emr alub reayasına ve sancakbegileri hasları fukarasına teaddi üzere olduklarından ba'de kalan reaya dahi perişan ve isyan ve tuğyan üzere olmalarıyla evâmir-i mezburda olan evkafdan mâ-ada eğer gereklü ve eğer gereksüz zi'amet ve timarlar ve şahinci ve toğancı tımarları ve mirlivâ hassı ve bunun emsali bazı senet ile bazı kimesnelerin mutasarrıf oldukları karyeler bi'l-küllîye tasarruflarından ref' ve Vidin Sancağı dahi kimesneye virilmeyüb sancaklığı merfu' ve cümlesi Vidin nezareti mukataasına zam ve ilhak ve güzeşte mahsul ve rüsum ve hilaf-ı şer' fukaradan bir nesne taleb olunmayub şen ve abadan olunmak ve fi-mâba'd ta'dil ve tagyîr olunmamak üzere mahale tashih olunmak için bilfiil baş defterdâr olan iftiharü'l-ümera ve'l-ekabir İsmail dame uluvuhu ilam itmeleri ile defter-i icmali getürdüb vech-i meşruh üzere mumaillehyin ilamı mucibince mahalleri mülhakiyle tashih eyleyesün deyü bu hakire hitaben emri ali varid olmağla mucibince sebt-i defter olundu.

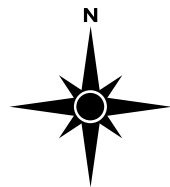
Tahriren fi evail-i Muharrem sene [1]105.⁴

El-hakir Mehmed, el-tevkîi el-vezir. m. [tamma].

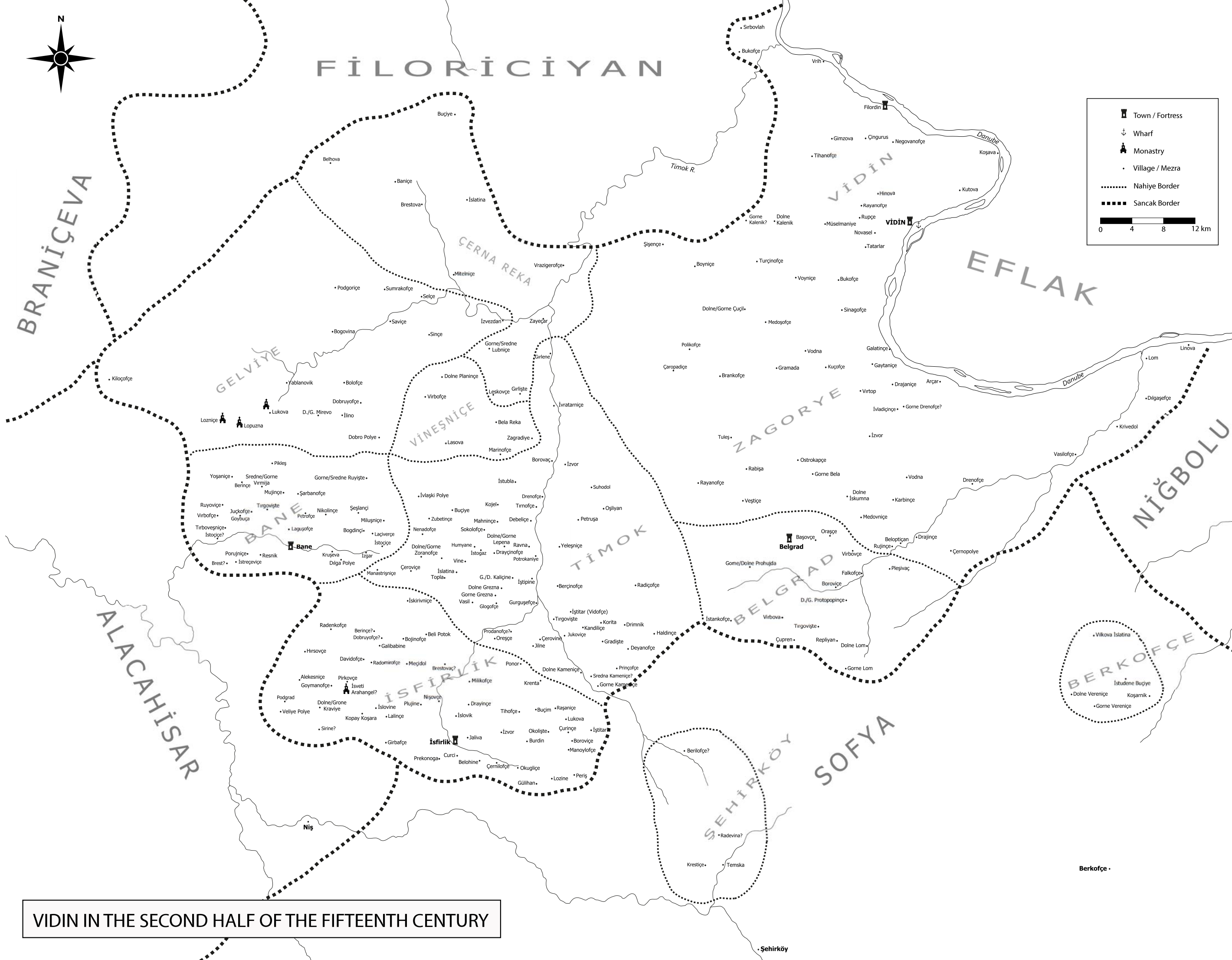
³ TKA-TT.d 219, p. 1.

⁴ September, 1693

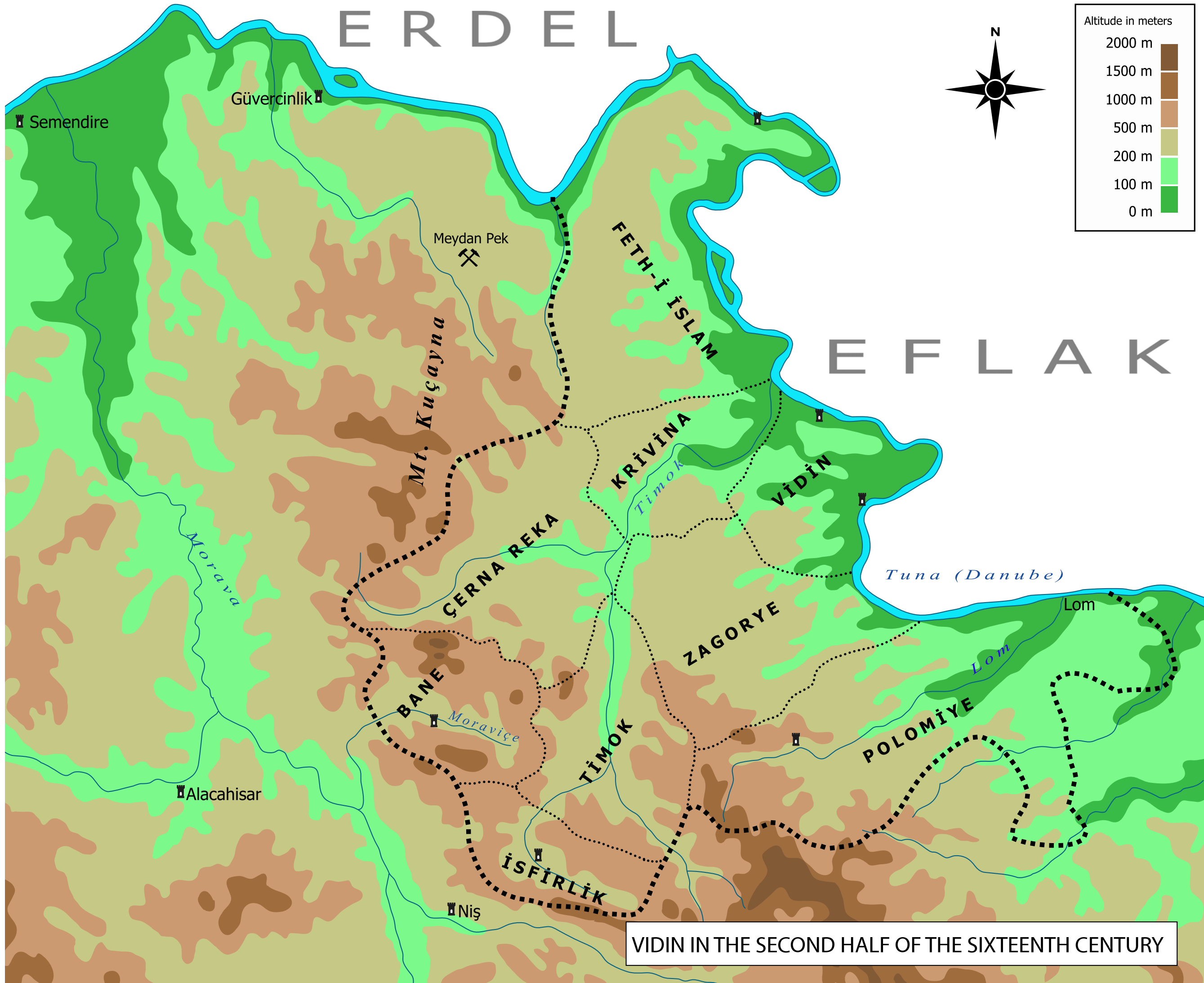
Appendix XIII: Maps



FİLORİCİYAN



VIDIN IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY



VIDIN IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

